LAND INVESTMENT & POLITICS

Reconfiguring Eastern Africa's Pastoral Drylands

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Introduction:
The Politics of Land, Resources & Investment in Eastern Africa's Pastoral Drylands

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& IAN SCOONES

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1

Introduction | The Politics of Land, Resources & Investment in Eastern Africa's Pastoral Drylands

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The rush for land and resources has featured prominently in recent studies of sub-Saharan Africa. Often happening alongside regional projects to upgrade and expand infrastructure, this urgency to unlock untapped economic potential has generated heated debate around the social and environmental impacts, as well as consequences for livelihoods, rights and benefit sharing.[1] More than ever before, the gaze of global investment has been directed to the pastoral drylands of Africa. This matters because of the varied land and natural resource uses, social organisation and the histories and legacies of development that are unique to these areas. Given ecological uncertainty and the patchy distribution of resources, adaptability and flexibility have been the basis for sustaining lives and livelihoods in the drylands (Catley et al. 2013b; Mortimore and Adams 1999; Scoones 1994).

The organisation of dryland societies emphasises decentralised decision-making, meaning that many voices count in deciding on land and resource uses. Tenure systems privilege the rights of groups to gain access to resources, as well as passage to move herds between key resource areas. Opportunism, such as in cultivating a riverbank after a seasonal flood, expanding the size of herds in good years or migrating further afield in search of alternative work and sustenance, defines livelihood strategies for many (Oba 2013; Little and Leslie 1999; Behnke et al. 1993). All these facets of dryland livelihoods suggest that the impacts and influences of large-scale investments in land, resources and infrastructure unfold in ways that are specific to dryland settings.

The unprecedented increase of investments in these areas also matters because, until recently, state planners and investors overlooked

[1] See for example, Enns et al. 2019; Stein and Kalina 2019; Enns 2019, 2018; Smalley 2017; World Bank 2017; Pedersen and Buur 2016; Ferguson 2015; Hall et al. 2015a, 2015c; Laurance et al. 2015; Cotula et al. 2014; Weng et al 2013; Mulenga 2013; Cotula 2013; Borras and Franco 2013; Edelman et al. 2013; White et al. 2013; Wolford et al. 2013; Fairhead et al. 2012; Mehta et al. 2012; Moyo et al. 2012; Borras et al. 2011, among many others focusing on the intersections of land, water and green grabbing and investment.

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drylands. The assumption was that drylands were 'low potential' areas – unsuitable for farming – and thus were relegated as sites for investment. The prevailing notion was that pastoral land uses were destructive and inherently unproductive. Pastoralism as a way of life was and continues in many ways to be seen as outdated, backward and ill-fitting in a contemporary nation-state. The presence of central state power and corporate capital was previously minimal in such areas, but when state plans and capital investments arrived, new negotiations over rights and access unfolded.

The recent land and resource rush thus upends established patterns of state–society relations in the drylands. No longer seen as threatening borderlands in need of pacification, or low potential wastelands that can be ignored, in public and policy imaginations these areas are now seen as frontiers with abundant land and resources that can be exploited for national wealth (Greiner 2016; Mosley and Watson 2016; Browne 2015). The land rush marks a moment of repositioning for pastoralist frontiers in national development strategies and economic planning. The shift is all the more notable when considering that it follows decades of underinvestment and marginalisation by post-colonial governments. Ports, pipelines, roads, wind farms and plantations are all linked in the 'high modernist'[2] visions of states and private capital (Ferguson 2005; cf. Scott 1998).

Such large-scale investments are portrayed as part of wider commercialisation and growth imperatives, and even as a precursor to peacebuilding and the creation of 'resilient' livelihoods for pastoralists (Smalley 2017; Nicol 2015). Yet investments come up against the reality of existing intricacies of social and economic practices, and embedded regional systems of marketing and trade; they are always therefore tentative, provisional and in the process of becoming realised (Enns et al. 2019; Stein and Kalina 2019). The colonial depiction of these places on maps as 'uninhabited' or 'wilderness' is updated in new frontier visions as expanses of land that are cheap and for sale, while ignoring overlapping claims to land and resources, based on ancestral precedence, communal histories and practices of making use of these environments over generations.

Many influential actors are involved in the global investment push from international corporates to states and local elites, very often in interaction (Keene et al. 2015; Margulis et al. 2013; Wolford et al. 2013). But important questions are raised about who benefits and who loses out, and whether such large-scale projects do indeed deliver poverty-reducing development, as is often claimed.

[2] 'High modernism' refers to an unfaltering belief in the power of science, technology and expertise to transform nature and generate an ordered, legible, technology-driven modernity. Characteristic of the development plans of the 1960s and 70s, the features are replicated in the designs, for example, of investment corridors and grid-like plans for infrastructure development today.

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As the chapters in this book show, this new emphasis on developing pastoralist areas through investment in resources, land, infrastructure and small towns is resulting in new forms of territorialisation, contentious politics and social difference. The chapters that follow address three related questions. First, what do investments look like and who frames their meaning, interpretation and pursuit? Second, how are investments generating wider impacts, and who wins and loses? Finally, what types of resistance, mobilisation, subversion and forms of contentious politics arise?

While states and investors continue to envision large investments as part of a wider vision of growth and transformation, seen from the dryland margins, struggles around the framing and meanings given to oil, wind, livestock, land and water are the crux of many contestations. By examining the ways in which large-scale investments enmesh with local political and social relations, the chapters show how, even the most elaborate plans of financiers, contractors and national governments, come unstuck and are re-made in the guise of not only states' high modernist visions, but also those of herders and small-town entrepreneurs in the pastoral drylands.

Changes in the drylands

The chapters offer local cases of investment from across Eastern Africa, stretching from the Gulf of Aden ports on Somaliland's coast in the north to the Kilombero rice developments in southern Tanzania (see Map 1.1). Dryland Eastern Africa – far from being at the periphery of regional integration and global economic change – sits at the centre of evolving systems of trade, investment and security that knit Africa ever more closely with Western Europe (Borras et al. 2019; Antonelli et al. 2015), Turkey (Donelli 2017), the Arabian Peninsula (Keulertz 2016; Woertz 2013b), Russia (Oğultürk 2017; Andreff 2016), India (Carmody 2013), Brazil (Cabral et al. 2013) and China (Brautigam and Zhang 2013), as well as other parts of the continent, notably South Africa (Hall and Cousins 2018). Many investments do not come from a single country, as commercial financing and development investments may involve multiple partners (Cousins et al. 2018; Keulertz and Woertz 2016; Scoones et al. 2016; Allan et al. 2012). A web of transnational relations is generated that links states and private capital through a complex mix of finance flows, including private companies, finance capital funds, public–private partnerships and development finance (Borras et al. 2019; also Clapp and Isakson 2018; Ouma 2016). Much is opaque, making it often very difficult to trace the origins of investment finance.

Many such networks have long existed (Bose 2009; Beaujard and Fee 2005), but the intensification and spread of capitalist relations and new investment in dryland Eastern Africa is changing social, economic

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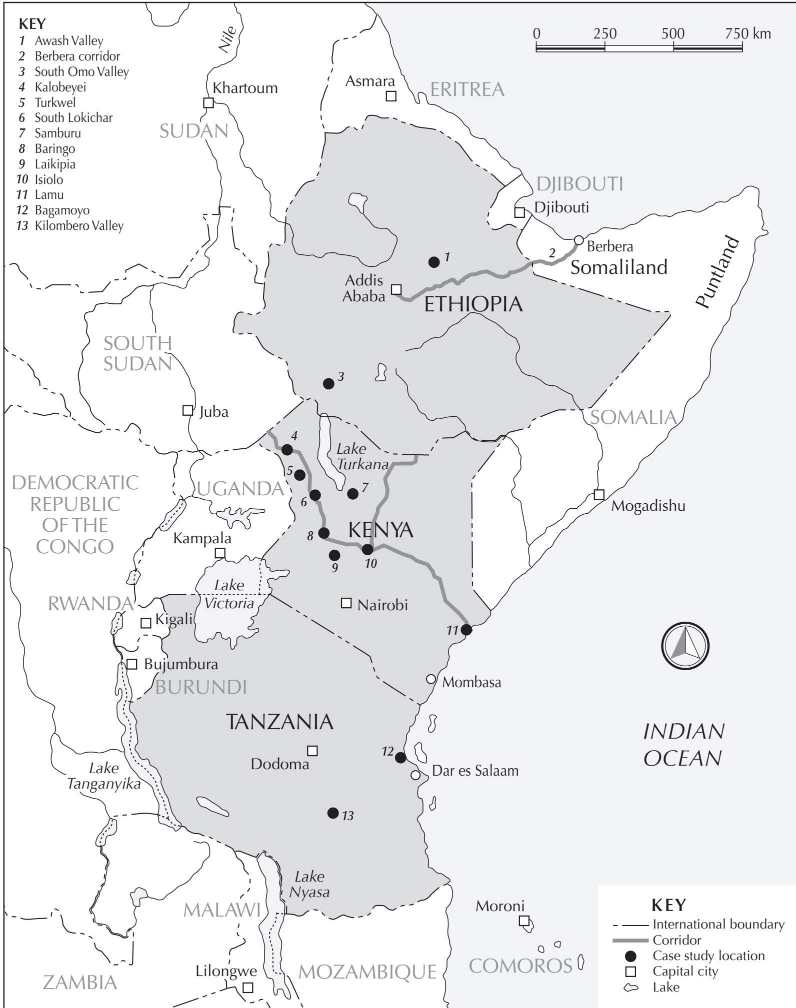

Map 1.1 Eastern Africa, showing case study sites

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and political dynamics.[3] These perhaps have the greatest impact on the region's pastoral and agro-pastoral populations. Dryland Eastern Africa is home to the largest population in the world still active in pastoralism (Schlee and Shongolo 2012) – estimated at 12 million to 22 million people, accounting for more than 60 per cent of the world's total surface area supporting pastoral production systems (World Bank 2014).

Changes in the region's economic life bring into sharp focus the transformations in capitalism and capital that are reconfiguring political and social orders more widely. Droughts in the early 1980s devastated livestock herds throughout the region, precipitating migrations of destitute herders in search of new livelihoods and relief (Adepoju 1995). Combined with other demographic and social trends, many pastoralists began to settle. State, non-governmental organisation (NGO) and church efforts to provide services – schools, health centres and water points – encouraged wider sedentarisation and the growth of small towns (Homewood et al. 2009; Little et al. 2008; Fratkin and Roth 2006; Salih et al. 1995). As growing numbers of pastoralists settled, states and donors promoted irrigation as a way of turning pastoralists into full-time farmers. However, most schemes were capital intensive, technically complex and dependent on heavy machinery, which left the sustainability of the schemes ultimately dependent on external commitments and expertise (Sandford 2013; Unruh 1990; Adams and Anderson 1988; Hogg 1983).[4] This meant many ex-pastoralist farmers had to rely on food aid and loans of inputs to cobble together an existence. Unsurprisingly, many sought to reinvest in livestock-keeping as the surest way of making a living (Hogg 1987b), a trend that continues in the current regime of large-scale investments and advancement of global capital.

[3] The World Bank's *World Development Indicators* (https://databank.worldbank.org, accessed 6 November 2019) include 'Foreign direct investment, net inflows (BoP, current US$)'. The data below in million US$ for selected countries and dates show (outside Eritrea) the massive increase in FDI since 2000, although much variation. The data of course rely on reported inflows and government statistics, and do not include informal transfers, including remittances.

	1977	**1993**	**2000**	**2005**	**2010**	**2015**	**2018**
Ethiopia	5.85	3.50	134.64	265.11	288.27	2,626.52	3,310.30
Kenya	56.55	145.66	110.90	21.21	178.06	619.72	1,625.92
Eritrea			27.87	1.43	91.00	49.32	61.02
Somalia	7.78	2.00	0.27	24.00	112.00	303.00	409.00
Sudan	8.27	-0.16	392.20	1,561.69	2,063.73	1,728.37	1,135.79
Uganda	0.80	54.60	160.70	379.81	543.87	737.65	1,337.13
Tanzania	2.94	20.46	463.40	935.52	1813.20	1,604.58	1,104.80

[4] Data on total irrigated area across countries are scarce, but in Kenya the area under 'full control irrigation' increased from 73,000 ha in 1990 to 100,000 ha in 2003 to 140,200 ha in 2010, including investment in irrigation schemes in dryland areas (www.fao.org/aquastat, accessed 6 November 2019).

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By the late 1990s, small towns had grown beyond their roots as sites of government offices, relief distribution centres and points for basic service delivery. In many areas, the settlement of refugees and internally displaced people from the region's conflicts added substantially to the population of such towns (Jacobsen 2002; De Montclos and Kagwanja 2000). Many were integrated into local economic life; sharing knowledge and business acumen (Alix-Garcia et al. 2018; Sanghi et al. 2016). Starting at first with small shops and vegetable stalls, often established by savvy refugees and migrants, business activities proliferated and diversified, as new entrepreneurs sought to emulate the success of pioneer shopkeepers and traders (Rawlence 2016; Fratkin 2013). This redefined the value of land and fuelled the growth of local capital as town dwellers and businesspeople took to fencing plots in anticipation of urban expansion. Local business elites anticipated opportunities to accumulate and diversify their wealth, investing in everything from rental housing in towns to transport services and fenced areas for private grazing (Caravani 2018; Korf et al. 2015). As Clemens Greiner shows in his chapter, recent trends in large-scale investments are not entirely responsible for changes in land-use patterns and social differentiation. Rather, they are occurring alongside long-term developments in Africa's drylands.

Beyond such towns and market centres, individuals fenced land to establish medium and small-scale ranches for hired grazing (Catley and Yacob Aklilu 2013; Tache 2013). As national government and aid investment in the drylands expanded in the early 2000s, more people invested in boreholes and leased grazing to herders (Flintan et al. 2011; Eriksen and Lind 2009). Small irrigation schemes established with private capital emerged across the region as local investors sought to supply valuable vegetables and fruits to local markets (Sandford 2013). Transport services, from motorbikes to public service vehicles and lorries, swelled in spite of poor infrastructure (Nunow 2013). This encouraged new marketing and trade activities in livestock, building materials, wild foods and charcoal (Devereux 2006).

While generating substantial wealth for some, processes of territorialisation have had profound consequences for livestock-keeping, social relations and conflict. The carving up of rangelands, through the establishment of private enclosures, water points and cisterns, agricultural and fodder plots, ranches and conservation areas, directly threatens adaptive processes in customary pastoralist systems (Reid et al. 2008). Movements become more difficult to make and key resource areas are fenced and set aside for non-livestock uses (Flintan et al. 2011). Resource claim-making by a new class of entrepreneurial pastoral capitalists has tested customary social relations based on resource sharing and reciprocal help within horizontal networks. Many local resource users deeply resent paying for grazing in fenced sites, or for water from a private borehole, in social settings where identity, belonging and kinship connections were the basis for determining rights to access and passage (Eriksen and Lind 2009).

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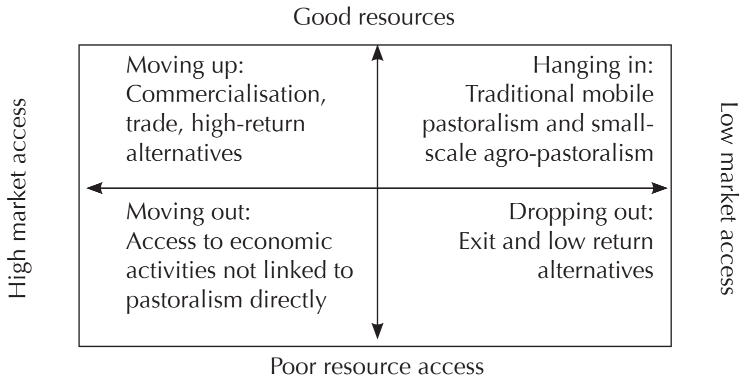

Figure 1.1 Pastoralist livelihood pathways in eastern Africa

Beyond the resultant resentment and tension, hostility has increased to pastoralists from other areas who pay to gain access to fenced enclosures and private boreholes. Conflicts in the drylands are transforming in other ways, as well, as the value of land increases (Cormack and Kurewa 2018). Traditional resource-based conflicts and livestock theft are driven by wider economic agendas and are becoming more difficult to resolve as relations fragment within groups, and between neighbouring societies (Lind 2018; Korf et al. 2015; Raeymaekers 2013; Hagmann and Alemmaya Mulugeta 2008).

Livelihood transformation and changes in this dynamic context are thus complex and contradictory. Rangeland fragmentation, sedentarisation, small-town growth, commercialisation and infrastructural investment, among others, are reshaping access to resources (to support herds) and markets (for livestock and other goods). This, in turn, is driving decisions about livelihood choices and creating new livelihood pathways for the region's dryland populations.

Catley et al. (2013) distinguish four different pathways for pastoral livelihoods depending on access to resources (a continuum of good to poor) and markets (a continuum of high to low) (see Figure 1.1, also Dorward et al. 2009). Areas and people with good natural resource access and access to markets are *moving up*, because they are able to maintain and sell livestock as a successful business enterprise, commercialising the milk and livestock trade, selling in high export zones, creating private abattoirs and finding lucrative opportunities along the livestock value chain. Areas and people with good access to natural resources, rangeland and water sources in particular, but who do not have a high level of market access are *hanging in*, practising customary forms of pastoralism based on high mobility, extended social ties for trade, and opportunistic use of key resource patches within the wider landscape. However, as already noted,

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rangeland fragmentation is constraining traditional mobile pastoralism because pastoralists are less able to gain access to the key resources that are needed to manage uncertainty.

When a livestock herd is no longer viable owing to lack of good resource access or inadequate markets, the household exits pastoralism, *dropping out*, at which point its members seek productive activities not directly linked to their own herds or flocks. Others elect to pursue economic activities that are not linked to pastoralism directly but make use of good market access, *moving out*. The opportunity to step out of pastoralism into 'value-added diversification' is limited to those able to take advantage of resources that add a high return to their activities. Still, small-town expansion, better connections with larger centres and the younger generation's acceptance of non-traditional livelihoods are enabling some to earn a living from activities in the pastoral economy that are not directly linked to pastoralism.

The global land rush, and the associated changes in land values, patterns of investment and changes in economic opportunity in the drylands, affects these four ideal-type pathways in different ways. Processes of inclusion and exclusion in new economic activity – whether the establishment of a wind farm or the carving out of a wildlife conservancy – result in opportunities for some but challenges for others. The 'traditional' extensive, mobile form of pastoralism is increasingly constrained though land fragmentation and competition. Yet new investments may offer business openings for others, whether a small-scale service supplier in a regional town or an emergent capitalist land speculator. All these processes are radically transforming pastoralism across Eastern Africa, and the chapters that follow illustrate how.

The global land rush and its aftermath

Debates around the global land rush provide both the framing and the context for discussions around investments and new territorialisation processes in pastoral areas. Land-based investments have multiplied around the world since 2008, as global capital sought to secure returns following the financial crash (Clapp and Isakson 2018; Ouma 2016; Visser et al. 2015; Fairbairn 2014; White et al. 2013). Galaty (2014: 83) outlines three factors driving the upsurge in land acquisitions: food shortfalls, and the resultant rise in food commodity prices in 2008, indicated that farmland could represent a lucrative investment; the relative decline of available land in both industrialised and middle-income countries – a condition heightened in wealthy yet farmland-poor nations such as the Gulf states; and the perception that in some developing countries abundant land with agricultural potential was underutilised, cheap and available.

On the last point, many governments present their drylands as vast tracts of empty, marginal, uncultivated or inefficiently used land that

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can be deployed more profitably towards commercial agriculture (Hall et al. 2015a; Nalepa and Bauer 2012). Thus, land deals are justified by narratives of scarcity and abundance on both local and global scales (Scoones et al. 2019b; Mehta 2001).

The recent land rush of course has important precedents; whether gold rushes in the 1850s in the USA, the South Sea Bubble in 1720 in the UK, or the sudden spike (then collapse) in demand for tulip bulbs in Holland in the mid-1630s (Li 2014b: 595). What is distinctive about land acquisitions over the past decade is its temporality and scope. The geography is also striking: more than 40 per cent of concluded agricultural deals globally since 2000 have been in Africa according to figures from the Land Matrix (Nolte et al. 2016: 16). Africa also leads the world in terms of the size of land acquired by investors: 10 million hectares out of 26.7 million hectares globally (ibid.).[5]

Rather than the process of land becoming a commodity, representing the outcome of a historical expansion of property rights and the rule of law, it in fact usually results in the abrogation of the rights of landholders by the state, in the interest of elites and investors (Galaty 2014: 85). Speculative land investments, as land becomes an asset class, do not result in increased productivity, but very often in land lying idle (Clapp 2014; Fairbairn 2014). That land is 'available' does not refer to whether those with legitimate land rights are willing to part with it. What is often taken into account is if a firm can make an arrangement with political elites to acquire land, usually in the absence of consent or awareness of those holding the land in question. Taking this further, Tania Li cautions that consent can become a means of dispossession, when a 'customary chief', who claims to have jurisdiction over communal land, signs off

[5] Land Matrix offers data on concluded, intended and failed deals. However, much caution has to be attached to such figures (Scoones et al. 2013). The focus is on land extent, which of course underplays the importance of focused, enclave investments for mining, oil and gas extraction, for example. The data show total hectares and numbers of deals (in brackets) for the greater Horn region (www.landmatrix.org, accessed 6 November 2019; there is no data for Somalia, Somaliland or Eritrea, however):

Area in hectares (number of deals)	**Concluded**	**Intended**	**Failed**
Ethiopia	1,447,101 ha (121)	520,550 ha (14)	380,829 ha (15)
Kenya	478,103 ha (55)	135,659 ha (8)	390,575 ha (11)
Tanzania	735,859 ha (77)	296,300 ha (12)	681,017 ha (13)
South Sudan	2,571,982 ha (15)	1,483,020 ha (9)	424,300 ha (12)
Sudan	762,208 ha (33)	3,427,578 ha (10)	588,000 ha (4)
Uganda	273,250 ha (49)	12,500 ha (4)	847,975 ha (5)

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on a land deal without consulting the people affected (Li 2014b: 598).

In *Africa's Land Rush*, nine contributions assessed the early impacts and influences of the post-2008 land-based investments (Hall et al. 2015c). They found that, while land deals often entailed enclaved investments and the (re)creation of agrarian dualism, with large estates and small-scale farms sitting alongside each other, on closer inspection patterns of change were more varied. Not all investments involved dispossession, as critics feared they would, nor did they imply a simple incorporation into global capitalism from a pre-capitalist state. Instead, the fate of African smallholders rests on the terms of their incorporation in investment deals – something requiring attention to multiple, coinciding processes of both inclusion and exclusion in the spread of capitalist relations. This suggests a focus on labour, technology, expertise and markets, as well as land. Processes of 'accumulation by dispossession' (Harvey 2003), driven by the global forces of financialised, neoliberal capitalism and supported by states, are thus made more complex by the intersection of the agency of local actors, institutions mediating resource access and the dynamics of differentiation across class, gender, age and ethnicity (Hall 2012, 2013).

This book updates the story of Africa's land rush with a focus on the drylands of Eastern Africa, asking what has happened over the past ten years? The chapters show how, far from resisting and obstructing investment, many have sought to position themselves to benefit from land investments. A major result is the heightened tensions across groups, between emergent local capitalists and those whose access to land is curtailed. Poorer pastoralists may gain employment to complement or replace their livestock-based livelihoods, while those with small-town businesses may profit from a boom in the economy, especially during establishment and construction phases. Speculative behaviour in anticipation of future development frequently characterises local responses to investment in many areas. Hannah Elliott's chapter in this book investigates investments in land by residents of Isiolo, an important hub in northern Kenya along the planned multi-billion dollar Lamu Port–South Sudan–Ethiopia Transport Corridor (LAPSSET). Anticipatory actions by residents such as fencing, building, occupying, purchasing, and acquiring legal documents of land are reshaping the social and spatial outcomes of LAPSSET. While the LAPSSET proposals induced a rush for land in Isiolo, Elliott explains that this is more than individuals and groups seeking simple profit. Rather, many see their actions as staking a claim on the future city.

In his chapter, Ngala Chome explains how diverse local stakeholders have redefined the state's modernist plans for a new deep-water port in Lamu on Kenya's coast. While the port's construction advances, the wider impacts of LAPSSET in Lamu are felt through local struggles over ownership and control of land, linked to potential future benefits and sub-national contestations over political power. These dynamics have transformed what appears to be 'top-down', large-scale investment

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driven by the state's 'tunnel vision' of generating and extracting wealth at source into something that is intimately networked with local visions of investment and future economic relations.

The chapters in this book highlight the often unpredictable and unexpected consequences of large-scale investments when they encounter local economies and societies. Linda Engström's chapter, for example, examines the consequences of delays in project implementation in a case from Tanzania. The project simplifications resulted in an unravelling of the investment plan, but with major material consequences for those living in the area. Also in Tanzania, Adriana Blache examines a rice investment scheme that has generated multiple conflicts through the creation of different categories of 'squatter' vs. original dwellers, fostering resentment and resistance among local populations.

The social and spatial outcomes of investments do not reflect merely the state's high modernist vision of 'development', or the interests of large global capital. Anna Tsing's notion of 'friction' (2011), drawing on the analogy of a tyre hitting the road, aptly focuses attention on the interaction between broader – global, national – forces and diverse forms of local agency. Anticipatory actions by local-level actors, be they investments in land, resources and property; new forms of social mobilisation or alliance-making; or the establishment of businesses in the hope of winning contracts and tenders, reimagine and restructure the grand plans of states and investors. This renders the distinction between global capitalist forces and local places and peoples less pointed than is often portrayed in discourses on investment. Such encounters produce the diverse impacts and influences of investment and responses to these in local settings observed across the chapters.

In short, the 'local community' is not singular, and the potential for enrolling villagers may be bigger than it first appears (Li 2014b: 600). Fana Gebresenbet's chapter on local responses to state-building in Ethiopia's South Omo Valley underscores the temporality of investments and the different reactions on the ground. The state coerced small-scale herders and agro-pastoralists into volunteering their labour for road-building in the Benna-Tsemay area of South Omo in the 1960s. In subsequent years, the state encouraged private land investments, resulting in the dispossession of Tsemay herders from rangelands, as well as the destruction of valued beehives. Workers brought in from other parts of Ethiopia bred hostility and conflict. Yet a longer trajectory of change in Benna-Tsemay has seen the growth of towns, services and marketing linked to better infrastructure and transport services in the region. Over time, the chapter shows, local attitudes to large-scale investment, even those involving the fencing of land and resources, have mellowed.

The outcomes of large investments are thus uncertain and contingent on a number of coinciding processes of enclosure, commercialisation, commodification and financialisation of land, resources and agriculture, as well as responses to these by residents of communities in investment areas.

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Visions of the frontier and the making of resource value

This brief overview of debates on land deals sets up our exploration of investments in pastoral areas throughout the book. Not all of these are investments in land for agriculture – they also include exploration for oil and gas, efforts to harness green energy such as wind and geothermal, infrastructure such as roads and airports, and also abattoirs and other infrastructure for encouraging greater livestock marketing.

Common to both wider debates on the global land rush and narrower discussions around investments in pastoral areas is the notion of the frontier. Official justifications for large-scale investment in pastoralist areas often speak to frontier discourses – of growing economies and improving lives through the transformative power of large and capital-intensive projects. Previously 'untapped' regions become reimagined, revalued and re-made into new 'resource frontiers' of global capital. As Tsing (2011: 29) aptly notes, 'most descriptions of resource frontiers take for granted the existence of resources, they label and count the resources and tell us who owns what. The landscape itself appears inert: ready to be dismembered and packaged for export.' Thus, the frontier is not just 'a matter of political definition of a geographical space', as Kopytoff (1987a: 11) suggests, but a particular configuration of values and institutions related to the advancement of extraction and commodification, as defining features of capitalist development (Rasmussen and Lund 2018).

Imaginations of the frontier often reflect notions of civilisation and progress. As Clemens Greiner explains in his chapter, the idea of the frontier owes much to Frederick Jackson Turner's conceptualisation of the American westward expansion in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. While the American expansion was associated with rugged individualism and 'the wild west', the frontier of today's large-scale investment in pastoral areas has more in common with a penetration-type spread of capitalist relations and the reassertion of centralised state power. These are not the wagons and pioneer families moving west in search of a better life; these are the Learjets and executives of FTSE-listed oil, mining and biofuel companies in search of new resource wealth, with convoys of Land Cruisers ferrying ministers and presidential advisers from capital cities to sites where projects are imagined or unfolding.

In both cases, frontiers represent the discovery or invention of new resources (Rasmussen and Lund 2018) – land for commercial agricultural enterprises, hydrocarbon reservoirs beneath rangelands, other energy from subterranean steam and wind, and even pastoral populations themselves being drawn into wider markets for everything from pasteurised long-life milk to mobile phones and online betting. Thus, the dynamics that link space and resources are not a function of mere distance, but a particular configuration of values and institutions related to the advancement of extraction and commodification as defining features of capitalist

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development (Rasmussen and Lund 2018). Or, as Geiger (2008) explains, based on evidence from Latin America and Asia, the frontier is a zone of destruction of property systems, political structures, social relations and life worlds to make way for new ways of resource extraction.

In Africa, large-scale investments are inseparable from state visions of throwing off aid dependency and achieving rapid economic growth and national transformation (Mosley and Watson 2016). Thus, states are discovering resources in pastoral areas that can sustain national economic development and ambition for rapid industrialisation. Simone Rettberg's chapter shows how these dynamics have unfolded over a sixty-year period in the Awash Valley in Ethiopia's eastern lowlands. Successive regimes have sought to deepen and expand large-scale sugar plantations established on rangelands used by Afar herders. Increasingly, these have come to define the state's interest in the region, away from establishing a security buffer with neighbouring states and instead to asserting the state's claim to national resource wealth. Over time, far from resisting state-driven territorialisation, Afar elites have become complicit in seeking personal advantage from the state's agricultural investments.

The frontier is not a boundary between civilisation and wilderness, but rather a relational space that is characterised by interaction, connections and conflict (Goodhand 2018; Van Schendel 2005). Frontier dynamics emerge from the 'messiness' of competing spatial imaginations, and disputes over territorial claims, as existing institutional orders are unsettled, uprooted and ultimately reconfigured as new kinds of resources become subject to governance (Boone 2014; Lund and Boone 2013; Sassen 2008). Greiner's chapter describes the unfolding of these dynamics in Baringo in Kenya's northern Rift Valley. In the state's vision, Baringo is an unexploited frontier whose subterranean geothermal wealth can fuel Kenya's rapid national transformation. Yet this Turner-like imagination of Baringo as a frontier to be civilised in the interest of national development enmeshes with the frontier-making practices of the area's Pokot elites. These are akin to Igor Kopytoff's 'internal African frontier' (1987a): elites are at the forefront of land privatisation, involving the fencing of the most valuable land along new roads linking Baringo's geothermal sites with national infrastructure. Uncertainty in institutions and the threat of violence to stake claims are central to frontier-making.

Thus, this book argues, there are many ways of 'seeing' large-scale investment in the drylands. State actors at the national level see investments as engines for national transformation, which is inherently good for dryland areas with legacies of marginalisation and underinvestment. Invariably, investors promote the benefits of project activity to residents of nearby communities, through the construction of new infrastructure, easing transport difficulties and promoting marketing activity, providing opportunities for work, and creating corporate social investments in bursaries, classrooms and the provision of water, for example. State actors at the sub-national level may not see investments in the same

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way, however, depending on how power constitutes at the centre and the status of state–society relations in their area. The position of sub-national political administrations can waver between embrace and hostility. Mixed views of large-scale investments often hold among local capital, as well. Ultimately, investment is something to be welcomed, but the terms of inclusion in land deals, compensation, and contract and tendering opportunities dictate the nature of politics. The views of other dryland residents, small-scale pastoralists and dryland farmers, cover a spectrum, from opposition and resistance to the perceived loss of key grazing resources and farmland, to accommodation in anticipation of deriving personal benefit, to simple antipathy.

As argued in *Africa's Land Rush* (Hall et al. 2015c: 24), simple narratives of the 'state' and/or 'investor' versus 'local people' do not relay the more complex dynamics and assemblages of interests that mobilise behind, anticipate and pursue large-scale investments. In the following sections, we outline four ways of 'seeing', from different standpoints. Across these, it is the production and attainment of wealth and control that mediates relationships between actors, creating a complex politics of investment in the drylands. Of course, these actors overlap and intersect, with for example, global capital supported by states and local elites in the acquisition and governance of land and resources (Wolford et al. 2013). But, as a challenge to normative perspectives of mainstream development and investments, exploring competing ways of 'seeing' invites a robust debate on how these developments are unfolding at the margins.

The chapters that follow emphasise how winners and losers emerge from anticipation, contention and the multiple ways of seeing an investment. How states, global investors and non-state actors frame investments often diverges from local interpretations, as the cases in this book show.

Seeing like a state

The promotion of large-scale investment in dryland Eastern Africa is part of a wider vision of regional economic integration and transformation of the rural frontier, generating legible order for investment, thus 'seeing like a state' (Scott 1998; see below). From the perspective of states, large-scale infrastructure and resource developments are benign and even positive as they connect remote rural areas to larger markets and improve accessibility to outside investors, traders and service providers – be they government departments or other charitable and private agencies. Thus, integration, involving investment in trade and transport corridors to move goods, services and people between coasts and resource-rich hinterlands, is seen as central to development and economic growth, and even bringing peace to restive pastoral areas. However, the very idea of state-sanctioned investments as a type of new development that can bring

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about peace and stability stands in stark contrast with the experience of Eastern Africa's pastoralist societies in their encounters with state power over time. State violence against pastoralists is part of a long history of a 'civilising' mission to bring peace and impose a new social order, as the chapters by Fana Gebresenbet and Rettberg show.

Unsurprisingly, institutions of the state that were introduced – sub-national political administration and other elements of the security apparatus – were mistrusted by dryland societies in many places where wide-scale violence against pastoralists was the official policy of colonial states and other central authorities (Vaughan 2013; Hagmann and Korf 2012; Lamphear 1992). The response of pastoralists in such areas was to seek an escape from the state's reach by resisting incorporation and other external imposition, avoiding taxation and maintaining an apparently war-like stance in relation to state attempts to impose its will (Catley et al. 2013).

Comparisons can be made between the experience of African pastoralist societies and the mobile swidden agriculturalists of the south-east Asian highlands that James Scott (2009) discusses in his book, *The Art of Not Being Governed*. As he explains, hill peoples operate outside the reaches of the state's authority when they can. State authority came not only through the threat of force, but also through the imposition of its vision of 'development'. Scott (1998: 88) likens state visions with 'high modernism', whose ideological variants incorporate 'a sweeping, rational engineering of all aspects of social life in order to improve the human condition'. Adding to this, Li (2007) contends that high modernist projects, like growth corridors, are framed by a so-called 'will to improve' by development donors and states, in line with a particular vision of progress. Central to Scott's (1998) thesis is the idea of legibility. His research on state efforts to settle or 'sedentarise' nomads, pastoralists, gypsies and people living outside mainstream society led him to the conclusion that making a society legible was an exercise in control and the establishment of state power. Understanding 'legibility' as a crucial problem in statecraft, he argues that

> the pre-modern state was, in many crucial respects, particularly blind; it knew precious little about its subjects, their wealth, their landholdings and yields, their location, their identity. It lacked anything like a detailed 'map' of its terrain and people. The state therefore views the complex, organic entities it governs as features that must be organized in order to yield optimal returns according to a centralized, narrow and strictly utilitarian logic. (Scott 1998: 2)

'Seeing like a state' assumes a particular form in the relationship between a highland-centric state (as in Kenya and Ethiopia) and peripheral pastoral areas, often by way of the civilising mission of settlement projects, irrigation schemes, road-building and the provision of basic services (see the chapters by Akall, Chome, Fana Gebresenbet, Rettberg and Elliott

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this book). Complementing other works on the region (cf. Asebe Regassa et al. 2019; Korf et al. 2015; Nunow 2015; Behnke and Kerven 2013), the chapters in this book show how state projects to 'develop' dryland areas have had a disciplining effect on pastoralist societies. Most projects have the intended or indirect consequence of sedentarising pastoralists, or at least minimising longer-distance movements, easing the burden of governing pastoral subjects through taxation, the delivery of basic services and other social assistance.

This style of development in turn generates a style of 'techno-politics' (cf. Mitchell 2002), where certain types of expertise and technological intervention are privileged, each with exclusionary characteristics. A homogenised, standardised, grid-like imposition emerges in the plans. Embedded within state plans in Eastern Africa is a heavy emphasis on the notion of 'unlocking potential' in particular pastoral and peripheral farming areas. This is the underpinning of Ethiopia's state-led approach to national growth and transformation (Mosley and Watson 2016). Over four decades, successive governments in Ethiopia have sought to expand large-scale cotton and sugar estates in the Awash Valley at the cost of restricting access to key grazing sites for Afar pastoralists, as Rettberg notes. Yet, this expansion happened despite evidence that the historical performance of plantations, especially cotton, was far less productive than pastoral use of valuable floodplains and river water to support livestock. Nonetheless, from the perspective of central state planners, the conversion of land use was profitable: this conversion to plantations 'has transformed a fiscally sterile grazing environment into a fiscally productive agricultural one, and displaced independent pastoral producers with tractable taxpayers' (Behnke and Kerven 2013: 69).

State-like visions and plans of tapping the economic potential of previously marginalised pastoral areas extend to humanitarian programming in the region, as well. As Cory Rodgers' chapter shows, populations long thought of as 'vulnerable' and requiring assistance, including pastoralists and refugees, become frontiers for international investments in humanitarian intervention. In 2015, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) agreed plans with the Turkana County Government to establish a new type of 'integrated settlement' at a 15 km^2 site in Kalobeyei in Kenya's far north-west. This was conceived as a progressive model of refugee settlement and an alternative to the 'care and maintenance' approach inherent in refugee encampment. Planners envisioned a grid-like market town in which refugees and Turkana hosts lived side by side, accessing the same basic services and social assistance, and operating their own businesses. Even as Kalobeyei's population swelled to 40,000 in less than five years, the development has not gone to plan. An influx of newly displaced South Sudanese refugees, rather than longer-established refugees, has meant a population that is in greater need of social assistance. Turkana hosts themselves have rejected the idea of integration, preferring their own

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allocations of services and assistance and living outside the boundaries of the settlement.

Generating wealth for the state, whether by converting land uses to forms that can be captured to produce revenue for national treasuries or establishing new markets encompassing populations previously thought of as unproductive and a drain on state and donor finance, is the impetus of many plans for large-scale investment. The development of oil and coal reserves, alongside wind and geothermal power – mostly in rural drylands – are integral elements of state development visions in Eastern Africa. For example, Uganda's second National Development Plan aims to enable continued upstream capital investment by global companies in oil and gas exploration and appraisal in the Albertine Rift, which reached US$2.3 billion by 2013 (World Bank 2015: 41). Kenya is at the forefront of green energy development, ranking first in sub-Saharan Africa in investment in renewable energies. By one estimate, it receives a massive 38 per cent of the funds OECD countries put into developing renewable energy solutions in the region.[6] The Kenyan government is banking on further large-scale investment in renewable energy production and transmission to help it achieve middle-income, industrialising status by 2030. Already, the country hosts the largest geothermal and wind-power developments in Africa. Investment in the Ol Karia geothermal complex has expanded substantially in recent years, with construction underway on a network of pipelines, wells and plants to tap an estimated potential of 1,000 megawatts of energy. In Marsabit County in the country's north, the Lake Turkana Wind Power (LTWP) site – consisting of 365 turbines – was connected to the national grid in 2018.

As James Drew discusses in his chapter, the state's vision of green transformation has not translated into significant improvements in livelihoods for residents near the project site. As construction advanced on the wind farm in 2015, youth in neighbouring Samburu towns and settlements blockaded roads in protest against their alleged exclusion from investment benefits, including compensation for the extraction of sand and the felling of trees, as well as access to new LTWP jobs. Protestors directed their ire at local administrative officials as well as liaison officers employed by LTWP. They were accused of undertaking selective consultations on project plans, inequitably allocating work opportunities and keeping the community in the dark over leasing land to investors.

Beyond investing in big energy in the drylands, as part of plans for national economic growth and transformation, states in Eastern Africa are also upping their commitments to livestock sector improvements. These have a long history, involving the establishment of ranches and attempts to 'upgrade' marketing, aiming to encourage the commercialisation of

[6] www.thisdaylive.com/index.php/2018/11/13/report-nigeria-third-preferred-destination-for-green-economy-projects, accessed 20 November 2018.

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livestock production. The history of interventions in 'modernising' pastoral production system based on models imported from elsewhere has been dismal (de Haan et al. 2001; Scoones 1995). Yet such projects are being revived in the context of wider investments in the drylands, and linked to efforts at reducing poverty and boosting livelihood resilience through market-oriented programmes.[7]

The formalisation of the livestock sector, including the expansion of corridor infrastructure, feedlots and processing facilities, feature in Ethiopia's second Growth and Transformation Plan. This builds on wider efforts by the state to promote the export and trade of livestock, most of which is supplied by pastoralists that have long been marginalised (Catley and Yacob Aklilu 2013). These efforts extend to investments in cross-border infrastructure to encourage further growth of the lucrative regional livestock trade. Ethiopia has a 19 per cent stake in the Berbera corridor, a US$440 million development encompassing a new 400m quay at the existing Berbera port in Somaliland, a 250,000m^2 yard and upgrades to the city's airport. This is matched with an additional US$100 million in financing from the United Arab Emirates to upgrade the 250km road connecting the port with Hargeisa – Somaliland's capital – and Togwajale, a town on the Somaliland–Ethiopia border. The corridor's proponents pronounce the anticipated increase in the flow of goods and associated impact this will have on the region's economic prospects. However, as Ahmed Musa explains in his chapter, the development has already given rise to other unexpected impacts, including new tensions that are upsetting Somaliland's complex clan politics.

Official narratives of development come up against critical discourses and contested political relations from below, themes explored in subsequent sections of the chapter. They constitute a new spatial politics of resource and infrastructural development – one that is unfolding well beyond the cases in Eastern Africa highlighted here.[8]

Seeing like a global investor

A different spatiality and way of 'seeing' large-scale projects emerges from the perspective of global capital investors. Although the types of invest-

[7] See for example, Cultivating New Frontiers in Agriculture (CNFA), www.cnfa-europe.org/program/agricultural-growth-program-livestock-market-development-2 and www.cnfa-europe.org/program/agricultural-growth-program-livestock-market-development-2 (accessed 29 July 2019).

[8] For example, in Angola (de Grassi and Ovadia 2017; Rodrigues 2017), Burkina Faso (Côte and Korf 2018), Congo (Hall et al. 2015c), Eastern Democratic Republic of Congo (Geenen and Verweijen 2017), Ghana (Nyantakyi-Frimpong and Bezner Kerr 2017; Adusah-Karikari 2015; Boamah 2014), Malawi (Chinsinga 2017), Mozambique (Milgroom 2015), Niger (Schritt 2018), Sudan (Verhoeven 2016; Hopma 2015; Sulieman 2015; Keulertz 2012) South Sudan (Deng 2011), Uganda (Carmody and Taylor 2016), Zambia (Manda et al. 2019; Nolte 2014), Zimbabwe (Mutopo and Chiweshe 2014) and elsewhere across Africa's marginal rural frontiers (Larmer and Laterza 2017; Schoneveld 2017; Hall et al. 2015c).

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ments discussed in the book's chapters vary, as do the physical, social and political geographies of each focal site, the 'resource imaginations' of global economic actors (Ferry and Limbert 2008) is a significant influence in most of the cases. A range of global investors, from overseas private capital to foreign state investment agencies and global charitable organisations and foundations, are turning to drylands as destinations for accumulating wealth, often underpinned by a type of 'growth talk' that emphasises the presumed benefits of large outside investment for expanding markets and economic activities in marginal rural areas. Investors emphasise the value of outside capital and expert knowledge to unlock the potential of land, labour and resources in the drylands. In this way, these acquire a different value in relation to the interests and logics of global capital. Elizabeth Ferry and Mandana Limbert (2008: 4) remind us that 'nothing is essentially or self-evidently a resource. Resource-making is a social and political process, and resources are concepts as much as objects and substances.' It is not so much the resources and investments generated, but rather the process of appropriation and redeployment of these resources within the world economy that generates a new spatial politics and, with it, local social effects (Friedman 2011). This speaks to the incorporation of states and local communities into global networks (Duffy 2000): 'an economic order based on networks of actors linked in unstable hierarchies and partial dependencies which are loose at the level of interaction' (Friedman 2011: 35).

In 'Seeing Like an Oil Company', James Ferguson (2005) argues that multinational companies engaged in the extractives industry thrive on the establishment of resource enclaves, a political economic rationale that isolates resource-rich localities such that they do not only become 'sharply walled off from their own national societies' but also excluded from the benefits generated by the resources. This is because global capital does not flow in neat symmetry between its point of foreign origin and sites of extraction but 'hops, neatly skipping over most of what lies in between' (2005: 379). As capital 'hops' over its enclaves, repatriated back to its foreign point of origin, the model of 'seeing like a state' is up-ended in the neoliberal world where developmental states in Africa have less reach and traction. Contrary to the spatialised political order of standardised grids, the characteristic mode of 'seeing' by global extractive companies has not entailed homogenisation within a national grid, but the establishment of highly securitised pockets, often in areas with chronic violent insecurity and weakened central government authority. These have their own security and state-like features, as capital travels between disparate sites where rule, order and capitalist accumulation can be assured. Different ways of 'seeing', like a state or a global investor, entwine in these developments. As Mattias Rasmussen and Christian Lund (2018: 338) explain, territorialisation is a strategy of using bounded spaces for particular outcomes; a resource control strategy that involves classification of particular areas in order to regulate people and resources. Although states are often privileged as

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territorialising agents in the contemporary neoliberal regime, the spread of extractive, green energy, commercial agriculture, conservation projects and humanitarian operations in pastoral areas shows how non-state actors and organisations also have capabilities to define resources, as well as order and control land (Peluso and Lund 2011; Sikor and Lund 2009).

However, these processes of sorting sites into global capital-generating enclaves whether through resource extraction, large-scale agriculture and irrigation or market-oriented refugee settlements constructed on repurposed drylands, are not new. African countries and many of the localities in our case studies have a long history of these encounters (Ferguson 2005). It bears a remarkable parallel with colonial models of fragmentation and enclave economics reflected in the long-term implications of formerly colonised 'white highlands,' as Marie Gravesen's chapter shows, or similarities with the UN market expansion model of an integrated refugee settlement, as shown in Rodgers' chapter. Thus, territorialisation in this contemporary era of state sovereignty is only slightly disguised from the preceding colonial enclaves. It involves a series of operations that include establishing a territorial administration, instituting a legal system and with it the creation of rights subjects and laws of property, establishing boundaries and mapping space, and, critically, ensuring the capacity to enforce any and all of this by means of force if necessary.

Territorialisations associated with global investment across dryland Eastern Africa have a precedent in conservation efforts across the region. Contentious politics around land and resources in Laikipia, as Gravesen shows, and in the South Omo Valley, as Fana Gebresenbet demonstrates, relate in part to the influence of outside investors, as well as states in the region, to expand protected areas. As conflicts around conservation over recent decades show, neoliberal forms of territorialisation 'can be both a claim to control land and resources, as well as a claim to the authority to determine who controls those resources' (Corson 2011: 704). Catherine Corson, who documents the design and implementation of Madagascar's protected areas since the early 2000s, explores the critical role of a range of donor and private interests in defining the boundaries, rights and authorities associated with 125 new protected areas, covering 9.4 million hectares (ibid.). Observing this trend in Kenya, Peter Little (2014: 76) explains:

> What has surfaced as a twenty-first century conservation model in Kenya is a complex and often contradictory mix of private investors, wealthy Western conservationists, private corporations, NGOs (international and local), local community groups, and an accommodating state agency (KWS [Kenya Wildlife Services]). What also have emerged are new strategies of both local political resistance and strategic accommodation among local communities.

On the extractives front, as Doris Okenwa shows in her chapter on oil politics in Turkana, Kenya, these processes unfold with new forms

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of global economic integration, and coexist with 'specific – and equally "global" – forms of exclusion and marginalization' (Ferguson 2005: 380). Since 2010, an investor consortium led by the Anglo-Irish company Tullow Oil has established an infrastructure for oil exploration and appraisal across southern Turkana's rangelands. Viewed from the air, the fenced exploratory wells are mere pin-pricks in a huge landscape; the largest visible land-take is a 2 km by 1 km base by the village Kapese, including an airstrip, accommodation, offices and storage facilities for Tullow and other large oil sub-contracting firms. Land for the Kapese base was transferred following negotiations with local officials, including the area's Member of the County Assembly and the area chief, as well as elders and an influential seer. A deal was signed off, with a pledge to pay the Turkana County Government four million Kenyan shillings[9] a month in leasing fees. The Kapese deal spurred opposition and claims that the company bought the support of local leaders. Tullow has faced similar tensions in its efforts to acquire land for exploration wells. The company has negotiated land access on a case-by-case basis. Many have come to see both elders and seers, who were revered and highly respected individuals in Turkana custom, as self-interested because of their part in endorsing deals that deliver few wider public benefits from extractive activity (Lind 2017).

Thus, even where land takes by global investors are relatively circumscribed, the impact on social relations, politics and cultural identity are significant. As Doris Okenwa explains, in a bid to localise global capital and counter corporate impunity, ethics and morality have become integral, and often contradictory, components of capitalism. Extractive companies aim in principle at promoting inclusivity in investments and economic growth beyond resource enclaves. These are pursued through various forms of 'community engagement' and corporate social responsibility programmes that bring together global investors, state actors at multiple levels of governance, other non-state actors (NGOs and local civil society groups), customary leaders and interest-based associations. Yet investor attempts to mediate the process of resource acquisition and extraction through elaborate consultation processes and related community engagement efforts often fail to engage effectively with the dynamic political context of operations. Investor efforts to establish consultative fora, provide work opportunities for local residents and fund social development projects often elevate the position of various local middlemen who seek to broker access to new spaces of local engagement and, by extension, the resources associated with these.

As a result, 'capital hops' are shifting within enclaves themselves, as local elites grab opportunity and wealth associated with investor efforts to cultivate closer ties with 'host communities', as many chapters show. What have also emerged are new strategies of inclusion that often take

[9] US$1 = Ksh80.31 on 31 December 2010.

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the form of subversion against established hierarchies. As later sections demonstrate, these draw on wider discourses of rights, belonging and inclusion. Thus, the spatial politics of resource and infrastructure investments at the dryland margins are characterised by alliance-making at multiple levels of governance. The book's chapters illustrate how investor visions entangle with other ways of 'seeing' by local capital, as well as smaller-scale pastoralists, dryland farmers and small-town dwellers, to influence the outcomes.

Seeing like local capital

While the optic of modernity and prosperity spreading outwards into underdeveloped peripheries is integral to state visions of development throughout the region and undergirds investor faith in securing social acceptance of operations, these projects often appear very different from the margins.

Large-scale investments in pastoral areas of Eastern Africa happen in parallel to the slow but steady rise of local capital among town-based entrepreneurs, transporters, livestock traders and political brokers. Local capital has become an important driver in territorialisation processes in pastoral areas. Benedikt Korf et al. (2015: 896) argue that 'the contemporary frontiersman in African drylands thus resembles less a state-backed settler than a post-pastoral capitalist who acts as a partly self-governing frontier entrepreneur'. They focus on Ethiopia's Somali Region, which they explain has experienced a kind of 'indigenisation' of sedentarisation since the late 1990s at the hands of Somali investors, traders and entrepreneurs. An economic rush in the region, incentivised by transnational marketing networks, has seen the rapid commodification of pastoral resources such as charcoal, water points and cash crops. These have combined with sovereign state claims to territory, such as the establishment of irrigation and commercial agriculture schemes, to produce new patterns of territorialisation. As pastoralist entrepreneurs covet monetised dryland resources, they thus become complicit in the state's project of territorialisation and vision of a sedentarised pastoralist society.

In some cases, frontier entrepreneurs invest capital in reviving infrastructure from earlier projects that fell into disuse. Gregory Akall's chapter documents the emergence of a new class of irrigation entrepreneurs in Turkana led by individuals with start-up capital, including retired civil servants and other Turkana who lived elsewhere in Kenya and returned in recent years. They have made use of a combination of their own investments and some external support to invest in entrepreneurial activities, often including fodder production to link to the wider pastoral economy. They have used old irrigation infrastructure but rehabilitated it in ways that can be sustained, often by linking it in innovative ways with

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elements of the flood cultivation system long used by Turkana pastoralist farmers along the Turkwel River. They have invested in pumps and other equipment and have begun to make profits from their businesses, which are a mix of individual and collective enterprises.

Improvements in roads and transport services are making markets and basic services more accessible for pastoral populations, helping to lift the position of local capital, while at the same time supporting the penetration of larger capital from outside, both domestic and foreign. As Musa explains in his chapter, the formally recognised Berbera corridor is contested locally by different pastoral groups who argue for alternative routes for new infrastructure, and in one case have themselves raised funds for an alternative investment in a road to improve marketing.

While certain investments in roads, transport and marketing infrastructure by states can represent a welcome injection of public resources in pastoral areas, and address historical marginalisation, the outcomes can be ambiguous. Drawing on longitudinal evidence from the Borana plateau in southern Ethiopia, John McPeak et al. (2011) observe that transport improvements can create new opportunities for livestock marketing and value-added processing. However, the benefits for the majority of dryland residents may not outweigh the costs, and such investments may result in accelerating the concentration of wealth among the better off.

Examples abound in pastoral areas of Eastern Africa of land and resource grabbing, or of pastoralists making ill-informed sales of individual land holdings. A land rush in Kenya's South Rift Valley, driven by speculators spurred by the area's proximity to Nairobi, has resulted in distress sales by local Maasai pastoralists. This has seen the rangelands become highly fragmented as the area becomes a peri-urban frontier. This has left many Maasai worse off through a process they explain as 'selling wealth to buy poverty', whereby Maasai sell their plots within group ranches to buyers, worsening fragmentation and further undermining the requirements for livestock-keeping in the area (Mwangi 2007; Rutten 1992).

Yet, the dynamics of land acquisition are context-specific across the drylands. It is not always the case that pastoralists are victims of the new push for land. Greiner's chapter shows how Pokot elites in Baringo in Kenya's northern Rift Valley acquire newly valuable plots along improved roads and other infrastructure developed to support geothermal exploration. Large livestock owners and other well-connected Pokot were also behind the push into new territories on the neighbouring Laikipia plateau. In turn, Laikipia shows the consequences of processes of land fragmentation over the longer term. Its landscape is divided into an array of enclosures, where smallholders settle according to shared ethnicity, and pastoralists negotiate access to grazing at the margins of other large-scale private conservancies, ranches and national parks. Gravesen's chapter shows how land-buying companies, established by Kenya's new political elite following independence to satisfy the demand for land, remain at the centre of land-use fragmentation, ambiguous ownership and disputes

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on the plateau. Many company shareholders (being smallholders from other areas of central Kenya) did not fence their land because of the dry conditions that made farming risky and unpredictable. This permitted livestock passage and settlement of some herders in a new pastoral frontier. The pastoralists saw the unfenced lands as an opportunity to make up for their exclusion from the redistribution of lands in the years following independence. Yet in 2017, ahead of Kenya's national and county elections, the expansionist potential of these lands once again became apparent in a wave of politically incited land invasions by other groups, including pastoralists from neighbouring Samburu and Baringo counties. In contrast to pastoralists who had already settled and crossed unfenced lands over many decades, incursions by Pokot and Samburu pastoralists in 2017 were encouraged by various elected officials and aspiring politicians as a way of influencing the election outcomes, as Gravesen explains in her chapter.

Thus, seeing like local capital in pastoral Eastern Africa entails seizing opportunities apparent in regional demands for rangeland resources, booming markets for livestock and livestock products, as well as state investment in infrastructure and land. As Greiner shows in his chapter, the advancing resource frontier, along with expectations of rising land values, accentuates the trend to privatise land. The rapid spread of dryland farming among the pastoral Pokot happens alongside and entwines with the early development of geothermal power. Capital investment in plots and rental property in Isiolo in anticipation of the Kenyan government's US$23 billion LAPSSET corridor development and future growth of Isiolo town in northern Kenya is fuelling the rise of an investor class, as well. While the LAPSSET project promises to make Isiolo into an economic hub along the corridor, Elliott shows in her chapter that it is the actions of ordinary people propelling the town's transformation thus far, as noted earlier.

Cases from elsewhere, including land and resource investments by local and transnational Somali merchants in Ethiopia's Somali Region (Korf et al. 2015), or the rapid growth of a rental market in Karamoja in north-east Uganda fuelled by well-off Karamojong constructing housing for recent migrants (Caravani 2018), show that these are not isolated examples. Rather, they illustrate broader trends that are reconfiguring access to and control over land and resources in the drylands. Further, they point to the likelihood of widening inequality, as an entrepreneurial class positions itself to benefit from investment, while the majority who are unable to acquire land, establish businesses or acquire training to gain employment are likely to fall further behind.

These developments are happening parallel to continued investment in livestock production by pastoralist elites. The regional trade in livestock and meat was US$1 billion in 2010 (Catley et al. 2013); exports of carcasses and live animals through the Gulf of Aden ports mean this has increased still further. Here too, the advancing resource frontier – in this instance,

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value in live animals and carcasses – intersects with the practices of local capital to accumulate greater wealth. As Musa (this book) shows, development of the Berbera corridor has intensified political competition along clan lines precisely because of the anticipated wealth it will generate. The dynamics of inclusion shift as the large-scale development of the port and associated infrastructure lead to uncertainty around who will benefit and who will miss out. Already, the burgeoning livestock trade through Berbera and other Gulf of Aden ports has concentrated wealth among frontier capitalists as many poorer pastoralists sell-up and exit livestock-keeping. Besides investments in livestock, land and rental properties in growing towns, indigenous capital has flowed into transport, ranging from lorries and private hire vehicles to motorbikes, petrol stations and mechanics' shops.

Commentators have often been too ready to assume that the kinds of transformations that large-scale capitalist development will generate will be 'top-down' and driven by the powerful. Jamie Cross's (2014) study of the economy of anticipation provoked by plans for special economic zones in Andhra Pradesh in India shows that it is not only the interests of big capital and powerful government elites that drive the reshaping of the local places where such projects are located, but also the anticipatory actions of ordinary people. In Isiolo, while the land rush undoubtedly relates to the rapidly rising value of land in the town and its environs, and thus residents' demands for economic inclusion, Elliott describes how laying exclusive claims, individually and collectively, is also a means through which residents seek to ensure political inclusion. Chome's chapter argues that, in Lamu, corridor-making creates a new local politics around a reconstructed indigeneity, with claim-making facilitated by Kenya's decentralised politics.

Seeing like local capital therefore suggests a different lens on investment and land politics, refracted through changing class relations at the local level and how the contested politics between local elites, government and investors are played out in particular places.

Seeing like a pastoralist

What about pastoralists themselves; how do they see investments in the drylands? As we have already discussed, rangelands have been carved up and fragmented through the establishment of new investments, and with this patterns of resource tenure and land control have changed. Pastoralism as a type of land use depends on access to key 'reserved' resources, such as riparian areas along rivers or hilltop forests, seasonally and during more serious droughts as well (Scoones 1995). Pastoralists also depend on mobility and access routes to track spatially and temporally distributed resources, gain access to markets and other services (Turner and Schlecht 2019).

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From the perspective of pastoralists who depend on extensive resource use and the right of passage and movement between different parts of a highly variable and differentiated landscape, new processes of territorialisation, resulting from both large-scale and indigenous investments, are a considerable challenge. Rangeland fragmentation constrains traditional mobile pastoralism, as movements become more difficult to make and key resource areas are fenced and set aside for non-livestock uses.

As Li (2014b: 589) writes, although often treated as a thing and sometimes as a commodity, turning land into alternative productive uses requires a process of 'assemblage'. This generates regimes of exclusion that distinguish legitimate from illegitimate uses and users, inscribing boundaries through devices such as fences, title deeds and other legal documents, and regulations. In mobile pastoral systems, land is both passage and a seasonal resource. As we have seen, to the state, land is something investible through the use of technologies, and the selective application of law, to assign new exclusive rights. To a global investor, land may be nothing more than an operational space that needs to be secured from other uses for the unimpeded extraction of subterranean steam, oil and gas, or above-ground wind.

For local capitalists and entrepreneurs, many of whom are current or former pastoralists in these areas, land is something altogether different – something to claim for speculative reasons – anticipating future wealth creation as the value of land increases – and/or to stake claims to belonging and, thus, rights to future compensation, political representation or power. As Drew observes for the Samburu and Chome for Lamu in this book, the politics of belonging, linking to identity and new forms of citizenship are central to how claim-making is practised. Constructions of identity – through discourses of indigeneity, biocultural heritage and ethnic or clan belonging – become important in a 'politics of possession' (Sikor and Lund 2009), where land, property, territory and citizenship become intimately linked (Lund 2016, 2008).

For example, in Harshin in the Somali Region of Ethiopia, traditionally an important drought grazing reserve that lies on a strategic trekking route for livestock being exported from Ethiopia and Somaliland through Berbera, there has been a near total privatisation of grazing areas and water as the rangeland was carved up into household plots for farming and private grazing (Flintan et al. 2011). Based on experiences from Baringo County in Kenya, Greiner's chapter documents the rapid spread of dryland farming among the pastoral Pokot, on the one hand, and the early stages of large-scale investments in the exploitation of geothermal power, on the other hand. He shows how both processes increasingly converge and mutually reinforce each other in ways that lead to profound competition for and revaluation of land.

Seen from the margins, struggles around the framing and meanings given to resources – whether they are geothermal superheated steam, oil

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or land for agriculture, livestock-keeping or wildlife conservation – are the crux of many contestations in pastoral areas. Residents of areas where large projects are proposed or taking shape frame their claims variously, employing in particular discourses around ecology, ethnicity, heritage and social justice. Extraction channels resource claims into a ‘rights talk’ (Cornwall and Nyamu-Musembi 2004) that speaks to questions of local identity, territory, citizenship and the claims stemming from these (Lund 2011). Contestations around oil exploration activities, for example, connect to a social body beyond the enclave, underscoring the enmeshing of oil extraction with wider politics and governance. As shown for Turkana in Kenya, the operations of oil explorers, as well as the benefits of oil development and how these are shared, are mediated through a number of relationships at all levels from the global, regional and national, all the way down to the sub-national administrative unit (county or council), town, and village (Lind 2017).

Ultimately, given the divisions of class, age, gender and ethnicity, there is no uniform view among pastoralists on the impacts of large-scale projects; no simple view ‘from below’. Social difference matters a great deal in terms of assessing both pastoralist perceptions and new investment and economic change. Men, women, older and younger pastoralists, for instance, see investments in very different ways. Investments may create jobs, which allow opportunities for accumulation for some and, in turn, a return to pastoralism. As pastoral systems transform through a variety of overlapping pathways (see Figure 1.1; Catley et al. 2013), diverse forms of accumulation emerge. This results in new patterns of social differentiation in pastoral areas, with implications for class, gender and generation (Caravani 2018; Hodgson 2000; Galaty and Bonte 1991; Rigby 1988). Impacts are non-linear and complex, and simplistic ‘land grabbing’ headlines usually never tell the whole story. This makes the processes of negotiation among different ways of ‘seeing’ an investment in the drylands highly contentious, as we discuss next.

Claim-making and contentious politics

Investments – be they in roads, pipelines, irrigation schemes, oil wells, geothermal plants or wind turbines – entail the increased presence of the state and the interests of centralised state power, alongside those of global finance and large companies involved in developing the frontier. As we have explored already, they have profound implications for governance, local politics, security and violence in the dryland margins. Yet, as we have seen, seeing like a state or a global investor is not the only way of seeing. Perspectives from indigenous, local capital or diverse pastoralists complicate the picture. Contestations over meanings and visions matter, and shape the nature of political contestation and conflict in these places.

In practice, as the chapters in this book show, neither a state-driven

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modernist plan nor enclave capitalism is the result. Ngala Chome et al. (2020) argue, in relation to corridor development along Africa's eastern seaboard, that local contexts and political negotiations result in many hybrids, as different visions compete and converge. State plans often fall apart as the realities of contexts at the pastoral margins impinge or morph into a new project more closely aligned with local capital interests, while enclaves can never fully isolate themselves and must articulate with other forms of local capitalism, politics and resistance on the ground.

The concept of contentious politics was first introduced by the historian and sociologist Charles Tilly during the 1970s. He observed that 'all forms of contention rest on performances' (Tilly 2008: 16). It is unsurprising that the various ways of seeing investments in Africa's drylands has set off a wave of contentious politics, created a range of claim-making factions and performances aimed at negotiating more favourable terms of incorporation into investment projects. As groups mobilise to make claims, particular modes of collective action are deployed, even though the interests of local actors differ.

Governments and investors may introduce local compensation schemes and use local gatekeepers to champion 'development', although often without fully grasping community experiences of and responses to new extractive development. Returning to Turkana in Kenya, the establishment of an infrastructure for oil extraction in Turkana has happened through ties that Tullow – the lead oil explorer in the region – has cultivated with county government officials, emergent local capital in Turkana and other community voices influencing public attitudes. Extractive activities have ignited debates around belonging, entitlements and inclusion, as the oil investors have sought to curry favour with communities and stem any potential resistance through 'participatory' and 'consultative' processes. Mirroring the behaviour of Kenya's national political elites to advance private wealth, county politicians and officials have used their positions to leverage local capital by insisting on more contracts for local companies. Like national officials, they have also sought to derive patronage by pressuring the company to create more work opportunities, social investments and funding infrastructure (Lind 2017).

Okenwa takes this up in her chapter in this book. On Turkana's oil development, she argues that these processes produce asymmetric power relations and the rise of brokerage. As a way to secure local support, or at least acceptance of extractive operations, the oil investors created casual work opportunities for local residents, financed social projects, such as building school dormitories and water points, and compensated residents directly affected by construction and drilling. However, the negotiation of these social investments inadvertently established community engagement as a place-making project and a relational process of soliciting cooperation based on particular performances of deservingness by emerging community factions and leaders seeking to lay claims to the resource benefits. As such, investor efforts to 'partner'

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with 'community' members takes on material forms as local residents assert their own understanding of what a community is, who should be included, and thus who has a right to benefit. As struggles have ensued to define what and who exactly is 'the community', oil development has fuelled new articulations of citizenship, inclusion and claim-making. As Okenwa explains, company efforts to encourage participation do not ensure equitable distribution or alter the social forces that perpetuate inequality and engender a kind of social relations that emphasise par—ticular knowledge systems and essentialist ideas of 'community'.

What we also find at the heart of these contentions and claims to benefits is part of what Ferguson (2015) considers the new politics of distribution in Africa – 'distributive claims grounded in ideas not of need or charity but of a "rightful share"' (2015: 24). In this light, the contention stems from a place of ownership and not mere subjects of state charity and arbitrary corporate interventions.

Conclusion

More than a decade on from the peak of Africa's land rush, the reality on the ground has panned out differently from what many expected. As the chapters in this book show, large-scale investments often have advanced in a piece-meal way as challenges of implementation have mounted. For instance, LAPSSET's high modernist vision has not materialised in a sudden multi-billion dollar boom, but rather emerged incrementally, such as through the completion of the Isiolo–Moyale highway in Kenya and the recent opening of Isiolo's airport. Mass expropriations to establish large-scale commercial farms in Ethiopia and Tanzania have by-and-large not happened, as only a small part of an agreed area is actually farmed.

Still, the reconfiguration of land ownership and use, while perhaps not as dramatic as the 'land grabbing' debate feared, has been profound, creating a new politics of land and investment in the pastoral regions. As the chapters in this book show, infrastructure and investments have ignited intense competition for and revaluation of land, as local elites, and other domestic and foreign investors, jostle to claim tracts of land. Development of oil, wind and geothermal reserves has fuelled further competition around 'local content' – the industry term for procuring goods and services from local suppliers and workers (Ovadia 2016). The footprint of these developments, and the arrival of workers and contractors from outside of local areas, sits uncomfortably with the reality of work opportunities that are thinly spread and temporary.

Box 1.1 lists some of the main impacts of resource and infrastructure investments in pastoral areas highlighted in the chapters that follow. These impacts emerge from the terms of incorporation in investment projects and the differential patterns of accumulation that emerge. They range from the consequences of speculation and the economies of anticipation to the

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Box 1.1 Impacts of new resource and infrastructure investments

- **Restricting rights to land, water, other resources and passage.** Examples include fencing by new land buyers in Laikipia (Gravesen), pastoral exclusions and displacement in Kilombero (Blache), establishment of state-backed sugar estates in riparian grazing lands in the Awash and Omo valleys (Rettberg, Fana Gebresenbet) and geothermal development in Baringo intensifying existing internal processes of land commodification (Greiner).
- **Delays, uncertainties and lack of accountability in implementation.** Examples include the long process of delay in the implementation of the Bagamoyo sugar investment in Tanzania (Engström) and the long-running contestation of the KPL rice scheme in Tanzania (Blache). In both cases, responsibilities shifted between agribusiness companies, financiers and the state, with little accountability for negative consequences on local populations.
- **Land speculation.** Examples include land speculation in and around Isiolo town (Elliott) and around Lamu (Chome), both in anticipation of the major LAPSSET investment. An economics and politics of anticipation is created, even in the absence of the actual investment. A similar process occurs in Laikipia, also in Kenya, through land-buying companies (Gravesen).
- **Generating immigration.** Examples include the influx of South Sudanese refugees to new integrated settlement established on rangelands used by Turkana herders in Kenya (Rodgers), resettlement of Konso smallholders on borders of Boni rangelands in South Omo in Ethiopia (Fana Gebresenbet) and an influx of new settlers in Lamu in Kenya in anticipation of LAPSSET development (Chome).
- **Creating employment and contracts, which may privilege one group over another.** Examples include tensions concerning the allocation of work opportunities around oil exploration in Turkana (Okenwa) and construction of the LTWP site (Drew), which also stimulates various kinds of localism or separatism based on the expectation that a local monopoly on a specific resource will make possible more local political autonomy.
- **Initiating compensation mechanisms over which people then fight.** Examples include Banjuni pressure to formalise land titles in expectation of compensation from LAPSSET development (Chome), land-takes for establishing oil wells in Turkana (Okenwa), compensation to households displaced by wayleave for the LTWP transmission line (Drew) and Turkana resentment over inadequate social services provision as compensation for hosting refugee settlement (Rodgers).
- **Establishing new security arrangements involving increased state security/ policing presence and/or contracts with private firms and local militants.** Examples include increased state security presence around Awash (Rettberg) and Omo Valley (Fana Gebresenbet) commercial agriculture schemes, use of police to suppress protests by farmers opposing evictions in Kilombero (Blache), establishment of private security presence around oil installations in Turkana (Okenwa) and the LTWP site (Drew).

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direct results of dislocation and dispossession, to the indirect effects on local economies, employment opportunities and service provision. This in turn has consequences for social differentiation, patterns of selective accumulation and class formation, as well as for local politics, identities and citizenship. Outcomes are not linear, nor are they always complex. Investment is neither necessarily 'good' nor 'bad'; it depends on context.

As noted earlier, this book asks three interlinked questions: first, what do investments look like, and who frames their meaning, interpretation and pursuit? Second, how are investments generating wider impacts, and who loses and wins? And third, what types of resistance, mobilisation, subversion and forms of contentious politics are evident? The case studies presented in the chapters that follow attempt to answer these questions in different ways. Overall, they show how the spread of large-scale investments in pastoral areas, the political and economic interests driving these, and the new valuing of land and resources they introduce, is reshaping the politics of resource contestations. These politics matter for the governance of security in pastoral margins, for whom, and in whose interests. Investments unfold in contexts that have experienced all sorts of dynamic change over recent decades, resulting in diverging trajectories for lives and livelihoods in the drylands. In different ways, investments are reconfiguring territory, as well as economies and politics, creating new forms of livelihood beyond conventional pastoralism, as pastoral settings transform along different pathways. This is significant for how pastoralists are seen and see themselves, with implications for the construction of citizenship and wider state–society relationships. Widespread sedentarisation of formerly mobile populations, the concentration of livestock wealth among elites, and the shift away from livestock-keeping for many are manifestations of significant structural changes that have accelerated with the rise of large-scale investments.

This book does not claim to have exhausted all the answers or the best possible interpretations of the emerging issues. What it does is to challenge existing assumptions about Africa's drylands, adding to the understanding of the future economic and livelihood trajectories of those moving up, moving out, hanging in and dropping out of the pastoral sector (see Figure 1.1). Those who *moved up* into commercialised systems, and participate in regional marketing and trade, are more likely to have the capital, social connections and business ties, and knowledge to take advantage of opportunities opened up by large-scale investment. The impacts of investment are more ambiguous for those who *moved out* into activities not dependent on owning livestock, such as irrigated farming or town-based trades and work. Opportunities for business and work around large developments are often restricted, as those with existing political and social connections capture the greatest share. Many opportunities are limited in time, as well, coinciding with a particular phase in project development, rather than something that will endure. For those who *hang in* traditional pastoralism and small-scale agro-

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pastoralism, improvements to roads can ease marketing barriers, but for most, new restrictions on passage and access to resources, as well as the disruptive influences of investments on the valuing of land and resources in drylands, may outweigh the marketing benefits. For the many who have *dropped out* of pastoralism, large-scale investments do not have the transformative effects that could lead to sustainable livelihood alternatives to livestock-keeping. Investment plans and implementation in most cases have little or no connection to local economies and livelihood activities. Meanwhile, the more imperceptible influences of investments on territory, as well as economy, politics, citizenship, will accentuate inequalities and social difference that increasingly characterise dryland margins.

Resistance, mobilisation and subversion are therefore something to anticipate as part of the ongoing development of infrastructure, land and resources across Africa's drylands. Central governments and investors often view any conflict in these places as localised disturbance to be overcome through the provision of more state or private security, corporate social investment and deals that incentivise local acceptance. In other words, the governance of investor operations can be largely contained in enclaves and made separate from wider political and social relations. However, state and global investor capital is unable to wall itself off – it has to navigate a spectrum of local interests. National government – the state – is unable to impose its will without striking deals and cultivating ties within political society at the margins. It is therefore the entwining of different ways of seeing – like a state, investor, local capitalist and pastoralist – and the logics and interests associated with them, which define the political topography of extractive landscapes and so the governance of contestations and struggles around these.

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Shifting Regimes of Violence within Ethiopia's Awash Valley Investment Frontier

SIMONE RETTBERG

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Shifting Regimes of Violence within Ethiopia's Awash Valley Investment Frontier

SIMONE RETTBERG

Over the past fifteen years the Ethiopian state has greatly increased its investments in the sparsely populated arid and semi-arid pastoral lowlands where land is deemed as 'unused' (Lavers 2012). Guided by export-oriented agro-industrial development strategies and a modernist development ideology, the state has embarked on large-scale mechanised schemes to expand commercialised irrigation agriculture. Land investments focus on the large river basins such as the Wabi-Shebelle, Nile, Omo and Awash, all of which are considered to have high irrigation potential. With the construction of large dams and the conversion of prime grazing areas along large rivers into farmland, conflicts with dispossessed and resettled local pastoralists and agro-pastoralists are on the rise (Fratkin 2014). While the Ethiopian government has trumpeted double-digit national economic growth rates, critical perspectives are that pastoral livelihoods have experienced a 'negative' structural transformation characterised by widespread impoverishment, increasing social inequality and rising levels of destitution (Rettberg et al. 2017). Most pastoralists are currently excluded from the benefits of large-scale land investments pursued in the name of 'growth and transformation'.

Land investments and large-scale enclosures in marginal dryland areas are not a new phenomenon in the Ethiopian lowlands. They map onto the historic Ethiopian centre–periphery dynamics between Muslim mobile pastoralists inhabiting the lowland areas and the ruling Christian Orthodox regimes familiar with farming in highland areas. Previous regimes under Emperor Haile Selassie (1930–74) and the socialist military junta of the Derg (1974–91) also pursued investments in large-scale cotton and sugar estates in the lowlands, leaving a legacy of displacement and dispossession in the pastoral frontier (Makki 2012). The state conceives arable land in the lowlands as 'underutilised', 'untapped' and relatively abundant compared to the densely populated highland areas where land is scarce, as we saw in Fana Gebresenbet's chapter on South Omo in this book. At the same time, large-scale agricultural investments in Ethiopia

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have always served as a tool for state-building and the consolidation of power in its periphery, countering the widespread assumption that land grabs undermine state sovereignty (Lavers 2016). An authoritarian high-modernist state mainly concerned with control and appropriation often uses the establishment of large-scale schemes as a way to increase the legibility of frontiers (Scott 1998). Pastoralists uniquely challenge state sovereignity as their mobility undermines the state's capacity to tax, conscript and otherwise regulate the population. This explains the continuity of governmental policies for an expansion of the plantation economy in the pastoral frontier in spite of its lack of profitability compared to pastoralism (Behnke and Kerven 2013).

In the face of increasing resource appropriation by the state, this chapter examines the impact of past and contemporary state-driven land investments on regimes of violence and forms of local conflict and contestation in the pastoral frontier of the Awash Valley. As Hagmann and Alemmaya Mulugeta (2008) argue, the drivers of conflict and violence in Ethiopia's lowlands have changed through the process of increasing political and economic incorporation of pastoral areas into the state. In 2014 the Awash Valley accounted for 50 per cent of the national irrigated area (Fratkin 2014). Having unfolded over a period of nearly sixty years, the impacts and influences of large-scale investments in the Awash Valley are readily apparent. Once known as an area of exceptional pastoral wealth due to preferential grazing areas along the river, pauperisation and food insecurity have substantially risen during the last decades, with new forms of local conflict emerging. Therefore, the case of the Awash Valley can also be read as a cautionary story of how lives and livelihoods in other drylands in the Horn of Africa that are experiencing new, more recent large-scale investments may develop, including in South Omo (Chapter 10), Lamu (Chapter 2), Turkana (Chapter 4), and Kilombero (Chapter 6).

Conceptually, frontiers are understood as symbolic and material spaces at the margins of the state where 'authorities, sovereignties, and hegemonies of the recent past have been or are currently being challenged by new enclosures, territorialisation, and property regimes' (Peluso and Lund 2011: 668). They are zones of contact between two previously distinct social orders, where governmental and autochthonous forms of political organisation compete and multiple regimes of violence, power and territoriality overlap (Korf et al. 2015; Hagmann and Korf 2012).

The transformation of regimes of resource control goes hand-in-hand with the conflictive establishment of new property rights and regulations of access. Territorialisation, the embedding of social relations in bounded space, is the defining strategy to gain resource control, to consolidate state power in frontiers (Vandergeest and Peluso 1995) and to increase the legibility of the society (Scott 1998). It refers to the 'creation of systems of resource control – rights, authorities, jurisdictions, and their spatial representations' (Rasmussen and Lund 2018: 388). Therefore, territorial reordering for the allocation of rights, authority and control presents

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one of the main features of national governance in pastoral areas where national sovereignty is contested. Recent studies increasingly include indigenous discourses and practices so that territorialisation appears as a co-constitutive process of governmental and non-governmental actors within the frontier (Korf et al. 2015). The centre represents frontiers as zones of backwardness, disorder and insecurity. However, from the perspective of local inhabitants, the frontier is not a backward, marginal territory needing to be controlled but a threatened homeland at risk of being invaded by external powers.

The hegemonial discursive construction of the frontier as 'no man's land' is constitutive for the legitimate use of state violence and authoritarian interventions in the name of 'civilisation' and modern development, for example, through sedentarisation (Asebe Regassa et al. 2018). While violence is often the outcome of conflicts over resource control and sovereignty within the frontier, it can also serve as a tool to establish the frontier. A 'state of emergency' characterised by violence, disorder and insecurity is often a constitutive means of governance for the anchoring of state presence in areas where the state lacks the monopoly of power (Hagmann and Korf 2012; see also Chapter 10 on South Omo).

Historicising conflicts over land control in the Awash Valley

The Awash is the longest river in Ethiopia (1,200 km), originating in the highlands where mean annual rainfall reaches 1,200–1,400 mm. It descends the escarpments of the Awash Valley as it makes its way to Afar, a hot lowland region bordering Djibouti and Eritrea. The land-use potential for irrigation and grazing along the river has made it a bone of contention between the state and Afar pastoralists inhabiting the riverine areas. The fertile seasonally inundated floodplains along the Awash River became the earliest focus for agricultural investments under the imperial regime of Haile Selassie in the second half of the twentieth century. These floodplains constitute a small area but are highly significant resources for Afar pastoralists as dry season grazing and drought refuge. Customarily, access to and use of resources in the floodplains was governed by a communal clan-based system of granting land rights. The only area where Afar practised agriculture along the river was the powerful Sultanate of Aussa located in the lower Awash Valley (around Asayita), where agro-pastoralists engaged in small-scale irrigation in the inland river delta.

Another group who claims resources along the Awash are Issa-Somali pastoralists. With the flare up of Somali irredentism in the second half of the twentieth century, Issa violently displaced the Afar far towards the west, so that Afar clans of the middle Awash Basin lost access to a major part of their rainy season grazing areas (Rettberg 2010). Issa even managed to establish several settlements along the main road to Djibouti (Undufoo,

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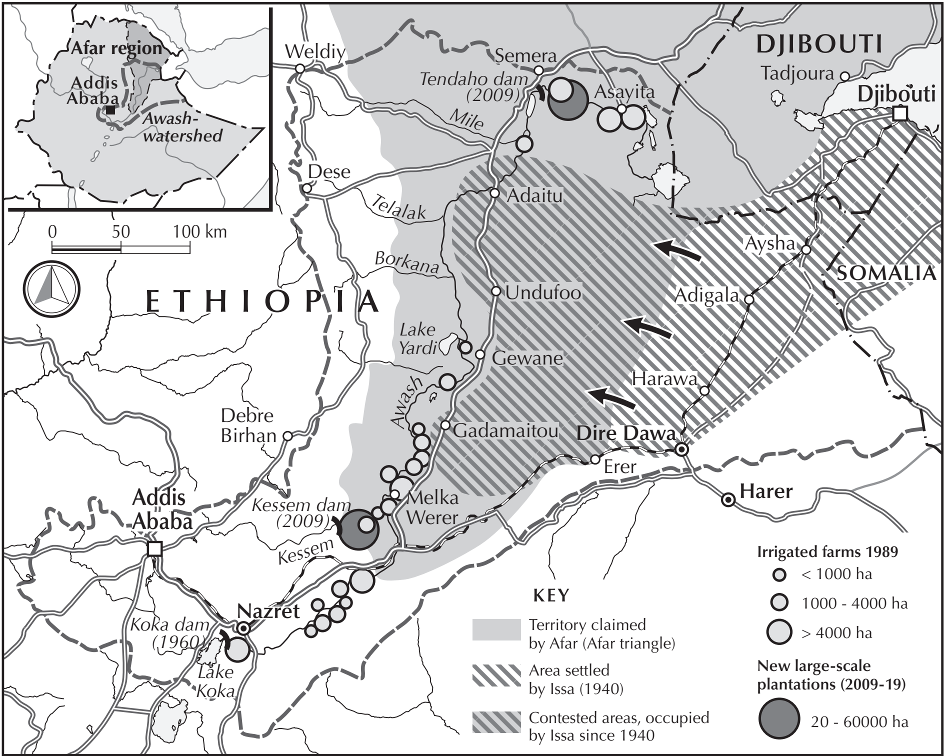

Map 14.1 Ethiopia, showing the Awash Valley as a conflict hotspot

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Adaitou and Gadamaitou). The area where Afar and Issa currently come into contact and violent contestation overlaps with the development corridor along the Awash River where small towns, administrative centres, major transport routes and large-scale farms are concentrated (see Map 14.1). Recurrent clashes along the main road threaten Ethiopia's foreign trade, which relies disproportionately on access to the Djibouti port that is reached by road through Afar.

Imperial and military rule: geopolitical threats and securitisation

State land investments in the Awash Valley were initiated by the Abyssinian imperial government as part of its nation-building efforts and as a way of asserting its economic and political power in the pastoral frontier (Markakis 2011). The establishment of commercial farms on the banks of the Awash in the 1950s and the completion of the Koka Dam in 1960 marked the start of an agro-capitalist exploitation of the floodplains (Kloos 1982; Bondestam 1974). The main body responsible for the planning and implementation of development programmes in the Awash Valley was the Awash Valley Authority (AVA), a parastatal agency founded in 1962. The government transferred the land rights along the Awash to AVA in order to modernise the agricultural economy through the cultivation of cash crops and to generate foreign currency. In the following years, the Awash Valley became Ethiopia's most intensely used river basin. This was also owing to its relative proximity to ports along the Red Sea and the strategic location of the valley between the Ethiopian highlands and the Red Sea, which made it an important transit region for overseas trade. Under Haile Selassie large concessions were granted to foreign investors, primarily British and Dutch. By 1971 the irrigated farm area had expanded to 48,900 ha, of which 60 per cent was used for cotton and 22 per cent for sugar cane (Maknun Gamaledin 1987). In 1989 the Awash Valley accounted for approximately 70 per cent of the country's total irrigated area (68,800 ha).

The Awash Basin also served as a security buffer for the Ethiopian state. The securitisation of the Awash Valley was of major importance in defending Ethiopian territory against the irredentist ambitions of Somalia, which claimed the Awash River as the western border of a 'Greater Somalia'. Even though the overall size of irrigated farmland increased (especially under Haile Selassie), the state's prime interest was not resource accumulation, but rather to protect national security in a politically fragile, war-ridden region. Against this background, the Ethiopian state employed divide and rule tactics to isolate the Issa-Somalis. Ethiopia selectively supported the Afar in their conflict with the Issa, while the Somalia government lent military assistance to the Issa. Consequently, the conflict between Afar and Issa-Somali pastoralists

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deepened and morphed into a proxy conflict between Ethiopia and Somalia. On several occasions over the years, buffer zones were established to separate the Afar and Issa, but this was above all motivated by the Ethiopian state's interest in halting westward Issa expansions.

Ongoing violence between Afar and Issa and repeated attacks on trucks and trains provided cover for autocratic governmental interventions, including the occasional proclamation of martial law and the deployment of violence as a means of political rule. For local communities, the state's presence was manifest above all in the military (Markakis 2011). Large-scale state violence was directed against Issa who were perceived as state enemies because of their Somali background. Notable episodes include the killing of hundreds of Issa civilians by troops of Haile Selassie in Aysha town in 1962 and the 'Getu war' (named after Colonel Getu, Police Chief of Chercher, Adal and Garaguracha Awraja) in 1972, when the army, led by Colonel Getu, in alliance with Afar and Oromo launched an attack on Issa who had settled close to the Awash River. In comparison, Afar suffered relatively more from structural forms of state violence, namely the dispossession from their key dry season pastures in the Awash floodplains to make way for large plantations. It can be concluded that the Ethiopian state under Haile Selassie and the Derg instrumentalised and used pastoral violence and disorder within the Awash frontier for its own ends: to defend its external borders against Somalia and to gain a hold over land resources for the sake of national economic development and modernisation.

The developmental state: geo-economic opportunities and infrastructural violence

The territorialisation of social relations and processes of land commodification in the Awash Valley intensified in the early 1990s following ruptures in state power. After the removal of the Siad Barre regime, Somalia descended rapidly into civil war, which meant a dampening of the irredentist threat inside Ethiopia. Around the same time, the Derg regime collapsed and the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF), an alliance of ethnically based opposition movements, assumed power in 1991. The government under the leadership of Prime Minister Meles Zenawi (1995–2012) adhered to a strategy of 'Agricultural Development-Led Industrialisation' (ADLI) with land remaining the property of the state. The policy encouraged land investments by foreign or domestic investors, which were centrally managed by the state (Lavers 2012). Adopting a developmental state model in the first decade of the twentieth century, the EPRDF embarked on a mission to consolidate its political power in the peripheral lowlands and to integrate Ethiopia in a global neoliberal market economy (Rettberg et al. 2017). The overarching interest of the Ethiopian developmental state focuses on export-oriented

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catch-up development in 'unused' areas of the lowlands. While security remains a major strategic objective, the expanded commercial exploitation of water and land resources, as well as extending the reach of state institutions, has become a further priority.

Against this background, practices for territorial reordering have received increasing attention in the Awash Basin frontier. The first phase of territorialisation aimed to create the base for an enhanced regulation of resources and pastoralists. It was marked by the institutional formalisation of a new administrative structure in 1994 based on ethno-territorial units (so-called ethnic federalism) and the decentralisation of political power so that state presence expanded significantly. This undermined customary institutions and created a class of Afar politicians highly loyal to the state. The second phase of territorialisation (since 2000) has focused on investments in commercial agriculture, water provision and transport infrastructure. Bearing the hallmarks of earlier large-scale resettlement programmes pursued by the Derg regime, since 2010 the EPRDF has pursued a villagisation programme in which pastoralists are encouraged to settle voluntarily in new settlements. Here, the provision of water and schools, as well as access to other basic services including health and social assistance, serve as a main incentive to encourage pastoralists to settle. This is linked to a formalisation of land rights and property regimes through land titling, the distribution of one-hectare riverine plots to newly settled pastoralists, and the commodification of water provided by new water supply schemes.

Decentralisation, an increasing literacy of the pastoral population and improved accessibility due to the expansion of transport infrastructure have increased the capacity of the state to penetrate civil society and to implement political decisions. A proliferating number of infrastructural state investments in the region indicate the state's intent to deepen its presence also in areas outside of the development corridor along the Awash River. This thickening of state presence is also apparent in other pastoral areas of Ethiopia, notably in the South Omo valley (see Fana Gebresenbet, Chapter 10 this book). Recent investments include the expansion of the rural roads, the completed rehabilitation of the Addis–Djibouti railway, and schemes to develop the region's groundwater supplies as well as tributaries of the Awash for irrigated agriculture.

In 2010 the EPRDF regime began construction of two large dams (Tendaho and Kessem) in the middle and lower Awash Valley with the capacity to irrigate up to 80,000 hectares of land. The Tendaho Dam and Irrigation Project aims to develop 50,000 ha for sugar-cane production along with 10,000 ha for fodder for displaced (agro-)pastoralists. Riverine forests were flooded or cut and existing cotton farms and key patches of communal dry season grazing areas were transformed into a fully state-owned and federally managed sugar-cane plantation. This dispossession from key rangelands has disturbed seasonal migration patterns, as pastoralists have been forced to move to other, less productive grazing areas for extended periods, leading to localised overgrazing in some places

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and declining herd sizes. This, in turn, has contributed to widespread impoverishment, chronic food insecurity and a high dependence on food and cash transfers (Rettberg et al. 2017; Müller-Mahn et al. 2010).

A large majority of the pastoralists have not reaped any economic benefits of agro-capitalist irrigation developments so far. Without formal land titles over their communal grazing areas they received no compensation when the land was expropriated and they were displaced (Dessalegn Rahmato 2008). They also have not benefited from employment opportunities on the plantations, as it is mostly incoming labour migrants from highland areas who are recruited. Afar only get low-paid jobs as guards, as they lack the agricultural skills and qualifications required by recruiting agencies; exclusion from higher paid work in this case mirrors the experience of residents living near to large projects in other contexts covered in this book, including oil installations in Turkana (see Chapter 4), the wind farm in Marsabit (see Chapter 5), and the Mngeta commercial rice scheme in Kilombero (Chapter 6). As in these others, lack of access to good paying and longer-lasting jobs for local residents has nurtured the perception that the state excludes them from economic development. Seen from the margins in Afar, the promise of large-scale plantations has turned into infrastructural violence (Li 2018; Zoomers 2018), as benefits are only captured by a narrow, predatory elite.

Resistance within the frontier

State interventions to firm up its economic and political control in the frontier are conceived by pastoral groups as massive threats. Most pastoralists experience the state as an external, colonising invader whose interventions have undermined local institutions and livelihoods. While pastoralists are often portrayed as victims of land grabs, local agency in resisting and adapting to the state's expanding presence has been evident in the Awash Valley over time. During the imperial and military regimes, local resistance within the Awash Valley was mainly directed against political control and state sovereignty. High on the political agenda of Afar and Issa was the quest for self-rule in autonomous regions. Various ethnically based insurgent movements offered armed resistance to state power.

At the same time, endogenous forms of territorialisation emerged to counter the ongoing and anticipated land losses through large-scale enclosures by external actors. Land investments had a notable impact on the wealthy Aussa sultanate where the granting of a concession to the British Mitchell Cotts Tendaho Plantations Share Company in 1961 led to dispossession and dislocation of the Afar (Cossins 1973). Against this background, the Sultan of Aussa, Ali Mirah Hanfere, who controlled most of the land in the lower Awash Valley, became one of the largest investors in order to prevent a further expansion of multinational investments onto

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'his' land (Maknun Gamaledin 1993). This agrarian development led to a stratification of society in Aussa consisting of marginalised labourers, relatively affluent agro-pastoralists who cultivated small areas (<10 ha), and a wealthy upper class. The latter consisted of customary authorities and relatives of the sultan who controlled most of the irrigated land and were comparable to feudal lords (Bondestam 1974).

Processes of counter-territorialisation intensified after the EPRDF came to power in 1991. The new political context of ethnic federalism increased exclusive ethno-territorial claims to land. It induced processes of voluntary sedentarisation, which has also been encouraged by state development policies for pastoral areas. In a context of insecure land rights in the Awash frontier and an outstanding border demarcation between Afar and Somali regional states, Afar and Issa rushed to establish settlements along the main road to Djibouti as a way of staking territorial claims based on physical presence (Markakis 2003; Rettberg 2010; see Chapters 3 and 8 this book for parallel developments in Isiolo and Baringo, respectively). For the Issa these settlements also perform an economic function by providing an outlet for contraband items coming from Djibouti and Somaliland. In this context, the conflict between Afar and Issa pastoralists turned more and more into a political conflict involving also the Afar and Somali Regional States. It was the contested administrative status of the road settlements inhabited by Issa that led to severe fighting in 2018–19 between pastoralists as well as regional security forces.

Pastoralists also increasingly engage in small-scale subsistence farming (mostly maize and vegetables) on their clan land along the Awash River. Individual and communal enclosures for livestock and farming have become a new phenomenon in recent years, a further indication of local grabbing to stake exclusive land claims, minimise the risk of land losses to competing groups and diversify their livelihood. The main actor in this was the new local Afar elite that emerged after 1991. They included individuals who benefited from political positions in the regional administration and from their involvement in land deals with investors mainly from highland regions (Rettberg 2010). Many profited from their own agricultural investments as well. From being a collective resource, a 'gift of Allah' to be shared, land has turned into a valuable commodity and political resource, just as it has elsewhere in dryland eastern Africa (see Elliott, Chapter 3 and Greiner, Chapter 8 this book). The accompanying monetisation and spread of predatory dynamics have eroded the social capital and the overall well-being of the Afar. In a speech to mark his coronation as the new Aussa sultan in 2011, Hanfare Ali Mirah spoke of the worsening inequalities and social divisions:

> Formerly virility, bravery and a fighting spirit were the most laudable qualities among the Afar … Today we have entered into an age where merit and reputation are based only on the wealth one has amassed and the power one has obtained by intrigue. Today the descendants

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> of the Afar live in poverty, their livestock decimated, and everyone knows that their agricultural lands on both sides of the river, despite an increase in the area cultivated, have shrunk in size through land grabbing … People have no mutual trust because of their fear, poverty, lack of faith and ignorance combined. This is due to a lack of spirit of resistance and solidarity leading to the total debility of individuals. A condition in which anything can happen without anyone making the least attempt to protest.[1]

With their integration in and growing economic dependency on state structures, the Afar leadership is increasingly co-opted and tamed. This has resulted in a crisis of both representation and political legitimacy. The interests of Afar elites who have amassed significant wealth from agricultural investments as well as political budgets are in opposition to the majority of Afar livestock-keepers who are dispossessed from key rangelands and are the losers within Ethiopia's developmental state model. The lines of conflict have shifted, with the state now embedded and allied with Afar leadership and pastoral frontier capitalists. The new wealthy Afar elite, which has benefited from its association with political administration and land deals, has emerged as a type of enemy from within as perceived by the majority of disempowered and dispossessed pastoralists. The insecurity and loss of solidarity this has generated has weakened customary institutions, undermining the potential for a unified resistance and easing the way for further investment in the future.

Conclusion

A long-term perspective highlights that land investments and the appropriation of communal land have been going on since the Ethiopian state first sought to expand into the pastoral lowlands in the mid-twentieth century. Shifting geopolitical and geo-economic conditions have seen the Awash Valley evolve from a security buffer zone against Somalia's irredentist ambitions into a frontier for grabbing resource wealth to the advantage of state development aims. While frontier interventions by the imperial and the Derg regimes were mainly guided by concerns of national security and territorial integrity, the state's objective since the early 1990s has shifted to expand and deepen its resource control and political domination as part of a broader vision of economic growth and structural transformation. The periodic coercive use of state violence and the instrumentalisation of pastoral conflicts have remained central strategies to consolidate its power and enforce processes of commodification and territorialisation in the frontier.

[1] Official speech of the new Sultan of Aussa, Hanfare Ali Mirah, on his coronation in Assayita, 10 November 2011. From 1995–96 Hanfare had also served as president of the Afar Regional State.

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A new dynamic is the emergence of capitalist social formations in the context of land dispossession through enclosures. Under these conditions, new types of pastoral conflicts in the Awash investment frontier have evolved as territorial claims multiply. Ongoing processes of social differentiation that are marked by new inclusions and exclusions challenge the assumption that pastoral society is egalitarian. These dynamics underline the need for a critical agrarian political economy perspective in the context of understanding the impacts and influences of investments in pastoral settings. Land investments, rather than being seen only in terms of external state grabs of frontier resource wealth, must also be understood as an investment strategy by new pastoral and post-pastoral capitalist elites in the frontier.

Currently, local forms of resistance do not challenge power structures, as the state has effectively created a class of domesticated capitalists among the Afar who are closely allied with the exercise of state-building – a dynamic similar to what is unfolding in South Omo (see Fana Gebresenbet, Chapter 10 this book). Rather, increasingly individualistic adaptations to a changing institutional context of conjoined state–local elite power are a reflection of a fragmented pastoral society, and one of the few options for most people to build secure lives and livelihoods. With no end in sight to the state's investment push at the frontier, further inequality, social division, violence and conflict in the Awash Valley are likely.

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