

Africa's land rush – future-making at the margins?

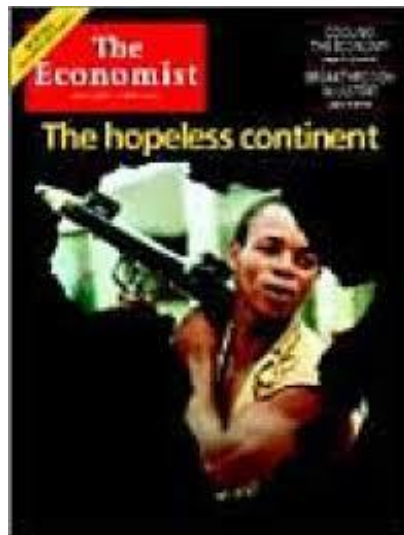
Detlef Müller-Mahn (Bonn)

GLOCON Berlin 2.12.2016

PANEL: State, authority and citizenship

Central questions of the symposium:

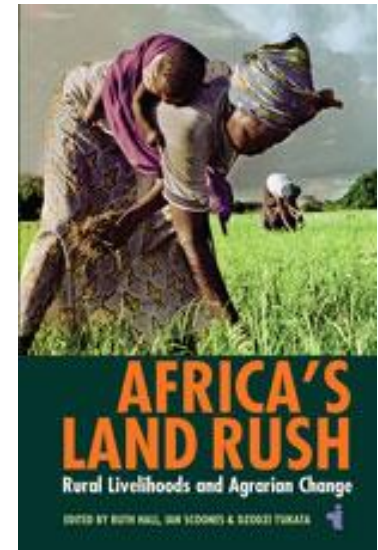
1. Relevance and theorizing of spatial dimensions of conflicts over land?
2. How are land conflicts shaped by different authorities and patterns of domination?



1998



2013



2015

Narratives of future-making

To what extent is global capital driving Africa's land rush?



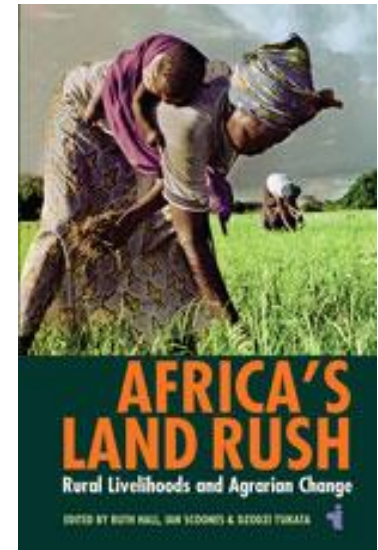
Financialization of agriculture

What is the role of African states in rural transformation?

How are rural futures produced, by whom and for whom?



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Narratives of future-making

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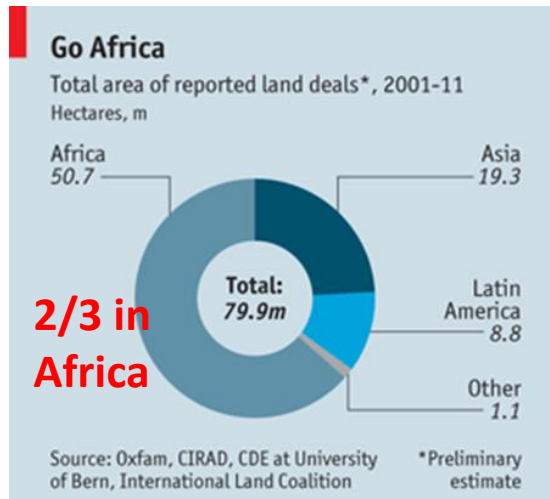
Financialization of agriculture

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(a) Macro-perspective



Land deals 2001-11
(Economist 2011)

Contested terminology:

- Land grabbing
- Land rush / land deals
- Large scale land acquisition

Controversial interpretations:

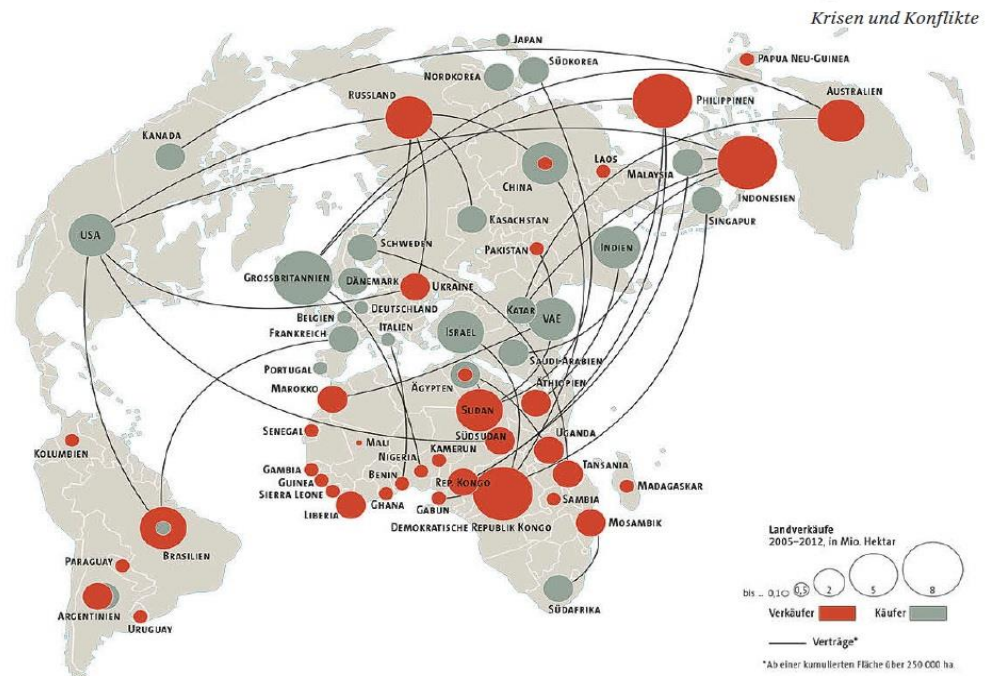
land grab or development opportunity?

weak data base!

Landmatrix.org

Diverse patterns – remarkable similarities :

- N-S and increasingly **S-S** investments!
- International and increasingly **domestic** capital
- Large and increasingly **medium scale** transactions



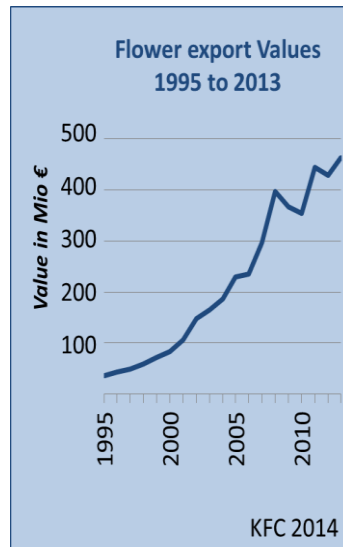
Le Monde diplo 2015

→ **pivotal role of African states** (Hall et al 2015)

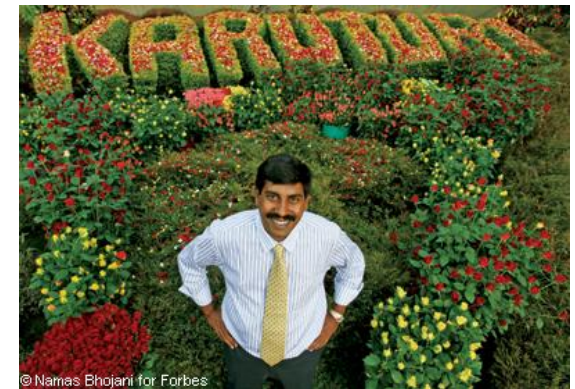
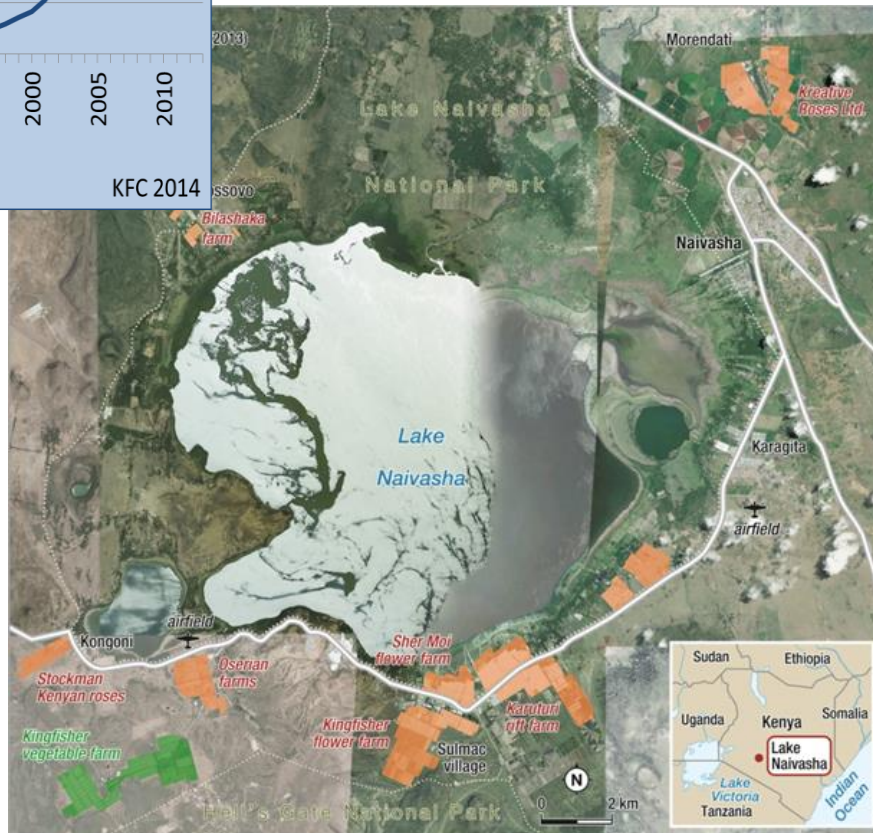
→ **state-capital alliances** (Harvey 2003)



(b) Micro-perspective: cut flower farms at Lake Naivasha/Kenya



- Appr. 60 commercial farms
- Mainly foreign investors, 60000 Kenyan workers
- Flower export value rising to 500 Mill. €
- Shifting bio-cultural frontiers
- Eviction of Maasai pastoralists





(c) Micro-perspective: commercial farms in the Awash basin/Ethiopia

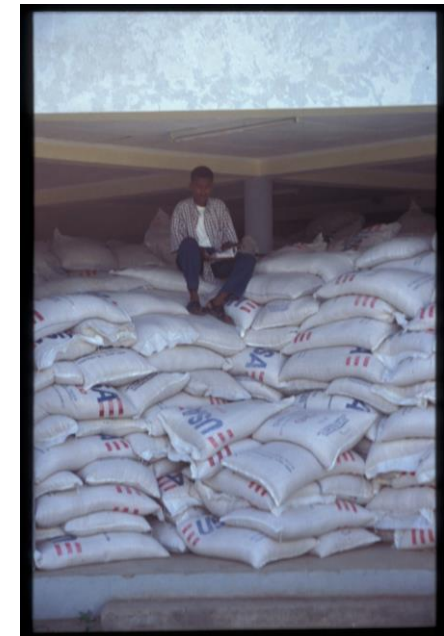
Afar pastoralists: 1 Million people

Ethiopian government: intensified use and commercialisation of „unused“ territories and natural resources (water, land)

→ Eviction of pastoralists → aid dependency



Investor from Dubai



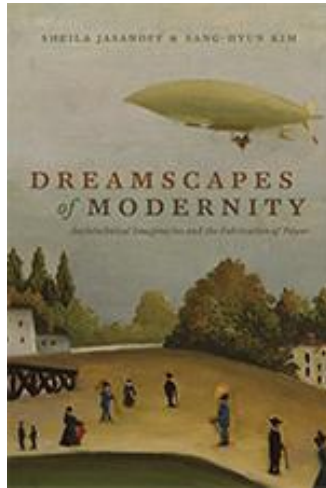
Food aid distribution center
© S. Rettberg



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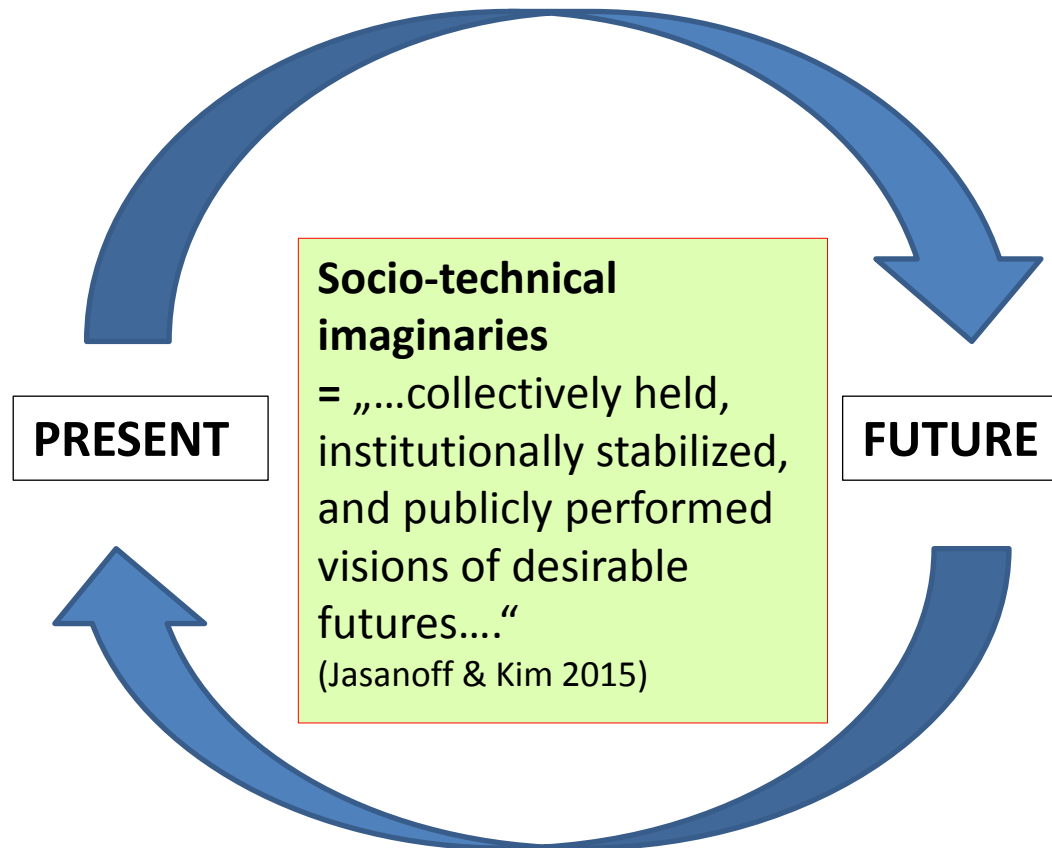


Jasanoff & Kim 2015



Future-making = social practices that „fold the future into the present“ through anticipation, aspiration and imagination (Anderson & Adey 2012, Appadurai 2013)

- Imagination as a social **practice** (Appadurai 2013)
- Dreamscapes: **modernity**
- **Performativity**: enactment of underlying models of futures
- Institutional stabilization & coordinated action: **state**



In which way do African states enact their „visions of desirable futures“ ?

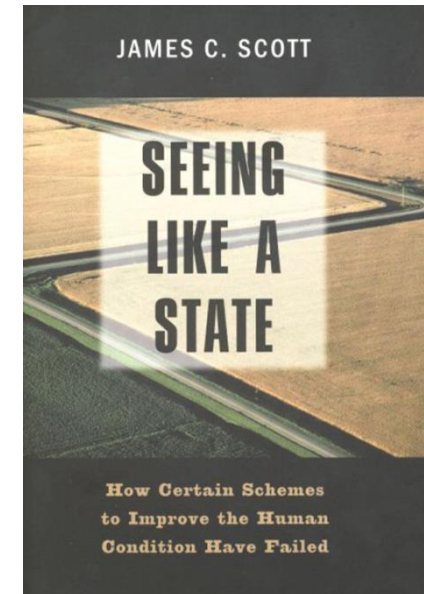


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Scott 1998: Seeing like a state

- Example: compulsory villagization in Tanzania (*ujamaa*)
→ Creation of state landscapes of control
→ **transforming visions**
- Importance of imagination / „imagined communities“ for nationalism and state-building (Anderson 1991)
- Shared Imaginations of invented traditions and common futures
- African nationalisms → future-oriented projects of development and modernization



1998

Spatialization of transforming visions of modernization:

- **development corridors**
- **transformation of land tenure & resettlement**
- **self-assurance of sovereignty through territorial control**



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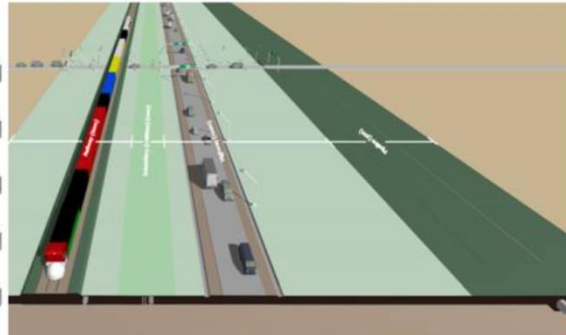
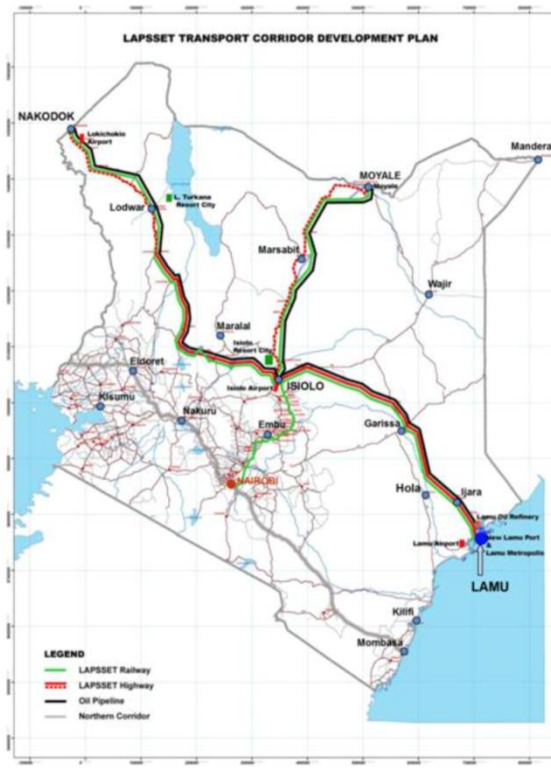


Kenya's Vision 2030: dreamscape of modernity

“development **blue-print** ... to transform Kenya into a newly industrializing, middle-income country (...).”



LAPSSET Corridor Design Layout



LAPSSET Corridor: → developing “empty spaces” and “ungoverned territories”

Luxury Resort Cities

Bird's Eye View of Resort City in Lake Turkana (Eliye Springs)





The Galana-Kulalu scheme



The “vision”:

- achieving food sufficiency by transforming “unused” semiarid lands into irrigated farming and high-yield maize
- 10.000 ha model farm at Galana-Kulalu scheme launched in 2016 by Israeli investor
- 2nd phase planned for 500.000 ha

The reality:

- Implementation delayed, corruption
- Disappropriation of smallholders and pastoralists,
- Inter-communal conflicts



Whose visions count?

„While a national dream is conceived by people, Vision 2030 was not conceived internally by Kenyans but externally by **McKinsey & Company** of South Africa that has been **conceiving and selling „national visions“ to African countries** like Kenya. Ours is Vision 2030, Rwanda’s Vision 2020, Burundi’s Vision 2025, Tanzania’s Vision 2025, and so forth. (Daily Nation 7.6.2016)



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Conclusion: Transformation at the margins and future-making

Questions:

1. To what extent is global capital driving Africa's land rush?
 2. What is the role of African states in rural transformation?
 3. How are rural futures produced, by whom and for whom?
1. Mixture of global and domestic capital; specific investments cannot be adequately explained by financialization of land markets alone
 2. National „visions“ aim at territorial control and spatial transformation by reducing uncertainties for investors
 3.
 - assemblages of socio-technical imaginations;
 - coalitions between global capital, national elites and experts;
 - creating new exclusions and shifting bio-cultural frontiers at the margins