

Territorial Restructuring and Resistance in Argentina

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This article argues that the logic of territory is particularly important for understanding the processes of capital accumulation and resistance in Latin America. The analysis focuses on Argentina, but draws on examples from throughout Latin America for a regional perspective and from the provinces of Jujuy, Cordoba and Santiago del Estero for subnational views. Section one describes the territorial restructuring of meaning, physical ‘places’ and politico-legal ‘spaces’, as it plays out at multiple scales to facilitate the investment in and sale and export of natural resource commodities. I argue that land grabs contribute to this process but are not solely responsible for it. Section two explores the territorial logic of resistance. In what might be understood as territorial restructuring from below, rural communities are finding their own ways of restructuring places, legal spaces and the meaning of resistance from a peasant struggle for land reform to a peasant–indigenous alliance in defense of territory. This emerging alliance is not only important for understanding the nature of reactions to land grabbing and land conflict today. Recognizing and navigating the differences between peasant and indigenous histories of collective action are also crucial for sustaining such alliances at the regional, national and subnational level.

Keywords: territorial restructuring; land grabs; indigenous and peasant alliance; agrarian resistance; Argentina

Introduction*

It is no longer possible to address agrarian reform without bringing indigenous peoples into our struggle. They are the front lines of the battle to defend territory, and thus over time they have become the principal strategic member and ally of the struggle for a real genuine and integral agrarian reform. (Torrez 2013, 764)

— Faustino Torrez, Peasant leader from La Vía Campesina, Nicaragua

A flurry of research and media attention on land grabbingⁱ has put land and territory in the spotlight of development debates and signaled a renewed interest in investing in natural resources. A growing academic literature on land grabbing has helped reveal the dynamics of this trend, key actors and drivers, however less research has been done on resistance to it.ⁱⁱ I hope to contribute to this question in Latin America, with special emphasis on the Argentine case. However, I argue that neoliberal reforms in Argentina established a pattern of territorial restructuring that land grabs also reproduce, but are not solely responsible for. This process is facilitating the expansion of multiple industries,

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namely industrial soy production and mining, driving agrarian change, and triggering resistance. Defense of territory in resistance discourse initially emerged in Latin America as an ethnic claim, linking land struggles to indigenous mobilizations, but the concept has also been increasingly incorporated into peasant movement discourse, signifying an important alliance.

Argentina's indigenous population identified by census data has traditionally represented a small fraction (roughly 1%) of the population (Van Cott 2007, 129), and thus it is more often than not left out of regional analyses of indigenous politics (Assies *et al.* 2000, Yashar 2005). Although the 2010 census shows an increase to 2.4% of the population registered as indigenous (a remarkable 60% rise) (cited in Wald 2013, 603–604), this blind spot in the literature continues to further invisibilize a population whose role in agrarian change historically has been central and whose mobilizations today shape the agenda of resistance politics. Moreover, although much of the new literature on land grabs in South America focus on Brazil (Oliveira 2013; Sullivan 2013), Argentina is also a country whose agrarian structure has been shaped by land conflict and land grabbing, but has received less scholarly attention. It therefore offers an especially relevant context in which to explore the connections between land grabbing, land conflict and indigenous and peasant resistance.

In this paper I argue that the logic of territory is particularly important for understanding the processes of capital accumulation *and* resistance in Latin America. For Arrighi (1994) and Harvey (2003) state making is based either on territorial power or capitalist power. Territorial power consists of control over places, people and socio-political spaces. In contrast, capitalist power is based on control over money and processes of accumulation. I highlight that the processes of capital accumulation themselves, have taken on a notably territorial logic. In other words, the 'real' (territorial) and 'financial' (capitalist) sides of the economy have become increasingly interwoven. Alonso-Fradejas (2012) offers valuable insights by highlighting the 'complementarity' of the territorial and capitalist logics of power that characterizes and makes unique what he calls 'land-control grabs' (2012, 512). Similarly, for Holt-Giménez the fusion of these two logics in Guatemala is what drives processes of 'territorial restructuring' of the 'social and economic institutions in a country's hinterlands in favor of agribusiness, tourism, or extractive industries' (Holt-Giménez 2008, 5). This idea of territorial restructuring is useful in understanding the current character of the agrarian question in Latin America, which I elaborate in section one. That is, how capital, with the help of the state rearranges physical 'places' and socio-political 'spaces' (Holt-Giménez 2008, 6) in order to accumulate more capital—the logic of capital in combination with the logic of territory. Examining this process in Argentina reveals, however, that the complimentarity of these two logics is indeed precarious at times as it causes tension within the state which seeks to facilitate capital accumulation and also maintain political legitimacy (Fox 1993). Building on Holt-Giménez's 'places' and 'spaces', I suggest a third dimension of territorial restructuring—broadly understood as political or ideological meaning. In this analysis I highlight this dimension as expressed through political ideology and discursive framing. The restructuring of places, spaces and meaning plays out at multiple scales. To capture this I anchor my analysis on Argentina, but draw on examples from throughout

Latin America for a regional perspective and from the provinces of Jujuy, Cordoba and Santiago del Estero for subnational views. This research is based on a review of secondary data and literature as well as participant observation and semi-structured interviews with social movement representatives, government researchers and policy makers, academics and farmers conducted throughout 2011 and 2012 in the Argentine provinces of Jujuy, Santiago del Estero, Cordoba and Buenos Aires.

Section one critically engages with the land grabbing literature, exploring its relevance in Argentina, a country where land conflicts are not all linked to the convergence of food and financial crises that culminated in 2008, nor are they all large scale, as contemporary land grabs are commonly understood. Nonetheless, they contribute to broader processes of territorial restructuring and shed light on the current character of the agrarian question in this case. I argue that a process of territorial restructuring is happening at multiple scales in Latin America to facilitate the investment in, sale and export of natural resource commodities, a process in which the logic of territory and of capital are in large part complimentary. Nonetheless, the Argentine case brings out a number of tensions that the state must negotiate.

In section two, I suggest that we are also seeing an emergent territorial logic of resistance. In what might be understood as territorial restructuring from below, rural communities are exerting direct control over places through occupation, and legal spaces are being leveraged to politicize territorial rights for indigenous and subsequently peasant groups. Despite differences, there is evidence that the identity and discourse framing of some resistance movements involved in conflicts over land are changing from a peasant struggle for land reform to a peasant-indigenous alliance in defense of territory against the expansion of capital. It is important to note that here I use ‘indigenous’ to refer to an ethno-cultural identity, while I use ‘peasant’ as a reference to a particular class of rural people.ⁱⁱⁱ Class and ethnicity are interrelated but distinct concepts, the meaning of which is context specific (Van Den Berghe 1979, 254). Throughout the region many indigenous people are also peasants, and identification with one or the other or both can be motivated by political, economic, cultural or ethnic affiliations. But many peasant movements in Latin America have a Marxist legacy, mobilizing on the basis of class, while indigenous movements have largely made claims on the basis of shared ethnic identity. In many parts of Latin America there has been a clear shift in recent decades towards ethnic recognition and thus political demands articulated on the basis of indigeneity. However peasant movements grounded in class politics have not disappeared (Veltmeyer 1997, Wald 2013, 603, Fontana 2014, 297). This work explores the ways in which agrarian resistance movements today are attempting to integrate notions of class and ethnicity. Land claims by peasant and indigenous movements throughout Latin America have mobilization trajectories that have been at times overlapping, complimentary, contested and even conflicting. Therefore, this emerging alliance in defense of territory is not only important for understanding the nature of reactions to land grabbing and land conflict today. Recognizing and navigating the differences between histories of collective action is also crucial for sustaining such alliances at the regional, national and subnational level in order to resist the dispossession of peasant and indigenous communities.

I. Territorial restructuring and the expansion of capital

The high prices on international markets for Latin American commodities are and have been without a doubt an important draw for capital to the region. But these market-based explanations mask the details of the way capital penetrates and restructures agrarian production systems—today's agrarian question. To supply this demand, a complex process of territorial restructuring is underway. Initially the so-called 'Washington Consensus' justified this change and now increasingly the commodities boom, or the 'Commodities Consensus' gives the persistence of this production model meaning. Landscapes throughout the region have been ripped open, re-planted and paved over to facilitate the movement of goods to the international market and the expansion of capital into new territories. Importantly, particular political choices have been made that activate institutions, regulation, and laws to privatize lands, displace peasants and indigenous peoples, and silence dissent—the restructuring of 'spaces'. While by and large this process has favored capital accumulation, in Argentina's 'post-neoliberal' political climate, it has also brought out some of the tensions between the logic of territory and the logic of capital.

Land grabbing

In the context of this wider panorama of territorial restructuring, I suggest that land grabbing contributes to it by also restructuring places, spaces and meaning, but is not solely responsible for it. To limit this analysis to resistance to land grabbing alone not only misses broader processes of agrarian change, it is also complicated by the fact that in Argentina (as in many places) the term land grabbing gets used in widely different ways. For some, like Naharro and Álvarez (2011) in their research in Salta, land grabbing refers generally to acquisitions of indigenous lands by 'new owners' for soy production for export. The National Peasant and Indigenous Movement (MNCI) in Argentina uses the term in an article describing a violent eviction of family farmers in Esteban Echeverría, Buenos Aires province (UST-MNCI 2011), or more generally the 'offensive of industrial agriculture and agribusiness' (Prensa De Frente 2011).

An FAO study (2011) of Latin America, defines a land grab as a phenomenon with three key characteristics: i) recent large-scale land acquisitions ii) transactions involving foreign governments; and iii) negative impacts on food security in the host country. Of the 17 countries in the region examined, this study only found land grabbing present in Argentina and Brazil. In Argentina, transactions like the stalled deal for 320,000 hectares with the Chinese company, Beidahuang State Farms Business Trade Group CO, LTD. in Rio Negro, or the 200,000 has acquired by the Saudi Arabian Al-Khorayef Group in the province of Chaco in 2010, represent the restructuring of 'places' to produce commodities for export. These deals depend on negotiated agreements and access to political 'spaces' and have signaled that, no matter how limited the definition, land grabbing is not just an African phenomenon, and is indeed happening in Latin America. The 2012 data from GRAIN based on a similarly narrow definition of land grabbing^{iv} in Argentina suggest that a total of 961,552 has have been grabbed, primarily for the production of soybeans and other grains (GRAIN 2012b). These definitions highlight

compelling cases, but must be problematized in three key ways.

First, limiting the meaning of land grabbing to foreign investors as ‘the grabbers’ misses the role of domestic actors. Gras and Hernandez (2014) point out that not only have domestic agribusinesses been central in the development of soy in Argentina, they are diverse in size and structure themselves. Nonetheless, the Cristina Fernández de Kirchner government’s institutional response to the issue has been largely directed at limiting foreign ownership of land. In 2011, Argentina passed a law to limit the total land area that can be foreign owned to 25%, which according to Aranda (2011), was hailed by government friendly media as if it were an agrarian reform, but ultimately made little difference to peasants and indigenous communities engaged in conflicts over land. Murmis and Murmis (2012) remind us that while much of the trade in commodities is dominated by multinational firms, control of land and resources to produce those commodities is exercised in a variety of ways, combining domestic and foreign capital, investment ‘pools’ and land leasing as well as outright purchase. In the words of Argentine journalist Darío Aranda, ‘The main problem for peasants and indigenous peoples is not foreign ownership, [but] rather the dominant model of agricultural production’^v (2011). Key actors advancing the dominant model of agricultural production are both foreign and domestic (Murmis and Murmis 2012) and they rely on political and institutional support as the following sections describe.

Second, measuring land grabs by acreage, and focusing only on large-scale acquisitions has been called into question by Borras, et. al. (2012) who note that other factors like the size of the capital involved, extraction of resources, land control transfer (rather than ownership) and changes in meaning and use of land are perhaps more relevant criteria for identifying land grabs. Using this broader lens, Borras et. al. found land grabbing present in at least 10 countries in Latin America as opposed to the two found in the FAO study. In Argentina, looking at acreage being grabbed is also misleading given the large number of conflicts over small pieces of land. According to a Ministry of Agriculture, Ranching and Fishing (MAGyP) study in 2013, there are 857 distinct conflicts over land, affecting 63,843 family farms, covering 9.3 million hectares—ten times the amount of land identified as having been ‘grabbed’ in the GRAIN study. Nationally, nearly a quarter of Argentina’s farming families are engaged in some kind of dispute over their land. Forty-eight percent of the 857 cases identified are conflicts over parcels of 500 hectares or less. The sources and types of conflict vary, including: incomplete or nonexistent titles (18.25%); usurpation of peasant or indigenous lands (8.95%); dispossession (8.15%); demand for recognition of indigenous territory (7.89%); lack of land (6.57%); issues arising from public land management at the provincial level (6.39%); fraud (6.13%); lack of information (6.8%); and other (9.17%) (Bidaseca *et al.* 2013). Because of the broad range in size of ‘places’ in dispute in Argentina, a large-scale lens does not capture the diversity of processes of agrarian conflict and dispossession happening today. The territorial restructuring framework on the other hand complicates this picture by looking, not just at the size of the place that is grabbed, but also at the political spaces and meanings that are restructured.

Finally, land grabbing is often linked to the convergence of food, energy and financial crises as Borras et. al. have done (2012, 851). Anchoring the land grab concept to these multiple crises prevents the term from being rendered irrelevant by applying it to too widely to large-scale transfers of land and resources throughout history. While I see this contextualization as key to maintaining the analytical utility of the concept, focusing so precisely, as GRAIN and FAO studies have, on land grabs in the post 2007-08 crisis period also does not provide a full explanation of land struggles in the Argentine context. Processes of agrarian transformation have been exaggerated in recent years, but they build on patterns of accumulation that gained momentum in the neoliberal period in the 1990s. According to the MAGyP study, 64% of registered cases of land conflict began within the last 20 years. For this reason, as Borras et. al. (2012) rightly point out, the land grabbing lens offers a useful but incomplete view of the dynamics of agrarian change, as the Argentine affirms.

Meaning: From the ‘Washington Consensus’ to the ‘Commodities Consensus’

Latin America has a long history of natural resource extraction and primary commodity production, but recent shifts in production patterns since the beginning of the neoliberal period have consistently deepened dependency on these sectors. What has not been consistent during that time is the way economic development strategies have been framed ideologically by governments and scholars throughout the region. When neoliberalism lost social legitimacy, the so-called ‘Washington Consensus’ shifted to the ‘Commodities Consensus’.

A focus in the post WWII years until the late 1970s on an import substitution industrialization model (ISI) of development emphasized diversified domestic production and state led development of mainly industrial sectors. The neoliberal turn in response to the debt crisis in the 1980s reversed this logic, instead promoting an opening up and deregulating of national economies, lowering tariffs, rolling back the role of the state and pushing for outward looking export-led development. This shift towards global markets favored specialization in export commodities and a complex process of ‘reprimarization’ of Latin American economies away from manufacturing and increasingly geared towards production of low value-added primary goods (Svampa 2013). The 1990s was a time of increasing protest and social struggle against these policies. Faced with this pressure many Latin American governments saw sweeping changes in political discourse in rejection of neoliberalism—towards ‘neostructuralism’ (Leiva 2008) and a return of the state. This time, however, state-led development did not focus on industrial production as it had during ISI. The majority of South American nations doubled down on primary goods for export.

Now, booming international commodities markets, especially the sustained boom from 2001-2008, are framed as key drivers behind the expansion of natural resource frontiers. New technologies like lithium batteries and increased grain-fed meat consumption have created high demand for Latin America’s primary goods. An important factor in this boom is the growth of Chinese consumption, capturing an increasing share of exports (Sinnott *et al.* 2010, 9). Indeed processes of productive change triggered by the neoliberal Washington Consensus continue today, but new ideological meaning and justification for

this path has emerged. Led by the dynamism of Brazil's economy and a sense of post-hegemonic regionalism, a wave of leftist governments proposing a post-neoliberal agenda—most notably in Argentina, Bolivia, Ecuador and Venezuela—has grown. Despite this ideological shift, the Washington Consensus has been replaced by what Svampa (2013) calls a 'Commodities Consensus'. Her term captures the tension between the political rejection of the neoliberal project and a renewed commitment to the model of agrarian production based on export of primary commodities, which that same neoliberal project established. As Fox (1993) points out, the need to facilitate capital accumulation *and* maintain social legitimacy is a tension embedded in the state, which the current commodities consensus is exacerbating in Argentina.

Places: 'Mountains were moved and valleys obliterated'

Mining and industrial agriculture and transportation networks are re-drawing territories (places) to facilitate the sale of commodities on the global market. Mining has been present in the region for centuries, but technological developments deepened its impact on physical places. The emergence of open-pit mining in the 1960s transformed copper, iron and bauxite mining processes in particular, and dramatically increased production. Similarly, the introduction of cyanide leaching in gold mining in the 1990s made it more feasible and profitable to extract gold from low grade ore deposits, but this has also come with increased environmental impacts per unit of gold (Urkidi and Walter 2011, 683). Thus to expand mining, as Dore (2000) describes, 'Mountains were moved and valleys obliterated. Fertile soil that had supported plant and animal life was covered by toxic tailings' (16). Large-scale industrial agriculture has also had serious impacts on South American landscapes as commodity exports have grown. Most notably, deforestation has advanced at an alarming rate to clear new areas for extensive agriculture or for other activities displaced by it. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) warns that 48.3% of Latin America's GHG emissions are due to deforestation and land use change. Sadly, Latin America is unparalleled in this regard. Forests were converted to agriculture at a rate of 57,800 km² per year during the first half of the 1990s, accounting for the greatest percentage loss of forest cover of any region in the world (Carr *et al.* 2003, 2).

In line with regional trends, by 2013 Argentina had 614 distinct mining projects (active mines, concessions or prospective mines), the bulk of which are open pit, large-scale developments, producing silver, copper and gold, with growing interest in lithium (MICLA 2012). Deforestation has swept across the northwest to make way for genetically modified soy, which now covers over half (59%) of all cultivated land in the country (Aranda 2012). Argentina is the world's third largest producer of soy, 99% of which is transgenic and 95% is for export (Aranda 2010a).

These changes in cropping systems and land use have been paralleled by the development of massive infrastructure projects to facilitate the movement of primary goods (Svampa 2013, 35). In South America under the banner of territorial ordering (*ordenamiento territorial*), the Initiative for the Integration of Regional Infrastructure in South America (IIRSA), a multi-country regional integration project established in 2000, aims to build and improve transportation lines, energy production and communications. In the first ten

years 86% of the projects launched by this initiative were in the transport sector and 46% of them were roads (IIRSA CCT Secretariat 2011, 97). In other words, IIRSA is enabling commodities to move. And it has worked. Among the different regional development hubs delineated by IIRSA, the average increase in dollar value of exports eight years into the project was 248% (IIRSA CCT Secretariat 2011). All of the top five exports in every hub are primary goods (especially crude oil and soybeans) except in the Guianese Shield Hub where airplanes and other aircraft rank fifth. When examined by country, Argentina is home to the highest number of IIRSA projects in the region (IIRSA CCT Secretariat 2011).

Spaces: making way for soy and mining expansion

Changes in physical places are made possible by complex systems of socio-political relations and power dynamics that restructure political ‘spaces’ in order to take hold of physical ‘places’. Here, I look at four key arenas, which are by no means exhaustive, but serve to illustrate the process of restructuring of socio-political spaces: state support for transgenic soy; investment incentives for mining; land titling; and dispossession and population control.

State support for transgenic soy

The introduction of genetically modified, or GMO soy has played a central role in the rapid spread of industrial agriculture in the Southern Cone of Latin America and opened the door to powerful multinational companies. In Argentina the benefits reaped from this expanding sector are highly concentrated in the hands of a few large companies. Six corporations (Cargill, Bunge, Dreyfus, AGD, Vicentín and Molinos Río de la Plata), for instance, control 89.34% of soy derivatives export (Teubal and Palmisano 2010, 207). This concentration has been largely made possible by the dominance of transgenic seed, which lends itself to large-scale production and grows in areas where non-GMO soy can't. Newell (2009) notes that Argentina has shown particular enthusiasm for biotechnology in agriculture. Here, control over institutional spaces “derives from and is manifested in access to bureaucratic structures and decision-making procedures within the state institutions that have responsibility for governing agricultural biotechnology” (Newell 2009, 47). President Menem's (1989-1999) neoliberal reform of agricultural inputs sectors privatized and concentrated seed markets on maize and soy, selling national seed companies to multinational producers (Newell 2009, 33). These powerful industry players maintain access to government decision-making processes directly and through representative organizations like the *Asociación de Semilleros Argentinos* (ASA) and the *Foro Argentino de Biotecnología* (FAB). This preferential treatment has been criticized by Greenpeace as a revolving door of personnel, which ensure regular meetings between industry and government representatives every two to three weeks, depending on the issue (Newell 2009, 48).

The proximity of the biotech seed industry to policy making has been effective and support from the federal government for soy production is clear. The National Agro-food Production Strategy, 2010-2016 that proposes an expansion of soy production by 20 million tons, and by 2020 to reach a 160 million ton harvest, a level 60% higher than in 2010 (Aranda 2011). In response to this proposed increase, one of the main peasant and

indigenous organizations in the country, the MNCI has warned, ‘there is no way to do this besides displacing peasant families’ (cited in Aranda 2011). The 35% export tax on soy exports that President Kirchner collects is a key source of income for her government, which has greatly increased government spending on social policies (Richardson 2009). In other words, the way President Kirchner seems to be dealing with the tension between social legitimacy and capital accumulation is by tacitly allowing the expansion of soy to displace the rural poor, but using the tax revenues it generates to fund the public assistance programs that those displaced people then rely on.

Investment Incentives for Mining

Through Structural Adjustment Programs (SAPs), international finance institutions (IFIs) like the International Monetary Fund (IMF) played a key role in shaping political spaces in ways that encouraged the expansion of mining throughout Latin America throughout the 1980s and ‘90s. But increasingly, financing for extraction is coming from the private sector, while IFIs are focusing on integration projects like IIRSA to move goods (Hildyard, 2008, cited in Bebbington 2009, 8). Although Latin America provides the natural resources, key actors profiting from their extraction are often foreign firms. For example, Canadian companies are not the only actors behind mining expansion, but they represent the majority. In 2012 there were 47 Canadian mining firms operating in Argentina, 37 in Brasil, 46 in Chile, 40 in Colombia, 169 in Mexico and 77 in Peru (Bebbington 2009, 8).

Without the pressure from IFIs to invest, Argentina has found that facilitating capital accumulation and maintaining political legitimacy to be challenging. The Argentine government celebrates the fact that mining exports in Argentina increased by 434% between 2001 and 2011 (*Minería Argentina: oportunidades de inversión* 2011). However, its attempt to capture mining revenues from foreign firms to fund domestic needs has not been as effective as in the soy sector. Increasing taxes and regulations on remittances to headquarters combined with serious inflation and currency restrictions, are all factors that have cut into perceived profits (Romig 2013). Additionally, President Kirchner’s nationalization of Spanish oil company YPF with no compensation in 2012 has investors nervous. In the words of one multimillion dollar mining company president, ‘The country of Argentina has consistently over the past 2 years introduced legislation and modified laws to “extract” more economic benefits for the country without thought or concern about the impact on long term resource development’ (Wilson and Cervantes 2014, 65).

This highlights the contradictory nature of the anti-neoliberal platform that proposes to fund social programs with revenues from extractive industries, which leftist governments like Argentina have taken. As these industries expand, they face increasing social resistance from the very base that elected presidents like Kirchner. On the other hand, if they exert too much state power or lean too heavily on tax revenues from foreign corporations, companies will take their investments elsewhere.

Land titling

Another mechanism facilitating the entry of capital to a given territory is land privatization. In Scott's (1998) words, it makes space and nature 'legible' (and sellable). The institutions that grant land titles are key political spaces of contestation in the process of territorial restructuring. In Jujuy, increasing recognition of indigenous territorial rights appeases growing indigenous resistance movements, but it comes to a head with the demand for the incorporation of untitled lands into private and unfettered land markets, in order to facilitate the expansion of capital. Jujuy is the province with the third highest percentage^{vi} of its population identifying as indigenous in the nation (INDEC, cited in Lipcovich 2012) and indigenous land titles have been the source of debates throughout Jujuy's history since the founding of the Republic. Though not in the heart of soy country, between 2005 and 2012 the area planted with soy in Jujuy still increased by 310.2%^{vii} and the province experienced a 1,948% increase in mining investments since 2003 (El Libertario 2012). With nearly half of all of the farms lacking titles and clearly defined limits (INDEC 2008) these changes have reignited competing interests over land and the call for communal land titles, which reflect indigenous pastoral and collective land use practices. Collective titles can't be sold, and therefore disrupt the operation of private land markets.

In the 1990s, national government institutions began to see greater indigenous representation among staff, coupled with the rise of indigenous movements throughout the region, this resulted in more calls for communal land titles. In an agreement signed by the national government's Institute on Indigenous Affairs (INAI) and the provincial government, in 1997 the Program to Regularize and Allocate Lands to Jujuy's Indigenous Population (PRATPAJ), was launched, officially recognizing indigenous collective territorial rights as part of the provinces land-titling program. In 2006, a push for communal titles appeared on the national agenda, with law N° 26.160. This law proposed to halt all evictions of indigenous communities that didn't have titles to their lands until every province carried out what's called the National Survey of Indigenous Territories Program (RETECI), which Jujuy had already begun with PRATPAJ. In Jujuy, relying on a number of institutions to survey, register, and issue deeds, and ultimately executive approval from the governor to grant communal land titles, this process has been slow. In 2006, only seven of the communities demanding communal titles had received them (Borghini, 2010: 146). By 2013, the Jujuy public notary claimed this number had gone up to a total of 44 titles representing 30% of the public lands in the province (OEA 2013, 14). Meanwhile the Jujuy Institute of Colonization (IJC), formed in 1988, operates independently and continues to grant private titles.

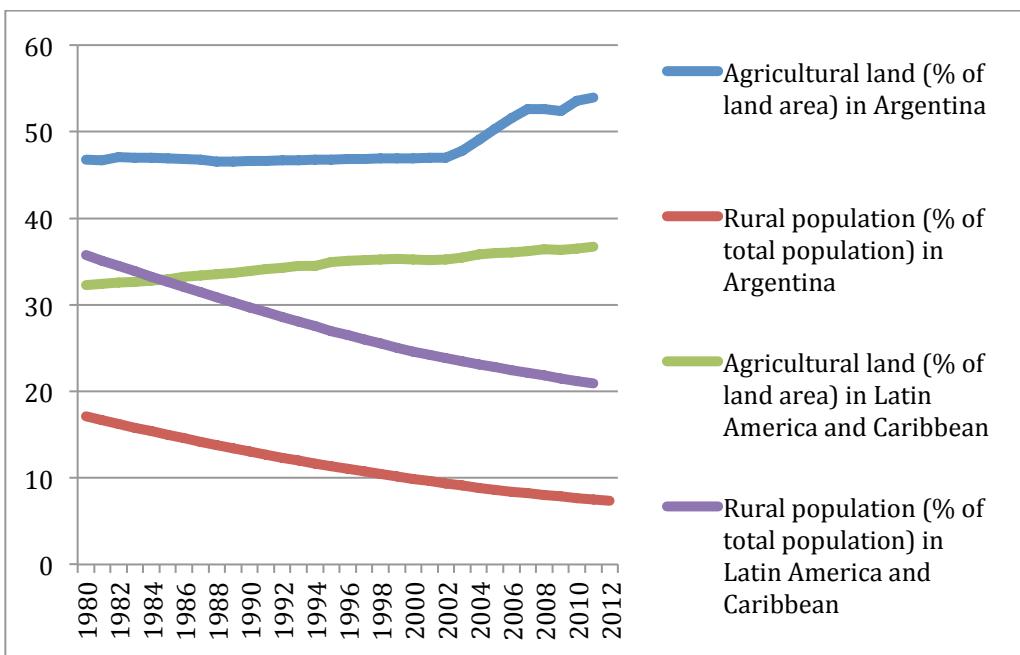
The tension between the interests of capital and communal ownership is not lost on indigenous groups waiting for their collective titles. In 2003, 200 representatives of indigenous communities from Jujuy sent a letter to Alicia Kirchner, the Minister of Social Development of the Nation, stating, 'We think that the long delays [in granting communal titles] could have various causes, from simple inefficiency to racism masked by double speak' (ENDEPA 2003). The slow action by the state in the institutional spaces that handle matters of collective titles has allowed privatization to make new lands available to investors, rather than protecting indigenous communities who currently reside there.

Processes of land regularization are also shaped by the current territorial development model in Argentina, which was introduced to Argentina in 2004 (RIMISP 2004). This framework promotes decentralized governance (Schejtman and Berdegué 2004) and ultimately means implementation happens in provincial government ‘spaces’ where the interests of capital have proven dominant. Beginning with Perón’s first attempt in 1947, each indigenous land titling program in Jujuy has followed a similar dynamic: indigenous land titles are promised by the national government, but efforts to grant them are undermined by the provincial government. While granting indigenous territorial rights remains slow, plans to expand soy and mining continue. The Provincial Ministry of Production’s Strategic Production Plan (PEP) proposes to expand and strengthen soy, mining *and* smallholder agricultural production. The authors of the plan admit that, the challenge to the growth of this sector in Jujuy is ‘the eventual conflicts with rural communities’ (Díaz Benetti 2011, 350). On this point, the PEP explicitly offers no solution. Instead, the authors of provincial government’s development plan avoid the entire land issue by claiming it is a national matter, thus leaving the demands of peasants and indigenous communities unresolved. Despite the existence of legal frameworks to protect indigenous collective rights, the political spaces of implementation are shaped by the interests of capital. Allegiance to large-scale mining and agro-industrial development at both the federal and provincial levels has hampered the full expression of indigenous rights.

Dispossession and population control

Though titling programs are stalled, territorial restructuring continues to drive dispossession of peasants and indigenous communities, which in turn generates resistance. In this sense, taking hold of and maintaining control of spaces is also about the politics of population control. Despite a renewed focus on production in rural areas, increased mechanization of agriculture and open pit mining practices require less labor. What is needed is not people, but land. While labor conditions in mining may have improved, now the problem is unemployment (Dore 2000, 21). Abuayo (2005) estimates that well over half of Latin America’s rural population has been converted into an impoverished semi-proletariat in a process of depeasantization (cited in Veltmeyer 2007, 8). Although agrarian production expands, the rural population is dwindling as the graph below demonstrates. The numbers for Argentina show similar trends but even more exaggerated than the regional average, with the rural population in 2012 representing only 7.3% while nearly 54% of the total land is used for agriculture.

Figure 1. Agricultural land vs. rural population in Argentina and LAC



Source: Author's compilation of data from World Development Indicators.

In order to free up new lands for soy, peasant and indigenous organizations claim private security forces hired by new land claimants use violence to evict rural communities (FM Del Monte MOCASE-VC 2012). Between 2009 and 2012, 11 farmers and indigenous people have died,^{viii} all of whom opposed the incursion of large-scale developments on their lands (Aranda 2013). Some were murdered in cold blood, while others died in mysterious traffic accidents that their families claim were also premeditated (*ibid*). Mining projects are upsetting neighboring communities as well. Lithium exploration in the Salinas Grandes salt flats on the border of Jujuy and Salta provinces, for example, has sparked a conflict with the indigenous inhabitants. They worry that the mining operation would rob them of the water they need to sustain their way of life based on the production of llamas and sheep forcing them to migrate to precarious urban settlements (Comunidades de la Mesa de Pueblos Originarios de la Cuenca de Guayatayoc y Salinas Grandes 2012).

As resistance grows to the increasing levels of dispossession throughout the region, many countries have begun passing or reviving antiterrorism laws, which some activists and journalists warn provide a legal mechanism to criminalize protest. In Chile indigenous Mapuche groups defending their territory have been disproportionately targeted by this law (EFE 2011). In Ecuador the Confederation of Indigenous Nationalities claimed in 2011 that there were some 189 cases of people accused of terrorism or sabotage for protesting the privatization of natural resources (Picq 2011). Similar laws exist in most Latin American countries, including Argentina, which passed its own version in 2011. This has raised alarm among grassroots organizations and members of congress alike who warn that the law could be used against peasants and indigenous communities defending their right to land or communities protesting open pit mining (cited in Valente 2011). While in the case of Argentina it is too early to assess the full impact of this legislation, these laws throughout Latin America provide a legal tool that can and has

been used for population control as dispossession from the expansion of extractive industries sparks social unrest.

II. Resistance: reshaping territories from below

In this section I argue that we are seeing the emergence of a territorial logic in the context of resistance, which is characterized by the same three features of territorial restructuring as outlined in section one: reshaping places, meaning, and political spaces. In this case, however, change is coming ‘from below’. The development of this territorial logic of resistance is uneven as different peasant and indigenous organizations navigate contextually specific and historically rooted divisions among and between them. The differences among peasant and indigenous movements have been especially shaped by the particular politico-legal opportunities for claim making and the types of political identities that are given the opportunity to express themselves—what Yashar calls a ‘citizenship regime’ (Yashar 2005). In Argentina’s neoliberal period, state recognition on the basis of culture and identity has helped ‘politicize ethnic cleavages’ (Yashar 2005, 81), between peasants and indigenous groups and masked class based commonality between them. As Tom Brass has warned, this focus on identity over class can become ‘politically problematic’ (Brass 2003, 6). By looking at the three dimensions of territorial restructuring from below in this context, I explore how such tensions and commonalities between class and ethnicity are being negotiated by social movements at different levels.

The territorial turn in resistance: reclaiming rural places

As natural resources are ever more the target of capital expansion, for peasants and indigenous communities facing threats of displacement throughout the region, the defense of territory (places) has become central to resistance efforts. From their compilation of research from Africa, Asia and Latin America, Moyo and Paris (2005) conclude, “rural movements today constitute the core nucleus of opposition to neoliberalism and the most important sources of democratic transformation in national and international politics” (6). This territorial turn in resistance represents a shift away from the wage wars and industrial conflicts spearheaded by labor unions that characterized the 1960s and ‘70s in Latin America (Seoane *et al.* 2005, 115). While rural revolutionary guerilla movements and land reform efforts were also important at this time, according to Veltmeyer, they were often peasant-based, but not peasant-led (2005, 307). As neoliberal reforms changed the nature of production systems and ‘reprimarized’ regional and national economies, the nature of protest in turn has shifted towards a ‘territorial basis’ (Seoane *et al.* 2005, 115). Following the rise of indigenous movements in the 1970s and ’80s, Latin American peasants emerged as leaders of their own new movements as well.

Rural social movements in Latin America have sought to defend their territory through a variety of strategies, some of which rely on legal and political mechanisms and seek to reclaim socio-political spaces, but perhaps most notably peasants and indigenous peoples are taking and maintaining control over land (places) by way of direct land occupation (Veltmeyer 2005, 308). The MST in Brazil has made famous this brand of ‘land reform

from below' (Langevin and Rosset 1997) and in so doing managed to reclaim lands for some 350,000 families who now have legal recognition and another 90,000 still occupying disputed territory (Watts 2014).

As the previous section described, this renewed focus on land among both indigenous movements and new peasant movements provides fertile ground for building shared territorial claims and unifying issues of concern to both rural peasants and indigenous communities. However, a close reading of the distinct social movement histories of indigenous peoples and peasants in Latin America reveals, that while there has been overlap and complementarity, there has also been tension, especially in regards to control over land. In the 1960s and 1970s indigenous communities began claiming their peasant or class-based identities rather than making ethnically based claims (Bengoa, cited in Soliz 2012, 128). State led land reforms, for example in Mexico (1934), Bolivia (1953), Guatemala (the short lived reform of 1952), Ecuador (1964 and 1973), and Peru (1968), targeted peasant communities and offered incentives for Indians to register with peasant organizations in order to gain access to land and the state (Yashar 2005, 61). Such complimentary and fluid political identities have not always been the case. Argentina never had an agrarian reform, and it was immigrant peasant farmers, not indigenous peoples who benefited from early titling programs in the transition from a Spanish colony to a new republic. In fact the state effectively 'usurped' indigenous lands to give to European colonists (Giordano 2003, 2).

In this context, much of the mobilization by European settler farmers focused not on land control, but on the terms of incorporation. Most accounts of non-indigenous rural uprisings in Argentina begin with the famous *Grito de Alcorta* in 1912, and the formation of the Argentine Agrarian Federation (FAA) where primarily Italian immigrant farmers demanded better contracts (Solberg 1971, 24). This was a struggle over terms of incorporation and the FAA has historically served as a conduit for the political interests of the Pampean (plains) farmers, who have traditionally been those most linked to export commodity production and carry significant political and social weight still to this day (Bidaseca 2010, 259). Peasant mobilization continued in the 1970s with the *Ligas Agrarias* that mobilized primarily non-indigenous small-scale farmers throughout the northeast. In this case demands centered again on terms of incorporation, specifically commercialization and control over distribution (Bartolomé 1982, 29). However the brutal repression by provincial governments and the military dictatorship that ruled the country from 1976 to 1983 limited sustained rural or labor movements in those years.

In contrast, indigenous social movements in the country grew out of a deep history of cultural invisibilization and land loss that was part of the Argentine project of nation-building. Mobilization, as Gordillo and Hirsch argue, was fundamentally about, not just becoming visible, but state recognition (2003, 5). The basis on which claims are made has evolved over time, but in large part has been distinct from peasant uprisings. In Jujuy, for example, the most famous uprising in an attempt to reclaim control of rural lands, in the highlands during the pre-sugar era in 1879 developed from an 'indigenous condition' (Karasik 2006, 292). One exception is the Malón de la Paz in 1946 where the farmer and the indigenous identities converged, but this convergence was not sustained

(Karasik 2006, 292). In 1972 the formation of the First National Indigenous Parliament (Futa Traum) represented a high point in growing indigenous mobilization, which during that era was divided among those promoting ethnic-cultural demands and those pushing for political and economic recognition (Gordillo and Hirsch 2003, 17). Like peasant movements, severe repression during the dictatorship limited indigenous activism at that time. But with the founding of INAI in 1982, resurgent indigenous mobilization focused on a politics of participation and demands for cultural recognition. In turn, such recognition facilitated ‘the reemergence of groups that had supposedly disappeared’ (Gordillo and Hirsch 2003, 20).

Although race and ethnicity still shape land access, what once may have been clear ethnic divisions between European settlers and indigenous communities are no longer the primary factor upon which dispossession and land control is determined. As described in the first part of this paper, territorial restructuring has put new lands in the sights of soy and mining development and the communities that are under increasing pressure of displacement are unified by their shared class as rural peasants, despite their diverse ethnic and cultural affiliations. Historically and today land occupation is a common resistance strategy used by both peasant and indigenous rural social movements throughout Argentina. According to a pamphlet on land rights published by the Red Puna in Jujuy, ‘occupation has always been the best way to demonstrate that land is ours’ (1998). Increasingly there are new land occupations or squatter settlements in urban and peri-urban areas (El Libertario 2009). However, for groups like la Red Puna, and other members of the MNCI the strategy is actually about gaining recognition for land on which they have historically lived. The national civil code establishes that legal possession may be granted to those without land titles after 20 years of uninterrupted occupation with the ‘intention of ownership’ (Vélez Sársfield 1871). In many areas with incomplete or confusing land registries, direct occupation is the most secure way of controlling land. In fact many rural communities have been ‘occupying’ their lands for generations. However, the title obtained through this process is a private land title that provides little protection from the economic pressures that can force peasants and indigenous communities to sell their land. For this reason, land occupation is complimented with other strategies of resistance.

The meaning of struggle: From Land Reform to Defense of Territory

In contrast to the discourse of the Washington consensus, or the Commodities consensus and post-neoliberalism, rural social movements frame current patterns of dispossession as inherent to neoliberalism, which despite leftist governments post-neoliberal discourse, continue today. In his discussion of the increasingly territorial perspective of land struggles adopted by Latin American peasant movements, Faustino Torrez, Nicaraguan peasant leader from la Vía Campesina explains the motives for resistance:

We are in a contradictory moment of both strong depeasantization, ever decreasing peasant agriculture in many places, displaced by the *territorial logic* of agribusiness, with repeasantization in other areas...the neoliberal economic system has made peasant and family farm agriculture unviable. (Torrez 2013, 766, emphasis added)

As threats to peasant and indigenous livelihoods have broadened and grown, La Via Campesina ‘has increasingly learned to think in terms of territory’ (Rosset 2013, 726). Thinking in terms of territory has also shaped the discursive framing of the movement, increasingly expressed as an alliance between peasants and indigenous communities united by common threats to their territory from the expansion of agribusiness and mining in the context of neoliberal capitalism.

Defense of territory is proposed as a unifying theme that can help facilitate new alliances between peasant and indigenous groups. This discourse is especially notable at the international level and among movement leaders. In Latin America the Latin American Coordination of Rural Organizations (CLOC) and globally La Via Campesina have facilitated these linkages as well as internal debate and exchange in order to strengthen the process of combining peasant and indigenous agendas in one movement. A key moment in the evolution of how land struggles are framed and resistance movements are composed in the region took place in March 2006 in Porto Alegre, Brazil at the ‘Land, territory and dignity’ forum organized by La Via Campesina as a lead up to the FAO International Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development (ICARRD) (Rosset 2013, 724). This encounter was the first to bring together peasants with non-peasant allies from outside of La Via Campesina, who are also threatened by enclosure in rural areas, including nomadic pastoralists, fisher folk, and indigenous peoples. But the cross cultural conversations that had begun within the context of the International Planning Committee on Food Sovereignty provided the foundation of the alliances that were solidified at this event (Monsalve, personal communication 2014). This conversation had started within La Via Campesina at the meeting of the landless at the second World Social Forum in Porto Alegre in 2002, where indigenous leaders from member organizations challenged the Global Campaign for Agrarian Reform (GCAR) within the movement to rethink agrarian struggles in terms of the indigenous notion of territory, not just land. The continuation of this conversation in 2006 gave rise to a collective analysis that sought to reframe land reform from a territorial perspective so that it would not pit peasants against indigenous or pastoralist communities as land reform programs in the past had done. Indeed, Borras notes, this process has unearthed tensions, as some within La Via Campesina have expressed that the organization “feels like a peasant space, not an indigenous peoples’ space” (2010, 791).

While the regional dynamics are important, Harvey’s (1998) research on the way peasant, indigenous and student organizations converged in Zapatista rebellion in Chiapas, Mexico serves as a reminder that much of the work of forming and sustaining such alliances happens at the national and local levels (also cited in Edelman 2001, 293). Examples from Bolivia and Argentina, for instance, show that this alliance is manifesting in different and uneven ways. In Bolivia we see peasants linking up with indigenous groups, maintaining distinct identities, but working in collaboration. Lorenza Fontana offers a helpful historical perspective on how the relationship between peasants and indigenous groups has evolved. She argues that the Morales government’s attempt at uniting these groups in a broad alliance (Unity Pact) has fallen apart. As the chief of the Conciliation and Conflict Management Unit of the National Institute of Agrarian Reform

(INRA) (2010) puts it, “Nowadays, the greatest land conflicts in Bolivia are between native communities and syndical [peasant] organizations. These conflicts are more intense than the conflicts between communities and big landowners” (cited in Fontana 2014a, 303). These conflicts have been shaped by a politics of cultural recognition that has facilitated a shift from “resource-based claims to ethno-identitarian issues” (Fontana 2014, 304). This so-called ‘political ethincization’ and its encouragement by international cooperation agencies, academics and Bolivian public officials, has reshaped the way resistance is framed in a way that some groups claim discriminates against peasant organizations in favor of those that identify as indigenous (Fontana 2014a, 306). The context of scarcity of land resources and differences among views about property relations (i.e. collective vs. private) have further compounded these identity based tensions (Fontana 2014, 304).

In Argentina, on the other hand, Via Campesina member groups, have focused on strengthening the peasant-indigenous alliance through coalition building and by reconnecting with the invisibilized indigenous roots of peasant organizations, thus cultivating a ‘double consciousness’ that links class and identity (Wald 2013). After 10 years of strengthening coalitions within Argentina, the National Peasant and Indigenous Movement (MNCI) was born in 2005 (Aranda 2010b, 138). The MNCI represents over 20,000 families in over 1000 peasant and indigenous grassroots organizations throughout nine provinces and reflects increasingly territorial perspectives within the movement. Not only has this organization formed a coalition of peasant and indigenous rural organizations, it offers a unifying discourse by framing its diverse membership as threatened by the advance of the same neoliberal capitalist system. At one of the early founding meetings in 2006 the young organization drafted a collective declaration summing up their struggle: ‘We struggle for land and territory, against injustice and a common enemy: Capitalist values’ (cited in Muñoz 2012, 17).

Although much of its membership identifies as indigenous, the indigenous movement history of Argentina was not well represented within the organization initially. How to resolve this omission was a deliberate debate that began before the MNCI was officially established and continues today. The topic was discussed at length in plenaries in Quimili, Santiago del Estero (Nov. 2006) and Juella, Jujuy (Feb. 2007). This led to the writing of an internal report on how to unite peasants and indigenous struggles via ‘transformative opportunities and practices beginning at the territorial level, that construct a different reality in favor of the poor and the oppressed’ (cited in Aranda 2010b, 138). One of the driving questions is ‘How do we join our struggles and rebuild our territory?’ (cited in Aranda 2010b, 138). This is an open-ended conversation that remains unresolved, and is being taken up to varying degrees by MNCI member groups.

In Santiago del Estero for example, the oldest member group within MNCI, the Santiago del Estero Peasant Movement (MOCASE) first emerged in the 1990s as a peasant movement. But it has increasingly shifted internally to adopt a double consciousness among its members that highlights their peasant *and* indigenous identity. As Dominguez (2008) claims, in the context of land tenure insecurity, social mobilization first encouraged the process of ‘repeasantization’ that later led to a process of

'reindianization'. The birth of this movement was influenced by ideas from the peasant organization, *Ligas Agrarias*, the Revolutionary Workers Party, young activists and agronomists working within the National Institute of Agricultural Technology (INTA), and the ideas of liberation theology and Rodolfo Kusch that he and others studied together at the University of Cordoba (cited in Guarnaccia and de la Calle 2012). Later MOCASE began receiving student exchange groups initiated by the Argentine Federation of Agronomy Students (FAEA), but for peasant leader, Diego Montón, alliances of all kinds have been crucial:

This in reality is the strength of the movement, creating conditions for synthesis. We don't represent a kind of peasantry or indigeneity where no one else can contribute, nor is it academia that has come to teach the peasants, rather we try to achieve a synthesis between distinct histories, different knowledges and different origins. (Guarnaccia and de la Calle 2012)

As the organization has matured and opened up spaces of collective action and political expression, its members have begun to recuperate their indigenous origins, register with the INAI and reconstruct ancestral social norms and uses of plants. The expansion of networks also facilitated connections with other similar agrarian organizations that began to emerge in other parts of Argentina throughout the '90s.

In contrast, rural mobilizations in Jujuy have not followed the same evolution. Unlike MOCASE, La Red Puna began as an indigenous organization and Wald notes that despite increasing alliance with groups like MOCASE, its members tend not to describe themselves as peasants (2013, 600). It is important to note, however that an analysis of the economic and material conditions their members face has been present since the founding of the organization in 1998, indicating that, while different from how it developed in Santiago del Estero a form of double consciousness that links class and ethnicity also exists in Jujuy (Wald 2013, 607-08). Similarly Hristov's discussion of the indigenous movement, the Indigenous Regional Council of Cauca (CRIC), in Colombia supports this strategy of double consciousness. She argues that on one hand, 'It is undeniable that ethnicity/race is of significance in the organization of the CRIC', but at the same time, 'those who ignore the mechanisms generating economic inequalities are in a very weak position to capture the forces that have kept most indigenous people in a subordinate position' (Hristov 2009, 59).

Legal spaces: Politicizing territorial rights

The process of reshaping legal spaces in favor of territorial rights for peasants and indigenous communities has born a number of significant achievements, but also reveals some of the tensions within and among resistance movements. Throughout Latin America the sort of multicultural citizenship reforms that have granted territorial rights to indigenous groups are serving as a model for other marginalized groups.

Indigenous territorial rights frameworks have been developed at the international and national levels. The 2007 United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) and the 1989 International Labor Organization, Convention 169 have

served as guides for constitutional reform efforts and given backing to local indigenous land rights claims. In 1992, the Argentine government formally adopted the ILO Convention 169 in the form of Law N° 24.071, which promotes respect for the cultural and spiritual relationships that indigenous communities have with land and territory.

La Via Campesina has spearheaded a process to approve a similar international declaration on the rights of peasants, which seeks to protect the rights of all marginalized rural communities, including indigenous peoples. In 2012 the UN Assembly of the Human Rights Council accepted the final text, and in July of 2014 the same body authorized the continuation of the negotiating process to draft a declaration (La Vía Campesina 2014). In this document authors seek to address the lack of existing territorial rights framework for peasants by asserting their right to land and territory, owned collectively or individually as has previously been articulated for indigenous communities in the UNDRIP.

Similarly, in Argentina the MNCI has been pressuring executive and legislative bodies to support legal recognition of peasant territorial rights and to collective titles also (Barbetta 2014, 9). This targeting of political actors rather than judges comes out of a frustration with the judicial system and represents the politicization of legal spaces. Unlike indigenous communities that have seen greater institutionalization of their political agenda throughout the neoliberal period (namely via the INAI), small-scale peasant producers have not had the same degree of institutional representation at the national level in Argentina (Bidaseca 2010, 262). Development policy specifically targeted at rural areas didn't emerge until the 1980s, consisting mostly of social services for the poor (Manzanal 2008). At the same time, neoliberalism took hold and there was a rise of indigenous movements in Latin America, strengthened by international human rights frameworks (Van Cott 2005, Yashar 2005). As I have argued, the productive strategy pursued in this period—the expansion of export commodities—effectively excludes peasant farmers. Manzanal (2008) argues, that what is called rural development in Argentina actually serves as a form of ‘relief’ for those marginalized by to the country’s ‘economic policy’ (7). Schwittay (2003) points out that Argentinian peasants historically received handouts or ‘favors’, while indigenous peoples now claim ‘rights’. Increasingly, peasants are demanding rights also.

In collaboration with other peasant and indigenous groups throughout the country the MNCI has proposed a peasant law (*Ley de Campesinos*), commonly referred to as Cristian Ferreyra’s law in commemoration of his death resisting eviction from his land to make way for soy plantations in 2011. This legislation would suspend all displacement of peasants in much the same way that law N° 26.160 does in relation to indigenous peoples, until a survey of all lands, not just indigenous territory, is completed. Like the declaration of peasants’ rights at the international level, this proposed law is an attempt at the national level to politicize and strengthen territorial rights beyond indigenous peoples to include peasants’ rights also.

A similar dynamic is playing out in the province of Cordoba in the face of land conflict. In September of 2013, a historic court case finally laid the groundwork for non-

indigenous peasants to assert collective territorial rights. The community of El Chacho has been engaged in a struggle over land for nine years with a businessman by the name of Martín Rodolfo Buttié who charged community members with trespassing on land he claimed to own (Justicia ratifica posesión de tierras campesinas en El Chacho 2013). Upon appeal, the Superior Court of Justice of the province of Cordoba found no proof that Buttié was the legitimate owner of the disputed territory and overturned the criminal charges against the eight families. Notably, the judge not only recognized the area in dispute as the ancestral land of the community, but also referred to their lands as ‘communal property’. This set a new legal precedent for non-indigenous peasant farmers to gain collective land rights, representing an important victory for MNCI and rural communities not officially recognized as indigenous (Rumi 2013).

On one hand, peasant movements are emulating the way that indigenous movements have reshaped politico-legal spaces. On the other hand, the MNCI claims the institutional focus that indigenous movements have received throughout the neoliberal period from political parties and the state (via INAI) is set up ‘to coopt the indigenous identity and quickly delineate its institutional and organizational space so that it conforms to the parameters of the system’ (cited in Aranda 2010b, 138). As Claeys suggests multicultural rights frameworks may also deepen the ‘institutionalization of particularity’ (Claeys 2013, 6) based on essentialized versions of historically fluid identity groups. Moreover, Hooker (2009) points out that throughout the region, rights and recognitions have not been granted in an equal way among ethnic subgroups. Afro-Latinos, for example, often get excluded from both peasant and indigenous rights regimes. Although notable afro-Latino peasant mobilizations exist (for example the Quilombo groups in Brazil) they are often not well incorporated into other peasant or indigenous organizations. Hooker argues, “it is easier for Indians to win collective rights than blacks under Latin America’s new multicultural citizenship regimes because such rights are awarded based on the perceived possession of a distinct cultural group identity, not a history of political exclusion or racial discrimination” (Hooker 2005, 298). In Colombia, the creation of peasant reserve zones (ZRCs) represents an attempt to claim autonomy based on a peasant identity in much the same way that indigenous peoples have made ethnically based claims to territory. However, the very identity groupings supported by Colombia’s multicultural reforms—peasants, indigenous peoples and afro-colombians—have also surfaced as the dividing lines between groups in conflict over land (See for example García 2009, 83 on the conflict in the Cauca region).

In many ways the broadening of social movement coalitions through a shared territorial framing of land issues may be key to bridging peasant and indigenous struggles in the face of capital expansion and land grabbing. This strategy of alliance building in Latin America, while in practice challenging and imperfect, can be interpreted as a move to counter the cooptation and fragmentation noted throughout this section and to build class-based mobilization rather than ethnically driven politics that ‘delimit, and *produce* cultural difference rather than suppressing it’ (Hale 2005, 13). However, as Rosset (2013) rightly points out, this is an ongoing conversation that has had and no doubt will continue to have some sticking points. Does creating parallel but separate rights frameworks strengthen these movements or divide and weaken them? Does merging peasant and

indigenous movements mask histories of tension and conflict over lands? And to what extent is an alliance able to overcome the current realities of competition over finite land resources among different rural communities?

Conclusion

In this paper I have set out to explore the dynamics of resistance to land grabbing in Argentina. I argue that while land grabbing helps understand the territorial logic behind recent patterns of capital expansion, a more robust understanding of the motives for resistance is captured by taking a longer view of patterns of dispossession, understanding them as part of a broader process of territorial restructuring. This framework helps to recast the agrarian question in the context of neoliberal reform in Latin America and its lasting impacts. In order to facilitate the expansion of capital and the export of primary commodities from the region, landscapes have been altered to move goods to international markets. Political spaces, institutions and regulation have shifted to promote investment in mining and expand transgenic soy. Land titling programs have facilitated privatization despite calls for collective titles, peasant and indigenous communities are being displaced, but new laws are in place to control social unrest. As the Argentine state struggles to sustain the tension between capital accumulation and social legitimacy in a post-neoliberal political climate, all of this is now understood as part of supplying the commodities boom. In this context resistance movements have also adopted a territorial logic, combining forces with indigenous movements in defense of territories, physically occupying lands to hold on to their ‘places’ and politicizing new legal ‘spaces’ and demanding territorial rights. These alliances are crucial to breaking out of identity categories that construct difference and de-emphasize class based collective action. Nonetheless, overlapping, and at times competing social movement histories require a careful reading of buried fault lines and potential tensions if such alliances are to be sustained.

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ⁱ See GRAIN's 2008 report, 'Seized: The 2008 land grab for food and financial security' and their ongoing news and analysis at www.farmlandgrab.org. Also: *Third World Quarterly*, 34(9), 'Global Land Grabs' edited by Marc Edelman, Carlos Oya & Saturnino M. Borras Jr.; November 2013; *Journal of Peasant Studies*, 40(3) -- Forum on Land Grabbing part 2 on methodologies, 2013; *Journal of Peasant Studies*, 40(5) -- Debate on methodologies between Scoones et. al. and Rulli et al., November 2013; *Journal of Peasant Studies*, special issue: *Green Grabbing* (April 2012; eds: James Fairhead, Melissa Leach & Ian Scoones); *Development & Change* special issue: *Land Grabbing and the State* (eds. J. Borras, R. Hall, I. Scoones, B. White & W. Wolford), March 2013; *Globalizations* journal: *Land Grabs and Global Governance*, March 2013 (eds. M. Margulis N. McKeon, S. Borras); *Water Alternatives* journal: *Water-Grabbing*, 2012 (eds. L. Mehta, Jan Gert,v G., J. Franco); *Canadian Journal of Development Studies*: *Land Grabs in Latin America and the Caribbean* (eds. J. Borras, C. Kay, S. Gomez and J. Wilkinson) December 2012; two international conferences on land-grabbing (2011, 2012). For working paper series, see: www.iss.nl/ldpi

ⁱⁱ Indeed this special issue is an exciting contribution to the gap.

ⁱⁱⁱ These are admittedly simplified uses of these concepts used here in this way for analytical clarity and to highlight the dynamics between class and identity politics. For a deeper discussion of the definition of a peasant and its complexities see Edelman 2013, For elaboration on indigenous ethnicity as related to class see Van Den Berghe 1979, and for the intersection of the two in Argentina see Wald 2014.

^{iv} Deals that 'were initiated after 2006, have not been cancelled, are led by foreign investors, are for the production of food crops, and involve large areas of land' See (GRAIN 2012a).

^v Translated by the author, as are all direct quotes of Spanish language text cited in this paper.

^{vi} According to the 2010 census, 7.8% of the population of Jujuy identifies as indigenous (Lipcovich 2012).

^{vii} In 2005-2006, it covered 3,970 has., and in 2009-2010 it reached 16,285 has (ProReNOA — INTA Salta, 2010, cited in Ministerio de Producción de Jujuy, 2011: 144).

^{viii} Javier Chocobar, Ely Sandra Juarez, Roberto Lopez, Mario Lopez, Mártires Lopez, Cristian Ferreyra, Miguel Galván, Celestina Jara, Lila Coyipé, Imer Flores and Juan Diaz Asijak