DEVELOPMENT AS A TROJAN HORSE? LARGE-SCALE LAND ACQUISITIONS IN ETHIOPIA, KENYA, MADAGASCAR, SENEGAL AND UGANDA

Understanding Stakeholder Relations Through the ‘Zones of Intermediality’ Approach

Josh Maiyo
PhD Fellow
Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam
RESEARCH PROGRAMME

- Five PhD candidates:
  - Theodros Woldegiorgis Atreso
  - Mijasoa Andriamarovololona
  - Carole Rabemanantsoa
  - Davide Cirillo
  - Josh Maiyo
- Post-doc.,
  - Froukje Krijtenburg
- Several master students and affiliated researchers
CONCEPTUALIZING ‘ZONES OF INTERMEDIALITY’

‘Zones of intermediality’:
- Physical and ontological grids where land claims are mediated, legitimized and/or defended by various stakeholders.

‘Zones’
- Stakeholder spheres of influence in the land project.

‘Stakeholders’
- Individuals and groups directly or indirectly (through engagement in debate, policy, activism etc.) asserting claim to the land and its use.

- **Legitimization of land access:**
  What and how are discourses used by stakeholders to legitimize their land claims?

- **Practices and embodied valuations:**
  How are different land and livelihood claims mediated through various forms of stakeholder interactions?
Intermediality:
1) Interconnectedness of discourses and media of communication;
2) Shifting positions and discourses and how they’re deployed by various stakeholders;
3) Unravelling conceptual convergence and divergence and everyday practices

Intermediality example - problematizing participatory approaches:
- The use of the same word(s) by various stakeholders in a land project, but with discrepancies in meaning.
- The use of different words/meanings by particular stakeholders in different contexts

Measuring meaning. How do we decode and interpret meaning?

Application: How to design an appropriate (social science) toolkit?
CONCEPTUALIZING ‘ZONES OF INTERMEDIALITY’

**Mediation** (agendas, messages and audiences)
…is highly **contextual** and conducted through **political processes** of social navigation, imagination, and interaction between and within stakeholder groups.

**Aim**
…analyse variations within and between stakeholder groups, to track power dynamics that shape conceptions, discourses and practices of land-use between actors associated with certain stakeholder categories.
MEASURING INTERMEDIALLY: LEVELS OF INTERMEDIALLY

- **High vertical intermediality** refers to a high level of conceptual convergence between individuals seen as representative of **different** stakeholder groups;

- **High horizontal intermediality** refers to a high level of conceptual convergence between individuals seen as representative of **one** particular stakeholder group;

- **Low vertical intermediality** refers to a low level of conceptual convergence between individuals seen as representative of **different** stakeholder groups;

- **Low horizontal intermediality** refers to a low level of conceptual convergence between individuals seen as representative of **one** particular stakeholder group.
Green growth is economic growth that is environmentally sustainable (WB, 2012)

- Enhances the quality of growth
- End goal is to operationalize sustainable development

Figure from Poverty-Environment Partnership 2012.

An inclusive green economy that can reduce poverty and inequality and sustain inclusive growth
APPLYING ‘ZONES OF INTERMEDIALITY’

Mapping Stakeholder configurations: Establish (intra) stakeholder diversity and intermediality of stakeholder positions

Scales and hierarchies of power:
- Identity and Belonging: What is local and who is local = impact on intermediality?
- Power distribution: How stakeholder positionality in multi-level hierarchies shape power relations?
- Intermediaries: What is the role of mediators and brokers?
- Impacts: What is the (potential) nature and distribution of impacts

Mapping friction and conflict:
- What is the nature and type of (potential) conflict? E.g. cultural and existential (identity), imagined/real, economic, ecological, (ethno)political, social?
An important milestone is reached when the first young Ugandan farm entrepreneur, inspired and trained by this project, has made enough money from farming to build a nice brick house for his family, with a solar panel to charge his smartphone, and provide all his children with a strong education.

http://gladfarm.com/Mission.html

To contribute to poverty eradication, capacity building and the overall development of Uganda by exporting fresh, dried and value-added organic farm products.

- Amfri Farms
CONCLUSIONS: PATRONS AND CLIENTS

- **Intermediality:**
  - Discourse appropriation and instrumentalization for legitimization of access and control
  - Disjuncture between discourses and practices (land use and socio-economic impacts)
  - Higher horizontal and less vertical ‘intermediality’.

- **Stakeholder Relations:**
  - Political patronage provides protection and ‘security’ of investment
  - Political Brokers = Link investors + landowners + administrators ≠ land dwellers.
  - Central↔local relations: Elite capture of decentralised land administration institutions.
  - Land deals produce shifting alliances and disrupt political relations at local level
CONCLUSIONS

• What is the dominance and impact of traditional theories/ideas/ideologies of development in shaping discourses?
• How are global discourses of development applied to (justify/legitimise) desired transformations in the countryside by whom and for whom?
• What is the role of the state and elites in appropriating, contributing to, transforming and ‘domesticating’ global discourses and to what ends?
• How do stakeholder relations and their agency shape the outcome of social struggles over access to land?
• Are ‘local’ people always victims of structural injustices and power differentials or active determinants of land acquisitions?
### GLOBAL DISCOURSES OF LEGITIMATION

**Pro: “win-win” situation**
- Investors profit
  - High return on investment
  - Favourable terms
- Host nations benefit
  - Agricultural infrastructure
  - Employment
  - Food security
  - Poverty reduction
  - Economic development

**Critics: winners and losers**
- WB, IMF, IFI orchestrate business-friendly environment for land access.
- Help attract investors
- Shaping land policy & law
- Critical issues:
  - Human rights
  - Food (in)security
  - Cultural rights
UNDP Country Policy
- Rediscovering agriculture for Human Development
- Increase investment, technology, markets for rural farmers

WDR 2008
- Agriculture is the engine for development in non-industrial societies

“Promote and Support Sustainable and Market Oriented Agricultural Production”
AGRARIAN MODERNISATION

Transformation of **agrarian systems**

- The dynamic set of economic and technological factors that affect agricultural practices.

- Different systems have developed depending on the natural and social conditions specific to a particular region.

- Political factors also have a bearing on an agrarian system due to issues such as
  - land ownership
  - labor organisation
  - forms of cultivation