

New Dynamics and Trajectories of Agrarian Change in Bolivia: Regimes of Dispossession and the Rise of Brazil

Ben McKay

New dynamics of agrarian change have emerged in Bolivia as a result of its insertion into what appears to be a transitioning 'polycentric global food and agro-commodity regime' (Borras et al, 2012). With the onset and convergence of multiple crises (financial, food, climate, peak oil), coupled with the emerging economies of BRICS and MICs as new hubs of global capital accumulation, there has been a significant 'rising global interest in farmland' particularly for large-scale 'flex crop'¹ plantations (Deininger 2011, Borras et al. 2012). These changing dynamics in the global political economy are resulting in a "spatial restructuring process" (McMichael 2013) of the global food regime, reshaping patterns of production, distribution, and consumption worldwide. With the rise of Brazil as a key factor in this process, Bolivian territory and its peoples have become subject to forms of dispossession at the hand of capital accumulation in the agrarian sector. Despite the history of dispossession in rural Bolivia carried out by both state and societal actors in what I call 'regimes of dispossession'; the rise of Brazil presents new dynamics of agrarian change in terms of how to understand state-society-capital relations in the current global context. This research situates Bolivia's agrarian structure since the 1952 revolution within a framework of 'regimes of dispossession' and argues that new dynamics of land-based social relations and territorial hegemony are both historically rooted and shaped by the rise of Brazil.

¹ Flex crops...