



LDPI 2012 Small Grants Recipients

Disputed Meanings and Practices of Territorial Appropriation in Guatemala's Reinforced Export-Oriented Plantation Model, by Alberto Alonso-Fradejas

My project revolves around my three years of field research about the political economy, ecology and sociology of the territorial re-structuring processes associated with the expansion of oil palm and sugarcane plantations under the new flexible regime of agrarian capitalism in Guatemala, in the context of the converging global financial, energy, food and environmental crises. I intend to problematize my research outcomes within a broader literature review as well as to further analyse the collected empirical evidence and the different stakeholder's discourses and institutional frameworks embedded within the following dynamics: How the political economy, ecology and sociology of the flexible regime of agrarian capitalism relates to the capacities to gain, control and maintain access to the land and the natural goods of indigenous-peasant families and communities throughout territories with expanding oil palm and sugarcane plantations. The elements fostering the (possible) diverse expressions of (social) agency and collective action of different groups of the former indigenous-peasant population at different levels, ranging from the household to the (inter)national arenas.

Alberto Alonso-Fradejas: altitumir@yahoo.es. I am currently a PhD student at the International Institute of Social Studies (ISS) in The Hague, Netherlands. During 2001-2002, I worked as a researcher in agrarian and labour issues at Praxis in India. From 2003 to 2011, as the Head of the Land and Territory Research Area in the Institute of Rural and Agrarian Studies of Guatemala, I have been the (co-)author of a series of monographs on Guatemala's and other Latin American countries' changing-but-contested agrarian structures, a visiting professor in bachelors and post-graduate degrees in Guatemala and Spain, and a collaborator with several rural social movements. During 2011, I also worked as a consultant for the World Bank's Evaluation Team of its Land Administration Projects in Guatemala.

Fracturing Communities: Assessing local reactions to natural gas drilling in rural southwestern Pennsylvania, USA, by Andrew Brooks

Rural southwestern Pennsylvania is currently experiencing unprecedented change to its physical environment and socio-economic relations due to an influx in natural gas drilling or 'fracking' in the region. Beyond the dichotomous "anti/pro" fracking narrative perpetuated by mainstream media, this study provides a more nuanced examination of community reactions, resistance and alternatives to industry practices in asking "how and where do people come to position themselves in relation to fracking?" Employing Actor-Network Theory (ANT) as an analytic framework, the study combines online

archival research of involved organizations with semi-structured interviews of affected community members across three southwestern counties. In evaluating the positions of groups and individuals, I consider how benefits and impacts of the industry are coming to be distributed amongst local and often marginalized populations. Early evidence suggests that even the most polarized individual opinions on the issue are arrived at through complex thought processes and expansive sets of criteria.

Andrew Brooks is a doctoral student at the CUNY Graduate Center, specializing in environmental anthropology. Brooks' current LDPI research is part of his dissertation study on shifting conceptions of property in areas of shale gas development.

Agricultural Land Conversion in Northeast Iran: Understanding the Consequences of Land Use Policies, by Hossein Azadi

Agricultural land conversion (ALC) is a phenomenon that is almost unavoidable during economic development and population growth periods. However, uncontrolled land conversion has great impacts on environment in general, and agricultural products in particular. High population density, rapid economic growth, urban sprawl and transportation are believed as the main drivers of ALC. Among all, urbanization patterns and transportation have increasingly led to high pressure on urban fringe areas. This urban expansion encroaches on fertile agricultural lands. Infrastructure development, such as road construction for transportation also contributes significantly to ALC in most countries, especially in developing countries like Iran where the urban sprawl and transportation are in rise. Using a multi-stakeholder analysis and mixed-method approach, this study aims to understand “why”, “when”, “where”, “to whom” and “how” ALC is taking place in Northeast Iran and “what” are the main farmers' coping strategies toward ALC.

Hossein Azadi is a post-doc researcher at the Department of Geography, University of Gent, Belgium. He holds a PhD in “sustainable rangeland management” and is familiar with decision support systems and spatial modeling. His main works have focused on integrated studies on “Food & Land” policies aiming at understanding the mutual impacts of different farming systems and land use change/development.

Labour mobility and access to resources in a time of oil palm boom in Indonesia, by Jean-Francois Bissonnette

The undergoing oil palm boom in Indonesia has influenced patterns of labour mobility and land ownership throughout the country. Although large-scale land deals for oil palm agribusiness occur in less densely populated areas of Indonesia, they contribute to social differentiation throughout the country, often indirectly. I seek to contribute to the critique of the structural limitations of labour regimes and resource distribution associated with profit-driven oil palm agribusiness. I analyse how oil palm wealth has contributed to the production of a geographically diffuse land ownership structure that straddles multiple islands in Indonesia. Concomitantly, I look at patterns of labour mobility from resource strapped central islands such as Lombok to the oil palm plantation belts in Kalimantan and Sumatra and how this shapes access to capital. This paper is based on in-depth fieldwork research carried out in multiple sites of Indonesia. The qualitative data provided by interviews with plantation workers and officials addresses how practices underlying oil palm agribusiness are reshaping agrarian structures in a context of heightened mobility of labour and capital.

Jean-Francois Bissonnette, PhD candidate, University of Toronto. I have been conducting research on agrarian questions in Southeast Asia since 2005. I first investigated the economic and cultural implications of oil palm expansion in the states of East Malaysia as I was affiliated with the Canada Chair of Asian Studies at the University of Montréal. In 2008 I undertook doctoral studies at the University of Toronto to look at questions of labour mobility and social differentiation among workers and smallholders involved in oil palm agribusiness. Email Address: bissonnettej@geog.utoronto.ca

Agrarian struggles, environmental discourses and party politics: obstacles to land grabbing within the biofuel expansion in the Lacandon rainforest, by Antonio Castellano-Navarette

Biofuel expansion constitutes the last modernisation attempt directed to rural communities in Mesoamerica. In Chiapas, this project is advanced by the State through contradictory alliances with agrarian organisations, resource redistribution to key actors and favourable conditions to investors, all couched in the terms of 'green development'. Paradoxically, biofuel cultivation has been readily adopted by agrarian actors as a strategy to advance their claims. These organisations have appropriated common environmental discourses for very different political and social purposes, often strongly linked to party politics. In the Lacandon rainforest, the double economic and political character of biofuel development is actually limiting land grabbing processes. An apparently neoliberal project has gradually become a populist strategy for both conservative and progressive political parties. Based on an in-depth case study over the period 2011-2012, this study analyses current material and meaning struggles around land (and other natural resources) from a political ecology perspective.

Antonio Castellano-Navarette. Motivated by the complex and often conflictive nature-society relations experienced as a biologist, I have focused on critical social sciences in general and political ecology in particular. Agronomy and soil sciences were an intermediate step in this trajectory for better understanding natural resource management. Currently, I am a PhD Candidate at the Technology and Agrarian Change Group at Wageningen University, at The Netherlands. Email: Antonio.castellanosnavarrete@wur.nl.

Foreign investments in agriculture in Zambia: Evaluating potential and the new social products of large-scale farmland acquisitions, by Jessica Chu

Zambia has been the site of rising foreign investment in large-scale land acquisitions; it has been suggested (World Bank, 2010) that with its abundance of land and water, Zambia contains great potential to act as Africa's new 'bread basket'. In particular, the acquisition of large-scale farmland has been promoted as an investment opportunity with safe returns, as well as a way to promote local food security and economic development, suggesting the rise of a new model of agricultural development. This project seeks to evaluate the potential in large-scale farmland acquisitions in contributing to agricultural development, with particular regard to the positive and negative impacts to food security, social relations, and agricultural livelihoods. This research contributes to a larger PhD project that explores the political and cultural economies of large-scale farmland acquisitions in Zambia. It seeks to examine, what frictions are produced in the social relations between global discourses and local knowledge?

Jessica Chu is a PhD candidate in the Department of Anthropology and Sociology at SOAS, University of London. She holds an MA in the Anthropology of Food (SOAS) and a BA(Hons) History and BSc Life Sciences (Queen's University, Canada). Her research interests include issues concerning food security, agricultural development, and land rights and she is currently conducting research on large-scale land acquisitions in Zambia. Email: jessica_chu@soas.ac.uk

What's in a right? A case of land governance at the intersection of neo-liberalisation and decentralisation in the gold mining sector of Burkina Faso, by Muriel Cote

In Burkina Faso the industrial gold mining sector has rapidly become a motor of the national economy, with gold passing from 3rd to first export product in the last three years. This is a result of recent global financial market crises that have resulted in an increase in the value of gold, but also a consequence of a couple of decades of neoliberal state reforms that have facilitated foreign investments, including the acquisition of mining rights. Artisanal miners on the other hand, operate on the basis of locally embedded customary land ownership and use rights, which current decentralisation reforms aim to formally recognise. What this means is that local decentralised institutions face the difficult mission to accompany foreign investors in their activities, while at the same time trying to secure their constituents' livelihoods that large land deals currently put in jeopardy. The paper argues that an analysis of the contradictions that emerge at the intersection of neoliberal and decentralisation state reforms pertaining land governance in the gold mining sector, help to identify the institutional and power relations that contribute to the recognition of certain rights and to the neglect of others. This paper draws on current doctoral research in the northern region of Burkina Faso where a recent research permit for a transnational mining company and long-standing artisanal mining activities overlap in a village. Mapping out stakeholders' claims, how these are justified and the institutions mobilised (or not) to back up their claims sheds light on the constraints to the realisation of state sovereignty, local rights and authority that are fuelling current dynamics of 'land grabbing'.

Muriel Cote is a doctoral candidate at the Institute of Geography, University of Edinburgh, looking at the mobilisation of decentralised institutions through ethnographic case studies of changing land governance, and the impacts on the emergence of local democracy in rural Burkina Faso. She is also currently affiliated to a research programme (Responsive Forest Governance Initiative) that assesses the democracy effects of decentralised forest governance across different African countries. She has recently published papers in *Ecologie et Politique* and in *Progress in Human Geography*.

The formalization fix? Land titling, agribusiness concessions and geographical transparency in contemporary Cambodia, by Michael Dwyer

In a widely read discussion paper, the FAO, IFAD, UNCTAD and the World Bank propose the respect for existing property rights as the first of seven principles of "Responsible Agricultural Investment." Noting that property rights are complex and often informal, the authors call for centralized property formalization – "the identification of rights holders, [the] legal recognition of rights and uses, [and] their demarcation and registration" – on a massive scale. Yet land administration programs have been a staple of Western lending and donor aid for decades; at least 13 countries in the "global land

grab” have had them since 1990. This paper investigates one such country, Cambodia, where the geographies of land titling and agribusiness investment are relatively transparent, thanks to civil society pressure. The paper shows (i) how and why titling tends to avoid the hinterland regions targeted by “state” land concessions; (ii) an example of how conflicts over “state” land are playing out in areas outside the titling zone; and (iii) how the politics of transparency and opacity figure centrally in not only land grab debates, but in land administration as well.

Michael Dwyer has studied the history, practice and politics of land formalization, agribusiness investment, and natural resource development in Southeast Asia since 2004. He received his PhD from U.C. Berkeley's Energy and Resources group in 2011, where his dissertation examined the effects of Cold War conflict and postwar reconstruction on the geography of rubber investment in northwestern Laos.

The role of commodity certification in greening the global land grab: the case of soy certification in Paraguay, by Laureen Elgert

There has been marked resistance against the way in which ‘sustainability’ is invoked by the Roundtable on Responsible Soy (RTRS) to legitimize land inequality and the soy industry more generally. This project examines the ways in which the discourse of sustainable agriculture – in part created and mobilized through certification initiatives - enables the coalescence of diverse justifications for land-grabbing. Such justifications range from job creation, to national development, to increased food production, and environmental conservation. The role of certification bodies in establishing and mainstreaming this discourse needs greater attention from critical perspectives. Such institutions are increasingly prominent means of quelling public concern about the wider social, political and environmental consequences of concentrated land holdings in countries characterized by a large, and poor, rural population. Furthermore, well-known initiatives (ie: Forest Stewardship Council) have been joined by emergent organizations focused on creating the means of mainstreaming commodities such as palm oil, cocoa, beef and biofuels as ‘sustainable alternatives’.

Laureen Elgert is Assistant Professor in Social Science and Policy Studies and Environmental and Sustainability Studies at Worcester Polytechnic Institute in Massachusetts. She completed her PhD in the Department of International Development Studies at the London School of Economics in the UK. She has published on the politics of sustainable development and soy certification. Her research interests include expertise and deliberation, sustainability discourse, agriculture, certification, modeling indicators and commodity chains. Contact Laureen at lelgert@wpi.edu.

‘Friendship’ rice? A Chinese rice plantation in Mozambique, by Ana Sofia Ganho

This study focuses on a rice plantation in Mozambique that resulted from an accord between Mozambican and Chinese provincial authorities, and the impacts that it has had on land and water rights. This study is based on quantitative data about water availability and demand, and interviews with different groups, such as peasants and farmers in the area, the plantation’s manager, and representatives from the District Office of the Ministry of Agriculture and Land Registry. Information sought includes previous and current sources of livelihoods as a reflection of changes in their access to and management of land and water, but also questions of social differentiation, as reflected in unequal access to quality seeds, credit, and political actors. Furthermore, the terms

specified in the twinning accord (e.g., technology sharing, hiring of local workers) inform the discussion and link with the central government strategies for land and water, and national/local accumulation processes.

Ana Sofia Ganho is a PhD candidate at University of Manchester's Institute for Development Management and Policy. Her thesis project looks at the water component investments in rice and sugar plantations in Mozambique, impacts on land and water rights locally and in the policy-making process. Ana Sofia has worked in Portugal, the USA and sub-Saharan Africa. She can be reached at: ana.ganho@postgrad.manchester.ac.uk.

Speaking law to land grabbing: land contention and legal repertoire in Colombia, by Jacobo Grajales

Colombia is a particularly interesting case for land grabbing analysts, as it combines political and economic incentives to agribusiness and a development discourse centered on global markets as well as criminal actors (i.e. paramilitary groups, drug gangs...) who are able to use physical violence and bureaucratic linkages in order to seize and accumulate land. Yet, Colombia is also a highly judicialized polity, with a strong tradition of legal contention and cause lawyering. Moreover, a certain number of formal rights run in favor of the dispossessed peasant population; there is a relatively strong recognition of land rights, that has been reinforced by the recently enacted "Victims Law". Yet, these formal rights suffer from prosaic, underground and violent forms of reaction on the part of the new land owners, often linked to paramilitary militias. This contribution aims to analyze the use of the legal repertoire as a form of resistance against land grabbing and dispossession. It is centered on contentious practices and on the actors of this legal mobilization: NGOs and peasant organizations, as well as Courts and lawyers.

Jacobo Grajales is undertaking his doctoral studies in the Center for International Studies and Research at Sciences Po Paris. His research concerns the paramilitary phenomenon in Colombia; he is implementing a socio-historical approach and incorporating field research completed in several regions of Northern Colombia, as well as archival work. He concentrates on the relation between the state and paramilitary groups, that he studies through the analysis of the place of violence in the control of the population, resources and territories, as well as on political and judicial responses to paramilitarism. Email: jacobo.grajaleslopez@sciences-po.org

China's 'land grabs' in Tajikistan: understanding rural politics and everyday resistance, Irna Hofman

The past five years have seen a rush for agricultural land worldwide. While there has been a lot of attention for foreign land investments in the 'developing South', the occurrences in Central Asia hitherto have not garnered much notice from global civil society and academia. Strikingly, the region is an ethnic and cultural hodgepodge, where land is a core aspect of people's identity. By taking a political economy and political sociology approach, this research focuses on the politics of 'land grabbing' by zooming on two Chinese agricultural land investments in Tajikistan. Given the proximity of the politically volatile, yet mineral rich Central Asian region, there may be various motives underlying the Chinese investments. Rural Tajikistan bears an exceptional context to study rural politics and peasant resistance. In a setting of extreme poverty and land

scarcity, land use rights are governed by a neopatrimonial regime that generates great uncertainties and furthers disparities in access to land. How the Chinese land investments intermingle in this context is a focal point of this study. The research will provide essential insights into whether and how Chinese agricultural land investments re-craft land-based institutions in Tajikistan, and how rural households cope with and respond to this agrarian change.

Irna Hofman is a Ph.D. researcher and research assistant at the Modern East Asia Research Centre (MEARC) at Leiden University Institute for Area Studies. She holds a Master of Science degree in Environmental Sciences from Wageningen University and is rural sociologist by training. Her work and interests are focused on agrarian and social change, rural sociology and transition economies, and her past research activities focused on agrarian reform in Uzbekistan. Her research in Tajikistan focuses on the politics of China's agricultural land investments with particular regard to the dynamics at the local level. Email: i.hofman@hum.leidenuniv.nl

Jordanian food security and agricultural investments overseas, particularly in Sudan, by Justa Mayra Hopma

This study investigates the nature of Jordanian agricultural investments overseas. Jordan is the world's 4th poorest country in water resources and its attempts at securing future food supplies are inherently related to its water situation. Driven by water scarcity, it has investigated possible joint ventures in various areas in Sudan. In some respects, Jordan's policy decision to look abroad, however, is ironic because its own "indigenous" Bedouin population used to specialise in, for example, pastoralist livestock production. Bedouin economies and modes of life, however, have been systematically undermined and Bedouin are now encouraged to become cash croppers producing tomatoes, cucumbers, and watermelons (~90% water content) for cheap export to Gulf countries. The export of "virtual water" is contrary to Jordanian interests and can be regarded as "irrational" policy. This study investigates the rationale behind Jordanian agricultural policy and the problems surrounding its implementation.

Justa Mayra Hopma. While completing an undergraduate degree in International Politics & Geography at the University of Wales, Aberystwyth I participated in an archaeological project in the Wadi Arabah, Jordan where I returned the next year to conduct fieldwork for my MPhil dissertation at the University of Oxford. At present I live in Amman where I combine my PhD research with an internship at the Dutch Embassy. jmh23@aber.ac.uk

Consolidating land, consolidating power: What future for smallholder farming in Rwanda's 'Green Revolution'?, by Chris Huggins

Rwandan farmers are experiencing simultaneous reforms in the land and agricultural sector. The objectives of these reforms encompass increased production, and also consolidation of land use and marketing options and a profound shift in farming practices towards export-oriented models. The government wants only half the population (from the current 85%) to be engaged in agriculture by 2020, raising questions about the resulting 'surplus population'. Foreign agricultural investment is one part of this vision of 'modernisation', while land accumulation by Rwandan urban elites also drives rural change. Concentration of land holdings by foreign corporations or Rwandan elites should be understood as part of a broader reconfiguration of access to credit and inputs, technologies of coercion and socio-economic control. To this end, fieldwork was

conducted in 2011 in two Districts, with a focus on the role of cooperatives in the institutional framework of the agricultural reform and household-level impacts and counter-strategies. Scholarly influences include James Scott, Michel Foucault and Mark Duffield.

Chris Huggins specializes in the political economy of land and agricultural reform, particularly the East and Central Africa, where he lived from 1998-2007. He is co-author (with Scott Leckie) of *Conflict and Housing, Land, and Property Rights: A Handbook on Issues, Frameworks, and Solutions* (Oxford University Press, 2011). He is currently a PhD Candidate in Geography (specialization in political Economy) at Carleton University, Ottawa. Email: cdhuggins@gmail.com

Green Governance of Green Grabs? Roundtable on Sustainable Pal Oil (RSPO) in Ecuador, by Adrienne Johnson

My project entitled, *Green governance or green grab?*, seeks to analyze the politics and power relations of 'alternative' multi-stakeholder institutions involved in governing resources and land. I examine a new collaborative governance arrangement known as the Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO) in Ecuador and how, instead of ameliorating deep inequalities in the palm oil industry, this understudied field can be a new site of institutionalizing environmental policies that sanction cases of land dispossession and facilitate incentives for new forms of land enclosures. Therefore, the main objective of this project is to analyze the extent to which this 'power-sharing' institution is a mechanism for circulating 'green' capitalist perspectives that ultimately encourage and legitimize the material practice of land acquisitions. To further this research, I will travel to Ecuador to attend the 3rd Latin American RSPO conference and to study the national interpretation of RSPO principles and new 'green' policies relating to palm oil governance and land tenure.

Adrienne Johnson, PhD student, Clark University, USA. Broadly, my research examines the intersections of the political ecology of resource development and the geographies of 'meeting culture' in shaping environmental governance outcomes. Over the course of my graduate studies, I have explored these interests in the context of the global palm oil industry by looking at corporate social responsibility and multi-stakeholder engagement approaches to governing palm oil production in Indonesia and most recently in Ecuador. Email: AdJohnson@Clarku.edu

Enclosure of park lands: the case of Waza National Park, northern Cameroon, by Alice Kelly

This paper will trace the mechanisms by which a "property vacuum" was formed in Waza National Park, northern Cameroon. It will first examine the enclosure of park lands in the context of 'land-grabs' by colonial and post-colonial powers. It will reveal the brutal enforcement of these enclosures by park guards and managers for an extended period. It will then show how, with economic crisis, changing political will and regional politics, the national government's interest in this protected area began to diminish. Filling this gap, the role of international organizations, along with their own sets of land deals, will be investigated. I will conclude by focusing on what happens when strict park management regimes end, leaving behind an open access situation which threatens local people's security. This analysis will reveal how the current property vacuum has transformed a space for nature conservation into the territory of outlaws—bandits who

use this area as a base of operations for kidnappings and theft. Further, it will show that local residents perceive the subsequent excess of “outsiders” as a threat to their food and livelihood security.

Alice Kelly, PhD candidate, University of California, Berkeley. Originally from Virginia, I went to Connecticut College and earned degrees in English Literature and Environmental Studies. After college I joined the United States Peace Corps and was assigned a project in the Extreme North Province of Cameroon where I helped 7 local communities set up Mozogo-Gokoro National Park for ecotourism. I am currently studying Waza National Park in northern Cameroon—looking at the social and ecological effects of changing management strategies in this region.

Political dynamics in carbon credit projects and land use change: the case of Western Kenya Smallholder Agricultural Carbon Project (WKSCAP), Jean Lee

The proposed study seeks to understand the equity concerns surrounding smallholder farmers and women in climate mitigation projects. The study will use a political ecology approach that emphasizes the role of power in mediating access to resources and how power dynamics within a community and a household affect equity in access, equity in decision-making, and equity in outcomes of carbon mitigation projects. This field-based case study will focus on the Western Kenya Smallholder Agricultural Carbon Project (WKSCAP), a soil carbon project in western Kenya that works with farmers and encourages them to adopt sustainable agricultural land management practices in maize-based systems. The project offers opportunities for receiving carbon credits by encouraging farming practices that sequester aboveground and belowground carbon. The study will focus on the following questions: Who gets to participate in the project, and how does the degree of participation determine the benefits the project offers? How does differential access to climate mitigation projects result in differential benefits along socio-economic classes and gender roles in a community? How do the power differentials shift among community members and within the household? How might a marginalized farmer's access to land change when projects advertise carbon payments for adopting sustainable land practices? Data on participation and benefits will be collected through household surveys, semi-structured interviews, and focus groups.

Jean Lee is currently a PhD student at University of Vermont. Her research focuses on the barriers farmers encounter in participating in and benefiting from agricultural mitigation projects, with a particular focus on women and how they are differentially affected by projects. She will be conducting research in the Kitale, Kenya and working with farmers to understand how farmers' perceptions of barriers and benefits and how projects can effectively and efficiently deliver their pro-poor objectives while also achieving agricultural mitigation. She completed a Masters of Environmental Management at Duke University and a Bachelors of Arts in Environmental Biology from Columbia University.

Large-Scale Land Transfer in Contemporary Rural China: A Case Study of the Consolidation of Peasant Land for Large-Scale Commercial Farming, by Kan Liu

As countless factories in China's industrial cities have lured away millions of rural laborers, the result has been an increase in agricultural labor shortages and in fallow land. A new government campaign—called “Constructing a New Countryside”—that seeks to modernize China's “backward” rural society has pushed local governments to

embark on a program of rural land consolidation in order to create large-scale commercial farms. In exchange for giving up their land, peasants receive monthly rents from agribusiness firms. Often, peasants from the same region are then hired as day laborers. This very recent phenomenon has thus far attracted very little scholarly attention, despite its potential to affect hundreds of millions of people over the course of the next decade. The ultimate goal of my research is to understand the impact of agrarian capitalism and land dispossession on peasants and the rural poor, and to examine to what extent there is resistance to this transformation.

Kan Liu. After receiving Bachelor's degrees in Economics and Chinese Literature at Berkeley, Kan is now a PhD student studying Geography at UCLA. She was born and raised in a small hamlet in rural China, the fifth daughter of a peasant family. She also worked several years on an assembly line in South China. As a peasant veteran, she is committed to peasants' rights globally. Email: liukan@ucla.edu

Alienated from our land: capital, modern technology and dispossession in Western Kenya, by Adelaide Lusambili

I use the elite and alienation theories to document how modern farming technology has invisibly transformed land tenure in the predominantly sugarcane and maize farming zones of Western Kenya. Modern farming technology in terms of the machines to plough cash crop plantations, harvest and transport the crops can be very costly for rural farmers in Kenya. The elites, - especially those who have money have formed associations that allow them to lease the most productive land from rural farmers as well as buy the modern farming technology. Because they have money, they lease huge tracts of sugarcane and maize plantations for a period of 5-10 years, - a period when many farmers are rendered landless or left to be squatters on their own farms. This informal practice has become cyclic diminishing the traditional land tenure ownership and rendering many families powerless. The research uses phenomenological framework.

Adelaide Lusambili has a PhD and MA from American University in Washington DC. She holds a honorary research fellowship at Sheffield Hallam University/UK. She has worked in Africa, USA and UK specializing in mixed methods research.

The Green and the Gold: Brazilian Elites in the Regional Production of Ethanol Frontiers in Latin America, by Lee Mackey

A recent six-million hectare land acquisition by Brazilian producers in Mozambique announces the emergence and global scale of Brazil as a BRICS driver of land-based investments. The differences in land grabbing between Latin America and Africa as well as the important regional role of Brazilian Trans(Latinas) require closer analysis of Brazilian actors as shapers of land-based investments and land property change in Latin America. This research draws a regional portrait of Brazilian agro-energy drivers in Latin America by disaggregating the visions, actions, and future strategies of Brazilian actors in the sugar ethanol complex through analysis of time-series data on agroindustrial sector investments, exports and consulting projects in Latin America as well as key informant interviews and content analysis with important regional firms in the Brazilian sugar ethanol complex.

Lee Mackey is a doctoral student in the Department of Planning at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA). His research analyzes the rise of Brazilian agro-innovation, foreign aid and agroindustrial development in Latin America. Lee is a Research Associate at the UCLA North American Integration and Development Center and holds a Master of Public Policy (MPP) from UCLA.

Subaltern voices and corporate/state land grab in the Save Valley, Zimbabwe, by Eric Kushinga Makombe

The history of the Save Valley in south-eastern Manicaland provides an intriguing account of peasant encounters with state apparatus dating back to the 1920s. However, the process currently underway, where an obscure 20year-deal between the quasi-state parastatal ARDA and Rating Investment (Ltd) for 40,000 hectares of land; represents what is perhaps the highest level of the state's coercive apparatus at work as close to 250,000 communal farmers stand to lose or have already lost their lands and livelihoods. A context of disassembled private property rights and absent political and legal tenure rights has rendered the inhabitants of Save Valley vulnerable to another wave of elite land-grabs. This paper seeks to capture and historicise the subjective subaltern voices in the light of the current corporate and state-centric land-grab being experienced in south-eastern Manicaland. The study will attain this objective by drawing upon oral interviews, life histories, participatory rural appraisal methods and newspaper reports.

Eric Kushinga Makombe is a doctoral student at the University of the Witwatersrand (RSA). His research focuses on the social history of rural-urban interaction in Colonial Zimbabwe and seeks to explore human experiences and agency attendant in the system. Eric received his bachelors' and masters' degrees from the University of Zimbabwe (UZ) before becoming a Lecturer in the Economic History Department (UZ).

Black Earth, Red Barons, 'Green' Investors and Grey Communities: Land grabbing and responses by local communities in post-communist Ukraine, by Natalia Mamonova and Oane Visser

This research investigates land grabbing in Ukraine. This country was a 'bread basket' of Europe before its USSR period. Collectivization and post-Soviet de-collectivization of its land destroyed Ukrainian agriculture and fertile black soil was left abandoned. Currently, in the time of rising global food-feed-fuel demand, the Western and Gulf States investors shifted their attention to Ukrainian lands. Despite a moratorium on land sales, a land market exists behind the scenes, with an estimated 30% of agricultural land already controlled by TNC. Modern agricultural development in Ukraine left rural dwellers on the sideline, caused impoverishment of villages and peasant dispossession. This negative consequences for Ukrainian rural poor is often explained by aging of rural population and its political 'indifference'. The paper will draw on preliminary research with representatives of rural movements in Ukraine conducted last year, and on this spring fieldwork in one or two rural communities, to study rural responses from a more grassroots perspective.

Natalia Mamonova is a PhD candidate at the International Institute of Social Studies of Erasmus University Rotterdam. Her research focus on land grabbing in the post-Soviet countryside, land conflicts and activities of rural social movements in Russia and Ukraine. She holds 2 master degrees, has journalistic experience in Russia and

participated in the academic research projects: 'Land grabbing in Russia' (LDPI 2010), 'Land governance in Russia and Ukraine' (Landac 2011). E-mail: mamonova@iss.nl

Oane Visser is Assistant Professor at the Department of Anthropology and Development Studies, Radboud University, the Netherlands. His research focuses on land grabbing, rural development, land governance and rural social movements in Russia, Ukraine and the former Soviet Union at large. He has carried out field research in various Russian regions, and engaged in comparative research on rural issues within the former Soviet Union, and beyond. E-mail: o.visser@maw.ru.nl

Windmills: The Face of Dispossession, by Jimena Martinez and Jose Llaguno

In recent years the development of renewable energy projects in Mexico has been widely accepted. During the last 15 years a wind farm mega project located in the Isthmus of Tehuantepec, Oaxaca, has erected more than 430 windmills on communal and ejido lands through lease contracts that have changed agricultural practices in the communities involved. Lately, the construction and planning of new wind farms in the area has led to growing resistance as environmental, agrarian and social effects become more evident and malicious political practices deep rooted. The proposed research paper will trace the agrarian change and its social consequences within the communities where windmills have been working for several years. This research is also aimed to deconstruct the discourse that legitimize the development of wind farms in the region and to analyze the political structures and the enactment of new regulations that enable and warrant the implementation of wind farms; finally documenting past experiences that can reinforce current strategies of resistance arising against the construction of new wind farms in the area.

Jimena Martinez, MA in Southeast Asian Studies, El Colegio de México (2011). Research interests include land and agrarian reforms, agrarian change and rural social movements; environmental problematics related to agrarian change, climate change and adaptation. Field-work experience in Southeast Asia and Latin America. E-mail: jimenamartinez@colmex.mx

Jose Llaguno, MA in Middle Eastern Studies, El Colegio de Mexico (2011). He is keen on security issues, particularly on energy security and its discourses. Lately, he has worked on Irak's domestic energy security and pipelines attacks, and now is moving to renewable energies issues. E-mail: jllaguno@colmex.mx

Fair dealing or compromise under duress? Conceding land for carbon forestry in exchange for tenure security in Kenya's Mau Forest, by Scott Matter

This project addresses the politics and ethics of appropriating contested land via ostensibly free and fair transactions, whether such land swaps are (or should be considered) "land grabs" – representing a form of accumulation by attenuated dispossession – and what implications such processes have for the future of forest conservation in the interests of climate change mitigation, for local development and security, and for local autonomy and national sovereignty. I use as a case study a REDD+ pilot project established in a degraded forest area where access and control have been disputed over the past twenty years, including through violent conflict involving the state and members of different ethnic communities. Central questions include: Who will benefit from this land deal, how, and when? Have long-term, ancestral

claims to the “forest” been extinguished or deferred? How are the terms of this deal understood by various stakeholders? How are different understandings reconciled, if at all? And, to what extent does negotiating transfer of control over contested land constitute free, prior, and informed consent?

Scott Matter is a SSHRC Postdoctoral Fellow in the Department of Anthropology at Rutgers, The State University of New Brunswick, and received my PhD in socio-cultural anthropology from McGill University in 2011. I have been conducting research on land tenure transformation, rural resource governance, and the cultural politics of belonging in Kenya since 2003. Email: scott.matter@rutgers.edu .

Rubber, rights and resistance: local and transnational land grabbing in northern Laos, by Karen McAllister

My research concerns the introduction of rubber trees from China into highland communities in Northern Laos. Rubber is being introduced as plantation concessions and contract farming arrangements with Chinese companies, and is also being adopted independently by highland farmers who seek to become “modern” and improve their economic status. Land grabbing for rubber is occurring at different and interacting socio-political and spatial scales, involving Chinese companies, state officials, Lao entrepreneurs, and villagers themselves. Land reform policies, intended to improve security of local land rights, have been used to legally free up village territories for lease to rubber companies in the name of poverty alleviation. The connected processes of accumulation and dispossession resulting from planting rubber are occurring along ethnic lines, with some ethnic groups benefiting and others being dispossessed. My research examines the ethnic dimensions and forms of resistance, acquiescence, and conflict arising from property transitions resulting from land grabs for rubber in Luang Prabang Province.

Karen McAllister is completing a doctorate in anthropology at McGill University in Montreal. She has conducted research on local environmental knowledge, property rights systems, and community based natural resource management in Laos, Indonesia, Philippines, India and Bangladesh. Karen has worked for the International Development Research Centre (IDRC), International Rice Research Institute (IRRI), and the International Centre for Tropical Agriculture (CIAT). Email: karen.mcallister@mcgill.ca or ke_mcallister@yahoo.com

Policy, participation and micro-struggles for sovereignty amidst large elephants in Mozambique, by Jessica Milgroom

Creation and enforcement of policies, international standards, or national laws are often cited as the best way to prevent and mitigate undue harm to people who are economically or physically displaced by development projects. In practice, however, these policies rarely achieve their objective. Private or commercial land grabs pose an even greater challenge for local residents attempting to protect their livelihoods and heritage. Based on a case from southern Mozambique of one land grab, three overlapping projects and two major policies, Jessica’s LDPI grant will be used to interrogate the questions, what is the potential for policy, or international standards to protect and promote the interests of marginalized people? How do sanctioned acts of resistance through formal participatory processes versus illegal acts of resistance influence policy enactment?

Jessica Milgroom, Wageningen University. Email: jessica.milgroom@gmail.com
Jessica has recently completed an interdisciplinary PhD based on an in-depth case study of the unfolding process of resettlement of residents of the newly established Limpopo National Park in Mozambique. Her research interests include population resettlement, policy enactment, situated, interdisciplinary studies of people's use of natural resources, and applied agronomy.

Differentiated impacts of land grabbing on local communities in Benishangul-Gumuz region, Ethiopia, by Tsegaye Moreda

The current LDPI research project sets out to explore the political dynamics of 'land grabbing' in Ethiopia. The study assumes that local communities may not be equally affected by the current 'land grabs' since the rural population is differentiated in terms of economic, political and social dimensions. Informed by the theoretical engagements of political economy, this study will thus focus on examining changes in the livelihoods of local communities as a result of changes in land use induced by the 'land grab' and thereby explore the differentiated impacts on and reactions of local communities to such changes through a particular case study in the Benishangul-Gumuz region. To this end, I will primarily depend on an in-depth qualitative research method.

Tsegaye Moreda is a PhD student at the International Institute of Social Studies (ISS) of Erasmus University Rotterdam in the Netherlands. He holds degree in Geography and Environmental Studies (2004) and Masters in Development Studies with specialization in Rural Livelihoods and Development (2008) from Addis Ababa University. He has been teaching at the University of Gondar before beginning his PhD study. Contact address: shegro@iss.nl

Gender and protest: contesting oil palm plantation expansion in Sambas, Indonesia, by Miranda Morgan

This research examines if and how women and gender are implicated in resistance movements against large-scale land acquisitions in Indonesia today. Drawing from a combination of secondary literature (specifically, the fields of agrarian political economy, feminist political ecology and contentious politics) and primary data obtained during a case-specific field study in Sambas district, West Kalimantan, the research offers new analysis of who is impacted by land deals, who resists it and in what ways. Interviews conducted with a range of key actors involved in a protest against a proposed oil palm plantation in Sambas sheds light on how gender relations shape all stages and facets of protest around land deals. Gender influences everything from women's decisions to participate in protest (by informing their motivations and political opportunities) to women's protest activities and how women experience protest outcomes. The research also reveals how gender relations are not fixed. Rather at all stages of mobilization gender itself is shaped by and through women's participation in protest. This study has potentially far-reaching implications not only for the future of oil palm expansion and resistance, but on women's participation in protest, in politics in general and on gender relations.

Miranda Morgan was recently awarded a PhD in Human Geography from the University of Manchester (UK), where her research was funded by the Brooks World Poverty Institute and the Overseas Research Student Awards Scheme. She also holds a MSc in

Nature, Society and Environmental Policy (University of Oxford, UK) and a BA Honours in Political Studies and Development Studies (Queen's University, Canada). Some of Miranda's most formative professional experiences have included working at the Democratic Dialogue Project (UNDP Guatemala), LEAD International (London, UK) and the Ministry of Community and Social Services (Ontario, Canada).

Cuba's Law 259: land redistribution, agricultural restructuring and alternative development, by Meghan Morris

The centrality of the regulation of land and labor to Cuban agriculture, and of agriculture to the Cuban economy, has been apparent for centuries, from the island's historical position as a site of colonial sugar plantations to the government's recent attempts to institute and rework socialism through agrarian reform. Cuba's most recent wave of agricultural restructuring came as part of a package of economic reforms issued by Raúl Castro's government in 2008. Most notably, this package includes Law 259, which authorizes the distribution of idle land in renewable usufruct for ten years to individuals who commit to using it in a "rational and sustainable" manner for agricultural production. Since this reform took force, the government has distributed over a million hectares – nearly 20% of the island's cultivable land – to existing cooperative farmers and *parceleros*, a steadily growing group of non-cooperativized individuals involved in agricultural production. My research will examine the political, economic, ecological, and social effects of this 2008 restructuring as one of the most significant agricultural reforms in Cuba's recent history.

Meghan Morris is a doctoral student in the Department of Anthropology at the University of Chicago. Her work focuses on regulation of land and labor through agrarian reform, the mobilization of law and science within such reforms, and their social and ecological effects. She has conducted research on legal strategies and campaigns for land restitution in Colombia's banana region, and her dissertation project focuses on Cuban agrarian reform. Morris holds a J.D. from Harvard Law School and a Masters in International Relations from The Fletcher School, and has been involved in environmental justice and human rights work in South America for over a decade. Contact: mlmorris@uchicago.edu.

The Politics of Special Economic Zones in Maharashtra, India: Institutional Politics and the Framing of Resistance/Alternatives, Rohit Mujumdar

How have social movements responded to processes of establishing large Special Economic Zones (SEZs) in Maharashtra, India, which seek to implement India's economic reform through a politics of stealth? Drawing from theory within the disciplines of planning and social movement studies, my research attempts to address this question and comprehend the evolution of state-society dynamics in implementing Maharashtra's SEZ Policy and two large SEZ projects located at the periphery of Mumbai and Nasik. It explores the relationship between existing social ecologies and how they shape institutional politics of response to land grab, the factors that shape collaborations and fractures in the framing of collective action and their outcomes in different locations, and interpreting the alternatives posed in the mobilizations against SEZs.

Rohit Mujumdar is a doctoral student at the School of Community and Regional Planning, University of British Columbia (UBC) and a PhD Scholar at Liu Institute for Global Issues, UBC. His ongoing doctoral research, against the backdrop of accelerated

rural-urban transition in contemporary India, explores how a politics of citizenship shaped by migratory flows and incremental planning influences the politics of urbanization at Mumbai's periphery. He has earlier taught at the K. R. V. Institute for Architecture, Mumbai, and has co-founded Collective Research Initiatives Trust, which is an extra-curricular space for critical investigations on urbanism in Mumbai.

Linking land grabbing and land use change: a multi-scalar characterization of marginal lands for biofuels in Ethiopia, by Rachel Nalepa, Ethiopia.

Seeking foreign exchange, rural development, and domestic energy security, the Ethiopian government has asserted that approximately 23 million hectares of land are potentially available for the development of bioenergy crops nationally. Though it has been stressed that only 'marginal land' is to be used to avoid compromising food security, there are no specifics on these earmarked lands nor has the government disclosed the means by which they were identified. This project is a multi-scale investigation into the 'marginal lands' narrative in Ethiopia and explores the characteristics that set land slated for bioenergy crops apart and whether these lands are indeed unfit for food production, as it is often implied. This study also investigates how 'unused land' may be methodologically or rhetorically differentiated from 'marginal land' and proposes alternative perspectives on these landscapes that more completely capture existing human-environment relationships than the 'unused' land narrative put forth by the state.

Rachel Nalepa is a PhD student in the department of Geography and Environment at Boston University. Her dissertation research is focused on the modernization of contemporary Ethiopia through large-scale food and biofuel projects. In particular, she is interested in the politicization of geospatial technologies and the categorization of 'marginal' and 'unused' agricultural lands to legitimize land deal politics and land redistribution in both a local context and at a national level. Contact information: ran@bu.edu

The land of our ancestors: property rights, social resistance, and alternatives to land grabbing in Madagascar, by Ben Neimark

This study focuses on a well-known 'biofuel battleground' in Madagascar, highlighting the first case of successful social resistance against contemporary land grabs. Development economists and land policy specialists advocate for formal property rights to secure tenure and stimulate agricultural investment in land and markets, and while foreign aid projects are beginning to address land rights, most of Madagascar's agricultural zones remain under extremely complex overlapping state and customary claims. International donor's copious funding of land tenure is producing some positive results; however, as a new Malagasy-generated land law ("Law 2005-019") is now being implemented nationally in rural sites. Yet, as competing visions of land securitization take hold; significant questions remain regarding whether the law is an adequate alternative for protecting rural Malagasy from dispossession of livelihood resources under agro/biofuel capitalism. Additionally, given the history of politically-charged divisions in Madagascar, tenure claims may fracture along class, gender, and ethnicity, exacerbating tenuous social relations and promote rural differentiation. This project addresses these questions empirically and builds on existing foundational analysis of this bellwether case of global land-grabbing.

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Land deals without land owners: minerals and wildlife in Mbarabg'andu community wildlife area, Tanzania, by Christine Noe

The central issue for the proposed paper is to investigate and explain the nature and impacts of the land deal between two investors who are involved in hunting and mining in Mbarang'andu Community Wildlife Management Area, Tanzania. Although Mbarang'andu is supposedly a community land, and that the two land uses are incompatible, a deal was signed in 2007 that involves thousands of dollars as compensation for the disturbance caused by the mining activities on the side of the hunting company. Villagers are neither part of the deal nor do they have control over any activities going on in the area. The paper will engage with key questions that arise from this background including; what future holds for the rural poor whose land is continuously converted into protected areas but later made available for investors who can reallocate rights among themselves and their successors? What constrains community participation in such land deals in Tanzania and elsewhere in Africa?

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Three Investment Cases in the Office du Niger Region in Mali: Insights into the Process of land-related Investments with a Focus on the Involvement of the Local Population, by Kerstin Nolte, Mali

The project researches land-related investments in the Office du Niger (ON) region in Mali which accommodates the majority of land acquisitions in Mali. Whereas the Malian government claims that investors bring much needed development to the area, NGOs and civil society fear the exclusion of the local population. Whether these land acquisitions include the local population or benefit only few is indeed a crucial question addressed in this study. Drawing on semi-structured expert interviews with government officials, civil society, and investors and focus group discussions in three villages directly affected by investments, we focus on the actual investment process, especially the involvement of the local population. Thereby we shed light on actors and institutions involved in the process of leasing farmland in Mali's ON. We put a special focus on sensitization and information of the population, displacements and compensations as to scrutinize in which extent the much acclaimed development trickles down to the population.

Kerstin Nolte (kerstin.nolte@giga-hamburg.de), Research Fellow at GIGA German Institute of Global and Area studies and PhD student at University of Göttingen, Germany. My research focuses on large-scale land acquisitions in Sub-Saharan Africa, especially the process of acquiring land and the institutional setting of target countries. Field research is carried out in Zambia, Kenya, and Mali. I hold a Diploma in Geography and a Bachelor in Economics from University of Göttingen.

Small Farm Holders' Response to the Global Land Rush in Benin: Linkages of international solidarity between civil society organizations, by Paulette Nonfodju

The current project seeks to provide insights into how linkages of solidarity among civil society groups in Benin and France help to empower local small farm holders to resist the global investments in farmland in Benin. The mapping and the analysis of these linkages between the different movements will shed light on the role of both national and international civil society organizations in shaping the forms and strategies of resistance adopted in order to thwart the rush on agricultural land in Benin. Hence we will get to better understand one of the alternatives of resistance as global answer to the global farmland rush in the local context of rural Benin. To reach the above mentioned aim, the project will draw heavily on primary data from fieldwork in Benin and France which will serves as source to analyse the small farm holders' response to the global land rush in the above mention country.

Paulette Nonfodji has a Bsc in Cultural Anthropology, a master degree in Sociology and is currently a Msc candidate (summer 2012) in Contemporary Asian Studies from the University of Amsterdam. Her main field of research concerns the politics of bio-fuel in relation to food crops and farmland at multinational corporate, state and regional organizations levels. Contact details: paulecathynonfodji@gmail.com

Social Resistance to 'Land Grabbing' in Northern Ghana: A Class Dynamics and Gendered Analyses, Hanson Nyuntakyi-Frimpong

The purpose of this study is to contribute to an understanding of whether and how marginalized local communities are attempting to resist appropriation of their lands by transnational investors. The study will examine the character and dynamics of local resistance at multiple scales - from the household, community, to national levels. It will draw upon an agrarian political economy approach to answer the following key questions: What kinds of organizational forms, tactics and moral vocabularies define community resistance to 'land grabbing'? How does identity, both collective and individual, shape various forms of resistance to 'land grabbing'? In cases where communities vociferously resist 'land grabbing', what constraints do they face, especially given already overlapping conditions of social, economic, and political marginality? What resources can communities draw upon, not only to challenge the authority of unjust land appropriation, but also to transform the relations of power that undergird it? And finally, what are the gender dynamics in various forms of resistance to land appropriation? The empirical analysis will be derived from a case study of two villages in northern Ghana.

Hanson Nyantakyi-Frimpong is a PhD Candidate in Geography/International Development at The University of Western Ontario, Canada. His dissertation focuses on a political ecology of food security and smallholder farmer adaptation to climate change in north-western Ghana. He holds a Bachelors degree in International Development Planning (1st Class Honours) from KNUST-Ghana. His Masters degree in Community and Environmental Planning was conferred by The University of Montana-Missoula, USA. Email: hnyantak@uwo.ca.

The Political Economy of Agriculture and Land Conflict in a Transborder Oaxacan Community, Oaxaca, Mexico, by Ivan Sandoval-Cervantes

In this project I seek to provide a detailed account on how transnational capital is reshaping the land politics of a Zapotec indigenous community in Oaxaca, Mexico. Oaxaca is a predominantly rural state in southern Mexico, characterized by land conflicts and a high rate of migration. Santa Ana Zegache, in the Zimatlán Valley, is not a stranger to these phenomena; its economy depends on remittances and non-industrialized agriculture, and land is still a central element in local political conflicts. Zegache's inhabitants are divided between "ejidatarios" and "propietarios", and this division informs the political struggles not only in Oaxaca but also in the immigrant community of Zegacheños living in Oregon, U.S. Here, I will explore how transnational capital reinforces the continuation of traditional subsistence agriculture while also promoting increased political conflict that is directly connected to local political and social relationships, and land ownership

Iván Sandoval (ivans@uoregon.edu) (B.A. Anthropology, Universidad de las Americas-Puebla; M.Sc. Philosophy of Social Sciences, London School of Economics) is a graduate student in cultural anthropology at the University of Oregon. He is interested in the political economy of rural communities in the Mexican state of Oaxaca. His research focuses on the connections between Mexico's land reform, migration and local agrarian conflicts in Oaxaca.

The Goan Impasse: Special Economic Zones in India, by Preeti Sampat

On December 31, 2007, following widespread protests from peasants and citizens groups, the Chief Minister of Goa state in India Digambar Kamat scrapped all 13 approved Special Economic Zones in the state. As the Government of India declined to honor this decision, Kamat declared that SEZ developers in Goa could go ahead 'at their own risk,' and revoked the state's SEZ policy. In Verna and Kerim villages where construction had begun, villagers now keep watch and graze cattle over SEZ lands, even as the matter is sub judice in the Supreme Court of India. This ethnographic and archival study of resistance to SEZs examines the emergent political economy of the right to land and resources in Verna and Kerim villages of South and North Goa districts. It examines the historical, political and strategic specificities that led to this reversal of power and their implications for the relationship between the Goan state, capital, the rule of law and citizenship rights.

Preeti Sampat is a PhD Candidate at the Department of Anthropology in the City University of New York working on the right to land and resources, Special Economic Zones, the real estate economy, peasant and citizens' resistance struggles, state, citizenship, the rule of law and democracy in India. She can be reached at preeti.sampat@gmail.com

The Land Deals in Ethiopia: The Changing Political Economy and Ecology Case Study: The Gambella Regional States, by Wondwosen Michago Seide

With many foreign investors receiving large-scale land in many countries of Africa, land grabbing has become the catchphrase of the hour in the media and in the political sphere of many countries in Africa. In countries like Ethiopia, particularly in the Gambella Regional States, where the government has given out hundreds of thousands of hectares of land for foreign and domestic investors, 'land grabbing' has become a very emotive issue. Although there is an expanding amount of research on this issue in other parts of Africa, land deals in the Gambella region of Ethiopia is still under researched.

Hence, apart from questions on the development benefits of such deals to the society, their implications on local communities and impact on the political economy and ecology of the region is awaiting serious inquiry. Moreover, how local communities are responding to these and how these responses are handled is also wanting in explanation. This research attempts to examine the ways in which local communities adjust to these changes and critically assess how these changes impact on their lives, their development needs and their relationships with the investors and regional and national governments. It also tries to evaluate the implications to the overall political economy and ecology of the region through primary research with the hope of understanding the land deal phenomenon better.

Wondwossen Michago Seide is an adjunct lecturer at the Department of Geography and the Environment, Addis Ababa University (AAU). He earned an MSc in Water Science, Policy and Management, Oxford University and an MA in Environment and Development and BA in Political Science and International Relations from AAU. Currently he is a Consultant to the Institute of Development Studies (IDS), University of Sussex where he is involved in two research projects: water-energy-climate change nexus and the future of pastoralism. Previously, he has worked as a Researcher at the Nile Basin Discourse Forum and as an Assistant Researcher at the Ethiopian International Institute for Peace and Development. Email- Wondwossen.seide@chch.oxon.org , Tel- +251-911452102

The social and environmental implications of urbanization strategies and domestic land grabbing in China. The case of Chongming island, by Giuseppina Siciliano

The aim of this paper is to explore the social and environmental implications of urbanization strategies and domestic land grabbing in China. Domestic land grabbing refers to the process of land expropriation put in place by governments within their country borders. In China these are the cases of urban sprawl and land commodification for food security and agricultural modernization. While a number of studies have documented directly or indirectly the consequences of domestic land grabbing from urban sprawl, little has been done to reveal the impacts of land conversions due to agricultural modernization in rural areas. This aspect need further study in order to provide better insights into the relationship between rural development, urbanization and land expropriation. Drawing on a case study from a rural area in east China, this paper analyses the impacts of farmland expropriation due to domestic land grabbing in relation to: (i) land tenure rights and compensation measures; (ii) rural workers livelihood and the hukou registration system; (iii) environmental degradation.

Giuseppina Siciliano is a post-doctoral researcher within the Faculty of Regional Planning at University IUAV of Venice. She holds a Ph.D. in Analysis and Governance of Sustainable Development from Università Ca' Foscari, Venice and an MSc in Ecological Economics at the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona. She works in the field of public policy evaluation, environmental management and sustainability with research experiences and fieldwork in rural areas of China, Mexico and Italy. She is lecturer in Political Economy of the Environment (University of Siena, Department of Political Economy) and in Planning and Evaluation Techniques (University IUAV of Venice). Email: giuseppina.siciliano@gmail.com

Arab-Australian Land Deals: A Challenge for Democracy?, by Sarah Ruth Sippel

Investments in global agricultural land properties have recently gained much attention. While the focus is often on “North-South” dimensions questioning its impact on developing countries, my research explores investments from the Arab Gulf targeting agricultural properties in Australia. For the Arab Gulf States who highly depend on external food supplies investment abroad is one strategy to guarantee future food security. Australia offers several advantages differentiating it from other targeted regions. At the same time, leading Australian political and economic representatives have been eager to attract investments from the Gulf. Increasing media reporting has however also raised critical voices and provoked a vivid public debate on the selling off of Australian land properties. Arab investments in Australian land properties therefore raise several highly relevant questions related to “land grabbing” taking place in a developed context, the concept and nature of foreign investments as well as democratic citizenship and forms of resistance.

Sarah Ruth Sippel is a postdoctoral researcher at the Centre for Area Studies at the University of Leipzig in Germany and currently working as a visiting researcher at the University of Queensland in Brisbane. She studied Middle Eastern Studies and Philosophy in Leipzig and Aix-en-Provence. In her PhD on the Moroccan export production of fresh fruits and vegetables she combined a global agri-food systems perspective with approaches on human security in order to investigate processes of social differentiation within the context of intensive agricultural production. (Email: sippel@uni-leipzig.de)

Land grabbing in the North?: the case of One Earth Farms (OEF) in Canada, by Melanie Sommerville

This study examines One Earth Farms (OEF), a large agricultural investment project located on First Nations (indigenous) land on the Canadian prairies. It explores how participation in OEF might further or hinder First Nations’ political self-determination objectives. By examining the intersection of OEF with First Nations’ land claims and political institutions, the research draws attention to the relevance of the ‘global land grab’ for marginalized populations in the global North. Moreover, it highlights the articulations of agricultural investment projects with indigenous politics, a topic of relevance to many areas globally.

Melanie Sommerville (melanie.sommerville@geog.ubc.ca) is a PhD student in the Department of Geography at the University of British Columbia in Vancouver, Canada. Her research interests lie at the intersection of global farmland investment and the land claims and political self-determination interests of marginalized populations. Currently her research focuses mainly on Canada and South Africa.

Land Grabbing along Livestock Migration Routes in Gadarif State, Sudan: Impacts on Pastoralism and the Environment, by Hussein Sulieman

Dispossessing pastoralists of their traditional system and put it under commercial farming system are disseminating a cruel dilemma of increasing resources conflict and environmental degradation in Sudan. This is one of the reasons that the country has earned a reputation as a home of bloody civil wars and the country is unlikely to see lasting peace unless such issues has been addressed. The aim of the research is to

show recent grapping of grazing land along transhumance migration routes in Gadarif State (eastern Sudan) due to encroachment of large-scale mechanized farming. The project depends on review of land legislation policy of Gadarif State, field visits, interview with different groups of stakeholders. Satellite imagery and Geographical Information System will be used in order to analyze the land-use change along livestock routes and producing relevant map layers. Recommendations aiming at setting up the major constraints and forward appropriate development policy will be stated.

Hussein M. Sulieman obtained his BSc in Natural Resources and Environmental Studies, MSc in Forestry and PhD in Natural Sciences. Currently he is affiliated to University of Gadarif, Sudan as Assistant Professor and Director of the Remote Sensing Unit. His work experience and professional are in the area of Remote Sensing and Geographical Information System. His main research interest include Socio-spatial analysis of land-use/land-cover changes, climate change and variability and scientific interpretation of local knowledge. Email: hmsulieman@yahoo.com

Gaining neighbours or disruptive factors - what happened when large-scale land-based investment in the Ghanaian oil palm sector met the local population on the ground?, by Susanne Johanna V  th

If land transactions can be beneficial to host countries depend on the governance system, the so-called rules of the game and their enforcement, but also on the appreciation of the fact that land is more than solely a production factor. As investors often face a weak institutional environment, outcomes for the local populations frequently seem to be arbitrarily. To overcome these grievances clear regulations are necessary, but how to design and implement them? This study wants to contribute to a positive approach improving future investment when learning from the past in the Ghanaian oil palm sector. Based on focus group discussions, expert interviews and a household survey (conducted in 2010/ 2011), the effects on people who received compensation, on neighbouring communities in general, on permanent and casual workers as well as on contract farmers will be analysed against a theoretical framework of land governance inspired by new institutional economic thoughts.

Susanne Johanna V  th is a Research Fellow in the field of Development Economics at the Institute for Co-operation in Developing Countries at Philipps-University of Marburg/Germany. Due to her interdisciplinary background (Economics, Political Science & Philosophy) she combines quantitative and qualitative approaches in her PhD-research to analyse large-scale investment in agricultural land with a focus on Ghana and Kenya. contact: vaeth@staff.uni-marburg.de

Moral Economy Meets Global Economy: Shrimp farming, land concentration and landlessness in Vietnam, by Hong Anh Vu

Some things don't change. Land grabbing is almost always done under the guise of public good. This paper illustrates the process of global land grabbing by the logic of a market-led land reform. In Vietnam, this path was facilitated by a series of policy changes, including the 1993 Land Law that endorsed individualized property rights, the 2000 resolution on the farm economy that promotes commercial farming on large-scale, and trade liberalization, all of which are seen as essential ingredients for economic growth. In the effort to foster greater flexibility for land transactions at the local level, these policies have in effect modified local patterns of production, land ownership, and

social relations. Commercial shrimp farming in Vietnam's Mekong Delta is a case in point to demonstrate the complex and intertwined environmental, economic, and social processes of global land grabbing based on neoliberal economic principles.

Hong Anh Vu is an anthropologist with a doctorate degree from the Syracuse University in New York. Her research interests include rural livelihoods, natural resources management, climate change adaptation, and the role of local skills and knowledge in sustainable development. She has extensive experience in the development field, having worked on anti-landmines and environmental advocacy, food security and gender disparity issues for Oxfam, the UN and the World Bank on various assignments.

Land grabs and land reform: contemporary conflicts in the Brazilian land struggle, by Cliff Welch

While land reform and land grabbing are two quite different phenomena, there has long been a dynamic relationship between them. As symbols of neocolonial control, foreign-owned lands have often been the first targets of land reform projects. One recalls, for example, Guatemala's attempt to redistribute to peasants lands controlled by the United Fruit Company in the early 1950s. During these same Cold War years, Brazilian communists accused latifundiários of being allies of United States imperialism and targeted their properties for expropriation. Thus, the terms easily came to be seen as representing opposite political poles: resisting foreign land grabs with land reform. To explore this relationship, this project mines the historical struggle over land grabbing and land reform in the state of São Paulo, Brazil, from the first projects in 1961 to the present. Utilizing historical materialism as method, the paper places at its analytical the discourse and actions of landlord, capitalist and peasant groups, as well as policymakers. It examines the changing face of land reform policies to understand their relationship to land grabbing, especially their contradictory role as forms of resistance and collaboration with the process.

After working as a stevedore, cowboy, carpenter and journalist, *Clifford Andrew Welch* earned his Ph.D. in Latin American history at Duke University in 1990. He taught Latin American history at Grand Valley State University in Michigan for 20 years before taking a position as historian of contemporary Brazil at the Federal University of São Paulo (UNIFESP) in 2009. He has been visiting professor of graduate studies at the Pontifícia Universidade Católica, the Universidade de São Paulo and the Universidade Estadual Paulista. His books and films include *Lutas camponesas no interior paulista: a memória de Irineu Luís de Moraes* (1992), *The Seed Was Planted: The São Paulo Roots of Brazil's Rural Labor Movement* (1999), *Grass War! Peasant Struggle in Brazil* (2001), *Camponeses brasileiros* (2009) and *Jôfre Corrêa Netto, Capitão camponês (1921-2002)*.

Impact of Restrictive Legislation and Popular Opposition Movements on Foreign Land Investments in Brazil: The Case of the Forestry and Pulp Paper Sector and Stora Enso, by John Wilkinson and Debora Lerrer

We will analyze the new role of the Southern Cone countries in the global forestry and pulp paper market and the impact which this is having in Brazil. Secondly we will review the way in which the sector has been affected by, and is responding to, Brazil's restrictive legislation on foreign land investments. And thirdly we will examine the opposition movements which have developed to challenge the expansion of the sector in Brazil, particularly those of the landless movement. While we will present an overall

analysis of the sector, our research will center on the leading foreign firm, Stora Enso. This firm is active in both of the major investment regions mentioned above, and is an ideal case for studying both the reactions of foreign capital to restrictive legislation by national governments and the opposition movements which this type of land investment provokes.

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Reclaiming the People's Property: Land Grabbing, Worker Resistance and the Las Tunas Movement in Nicaragua, by Bradley Wilson

My LDPI research project explores a land grabbing resistance movement composed of unemployed coffee workers in Central Nicaragua. Between 1996 and 2000 a private agro-export conglomerate appropriated 60 worker-owned coffee estates previously designated as the Area Propiedad del Pueblo (APP). Following mass protests between 2001 and 2006, worker representatives from the Asociación de Trabajadores del Campo (ATC) and government officials negotiated and signed the Acuerdos de Las Tunas which provided 6,000 temporary jobs and redistributed land from nineteen of those coffee estates to 2,500 families. My project reveals the contentious politics, possibilities and paradoxes of worker-led alternatives to land grabbing in the (post) socialist agrarian reform context of Nicaragua.

Bradley Wilson. I received my Ph.D. in Geography from Rutgers University in January 2010 and currently hold a post as Assistant Professor of Geography at West Virginia University. My work focuses on consumer solidarity politics in the United States and peasant and rural worker politics in Nicaragua. My previous research has explored the moral and political economies of fair trade coffee labeling and cooperativism among agrarian reform beneficiaries in Nicaragua. Reclaiming the People's Property represents the next stage of a comparative project on the social, spatial and political-economic trajectories of agrarian reform in Nicaragua.

Land Dispossession, Local Power and Peasant Movement in Yogyakarta, Indonesia, by Dian Yanuady

This research is about the dynamics of land dispossession in the case of changing land use from agricultural coastal land to sand coal mining in Kulonprogo, Yogyakarta. This research will describe the peasant's initiatives and processes of producing and reclaiming the commons, in De Angelis' term (2003), which they consolidated the coastal land, distributed equally amongst them, created some technology of their own in irrigation and farming techniques with kind of a low external input sustainable agriculture,

and creating local auction as 'fair trade market mechanism'. But, as indicated by many scholars, thus processes of producing and reclaiming the commons is always challenged by the imperative and dynamic of capital to accumulate and find for new frontiers. Then, this research would unpack the role of local power, a politically and economically dominant social class in Yogyakarta, in smoothening thus land dispossession and re-concentrating the land-based wealth for deepening capital social relation. Finally, this research is also about the peasants' counter-movement against thus land dispossession.

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