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Engendering the New Enclosures: Development, Involuntary Resettlement and the Struggles for Social Reproduction in Coastal Tanzania

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ABSTRACT

This article engages with the feminist concept of ‘social reproduction’ to arrive at a richer understanding of the gendered processes and outcomes of contemporary large-scale land acquisitions, or the ‘new enclosures’. It focuses on the case of a recent land deal for industrial sugarcane production in the Coast Region of Tanzania and the resultant process of involuntary resettlement. It critically analyses people's struggles for land in the face of imminent displacement, and the gendered ways they experience the erosion of their pre-existing modes of social reproduction. It argues that enclosure of rural landscapes does more than immediately strip peasants and pastoralists of their means of production and turn them into wage labourers. It gradually uproots them from their socio-ecological knowledges, cultural practices and historical memories, which are rooted on the land and articulated through gender. The highly uncertain processes of enclosure and displacement also force rural women and men to renegotiate their livelihood strategies and intra-household gender relations.

INTRODUCTION

Tanzania is among the top African countries targeted by foreign investors in the contemporary global land rush (Anseeuw et al., 2012). While obtaining precise data on transnational land transfers remains a challenge, it is estimated that more than 30 deals amounting to one million hectares have been announced, negotiated or signed in Tanzania within the last decade (see Locher and Sulle, 2014). The new wave of enclosures in Tanzania has not only been accelerated by the convergence of the global food, fuel, finance and climate crises (Borras et al., 2011; McMichael, 2012), but also by the state's committed push to transform agriculture into a ‘modernized, commercial, highly productive and profitable’ sector (URT, 2013: 9). Since the launch of the Kilimo Kwanza (Agriculture First) initiative in 2009, the Tanzanian government has placed the private sector at the heart of its agricultural transformation agenda. As part of this strategy, it launched the Southern Agricultural Growth Corridor of Tanzania in 2010 to promote public–private partnerships (PPPs) as a model for agriculture-led growth and development. More recently, in 2013, the government announced its ‘Big Results Now’ initiative, with the aim of establishing 25 large-scale commercial farm deals for paddy rice and sugarcane by 2015/16.¹

This article examines, from a feminist perspective, a recent large-scale land deal for industrial sugarcane production in Bagamoyo

District, Coast Region of Tanzania. The deal was negotiated between the Tanzanian government and Agro EcoEnergy Tanzania Limited (hereinafter referred to as EcoEnergy), a subsidiary of the Swedish company EcoEnergy Africa AB, based on a benefit-sharing scheme, known as 'land for equity'.² According to this arrangement, the Tanzanian government agreed to lease 20,373.56 hectares³ of public land to EcoEnergy for 99 years, in exchange for a 25 per cent equity share in the investment (Agro EcoEnergy Tanzania, 2012a). Despite the fact that the land title was transferred to EcoEnergy in May 2013, the actual project implementation remains at a standstill at the time of this article's publication. In this text, I argue that the project has stalled because the government and the company have been unable to resolve the issue of how to compensate and remove the approximately 1,400 people who are currently subsisting on and staking their claims to the land. These individuals, their families and communities are not just awaiting physical displacement from their homes and dispossession from their means of production. They are experiencing gradual dislocation from their socio-ecological knowledges, cultural practices and historical memories, which are inextricably tied to the land, and which are often articulated through gender. By considering involuntary resettlement as a technical issue, the Tanzanian government and EcoEnergy have inevitably underestimated the strength and the gendered nature of people's attachment to the land.

To explain the dispossessions associated with contemporary land deals, many authors have turned to the Marxist concepts of 'primitive accumulation' and 'accumulation by dispossession (ABD)' (see Levien, 2012; Moyo et al., 2012). These concepts are indeed useful for historicizing the current bout of transnational land deals as an expression of, and as responses to, the crisis of neoliberal capitalism, and for explaining how displacement and dispossession are inherent to capitalist development. However, I argue that they are insufficient for explaining the gendered processes and outcomes of contemporary land deals, let alone other means through which capital continues to encroach upon rural landscapes. This is because primitive accumulation and ABD are constrained by their androcentric and capitalocentric approaches to valuing land and labour, and hence fail to account fully for the complex gender dynamics and realities of social life on the land for agrarian households.

The overarching aim of this article is to embed gender, or to correct the 'overwhelming gender-blindness' (Daley, 2011: 14), in the global 'land grab' debate. I start by sketching in broad strokes what I am calling a 'feminist ontology of land'. Central to this approach is the concept of 'social reproduction'. This concept is more explicitly gendered, nuanced and humanistic than the notion of 'reproduction', which is laden with the ideas of primitive accumulation and ABD. Against the dominant ontology that abstracts land as a commodity and a factor of production, the feminist ontology conceptualizes land as a broader site and source of social reproduction. I argue that social reproduction allows us to see the multiple uses and values of land and labour that give significance to life for rural women and men. This highlights the role of gender as a key signifier of power that mediates peoples' relationships to and experiences on the land.

Following this discussion, I present the case study of the Bagamoyo EcoEnergy (BEE) Sugar Project. I highlight the complexity of multiple and overlapping claims made over the acquired land, as well as various problems associated with how people and their properties were counted by government authorities for compensation purposes. I argue that involuntary resettlement, specifically the ways in which it is planned and governed, results in the fragmentation of pre-existing modes of social reproduction; it devalues the polyvalence of land and labour, and glosses over the unequal gender relations of power that operate within Tanzanian society. Yet, the ways in which rural women and men experience and respond to (the imminence of) displacement are deeply gendered — they are shaped and constrained by the patriarchal ideologies that are entrenched and reproduced within households.

The empirical findings presented in this article are based on fieldwork conducted in August 2013, July and August 2014, and September through December 2015. I draw upon in-depth interviews with 54 people from 47 households (24 women, 30 men), and three focus groups involving 34 people — all of whom are facing involuntary resettlement induced by the BEE Sugar Project. I also build on data collected from semi-structured and unstructured interviews with 52 key informants, including village leaders, national and district level government officials, EcoEnergy executive and consultants, donor agency staff, local researchers, activists and lawyers working on issues of land, gender and agricultural development.

TOWARDS A FEMINIST ONTOLOGY

In order to engender our understandings of the new enclosures, we cannot simply 'add women and stir' (Harding, 1995). Engendering is about taking gender seriously as a relational and analytical category and an ideological process, which defines what it means to be women and men, female and male, and feminine and masculine in a given society (Scott, 1988). It is also about being keenly aware of how gender intersects with class, race, ethnicity, marital status, sex, age and other identity categories to mediate the relations of power and inequality. As Joan Scott emphasizes, feminist scholarship is less about highlighting the important role and deeds of women than exposing the 'silent and hidden operations of gender that are nonetheless present and defining forces in the organization of most societies' (ibid.: 25). Before elaborating on the concept of 'social reproduction', which lies at the heart of the feminist ontology, I highlight several limits of primitive accumulation and ABD for engendering the new enclosures.

Limits of Primitive Accumulation and ABD

Primitive accumulation refers to the violent process through which capitalism emerges from pre-capitalist agrarian social formations: the enclosure of the commons; the expulsion of peasants from their land; and their forcible transformation into wage labourers (Marx, 1867/1976). Harvey's (2003) updated concept of ABD signifies the ongoing nature of primitive accumulation in the contemporary era; it is the central mechanism through which capitalism reproduces itself over time. Reproduction according to orthodox Marxism consists of: a) the daily maintenance of the workers' labour power; b) the continued extraction of surplus value through the exploitation of the proletariat by the bourgeoisie; and c) the biological reproduction of human beings or future labour power. As Marx (1867/1976: 711) puts it, 'every social process of production is at the same time a process of reproduction'. This interconnected process, however, is distinctly class based in orthodox Marxist theory, and has significance insofar as it expands the 'public', or the 'formal', sphere of the commodified market economy.

However, as Marxist and socialist feminists have long argued, privileging the 'public' sphere and silencing the 'private' sphere of the

unwaged domesticity has far-reaching consequences. It eclipses the fact that capitalism has thrived on the co-existence of waged and unwaged labour, and especially the exploitation of the latter. It also degrades women's social status to a mere biological 'machine' for the production of new workers' (Federici, 2004: 12), and devalues women's housework and care work, which are unwaged but still socially necessary for ensuring the well-being of all people, regardless of their position vis-à-vis the capitalist labour market (Picchio, 1992). Furthermore, it naturalizes and trivializes patriarchy which predates capitalism by over five millennia, and conceals the fact that capitalism, as we know it, depends on patriarchy for its continuity (Connell, 1987).

In addition to their relation to labour, primitive accumulation and ABD are also limited by their androcentric and capitalocentric approaches to land. The questions of who has land, who gets land, what they do with it, how and why cannot be answered without an analysis of the interlocking hierarchies of class, gender, ethnicity, age, marital status and other forms of inequalities. However, because primitive accumulation and ABD tend to assume that land is a commodity, private property or physical resource to be dominated by people for 'productive' use, they pre-empt the exploration of the polyvalence of land (see Li, 2014; McMichael, 2014; Verma, 2014). By this I mean the multiple and overlapping ways in which land is accessed, used, controlled and valued by rural women and men, and how property, inclusive of private, public and communal, exists in a complex web of social relationships and institutions (see Berry, 1989; Ribot and Peluso, 2003). For instance, as Radcliffe (2013) demonstrates in the case of contemporary Ecuador, indigenous women articulate their historical land claims not based on their class identities per se, but on their ethnicity and gender, while rejecting a stark division between collective and individual property rights. In another historical example, Federici (2004) highlights how medieval women claimed the commons as the centre of social life before the European enclosures. She argues that the commons provided not only the source of material life, but also a space for women to convene to exchange news, carry out cultural activities, and form their own viewpoints autonomously from men. There is a strong parallel between her idea of gendered commons and what Rocheleau and Edmunds (1997: 1355) refer to as 'micro-frontiers' in contemporary rural Africa, such as kitchen gardens, bush lands or scattered patches of uncultivated land. Women exert relatively greater control over these niche spaces, than they normally would over their family plots (which are often perceived to be 'owned' by their husbands or male elder kin). At the same time, poor women in particular rely heavily on these gendered spaces to access resources, such as fuelwood, wild foods and medicinal plants, to meet their personal, household and communal responsibilities (ibid.).

My main argument is that land enclosures do more than immediately strip peasants and pastoralists of their means of production and turn them into wage labourers. They gradually displace people from their cultural practices, socio-ecological knowledges and historical memories, which are deeply rooted on the land, and which are articulated in gendered ways. These combined processes of displacement, dispossession and dislocation can be rapid or they can be slow, they can be visible or they can be invisible. As Feldman and Geisler (2012: 974) argue, 'in situ displacement', or a situation in which people are displaced in place through the loss of entitlements, social exclusion and alienation of rights and identities, can be as traumatizing as physical eviction itself. This type of displacement, albeit unseen, results in the accumulation of human insecurity and, ultimately, the failure of peoples' capacity to 'socially reproduce everyday lives and livelihoods' (ibid.). However, what does it mean to be socially reproducing? And what does impaired social reproduction look like?

Bringing the 'Social' Back in Reproduction

At the crux of the feminist ontology of land is the concept of 'social reproduction', which has been used widely by feminist scholars across the disciplines. Laslett and Brenner (1989: 382–3) refer to social reproduction as the 'activities and attitudes, behaviours and emotions, responsibilities and relationships directly involved in the maintenance of life on a daily basis, and intergenerationally'. Katz (2001: 711) defines it as the 'fleshy, messy and the indeterminate stuff of everyday life', and Picchio (1992: 98) suggests that social reproduction is something that allows 'people to feel like human beings in a system that treats them like commodities'. In this article, I consciously use the concept of social reproduction to distinguish it from, and to rescue the humanism that is lost in, the orthodox Marxist notion of 'reproduction'.

Social reproduction occurs at multiple levels (e.g. household, market, state) and can be associated with various social formations. However, for the purpose of this article, I focus on the level of the household in agrarian societies undergoing capitalist transformation. I define social reproduction as an assemblage of diverse labour processes — both paid and unpaid, material and symbolic, individual and communal — which are necessary for the sustenance and resilience of human life. What is unique about agrarian households is that their labour processes (i.e. the transformation of their labour power into labour) occur on, with and through the land. For example, rural Tanzanians use their land for more than just cultivating crops. They depend daily on forests and other tree resources (for gathering fuelwood, timber and medicinal plants); grasses (for thatching and weaving); meadows and pastures (for grazing livestock); and rivers, ponds and dams (for fetching water, catching fish and collecting clay and sand for making cooking utensils). In other words, there is a strong unity between what are often separated as 'productive' and 'reproductive' activities, or 'public' and 'private' spheres, in agrarian societies.

What is important to note here is that, more often than not, it is women and girls who perform the labour processes constitutive of rural social reproduction. The repeated performance of gendered labour processes on a daily and intergenerational basis has the effect of reifying the dominant identities of women as mothers, housewives, caregivers and agricultural labourers. In Tanzania, such ideological construction of womanhood has stemmed from the historical legacy of slavery and servitude, as well as the patriarchal norms that are produced and reproduced most intimately within households (see Bryceson, 1995). Nevertheless, agrarian households are hardly natural, isomorphic or altruistic units. Rather, they are a 'battleground over patriarchy' (Friedmann, 1986: 192), in which daughters, sons, wives and junior kin do not automatically acquiesce in the authority of the male 'head' of the household, but constantly bargain, negotiate, resist and/or adapt to unequal relations of power (Carney and Watts, 1990; Guyer and Peters, 1987; Schroeder, 1999).

The definition of social reproduction provided above is intentionally broader than the approach taken by some contemporary feminist political economists, who pit the 'unpaid care economy' against the 'commodity economy', and attempt to calculate its monetary value within national income statistics (see Folbre, 2006; Razavi, 2007). While such distinctions help politicize the 'invisibility' of gendered

unpaid care work, they still operate within the public–private dualism that has characterized both mainstream and Marxist analyses of capitalism. My aim is to move beyond these rigid boundaries and to demonstrate that production and reproduction are in fact mutually constituted, and nested within a broader field of social reproduction.

To recapitulate, social reproduction is analytically important as it lends the following two key insights for engendering the new enclosures. First, it allows us to see the multiple uses and values of land and labour, and how combining the two ensures the sustenance and resilience of life for agrarian households. Second, it allows us to examine gender as a key signifier of power and a constitutive element in shaping people's relationships to and experiences on the land. Hence, enclosures of rural landscapes will likely result in the fragmentation of the meanings of land and labour, and force rural women and men to renegotiate their livelihood trajectories and intra-household gender relations. These are not consequences specific to the new enclosures per se, but of agrarian capitalism more broadly. For example, Carney and Watts (1990) and Schroeder (1999) have shown that commercial agriculture and agroforestry schemes introduced in the 1980s in rural Gambia have resulted in the intensification of intra-household conflicts and the renegotiation of conjugal contracts, that is the terms on which claims on resources (e.g. land, labour, income) are made between husbands and wives. Such gendered experiences can be reformulated as 'struggles for social reproduction'; while clearly being material processes, struggles over land and labour are at the same time 'struggles over socially-constructed meanings, definitions, and identities' (Hart, 1991: 95). In the remainder of the article, I extend the theoretical discussion thus far to the case of the BEE Sugar Project.

A CASE STUDY: THE BEE SUGAR PROJECT

Acquiring 'Land for Equity'

The BEE Sugar Project is a PPP between the Tanzanian government and Agro EcoEnergy Tanzania, which is a subsidiary of the Swedish company EcoEnergy Africa AB.⁴ The project site is located in Bagamoyo District in the Coast Region of Tanzania, approximately 80 km northwest of Dar es Salaam, about 8 km inland from the Indian Ocean, directly south of Saadani National Park, and situated within the Wami/Ruvu River Basin, one of nine river basins draining mainland Tanzania. This vast project, requiring over half a billion US dollars in total investment cost, is to be financed primarily by the African Development Bank (AfDB).⁵ While a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed between EcoEnergy and the (then) Ministry of Planning, Economy and Empowerment in June 2006 to produce ethanol for export, its current rationale is to produce sugar, electricity and ethanol for the Tanzanian domestic market, thereby contributing to national economic development (AfDB, 2012).

In May 2013, EcoEnergy received a certificate of title to a large portion of an 'abandoned' state cattle ranch, known as Razaba (Ranchi ya Zanzibar Bagamoyo), which operated between the late 1970s and early 1990s. As per the 'land for equity' arrangement, the Tanzanian government granted EcoEnergy the right to occupy 20,373.56 hectares of general land (a category of public land), free of encumbrance for 99 years, in exchange for 25 per cent equity ownership in the investment.⁶ Specifically, it was agreed that the Tanzanian government would receive a 10 per cent non-dilutable equity share at the time of financial close with the AfDB, and an additional 15 per cent after 18 years of project operation (Agro EcoEnergy Tanzania, 2012a).⁷ Despite the official transfer of the land title in 2013, years of inactivity on the ground since the signing of the MoU have meant that the land has become an epicentre of illicit property transactions and burgeoning informal settlements. In November 2011, the District Commissioner's Office resorted to erecting a notice board at the entrance of the project site that read: 'Warning! Do not agree to buy land/farm in this area. This area, which used to be Razaba... is public land, and the government is in the final stages of transferring the land to the investor, EcoEnergy. Do not be deceived'. In early 2014, additional notice boards were erected to show the boundaries of the project area, and site-closure workers and militia police were deployed to close off the area.

As of this article's publication, however, there is little project implementation on the ground. No bulk infrastructure or on-farm development is under way, such as the construction of haulage roads, bridges, power lines, water storage, processing plant and the installation of irrigation systems. The project's partners attribute this impasse to the bureaucratic and political obstacles associated with fulfilling the loan conditions set out by the AfDB. Some of the major conditions include: a) the resolution of various land disputes within the project site; b) the enactment of regulatory reforms to protect the domestic sugar industry; and c) the provision of various tax incentives for EcoEnergy.⁸ I will examine the first issue in the following section, although not in an exhaustive manner due to reasons of space.⁹ While the other two conditions also merit detailed analysis, such analysis falls beyond the scope of this article. What the text aims to do instead is to show that there is a more fundamental and theoretical reason for the delay. I argue that the project is at a standstill because the Tanzanian government and EcoEnergy have not been able to resolve the issue of how to compensate and remove the people who are currently occupying and deriving their livelihoods from the land.

Competing Land Claims

There are five major settlements whose residents are facing involuntary resettlement induced by the BEE Sugar Project: Bozi, Gama, Makaani, Kaloleni Biga and Goble. In addition to these farming communities, there are other populations, such as pastoralists, charcoal producers, seasonal fishermen and food traders, who have set up semi-permanent residence throughout the project site over the past two decades. The exact population size of the project area is difficult to determine due to the large numbers of transient groups of people and the lack of census data at sub-village levels. Triangulating from available sources, about 1,400 people were estimated to be living and working on the land as of 2014.¹⁰ The local populations are ethnically diverse, representing a wide range of tribes, such as Zaramo, Doe, Kwere and Zigua — the original peoples of the Swahili coast — as well as Nyamwezi, Gogo, Sukuma, Nyakyusa, Luguru, Hehe, Bondei, Dengereko, Kaguru, Fipa, Ha, Nyiramba, Barabaig, among others. It must be noted that the Coast Region has historically been characterized by high levels of migration from the interior; Bagamoyo was once the centre and terminus for the East African ivory and slave trade in the early 19th century.

In terms of livelihoods, farming communities within the BEE project site intercrop cereals, tubers and legumes, such as maize, paddy rice,

cassava, potatoes, cowpea and pigeon pea. Many households also grow perennial fruit trees and cash crops, such as banana, mango, coconut, papaya, cashew, watermelon and sesame. These crops provide important sources of income for meeting basic needs, such as foodstuffs, household goods, school fees and health services, as well as for meeting emergent needs. Back gardens are considered to be autonomous spaces for women, where they grow vegetables, such as tomatoes, okra, onions, green peppers, African eggplant, amaranth, pumpkin/pumpkin leaves and sweet potato leaves. Women use these vegetables and other ingredients to prepare side dishes (mboga) to serve with staple grains or to sell at local markets. Few households cultivate sugarcane; for those who do, it is mostly done on a small scale for domestic consumption or for occasional sales.

While systems of land tenure vary according to ethnicity, lineage, religion, as well as land policies at the village level, gender inequality in land inheritance remains a common obstacle for women in rural Bagamoyo. A woman's right to land is often determined by her marital status—even in those few coastal societies that have historically been matrilineal and matrilocal. When a woman marries a man, or when she is 'wedded to' (kuolewa in Kiswahili) a man, she usually receives usufructuary rights to her husband's land. Unmarried daughters, divorcees and widows are further disadvantaged from inheritance, according to both customary practices and Islamic law (Ezer, 2006; Tsikata, 2003). For nomadic pastoralists, the concept of individual ownership of land is irrelevant, as pasture, grazing land and water dams are communal property. For the Barabaig, an ethnic minority in Tanzania, but the dominant pastoralist group within the BEE project site, the experience of enclosures and evictions is not new. They had already been displaced from their homelands, the Hanang Plains of Northern Tanzania, in the 1970s due to a large-scale wheat mechanization project (see Tenga and Kakoti, 1993). Since then, they have been migrating eastwards in search of grazing land for their large herds of livestock.

As stated, the land acquired by EcoEnergy was a former cattle ranch, Razaba, established during the state socialist era. When it closed permanently in 1994, its former workers and their families were permitted to live on the land until the farm would be repurposed for other activities.¹¹ The workers settled in an area now known as Bozi, situated at the southern end of the BEE project site. All government officials whom I interviewed at both district and ministerial levels referred to Bozi people as 'invaders' (wanaovamia/wavamizi), squatting on government land. Most, if not all, of Bozi residents are aware of the fact that they are living and working on land that is not legally theirs, and recognize the precarious nature of their land rights. However, they stake their claims to the land not by the virtue of statutory ownership of land, but by the years of labour they have expended, customarily, to clear, occupy and use the land to socially reproduce their lives and livelihoods. As an elderly man, who formerly worked as a Razaba watchman, recalls: 'The former workers of the ranch started a life here in Bozi. It was a fertile place. I cleared three acres to grow maize, paddy rice, cassava, mango, orange and cashew with my wife. But now we are forbidden from growing permanent crops. We were told that if we plant them, it's like we are wasting our energy.'¹² I will later return to this issue of land use restrictions when I discuss the process of compensation valuation.

Stretching across the northeastern part of the BEE project site, immediately past the two remnant dams from the Razaba era, there are two settlements known as Gama and Makaani. While Gama is officially recognized as an area within the sub-village of Kitame, which lies northeast of the project site, Makaani is not registered as a legitimate settlement in any of the public documents I have surveyed. While the official position of the government is that the people of Makaani are invaders just like the people of Bozi, some of its residents insist otherwise. Both claims have some merit, but are clearly contradictory. When I first visited the project area in August 2013 and returned in July 2014 and November 2015, I was astonished by the proliferation of people, houses and businesses (e.g. kiosks, fruit stands, butcher shops, hair salons), none of which had existed before. Some of the 'new' Makaani residents I interviewed had decided to settle in this area despite being aware of the planned BEE project, due to the hardship of eking out a living in urban areas. While some are ardently claiming the land as theirs through legal action, others are more passive, with a greater willingness to migrate elsewhere if and when the project becomes operational.

To elaborate on the former, three male elders from Makaani, allegedly representing 537 others from the area, filed a court case against the government and EcoEnergy in August 2012 to claim their historical rights to the land. Two of the plaintiffs, whom I interviewed, vehemently asserted that: a) Makaani people are not invaders or trespassers of government land; b) Gama and Makaani are considered one community, 'Gama-Makaani', because many Gama residents have shifted to Makaani over the years due to recurrent floods; and c) the formal border of Razaba never exceeded beyond the two dams that marked the southern boundary of 'Gama-Makaani'.¹³ According to the former Razaba manager, Wami River was officially the northern boundary of the ranch. Yet, since the ranch failed to utilize fully the northern portion of the land, farmers were allowed to carry on living there as usual.¹⁴

The villagers are divided. While the Makaani elders have some supporters within their community, outside Makaani — even in Gama — it is rumoured that the elders are fabricating historical evidence to support their lawsuit. Some people believe that the majority of the 537 people who backed the court case are in fact urban elites who illegally bought land in the project area from the Makaani elders. As for EcoEnergy, the company believes that the Makaani elders were financially supported by domestic sugar importers, who stand to lose from the development of the national sugar industry.¹⁵ Whatever the truth may be, the Tanzanian High Court ruled in mid-November 2015 that the Razaba land, which was transferred to EcoEnergy, was inarguably general land, and that 'Gama-Makaani' residents did not have any claims to it.

Finally, at the northern border of the project site along the south bank of the Wami River, there are two sub-villages: Kaloleni Biga and Gobole. Both are part of Matipwili village, whose land area — as conceived by the villagers — overlaps with and stretches further north of the BEE project site. According to the village chairman, the southern border of Matipwili well extended into the current Gama area during the ujamaa era.¹⁶ Whilst most of the village activities (e.g. politics, schools, social services) take place north of the river, the southern sub-villages are considered to be the historical breadbasket of the village, due to the high fertility of the floodplain soil. Just like the elders of Makaani, Matipwili elders argue that Razaba never utilized the land past the two dams. As one male elder who lived through the opening and the closure of the ranch laments: 'It is not true that the government only gave Razaba land to EcoEnergy. They also decided to give away our [village] land without telling us!'¹⁷ The grievance of Matipwili villagers further intensified in 2014, when the District Land Office issued a new village map, which had reassigned village boundaries and essentially erased Kaloleni Biga and Gobole from existence.

An official at the Ministry of Lands, with whom I spoke about this matter, stated: 'The government has fixed the problem of overlapping

land claims. The land was granted to EcoEnergy, so the village borders needed to be redrawn. You know all land in Tanzania is public land, so there is nothing wrong with the government doing its job'.¹⁸ This statement reflects not only the dominant ontology of viewing land as an arena of state activity and a factor of production, but also the ease and authority with which the state can wield cartographic power over its citizens. More poignantly, however, it epitomizes one of the key paradoxes of Tanzanian land laws. While so-called unoccupied and unused village land is automatically considered general land (URT, 1999a), the reverse does not hold true. That is, if general land has been left unattended by the state, villagers have no rights over it, even if they have made substantial investments on the land — both material and symbolic — for their social reproduction over multiple generations. One official, whom I interviewed in the Prime Minister's Office, highlighted this dilemma:



Land is politics. In Tanzania, there is hardly any square metre of land that does not have a claim over it. Only 10 per cent of all land in Tanzania has been surveyed, mapped and titled. You may have heard the common statistics that 2 per cent of land in Tanzania is general land, 28 per cent is reserved land and 70 per cent is village land. But this is data from 20 to 30 years ago! These are the statistics used in our 1995 Land Policy! Because we have not surveyed and updated these data, you will easily find that within a village, there is general land and/or even reserved land! ... We do not have updated information about what general land is today compared to what it was decades ago. This is especially the case for those state farms and ranches like Razaba that closed in the 1990s. And because general land forever remains general land, villagers who have customarily occupied and used the empty land for years have no legal rights over it.¹⁹

The local people I interviewed were aware that all land in the country was ultimately owned by the state, and that the President had the prerogative power to expropriate the land on which they lived for investments of 'public interest' (URT, 1999b: Part III, section 4). Yet, they resisted the purely statist and productivist notion of land by embodying a much larger vision of land as their site and source of social reproduction. As I will further demonstrate below, this disjuncture between different meanings of land becomes particularly salient during the interstitial stage of imminent involuntary resettlement.

Unsettling Involuntary Resettlement

As a condition attached to loans from international financial institutions (IFIs), BEE Sugar Project is required to comply with what is known as 'international best practice' on involuntary resettlement, in addition to complying with Tanzanian national laws. However, because the land was granted 'free of encumbrance' to EcoEnergy according to the 'land for equity' arrangement, it was agreed that the Tanzanian government would bear the resettlement costs in accordance with its national laws. It was also agreed that where additional compensation funds are required to meet the international standards, EcoEnergy would provide the top-ups (Agro EcoEnergy Tanzania, 2012b).

The international guidelines here refer to the World Bank Operational Policies/Bank Procedures 4.12 (2001), the International Finance Corporation (IFC) Performance Standard 5 (IFC, 2012a, 2012b) and the AfDB Involuntary Resettlement Policy (2003). These so-called 'social safeguards policies' are intended to help planners of development projects to: a) avoid or minimize involuntary resettlement wherever possible; b) when unavoidable, conceive and execute resettlement as 'sustainable development programs' (World Bank, 2001: 1); and c) consult with and assist displaced persons to improve, or at least to restore, their livelihoods and living standards. In Tanzania, there are no direct laws or policies on involuntary resettlement, apart from legal requirements for ensuring compensation for compulsory land acquisitions, as stipulated in the National Constitution, the Land Acquisition Act of 1967, the National Land Policy of 1995, the Land Act and the Village Land Act of 1999 and their respective Regulations of 2001 and 2002.

There are some major discrepancies between what is required by Tanzanian law versus what is recommended as international best practice. First, while the latter recommends that compensation be provided for all populations requiring resettlement regardless of whether or not they have legal rights to the land they are occupying, the former stipulates otherwise. Hence, because it is international best practice to provide resettlement assistance to even those considered 'invaders' (i.e. people of Bozi and Makaani), the Tanzanian state has reluctantly agreed to provide what the former Bagamoyo District Commissioner called 'compensation of compassion' (The Citizen, 2014). Second, while Tanzanian law requires a one-off payment of compensation (usually cash, unless the government decides otherwise), it is considered international best practice to provide people with the option to choose between cash and in-kind compensation. Notwithstanding the differences, I argue that there are two shared assumptions, both of which have far-reaching consequences for rural social reproduction.

First, involuntary resettlement is assumed to be a problem best solved through the knowledge of technical 'experts'. Tanzanian law stipulates that the assessment of all compensation for displacement induced by compulsory land acquisitions 'shall be prepared by qualified valuer ... and verified by the Chief Valuer of the Government or his [sic] representative' (URT, 2001: sections 11–12). The IFIs similarly recommend that the project proponents use 'a panel of independent, reputed resettlement experts ...[to] help capture international best practice' (World Bank, 2004: 325). The IFIs further conceptualize involuntary resettlement as a technical 'project within a project' (Cernea, 2008) such that the solution to the problem created by development (i.e. forced displacement) is more development! Consider the following quote from the World Bank (2004: xvii): 'Implementing resettlement as a development program not only helps the people who are adversely affected but also promotes easier, less-troubled implementation of development projects'. In order for this logic to make sense, however, development must be cast as a transparent, ethical and power-neutral object, or what Ferguson (1990) calls an 'anti-politics machine'. When depoliticized as such, displacement and dispossession become problems to be fixed by technical 'experts', and no longer intrinsic and abiding features of capitalism.

Second, both the Tanzanian law and international guidelines assume that the costs of displacement and dispossession can be measured and compensated for in cash or in kind. Tanzanian law states that replacement land for displaced populations should be of 'comparable quality, extent and productive potential to the land lost' (URT, 2001: section 25). The IFIs similarly recommend that it should

be of 'equal productive value' (Agro EcoEnergy Tanzania, 2012b: 39). For crops, it is considered international best practice to value them according to their 'earning capacity' (ibid.:147); the Tanzanian Ministry of Lands, in cooperation with the Ministry of Agriculture, also publishes an annual 'Crop Compensation Schedule' that lists the market value for each crop that is considered compensable.²⁰

In the context of the BEE Sugar Project, only cash crops, such as permanent fruit trees (e.g. mango, cashew, coconut), were considered worthy of compensation, since it was assumed that subsistence food crops had no exchange value and that they would be harvested, consumed or stored before relocation. It was further assumed that there would be 'a seamless transition for the next planting season on the replacement land' (Agro EcoEnergy Tanzania, 2012b: 147).

However, decades of research on development-induced displacement and resettlement tell us that there is hardly ever a 'seamless' transition after forced migration (Colson, 1971; Scutter, 2005). This is because people often are compensated with smaller plots of land with poorer quality soil compared to the ones they have been dispossessed from, and because it takes time for people to experiment with and get accustomed to farming on new land. More importantly, it is because people lose access to common resources, which are indispensable, particularly for women, for ensuring food security and overall well-being of their families and communities — that is, for ensuring the continuity of social reproduction.

Indeed, my in-depth interviews with people living in the BEE project site revealed a wide variety of common property resources, particularly indigenous tree species, on which they depend for social reproduction (see Table 1). In addition to their materiality as sources of food, fuel, fibre, medicine and building material, some of these resources carry symbolic and gendered meanings. For instance, mkole, a tree that bears small edible fruits and has pliant branches, symbolizes female fertility and matrilineality for the Zaramo — one of the original peoples of the Swahili coast (see Swantz, 1995). In Zaramo mythology, female elephants are believed to hide in the mkole woods during menstruation and gestation, by enclosing the area with the branches tied together. This timing coincides with the season when the mkole fruits reach maturity and change colours from white to green to red to black. This symbolism of mkole is still present in the initiation rites of pubertal girls to womanhood.

Table 1. Indigenous Tree Species Found in the BEE Project Site

Local Name	Botanical Name	Uses
Kikulagembe / Mkulajembe	Dichrostachys cinerea	Fuelwood, charcoal, medicine (dysentery, toothache, elephantiasis, gonorrhoea, snakebite), fibre, building material
Mchaaka / Mchalaka	Spirostachys africana	Fuelwood, building material
Mcheji / Mcheju	Manilkara sulcata	Edible fruit, medicine (snakebite, measles), building material
Mkoko	Diospyros mespiliformis	Fuelwood, charcoal, building material, medicine (stomach ache)
Mkole	Grewia bicolor	Edible fruit, medicine (anaemia, snakebite, diarrhoea, gonorrhoea, syphilis, infertility for women), building material, fuelwood
Mkunju / Mkuyu	Ficus sycomorus	Fuelwood, fodder, building material, edible fruit, medicine (diarrhoea, sore throat, chest pain)
Mkwamba	Flueggea virosa	Fuelwood, edible fruit, medicine (malaria, stomach ache, syphilis, gonorrhoea)
Mkwingwina	Sorindeia madagascariensis	Edible fruit, medicine (malaria, tuberculosis, menstrual problems)
Mlegea / Mungungu	Kigelia africana	Edible fruits, medicine (rheumatism, malaria, infertility, dysentery, epilepsy)
Muangaa / Mwangaa	Terminalia spinosa	Fuelwood, medicine (respiratory illnesses), building material
Mzambarau	Syzygium guineense	Edible fruit, medicine (stomach ache, dysentery), fodder, fuelwood, building material
Mzigunga	Acacia zanzibarica	Fuelwood, medicine (abdominal pains and disorders)

Source : Author's fieldwork; Hines and Eckman (1993); Ruffo et al. (2002)

These indigenous resources are not commodities with an exchange value, and hence, are not compensable under Tanzanian law. Yet, they embody immeasurable cultural values and knowledges that are passed on intergenerationally as an intrinsic part of rural social reproduction. While the IFC states that the loss of common property resources 'has been identified as one of the primary impoverishment risks associated with involuntary resettlement and requires careful mitigation' (2012a: 7), how and in what ways they should be protected and restored is ultimately up to the subjective consideration of government and third-party resettlement 'experts'. According to Lassailly-Jacob (1996), the reason why most involuntary resettlement operations have failed in Africa is precisely because the so-called resettlement 'experts' and local populations have different visions about what land is and how it is valued. Whilst the former are fixated on 'productivity and profitability', the latter are more concerned about 'a wide range of social, cultural and religious elements, as well as the productive factor' (ibid.: 196). The problem is not so much that there are differences in perspectives, but that certain visions become valorized while others are devalued and delegitimized. As one widow from Gobole poignantly remarks:



You know, there is a difference between the way you see things and the way I see things. Poor people like me — we have not been educated, but it doesn't mean that we don't know what is valuable to us on our land. Yet, to those educated people, some things we have on our land do not seem to have value. Mangos, cashews and bananas — we plant them nearby; they are easily seen on our farms and in markets in town. But there are trees in the bush and in the wild, which outsiders cannot see, but we know where they are and still depend on them for our lives... We have been ignored. Our culture has been erased.²¹

Compensation Valuation

In 2011, EcoEnergy hired an independent consultancy firm to draft the Resettlement Action Plan (RAP) in compliance with the international best practice. In preparation for the RAP, a census, also known as the People and Property Count (PPC), was conducted from October to November 2011 to determine the total number of people that are eligible for compensation, and to value their land-based assets.²² Because the Tanzanian government assumed responsibility for providing resettlement costs, the PPC was conducted primarily by government land valuers and surveyors, with the employees of the consultancy firm participating as observers (Agro EcoEnergy Tanzania, 2012b). Eligibility for compensation was based on the 'cut-off' date, the first day of the PPC, after which no new residents would be allowed and no additional permanent improvements on the land would be compensated (ibid.: 65). That is, if people decided to plant new mango trees, or build new houses after the cut-off date, they would not be provided with additional compensation beyond what had already been valued.

According to Tanzanian land laws and regulations, each person eligible for compensation shall be given an official document, called 'Land Form 69a'. This form specifies that the recipient has the right to have his or her assets valued, and to claim compensation in accordance with the national land laws. There is another document, called 'Valuation Form 1', which is used to record key information, such as the date and location of the census, a sketch map and measurement of houses and other built structures, and the types, numbers and maturity rates of different crops. While government authorities are recommended to share copies of these forms upon completion of the valuation process, not all households I interviewed possessed them. Even if they had the forms, they were unclear of what purpose they served. In early 2014, another PPC was conducted to take account of the households that were not included in the first survey. This second PPC, however, was also fraught with inconsistencies. For example, government authorities counted and gave forms to the people who were deemed ineligible for compensation, such as those who opportunistically moved into the project site after the 'cut-off' date, while bypassing the eligible ones.

Regardless of these irregularities, there was one consistency: the forms only included the names of male heads of the households (unless the households were female-headed), because it was assumed that husbands and fathers were the de facto owners of the land, and that they were the ones that would collect compensation payments on behalf of their families. When wives were interviewed separately from their husbands, they noted that it was 'not unusual' (kama kawaida in Kiswahili) for the PPC teams to have interacted mainly with men. They noted this was because their husbands, and men in general, were the 'clever ones' (wajanja) with more 'authority and ability' (nguvu na uwezo) than/over women. Even though they saw this as common practice, they cautiously admitted, upon further probing, that they were apprehensive about what was happening. They knew that their husbands would ultimately be the ones collecting and controlling the cash compensation, and they feared that it would be misappropriated. Nearly all women interviewed speculated that their husbands would use the money and/or run away with it to pay bridewealth for younger and more beautiful women, while leaving them and their children destitute. In particular, women of the Barabaig tribe (for whom polygyny is actively encouraged) noted that some men have already taken on more wives or mistresses, using the prospect of cash compensation as credit. They talked about the emotional stress they felt when forced to accept new wives into the household, and the fact that they cannot but keep quiet about their grievances for the fear of being beaten by their husbands.

Some women believed that perhaps their husbands were strategically trying to increase their household size with the hopes of getting a bigger house as part of in-kind compensation. However, husbands were not the only ones who tried to take advantage of the prospective compensation and the vulnerable social position of women. For instance, some widows were threatened by their deceased husbands' male relatives to take cash rather than in-kind compensation. They claimed that the land (and the cash that would eventually flow from it) belonged to the husband's family according to their interpretation of customary and Islamic law. All in all, what were considered strategic moves by men were experienced as torment for women.

Overall, the uncertainty surrounding involuntary resettlement and compensation has been a major stranglehold on the continuity of social reproduction for many households. Living in limbo — waiting for something, anything, to happen — has been psychologically and emotionally debilitating for people whose lives and livelihoods are dependent on the land. Many women and men referred to how they were tired of being treated like children (watoto), herd animals (wanyama), or imbeciles (wapumbavu), who were unable to take control of their lives. Consider the following quotes, which suggest the extent to which peoples' ability to socially reproduce themselves has been impaired — even when, on the face of it, nothing seems to be happening with the project on the ground:



I would like to grow and sell permanent crops. The school in Razaba closed. Now my children and grandchildren are not going to school. I have to send my children away so they can receive education. But where will I get the money [without income from permanent crops]? Who will take care of my children? Who will help me? We are troubled... We are just living here without knowing what will come next.²³



We are being tricked. It is a mind game. We are told that compensation will be paid in three months. Then they come back just shy of the third month to tell us that we will have to wait another three months. If they tell us that compensation will be

delayed for a year, they know that farmers will riot... Many people are giving up hope in farming. I mean, which farmer in his/her right mind would want to make an effort to plough and sow cassava, which takes anywhere from six months to a year to grow, when they are being promised that they will be resettled in three months' time?²⁴

CONCLUSION

The case of the BEE Sugar Project demonstrates how similar large-scale commercial farm deals or agricultural PPPs may take shape in Tanzania in the future. Given that such endeavours require the enclosure of large tracts of land, which are often occupied and used by agriculturalists, pastoralists and other rural populations, the extent of forced displacements are bound to become more ubiquitous. Yet, the absence of national policies and guidelines on involuntary resettlement and the irregularities (including gender-bias) associated with its current practice, as demonstrated by this article, pose significant challenges to the continuity and resilience of rural social reproduction. Social reproduction, as a concept and as a lived experience, highlights the significance of the multiple uses, values and meanings of land and labour for agrarian households. At the same time, it highlights the constitutive role of gender in shaping and defining peoples' relationships to and experiences on the land.

Through an examination of the BEE Sugar Project, this article shows how the new enclosures are bound up with and complicated by competing land claims, which are gendered in important ways. Specifically, the text argues that the process of involuntary resettlement, induced by the new enclosures, results in the fragmentation of pre-existing modes of social reproduction. In Bagamoyo, this was made possible through the technical 'expertise' of government authorities, who conducted the PPCs not only according to their subjective evaluations, but also based on capitalocentric and androcentric approaches to valuing land. At stake are the displacement of cultural practices, socio-ecological knowledges and historical memories, which are deeply rooted on the land, and which are often articulated through gender.

Lastly, this article demonstrates how the uncertain nature of imminent displacement, as well as (false) expectations surrounding compensation payments, are compelling rural women and men to renegotiate their livelihood strategies and intra-household gender relations. Those who live within the BEE project site across different communities find it extremely difficult to make long-term investments on the land, in the face of various land use restrictions and the lack of clear information about the resettlement process. However, the ways in which individual women and men experience and respond to living in limbo are simultaneously informed yet constrained by patriarchal ideologies that operate most intimately within households. This calls for further studies that examine in depth how different groups of rural women and men make sense of and resist, the agonizing predicament of 'not knowing', particularly during the liminal period between land acquisition and project implementation — or between development and dispossession.

- 1 As of November 2016, however, not one farm deal has been completed, including the one discussed in this article.
- 2 'Land for equity' models have been in place in South Africa since the mid-1990s, but they have largely failed to generate socially equitable outcomes for smallholder farmers and farmworkers (see Vhugen et al., 2014). Currently, there are no policy, institutional and legal frameworks governing 'land for equity' deals in Tanzania (Interview with a Ministry of Lands official, 21 October 2015).
- 3 This is the official figure as stated in the Certificate of Title granted to EcoEnergy, a copy of which was shared with the author by a Ministry of Lands official (21 October 2015).
- 4 Agro EcoEnergy Tanzania is owned 93.5 per cent by EcoEnergy Africa AB; 5 per cent by the Tanzanian Petroleum Development Company, a state-owned parastatal; and 1.5 per cent by Community Finance Corporation, a private Tanzanian company, for which no public information is obtainable. EcoEnergy Africa AB is owned by EcoDevelopment in Europe AB, which is a minority owner of Svensk Etanolkemi AB (SEKAB), one of the largest producers of ethanol derivatives in Europe (SEKAB, n.d.). Until 2009, Agro EcoEnergy Tanzania operated under the name of SEKAB Bioenergy Tanzania. See Havnevik et al. (2011) for the evolution of SEKAB's operations in Tanzania since 2005.
- 5 The Swedish International Development Agency (Sida) had guaranteed a bridge loan worth SEK 120 million (US\$ 14 million) to EcoEnergy in February 2014, but withdrew its support at the end of April 2015 (Interview with Sida official, 26 October 2015). The planned out-grower scheme associated with the BEE Sugar Project is to be funded by the AfDB and the International Fund for Agricultural Development.
- 6 All land in Tanzania is 'public land vested in the President as trustee on behalf of all citizens' (URT, 1997: 9). Public land is divided into village land reserved land and general land (URT, 1999a: section 4).
- 7 The government's equity shares are non-dilutable, meaning that its ownership percentage will not be reduced even if/when other shareholders make additional capital investment in the project.
- 8 Interview with two Ministry of Agriculture officials, 8 October 2015 and 16 October 2015; Interview with an EcoEnergy executive, 30 October 2015.
- 9 For instance, this article unfortunately omits the boundary dispute between EcoEnergy, Saadani National Park and the surrounding villages.
- 10 Agro EcoEnergy Tanzania (2012b) and interview with a district land valuer, 31 July 2014. Fieldwork conducted in 2015, however, showed that the actual number may be close to 3,000.
- 11 Interview with former Razaba farm manager, 24 November 2015.
- 12 Interview, 28 July 2014.
- 13 Interviews, 11 August 2014 and 28 November 2015.
- 14 Interview, 24 November 2015.

- 15 Interview with an EcoEnergy executive, 30 October 2015.
- 16 Interview, 15 August 2014.
- 17 Interview, 25 July 2014.
- 18 Interview, 20 August 2014.
- 19 Interview, 29 October 2015.
- 20 Interview with a district land valuer, 31 July 2014.
- 21 Interview, 25 July 2014.
- 22 In most cases, only unexhausted improvements were valued, such as permanent dwellings and perennial crops; people's land itself was not valued, since it was assumed that everyone was squatting on government land.
- 23 Interview with an elderly widow, Bozi, 28 July 2014.
- 24 Interview with a male farmer, Bozi, 28 July 2014.

Biography

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