Capitalist penetration in a colonial frontier: The case of the Angónia Plateau in central Mozambique.

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Abstract: Debates about the drivers of the development of capitalist relations of production in Southern Africa face the challenge of accounting for the most salient and idiosyncratic characteristics of the transition in Africa. Except for the extreme cases of settler colonies, the expansion of capitalism was largely exempt from the dispossession of land and the ensuing separation of direct producers from the means of production. However, in Portuguese colonies accumulation was premised on forced labour until the abolition of chibalo in the 1960s. This paper traces the case of the Angónia plateau in the Zambezi basin, where the colonial construction of a frontier aimed at controlling and extracting labour power, to show the implications of this type of incorporation for the subsequent development of agrarian relations.