

Land Grabbing: Then and Now

GEOG 930

3 credits

January 20 – May 4, 2016

Classes: Wednesday, 11:00-1:30

SCIENCE HALL 388

Course Director:

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Office Hours: Wednesday, 9:45-10:45 am, or by appointment (via e-mail)

Introduction

In 2008, a small Barcelona, Spain-based non-governmental organization (NGOs), GRAIN, declared that the world—and particularly tropical and sub-tropical regions—were facing an unprecedented “global land grab”, involving foreign investors including governments acquiring large quantities of land in other countries to use for producing food to feed their own populations, and also for other investment purposes, thus resulting in significant social and environmental impacts. Since then, people’s organizations, NGOs, journalists, and academics have become increasingly interested and concerned about large-scale land acquisitions and concessions. This, in turn, has led to the production of a large amount of advocacy and scholarship on the topic. Land grabbing did not, however, begin in 2008; it has been around for much longer, and it occurs in various ways and contexts. Conflicts and disputes over land and associated resources have a long and complex history; a history that we will review during this course. We will explore aspects of “land grabbing” during the past and at present, and will consider a wide range of relevant issues, from John Locke’s development of the concept of “private property”, to Karl Marx’s idea of Primitive Accumulation, to the changing ways that transnational land acquisitions and land concessions are developing, to the new financial mechanisms being developed in relation to land acquisitions. We will also consider what has become known as “green grabbing”, land and resource grabbing for conservation purposes. We will also examine how identity politics is influencing land tenure issues globally, including the increasing popularity of communal land titling, and the influence of indigenous peoples’ movements on changing land and resource tenure circumstances in various parts of the world.

The objective of this course is to familiarize present-day issues and debates of interest to geographers in relation to “land grabbing” globally.

Class Texts

Hall, Derek (2013). *Land*. Polity Press, Cambridge.

Li, T.M (2014). *Land's End: Capital Relations on an Indigenous Frontier*. Duke University Press, Durham and London.

Polanyi, K. 2001 (1957) 2nd edition. *The Great Transformation. The Political and Economic Origins of Our Time*. Beacon Press.

Evaluation and Assignments

Term Paper	30%
Reviews of term paper	20%
Introduction to Seminar Class	10%
Commentaries on Readings	15%
Participation/Attendance	25%
	100%

1) Term Paper: 30%. This paper will relate to some aspect of development studies, broadly defined. The topic will be chosen by the student, but will need to be approved by the course director in advance. The paper should be no more than 15 double-spaced pages long (12 point Times New Roman font), not including the title page and references. The first version of the paper is April 6, 2016. The final version, revised after being reviewed, will be submitted no later than May 4, 2016.

2) Review of term paper: 20% (10% for each review). Each term paper will be reviewed by two other students. The reviews should not exceed 1,500 words. The reviews are due on April 13, 2016 and April 20, 2016.

3) Introduction to Class Seminar: 10%. During the course each student will have to introduce and provide some commentary regarding one of the seminars. A no more than 1,500 word commentary will need to be posted to the whole class on the Tuesday evening before the class they are responsible. The presentation will also be made orally by the student at the beginning of the class in question.

4) Justification Abstracts: 3% each x 5 (15% total). Students will have to write 300 word abstracts describing eight articles or book chapters that address each class for the week. Each abstract will summarize the topic of the week. Abstracts are due one week after the seminars are completed. After that, they cannot be handed in.

5) Participation/Attendance: 25%. Attendance is important, including staying the full duration of classes, and fully participating. Especially considering that this is a graduate seminar; students are expected to engage in class discussions and other activities, while not overly dominating other students. Two marks will be subtracted for each absence (unless authorized for medical or compassionate reasons), and one mark will be deducted

for being late. At the end of the course, the overall depth and quality of student participation will also be evaluated.

Good writing is important: I appreciate good writing, and will reward those who demonstrate their ability to write well.

Grading

90-100	A
82-89	AB
74-81	B
66-73	BC
58-65	C
51-57	D
50 and below	F

Students whose grades border between two letter grades will be given the higher grade if they have excellent attendance records, good participation in classes, and show improvement over the course of the term.

Plagiarizing and otherwise cheating will not be tolerated, and it is suggested that students become familiar with UW-Madison policies related to this issue.

Assignments will be docked 10% for each day that they are late. There are no exceptions to this apart from cases of serious health problems or other documented emergencies.

Course Schedule

1	Wednesday, January 20, 2016	<p>Course Introduction</p> <p>Review of syllabus, key course concepts</p> <p>The Global Land Grab or the Global Land Rush</p> <p>GRAIN (2008). <i>Seized! the 2008 land grab for food and financial security</i>. Barcelona: GRAIN. http://www.grain.org/article/entries/93-seized-the-2008-landgrab-for-food-and-financial-security</p> <p>Daniel, S. and A. Mittal (2009). <i>The great land grab: Rush for world's farmland threatens food security for the poor</i>. Oakland, CA: The Oakland Institute. http://www.oaklandinstitute.org/great-land-grab-rush-world%E2%80%99s-farmland-threatens-food-security-poor</p> <p>World Bank (2010). <i>Rising global interest in farmland: can it yield sustainable and equitable benefits?</i> Washington, DC.</p> <p>Wily, L.A (2012). Looking back to see forward: the legal niceties of land theft in land rushes. <i>Journal of Peasant Studies</i>, 39(3 & 4): 751-775.</p>
2	Wednesday, January 27	<p>The Origins of Land</p> <p>Hall, Derek (2013). <i>Land</i>. Polity Press, Cambridge.</p> <p>Supplemental (Not Required)</p> <p>Hall, D., Hirsch, P., Li, T.M., (2011). <i>Powers of Exclusion: Land Dilemmas in Southeast Asia</i>. University of Singapore, Singapore/University of Hawai'i, Honolulu.</p> <p>Ribot, J. and N.L Peluso (2003). A theory of access. <i>Rural Sociology</i>, 68(2): 153–181.</p>
3	Wednesday, February 3	<p>Enclosure and Primitive Accumulation</p> <p>Seminar to be led by Matthew Zinsli</p> <p>Marx, Karl (1992). Part 8, Primitive Accumulation. In <i>Capital, Volume 1: A Critique of Political Economy</i> (translated by Ben Fowkes). Penguin Books.</p> <p>Baird, Ian G. (2011). Turning land into capital, turning people into labour: Primitive accumulation and the arrival of large-scale economic land concessions in the Lao People's Democratic Republic. <i>New Proposals: Journal of Marxism and Interdisciplinary Inquiry</i>, 5(1): 10-26.</p>

		<p>White, B., S.M. Borras Jr., R. Hall, I. Scoones & W. Wolford (2012). The new enclosures: critical perspectives on corporate land deals, <i>Journal of Peasant Studies</i>, 39(3&4): 619-647.</p> <p>Sassen, S. (2010). A savage sorting of winners and losers: Contemporary versions of primitive accumulation. <i>Globalizations</i>, 7(1-2): 23-50.</p>
4	Wednesday, February 10	<p>The Great Transformation and the Double Movement</p> <p>Polanyi, Karl (2001) (2nd edition) (1957). <i>The Great Transformation: The Political and Economic Origins of Our Time</i>. Beacon Press.</p>
5	Wednesday, February 17	<p>Native American Land Dispossession</p> <p>Banner, Stuart (2005). Introduction. Pages 1-48 in <i>How the Indians Lost their Land: Law and Power on the Frontier</i>. The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, Cambridge, MA and London.</p> <p>O'Brien, Jean M. (1997). <i>Dispossession by Degrees: Indian Land and Identity in Natick, Massachusetts, 1650-1790</i>. University of Nebraska Press, Lincoln and London. (part)</p> <p>Wonderley, Anthony (2003). Good Peter's narrative of several transactions respecting Indian lands. An Oneida view of dispossession, 1785-1788. <i>New York History</i>, 84(3): 237-273.</p>
6	Wednesday, February 24	<p>Financialization and Commodification/Decommodification of Land</p> <p>Fairbairn, Madeleine (2015). Foreignization, financialization and land grab regulation. <i>Journal of Agrarian Change</i>, 15(4): 581-591.</p> <p>Fairbairn, Madeleine (2014). "Like gold with yield": Evolving intersections between farmland and finance. <i>Journal of Peasant Studies</i>, 41(5): 777-795.</p> <p>Green, W. Nathan and Ian G. Baird (2016) (Forthcoming) Capitalizing on compensation: Hydropower resettlement and the commodification and decommodification of nature-society relations in southern Laos. <i>Annals of the Association of American Geographers</i>.</p>
7	Wednesday, March 2	<p>Gender and Land Deals</p> <p>Behrman, J., R. Meinzen-Dick and A. Quisumbing (2012). The gender implications of large-scale land deals. <i>Journal of Peasant Studies</i>, 39(1): 49-79.</p> <p>Chu, J. (2011). Gender and 'land grabbing' in sub-Saharan Africa: Women's land rights and customary land tenure. <i>Development</i>, 54(1): 35-39.</p>

		<p>http://www.palgrave-journals.com/development/journal/v54/n1/full/dev201095a.html</p> <p>Izumi, K. (2007). Gender-based violence and property grabbing in Africa: A denial of women's liberty and security. <i>Gender & Development</i>, 15(1): 11-23. http://www.jstor.org/stable/20461178</p> <p>White, J. and B. White. (2012). Gendered experiences of dispossession: oil palm expansion in a Dayak Hibun community in West Kalimantan. <i>Journal of Peasant Studies</i>, 39(3&4): 995-1016.</p>
8	Wednesday, March 9	<p>Indigenous People and Land</p> <p>Baird, Ian G. (2013). 'Indigenous peoples' and land: Comparing communal land titling and its implications in Cambodia and Laos. <i>Asia Pacific Viewpoint</i>, 54(3): 269-281.</p> <p>Milne, Sarah (2013). Under the leopard's skin: Land commodification and the dilemmas of Indigenous communal title in upland Cambodia. <i>Asia Pacific Viewpoint</i> 54(3): 323-339.</p> <p>Castree, Noel (2004). Differential geographies: place, indigenous rights and 'local' resources. <i>Political Geography</i> 23: 133-167.</p>
9	Wednesday, March 16	<p>Land and Labor</p> <p>Li, Tania Murray (2014). <i>Land's End: Capital Relations on an Indigenous Frontier</i>. Duke University Press, Durham and London.</p> <p>Li, Tania Murray (2011). Centering labor in the land grab debate. <i>Journal of Peasant Studies</i>, 38(2): 281-298.</p>
10	Wednesday, March 28	<p>Rethinking "Global Land Grabbing"</p> <p>Baird, Ian G. (2014) The global land grab meta-narrative, Asian money laundering and elite capture: Reconsidering the Cambodian context. <i>Geopolitics</i>, 19(2): 431-453.</p> <p>Buckley, L. (2013). Chinese land-based interventions in Senegal. <i>Development and Change</i>, 44(2): 429-450.</p> <p>Brautigam, Deborah (2010). <i>The Dragon's Gift: The Real Story of China in Africa</i>. Oxford University Press, Oxford (part of book).</p> <p>Hofman, I. and P. Ho (2012). China's 'developmental outsourcing': A critical examination of Chinese global 'land grabs' discourse. <i>Journal of Peasant Studies</i>, 39(1): 1-48.</p>

11	Wednesday, April 6	<p>Land Titling and other forms of Land Formalization</p> <p>Seminar led by Nathan Green</p> <p>De Soto, Hernando (2000). <i>The Mystery of Capital</i>. Bantam Press, London, chapter 1 and 2.</p> <p>Bromley, Daniel W. (2008). Formalising property relations in the developing world: The wrong prescription for the wrong malady. <i>Land Use Policy</i>, 26: 20-27.</p> <p>Mitchell, Timothy (2007). The Properties of Markets. Pages 244-75 In <i>Do Economists Make Markets? On the Performativity of Economics</i>, edited by Donald MacKenzie, Fabian Muniesa, and Lucia Siu. Princeton University Press, Princeton and Oxford.</p> <p>Dwyer, Michael B. (2015). The formalization fix? Land titling, land concessions and the politics of spatial transparency in Cambodia, <i>The Journal of Peasant Studies</i>, DOI:10.1080/03066150.2014.994510</p> <p>Version 1 of Paper Due</p>
12	Wednesday, April 13	<p>Contracts and Land Concessions Related to Railroad Development</p> <p>Seminar led by Kelly Wanjeng Chen</p> <p>White, Richard (2011). <i>Railroaded: the Transcontinentals and the Making of Modern America</i> (part of book, possibly chapters 4, 5 and 11).</p> <p>Monson, Jamie (2011). <i>Africa's Freedom Railway: How a Chinese Development Project Changed Lives and Livelihood in Tanzania</i> (part of book).</p> <p>Review #1 Due</p>
13	Wednesday, April 20	<p>Urban Land Grabbing</p> <p>Seminar to be led by Mike Dunford</p> <p>Harms, Erik (2011). <i>Saigon's Edge: On the Margins of Ho Chi Minh City</i>. University of Minnesota Press (part of book).</p> <p>Harms Erik (2013). Eviction time in the new Saigon: Temporalities of displacement in the rubble of development. <i>Cultural Anthropology</i>, 28(2): 344–368.</p> <p>Review #2 Due</p>

14	Wednesday, April 27	<p>Multi-Stakeholder Sustainability "Roundtables" for Governing Agricultural Commodities</p> <p>Seminar to be led by Daniel Bornstein</p> <p>Cheyns, Emmanuelle (2014). Making “minority voices” heard in transnational roundtables: the role of local NGOs in reintroducing justice and attachments. <i>Agriculture and Human Values</i>, 31(3): 439-453.</p> <p>Selfa, Theresa, Carmen Bain, and Renata Moreno (2014). Depoliticizing land and water “grabs” in Colombia: the limits of Bonsucro certification for enhancing sustainable biofuel practices. <i>Agriculture and Human Values</i>, 31(3): 455-468.</p> <p>Silva-Castañeda, Laura (2012). A forest of evidence: third-party certification and multiple forms of proof—a case study of oil palm plantations in Indonesia. <i>Agriculture and Human Values</i>, 29(3): 361-370.</p>
15	Wednesday, May 4	<p>Green Grabbing</p> <p>Fairhead, J., M. Leach and I. Scoones (2012). Green Grabbing: a new appropriation of nature? <i>Journal of Peasant Studies</i>, 39(2): 237-261.</p> <p>Leach, M., J. Fairhead, and J. Fraser (2012). Green grabs and biochar: revaluing African soils and farming in the new carbon economy. <i>Journal of Peasant Studies</i>, 39(2): 285–307.</p> <p>Neimark, B. (2012). Green grabbing at the ‘pharm’ gate: rosy periwinkle production in southern Madagascar. <i>Journal of Peasant Studies</i>, 39(2): 423-445.</p> <p>Corson, C. and K.I. MacDonald (2012). Enclosing the global commons: the convention on biological diversity and green grabbing. <i>Journal of Peasant Studies</i>, 39(2): 263–83.</p> <p>Filer, C. (2012). Why green grabs don’t work in Papua New Guinea. <i>Journal of Peasant Studies</i>, 39(2): 599-617.</p> <p>Final Paper Due</p>

* Note that during the course it is possible that some of the contents of classes will change.