

# Land Grab as a consequence of Capitalism and Globalization, the Colombian case

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## ABSTRACT

This paper intends to show how the issue of land grab could be considered as a consequence of the expansion of capitalism in a framework of the neoliberal globalization and as an example it is considered the case of Colombia. At first a theoretical framework will introduce the concept of expansion of capitalism and the neoliberal globalization from different writers; starting with Karl Marx and the concept of Primitive Accumulation, then Rosa Luxemburg and the Capitalist Landnahme and David Harvey with the concept of accumulation by dispossession. A second part of theory includes the approaches of Saskia Sassen, Susan George and Vandana Shiva, which consider land grab as part of the capitalist expansion. Those approaches also contemplate the consequences of the dispossession of land such as displacement, poverty, hunger and inequality. In a way to see how this process has been developed in the world this paper includes the case of Colombia, which highlights the main considerations about land grab in this country.

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## RESUMEN

Este artículo busca presentar cómo el tema de la apropiación de tierra puede ser considerado como una consecuencia de la expansión del capitalismo en el marco de la globalización neoliberal y como un ejemplo se considera el caso de Colombia. En primer lugar un marco teórico introduce el concepto de expansión del capitalismo y globalización neoliberal con diferentes autores; se inicia con Karl Marx y el concepto de acumulación primitiva, Después Rosa Luxemburgo y el Capitalista Landnahme y Daid Harvey con el concepto de acumulación por despojo. Una segunda parte de la parte teórica incluye las posiciones de SaskiaSasen, Susan George y Vandana Shiva, quienes consideran la apropiación de tierras como parte de la expansión del capitalismo. Estas posiciones también contemplan las consecuencias del despojo de la tierra como el desplazamiento, pobreza, hambre y desigualdad. En una forma de ver cómo este proceso que se ha desarrollado en el mundo este documento incluye el caso de Colombia, en el cual se resalta las principales consideraciones acerca de la apropiación de tierras en este país.

### KEYWORDS

Capitalism, Capitalist Landnahme, dispossession, Land grab, Neoliberal globalization, primitive accumulation.

### PALABRAS CLAVE

Acumulación primitiva, apropiación de tierras, capitalismo, globalización, neoliberal.

Land tenure is an issue that has been part of the evolution of the human being and through history communities have faced battles and wars for the possession of their own land. Today the commodification of land is part of the market-based economy that rules in the majority of the countries in the world but it is since 2007 and 2008 that the large acquisition of land in certain regions of the planet has been the subject of analysis from different

points of view. The food crisis in 2007-2008 and the financial crisis have marked a new era for the land as a commodity but it also includes the consequences of such business development.

From the financial point of view land is a commodity that represents an investment with future good revenues and an option to overcome the negative effects of the financial crisis, it represents a secure option to invest and improve the assets. But land is not alone, land is part of the communities living in most regions of the world, some times over exploited and some other underused but most of the land belongs to a community in a legal or not legally recognized way.

From the food supply point of view the investment in large areas of land represents for international organizations and some countries a matter of food security policy. The World Bank (WB) states by 2011 that over a billion people go hungry to bed every night and that the 75% of the world's poor are located in rural areas which makes the issue of food security a relevant topic in the agenda not only of the World Bank but of other international organizations<sup>113</sup>. Regarding the size of the countries and the size of their populations and the relationship with the capacity of self sufficiency of food supply some governments are concern about the future supply of food for their nations. This is enough reason to design policies and stipulate certain benefits to those private investors that are ready to buy land in other countries and grow crops to supply their own countries.

For the development of agribusiness the international organizations with the support of the developed countries designed a framework in which the aim of such investment was to increase the production of food to reduce hunger and also to bring economic development to the host countries in a way to contribute to the reduction of poverty. The policies were based on the neoliberal model developed in the 1980s by the western economies through strategies such as the Washington Consensus.

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113 Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). "Trends and impacts of foreign investment in developing country agriculture Evidence from case studies". Retrieved from [http://www.fao.org/fileadmin/templates/est/INTERNATIONAL-TRADE/FDIs/Trends\\_publication\\_12\\_November\\_2012.pdf](http://www.fao.org/fileadmin/templates/est/INTERNATIONAL-TRADE/FDIs/Trends_publication_12_November_2012.pdf), 10 January 2013): 3

The phenomenon of land grab has caused negative effects in the communities of the host countries and the aim to reduce poverty and hunger has not been reached. According to the FAO regions such as sub-Saharan Africa and Latin America have witnessed in the last years the rise of the foreign direct investment in agricultural production<sup>114</sup>. By 2008 4 million hectares were the annual extension of agricultural land but these figures have changed, according to the World Bank over nearly 56 million hectares were part of land deals by 2009<sup>115</sup>.

To understand the land issue caused by the expansion of Neoliberalism in the time of globalization the theoretical framework includes the concept of Primitive accumulation by Marx, the work of Rosa Luxemburg about the Capitalist Landnahmen, the concept of accumulation by dispossession developed by David Harvey which explain how this issue is part of the process of the expansion of capitalism and the consequences are part of the violent way in which land is acquired. At the same time the work of Saskia Sassen who follows the work of Marx and David Harvey explains how the expansion of capitalism and the acquisition of large areas of land by dispossessing them from their original owners in a violent way cause an increase of poverty. Finally Susan George and Vandana Shiva from different experiences highlight how the expansion of capitalism endangers society and the environment and suggest that a new world is possible with the development of social movements that reclaim the rights of the peasants, their right to the land and through the demonstration that ecological food production could be the answer to poverty and hunger.

The aim of this paper is to present the phenomenon of land grab from the theoretical point of view and with the example of Colombia. From the concept of capitalism until the process of globalization and with the different concepts developed around this subject that today is a situation that brings negative consequences to the communities in Africa and Latin America.

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114 Klaus Deininger and Derek Byerlee with Jonathan Lindsay, Andrew Norton, Harris Selod, and Mercedes Stickler. *Rising Global Interest in Farmland: Can it Yield Sustainable and Equitable Benefits?* (Washington, D.C. The World Bank, 2011): xiii

115 Deininger et al. *Rising Global Interest in Farmland*, xiii

## Some approaches to understand Land Grab

Land Grab refers to the acquisition of large areas of land to be exploited. This phenomenon that brings the interest of different actors today is not new but its impact has been increased for the last five years with its positive and negative results. Agribusiness and Land grab are a consequence of Globalization and the expansion of capitalism and it is for this reason that the concepts of Marx, Rosa Luxemburg, David Harvey are the basis to understand and analyse the situation. At the same time the work of Saskia Sassen, Susan George and Vandana Shiva are more focused on the recent facts and reaffirm the concepts developed previously.

For Marx there were two kinds of commodity possessors which were the owner of the means of production and the owner of the labour (Marx, 2013, p. 502). Those were the fundamental conditions of capitalist production because according to him the capitalist system required the separation of the means of production and labour (Marx, 2013, p. 502). For him the process of that system was to take the labourer away from the possession of the means of production and transform the means of production into capital (Marx, 2013, p. 502). From capital surplus value is made and from it more capital, turning into a vicious circle of accumulation of capital (Marx, 2013, p. 501). From this process Marx defined primitive accumulation with the following words: “The so-called primitive accumulation, therefore, is nothing else than the historical process of divorcing the producer from the means of production” (Marx, 2013, p. 502). From this point he states that the starting point of the whole process is the expropriation of the peasant from the soil (Marx, 2013, p. 502).

From the narrative of Marx the basis of capitalism is the process of expropriation, the movement of people from their land to the towns and cities to become free labourers and the creation of the capital farms as it happened in England and Europe at the end of the Middle Ages (Marx, 2013, p. 508). This is the start point of the accumulation of capital, the development of capitalism in a non-capitalist environment (Klaus, 2010, p. 45).

## **Rosa Luxemburg**

For Rosa Luxemburg Capitalist Landnahme is the hunger of land that brings the expansion of capitalism always looking for more resources in its process of accumulation of capital that “requires inevitably free access to ever new areas of raw materials in case of need, both when imports from old sources fail or when social demand suddenly increases” (Luxemburg, 1971, p. 358). She argues that capitalist production cannot be limited to the means of production produced by the capitalist method and that apart from the improvement in labour productivity the increase of the surplus value is based on the condition of the “unrestricted utilisation of all substances and facilities afforded by nature and soil” (Luxemburg, 1971, p. 357).

Capitalist Landnahme according to Luxemburg is part of the process of the expansion of the capitalist system because of the constant need for additional resources, labour and raw materials that are limited. This vicious cycle is always looking for natural economies which provide the perfect environment for capitalism to be developed and part of that process is to displace peasants to the industry and leave the land free for capitalists to exploit it and continue with the accumulation of capital and its reproduction.

## **David Harvey**

For David Harvey the original accumulation of capital developed in medieval times in Europe was characterised by the violence and illegal ways to obtain the resources (Harvey, 2010, p. 47) and this violent accumulation is not left in the past but it is also part of the present because of the illegal means used in the case of subprime mortgage market and even in the drug trafficking such as violence, criminality and fraud (Harvey, 2010, p. 49). The accumulation of the initial power in those businesses is characterised by the “accumulation by dispossession” (Harvey, 2010, p. 49).

David Harvey states that “accumulation by dispossession is about dispos-

sessing somebody of their assets or their rights”<sup>116</sup>, “where things are taken away and commodified”<sup>117</sup>. From history until today this practice has been developed as part of the reproduction of capital, the need for additional means of production brought the special expansion of capitalism, in this process the acquisition of the resources has been done in legal and illegal ways.

Harvey distinguishes two types of dispossessed, the one that is considered for the purposes of this paper is the second which refers to “those who have been deprived of their assets, their access to the means of life, of their history, culture and forms of sociality in order to make space (sometimes quite literally) for capital accumulation)” (Harvey, 2010, p. 242). In this type is considered all the people that were displaced from their land in times of colonisation and imperialism, by legal or illegal ways. Today with the expansion of capitalism the low income population is forced by legal or illegal means to sell their high value properties at a low price. According to Harvey it seems as a “plan to expel low income and unwanted populations from the face of the earth” (Harvey, 2010, p. 245). With the help of the financial system and taxes, low income population faces the threat of been dispossessed of their assets and become dependent on the capitalist system to survive.

The concept of accumulation by dispossession by Harvey describes the process of the emergence of capitalism with the dispossession of the land and displacement of peasants to the cities to be part of the labour army. At the same time this concept continues through the history of capitalism until today. In the neoliberal theory the accumulation by dispossession is part of the process of accumulation of capital for the elites and explains the process of Land grab or agribusiness as part of the expansion of capitalism.

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116 Kreisler, Harry. “David Harvey Interview: A Geographer’s Perspective on the New American Imperialism”. *Conversations with History*, Institute of International Studies, UC Berkeley. Retrieved from [globetrotter.berkeley.edu/people4/Harvey/harvey-con4.html](http://globetrotter.berkeley.edu/people4/Harvey/harvey-con4.html)

117 Mahon, Matt. “Interview with David Harvey”. *TheWhite*. Retrieved from [www.thewhitereview.org/interviews/interview-with-david-harvey/](http://www.thewhitereview.org/interviews/interview-with-david-harvey/)

**Saskia Sassen**

Saskia Sassen analyses the contemporary expansion of capitalism and the effects of prioritizing the exploitation of natural resources over the persons and communities that inhabit those areas affected by land grab. For Sassen the world is living a new face of capitalism characterized by elements of what Harvey calls accumulation by dispossession (Sassen, 2010, p. 25). The advanced capitalism of the post-keynesian period brings an increasing rate of “expulsed”, people that as consequence of the process of large scale acquisition of land in the Global South and North have been displaced causing a rise of levels of poverty and illness (Sassen, 2010, p. 24).

The theory of change developed by Sassen is about the real reason of the expulsion of people and the destruction of the traditional form of capitalism. According to Saskia Sassen this expulsion is not related with the value of the people as consumers or workers but with the growing need by the financial system to exploit the natural resources (Sassen, 2010, p. 25). Sassen argues that there are two issues that prepare the ground for this new phase of Primitive accumulation (Sassen, 2010, p. 25). The first is the implementation of the Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAP) in the 1980s and 1990 by the WB, IMF and WTO; and the second is the mortgage crisis that allows the expansion of capitalism into the global market through billions of households (Sassen, 2010, p. 25). As a result of the SAPs the countries which were forced to accept loans had to prioritize the payment of the debt instead of investing on health, education and infrastructure (Sassen, 2010, p. 26). Those circumstances added to weak governments, with high levels of corruption and soft regulations opened their boundaries to direct foreign investment with a promise of future development but devastating results to the communities (Sassen, 2010, p. 27). This was the perfect terrain to further development of capitalism.

**Susan George**

Susan George argues that Neo-liberal Globalisation has brought inequality and a concentration of resources in a national and international level, what

matters today is the control over business and that Globalization is “the latest stage of world capitalism and the political framework that helps it thrive” (George, 2004, p. 11) The consequences of the expansion of capitalism and the practice of the neo-liberal rules of marketplace are social, economic and environmental. From her study Susan George believes that a Global Justice Movement based on knowledge and democracy is the tool for people voices to be heard in the new configuration of the world.

Susan George argues that international organizations are more concern about the success of corporations instead of the welfare of the people as in 1992 with the United Nations Rio Declaration where it was recognized that “states have the sovereign right to exploit their own resources” (George, 2004, p. 34), but this is just a formal way to open the doors for corporations to invest and exploit resources everywhere.

### **Vandana Shiva**

Vandana Shiva as an environmental thinker and activist has developed her work around the effects of the imperialist effects of globalization in the third world especially regarding the rights and culture of the people (Shiva, 2000). Shiva states that what is called “growth” by the industrial economy is a form of theft from nature and people (Shiva, 2000, p.1). Her main concern has been the development of industrial agriculture, the role of companies like Monsanto that with the help of international organizations like the WTO have granted access to the whole world and impose their believe of been working to reduce poverty and hunger (Shiva, 2000, p. 9). As result of her work and the experience of different communities and cases around the globe the profits of giant companies are based on the stolen resources from the third world poor (Shiva, 2000, p. 3).

For Vandana Shiva there is a triple crisis that includes the environmental damage, peak oil and food and agrarian crisis (Shiva, 2008, p. 1). According to her studies the only way to have a change and guarantee a world for the future generations is with a reduction on energy demands of the rich and a bottom-up model for sustainability creating an Earth democracy based

on living economies (Shiva, 2008, p. 133). Shiva argues that the top-down model for a pseudo-sustainability and eco-imperialism only regards the generation of profit for the giant companies and it is based on the exploitation of natural resources (Shiva, 2008, p. 133). This model that is characterized by the industrial agriculture has destroyed diverse sources of food, impoverished the land, polluted the environment and displaced people generating poverty and hunger.

Vandana Shiva states that “for too long the very instruments that threaten the poor have been proposed as solutions to poverty” (Shiva, 2008, p. 134), and considers that there is a possibility to shape a new future that includes a reinvention of democracy becoming the citizens active agents of transformation by “recognizing that we have the capacity, the energy, and the creativity to make the change” (Shiva, 2008, p. 135). The role of multinational companies like Monsanto is the foundation of the top-down model of development to be applied in the Global south and the support of a financial system led by a small elite that focus its interest in the accumulation of capital and the exploitation of resources ignoring the communities that inhabit the stolen territories.

### **Land grab in Latin America and the case of Colombia**

Land and its possession have been central in the development of human history, it tells the ways in which societies have been developed and the ways how markets have evolved. As part of the expansion of capitalism land has had an important role since its beginning when according to Marx, peasants were displaced to the cities and landlords exploited the land. According to Ray Bush since the 1945 development was directly related with modernization of the land because this was the path that countries from the Global South should follow to be part of the industrialized world (Bush, 2007, p. 84). Land reform would guarantee rural wealth and economic development to the poor countries of the South, productivity and efficiency depended on an equal distribution of the land (Bush, 2007, p. 84).

In Latin America the Organisation of American States set up the Allian-

ce for the Progress promoted by the US that encouraged the land reform (Bush, 2007, p. 90). Despite the unequal redistribution this policy adopted by many countries from Africa and Latin America brought good results such as reduction of poverty, fall in infant mortality and the rise of life expectancy (Bush, 2007, p. 91). By the 1970's the crisis endangered the stability of the industrialized economies that had to switch to a new model in which land reform had to be pushed off.

By the 1980's the governments of Margaret Thatcher in the UK and Ronald Regan in the US introduced the neoliberal model and with the help of International financial institutions such as the WB, IMF and WTO the Washington Consensus was spread in the Global South. In the name of development the policies were established in most of the countries from the global south, the SAPs forced the governments to dismantle subsidies and reduce the investment in sectors such as education and health and prioritize the payment of debts. According to the developed economies and the International organisations the objective of these policies was to guarantee development to the poor countries through international direct investment. Although according to the facts the neoliberal policies applied by the North in the Global south respond to a strategy of opening new markets and to have access to additional resources from other regions of the world which can be understood as the expansion of capitalism and the basic primitive accumulation described by Marx.

The Twenty-first century is characterised by the process of Globalization, the neoliberal Globalization as Susan George says and the continued expansion of capitalism. In that context the acquisition of large areas of land by transnational companies in different regions of the world is a fact that cannot be ignored. Land Grab is a situation that affects many communities through the Global South and also some from countries in the North. The usual relationship between developed North and developing South has changed and today it is possible to include the relationship South-South. Land as a commodity has been part of capitalism for long time, but it is since the food crisis that the phenomenon of land acquisition is an issue for governments and transnational institutions because of its social, political, environmental and economic effects.

The regions where the land has been acquired are mainly Africa, Asia and Latin America but it has also been acquired in Eastern Europe and Oceania. According the Land Matrix 203.4 million hectares have been reported to be acquired in the world (of which 70.9 million hectares have been cross-referenced). From that total 66.1% is in Africa, 21.3% in Asia, 9.2% in Latin America, 2.3% in Europe and 0.3% in Oceania (Anseeuw, W., L. Alden Wily, L. Cotula, & M. Taylor, 2012, p. 22). Most of the land acquired is located in Africa, Asia and Latin America and in each region the distribution of the use of the land is different. For instance in the case of Africa 65.7% of the land is for biofuels, 15% for food crops, 9.4% for tourism, 6.9% for forestry and the remaining 3% for Non-food agricultural commodities, livestock, mineral extraction and others (Anseeuw, W. et al., 2012, p. 25). In the other hand the distribution for Latin America is 34% for biofuels, 27.2% for food crops, 23.8% for Mineral extraction, 10.2% for forestry and the remaining 4.8% for livestock and non-food agricultural commodities.

After identifying the main host regions and the use for the land it is missing the reason why this trend has increased recently and it is according to the needs and interests of the companies or countries that the investment is made allowing not only a North-South relationship but also South-South. There are buyers from different countries all around the world from the Gulf States, Asia, Europe and the US and few from Latin America (Anseeuw, W. et al., 2012, p. 22).

Nevertheless the policies are not designed to endanger the welfare of the people from the host countries or to increase poverty and hunger on the contrary, foreign direct investment aims to bring economic development to developing countries but the lack of an international legal framework leaves in hands of the governments the regulation and control about the land tenure. Robert Paarlberg (2010, p. 174) states that “Yet in food and farming sectors, national governmental institutions continue to play a dominating role in both rich and poor countries”. Investors look for environments in which deals can be easily signed and in some cases before the land is sold to the private investor it is necessary that the government expropriate the land

first<sup>118</sup>. There are different ways of land acquisition that include sale, lease or concession when there is a transfer of right to use, control and own the land (Sassen, 2013, p. 30) and the large-scale commercial use after being property of small holders or had an environmental purpose (Sassen, 2013, p. 30). For any of those options the investors focus their interest in countries where the land rights are not formally recognized or even if the law requires consultation to the communities the government knows how to manage the situation<sup>119</sup>. Narula argues that in those cases when the communities are consulted the information about the land deal is not clear<sup>120</sup>.

## Colombia

According to Frances Thomson in Colombia there is a close relationship between the violent conflict and the agrarian question (Thomson, 2011, p. 321). Ross Eventon states that the unequal distribution of the land inherited by the Spanish colonisation caused the social conflict when certain movements tried to change such imbalance<sup>121</sup>. Thomson also argues that the case of the Colombian conflict shows that violence is also used by the elites to impose their convenient economic development model, by this it is possible to argue that the expansion of capitalism can be violent and produce poverty (Thomson, 2011, p. 322). The close relationship between Colombia and the United States is demonstrated with the trade liberalization process that the country has lived for the last decades following the capitalist interests of small elite regardless of the social consequences such as inequality, illicit drug production, displacement, marginalisation and conflict (Eventon, 2013) and sealed with the Free Trade Agreement (Ministerio de Comercio, Industria y Turismo, 2013). The Colombian conflict has displaced many people from the countryside but land grab also contributes to the fact that

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118 Smita Narula “The Global Land Rush: Markets, rights, and the politics of food” *Stanford Journal of International Law*, 49 (2013):114

119 Smita Narula “The Global Land Rush: Markets, rights, and the politics of food” *Stanford Journal of International Law*, 49 (2013):114

120 Smita Narula “The Global Land Rush: Markets, rights, and the politics of food” *Stanford Journal of International Law*, 49 (2013):115

121 Retrieved from [www.tni.org/print/article/war-colombias-poor](http://www.tni.org/print/article/war-colombias-poor).

today Colombia is the country with the largest number of internally displaced people in the world<sup>122</sup>.

According to a report from the Colombian Geological Service there are 9.234 mining title deeds registered by February 2012 of which 694 belong to 18 companies and cover 30% of the 1.5 million hectares assigned (Omar Ahumada, 2013)<sup>123</sup>. Companies like Anglo Gold Ashanti and Mineros S.A. hold 394 and 107 titles each that correspond to the 59% of the 1.5 million hectares for mining (Omar Ahumada, 2013). Besides mining farmland is also an attractive area of investment to foreign investors in Colombia. For instance, by 2012 the American company Cargill had invested USD 100.000 million buying 90.000 ha of farmland in the region of Meta to produce cereals (Domínguez, 2013)<sup>124</sup> and in the region of Magdalena the group Merhav from Israel has invested USD 300 million in 10.000 ha of land to produce biofuels (Domínguez, 2013).

According to Eventon in the period from 2002 to 2009 while the country was experiencing an economic renaissance the number of displaced people increased by 2.4 million and fell from the place 68th to the 77th in the UN's Human Development index (Eventon, 2013). The violent conflict based on unequal distribution of land and wealth causes displacement and increases poverty but the neoliberal policies developed by the Colombian governments for the last decades are not designed to bring progress to the poor, on the contrary it reflects the interest of the capitalist elite which shares the accumulation desire even if it means that the poor become poorer.

When large companies acquire land in developing countries the aim of the local governments is to bring development to their nations but instead there is an exploitation of the natural resources, a reduction on the quality of life of the communities which most of the times are violent dispossessed from their territories and the consequence is an increase on poverty and hunger.

122 UNHCR, The UN Refugee Agency, Internally Displaced People Figures. Retrieved from <http://www.unhcr.org/pages/49c3646c23.html>

123 Retrieved from <http://www.portafolio.co/economia/30-areas-tituladas-la-tienen-18-grandes-mineras>.

124 Retrieved from <http://www.portafolio.co/economia/inversion-extranjera-pone-el-ojo-el-campo>.

This is a familiar situation with the one that happens in countries from Latin America which in especial cases such as Colombia people is not only displaced as a result of the violent social conflict but also by large companies that invest in the country and acquire land to exploit minerals and to develop mega farms that will nourish other countries and bring poverty to the local communities.

The capitalist aim of accumulation moves the elites to look for resources everywhere in the planet and how to get easy access to increase the profit of their business through the dispossession of the rights of communities. Those communities hold a natural and ancient right to their land that legally is not recognised or it is simply ignored. The expansion of capitalism is not bringing development to the poor but inequality, poverty and hunger.

## CONCLUSION

Land grab became an issue of the twenty-first century that endangers the survival of certain communities and the environment; it also has increased poverty, hunger and inequality and instead of bringing economic development to the developing countries land as a commodity represents a secure option of investment to generate important revenues in the future. Since the food crisis the acquisition of land increased at an extraordinary rate with the argument of securing food for the future and to reduce poverty and hunger. As David Harvey states “Politics has been depoliticised and commodified” (Harvey, 2010, p. 219) as the behaviour of the governments and international organizations shows that it is more important to be part of the global market instead of developing policies that allow poor people to increase their quality of live and have a more important role in the economy apart of being considered only as consumers.

The economic system that rules today is described by the primitive accumulation by Marx and reinforced by Luxemburg which adds the need of expansion of capitalism in search of new sources or means of production. That search and acquisition has violent characteristics as David Harvey argues with accumulation by dispossession that not only refers to the way land is

acquired but also the dispossession of rights that people used to have. A further explanation by Sassen includes that the priority of land grab is the exploitation of natural resources but this process of accumulations by dispossession leaves on its way poverty, inequality and hunger. Finally Susan George and Vandana Shiva go beyond the consequences of land grab and through the analysis of its causes which are the neo-liberal globalization and the accumulation of capital by few hands they take into consideration the role of the communities and how another world would be possible if with the use of knowledge and the development of a real democratic participation of the communities the policies are based in the context where they are going to be applied.

The case of Colombia exposes that it is the neoliberal policies those that rule the governments and the long intervention of foreign interests have prepared the ground to the foreign direct investment with the argument of being the only option that could guarantee an economic development of the country. To this aims the local elites share the interest because they will be directly beneficiated but the consequences involve a wide range of communities and a variety of interests which have kept quiet but recently they have found the way to express themselves. As the example of MST and La Via Campesina there are many others social movements and NGOs that are working to make the voice of peasants, migrants, displaced, women farmers among others to be heard. At the same time, the experience of some Latin American countries with the leftist governments is an example of how the identification of a common interest among the communities benefit from the democratic systems to be represented in the higher level of the national power and can work to design policies that will respond to the needs and characteristics of the local market and society without isolate the country from the global arena.

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