

## Acknowledgements

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Researching and writing this book has been a protracted process. In the course of the last seventeen years that have, one way or another, built towards writing this book, I have accrued many intellectual and other debts.

I first went to Ethiopia for a year in 2005, arriving in Addis Ababa in the aftermath of the hotly contested elections and at a time when the EPRDF's 'developmental state' was kicking into full swing. I worked in Ethiopia for a year as part of the Research Group on Wellbeing in Developing Countries (WeD) and remain very grateful to the project leaders in Bath – Allister McGregor, James Copestake and Sarah White – and the Ethiopia country team – Alula Pankhurst and Pip Bevan – for giving me what proved to be such an influential opportunity. In Ethiopia, as a *naïve ferenji*, I had the chance to visit towns and rural communities across Amhara and Oromiya, and I am indebted to Alula, Yisak Tafere, Workneh Abebe, Yohannes Gezahegn and Bizuayehu Ayele for their support and guidance at different points throughout that year. I left in 2006 convinced that something fascinating was going on in Ethiopia, but I was as yet ill-equipped to understand quite what. I draw on part of the WeD research that was subsequently undertaken by the Wellbeing and Illbeing Dynamics in Ethiopia (WIDE) project that emerged from WeD in the case study of Turufe-Wetera-Elemo in Chapter 9. WeD's funding by the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) is gratefully acknowledged.

After leaving Ethiopia in 2006, I joined the United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD). Like many others working at UNRISD at that time, the two years I spent there was a formative moment in my thinking that has greatly informed my subsequent research on the state, late development and distribution. Particularly influential was the then director, Thandika Mkandawire, as well as inspiring colleagues including Shea McClanahan, Eleanor Hutchinson, Yusuf Bangura, Katja Hujo and Peter Utting. I left UNRISD to study for my PhD at the University of Bath, intent on bringing the ideas I had

been exposed to at UNRISD to understand the political and economic changes underway in Ethiopia. This book is certainly not a standard conversion of a PhD thesis. It would perhaps be better described as a second – hopefully improved – attempt at answering a broadly similar set of questions to the original thesis. My PhD was funded by an ESRC studentship, with additional support from the Land Deal Politics Initiative (LDPI). I am very grateful to my supervisors at Bath, Joe Devine, Graham Brown, Peter Davis and Guy Standing, the research assistants who supported fieldwork, Tolossa Mamuye, Amdissa Darge and Meressa Tsehaye, the Political Science Department at Addis Ababa University for hosting me and Tigest Grieve for putting a roof over my head while in Addis. Jun Borrás and Ruth Hall from LDPI also provided very useful comments on early papers.

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