ELEVEN
Military and Police

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Colonial ideologues viewed soldiers and policemen as champions of order, strength and discipline. On the other hand, African nationalists and critics of colonial oppression described them as collaborators or traitors to the nationalist cause. Léopold Sédar Senghor spoke about the *Tirailleurs sénégalais* as the 'Black watchdogs of Empire'; Sylvanus Olympio characterized them as 'mercenaries'; and Frantz Fanon named them the 'spokespersons of the colonist and the regime of oppression'.[1] Similarly, Marxist and other radical thinkers came to the conclusion that colonial soldiers were traitors, albeit less to the national cause than to their social class.

Recent historiography, however, uses more nuanced frames for understanding the work of soldiers and policemen. Historians now make use of expressions such as 'men in uniform', 'colonial intermediaries', 'labour aristocracy' or 'violence workers', and increasingly compare military and police labour with other forms of labour.[2] There remain, however, two

[1] Senghor, Memmi and Fanon are quoted in Myron Echenberg, *Colonial Conscripts: The Tirailleurs Sénégalais in French West Africa, 1857–1960* (Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 1991). 3. Olympio quoted in Comi Toulabor, *Le Togo sous Eyadéma* (Paris: Karthala, 1986), 46.

[2] On the police, see Anthony Clayton and David Killingray, *Khaki and Blue: Military and Police in British Colonial Africa* (Athens, OH: Ohio University Press, 1989); David M. Anderson and David Killingray, eds, *Policing and Decolonisation: Politics, Nationalism and the Police, 1917–1965* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1992); Wiliam J. Berridge, "'What the Men are Crying out for Is Leadership": The Khartoum

challenges in addressing the history of policemen and soldiers as workers. The first challenge is to pay tribute both to the historical continuities *and* changes in these types of work. As is well known, several African languages acknowledge the colonial roots of police and soldiers' work, using words of colonial origin to designate them: *polisi* (Bambara), *mupurisa* (Shona), *konstebo* (Swahili), *polisi* (Swahili), *sodja* (Ewe), *soja* (Yoruba) and *musoja* (Shona). However, the work lives of men in uniform have been marked by considerable changes driven by colonial rule, repression, world wars, anti-colonial struggles, military coups, civil wars and democratization.

Throughout the twentieth century, the main distinctive feature of army or police labour has been the use of violence.[3] In war, violence includes the ability to maim or kill without hesitation. It also implies the ability to bear the physical demands of long marches, difficult terrain, harsh weather conditions, poor nutrition, and the ability to transition quickly from the most tedious tasks to the violence of combat and back again.[4] Similar features apply to police work; policemen face analogous conditions in contexts that have many of the same stressors as combat, even if they manifest in different forms

Police Strike of 1951 and the Battle for Administrative Control', *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, 39 (2011), 121–42; Timothy J. Stapleton, *African Police and Soldiers in Colonial Zimbabwe, 1923–80* (Rochester, NY: University of Rochester Press, 2011); on the military, see Marc Michel, *Les Africains et la Grande Guerre: L'appel à l'Afrique (1914–1918)* (Paris: Karthala, 2003); Nancy E. Lawler, *Soldiers of Misfortune: Ivoirien Tirailleurs of World War II* (Athens, OH: Ohio University Press, 1992); Anthony Clayton, *Histoire de l'armée française en Afrique: 1830–1962* (Paris: Albin Michel, 1994); Joe Lunn, '"Les Races Guerrières": Racial Preconceptions in the French Military about West African Soldiers during the First World War', *Journal of Contemporary History,* 334.4 (1999), 517–36; Timothy H. Parsons, *The African Rank-and-File: Social Implications of Colonial Military Service in the King's African Rifles, 1902–1964* (Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 1999); Gregory Mann, *Native Sons: West African Veterans and France in the Twentieth Century* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2006).

[3] Daniel Hoffman, 'Violence, Just in Time: War and Work in Contemporary West Africa', *Cultural Anthropology*, 26.1 (2011), 34–57; Martha K. Huggins, Mika Haritos-Fatouras and Philip G. Zimbardo, *Violence Workers: Police Torturers and Murderers Reconstruct Brazilian Atrocities* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2002); Sönke Neitzel and Harald Welzer, *Soldaten – On Fighting, Killing and Dying: The Secret Second World War Tapes of German POWs* (London: Simon and Schuster, 2012); Erik Jan Zürcher, ed., *Fighting for a Living: A Comparative History of Military Labour 1500–2000* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2013).

[4] Alf Lüdtke, 'Soldiering and Working: Almost the Same? Reviewing Practices in Industry and the Military in Twentieth-Century Contexts', in *Work in a Modern Society: The German Historical Experience in Comparative Perspective*, ed. Jürgen Kocka (Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2010), 109–30.

and, typically, on smaller scales. Violence, broadly defined, remained a central feature of police and soldiers' work in the twentieth century.[5]

However, violence work has been moulded by a broad variety of social constellations.[6] While many soldiers and policemen have been free men working for regular wages,[7] others have been coerced into this type of work – as was the case for slaves in colonial armies, colonial conscripts during the Second World War or child soldiers in current civil wars. Violence work has been at times a free, but in other circumstances an unfree, type of labour. Furthermore, violence work has not always been wage labour. Some soldiers and policemen have benefited from regular wages and important privileges (free housing, medical treatment, schooling for their children, etc.), but others have barely been paid at all. As in other occupations, police and army work has been highly stratified at times, and the social conditions of violence workers have varied over time and space. Consequently, soldiers' and policemen's everyday experiences vary significantly. Some have enjoyed long careers and achieved high rank and prestige. Some policemen, soldiers, insurgents or militia leaders have even succeeded in becoming part of the economic and political elite, or even heads of state. Others, however, have experienced their work as a risky task in an uncertain and ever-changing political, economic and social environment.

A second challenge in writing the labour history of soldiers and police is the relative scarcity of direct sources. Quantitative data remain scarce and are often unreliable; many questions regarding headcounts, wages or war casualties remain unanswered, and may indeed be unanswerable. Qualitative sources are no easier to use. Soldiers and police forces have strong public identities, as evidenced by the important parts they play in official parades and state ceremonies. They also have a strong impact on public imaginaries. One gets fascinating accounts of soldiers and policemen in African literature (Chinua Achebe's *Anthills of the Savannah*), songs (Alpha Blondy's reggae *Brigadier Sabari*) and even television shows (Missa Hébié's sitcom *Commissariat de Tampy*), but first-hand accounts and ego-documents that might provide access to the thought-worlds of African soldiers and police are few and far between.

Detailed life stories, such as the autobiography of G. A. Chaza, who served as a police officer in the British South Africa Police, or of John Mandambwe, who served in the King's African Rifles (KAR), are rarities.[8]

5 Zürcher, ed., *Fighting for a Living*.

6 See the chapter by Fourchard in this volume.

7 On wage labour, see the chapter by Eckert in this volume.

8 Gahadzikwa A. Chaza, *Bhurakuwacha: The Story of a Black Policeman in Rhodesia* (Harare: College Press, 1998); John E. A. Mandambwe (with Mario Kolk), *Can You*

Most police remain anonymous workers of the state, with a few exceptions.[9] Many more soldiers have made it to the forefront of politics, but even they seldom write much – Yoweri Museveni's autobiography, which recalls his path from rebel soldier to head of state, is an exception. Thus, our historical understanding of the military and police as work relies on a spectrum of varied though fragmentary sources, ranging from administrative reports to personal files, iconography and, for the most recent period, interviews and direct ethnographic observations.[10] Historians who want to understand soldiers as workers must read between the lines and against the grain to extract such sensibilities, and they must do so without much of a secondary literature to help frame their assessments. This is a field that cries out for further research.

This chapter explores the main features of soldiers' and policemen's work in colonial and postcolonial Africa, while underlining the broad diversity of experiences associated with this type of work across time and space.

THE GENESIS OF COLONIAL MILITARY AND POLICE FORCES

European colonial powers built armies of African soldiers to aid in building empires, and, thus, they were part of the colonizers' original labour pools. These armies conquered territories, forced the inhabitants of those territories to submit to colonial authority and carried out colonial rule following conquest. Police forces, often made up of ex-soldiers, were generally established after the conquest phase. Policing styles varied significantly from one colonial power to the next, with the British employing a more civilian style, for example, and others using a more military style. Colonial policing responsibilities sometimes overlapped with those of the military, even when colonial rulers intentionally constituted military and police organizations as separate entities. Both organizations played parts in building and maintaining colonial states. Their labour took many forms, including violence work (combat, but also the work of policing subject populations), as well as

Tell Me Why I Went to War? A Story of a Young King's African Rifle, Reverend Father John E. A. Mandambwe (Zomba: Kachere Books, 2008); Timothy J. Stapleton, *A Military History of Africa*, 3 vols (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2013).

9 Siaka Probyn Stevens, *What Life Has Taught Me* (London: Kensal Press, 1984).

10 Berridge, "'What the Men Are Crying out for Is Leadership'"; Stapleton, *A Military History of Africa*; Joël Glasman, 'Unruly Agents: Police Reform, Bureaucratization and Policemen's Agency in Interwar Togo', *Journal of African History*, 55.1 (2014), 79–100; Thomas Bierschenk and Jean-Pierre Olivier de Sardan, *States at Work: Dynamics of African Bureaucracies* (Leiden: Brill, 2013).

physical labour; supervision of subordinates, prisoners and labourers; and ceremonial roles.

Complex processes were at work in building colonial armies. For example, the German colonial army in East Africa (*Schutztruppe*) paid its troops relatively high wages, enticing some men to join as a way of achieving social mobility and relative authority. War spoils supplemented their wages, and prestige bolstered their authority vis-à-vis colonized African peoples. But significant coercive factors also influenced young men's entry into the *Schutztruppe*. Poverty, gender shaming, lack of transferable skills, a desire to escape certain forms of enslavement, and combinations of these and other factors all convinced African men to become colonial soldiers. Even if, on the surface, many of these soldiers looked to be 'volunteers', these less visible forms of coercion influenced their choices.

Colonial recruitment methods differed across time and space, exposing the labour relationships inherent in the making of colonial armies. Different recruitment methods often existed alongside each other within an army. Colonizers also moved back and forth between different styles over the course of an army's recruitment history. The *Schutztruppe*, for example, did not use conscription (that is, compelling soldiers to join) for most of its history. But during the First World War, as Germany's strategic situation devolved, the *Schutztruppe* turned to forced conscription of young men to supplement its numbers as it marched through eastern and south-eastern Africa.[11]

French West Africa offers some contrasts in recruitment patterns and techniques that endured over a longer span of time and greater expanses of territory than other colonial histories. Recruitment of African soldiers in French West Africa during the conquest period (1886–1905) involved coercion that equalled 'the discredited technique of *rachat*' – the practice of 'repurchasing' slaves from their West African masters that characterized the early 1800s.[12] Reforms begun in 1857 produced the standing colonial army for French West Africa (the *Tirailleurs sénégalais)*, initiating movement towards a more volunteer army. In this phase, French officers began issuing recruits with colourful new uniforms and opened up infantry training in an effort to attract new recruits who would otherwise have been sceptical, given the physical labour demands made of recruits in the earlier *rachat* period. Still, *rachat* persisted into the conquest period alongside these other recruitment practices.

[11] Michelle Moyd, '"We Don't Want to Die for Nothing": Askari at War in German East Africa, 1914–1918', in *Race, Empire, and First World War Writing*, ed. Santanu Das (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 90–107.

[12] Echenberg, *Colonial Conscripts*.

Beginning in the 1880s, three forms of recruitment emerged in French West Africa. First, colonial officers paid enlistment bonuses to slaveholders to secure their slaves' service. Second, colonial armies incorporated prisoners of war and porters into their ranks. Third, they incorporated West African career soldiers, providing a ready-made mid-level leadership echelon.[13] Multiple recruitment techniques thus existed alongside each other. In 1912, with international tensions high and the threat of war looming, French colonial authorities announced a partial conscription, requiring recruits to serve four years as compared to the five- or six-year service required by volunteers.[14] In 1918 a mass levy brought 63,000 African troops into the *Tirailleurs sénégalais*[15] to fight for France in the First World War. A review of British recruitment practices in the nineteenth century and into the First World War shows similar patterns with regard to an initial reliance on enslaved or otherwise 'unfree' men, followed by a push to recruit 'freeborn' men who supposedly exhibited 'martial race' characteristics suitable for military service.[16] Colonial officers' willingness to use more or less coercive recruitment methods, and in some instances to offer attractive incentives for enlistment, reveals the prevailing conditions under which African recruits cooperated with recruitment efforts or not – in other words, how they were able to sell their labour.

Soldiers in colonial armies worked in many different capacities. They spent their days in training, combat and ceremonial roles, all of which demanded physical stamina and concentration. They also performed physical labour, including work on construction projects in and around the colonial stations. When not engaged in military campaigns or training, colonial troops served as a cheap and captive labour force, and thus served colonial ideals of how local labour regimes should function.

Combat and its inherent violence occupied a central place in colonial soldiers' work lives. During the conquest phase some colonial armies campaigned almost constantly. Colonial armies' methods of war involved long marches across difficult terrain. Scouting, tracking and provisioning for the columns of soldiers, porters and family members also occupied soldiers while on the march. Management of prisoners captured during combat also fell to soldiers, shading into police work. First and foremost, though, violence work meant killing, or threatening to kill, anyone deemed hostile or supportive of enemy combatants. Soldiers also raided and laid siege to

[13] *Ibid.*

[14] *Ibid.*

[15] Lunn, '"Les Races Guerrières"'.

[16] Samson C. Ukpabi, 'Military Recruitment and Social Mobility in Nineteenth Century British West Africa', *Journal of African Studies*, 2 (1975), 87–107.

villages, seized livestock and goods as spoils of war, and used scorched earth ways of war that rendered local landscapes barren and unproductive for long periods after battle, profoundly disrupting local and regional societies, economies and cultural practices. In all of these ways, soldiers' work was defined by violence.[17]

Soldiers and police both performed constabulary work, including patrols, escorts, carrying messages and summons, making arrests, guarding prisoners and providing security for dignitaries. Soldiers and police in these roles often assisted with tax collection, adding a visible coercive element to the state's interface with its colonized subjects. Senior soldiers and police also filled supervisory roles, including overseeing prisoners and labourers, carrying out punishments and executions, recruiting labourers, organizing and managing porters during expeditions and conducting training for rank-and-file soldiers.[18] In the minds of Africans who lived with the everyday violence of colonial rule, these soldiers and police were the face of the colonial state.[19]

Military work conditions, and soldiers' responses to these conditions, determined the effectiveness of colonial armies when tested in times of stress, as in combat. Thus, studying differences in recruitment practices and work conditions also reveals the conditions under which soldiers resisted their officers' or commanders' authority, expressing themselves against the work being demanded of them. Soldiers' acts of resistance ranged from discrete individual acts of indiscipline, to small acts of collective indiscipline involving more than one soldier, to strikes or all-out mutinies involving many soldiers.[20]

[17] Michelle Moyd, *Violent Intermediaries: African Soldiers, Conquest, and Everyday Colonialism in German East Africa* (Athens, OH: Ohio University Press, 2014). For comparisons, see Benjamin Claude Brower, *A Desert Named Peace: The Violence of France's Empire in the Algerian Sahara, 1844–1902* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009); David Anderson, 'Massacre at Ribo Post: Expansion and Expediency on the Colonial Frontier in East Africa', *The International Journal of African Historical Studies*, 37.1 (2004), 33–54; Bertrand Taithe, *The Killer Trail: A Colonial Scandal in the Heart of Africa* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011).

[18] Moyd, *Violent Intermediaries*. See also Marie Muschalek, 'Violence as Usual: Everyday Police Work and the Colonial State in German Southwest Africa', in *Rethinking the Colonial State*, ed. Søren Rud and Søren Ivarsson (Bingley: Emerald Publishing, 2017), 129–50.

[19] G. C. K. Gwassa and John Iliffe, eds, *Records of the Maji Maji Rising* (Nairobi: East African Publishing House, 1967).

[20] David Killingray, 'The Mutiny of the West African Regiment in the Gold Coast, 1901', *International Journal of African Historical Studies*, 16.3 (1983), 441–54; Moyd, *Violent Intermediaries*; Taithe, *The Killer Trail*.

Comparative research on colonial army mutinies and strikes illustrates the extent to which soldiers' work conditions affected their willingness to continue working for European officers. In German East Africa, strikes or acts of collective indiscipline occurred infrequently. They took place in the two least stable periods of *Schutztruppe* history – either in its formative years (1889–95) or during the second half of the East African campaign of the First World War, when the *Schutztruppe*'s military disposition took a decisive turn for the worse compared to the first half.[21] Otherwise, the *Schutztruppe* remained largely untouched by disruptive strikes or mutinies. Smaller acts of indiscipline occurred with some regularity, however, in response to day-to-day demands placed on the soldiers by their officers and NCOs. By contrast, the history of colonial armies in French West Africa reveals a wider range of resistance to recruitment over a longer span of time. Widespread resistance to recruitment occurred throughout the French Federation during the First World War.[22] Only the privileged *originaires* – those who by virtue of living in the communes had claims to French citizenship and enjoyed some privilege – cooperated fully with French recruitment drives. Others, considered French colonial subjects, needed more convincing. In the end, French successes in recruiting 63,000 African troops to reinforce French lines on the Western Front in 1918 should not overshadow the significant resistance that recruiters faced in the process.

British recruitment efforts in eastern and western Africa during the same timeframe also brought tens of thousands of troops into the war and also met with resistance in some places, such as in Nyasaland (Malawi) and among the Hausa and Yoruba in Nigeria.[23] More comparative and synthetic analysis linking the work conditions of soldiers and police to their expressions of discontent, whether minor or major, will help us better understand the nature of soldiering as a colonial labour form.

[21] Moyd, *Violent Intermediaries*.

[22] Lunn, "'Les Races Guerrières'".

[23] James K. Matthews, 'Reluctant Allies: Nigerian Responses to Military Recruitment 1914–1918', in *Africa and the First World War*, ed. Melvin E. Page (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 1987), 95–114; George N. Njung, 'West Africa', in *1914–1918-Online: International Encyclopedia of the First World War*, ed. Ute Daniel et al. (Berlin: Freie Universität Berlin, 2014), DOI: 10.15463/ie1418.10462 (accessed 14 January 2019); Melvin E. Page, *The Chiwaya War: Malawians in the First World War* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2000).

THE SOCIOLOGY OF COLONIAL MILITARY LABOUR

In building colonial armies, European officers imagined ideal types of soldiers, constructing and then using 'martial race' categories to organize their thinking about recruitment. In short order, however, these racialized criteria revealed inherent inconsistencies. In labelling some groups more martial than others, colonial militaries elevated certain masculine identities to relative positions of authority within nascent colonial states. Men who belonged to such groups stood to gain from the increased status and wealth that accompanied this belonging. The Kamba, a group that became part of the KAR rank-and-file, illustrate this logic. The Kamba began joining the KAR in large numbers in the 1930s, when famine conditions in their reserves, exacerbated by the global Depression, led many Kamba to sell their livestock in order to get cash to pay for basic needs and taxes.[24] Participation in the KAR gave them access to a regular salary, uniforms and social status that they otherwise would not have had. The Kamba thus became a martial race and a privileged group out of a position of relative weakness. Soldiering became a central feature of Kamba masculinity ideals and sociopolitical position in British East Africa.[25] Colonial recruitment needs grew in the mid-1930s with the Italian invasion of Ethiopia, and the Kamba answered the call, providing a 'growing percentage of the KAR' during the late 1930s.[26] Thus, the Kamba became violence workers, their compensation and status coming from their willingness to use violence in service of the colonial state. By the 1960s, however, on the eve of Kenyan independence, Wakamba men no longer needed to rely as much on the KAR for opportunities for upward mobility, although their martial race self-definition continued to play a part in Wakamba 'communal identity' through the independence era.[27]

Recruitment based on martial race categorization also meant that certain groups of men experienced disproportionate levels of coercion and violence, both as part of recruitment processes and in combat situations. *Tirailleurs sénégalais* recruited from purported *races guerrières* in French West Africa during the First World War were deployed as shock troops in some of the worst fighting on the Western Front, particularly at Verdun.[28] At other times, though, when armies became desperate for manpower, this focus on martial

[24] Timothy H. Parsons, '"Wakamba Warriors are Soldiers of the Queen": The Evolution of the Kamba as a Martial Race, 1890–1970', *Ethnohistory*, 46.4 (1999), 671–701.

[25] *Ibid.*

[26] *Ibid.*, 680.

[27] *Ibid.*, 696.

[28] Lunn, '"Les Races Guerrières"'.

race recruiting preference dissipated, with colonial armies coercing men to fight regardless of their origins. This dynamic proves the basic fiction of colonial martial race recruitment strategies, as well as the primacy of colonial labour imperatives, and points to the need to consider how colonial military recruitment intersected with racializing practices within wider colonial labour regimes and ideologies.

Colonial militaries also depended on other kinds of labour to function. Especially during the conquest phase, most logistical functions of these armies were handled by labourers recruited from localities surrounding colonial garrisons. Until the widespread expansion of motorized and rail transport during the interwar period, armies relied on vast numbers of porters to move their supplies and materiel.[29] Soldiers' household members also undertook much of the domestic labour that undergirded soldiering, whether in garrison or during expeditions. Women and children frequently accompanied soldiers' columns on the march, handling cooking, laundry, nursing and the gathering of food, water and firewood. During the interwar period, when urbanized garrison life dominated soldiers' day-to-day activities, women continued to play central roles in supporting the armies' logistical needs.[30] In these ways, soldiers' households served as a basis for building their colonial armies' logistical infrastructures on the cheap.[31] This labour relationship thus also reflected built-in gendered and generational hierarchies that, alongside other labour dynamics such as migrancy, heightened the value of soldierly masculinity as a mechanism for socio-economic mobility.

FIGHTING IN THE WORLD WARS

The world wars provoked unprecedented levels of military recruitment, mobilizing African colonial soldiers to work and fight both on the continent and overseas. In these two global conflicts, African colonial soldiers' roles as violence workers, honed during the decades of colonial conquest, reached new levels of intensity. Built for fighting in the 'small wars' of colonial conquest, these armies now fought against similarly organized and equipped,

[29] Geoffrey Hodges, *The Carrier Corps: Military Labor in the East African Campaign, 1914–1918* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Publishing, 1986).

[30] Parsons, *The African Rank-and-File*; Sarah Zimmerman, 'Mesdames Tirailleurs and Indirect Clients: West African Women and the French Colonial Army, 1908–1918', *International Journal of African Historical Studies*, 44.2 (2011), 299–322.

[31] Michelle Moyd, 'Making the Household, Making the State: Colonial Military Communities and Labor in German East Africa', *International Labor and Working-Class History*, 80 (2011), 53–76.

European-led, colonial armies. Soldiers who fought abroad in Europe and other distant theatres found that warfare could manifest itself in previously unimaginable ways.

Encounters with new devastating technologies, long-distance deployments and racist ideologies constrained soldiers' abilities to determine their own work conditions. In turn, these dynamics influenced their understandings of what it meant to be violence workers. In both wars, examples of soldiers' resistance, ranging from strikes to desertion, illustrate that African soldiers held clear ideas about what constituted appropriate work conditions following their substantial sacrifices for European imperial powers. After both wars, veterans asserted claims for fair compensation and recognition of their labours from indifferent and racist colonial administrations with higher priorities. Viewing African soldiers and veterans of the world wars as workers shows that, despite soldiers' clear ideas about the benefits that should come as a result of their military service, colonial administrators only minimally acknowledged these claims after the war. Viewed through the lens of racist and civilizationist colonial labour ideologies, we see that soldiers' and veterans' struggles paralleled those of other workers for recognition from colonial states that usually failed to honour the promises they had made while they were drumming up manpower to fight in wars with little connection to the day-to-day interests of most African men and their communities.

THE FIRST WORLD WAR

Hundreds of thousands of African colonial soldiers fought in the First World War, both within and beyond the continent. These included 450,000 French West African and North African soldiers who fought on the Western Front in Europe as well as in the Dardanelles campaign. These soldiers fought in some of the bloodiest battles of the war, including at Verdun. Their use as 'shock troops' at Verdun – an outgrowth of the martial race thinking described in the previous section – probably resulted in disproportionate casualty rates for some of these units.[32] Following the Allies' defeat of German colonial forces in Cameroon in 1916, troops from Gold Coast and Nigeria joined with others drawn from the British empire (KAR and Indian soldiers), the Belgian Congo and South Africa to fight against German East Africa's *Schutztruppe*, which was also composed of an African rank-and-file. The colonial powers all had armies of African soldiers at the outset of the war, but these were relatively small: the *Schutztruppe* had a scant 2,000 soldiers in 1914. Recruitment drives rapidly expanded their numbers, so that by 1916

[32] Lunn, "'Les Races Guerrières'".

some 16,000 men were fighting for the Germans in East Africa. As early as 1910, French thinkers had advocated an aggressive recruitment strategy in Africa designed to build a 'reservoir of men' to supplement their numbers in Europe. Thus, *Tirailleurs sénégalais* and others fought in some of the earliest engagements of the war on the Western Front in 1914, and men from western and northern Africa continued to participate in Entente offensives throughout the rest of the war, including in the Dardanelles. France mobilized some 192,000 *Tirailleurs sénégalais* during the war. White South African troops fought on the Western Front in Europe and also against the Senussi in the Egyptian-Libyan border region.[33] During the interwar period, these men often experienced long demobilization processes, and their reintegration into the communities they had left behind often did not go smoothly.[34] Although older historiography argued that veterans of the First World War played a significant part in nationalist politics, this contention has proven to be overblown. Most veterans made quite conservative demands of the colonizers – they wanted pensions, land, jobs and care for their families. With a few exceptions, nationalism was not a primary goal of veterans, particularly in comparison to the post-Second World War era, in which their interests took on new importance, as more robust nationalist movements began to draw on a wider selection of interest groups and demographics than had previously been the case.

THE SECOND WORLD WAR

As in the First World War, European imperial powers drew on their existing colonial armies to work and fight in different parts of Africa, and also in overseas theatres. The French again mobilized African colonial troops, and many who helped defend France against the *Wehrmacht*'s invasion were massacred by German soldiers in 1940.[35] The *Wehrmacht* took an additional 100,000 of these troops prisoner.[36] African troops fought both in Vichy French armies and in the Free French Forces assembled to defeat Vichy. African troops in the Free French Forces fought in a number of major

[33] Bill Nasson, *Springboks on the Somme: South Africa in the Great War 1914–1918* (Johannesburg and New York: Penguin, 2007); Ian Van der Waag, *A Military History of Modern South Africa* (Johannesburg: Jonathan Ball, 2015); Stapleton, *A Military History of Africa*.

[34] Lunn, "'Les Races Guerrières'".

[35] Raffael Scheck, *Hitler's African Victims: The German Army Massacres of Black French Soldiers in 1940* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006).

[36] Scheck, *Hitler's African Victims*.

campaigns, including in Gabon, Tunisia and in the campaign against the Italians in eastern Africa. North African troops also fought in the Italian campaign in 1943–44.

Similarly, the British mobilized some 500,000 colonial troops from western and eastern Africa to fight in Africa and abroad during the course of the war.[37] The KAR bore the brunt of the confrontation with Italian forces in Ethiopia and eastern Africa, but soldiers from the Sudan Defence Forces, the Royal West African Frontier Force (RWAFF) and the Somaliland Camel Corps also fought there. White South African troops also fought in the Ethiopian campaign. Despite their relatively small numbers, their presence in the forefront of the victory march into Addis Ababa in April 1941 highlighted the extent to which racist thought influenced soldiers' deployment in particular circumstances.[38] Beginning in 1943, RWAFF and KAR troops were also sent to fight in Burma, a hellish campaign that resulted in significant casualties, including psychological disorders resulting from the particular hardships of warfare in this theatre.[39]

The presence of African soldiers and labourers in the North African theatre of the war warrants further study. In military histories, this theatre features as a series of battles between German and British armies composed of white officers and soldiers. It is thus subsumed into the wider European conflict without much regard to the effects of the war on North Africa itself, much less the presence of African soldiers from across the continent. Yet African soldiers and workers from East Africa, South Africa, parts of equatorial Africa, Sudan and Morocco served there.[40] Moreover, North African troops fought in Europe, especially in the Italian campaign.[41]

In all of these cases, going to war was work. Despite advances in transportation routes and technologies, for example, soldiers often still marched long distances under difficult, treacherous conditions, such as those encountered in Burma and Ethiopia. And combat itself constantly tested the physical and mental endurance and strength of soldiers, wherever they fought. Violence work in war required having one's wits about oneself under stressful conditions, and maintaining concentration on intricate tasks,

[37] David Killingray, *Fighting for Britain: African Soldiers in the Second World War* (Woodbridge: James Currey, 2010).

[38] *Ibid.*

[39] *Ibid.*

[40] *Ibid.*; Parsons, *The African Rank-and-File*; Van der Waag, *A Military History of Modern South Africa.*

[41] Driss Maghraoui, 'The *goumiers* in the Second World War: History and Colonial Representation', *Journal of North African Studies*, 19 (2014), 571–86.

such as firing weapons with accuracy. Soldiers in combat might go days and weeks without proper food, water, hygiene or rest, but they still had to remain absorbed in their work in order to avoid injury or death.[42] They shifted rapidly back and forth between boredom and extreme activity. Their work was dangerous and taxing, and many did not live to see the benefits they imagined would accrue to them through their military service.

The Second World War also saw the expansion of numbers of soldiers recruited for use 'specifically as non-combatants (auxiliaries and pioneers), [or] laborers in uniform'.[43] The British in particular recruited vast numbers of soldiers for this purpose. These military labourers were drawn from all over the continent and were deployed in the East and North African campaigns, as well as in the Middle East.[44] Recruitment methods included both enticing volunteers to join and conscripting enough men to fill the ranks. Soldiers' work in these capacities included a variety of 'manual labor and garrison duties' that were physically taxing and intense.[45] According to Killingray, these men 'served as laborers on docks, in stone quarries, building fortifications, and for general construction work; semi-skilled men and tradesmen were employed as signalers, in printing maps, as fire-fighters, and lorry drivers'.[46] As during earlier periods, men in uniform served as a captive and cheap labour force.

SOLDIERS' PROTESTS, STRIKES AND MUTINIES

African soldiers who served in the world wars sometimes protested against their work conditions, though perhaps not as often as one might expect given the scale of their involvement with war work in different theatres. During the First World War, *Tirailleurs sénégalais* participated in the French army mutinies of 1917, the result of widespread anger following the Verdun campaign in 1916, in which some 162,000 French soldiers died.

In November 1944, 1,300 demobilized *Tirailleurs sénégalais* who were stationed just outside Dakar at Camp de Thiaroye mutinied against their commanders. The soldiers, many of whom had been prisoners of war in Germany, demanded back pay, allowances and fair pensions. *Tirailleurs*

[42] Huggins et al., *Violence Workers*.

[43] David Killingray, 'Labor Mobilisation in British Colonial Africa for the War Effort, 1939–46', in *Africa and the Second World War*, ed. David Killingray and Richard Rathbone (New York: St Martin's Press, 1986), 71.

[44] *Ibid.*

[45] *Ibid.*, 73.

[46] *Ibid.*

who were guarding the camp fired on the protestors, killing thirty-five and seriously wounding another thirty-five. Hundreds more received less serious wounds.[47] Thirty-five of the soldiers were arrested, tried and convicted on charges of mutiny, although later, in 1947, they received amnesty. The massacre at Camp de Thiaroye is the most famous example of African soldiers protesting against their work conditions, but it is not the only one. The Mauritius Regiment, a unit fighting for the British against Vichy forces in Madagascar, mutinied upon arrival there in December 1943.[48] British colonial troops also participated in small- and large-scale mutinies in Sierra Leone, Gold Coast, Sudan, Burma and elsewhere throughout the war.[49] Soldiers of the *Force publique* garrisoned at Luluabourg in Belgian Congo mutinied in 1944 for a variety of reasons related to their treatment by Belgian officers. The soldiers' actions were also part of a wider set of anti-colonial actions, including a labour strike against Union Minière.[50] These expressions of anger due to unfair treatment from colonial officers stood out, because such actions had been quite rare in African colonial armies. Soldiers' desertions or refusals to undertake particular military missions should also be understood as expressions of dissatisfaction with work conditions generated by racist colonial military hierarchies. These factors combined with the exigencies of war to exacerbate unfair labour relations, which many soldiers refused to continue to tolerate as the war dragged on. We cannot fully understand these protests, strikes and mutinies without analysing soldiers' position at the intersection between colonial racial thought, labour practice and the violence and trauma of combat.

DECOLONIZATION, COUPS AND THE TRANSFORMATION OF MILITARY WORK

The aftermath of the Second World War challenged the role of policemen and soldiers. Urbanization, demographic growth and labour movements exposed the contradictions inherent in colonial rule. On the one hand, the colonizers needed more and more African soldiers and policemen. On the other hand, they were not prepared to give them complete responsibility for

[47] Myron Echenberg, '"Morts pour la France": The African Soldier in France During the Second World War', *Journal of African History*, 26.4 (1985), 363–80.

[48] Killingray, *Fighting for Britain*.

[49] *Ibid.*

[50] Bruce Fetter, 'The Luluabourg Revolt of Elisabethville', *International Journal of African Historical Studies*, 2.2 (1969), 137–47.

colonial order. The number of African officers remained very low. Even though African employees were instrumental in specific duties such as translating, typewriting or copying, most bureaucratic tasks continued to be taken care of by European officers. In French West Africa, for instance, the first African police superintendents were only appointed in the 1950s. In the end, the 'Africanization' of police forces did set in. However, this process was both too slow and too late.

An important impetus for change was the soldiers' and policemen's discontent regarding their working conditions. While some protests had already occurred before the Second World War, they gained a new vehemence afterwards. War veterans were especially vocal. The 1944 mutiny at Thiaroye signalled the tensions to come in the post-war period. The Senegalese politician Lamine Guèye adopted the *Tirailleurs*' cause and politicized the question of war veterans.[51] Policemen also protested against bad working conditions. In 1951 in Khartoum, 700 policemen went on strike in protest against the dismissal of several of their colleagues.[52] For the colonial administration, this kind of strike made it obvious just how heavily colonial domination relied on this particular profession. In the 1950s and 1960s police strikes and army mutinies became more frequent. Members of the Congolese *Force publique* mutinied in 1960, as did the first battalion of the Tanganyikan Rifles in Dar es Salaam in 1964. In all of these cases, soldiers' revolts resulted from the failure of colonial leadership to take seriously their troops' demands for adequate pay and care in exchange for their work. Equally important, however, was the widespread failure to recognize African soldiers as suitable for leadership roles, which in many cases remained in the hands of white officers and NCOs. The degree to which soldiers felt locked out of the potential for upward mobility is another factor that reminds us of the importance of thinking about soldiers through the lens of labour history.

Anti-colonial struggle marked another change in soldiers' labour histories, with many men and women across the continent taking up arms as their primary occupation, even if only for brief periods. The national wars of liberation in Algeria (1954–62), Kenya (1952–63), Cameroon (1955–62), Angola (1961–74), Guinea Bissau (1963–74) and Mozambique (1964–74) resulted in the militarization of societies. During the Algerian war, for instance, the French army recruited massively among the Algerian population. In 1961, in a country of ten million people and against a nationalist army of some 80,000 *moujahidines* (ANL – *Armée Nationale de Libération*, the armed

[51] Gregory Mann, *Native Sons: West African Veterans and France in the Twentieth Century* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2006).

[52] Berridge, "'What the Men are Crying out for Is Leadership'".

wing of the *Front de Libération Nationale*, or FLN), the French mobilized around 420,000 soldiers and 503,000 auxiliaries. The French troops were made up of soldiers fighting in regular forces (professional soldiers, legionnaires, African soldiers, French conscripts, etc.) as well as *supplétif* forces (*harkis*, *maghzens*, *aassès*, *groupes mobiles de protection rurale*, auto-defence groups, etc.) recruited from the local population.[53] The massive mobilization of the local population went far beyond the mere numbers needed for fighting; it was part of a colonial strategy of counter-insurgency war. This resulted in high casualty numbers – around 30,000 dead French soldiers and 350,000 Algerian casualties (3 per cent of the population) – as well as the emigration of a large number of French settlers and Algerians – including most of the *harkis* who had fought on the French side.

After the national war of liberation, military experience became a political asset: the new political elite frequently came from a military background. In Algeria, commander-in-chief Colonel Houari Boumediene became minister of defence and eventually head of the Algerian state (1965–78). Even for leaders who were trained in civil professions, experience as a 'freedom fighter' was a crucial issue – as it was for José Eduardo dos Santos, a fighter in the People's Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA), who eventually became Angola's head of state in 1979, or João Bernardo Vieira, head of state of Guinea Bissau after his coup in 2005. Another example is Robert Mugabe, who stated that the experience as a freedom fighter gave him, in addition to his seven academic degrees, a 'degree in violence'.[54] Their experiences as violence workers and as wartime leaders lent them credibility as leaders of newly independent nations that were expected to participate in international politics and economics. That many of these leaders remained in power decades later resulted in part from their ability to draw on political language and powerful symbols of struggle not unlike those of labour movements.

Coups and military rule were a third factor that led to changes in soldiers' work lives. Between 1958 and 2001 almost every African nation state – except for Botswana, Cape Verde and Mauritius – experienced at least one military coup or an attempted coup. Coups became a banal political tool in postcolonial Africa: there were two coups per year following independence.[55] In most cases, plotters claimed to be acting in the name of higher national interests, accusing the overthrown leaders of corruption or tribalism. In Togo, Gnassingbè Eyadema and his fellow veterans killed the civil president

[53] On other forms of professionalism, see the chapter by Pilossof in this volume.

[54] 'Robert Mugabe: The Man Behind the Fist', *The Economist*, 29 March 2007.

[55] P. Collier, *Wars, Guns, and Votes: Democracy in Dangerous Places* (New York: Harper Collins, 2009).

Sylvanus Olympio in 1963, accusing him of tribalism against the Kabyè. In Uganda, Idi Amin, who had risen through the ranks of the KAR to a high-level advisory position in the Obote regime, used anti-Ganda sentiment to justify his 1971 coup. The Ugandan army became an organization largely dominated by men from northern Uganda, Amin's home region, and especially 'Sudanese' or 'Nubi' soldiers who had long been viewed by the British and others as a martial race. Coups should also be understood, then, as a method of renegotiating military labour. Military coups have their origins in soldiers' discontent about their conditions of work, their relative status compared to other kinds of workers (especially bureaucrats), praetorianism and rivalries between factions of the army. In Togo, for example, soldiers who had fought in Indochina and Algeria were unhappy about their lack of professional prospects in the new national army. Theirs was one of the first military coups in an independent African nation, demonstrating the clear link between wartime military service and expectations of post-war rewards.

Coups had many consequences, the most important of which was state militarization. Coups were followed by rapid career advancement for the plotters and their accomplices, with violence work becoming the basis for political work, and soldiers considering themselves as the best men for the job of leading nations. Privates became sergeants, lieutenants became generals and generals became heads of state. Some of the plotters were high-ranking officers before seizing power, such as Zine el-Abidine Ben Ali of Tunisia (1987–2011) or Omar el-Béchir of Sudan (since 1989); others, such as Gnassingbè Eyadema of Togo (1963/67–2005) or Samuel Doe of Liberia (1980–90) were NCOs who could access higher ranks, and thus prestige, after becoming heads of state. In military regimes, the army complemented the political party as a site of elite formation and selection. Military leaders – such as Moussa Traoré in Mali (1968–91), Lansanna Conté in Guinea (1984–2008) or Jerry Rawlings in Ghana (1981–2001) – established extensive networks of military patronage. In several countries, such as Egypt under Gamal Abdel Nasser (1954–70), Sudan under Gaafar Nimeiry (1969–85) or Libya under Mouammar Kadhafi (1969–2011), the military ransacked the political realm. Even those who attempted to civilianize their power – such as Joseph Désiré Mobutu in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) (1965–97) or Teodoro Obiang Nguema Mbasogo in Equatorial Guinea (since 1982) – still relied strongly on their armed forces.

In the aftermath of military coups, armies have tended to grow rapidly – both in absolute and relative numbers vis-à-vis other state agencies. Performances of state power and calls for national security communicated new labour paradigms in which the military not only dictated the terms of labour, but argued for its centrality in maintaining sovereignty in an age of

Cold War rivalries and post-independence struggles for political authority. In order to control oversized armies, military leaders kept them divided. They built competing companies, units and factions. They hired foreign consultants and army experts and, in times of real crisis, relied on Western paratroopers and mercenaries. They maintained a strong division between a small and highly privileged officer staff and a massive and underpaid rank-and-file. In turn, officers could deploy a strategy of straddling by holding both military and political positions, as well as economic functions. Uganda is a case in point: under President Yoweri Museveni, many officers became economic entrepreneurs, profiting from everyday corruption through checkpoints, gas smuggling, misappropriation of ghost soldiers' salaries and cattle plunder. Military rulers not only established a new style of ruling, they also embodied a new political subjectivity. Camouflage became a widespread style in the streets and markets of African urban centres as well as in ministerial offices and at international meetings. Simultaneously, military techniques that were common under colonial rule – including coercive measures, physical torture or whipping – made their way into everyday political life. Here again, the links between violence work and political work become evident.

MILITARY WORK AT WAR: SOLDIERS, REBELS AND WARLORDS

Since the 1980s military and police work have been reshaped either by processes of democratization and structural adjustment, as in Benin, Nigeria, Kenya or South Africa, or by civil war in places such as the DRC, Liberia, Sierra Leone or Sudan. After dealing with soldiers at war in this section, we will focus on democratization in the next section. Since the Second World War, one-third (62 out of 178) of the world's wars have been fought in Africa.[56] The Central African region has been the theatre of a succession of mutinies, rebellions and insurgencies since the 1960s. The Horn of Africa has experienced a war of secession in Ethiopia, followed by civil war and interstate war with Eritrea.[57] Chad and Sudan have been countries where war alternated with short periods of peace for decades. However, it was in the 1990s, in the aftermath of the Cold War, that the number of African wars peaked. Separatist movements, armed groups and war entrepreneurs

[56] Sven Chojnacki and Gregor Reisch, 'Perspectives on War: Collecting, Comparing and Disaggregating Data on Violent Conflicts', *Sicherheit und Frieden*, 26.4 (2008), 233–45.

[57] Alexander de Waal, *Evil Days: Thirty Years of War and Famine in Ethiopia* (New York: Human Rights Watch, 1991).

mushroomed, relying on light, cheap and highly mobile weaponry such as Kalashnikovs, light rockets and landmines, and challenging conventional definitions of military labour by linking them explicitly to resource extraction and other revenue-generating methods.[58] Beginning in 1996, the 'African World War',[59] fought mainly in the DRC, has involved about ten countries and several non-state armed groups. Non-state armed groups have contributed to shaping African military labour, from Al-Shabaab in Somalia, M23 in Kivu and the *janjaweed* in Darfur, to the Ansar al Dine in northern Mali and the Boko Haram in northern Nigeria. In turn, states have responded to these insurgent militaries with expensive, long-term military deployments and counter-insurgency operations that frequently exacerbate conditions for civilians living in proximity to the conflict areas.

A paradigmatic case for the new role of soldiers in wars were the violent conflicts in Liberia and Sierra Leone in the early 1990s, known for the strategic use of theatrical violence – including horrific acts such as the chopping off of civilians' hands and arms – as a way of persuading local populations to be compliant. In the Mano River, most rebels were former students or peasants who took up arms to enter the labour market and escape the authority of their chiefs.[60] Rebellion was embedded in the long history of slavery, clientelism and colonialism, which reinforced the power of the elderly and big men among young members of the communities. Youth joined militias partly as a result of inadequate work opportunities, as well as an expression of frustration against these elders who had hoarded political and economic authority.

Civil wars had numerous consequences for soldiers' lives. In some regions – Mano River, the Horn, Central Africa and the Great Lakes region – war was no longer exceptional but became a part of normal social and political life. In these 'no peace, no war' situations,[61] peacetime did not imply non-violence, and war was always around the corner. In Chad, for instance – a country whose history has long been shaped by war, starting with pre-colonial *razzias* and the brutal conquest by French colonial troops – the creation of the *Front de Libération Nationale du Tchad* (Frolinat) in 1966 inaugurated a new and

[58] William Reno, *Warlord Politics and African States* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 1998).

[59] Gérard Prunier, *Africa's World War: Congo, the Rwandan Genocide, and the Making of a Continental Catastrophe* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009).

[60] Paul Richards, 'New Barbarism in Africa?', in *Fighting for the Rain Forest: War, Youth and Resources in Sierra Leone*, ed. Paul Richards (Oxford: James Currey, 1996), xiii–xxxv; Daniel Hoffman, 'The City as Barracks: Freetown, Monrovia, and the Organization of Violence in Postcolonial African Cities', *Cultural Anthropology*, 22.3 (2007), 400–28.

[61] Paul Richards, ed., *No Peace, No War: An Anthropology of Contemporary Armed Conflicts* (Athens, OH: Ohio University Press, 2005).

long-lasting cycle of rebellion and repression. Marielle Debos has named this period 'interwar',[62] a period in which people are waiting for the next war while hoping that it will not break out. War is intermittent, mostly limited to the dry season, and entails, for soldiers and rebels alike, long periods of waiting.

In these wars, the front lines change quickly, since the distinction between soldiers and combatants is not ideological but rather driven by the imperative to control resources and to demand civilian compliance in labour needs. In Chad, the factions are divided by circumstances and tactical choices rather than by identities or political stances. Combatants may have close ties with several factions, so that civil wars often set brothers and cousins against one another. Thus, the first consequence of civil war is the porosity of conventional boundaries between soldiers, rebels and civilians. 'Those who live by the gun'[63] can be, alternatively, army volunteers, rebels or road bandits. Social scientists have felt obliged to craft new categories to name those who live from war, categories that bypass the distinction between soldiers and rebels (such as 'men in arms' or the neologism *sobels*).[64] In different situations, rebels can become police agents, customs officials or soldiers in the state's armed forces. Similarly, civilians living as farmers, herders or merchants may take up arms and enter the bush for a few months or a year. Different categories of people become rebels: deprived minorities, victims of violence, young men facing socio-economic marginalization or soldiers not getting any salary. Daniel Hoffman, therefore, states that warriors are part of the workforce in the economy of war.[65]

Another consequence of civil wars has been the massive recruitment of children into armed forces, a phenomenon that should be read through the lens of labour history as well. Child soldiering is neither new, nor is it specifically African. But on a continent where half of the population is under eighteen years of age, and in a period characterized by several parallel civil wars, the phenomenon has taken on epic proportions. The United Nations Children Fund (UNICEF) estimates broadly that 300,000 children worldwide are soldiers, most of them in Africa – such as the *kadogo* in the DRC or Nigeria's *sozaboys*. Child soldiers do not require salaries, and they are likely to develop ties to the military as a surrogate family in times of relative insecurity. While we should avoid simplistic renderings of child soldiers as victims of exploitation, we

[62] Marielle Debos, 'Living by the Gun in Chad: Armed Violence as a Practical Occupation', *Journal of Modern African Studies*, 49.3 (2011), 409–28.

[63] *Ibid.*

[64] Catherine E. Bolten, '*Sobel* Rumors and Tribal Truths: Narrative and Politics in Sierra Leone, 1994', *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 56.1 (2014), 187–214.

[65] Hoffman, 'Violence, Just in Time'.

should keep in mind that armies rely on them because they are perceived to be malleable and docile. The Liberian 'small boys units' of Charles Taylor's National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL) are emblematic of the coercion of children into armed forces. Children are used by rebel forces as cooks, messengers, porters, spies or 'soldiers' wives'; they are also used as fighters, and they have been directly involved in systematic beatings, mutilations, massacres and the rape of civilians. After they had taken Monrovia, Taylor's NPFL reformed as the National Patriotic Party, but around 15,000 minors remained members of Taylor's government forces. Other armed forces – such as the Lord's Resistance Army of Joseph Kony in Uganda – gained a reputation for kidnapping children for soldiering. In some regions of Central Africa, the DRC and south Sudan, child soldiering has become endemic.

A further consequence of civil wars has been the internationalization of military labour. Not only have civil wars entailed the massive movement of troops between neighbouring countries (for instance, between Liberia and Sierra Leone in the early 1990s, from Uganda to Rwanda in 1993, or from Rwanda to the DRC in 1996), they have also witnessed the massive involvement of mercenaries from abroad. Famous mercenary outfits such as Executive Outcomes (South Africa), DSL (United Kingdom), MPRI (United States) or Levdan (Israel) have transformed African wars into 'dog wars' fought by corporate armies. Ukrainian pilots, French legionnaires or South African paratroopers have been part of the African military landscape since the 1960s. Another step towards internationalization has been in the form of international peacekeeping interventions. Since 1960 the United Nations has conducted thirty peacekeeping missions, with troop numbers ranging from 200 to 20,000, in countries such as Angola, Central African Republic, Côte d'Ivoire, the DRC, Ethiopia, Mali, Rwanda, Somalia and Sudan. Africa is currently host to some 80,000 international troops from all continents. Other international organizations such as the African Union, European Union and the Economic Community of West African States, as well as individual states (mainly France, South Africa and the United Kingdom) have also conducted peacekeeping operations. The Ghanaian and Nigerian armies, in particular, have gained reputations as professional peacekeepers, with the Ghanaians also enjoying a vaunted representation as exemplary ones. The African Union is becoming increasingly proactive in peacekeeping operations. Whereas international soldiers have sometimes been welcomed by local populations, they have been harshly criticized at other times for their lack of efficiency. In several cases, peacekeeping operations have been perceived as illegitimate because of the foreign soldiers' behaviour; they have been accused of war crimes – the Africa Mission in Somalia (AMISOM); corruption – the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo

(MONUC) and AMISOM; or sexual abuses – MONUC and the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL).[66]

Finally, a further consequence of civil wars has been that the experience of armed struggle has become political training for state leaders. Former rebel soldiers have become heads of state in countries such as Liberia (Charles Taylor, 1997–2003), Central African Republic (François Bozizé, 2003–13), Uganda (Yoweri Kaguta Museveni, 1986–present), Rwanda (Paul Kagame, 1994–present) and the DRC (Laurent Désiré Kabila, 1997–2001). They have not only shaped state armies by reforming them according to their long experience of fighting against them, but they have embodied the new African figure of the strongman. Paul Kagame is a case in point. The former rebel, winner of the 2009 'Clinton Global Citizen Award' for his leadership, became a favourite of global investors. His many hagiographists not only connect the economic success of Rwanda to his military past; they celebrate his military habitus, describing him as spartan, stoic, austere and disciplined, all qualities presumably gained in the army and which are key to his triumph.[67] The picture of the rebel as the new strongman not only attracts the approval of global elites and corporate investors, but it also influences the young urban unemployed who are on the lookout for social models and opportunities.[68]

POLICING AFRICA AFTER DEMOCRATIZATION AND STRUCTURAL ADJUSTMENT

The consequence of the 'third wave' of democratization for police work has been strongly debated. While many countries (for example, Benin, Ghana, Nigeria, Senegal, Tanzania, Zambia and others) witnessed a formal transition from autocratic to liberal rule, some scholars have emphasized the continuities of policing practices. Often enough, policemen trained to protect autocratic regimes and to track political opponents have remained in charge. In countries that experienced harsh police repression, policemen remained 'figures of shame'.[69] The policeman remains 'one who has big boots' (Bambara: *sàbàràbàtígi*), the 'man with the small stick' (Ewe: *kpovito*), the 'son

[66] Hoffman, 'The City as Barracks'.

[67] See, for instance, Patricia Crisafulli and Andrea Redmond, *Rwanda, Inc.: How a Devastated Nation Became an Economic Model for the Developing World* (London: Macmillan, 2012).

[68] On ex-military leaders in politics, see Anders Themnér, ed., *Warlord Democrats in Africa: Ex-military Leaders and Electoral Politics* (London: Zed Books, 2017).

[69] Jonny Steinberg, 'Policing, State Power, and the Transition from Apartheid to Democracy: A New Perspective', *African Affairs*, 113.451 (2014), 173–91.

of the stick' (Hausa: *dan sansa*), 'those who wear a belt' (Mandinka: *koulou siti*) or 'the boys who have guns' (Shona: *vakomana vezvivhorovho*). The public image of policemen is often associated with petty corruption. Alongside guards, soldiers or customs officers, they often have the reputation of being the most corrupt professionals. In Francophone West Africa, drivers call policemen the '*mange mille*' (eaters of banknotes of 1,000 FCFA). Day-to-day policing work in many parts of Africa carries the connotation that police do not work hard but instead, like vampires, exist in a parasitic relationship with their civilian victims.

Certain permanencies notwithstanding, some change has taken place. A case in point is the police in post-apartheid South Africa. Scholars have rightly pointed out that, in spite of the renaming of the 'police force' as the 'police service', key features of today's South African police recall the old apartheid institution: a paramilitary model of control over urban space re-emerged, and arbitrary arrests of young men at night and the use of violence against strikers have remained characteristics of police work. Even the appointment of the first black police commissioner in South Africa in 2000 could not convince observers of a profound change in police work. Nonetheless, some aspects of South African police work did change. A crucial point is the interaction with the public. During apartheid, the main task of the South African policemen was to repress insurgency. Today, policemen do respond to public demand. 'When democracy came', Jonny Steinberg writes, 'a dam wall burst; black civilians began calling police in high numbers and police responded.' For the first time in history, responding to civilians' calls became part of regular police work.[70]

Furthermore, everyday policemen's work is affected by the interaction with other security actors. Police forces often suffer from a lack of training and public support. They are often understaffed, underpaid and underequipped. Offices constantly run out of paper, and citizens have to pay for basic services. Many therefore hire private security companies. In spite of having one of the highest ratios of policemen per inhabitant (200,000 policemen and reservists for 50 million inhabitants, i.e. 1 for every 250), South Africa relies heavily on private security agents. There are around 400,000 registered active private security guards in South Africa, a number that is higher than that of the police and the army combined.[71] The diversification of security actors – private security companies, vigilantes, neighbourhood watches, area boys, etc. – is both a challenge for police agents and a source of revenue. Police agents often become private security agents after retirement. Others practise 'moonlighting', that is,

[70] *Ibid.*

[71] See also the chapter by Fourchard in this volume.

working as official cops by day and private cops at night. Others again are employed as 'consultants' for security firms. The plurality of arrangements between the state and private security companies has laid the ground for practices of urban policing that are neither public nor private and have therefore been termed 'twilight policing'.[72] In this context, the question of professionalization and specialization remains a crucial issue. Policing includes a wide range of skills and duties – anti-riot policing, patrolling, raiding, data gathering, paper processing, filing, etc.

Last but not least, democratization did not change a key structural feature of military and police work: gender inequality. A comparative survey in fourteen West African countries found out that on average only 12 per cent of personnel in security sector institutions (armed forces, police, judiciary system and prisons) were women.[73] This figure varies among countries and sectors. Whereas women make up almost 17 per cent of employees in the prison system, they constitute only 10 per cent of police staff and less than 4 per cent of military staff. However, the gender gap exists everywhere. In some countries, women are not allowed to serve in the military. Moreover, if women are allowed to serve, they often remain confined to administrative and subaltern tasks and do not reach the highest ranks.

Of course, the rule admits significant exceptions. Over the past few decades, some African women have served in the highest ranks of the security system, such as Elizabeth Mills-Robertson, who in 2009 was the acting Inspector General of Police in Ghana; Mary Gahonzire, who served as acting Commissioner General of the National Police of Rwanda in 2008; and Mangwashi Victoria Phiyega, who was Commissioner of the National Police in South Africa in 2012. However, these remain isolated cases. And while the police service of Ghana employs almost 20 per cent women, this, too, is an exception.

An emblematic case is Rwanda, a country that is often praised for the significant participation of women in politics. Rwanda has recognized the importance of gender equality and has created 'gender desks' to raise awareness of gender issues in its armed forces. In 2010 the high command promoted women to the ranks of major, lieutenant colonel and colonel, an idea that is anything but new in a country that has a tradition of female combatants and female officers. Rose Kabuye, a former lieutenant of the Rwandan Patriotic Front and a hero of the liberation of Rwanda, was a lieutenant colonel in

[72] Tessa D. Diphoorn, *Twilight Policing: Private Security and Violence in Urban South Africa* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2015); on the relationship of labour with the state, see the chapter by Britwum and Dakhli in this volume.

[73] Miranda Gaanderse and Kristin Valasek, eds, *Le secteur de la sécurité et le genre en Afrique de l'Ouest: Une étude de la police, de la défense, de la justice et des services pénitentiaires dans les pays de la CEDEAO* (Geneva: Centre de Genève pour le Contrôle des Forces Armées, 2011).

the Rwandan army and a public figure of strength and the armed struggle against the *genocidaires*. However, even in Rwanda, there is no woman at the top command level of the army, and the proportion of women in the military and the police remains strikingly low, at 0.8 per cent and 10 per cent, respectively.

The under-representation of women in the military and police does not mean that they do not play a role in these sectors. On the contrary, many tasks that are crucial for the functioning of armies are dependent upon women. The presence of women within and around military camps, barracks and police stations is no accident; they are in charge of many logistical duties (food supplies, hygiene, health, patching uniforms, etc.). African armed forces were historically constructed on a gender division of 'man in arms'/'woman in services', which seems hard to undo. This leads to a separation of tasks as well as a hierarchization of duties. The notion that marching in the street with a rifle is a noble duty that deserves status and remuneration whereas feeding and clothing soldiers is informal unpaid labour has been entrenched in military thought since before colonial occupation and has continued through the colonial and postcolonial eras.

Gender inequalities, however, have significant consequences, including the sexualization of work relations. On the one hand, work in armed forces is connected with the construction of specific martial masculinities. Armies and police institutions intervene in the social construction of gender through rules (for instance, it is common in police institutions to employ only unmarried personnel and to accept pregnancy only for married women) as well as through a general discourse of virility and bravery. One effect of this gendered discourse is homophobia, with homosexuality being taboo in military and police organizations. On the other hand, the use of force often bears a link with sexualized violence in contexts as different as dictatorships, civil wars or post-revolutionary systems. In Central Africa, the civil war has been marked by the use of widespread campaigns of rape, battering or genital mutilation as war tactics. More recently, the Egyptian police has been accused of the systematic rape of male and female activists in custody, a practice aimed at stifling opposition. Continuing reports of sexual abuse and the exploitation of vulnerable populations around military posts in peacekeeping operations in Chad, Sudan and elsewhere remind us that the gendered sociology of African militaries relies on gendered assumptions about labour as well.[74]

[74] United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, *Report of the Mapping Project Documenting Serious Violations of International Human Rights Law and International Humanitarian Law Committed within the Territory of Central African Republic between January 2003 and December 2015* (Geneva, 2017).

CONCLUSION

During the colonial period, military and police forces undertook the, often violent, work of building and maintaining colonial states. Recruits were drawn from myriad backgrounds, but often their origins could be traced to histories of unfree labour or conditions of economic hardship that made such harsh work a viable path to manhood and respectability. Recruitment techniques among the colonizing powers were historically contingent, varying according to labour needs, wartime demands and the availability of those willing to become recruits. Resistance to conscription occurred in many places, most notably during the First World War, when young men across the continent fled from the excesses of European recruitment drives, alongside wider resistance to colonial labour demands. Embedded in European recruitment methods were racist and gendered assumptions about who could perform different kinds of work. Colonial reliance on soldiers' household members – women and children – as a cheap source of labour for logistical needs helped keep armies in the field. This strategy also reinforced patriarchal hierarchies, elevating soldierly masculinity as a preferred mode of labour and socio-economic mobility.

During the two world wars, hundreds of thousands of African soldiers were deployed to fight or labour both within the African continent and overseas. Soldiers and veterans who returned to their homes after the war expected their labours to yield benefits, usually of the most conservative kinds – land, jobs and care for their families. Their disappointment when colonial governments failed to honour these expectations sometimes led to strikes or mutinies. These moments are best understood within a labour history framework that can provide insights into the pliable relationship between soldiering, labour and racial inequalities at different times.

After decolonization, the conditions of labour in armed forces changed. First, African soldiers and policemen could now access the highest ranks formerly reserved for European officers. Secondly, some African officers now played a leading role in political processes, either because they had liberated their country through national wars (in Algeria, Angola, Kenya, Guinea Bissau or Mozambique), or because soldiers had taken power through military coups (Egypt, the DRC, Ghana, Guinea, Libya, Liberia, Mali, Togo, Sudan, Tunisia, Uganda, etc.). Labour in the military could now become a path for personal wealth accumulation and, at times, access to political power. This, however, was only true for a small number of high-ranking officers who could accumulate military positions as well as political and economic positions. Most of the rank-and-file remained poorly paid and worked in continuing poor conditions in the context of rapidly growing army headcounts.

For most of the twentieth century, armed forces in most African countries followed similar paths, for they were, almost everywhere, successively shaped by colonial conquest, colonial rule, decolonization and military rules. In the 1980s, however, the paths of national armies moved apart. In countries torn by civil wars (the DRC, Liberia, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Sudan, Uganda, etc.), military labour conditions have been reframed by the violent dialectic of rebellions and counter-insurgency. In these countries, the boundaries between soldiers, rebels and civilians became more porous. Living by the gun became an option for many peasants, students or even children seeking labour opportunities.

In contrast, in countries spared (or relatively spared) civil war (Benin, Ghana, Nigeria, Senegal, Tanzania, Zambia, South Africa, etc.), military labour has been framed by the effects of democratization and structural adjustment programmes. In these countries, police work became more complex and diverse, following the general tendency of police specialization (anti-riot policing, patrolling, raiding, data gathering and so on). Simultaneously, the public image of police work remained ambiguous, oscillating between suspicions of corruption and demands for safety and security.

As Daniel Hoffman argues, scholars should 'think of violence as literal work, to think the labor of war as labor'.[75] Thus, despite the centrality of violence as the distinguishing marker of soldiering and police work, it is still 'built on the factors of capital and labour just like any other industry, [which] makes it possible to analyze the activities of the soldier as just another form of work'.[76] As troubling as it is to think in this direction, ignoring soldiers and police as workers perpetuates the notion that military violence is somehow disconnected from markets and capital, when, in fact, they are usually intricately intertwined and mutually supportive. Perhaps even more importantly, we should recognize the ways that fluctuations in socio-economic opportunities within societies often dictate levels of interest in military and police work, as well as the degree to which the state and other powerful actors incentivize these forms of work in order to attract enough people to join them.

[75] Hoffman, 'Violence, Just in Time'.

[76] Zürcher, *Fighting for a Living*.