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**Understanding the Position of the State in Processes
of Accumulation**

**Exploring the tensions between Land Reform and
Biofuels in Zimbabwe.**

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Dedication

To those who have loved me inspired me and kept me alive. This is your achievement.

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List of Acronyms

ESAP	Economic Structural Adjustment Program
FTLRP	Fast Track Land Reform Program
GoZ	Government of Zimbabwe

Abstract

This paper is a study of the state-capital-society relationship in an effort to unpack the most actor in development. The rapid expansion of capital over the last decade with a growing presence in the agrarian sector has been a focus of several studies. The pervasiveness of land grabbing has led many to theorize on the state-capital alliance, but the tensions in Zimbabwe provide a unique site for analysis. The Chisumbaje Green Fuel project was sanctioned 9 years after the largest state led land reform process in sub-Saharan Africa had commenced. The evident tensions in policies between the land reform and the allocation of 45,000ha of land to a single enterprise provide a site for in depth analysis on whether the state is truly an instrument of capital or if it can serve the interests of the poor peasant classes as well. The class conflict over land and property has strong historical roots and by critically analysis the evidence as well as the discourse of land reform and land grabbing, a deeper understanding of the position of the state can be found. The framework of state theory of a strategic paradigm that allows the discussion to not only engage with the material issues but also engage the ideational debates in an effort to contribute to the body of literature on land reform and biofuel exploration, and also to stimulate further discussions on the state. This paper will question some of the dominant assumptions and positions that make arguments without a critical consideration of the role and position of the state. Such uncomplicated analysis can therefore lead to misleading hypothesis that then obfuscate the real issues by omission. Using the strategic relational approach and the Gramscian concept of hegemony, this paper will attempt to problematize and unpack the dominant perception of the state project to show that though accumulation is a permanent interest of the state, the interest of capital and the lower classes are not mutually exclusive. The assumption that in pursuing one, the other is abrogated is problematic and this thesis will challenge and examine this view to present a more assiduous analytic lens. Though it is an attempt to answer the question of whether the state can pursue both interests simultaneously, this paper does not presume to categorically answer the question, but rather it is an effort to contribute an alternative perspective on understanding the state that may provide a richer insight into the ultimate answer.

Relevance to Development Studies

This study is relevant to development studies position of the state in relation to capital and the society which is a central issue in development. The state is a key actor in the making of development thus understanding its relations and structures contributes first to the literature on the growing phenomenon of land grabbing and large scale production of biofuels and secondly to the theorization of the state. The findings of this paper can be extrapolated to various sectors where there is a state-capital-society relationship.

Keywords

Land Reform, neo-liberal policy, accumulation, legitimacy and power relations

Introduction

Introduction

One of the key emerging issues in development discourse, especially in Agrarian studies, had been the widespread evidence of accumulation by dispossession as the most common model in the expansion of capital. The increase in the discussions on commodification, exploitation, financialization and dispossession necessitates one of the most central debates in development studies. The global division of labor has seen the movement of capital across state borders and the state plays a pivotal role in mediating the interests of capital and society. This has stimulated the resurrection of the age old debate, on whether the state can act in the interests of the poor, minorities, oppressed and the peasants has been brought back to the forefront as it becomes more imperative in the context of globalization. The literature on land grabbing reflects this as it transitioned from a buzz word in a minor fraction of academia and development discourse, to become an important and central developmental issue especially in the Global South. The states are often complicit in the deals and projects that have led to the dispossession of countless households and the perpetuation of exploitation of the poor by the holders of capital. Zimbabwe is one of the many countries that have been pursuing this predatory accumulation agenda and strategy as evidenced by its support of the Green Fuel project in Chisumbanje. This trajectory in the expansion of capital is in line with the Marxist truism, that the state is the servant of the capital classes, and the sanctioning of such large scale investments and projects is viewed as a reflection of the state capital alliance. The example of the biofuel project in Zimbabwe provides an interest case study as the sanction of the project came within a decade of what is considered the largest re-distributive process in Sub-Saharan Africa [i.e. the Fast Track Land Reform Program]. The need to investigate the state-capital-society relationship is evident, and the case in Zimbabwe offers a unique insight for analyzing the position of the state in these processes of accumulation.

The case in Zimbabwe offers an exceptional moment for study as the land reform process that the state sanctioned in 2000 was hailed as an example of anti-imperial, anti-neoliberal government creating policy for the development of the poor, marginalized and peasant classes. The Zanu PF government was perceived as resisting the advance of neoliberalism and returning to its socialist roots to empower the poor indigenous peoples by taking from the wealthy capitalist classes that had benefitted from the colonial structures. This was therefore taken to signal that the state could act for the interests of the lower classes and that even within the structures of global capitalism, there was space for the state to make progressive policies. Land reform programs such as the one in Zimbabwe are often hailed as examples of there being room for significant social change from 'everyday forms of resistance (Fox, 1993). The fact that the state went on to displace at least 600 of the resettled households and supporting the encroachment of big enterprises into the agricultural sector within a decade of having begun land reform is what many found surprising and confusing. This observation made by Mandihlare reveals the tensions that exist within the state:

“In this light, the locals who were displaced to pave way for the bio-fuel project saw this move as a government’s way of backtracking on its land reform distribution policy, whose logic went against the repossession of large tracts of land by individuals and private companies.” (Mandiblare, 2013).

The finding from the Report by the Portfolio Committee on Youth Indigenization and Economic Empowerment (2015) showed that the villagers accused the state of “siding with white capital and having lost interest in their [the villagers] welfare”. The perceived contradiction in state policy between the 2000 FTLRP and the 2009 Chisumbanje Green Fuel project offers a unique site for exploring the state-capital-society relationship in the hopes of contributing to the larger debate.

This paper cannot completely answer the broad question on state theory expounding on what the nature of the state-capital alliance but it problematizes the current framing of the discussion in the hopes of contributing to the broader argument. The discussion challenges the current framing of the literature and re-evaluating some of the assumptions that have shaped the current discourse. The study of this peculiar case could provide a richer understanding of why and how the state project is formed and executed. Various authors have made reference to the tenuous position that the state presides in, where it must pursue both accumulation and legitimation which often times are incongruent. The accumulation project would support the interests of capital and the higher societal classes, but would translate to the exploitation and expropriation of the lower classes of society who form the majority. This tension therefore legitimation would require the appeasement and protection of the lower classes which often requires curbing the excesses of capitalism and/ or instituting distributive and re-distributive policies (Scott, 1998). The Zimbabwean state has instituted both on a large scale and therefore provides a great site for study. Though the Green fuel project falls into alignment with much of the literature on the state, and the concept of state elite capture, the context in which it happened [i.e. in the immediate aftermath of land reform] was considered the antithetical to accumulation from above. By re-examining the land reform project and the manner in which it has been framed, the actions of the state can be better understood.

Structure of the paper

A grasp on the nature of the state allows one to then discuss the state - society relationship. For the purposes of this study the focus will be on the state-capital relationship in an effort to resolve the question of why the state made policies that appear contradictory. The Marxist perspective would consider the alliance of the state and capital to be the norm, whereby “if the modern state wanted to abolish the impotence of its administration, it would have to abolish the present day private life ... it would have to abolish itself, for it exists only in contrast with this life” (Marx 1844 in Draper 1978). One might then consider the actions of the state in its support of the Green Fuel project as a reflection of the state acting by the dictates of its very nature which would be “institutionalizing class compromises that facilitate accumulation” (Jessop, 2007:24). The perception of the villagers in Chisumbanje who “accused Government of siding

with white capital and having lost interest in their [the villagers] welfare” (Parliamentary Portfolio Committee Report, 2014), would therefore be considered an astute estimation of a normal state. This conception would help to account for the state behavior in 2009, but raises the questions on the behavior of the state in the FTLR which appears to contradict this conception.

This paper will attempt to understand this perceived contradiction, and therefore a close examination of the FTLR process to observe the behavior of the state would be necessary. Moyo and Yeros (2007) would propose that the FTLR was the emergence of a radical state that was rebelling against a neoliberal orthodoxy and that by the end of the decade (the late 2000s) it was undergoing normalization. However, they do go on further to elucidate how the FTLR created of a capitalist bourgeoisie with a strong emergence of a rural bourgeoisie. The reflected partiality to capital and the ‘elite’ would then lead one to question the assumption that the FTLR process was pro-poor, radical and was designed as a re-peasantization process. This paper will explore this key assumption; examine the state and capital alliance, and ultimately the position of the state in processes of accumulation. The discussion will expound on the state capital relationship, exploring the political economy of this relationship from a theoretical standpoint and situating the study of the Green Fuel project within this frame.

Moyo and Yeros (ibid) argue that in the current discourse on the FTLR there has been little done to “understand the social basis and contradictions of the situation; these have been obscured and detached from politics”. Their postulation is that in discussing developmental matters involving the state, the disentanglement and in depth evaluation of the complexities that govern the state is fundamental to understanding the issues. This paper will therefore attempt to unravel the concept of state elite capture, as proposed by the Marxist perspective, in an effort to delineate the seemingly contradictory behavior of the state. The study takes a strong theoretical approach looking at the current discourse and how it has been framed in an effort to understand the matter at hand. The theorization of the state forms a fundamental foundation for this discussion as it is focused on situating the state in relation to capital accumulation. By examining the current conceptions of the state and how well they represent the situation being discussed in this paper I hope to explain the areas of contention. This illustration would help to provide a framework for understanding the position of the state in relation to accumulation in agrarian and non-agrarian fields thus contributing to the discourse of Development Studies.

The study is largely a theoretical analysis from a critical realist paradigm (Grix, 2004: 107) that is focused on a critical examination of the current discourse on the issues of state, biofuels and land reform in Zimbabwe. By using the Foucauldian methodological approach to discourse analysis (Hall 1997 in Seale 2004: 345), to explore the ‘truth’ of the assertions of the current literature. Grix argues that the critical realist paradigm enables one to “uncover the deep underlying structures of social reality” and thus a discourse analysis with the Foucauldian approach enables the investigation of the power relations that shape the discourse as well as society given the relational nature of discourse (Hall, ibid; Fairclough and Wodak, 1997: 357 in Seale eds., 2004; and Kendall & Wickham, 2004: 131-7 in Seale et al, 2004). By engaging with the current literature on land reform, land grabbing and biofuels, I hope to be able to engage the theoretical with the empirical elements of this topic. Given that this discussion is in the context of a specific case, which is the Zimbabwean situation, engaging with

the current discourse on both land reform and the Chisumbanje Green Fuel project. An empirical field study was conducted on the state's role in the Green Fuel project in light of the FTLRP, and semi-structured qualitative interviews (Bryman, 2004: 131; and Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009: 130) were conducted to glean for valuable information and perspectives from state officials involved in these policy areas.

This study will attempt to theorize on why states engage in seemingly contradictory policies, what the contradiction tells us about the character of the state, and about the position of the state in processes of accumulation and capital expansion. The biofuel sector in the context of land reform is a space in which these dynamics are evidently at play provide a possible rough approximation of accumulation and legitimation. And the process of understanding these processes requires an examination of the Chisumbanje Green Fuel project as well as the FTLR.

Chapter 2 : The State

One of the major challenges in addressing the question of whether the capitalist state can act in the interests of the lower classes is the in the way the position of the state is understood. Often the assumptions are simplistic and uncomplicated position and the discussion is framed in binary terms where either the state is a tool for the elite classes and thus legitimizes the interests of capital, or the state is autonomous as evidenced by pro-poor policy. In order to understand these policies, we explore our understanding and theories of the state to develop an explanation for these events that will “rationalize” the behavior of the state that appears to be conflicted. Das (2007, 351) makes an important assertion in regards to the idea that the state is an “apparatus that embodies a centralized form of class power”.

“That a connection exists between the state, class and the peasantry is on the face of it deceptively simple. Historically and currently, this is the kind of link that seemingly borders on the obvious. Yet the long-standing and unresolved conceptual debates about each element composing this connection, let alone the nature of the strands binding them, should warn about the extent of theoretical difficulties involved.” (Das, 2007, 351)

As is reflected in this quote, the argument in this paper is examining the current discourse on the states position in processes of accumulation, challenging a simplistic and superficial perspective on the state. By examining the policies in Zimbabwe on the FTLRP and the Green Fuel project, it is possible to engage with the current theories and conceptions of the state. This case study provides the opportunity to examine the state-capital alliance that is often discussed in the context of state elite capture. In the progression of state theory, various perspectives have attempted to nuance the discussion but it remains that in analysis, often the state actions are explained in these binary frames. In this case study, the FTLRP has been generally considered a pro-poor policy that reflects an autonomous state rebelling against the constraints of capitalism, whereas the Green Fuel project was a reflection of state elite capture. To understand the issues at hand it is important to unpack the state, capital and society relations as well as explore the class character of the Zimbabwean state.

In our attempt to understand the behavior of the state in implementing two seemingly opposed policies, we must begin by understanding the position of the state, as well as the role it plays in social affairs. Raftopolous (2009) explains how land and politics are inseparable in Zimbabwe and in framing our debates we engage with these political conceptions which in this case are in reference to the state. Matondi (2011) argues from a strongly Marxist leaning but his reading of the FTLRP is that the Zimbabwean state was reflecting autonomy challenging the structures of neoliberalism whereas in the Green Fuel project it was a tool for the domination of the masses, who in this case were the poor peasants.

The conventional wisdom from the Marxists state unequivocally that the state is a tool of capital. Das (2007; 356) writes, “For Marxists it is a truism that the historical role of the state is the protection of private property” and Fox (1993; 10) writes “even high-level reformists were unable to overcome the resistance of elite interests entrenched both inside and outside the state”. The state capital alliance is considered an unquestionable fact such that even in the neo-

pluralist Weberian perspectives though they would argue that the state is a platform available to all within its jurisdiction, they would concede that the elite hold a privileged position with greater access to the state and its resources. This concession therefore makes state bias or elite capture seemingly obvious, but as Das Raju opens in his article (2007; 351), “That a connection exists between the state, capital and the peasantry is on the face of it deceptively simple”. This section will therefore attempt to reveal some of the complexities within the state-capital alliance by exploring the ways in which the state has been theorized, and by so doing complicate the narratives of the FTLRP and the Chisumbanje Green Fuel project. This will be done in a way that will hopefully provide a richer understanding of the two processes and thus help to reach an understanding of the reasons behind the state pursuing these two programs.

What is the state?

To begin, the ‘Dictionary of Marxist Thought’ (Bottomore, 1991: 520) begins its definition of the state by stating the state is, “a concept of crucial importance in Marxist thought, for Marxists regard the state as the institution beyond all others whose function is to maintain and defend class domination and exploitation”. As such most Marxist analysis of the state is in reference to this, therefore the actions of the state are evaluated based whether they are propagating the class interest of the elite. Should the policies benefit the lower classes, this is often considered a reflection of resistance to the capitalist system and autonomy on the part of the state. Several scholars have challenged this framework, with the most prolific theory being the strategic relational approach by Bob Jessop.

Jessop (2007) begins a similar inquest with a warning that there is no one definition of the state, referring to it as a “complex phenomenon” such that defining it or describing what it is, is a task that is neither simple nor innocent. He highlights the deficiency of approaching the state as an object or a subject as it “[the state] changes shape and appearance with the activities it undertakes, the scales on which it operates, the political forces acting towards it, the circumstances in which it and they act, and so forth”. Scott (1998) validates this point in his explanation of the Gramscian perspective of the state, that posit that the state is not a monolith but rather it was a shaped by the different forces acting upon it. Paradza and Hall (2012) expand on this position by showing the complexity in the internal composition of the institution of the state. Though describing the state as an institution, they argue that one must be careful as this is often taken to mean the state is a unitary actor, which as Paradza and Hall (*ibid*) argued, would be problematic.

There are many positions and theories of the state, that attempt to describe and understand it, but this paper will focus mostly on the Marxist paradigms as they have been the most utilized in the discourses that this paper engages. For the purposes of this discussion, we will consider the state to be a social construction that evolves constantly in its task of ensuring cohesion in social formation (Watson, 2005: 183). The state engages in a state project towards a nation/ state building agenda and therefore the state directs social agenda and social relations

towards the attainment of this project. It is therefore neither an institution nor an organization but rather it is a social construction representative of a relationship between the different social classes. It is represented by the body of elected government officials and the bureaucracy thus we may go on to further define the state by the roles it fulfils in society as Jessop (2007) does, referring state as “a distinct ensemble . . . whose socially accepted function is to define and enforce collectively binding decisions on a given population in the name of their common interest or general will.”

Miliband (1965 in Bottomore 1988¹) writes that the bias observed in the state is not a result of external elements exerting pressure on the state, but rather they are foundational biases. Miliband is arguing that the main role and purpose of existence of the state is to protect property, and therefore by default protecting the interests of the holders of property. Marx himself is quoted as having said that “*impotence is the law of nature of administration. . . . If the modern state wanted to abolish the impotence of its administration, it would have to abolish the private life of today*” (Marx 1844). Given the stratification of society along class lines, the propertied are often those of the elite classes, and Engels argues that “as a rule, the state of the most powerful, economically dominant class, which, through the medium of the state, becomes also the politically dominant class and thus acquires new means of holding down and exploiting the oppressed class” (Engels in Bottomore 1991, 520-1). This often entails dispossession property which Hart (2006) argues is the most dominant form of accumulation, and generates surplus population (Li, 2011). By this argument then, the state was created purposefully to protect and legitimate the property and accumulation of the elite classes, therefore it is an instrument for domination by the capital and elite classes. Little and Watts (1994) would propose that the private-public dichotomy is but a fallacy and the state covertly supports enterprise and investors, restricting the markets for the sake of maintaining market imperfections that benefit capital. Watson (2005) writes that the state mediates competition between the different units of capital and ensures that society is structured “in a way that allows businesses to take profits out of society.” Paige (1975:17) drives home this point in positing that conflict over landed property is directly tied to political control. Das (2007, 354) even argues that “neoliberalism has made no difference to the fact that the state must protect capitalist property relations.”

These assertions however reflect a single side of the state, in which it acts in the interests of accumulation, and yet Borrás (2010) focuses on the tenuous position the state holds where it is still required to maintain legitimacy with the majority of the governed. As such, as Fox (1993) proposes, through various forms of resistance can also effect changes in favor of the dominated and lower classes of society. As has been indicated, the land reform process in Zimbabwe is considered one such example of the state acting for the interests of the peasants. Hart (2008) discusses this class conflict where she argues that the more successful the elite are at domination, the more motivated the oppressed are to resist. Her argument has its roots in the Marxist concept of class consciousness with resistance emerging from a class for itself. This line of argument goes on to reflect that it is also in the interests of the state to ensure that the interests of the

¹ Bottomores work is an editorial that compiles the works of various classic scholars who wrote and theorized on the writings of Karl Marx.

lower classes are engaged and catered to. Das (2007) however make the argument that though these “everyday forms of resistance” have shown promise and success in some areas, the state is a capitalist institution and therefore its levels of responsiveness is restricted. It is therefore critical that in unpacking the position of the state in relation to capital and society. Given that Jessop argues that the state shapes and is shaped by society, in order to fully understand this relationship, it is necessary to explore the position of the state in relation to society and capital.

The Position of the State

The discussion on ‘What is the state?’ above, opens up the questions on power relations thus the need to discuss what position the state holds in these processes of accumulation. Watts and Little (1994) explore the emergence of contract farming presenting it as a new mode of agrarian accumulation and commoditization. In their analysis of several countries including Mexico, Zambia and Kenya, they found the state to not only be a principal actor but also argued that the state acts on the behalf of investors to ensure a favorable investment climate. Watts (1994), however argues that contract farming contract farming is saving small farms through incorporation into the industrialization of agriculture therefore it can be said that the states support of this production model is also geared towards protecting small farms. Paradza and Hall (2012) study land deals in 3 African countries, and they reported that states would go as far as to break their own rules in an effort to facilitate the deals. They write, that this “exposes the paradox that the world holds it [the state] up to act as a neutral mediator and protector of the communities” referring to this paradox as ‘the foxes guarding the henhouse’. As such it becomes evident that the state-capital alliance does not preclude state intervention on behalf of the masses.

Watson (2005) and Watts and Little (1994) concur that the state must balance its two permanent tasks, of accumulation and legitimation, which are often conflicting. Given that the state is in an untenable position, Watson (ibid) argues that the coherence of the state project is primarily dependent on the level of social contestation to its trajectory and on the possibility of subverting the contestation. His writing focuses largely on the globalization discourse discussing the importance of social legitimacy to the success of the state project and the various ways in which it can be obtained or undermined. This discussion is essential not only because of the significant capital investments that are being made across country lines, but also because with the spread of global capital and capitalism comes a shift in values that change social relations in order to reduce resistance to the accumulation project. Watson (2005) highlights the significance of commodification of land and labor in the process of enshrining an accumulation focused state project. The position of the state is requires that it further the interests of the elite and capital classes, whilst ensuring the consent whereby it “subordinates social concerns ... to the needs of the private owners of the means of production”.

It is at this point that the Gramscian concept of hegemony emerges, because as Eckers et al (2009) write, “Hegemony gives us a convenient vocabulary for understanding why people consent to and participate in relationships that are fundamentally unjust”. Their analysis of the state-society interaction explore the forms of power as well as the contexts exploring the ways in which they constrain and act on each other. The strategic relational approach considers the state-society relationship to be co-constitutive and thus as Fox (1993) and Hart (2006) argued, the peasants have the potential to shift policies and negotiate for the state to act in their favor. The same would apply for the state, where it can act upon society in ways to negotiate the acceptance of its policies and projects. Watsons article (2005; 183) quotes Przeworski and Wallerstein (1988 in Watson 2005; 184) who referred to the bias as “the states structural dependence on Capital”. He argues therefore that the prevailing structures and paradigms are altered to ensure “that society is structured in a way that allows business to take profits out of society”. Hart (2008) posits that hegemony is interpretation and articulation of neoliberalism to society in terms that can be accepted, inculcated and thus become a form of regulation. Watson (ibid), posits that the state “is a factor of cohesion in the social formation” and given the constant conflation of economic growth with social progress, the state project tends to orient towards accumulation imperatives. As a result accumulation has been inculcated as a way of limiting resistance thus creating a system of legitimation by accumulation. It is in this light that Jessop might be interpreted, where he refers to the state as “self-valorization of capital in and through regulation” (2007: 24). When the individual perceives themselves as a utility maximizing individual their priority is on personal accumulation, thus the social culture is in sync with an accumulation directed state project. Society is therefore shaped by the state to suit the accumulation project, thus “universalizing the interests of a social group” (Eckers et al; ibid). Through manipulation from above, citizens are turned into consumers thus eliminating resistance to the accumulation project (Hart (2008) and numbing them to the exploitation and domination of capitalism (Watson, ibid).

The Marxist paradigm considers the state to be a tool of the dominant classes which exists for the purposes of legitimizing and protecting the class interests of the elite (Scott, 1998) where the elite oppress and exploit the lower classes of society. MacKinnon (1989, *xiii*) in her theorization of a feminist state “recognizes the power of the state and the consciousness and legitimacy-conferring power of law as political realities” and this can be extrapolated to the tensions in the land ownership conflict that this paper addresses. Bottomore (1988) reflects on Marx’s writings which posit that slavery is not dead, but rather it was adapted from owner and slave to the “idle rich and the worker”. This reflects the transformation of exploitation to an acceptable and legitimate form that is part of the system of accumulation. Watsons (2005) analysis on the commoditization of labor and land as a way of socializing the accumulation agenda explains and reinforces this position more-so when he reflects how individualization desensitizes the society normalizing exploitation and inequality. As such, the state project no longer faces opposition and thus the accumulation agenda can go forward unhindered. The current discourse on land deals is evidence of this, where the interests of the state are dictated by the interests of investors (Paradza and Hall, 2012).

The state therefore holds the mediatory and conciliatory position between society and capital where its role is to ensure both accumulation and legitimacy.

Its position is a difficult one where it must ensure the consent of the governed whilst maintaining healthy levels of economic growth. The discussion above however shows that the state is more disposed to pursue accumulation to the extent that the state acts as a tool for legitimizing accumulation. This position may not necessarily be surprising because, as Fox (1993, 23) explains, the power to disrupt political and economic stability provides leverage and in this regard capital holds the advantage as their withdrawal from supporting the state would be significantly more damaging. This was well reflected in Moyo's (2000) book on structural adjustment and agrarian politics in Zimbabwe. He explained very well how the Government of Zimbabwe (GoZ) had embraced the economic policies under the Economic Structural Adjustment Program (ESAP) because of the promise of revenue for the state. The argument has been made that ultimately the state must still preside with consent, thus legitimacy is a key factor to the success of governance therefore the state establishes its hegemony as a way to socialize its project and legitimate accumulation. Hart (2008: 691) uses the example of the South African president and the ANC who used national liberation rhetoric to exert moral weight on the populace, to such an extent that Hart argues that though the party is highly criticized, it still enjoys legitimate power as the populace continues to vote for them. This illustrates the state-society relationship and in a manner that highlights the position of the state in relation to society and capital.

The argument for state elite capture therefore emerges out of this framework where the state is perceived as protecting the interests of the dominant class, and pursuing an accumulation project thus incapable of meeting the developmental needs of the poor and lower classes of society. This is the key question that this paper examines. Miliband (1965 in Bottomore 1988²) argues that the state was established for the sake of protecting property rights in the interests of the propertied elite class, and as such its primary duty is the protection of private property. In this argument, as earlier stated, he was proposing that state capture is neither an anomaly, nor an act of coercion by economic means but simply the state of affairs and fundamentally rooted in the nature of the state. However Jessop (2007) and Watson (2005) posit that the state is relational and as Scott (1998) postulated, it may also have an agenda and a vision. In addressing the evident bias of the state one asks whether the structures that form the state constrain it to an innately impotent state (Marx, 1844) with no flexibility to alter its trajectory. This line of argument then requires one to engage with the age old debate of structure versus agency where one questions to what extent the state can maneuver or act outside of the interests of the capitalist structures. However, the logic of a state with a long term state building agenda, as Poulantzas (in Scott, 1998) theorized, criticizes this position on the basis that it is short sighted. This position holds that the state has a level of autonomy and that the state acts in the interests of self-preservation, thus the state has an interest outside of those of capital and/ or of the society. Therefore to simply propose state capture as an explanation would require further complication given the complex state-capital-society relations as outlined. The interests that are navigated and subjugated in elite capture are complex and therefore the concepts such as elite capture are not as simple as they may appear.

² Refer to note 1

Watson (2005; 179) makes a significant distinction between the state (i.e. the policy making institution) and the state project. He argues that the power to shape and regulate economic relations is at any given point within the hands of state or the market but he highlights that the state is often under inordinate levels of pressure as it is held accountable for the success and lack thereof even in the privately owned sectors. The distinction between the state project and the state helps to distinguish the functions the state engages in, and the state project often is a representation of the capitalist structures that are part of the state itself. Poulantzas (1975 in Bottomore 1988³) argued that the state was to facilitate balancing the various factions of society, and in particular moments it requires that the state make short term concessions to ensure the long term survival of capitalism. This was part of a concept of the state having a vision and thereby being able to protect, thus Das (2007: 357) argues that “control over the state is a durable asset” such that capitalist producers would be more willing to sacrifice material assets to maintain control of the state. He describes processes such as ‘state induced class formation’ and the formation of particular discourses and policies in order to ensure the political control of peasants as well as the reproduction of labor. His theory is that the long term survival of the capitalist system requires a healthy and sustainable society. He acknowledges the potency of everyday forms of resistance as an option for pursuing change and state action.

Conclusion

The relationship between the state, society and capital is a complex one that cannot be narrowed down to simple assumptions. To simplify the assumption or conceptualization of the state, would greatly impede the possibility of real analysis that is reflective of the issues and the situation. In this case, the discussions on Land Reform in Zimbabwe have largely been tackling questions surrounding the legitimacy of the FTLRP where researchers were exploring the Agrarian question of “who got what” (Bernstein, 2005: 9). This narrowly framed discussion, has led to the various gaps that the following chapters discuss whereby an appreciation of the process is limited and to some extent flawed. The biofuel exploration, on the other hand, is generally framed under the land grabbing discourse where state elite capture is presented as a reality with little complication or nuancing of the discussion. Though it may be accepted that the state panders to the whims of investors in many of the land grabbing incidences, the discussion often presents the state and society as a dichotomy without looking at the structures of capitalism that have long been in place that push governments to make the deals, or as was the case in Zimbabwe, the motivations though related to capital, were also towards resisting the neo-liberal structures. It is therefore this concept of a visionary state that establishes its hegemony within capitalist society that leads one to conclude that though the state-capital alliance is a truism that in fringes on the poor and peasant classes, the structure of the state still allows for the state to engage in meaning development efforts on behalf of the poor, marginalized and exploited. The next chapter will apply this concept of the state to the issues being studied and enable a more in depth analysis that may help explain the states policies.

³ Refer to note 1

Chapter 3 : Background

This ideas of the state in relation to capital and society offer a rich framework of analysis and in order to answer the questions of why the Zimbabwean government acted in a manner that appears contradictory, we must re-examine the actions of the state. In this chapter, the discussion will focus on the issues being discussed, i.e. the FTLRP and the Chisumbanje Green Fuel project. It will examine the current literature, discourse and tensions which can then be used to contextualize the theoretical arguments providing a concrete reference of analysis as well as addressing the issues on policy making in Zimbabwe.

The tensions under investigation are on the policy by the Government of Zimbabwe that established the Chisumbanje Green Fuel project 9 years after the Fast Track Land Reform Program (FTLRP) was institutionalized. The state awarded Green Fuel, 45,000 hectares of land on Estates run by the parastatal ARDA (Agriculture and Rural Development Association) and effectively displaced multiple households that had been resident on the land as beneficiaries of the FTLRP. The project though classified as a national project, is owned and run privately with the state holding a mere 10% stake (Parliamentary Portfolio Committee Report, 2014). The actions of the state in this regard raised several questions which include the main focus of this paper, questioning whether the state is indeed capable of acting for the interests of peasants or if the FTLRP had indeed been a smokescreen that is the state is now repudiating. This discussion, and policy reflection is part of a larger debate that questions the possibility of curbing and regulation of capital expansion, and the FTLRP had been a significant site of resistance and reigning in of capitalisms incursion into the agrarian sectors. The inconsistency of policy, and displacement of beneficiaries thereby challenges the possibility of a pro-poor state system and/ or of significant reform in order to reduce the inequality that is inherent to the capitalist mode of production (Redclift, 2007).

In this chapter, the issues of the Zimbabwean case are discussed, firstly to provide background information of and context to the issues being examined on the two policies in question. Secondly, this chapter will also review the literature and the discourse policies on the FTLRP. This is part of establishing the facts of the process as well as an effort to understand the conceptions of the state that have shaped this discourse. By exploring and critiquing the assumptions on which these positions are founded, one is better able to challenge and question the current discourse on the state and perhaps provide insight into the state-capital-society relations.

The Issues

Despite the failure of many biofuel projects, several countries in the global south, including Zimbabwe continue to explore large scale biofuel projects. Researchers argue that the interest in this area is a reflection of the shift in the

global political economy, and several authors go on to expound on the various aspects of this model of accumulation by dispossession across the globe (Borras et al, 2010; McMichael, 2010; Vermeulen and Cotula, 2010; and Li 2010 and 2011). The biofuel complex model has been considered unsustainable (White and Dasgupta, 2008) and as “the continued externalization of capitalism’s costs, through the distraction of green fuel” (McMichael, 2010). Projects such as these are viewed as commodity fetishization and profiteering off of the environmental challenges of the day, and such market environmentalism is yet another example of the expansion of capital into unorthodox fields (Redclift, 2007 and McMichael, *ibid*). Borras et al (2010) refer to this production model, as a “new profitability frontier for agribusiness” that has seen and it has continued to experience significant increase in investment and interest over the last decade.

Duvernage et al. (2012) studied the project and they argued that the project had brought a positive impact. The land had been unproductive and underutilized due to the dryness of the region so the local residents would benefit from the project as it would offer the locals jobs, and 0, 5 hectares of irrigated land. The global interest in biofuels is fueled by such narratives that argue that the projects provide poverty alleviation solutions as well as profit for the investors (Borras et al, 2010). These changes can be seen to be misaligned with the goals of Fast Track Land Reform Program (FTLRP) which sought to empower the black African citizens by giving peasants access to the means of production so they would become property owners and self-determining. The displaced lost access to their property and means of production and land given in compensation was considered insufficient for production to sustain a household, or for the rearing of livestock (Parliamentary Portfolio Committee Report, 2015). The local economy was drastically transformed from a budding cotton sector, to an economy dependent on sugarcane. The sugarcane is produced for sale to Green Fuel which holds a monopoly in that area and thus determines the price. By this one decision, the state essentially dispossessed the people of Chisumbanje of their livelihoods and “economic empowerment” and placed them at the mercy of a single enterprise. Moyo (2013) would argue that the FTLRP was aimed at redressing inequalities and also transform from the existing neoliberal agrarian structures to create a pro-peasant structure. The Green Fuel project was effectively undermining this effort by de-peasantizing the Chisumbanje region and reassembling plantation style agriculture which, according to Li (2011) is reminiscent of the colonial model.

In an effort to fully appreciate the subject, an empirical study was conducted and data was collected through semi structured interviews with several state officials. The 8 respondents included a former Cabinet Minister, a permanent secretary and directors of various state departments. The findings of these interviews largely corroborated the Mandihlare’s (2013) assertions. Adam⁴ stated that there were at least 600 families of war veterans that had been dispossessed from the land they had acquired under the FTLRP on the ARDA Estate. His testimony and that of the former Minister of Energy and Zanu PF politburo member

⁴ Adam was a state official who worked on the Chisumbanje project who requested to remain anonymous, but was able to provide significant information on the project and the states involvement.

Cde. Mavhaire⁵, also reflected that there had been a growing cotton sector in the area with communally managed ginneries which had been thriving with state support. The cotton sector had been growing in the area until the Green fuel project started and the former cotton producers and mill shareholders had been transformed to surplus labor (Li, 2010). The project is perceived as the state pandering to the wealthy elites, which many find concerning with some highlighting the country's economic problems as a driver for this alliance. It is however interesting to note that the fact that Billy Rautenbach, the owner of Green fuel, is white has not been a source of concern despite the racialized themes of the FTLRP. Consistently in all the interviews the respondents' main issue to be that the elite have the power to direct and mobilize the resources of the state in their favor.

The exploration of biofuels began in 1963 under the Rhodesian regime, and there have been at least 6 feasibility studies conducted by the state beginning in 1970 (Adam, 2015⁶). The production of ethanol as an alternative fuel source was meant to be done by the state for the purpose of reducing the import budget, creating some level of autonomy from the world fuel markets whilst still ensuring availability and affordability of fuel. After independence the state had continued to explore this venture, conducting several delegations traveling to Brazil in the early 2000s in an effort to get the Brazilian government to make a commitment to share knowledge and technology to help the Zimbabwean government; Benjamin⁷, had been a part of these delegations. Cde. Mavhaire (the former Minister of Energy) argues that the state had had a different plan for biofuel exploration, Billy Rautenbach had then maneuvered without the states knowledge to get the ARDA Estate and thereafter used his wealth and his family's longstanding relationship with the government to manipulate the state. All the respondents reiterated how Green Fuel and Billy Rautenbach himself had flouted agreements, policies, and state directives. All the respondents recounted the challenge for state officials to enforce regulations on a man who has the President's private mobile number and considers himself the President's adopted son.

These interviews reaffirm the argument that the biofuel project is undermining the redistributive agenda. Watts (1994) writes about the manner in which capitalism has been infiltrating the agricultural sector, and reflecting on Chayanov's writings that theorized that the reconfiguration of the agrarian sector under a capitalist model converts farmers to labor force. Das (2007, 358) also explains that the re-configuration must maintain a rural peasantry who are a "constant latent surplus population". Based on Li's (2010 and 2011) writing we understand that the biofuel plantation model is exploitative and depends on a significant surplus population to ensure optimum exploitation of labor for the purpose of profit maximization. The findings of the interviews are empirical evidence of these assertions as wages are still very low on the Chisumbanje Green Fuel plantations and they are often not paid on time but the lack of alternative

⁵ Cde is the abbreviation for Comrade, thus Cde. Dzikamai Mavhaire. The socialist roots of Zanu PF created a system where senior members of the party are called Comrades as an official title

⁶ Information provided by Adam in the interview

⁷ Benjamin was another interview respondent who requested to remain anonymous. He had formerly been employed under the ministry of Agriculture and had insights into how the project had evolved prior to 2009.

livelihoods constrains them from resigning. The out-growers of the scheme are often paid below market value for their crops because the terms of their production are dictated by Green Fuel thus they have no power of self-determination. This assertion is universally true such that in Little and Watts' (1994) analysis of contract farming in Mexico, Kenya, Liberia, Zambia and several other countries reflected that out-grower autonomy is but a myth. These findings are congruent with the Marxist perspective on agrarian transformations which is why the Green Fuel project perceived as contradicting the pro-poor land redistribution program that began in 2000.

Though it is apparent that there are points of conflict between the two programs sanctioned by the Government of Zimbabwe, the question still remains whether the Green Fuel project was a sign of the state backtracking on the FTLR program and its pro-poor agenda. Matondi et al (2011) asks this question trying to understand why after one of the most significant grassroots empowerment programs (i.e. the FTLRP), they were witnessing the emergence of industrial scale biofuel plantations. The state is central in the exploration of this situation as it is the body that sanctioned and legitimized both these programs, and one must question what role the state plays in these processes. It is therefore necessary to examine the position of the state, given the inconsistent demands placed upon it and, as in this case, its inconsistent actions. The execution of the FTLRP program appeared to be Zanu PF returning to its socialist roots where it was breaking down historical class structures, whereas there is evidence of elite state capture in the execution of the Green Fuel project within the same decade. This brings one to question the initial assumption about the nature and position of the Zimbabwean state in relation to capital and the processes of accumulation. In order to fully appreciate the position of the state, and why it operates in the manner in which it does, one must have an understanding of the theories of the state.

Beginning with Land Reform

Land reform in Zimbabwe began in the late 1990s, with a radical movement, that was driven by the “grassroots”, subscribed to by the masses and it evolved into a state policy and an institutionalized reform process. The focus for this movement was access to and ownership of land for productive purposes in order to redress the historical inequalities of colonization. Hanlon et al (2013; 31) write

“Land allocation has been a central issue in the country for more than a century. Settlers began forcibly displacing black Zimbabweans from their land in 1890, especially after Zimbabweans lost their first war against the white invaders, the 1896–97 First Chimurenga.”

The process that is now referred to as the Fast Track Land Reform Program (FTLRP) began with radical demands for land reform and illegal land occupations which are referred to as land invasions or jambanja [meaning chaos]. People from marginalized groups began to occupy spaces on the Large Scale Commercial farms (LSCF) (Cliffe et al, 2011), and the occupations signaled a shift in the land reform discussions. The states ultimate position was to legitimize and institutionalize the process creating policies and structures to facilitate the process, beginning with the Land Acquisitions Act of 2000. Over the period from the 2000 up until the mid-2000s, the Government of Zimbabwe (GoZ)

was engaged in a land reform process which saw the land holding of large scale commercial farms reduce from 15.5 million hectares total, to approximately 3,4 million hectares, and “overall there has been a significant shift to many more, smaller-scale farms” (Scoones et al; 2011). In a country where 60% of the population lives in the rural areas, land redistribution on this scale equates to wealth redistribution and perhaps even a revolution of sorts. Many consider this to be the state taking a pro-poor stance and Zanu PF returning to its socialist roots establishing a structure for accumulation from below. The FTLRP was seen as moving against the current at a time when capital expansion in the agrarian sector was depeasantizing the rural areas. It was this conception of the meaning of land reform and the FTLRP that causes the sanctioning of the Chisumbanje Green Fuel project to be unexpected as well as perplexing (Matondi et al, 2011).

Despite the many contestations on this subject, few would disagree with the notion that land reform was necessary in Zimbabwe. The very idea of it was enshrined in the Lancaster House agreement of 1980. This was the agreement between the liberation war fighters and the British government that ended the second Chimurenga (or liberation struggle) and gave Zimbabwe independence (Moyo, 2000 and Gunning et al, 2000). The need to redress the evils of colonization is justifiably evident, and land reform was one of the means to correct the injustices and inequalities perpetuated by colonization, thus reform efforts began in the early 1980s, immediately after independence (Cliffe et al (2011). However in 1997, the Secretary for International Development wrote an infamous letter shirking the responsibility by the British Government for the payments in the land transactions (Tendi, 2010; 87-93), and the British Government went further to withhold funding for the Zimbabwean Government in 2000 on account of the Government of Zimbabwe (GoZ) embarking on “a corrupt, inefficient land reform programme” (ibid). One can therefore argue that from its very inception, land allocation and empowerment was a central to the legitimacy of the Government of Zimbabwe (GoZ) and therefore process that began in the late 1990s was inevitable. This timeline therefore supports the notion that the FTLRP was motivated by the need to redress the heritage of colonial inequality as it can be argued that the active steps towards a more radical land reform effort only began after the British government had reneged on their promise.

The dominant discourse of a populist, pro-poor revolutionary state is however challenged by when one considers the policy position of the Zimbabwean government during the 1990s in the lead up to the lead up land occupations which are referred to as land invasions or jambanja [meaning chaos] in 1997 (Moyo; 2000) places as having. Moyo (ibid) studied the state in the 1990s, under the era of Economic Structural Adjustment Program (ESAP) and he highlights the Land Act of 1992 as a key point of reflection. Whereas some may argue that the GoZ was a populist state at the time that was working towards black empowerment (Cliffe et al, 2011), Moyo (2000; 15) posits that until 1997, the Land Act was merely potential “rather than an instrument of change”. In his view, the GoZ took a neoliberal approach to land ownership where it privileged economic viability such that the focus was on “growth with equity”. In his book (2000) he furthers this argument by discussing how the ESAP had re-enforced the promotion of export oriented agricultural production, thus differentiated the production classes and widening the inequality gap. Large scale producers (who at this

time where majority white farmers, remnants of the Rhodesian era) were incentivized and rewarded for producing export goods and the liberalization of the markets allowed them to access to more markets and capital that increased the profitability of their enterprises. The resultant frustration of the peasants, “poor landless and homeless” then pushed them to revolt and thus began the land occupations (Moyo, 2000).

This discussion on ESAP can be viewed in several ways; the first and most popular view would be that the Zimbabwean government acquiesced to the impositions of the World Bank just as many other African countries did in the hopes of “developing” their country under the existing global power structures. In his later writing, Moyo argues that in the late 1990s Zimbabwe made a rapid three year transformation to become a radical state (Moyo and Yeros, 2007: 104-5). It can be argued using this timeline therefore that the about-face that the British government had taken led to the disillusionment of the Zimbabwean “state” which then prompted what Moyo and Yeros (ibid) consider a rebellion to neo-colonialism and neo-liberalism. In this argument it was this radicalization that led to the abandonment of neoliberal policy in favor of more heterodox economics and thus the FTLRP can be considered a reflection of this radicalization. This argument is however flawed based on Moyo’s initial analysis of the GoZ in his book (2000). In this book he proposes that from Independence the state had used the promise for wholesale land reform under the 1992 Land Act as a tool for maintaining legitimacy rather than for real reform. He states how land redistribution during this time was conducted on a very small scale and at a gradual pace, often directly linked to appeasing black interests groups. These actions though fully reflective of a capitalist state accumulation project, these policies and actions cannot be attributed to ESAP or imposed structures. Instead over the course of the book, Moyo reflects on how the state project was focused on accumulation highlighting the state-capital alliance. This analysis of 20 years on state-capital accumulation project reflected in the agrarian policy interrogates the idea that the GoZs FTLRP was a result of a radicalized state rebelling against neocolonialism and neoliberalism.

The FTLRP transformed society, restructuring communities, livelihoods and the patterns of land ownership. The debate and discussion on the FTLRP still continues with several scholars exploring the successes and failures of what is considered the largest land reform effort in sub-Saharan Africa (Cliffe et al, ibid). The studies however tend to focus on the legitimacy of the project challenging the myths concerning the material concerns of the land reform. Given the haphazard manner in which the Fast Track Land Reform Project (FTLRP) began and was conducted (Moyo and Chambati, 2013), it has been challenging to ascertain exact figures for land allocations (Moyo 2011a, 514–7; 2011b, 262). Some of the challenges are a result of re-allocations in 2008 of land that had been re-distributed in the 2000 FTLR period as well some farm occupations that still remain unregistered (Scoones et al, 2011). The table below is a close estimate and approximation of the current structure of land distribution in Zimbabwe.

TABLE 1. CHANGES IN THE NATIONAL DISTRIBUTION OF LAND, 1980–2009.

	1980	2000	2009
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LAND CATEGORY	Area (million ha)	Area (million ha)	Area (million ha)
COMMUNAL AREAS	16.4	16.4	16.4
OLD RESETTLEMENT	0.0	3.5	3.5
NEW RESETTLEMENT: A1	0.0	0.0	4.1
NEW RESETTLEMENT A2	0.0	0.0	3.5
SMALL-SCALE COMMERCIAL FARMS	1.4	1.4	1.4
LARGE-SCALE COMMERCIAL FARMS	15.5	11.7	3.4*
STATE FARMS	0.5	0.7	0.7
URBAN LAND	0.2	0.3	0.3
NATIONAL PARKS AND FOREST LAND	5.1	5.1	5.1
UNALLOCATED LAND	0.0	0.0	0.7

Source: derived from various government sources and compiled by The African Institute of Agrarian Studies (Scoones *et al.* 2010, 4).

*Note: includes all large commercial farms, agro-industrial estate farms, church/trust farms, BIPPA farms and conservancies.

The table above is a reflection of the transition that Zimbabwe underwent over the period of the FTLRP, where the largest transition was the reduction of Large Scale Commercial Farms (LSCF) but it is worth noting that 3.8 million had been distributed in the 20 years prior to 2000. Rukuni et al found that under the FTLRP, over 145,000 farm households had benefited under the A1 schemes and approximately 16,500 households occupying A2 plots (2009; 3) all of which was on land that had previously been owned by 6000 households. This has prompted scholars such as Cliffe et al. (2011) to describe this process using Van der Ploegs term, “repeasantization”. The allocated sizes were approximately 12-30 hectares per household under the A1 scheme (Moyo and Chambati; 2013) and for the A2 farms the average size was 318 hectares, with the majority of the peasants being allocated land under the A1 model which also served a poverty alleviation purpose (Moyo 2011a, 514–7; 2011b, 262).

This stark representation of the transformation of the rural landscape in land ownership, land use as well as in racial dynamics was a testament to the radical policy that this land reform process was but it is still framed in the discourse of legitimacy. Despite its chaotic execution, (Hammar, 2008; Moyo and Chambati, 2013; 13; and Zamchiya, 2011), and the tenuous claims to the resettlement properties (Marongwe, 2011; Scoones et al 2011) many still consider the program to have been a success. The studies highlighted above (Moyo, 2011; Murisa, 2011; Mkodzongi, 2011; Scoones et al, 2011 and Zamchiya et al, 2011) all reflected on the new production models and sustainability as signals of grassroots empowerment and accumulation from below. Moyo and Chambati (2013) hold that “the majority of people see the FTLRP as the final embodiment of

empowerment following Zimbabwe's independence in 1980", thus there still remains some truth in the statement by the President Robert Mugabe in August 2005 that summarizes the GoZs position:

"Without doubt, our heroes are happy that a crucial part of this new phase of our struggle has been completed. The land has been freed and today all our heroes lie on the soil that is declaration. Their spirits are unbound, free to roam the land they left shackled, thanks again to the Third Chimurenga". (Quoted in Derman, 2006: 2)

Land reform was a central demand of the liberation movement, and one cannot critically discuss the FTLRP without situating it in the historical context of colonialism, power and racial inequalities. As Boone (2015) posits, some of the major land related conflicts are "marked by long histories of deep state involvement in the ordering and re-ordering of rural property relations".

If one were to begin with studying the earlier land reforms of the 1980s to 1990s, we find that the policies of the state were biased against the interests of the rural poor in favor of the wealthy, bourgeoisie and the urban population, both black and white (Moyo, 2000 and 2001). In his analysis, the elite contributed to the state's accumulation project and this remained unchallenged as the CSOs were primarily representing the interests of the urban middle class. The current body of literature however does not delve into the class structures, even though it ought to be an entry point into examining the accumulative and capitalist interests of the state. Instead, scholars focus on the narrative of the FTLRP undoing the remnants of the colonial history of Zimbabwe towards agrarian transformation (Moyo, 2011a; Scoones et al, 2010, Cliffe et al, 2011 and Matondi et al 2011). These positions are in response to the narrative that had emerged in the immediate aftermath of the FTLRP. For Pilosoff (2014) the positions of these scholars is skewed by both political and other interests, arguing that the Fast Tract Land Reform Program (FTLRP) was made policy in an election climate to garner political support for a waning ZANU PF. Moyo (2000; 165) and Cliffe et al (2011) highlight this diminishing popularity of the ZANU PF government in the 1990s with many of the peasants and proletariat viewing them as unresponsive to the needs of the masses exacerbated by the emergence of the first strong opposition party, Movement for Democratic Change (MDC). The inequality had worsened to the point where the poor and landless masses had been pushed towards "radical strategies" and self-provisioning which he describes as in the excerpt below:

"Instead, the state had continued to successfully trade off the interests of indigenous elites against white elites vis-à-vis those of the rural poor. The Government's strategy has been to offer a little bit of land and related resources to the black interest groups, and continually threaten to implement large scale and radical transfer albeit doing this in practice only on a small scale and a gradual pace". Moyo (2000)

Thus began the land invasion, and given that the state needed with the indigenous interest groups for political support they legislated the Land Acquisitions Act in 2000, but Moyo (ibid) implies that the initial strategy had included repressing and criminalizing the occupations (ibid). This position would therefore support Pilosoff's thesis that the FTLRP was an effort to regain political support and legitimacy by a waning ZANU PF.

It is interesting to note that all of the defenders of the FTLRP do acknowledge biases towards elites in the implementation of the program. This discussion of bias does speak to the elements of accumulation in this discourse, but majority of the literature is focused on either disproving or diminishing this element of elitism, such that the objective of the discussion is re-enforcing the

legitimacy narrative. Moyo and Yeros (2007, 109) briefly discussed the elite biases examining the complaints that the rural areas had not been adequately decongested whereas the chiefs and societies elite were focused on getting developed properties with farm houses and equipment. The analysis of beneficiaries fails to critically analyze the 3 tier structure of the program and though Scoones et al's (2011) findings in Masvingo briefly reflect on the political ties of beneficiaries, they provide little information on the class stratification of beneficiaries. Fox (1993, 23) discusses this idea of leveraging the state where he asserts that by virtue of having "the power to significantly disrupt political and economic stability" the capital classes have the power to leverage the state. This is not to say that the state acted in a prejudicial manner, but to question the assumptions that underlie the analysis presented on the FTLRP thus far. It must be acknowledged that given the recentness of the FTLRP it would be understandable that the focus of previous studies was on the empirical facts of the FTLRP before a more analytical and intricate examination could be conducted.

The Present Quandary

This re-counting of events however brings up the question of whether the Zimbabwean state was acting in the interests of the poor peasants and abandoning the accumulation project. Based on Moyo's article (2010) it can be argued that the 'radicalized state' was resisting the forces of neo-colonialism and neo-liberalism therefore the state was acting with autonomy. Moyo (2011b) reflects on how whilst land grabbing was escalating and where accumulation by dispossession was taking root with the advance of capital in the rest of Africa, Zimbabwe was pushing against the current by embarking on land reform. He writes, "Agrarian reform requires an articulated national development strategy, which emphasizes accumulation from below" and land redistribution was one such way to reach that goal. To sum up this point, this quote from his chapter says:

"Redistributive land reform responds to the political and social imperatives of addressing the historical social injustices and debunks the presumed inevitability of an economic and agricultural 'development' system created through a functional dualism in favor of a settler dominated capitalist transition and accumulation from above."(Moyo, 2011a: 198)

The dominant logic in these discussions now leans toward Paige's (1975) analysis of transition that reflected the peasantry as a key group in boosting productivity as they were more efficient. The success of the FTLRP has been discussed by several scholars who have been studying different geographical areas in Zimbabwe. To begin, Gunning et al (2000) had studied the early land reform projects of the early 1980s, where they debunked the myth that the "unskilled" black beneficiaries could not succeed in agriculture. This same position is taken by the contemporary authors who study different geographical sites Masvingo province (Scoones et al, 2011), Manicaland (Zamchiya et al, 2011) Midlands (Mkodzongi, 2011) and the Highveld areas (Moyo 2011 and Murisa 2011). These studies not only show the success of the accumulation from below model, but also are a reflection of a state that successfully executed a wealth redistribution program for the benefit of society's lower classes. These arguments would therefore support the proposition that the state is indeed capable of acting in the interests of poor peasants and against the capitalist imperative.

Most consider the FTLRP to be - thus it can be classified as accumulation from below, whereas the investor heavy and possibly land grabbing Chisumbanje project classified as Accumulation by dispossession. The Land reform program began as a grassroots movement which the state appears to have recognized and supported as a way to provide empowerment for the masses (Moyo, 2010) whereas the Green fuel project also received state support and sanction, but its main purpose appears to be private capital accumulation. It is these assertions that then make it difficult to reconcile the FTLRP with the Chisumbanje Green fuel project. Matondi et al (2011) make similar arguments, showing that the emergence of large scale plantation style enterprises in this context is perplexing. The GoZ is the central player in this discussion and therefore its position requires some unpacking if this quandary is to be understood. The dissonance in these two position is what this paper attempts to uncover, and thus necessitating the conversation on the states position is in relation to processes of accumulation and what role it plays. By exploring how the state is theorized, we better understand some of the gaps in the understanding of the FTLRP discourse itself as well as the actions of a seemingly conflicted state.

The summation of these discussions is still responding to the question of whether the FTLRP actually benefitted the masses. The problem with this framing of issues is that though these are very important issues for study, often this results in a failure to analyze the FTLRP more in depth. To re-iterate the words of Moyo and Yeros (2007), by limiting the frame of analysis and depoliticizing the issues, we obscure the social basis and contradictions thus we cannot fully appreciate the subject matter. The debates are framed around three (3) key elements of the FTLRP which are; the chaotic manner in which it happened, the success of the program and whether the process was meant only to benefit Zanu PF 'cronies' thus designed for self-aggrandizement. However, to fully understand the policies made by the Zimbabwean state in these matter, a re-examination of the FTLRP using the theoretical framework of state theory is necessary. The theory of the state suggests that the state is relational, but is closely aligned to the capital classes and pursues an accumulation agenda. To reconcile all these elements, an in depth analysis is necessary.

Chapter 4 : What Does This All Mean

Using theoretical framework on the state, it is possible therefore to re-examine these positions in order to better understand why the Zimbabwean state acted as it did. The current narrative was that those who can afford to, can purchase the services of the state for personal gain, but in 2000 the state had been 'radicalized' and thus began to run autonomously, independent of class domination. The sanctioning and support of the Green Fuel project was perceived as a state pandering to the interests of the dominant classes, thus raising the question of whether the FTLRP had indeed been an empowerment project, and/ or if the state is truly capable of acting in the interests of the poor peasants. This narrative however is an oversimplification in which on close observation one can observe multiple points of deviation where the evidence does not line up with the main narrative. In examining the main points of dissent in the literature in Chapter 3, there are several key points that also need further complication in order to be fully understood. The narrative of re-peasantization and accumulation from below (Cliffe et al, 2011, Scoones et al, 2011 and Moyo & Yeros, 2007) is problematic in that it seems to be a superficial analysis of the program. When observed through the lens of state theory, as argued in the preceding chapter, one begins to perceive the land reform process in a different light and this understanding can then address this paper's key question. The understanding of the two land transactions through this lens leads one to ask different questions from those that are addressed in the current literature, and this paradigm assists in uncovering the intersection of these policies revealing that the perceived tension is superficial.

The Broader Questions

The outlined challenges with the current discourse was in the framing of the discourse which excluded various key discussions. It can be argued that the gaps and shortcomings in the literature may stem are a result of the questions they were responding to, such that the FTLRP literature was shallow in its analysis because the research questions were focused on the material issues of the process and debunking the various myths that had been propagated. The research questions focused on the material issues, therefore in order to get a richer understanding of the workings of the state from a theoretical perspective, it requires more invasive questions. This paper is focused on understanding the behavior of the Zimbabwean state as it implemented conflicting policies which will hopefully contribute to the larger question of whether the state can act in the interests of poor peasants. Ultimately this discussion does not only serve the purpose of clarifying the policies in Zimbabwe, or the tensions in agrarian studies, but across the development field, this treatise contributes to the critical analysis of capitalism, the state as well as the political economy of CSOs and social movements.

To re-iterate Das' (2007: 351) argument, the relationship between the state, capital and the peasantry appears salient and the concept overtly simple, and yet he argues that this relationship is neither simple nor obvious. The supposition that given that by pursuing reforms for the benefit of peasants the state is defying or transgressing the interests of the dominant wealthy class would be a misguided assumption. An understanding of the long term visionary nature the state project, as already highlighted, means therefore that the interests of capital may be best served by providing resources to the peasant classes. It is therefore essential that in pursuing a critical analysis of this relationship, one must pursue the right questions and question the underlying assumptions if one is to gain meaningful insight. As the background review has highlighted, the major challenge with the current discourse is in the questions they pursue and the assumptions of simplicity that often underlie the analysis of the issues. It is only by complicating the discourse with the finer understanding of the contextual components, the theoretical paradigm can provide a useful lens for clarifying both the material and ideational elements of the discourse.

This section of the paper will attempt to critically re-evaluate the key assumptions under scrutiny with this new paradigm in a manner that will hopefully explain why the state sanctioned these two policies. I will also reflect on the intersection in the actions of the state and hopefully show that the though we can see tensions between the two programs, there is consistency on the part of the state. Bearing in mind therefore that the state is a dialectic social relation, the empirical evidence and contemporary discourse must be re-examined using the theories of hegemony, the strategic relational approach and Poulantzian (and also Watson) conception of the state project.

The Class Character of this State

It is important to first analyze the class character of the state in Zimbabwe given that a class analysis is the paradigm through which this entire study is conducted. If it is to be argued that the state is an instrument of the dominant classes designed to legitimize and socialize their interests within broader society, then it would be important that the dominant class be defined. Paige's work on rural class conflict reflected that the landed upper classes needed political muscle to maintain its economic objectives and thus conflict over landed property has always been directly tied to political control (1975, 17). The class analysis he conducts reflects the weaknesses of the middle peasants in organizing into a class for itself, using a quote from Mao to reflect this. The quote says, "The owner and middle peasants also want to be rich" and it is for this reason that they would not challenge the exploitative capitalist system as they would hope to use it for private accumulation to attain this wealth. Das (2007, 357) extends this argument to the political sphere where he shows that the "elite" are not only the capitalist propertied classes but also those who occupy high positions of power within the political state. This logic stems from the recognition of various forms of capital, of which political capital is still considered valuable currency. Das (ibid) shows that state capture represents privileged access to the state, and state infrastructure especially given that the state has a monopoly on legitimate violence and he

ties the element of financial capital to political capital by highlighting that capitalists would rather lose assets than to lose political power (page 357). Given this representation, it is essential that there be clarity on what elite refers to in this conversation as well as what the class structure is in Zimbabwe. It must be noted that for the purposes of this discussion, capital will refer to financial capital unless otherwise indicated.

Moyo (2000) provides a good point of departure, where he shows the various groups within Zimbabwe that fall into the category of elite. The first and most important marker is wealth and ownership of significant property. The colonial history of Zimbabwe was largely tied to agricultural production, thus the wealthy people were the large scale commercial farmers. The apartheid regime of the Rhodesian government meant that these were white farmers but with the political changes that came with independence, there were also black commercial farmers. These households controlled vast pieces of land and under the economic policies were able to be highly profitable and thus wealthy in financial terms. Though Moyo and Chambati (2013, 7) discuss how the Commercial Farmers Union (CFU) was racially biased and the arguments against the FTLRP were based on white supremacist logic, they also show (page 15) that the CFU president acknowledged the existence of a black wealthy elite as well. In Moyo (2000, 161) he shows that though re-distribution was not happening in earnest, there was some redistribution happening though less than 15% of the overall land holding changed ownership. By virtue of their wealth, and their being the largest contributors to the GDP of Zimbabwe they had significant power and thus they were the elite class thus the interests of both black and white elites were the same. In the terms of Das (ibid) they were the elite outside the state who were able to control the state personnel. Further to that, is the argument for political elites (the holders of high political offices) also used their positions of access to influence state action. Often this was related to private accumulation as well thus we find an intersection in the interests political and financial elites. Anecdotal evidence from the interviews on Chisumbanje corroborated this line of argument showing how after getting into office a number of political leaders had begun to amass wealth and property even before the FTLRP. Liberty⁸ gave an example of the former Vice president and her husband who was the first black army general at Independence, had amassed wealth using the states tendering process through privately registered shell companies and buying properties below market value by using their political muscle. This nexus therefore reflects the characterization of the elite class, which becomes more evident in the discussion on Chisumbanje, where Billy Rautenbach gained political access through his wealthy family. His father had provided financial support for Zanu PF during liberation struggle, whilst Billy himself had funded the state in for their military intervention in Congo⁹. Where in this case capital bought influence, in the case of the vice president and others like her, influence had stimulated the amassing of capital.

Outside of the elite, the state is also significantly influenced by the bourgeoisie classes with society. The colonial history of inequality meant that gap was

⁸ Liberty was also a respondent in the interview process. He is a civil society leader, the director of a CSO and is now also a PhD candidate.

⁹ This information was provided by the former Minister of Energy and Zanu PF politburo member Cde. Dzikamai Mavhaire.

often wide such that those who were considered middle class, were often more upper middle class and thus somewhat divorced from the lower classes. This was further exacerbated by the rural urban divide that Moyo (2000) refers to highlighting the lack of representation of peasant rights was a result of the lack of representation of peasants as well as the Civil Society being composed of middle class urbanites. Moyo and Yeros (2007, 110) argue that the emergence of a capitalist bourgeoisie was considered a prerequisite for accumulation. Given the states need for public accumulation (funds for the state) it relies on the incomes out of the taxes and duties and thus a strength healthy bourgeoisie class would ensure this revenue. Poulantzas (1975 in Bottomore 1988¹⁰) suggested that, as a fundamental political objective of the capitalist state is to demobilize/disorganize the opponents of accumulation, such that for one to think that being a part of the state is a source of power would be a fundamental misunderstanding of the nature of the state. The support of the bourgeoisie who amongst themselves have aspirations to wealth and property would help to legitimize the accumulation project in the process that was referred to in the last chapter, that Watson (2005) called 'legitimation by accumulation'.

A different formulation of the question that this paper focusses on would be that this is an inquiry into the actions of the state that appear uncharacteristic. The discussion on the FTLRP was framed with a particular understanding of the class character of the state. The argument was that the state was acting in an effort to rectify the inherited inequalities from the countries colonial past, and counter the neo-liberal logic pushing towards the capital expansion in the agrarian sector. The sanctioning of the Chisumbanje Green fuel project which was a private enterprise geared towards private profit would therefore be an unexpected action on the part of the state. These statements hold particular assumptions on the class character of the state, but using this characterization of the state, the actions of the state can be clarified

Re-evaluating FTLRP

Scoones et al (2011) state that "... but elite capture is not the whole story of Zimbabwe's land reform, nor indeed the dominant one". This statement was directed at the debate on cronyism, but using the characterization of the state from the previous section and it can be argued that elite capture is a major element in this discourse. The critique of the FTLRP discourse reflected that the current literature mainly focusses on the legitimacy aspects of the state's involvement in the program, whereas there was a classist agenda as well. It has been argued that the state was determined on creating a rural bourgeoisie, thus the tiers of the program ensured that the more productive regions, developed properties and the A2 scheme properties, were awarded to specific classes. As shown in Chapter 3, the discourse on FTLRP has been framed mostly as a state that was making attempts at undoing the heritage of racial inequality from the colonial period and providing equitable access to resources. The challenge is that, as

¹⁰ Refer to note 1.

Fox (1993, 30) says, the fact that state actors may claim to be acting in the national interests does not necessarily mean they are motivated by these national interests.

It is interesting to note that though Scoones et al (ibid) would argue that elite capture was not a significant factor in the FTLR discourse, Cliffe et al (2011: 916) state that partisanship and patronage are entrenched into the institutional character of the state thus the limits on the expression of political views. Moyo and Chambati (2013, 12) write, “The A2 farmers are clearly aware of the desire for accumulation” such that the A2 farmers tend to imitate the white LSC farmers and are often referred to as the commercial farmers (even though the model may be different). They argue that though the A2 farming schemes were the most promoted as representative of the FTLRP, the peasants were only able to leverage themselves onto the A1 scheme (Moyo and Chambati, ibid), which many still argue failed to sufficiently decongest the rural areas. The current narrative valorizes the fact that quantitatively, there were larger numbers of peasants who benefited from the FTLRP, and yet the parting words of the CFU president still hold true that qualitatively the process was led by the elite, thus it was the elite benefiting the elite.

The argument for a qualitative comparison reflects that though the elite may have been quantitatively fewer, they were receiving much larger pieces of land under the A2 scheme thus qualitatively there was elite bias. Further to that, the type of farms that they received as well as the levels of development on these properties was differentiated. Moyo and Yeros (2007, 109) discuss these differentiations citing how chiefs and elites agitated to get properties that were developed with farm houses, infrastructure and equipment already in place. The A2 schemes were designed for high output, forex generating and employment creation models, which was the same premise for the LSCF under the ESAP in the 1990s. Some of the pieces of property are said to be 500 – 1000ha (Cliffe et al, 2011, 916) with rumors of even larger farms having been allocated as well. Beyond these, there was a further disparity in allocation, whereby game farms and specific types of plantations (e.g. the tea and coffee plantations, tobacco and flower farms) were left untouched and/ or protected from invaders. In a few cases these types of farms were allocated to wealthy African elites, but overall the class dynamic and ownership structure also did not change. Moyo and Chambati (ibid) even go as far as to describe the pieces of land distributed under A1 as un-strategic. They quote a government document from 2001 that states that, “Beginning in 2000, the government equally prioritized the elite resource driven A2 model, ostensibly to deracialize the LSCF areas”. The state accumulation agenda is unmistakable visible in all these analyses showing that the tiered system as well as the manner in which land reform was executed was for the purposes of protecting and furthering the state accumulation project. The relegation of the poor landless peasants to the unsupported A1 scheme with insecure tenure on often undeveloped land, while running the risk of losing the property in re-relocations and land audits, cannot be considered inadvertent. It is my assertion that the structure 3 tier system [with the communal resettlement, A1 and A2 resettlement] was designed specifically to assuage and appease the poor peasants and war veterans whilst the A2 schemes perpetuated the capitalist state accumulation project.

This classist structure and co-option of the land occupation movement was a reflection of both a success in influencing state behavior, as well as an exertion

of hegemonic authority by the state. When observed through the lens of state theory, one begins to see the perpetuation of an accumulation agenda in the FTLRP as well as to also to consider the process a populist intervention. The FTLRP was implemented in response to a massive resistance movement in the rural grassroots, in what Fox (1993) referred to as everyday forms of resistance. The states eventual acknowledgement, legitimation, support and implementation of land reform was a result of the social pressure exerted upon it by these groups thus we do observe a populist response that validates the Jessopian relational notion that society can also influence and shape the state. However on the other hand, the program was classist in its structure thereby serving the long term state accumulation project. The findings of Scoones et al (2011), Moyo and Yeros (2007), Cliffe et al (2011) and Moyo and Chambati (2013) all reflect that the rural peasants were mostly allocated land under the A1 scheme, and that many were sidelined for the A2 scheme where there was more evidence of political patronage. Marongwe (2011) also highlights that in the post 2002 period, several beneficiaries had been displaced for the re-allocation of land in favor of the 'more connected' people. It can be argued therefore that in the face of significant resistance, the state had acknowledged and co-opted the land reform movement which it then re-structured to suit the accumulation agenda. Using Hart's example of South Africa (2008: 691-8), it can be argued that the FTLRP was a way of appeasing the masses, but it was also carried out in a manner the normalized class discrimination. The program evidently discriminated along class lines, but the state had rearticulated the cultural politics and interpretations of the discourse that few protested. It therefore becomes evident that the assumptions that serving the needs of capital or of the peasants, does not mean snubbing the other classes. Rather this analysis reflects that there is often a nexus point in the interests of the different classes such that in meeting the demands of the capitalists, the state can still serve the peasants and vice versa. The FTLRP was designed to neutralize the threat of instability created by the collective action of the landless poor whilst at the same time create a rural bourgeoisie, thus showing the complexity of the state and of the issues as well.

The FTLRP that was sanctioned by the state under the land Acquisitions act of 2000, was indeed a reflection of the demand for access to the means of production by peasants, as well as a culmination of the demands of the liberation war movement. The assertion that this process had anti-imperialist and anti-neoliberal influences can also be considered a fair analysis, but to end the analysis there would be partial. The accumulation project of the state is an essential component of this discussion that must be pursued especially in relation to the anti-neoliberal assertions made. Where Moyo and Yeros (2007) argue that the FTLRP as a reflection of a state radicalized to act in opposition to the neoliberal forces of neo-imperialism, there would be need for further analysis given the capitalist nature of the state. The state is an instrument for legitimizing capitalist accumulation, with a long term agenda for the perpetuation of accumulation and capital, and the same is true of the Zimbabwean state. Leaving out the logic of state capture and the state-capital alliance from the discussion would only lead to a flawed narrative that is partial and incomplete. This may then mislead, as has been the case with the FTLRP where many had begun to consider the Zimbabwean state a populist state that resisted the forces of capitalism, which I argue is not the case. The same can be said however for a complete bias towards state elite capture, and the next section will reflect on how our understanding of the

state colors the current discourse of land grabbing, biofuels and specifically the Chisumbanje Green Fuel project.

Examining the Divergent Land Grabbing and Green Fuel

The main narrative of the Green Fuel project is often considered the text book case of state elite capture. With all the interviewed state officials repeating similar experiences of flouted procedures, ignored advice and untouchable rich people, these stories all have the hallmarks of state capture. The narrative re-enforces the Marxist view that the state is the tool of capital, but as shown in the introduction there are also other elements that would perhaps complicate the narrative. To begin, the idea that the exploration of bioethanol fuels had been ongoing for 45 years before Green Fuel submitted their proposal brings one to question that assumption that the states actions were for the purposes of serving the interests of Billy Rautenbach. Though the state was acting according to New Institutional Economics logic towards sustainable intensification and pursuing a project that would help to reduce the import bill, stimulate local economies and create employment (Duvernage, 2012 and Cotula et al, 2009), its actions cannot be equated to state elite capture. The GoZ considered this a viable venture because the trade-off is justified because of the increase in efficiency and productivity as well as the benefits of Community Social Responsibility activities whereby the company helps with health care, education, inputs and also employment. When the idea had been first proposed in 1963 by the Rhodesian Government it had been after the Unilateral Declaration of Independence that had resulted in Rhodesia being under international sanctions. The Rhodesian government had begun exploring bioethanol fuel in an effort to ensure the country would continue to function even when they could not access petroleum based fuels. Objectively, this would have been equal to André Gunder Frank's (1966) 'delinking' (though in this case it was externally imposed). The Zimbabwean Government had also been exploring the biofuel option not only for the economic benefits, but also to reduce its reliance on foreign fuel especially given the volatility of fuel markets. These narratives do not quite fit within the state capture framework and therefore there is need to re-examine this framework.

An analysis of the Green fuel project also reflects this logic in that the though it has been largely presented as a case of state elite capture, an argument could be made for the project being designed to benefit the peasant class. As already stated, the Green Fuel project was set up by a private company that has effectively violated environmental regulations, lands rights, and workers' rights as well as exploited them for the purposes of profit maximization. The private accumulation interests of Green Fuel are evident, and the state has gone on to protect these, but it can also be considered that the state was also acting in the interests of the peasant class as part of a long term sustainable state project. The objective of the biofuel project was to provide an alternative fuel and thus give the state some reprieve from the international neoliberal pressures which more often than not involve oil. As such, by delinking from this key market, the state would regain some level of autonomy and thus be able to developmental projects

that would have been otherwise impossible under the terms of the WTO and Washington consensus. Many of the respondents argued that within the original agreement, the state had made provisions for the out-growers to be benefited as part of this program by safeguarding them from the exploitation that Li (2011) would later describe. It can be argued therefore that the interests of the state in pursuing this project were neither short sighted nor solely for the benefit of private capital. This is similarly a reflection of the Poulantzian state. Though at face value, it still appears as though the state utilized its coercive authority in instituting this project, and this can still be interrogated.

Given the levels of protest in regard to the Chisumbanje Green Fuel project, it is assumed that the project was imposed upon the communities and the nation at large, and that this imposition was for the benefit. By this logic, the state would have used its authority for legitimate coercion to enforce this policy on the unwilling citizens. However this assumption would be misleading because though there may be elements of truth, the discussion needs further nuance. The study by Mandihlare (2013) showed that the major points of contention with the Green Fuel project was not necessarily the project itself but rather their incorporation into the project and the lost livelihoods. Despite the loss of land, and the general desire for independent property ownership, the residents of Chisumbanje are largely concerned about the working conditions and the wage level. These concerns reflect that the interests of the capitalist classes have been universalized because the residents now consider their livelihoods to be dependent on the plantation, which is how it is meant to be. The normalization of this waged labor arrangement reflects an exercise of hegemony over this area that have harmonized the interests of the different parties. Though the state did exercise some level of coercion in imposing the project, it has normalized with several elements of the project as well and created a hegemonic space. This analysis reflects that the interests of capital and of the peasants are not mutually exclusive, and as such, though the state project may largely be for the expansion of capital, there still remains room for other actors to maneuver and further their class interests.

Chapter 5 : Conclusion

In summation, this paper explores the relationship between the state, society and capital in an effort to contribute to the discourse on whether the state can act in the interests of the masses. By taking the Marxist perspective, this discussion evaluates the FTLRP and the Chisumbanje Green fuel program in Zimbabwe as reflections on the nature of the state. Using the Gramscian concept of hegemony, Jessop's strategic relational approach and the Poulantzian idea of a visionary state, the actions of the state can be better understood in a manner that clarifies the perceived conflict in policy. These theoretical approaches also help to better understand the state-capital relationship in a manner that goes beyond the much discussed concept of state elite capture. In framing the discussion using these theoretical frames, the analysis of state policy in Zimbabwe can be viewed as a long term project that evolves over time, and as Eckers et al (2009) write, "Hegemony is a powerful conceptual vehicle for understanding how capitalism survives despite its contradictions" and the same would apply to the other frameworks. The study of the Zimbabwean situation provides a rich empirical case for analysis to bring out the theoretical gaps in the understanding of the state, but the available theories help to elucidate the contradictions that are being seen in state policy.

This thesis argues that the state was, and always has been pursuing an accumulation agenda, and thus when the stability of the state was threatened by the mass land invasions in the late 1990s, the state had to intervene in a manner that would both snuff out all further resistance while still ensuring accumulation. As such the land movements were co-opted into a state run land reform program that was tiered and thus differentiated based on social class. The tiered structure of the process ensured that specific and significant properties were to be given to those who were considered capable of maintaining the production levels. The 'poor' were given un-strategic pieces of land under the A1 scheme, with the A2 scheme being reserved for the development of a black upper middle class. The state was creating a rural bourgeoisie who would perhaps perpetuate the production model that had existed under the white owned LSCF which would challenge the argument that the FTLRP was a push against the neoliberalism. Though the land invasions in the late 1990s were an effort to challenge the capitalist neoliberal structure that was being further entrenched into Zimbabwean governance under ESAP, they cannot be attributed to the state. The state's response however did institutionalize and legitimize the grassroots resistance and thus one could view it as the state acting for the interests of the masses. Though the intentions and structuring of the reform process ensured the continuance of capitalist accumulation, it therefore reflects Jessop's thesis of a strategic relational process where the land occupations movement pushed the state to reform the structures of access to the means of production, the state shaped the process in order to protect the accumulation project. Though the relationship still reflects the Marxian view of the state-capital alliance, this program reflected that the relationship is co-constitutive, and further reflecting that the actions of the state are not targeted at immediate profiteering but rather the accumulation project is far reaching. It can therefore be concluded that the FTLRP was an example of

state power creating a hegemony within the rural landscape that was targeted at maintaining the far reaching state project.

It can be surmised therefore, that the state in pursuing the Green Fuel project, it was continuing on in the same manner it had with land reform, by facilitating the extension of capital into the agrarian sector and enabling that the accumulation project. The biofuel project in itself had survived a change of government, decolonization and had been pursued as an option for 46 years reflecting that the state project transcends government administrations. This reflects Poulantzas' argument that the conception of strict class interests is short sighted whereas the state has a long term state building agenda and vision (Poulantzas in Scott, 1998) as is reflected in the biofuel exploration in Zimbabwe. The position of the state is to mediate the interest of capital and legitimizing these interests in a manner that is palatable to the society, thus we see the Gramscian element of hegemony as well in this process that Watson referred to as the subordination of social concerns (Watson, 2005). This examination of the Chisumbanje Green Fuel project contributes to the understanding of the position of the state in processes of accumulation by going beyond a superficial argument for state elite capture. These reflections elucidate the state-capital alliance in a manner that not only help to understand the policies of the Zimbabwean government, but can also be extrapolated and applied to different situations.

At the outset it appeared as though the tensions between FTLRP, which is the single largest and most successful reform land program in Sub-Saharan Africa, and the Chisumbanje Green Fuel project were pulling in different directions. Ultimately, in the process of unpacking the issues we find that the systems of governance are more complex than they are presented to be. Though it may appear that the Green Fuel project was diametrically opposed to the FTLRP, this paper challenges that position by problematizing the conception of the state in this proposition. A re-examination of the discourses and position of the state show that even though land reform was a step towards righting the injustices left over from the colonial period, the execution of the FTLRP also served the purpose of quelling the uprising and ensuring the continuation of the accumulation state project. By reframing the discourse on FTLR, to directly address the accumulation state project, we begin to see the links between the states agenda in sanctioning land reform in 2000 and sanctioning the Chisumbanje Green Fuel project in 2009. We find therefore that our understanding of the state shows that the Green Fuel project does not contradict the goals of the FTLRP. Upon close examination we find that the state project was focused on accumulation in both cases therefore interests remained the same but it also reflects that despite to accumulation agenda, the state can still make meaningful change and reform for the benefit of the lower classes.

Though this thesis does provide a framework for analysis of such state action, it still remains to be explored whether the reason we cannot fully understand the Zimbabwean state is because the theoretical framework through which it is being understood is tailored from a normative conception of a state that is shaped by a Western idea of development. In several key points tensions can be observed within the state itself that are a result of cultural heritage, colonial history and the Marxist socialist roots of the revolutionary political parties, that form the state, that are required to function within a Westphalian conception of a state that is built on Western neoliberal ideology. Scholars (Mamdani 1996;

2001 and Nzungu- Ntalaja, 2006) have criticized the inheritance of the colonial state model and argued that it may be the foundations of some of the challenges that African countries continue to face. Moyo and Yeros (2007) make a significant statement where they argue that the issues in Zimbabwe cannot be understood on the basis of an idealized bourgeois democracy, and Maundeni (2002) reflects on the perceptions of the African state where he writes that some would argue that “The European state failed to transplant perfectly”. As Das (2007:355-6) highlights there has been very study in the area of state theory, and there is still need for further study to fully understand the state. He writes,

“Not only has the Third World been relatively absent from these theoretical discussions; similarly lacking were references to the peasantry, agrarian issues and agriculture generally”.

As such it stands to reason that the theoretical framework of state theory may not be sufficient for analysis of states such as the Zimbabwean State. The challenges of the African state that is seeking to define itself in a context the nature, role and standards have been predetermined require further inquiry for one to be able to engage the discussion on whether African states can be considered states.

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