

PREFACE

The ideas that led to the conception of this volume grew out of the intellectual environment of the research program Livelihood, Identity and Organization in Situations of Instability, which materialized thanks to the Danish Council for Development Research, the Centre for Development Research in Copenhagen, Institute of Anthropology at Copenhagen University, and International Development Studies at Roskilde University. The LIVELY program brought together researchers from a variety of academic fields in an effort to synthesize ongoing theoretical and empirical work on violent conflict, migration, and popular culture. Because these subjects converged on the culture of states yet challenged the idea of the state as something given and immobile, we conceived the idea of an international seminar on the States of Imagination in the postcolonial world and invited a number of prominent and talented scholars for the event.

The idea of States of Imagination was enthusiastically received, and the seminar, which took place in Copenhagen in the midst of winter 1998, elicited a collection of fascinating papers, most of which appear in this volume. We are grateful to the participants of this seminar for contributing to an intellectually stimulating seminar and for challenging and refining the common approach that now emerges from the volume. We would also like to express our appreciation of the support and inspiration we have received from our colleagues in the LIVELY program: Karen Fog Olwig, Bodil Folke Frederiksen, Preben Kaarsholm, Henrik Rønsbo, Ninna Nyberg Sørensen, and Fiona Wilson, as well as Peter Gibbon, Poul Engberg-Pedersen, Jan Ifversen, Karuti

Kanyinga, Thandika Mkandawire, Afonso Moreira, Kirsten Westergaard, and other good colleagues.

Finally, we would like to thank our secretary, Annette Smedegaard Christiansen, for working hard with us throughout these years, as well as the two anonymous reviewers for Duke University Press for their encouraging and constructive suggestions, which have improved the final product.