

The neoliberal governmentality of land-deals: A Foucauldian analysis of South-South development cooperation

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Dissertation submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree [Magister Artium](#) in [Political Studies](#) at the Potchefstroom Campus of the North-West University

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November 2015

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Acknowledgements

I would like to express my sincere gratitude and appreciation to my supervisors, Pieter Heydenrych and Gideon Van Riet. Pieter, thank you for always providing constructive feedback and inputs, encouraging me to pursue my ideas and pointing out when I have gone too far. Gideon, for not only developing my critical thoughts and introducing me to new theories, but also acting as a soundboard for my ideas and interpretations with regards to this study. Your influence has been profound.

To my family and friends – thank you for your support not only when the going got tough but also encouraging me to pursue my postgraduate studies. Thank you for listening to my ideas, providing input and engaging in critical debates during social gatherings. These have had an immense impact on my viewpoints and the analytic framework that informed this study.

However, it is necessary to point out one person who deserves an honorary degree for her role in this dissertation, my mother. Without you, my student career would not have been a reality. Thank you for all those years of giving up luxuries and working long hours to be able to provide me with the opportunity to study this far. Words cannot express my gratitude. This dissertation is ultimately dedicated to you.

ABSTRACT

In the past decade, Africa's agricultural land has been subjected to acquisition from a variety of actors across the globe. Their interest in arable soil forms part of a broader attempt to either promote domestic food and energy security or to obtain financial returns on speculative investments. Indeed, although attempts at trying to measure the land-grab phenomenon are highly problematic, research confirms the significant interest of foreign actors in African soil – especially for biofuel production.

This dissertation looks at how the land-grab phenomenon has been framed and presented to African governments as development opportunities. Informed by Michel Foucault's conceptualisation of power-knowledge, discourse and government, the study looks at the manner in which the discourse of development frames Africa as a continent that is in dire need of capital. Focusing on land acquisitions for the production of biofuels, this dissertation examines how such framings have triggered a range of practices in order to accommodate rising interest in farmland as well as the implications thereof for the way in which land and human existence is defined in discourses of development.

By making use of a discourse analysis methodology, I look at documents such as development policies, press releases, summit declarations and statements made by state actors to draw attention to the ways in which discourses maintain or shape power relations in society. My analysis pertains to the following countries: Mozambique, Ethiopia, Zambia, Sierra Leone, Tanzania and Mali. I also point out the undeniable resemblances between the current land-grab and historical colonial encounters. However, special attention is given to new actors that have emerged on the scene, especially the South-South multilateral forum, BRICS. I look at the diplomatic technologies employed by BRICS members to facilitate FDI in Africa under the auspices of a South-South cooperation that seeks to promote the development of the Global South by instilling virtues such as solidarity, equality and mutual benefit. By explaining how the idea of South-South cooperation is essentially produced by regimes of knowledge and truth by the West, claims that South-South cooperation is 'different' are rejected. Ultimately, I seek to draw attention to the ways in which discourses such as development, shape certain practices and power relations on a global and domestic level that enable those particular actors who seen as the most 'efficient' owners of land, to eventually benefit from Africa's land resources.

KEY TERMS: *biofuels, land access, governmentality, development, Foucault.*

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

ADLI:	Agriculture Development-Led Industrialisation
AISD:	Agricultural Investment Support Directorate
API:	Agence pour la promotion des investissements
ASA:	Africa-South America summit
ASO:	Anywaa Survival Organisation
BIT:	Bilateral Investment Treaty
BRICS:	Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa
CADF:	China-Africa Development Fund
CIPA:	Cameroon Investment Promotion Agency
CPI:	Centro de Promoção de Investimentos
DTI:	Department of Trade and Industry
DTTs:	Double Taxation Treaties
DUAT:	direito de uso e aproveitamento dos terras
ETB:	Ethiopian Birr
EXIM:	Export- Import Bank
FACIM:	Feira Internacional de Maputo
FAO:	Food and Agricultural Organisation
FDI:	Foreign Direct Investment
FIAN:	Food First Information and Action Network
FOCAC:	Forum of China-Africa Cooperation
GNP:	Gross National Product
G7:	Group of Seven

G77:	Group of Seventy-seven
IANs:	Indo-Asian News Service
IBSA:	India, Brazil, South Africa
IDA:	International Development Agency
IFAD:	International Fund for Agricultural Development
IFIs:	International Finance Institutions
IISD:	International Institute for Sustainable Development
IMF:	International Monetary Fund
ISI:	Import Substitution Industrialisation
GA:	General Assembly
GoM:	Government of Mozambique
GPNS:	Gambella's People's National Regional State
GTP:	Growth and Transformation Programme
MAI:	Massingir Agro-Industrial
MDGs:	Millennium Development Goals
MIGA:	Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency
MME:	Ministry of Mines and Energy
MoARD:	Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development
MoFED:	Ministry of Finance and Economic Development
NAASP:	New Africa-Asia Strategic Partnership
NDB:	New Development Bank
NGOs:	Non-Governmental Organisations
ODA:	Official Development Assistance

OECD:	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
PAPRA:	Action Plan for the Reduction of Absolute Poverty
PASDEP:	Plan for Accelerated and Sustained Development to end Poverty
PPD:	Partners in Population and Development
PRODECER:	Program of Brazilian and Japanese Cooperation for the Agricultural Development of the Brazilian Cerrado
PRS:	Political Risk Services
PSDRP:	Private Sector Development Reform Programme
PTIs:	Preferential Trade and Investment Agreements
RT:	Russia Today
SAPs:	Structural Adjustment Programmes
SIAL:	Sociedade de Investimentos Agroindustrias de limpop (<i>Limpopo Agro-industrial Investment Company</i>)
SLIEPA:	Sierra Leone Investment Export Promotion Agency
TIC:	Tanzania Investment Centre
TNC's:	Transnational Corporations
TSB:	Transvaal Suiker Beperk
WFP:	World Food Programme
UK:	United Kingdom
UN:	United Nations
UNICEF:	United Nations Children's Fund
UNOSSC:	United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation
UNPFII:	United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues
UNSC:	United Nations Security Council

US:	United States (of America)
WB:	World Bank
WDR:	World Development Report
WHO:	World Health Organisation
WTO:	World Trade Organisation
ZDA:	Zambia Development Agency

Chapter One

Un-underdeveloping Africa: Biofuels and South-South land acquisitions

In the past six decades the African continent, along with many other countries identified as 'underdeveloped', has witnessed a range of development models, constructed, implemented and evaluated. The outcomes of these are varied and controversial, and often produced the opposite of what was intended: namely further marginalisation, worsened poverty rates and untold exploitation and oppression (Li, 2007; Nustad, 2001:479; Escobar, 1995:3, DuBois, 1991; Alvares, 1992; Ferguson, 1990). All of these ills are rooted in colonial encounters, and also mirrored in the exploitative character associated with North-South development relations, often coupled with a host of 'conditionalities' that require structural reforms in order to qualify for 'assistance' (Balaam & Veseth, 2008:486; Collier & Gunning, 1992:2). Hence the emphasis on principles¹ such as equality, mutual gains and solidarity associated with forms of South-South cooperation, in order to recognise the historical injustices and oppression by the Global North. Essentially, South-South cooperation entails the exchange of knowledge, experience, technology and capital between members of the Global South (PPD, 2015; UNOSSC, 2014). By emphasising the aforementioned principles, the rhetoric of South-South cooperation represents an attempt to address the development challenges of the Global South by relying on alternate strategies than those of North-South development relations.

Recently, the South-South forum, BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa), emerged as a prominent actor in the field of Africa's development, as seen in myriad cooperation forums, programmes and 'Africa summits' hosted bilaterally by member countries or groups. Indeed, the proclaimed reason for South Africa's inclusion to BRICS in 2011 entailed Pretoria's supposed ability to fulfil a 'gateway' role for the rest of the group to gain access to the continent's myriad natural resources and minerals (Alden & Schoeman, 2013:112; Kahn, 2011:493; Kagwanja, 2006:160). In the past decade, this gateway position has become increasingly significant, on account of the convergence of global crises such as the 2008/09 food and financial crises, the energy crisis due to conditions of peak oil² as well as the lingering climate crisis, where BRICS countries seek farmland abroad to maintain and

¹ For the South-South Cooperation principles see <http://www.g77.org/doc/Declaration2009.htm> paragraph 70, as reaffirmed in the Ministerial Declaration of the 33rd Annual Meeting of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the Member States of the Group of 77 and China, 25 September 2009, New York, USA.

² The term 'peak oil' refers to a situation where the amount of oil available for extraction in a given year starts to decline as a result of geological limitations (Tverberg, 2007). Due to the increasing difficulty of extracting oil, extraction costs increase and the amount of oil being produced worldwide declines. As a result capital inputs such as transportation, production, and processing costs escalate, causing food prices to rise.

bolster their growing economies in order to ensure domestic food³ and energy security (Borras *et al.*, 2013; Ferrando, 2013; Margulis *et al.*, 2013; McMichael, 2013; Widengård, 2011:47; Borras & Franco, 2010:515). This culmination of crises has prompted attempts to address the said realities, where biofuels exemplify a solution to supposedly solve the intermingled crisis of energy security and climate change (Widengård, 2011).

Biofuels are processed fuels derived from plants, animals, fungi and bacteria (Vermeulen & Coluta, 2010:900). Commercially produced biofuels for transport are mostly manufactured from purpose-grown feedstock, which include carbohydrate-rich crops for bioethanol (e.g. maize, sugarcane) or oil-rich crops for biodiesel (e.g. rapeseed, palm oil, jatropha oil). The ability of biofuel in its liquid form to be ready for blending with fossil fuels and instantly useable in existing technologies in the global transport sector which comprises more than 90 per cent of its use, renders it an attractive alternative to fossil fuels as well as being environmentally friendly (Borras *et al.*, 2011:215). Biofuels are supposedly environmentally friendly as a result of the process of photosynthesis that is accelerated by crops used for biofuel production, and which reduce the amount of harmful gases released into the atmosphere. Additionally, by replacing a percentage of biofuels with fossil fuel used for transport, fossil fuel consumption decreases, leading not only to more energy security but also to less environmental damage (Holt-Giménez, 2007:2).

Faced with the alarming consequences of the energy and climate crisis, in 2008, the US and European governments implemented mandatory blending quotas of 10 per cent to be used in the transport sector (Grain, 2013; Young, 2011:132; Oxfam, 2008:6). Following in their footsteps, governments across the globe implemented mandatory blending targets for biofuel production or use, thereby placing a legal obligation on fuel companies to blend a certain volume or percentage of biofuels with the fossil fuels they sell (Oxfam, 2008:6). Yet, many countries implementing mandatory blending quotas do not have the necessary agricultural capacity to meet these targets, as biofuel crops require large-scale and intensive farmland to produce blending needs (Holt-Gimenez, 2007:1). For example, Europe would be required to convert 70 per cent of its farmland to biofuel crop cultivation. Likewise, the entire US corn and soy harvest would need to be processed as ethanol and bio-diesel (Borras *et al.*, 2010:577; Holt-Giménez, 2007:1). Realising these limitations, countries from the Global North and South – specifically the group of emerging powers like BRICS and other middle-income countries – increasingly acquire farmland abroad, especially in Africa.

³ I acknowledge that the concept food security is a loaded term (see for example Clay, 2002; Maxwell, 1996; Maxwell & Smith, 1992). However, since it is not the main focus of the study, I adopt the standard definition as formulated by the World Food Programme (WFP). According to the WFP (2015), 'people are food secure when they have all-time access to sufficient, safe, nutritious food to maintain a healthy and active life'. Food must be available in sufficient quantities and on a consistent basis; people must be able to regularly acquire adequate quantities of food and; the consumed food must have a positive nutritional impact on people.

The significant interest in Africa's farmland stems from the representation of land in Africa being vast, unused, idle or abundant, and that biofuel investments will make more 'efficient' use of these areas, as this promotes capital accumulation (Franco *et al.*, 2013; Borras *et al.*, 2011; Hall, 2011:394; McMichael, 2010:626; Coluta *et al.*, 2008). These framings are a result of the manner in which discourses of biofuel land deals are presented as 'development opportunities' by supposedly creating job opportunities, 'knowledge transfers' and 'spill-over effects' such as infrastructure, schools, or local public services such as hospitals and shops, etc. (Widengr  d, 2011:52; Coluta *et al.*, 2008). Burdened with the identity of being 'underdeveloped' the development opportunities associated with discourses of biofuel prompted authorities in Africa to 'scientifically' (by using a variety of technologies) identify and allocate available land for biofuel production, such as governmental departments dealing with land or 'experts' using maps. Prominent amongst these technologies is the use of satellite imagery to identify areas that are supposedly 'under-utilised' or 'marginal' and thus 'available' for biofuel production (Borras & Franco, 2010). In order to further promote these land deals, African governments typically increased their openness to foreign direct investment (FDI) and offered the identified areas of land to investors at giveaway prices (Prabhakar & Alemu, 2013:238; Anseeuw *et al.*, 2012:10; Matondi *et al.*, 2011; Daniel & Mittal, 2010; H  rsm  r, 2006:11).

However, in contrast to the optimism in which biofuels are promoted, in the past few years this supposedly 'renewable energy' source has been blamed for causing food insecurity, environmental degradation and land and water grabs, especially in the Global South (Clements & Fernandes, 2013; Borras *et al.*, 2011; De Schutter, 2011; Borras *et al.*, 2010; McMichael, 2010; Nhantamu & Salam  o, 2010; Vermeulen & Coluta, 2010; Coluta *et al.*, 2008; Oxfam, 2008; Holt-Gim  nez, 2007). This criticism intensified when biofuels were blamed for being a significant contributor to the dramatic rise in food commodity prices during the 2007/08 global food crisis, as food-crops were being produced for fuel instead of human consumption, in many cases causing the price of staple foods to increase (Akram-Lodhi, 2013: 121; Wideng  rd, 2011:51; Stephens, 2011; Hari, 2010). In 2008, the price of wheat, for example, increased by 130 per cent relative to 2007 levels. Similarly, the price of soya increased by 87 per cent, rice by 74 per cent and corn by 31 per cent, (FAO, as stated by Shah, 2008). Nevertheless, regardless of these alarming facts, governments have yet to halt the process of promoting not only domestic biofuel production, but also increasing openness for FDI to produce biofuel crops.

Problem statement

From the above discussion, it is clear that biofuels have scored significant political success as a result of the manner in which they are promoted as a package solution to energy security, climate change and rural development (Widengård, 2011:52). Hence, biofuel land deals are coupled with a 'win-win' narrative that promotes its attractiveness, especially in an Africa that 'drastically needs development'. As such, along with the growing critique against biofuel production are the growing attempts of governments to accommodate these rising concerns in order to promote FDI, which is assumed to contribute to the development of Africa (Matondi *et al.*, 2011:12; Widengård, 2011:51). A prominent strategy used to overcome the critique against biofuel land deals used by the BRICS members, is to frame their relations with Africa as manifestations of South-South cooperation, thus supposedly limiting the potential negative effects typically associated with development cooperation (Ferrando, 2013). **By examining the BRICS' attempts to promote biofuel land deals in Africa, the main purpose of this dissertation is to critically analyse the implications that the group's development cooperation involves for the rhetoric of South-South Cooperation be 'different' from North-South relations.**

North-South development interventions in the post-war period

In order to comprehend the rhetoric of South-South cooperation and its manifestations in international relations such as in the BRICS emphasising principles of equality, mutual gains and solidarity, it is necessary to provide a brief overview of development discourse and strategies in the post-war period⁴ that informed the development activities of the Global North in the South.

The aim of North-South development interventions in the post-war period, often used interchangeably with 'modernisation projects', is best explained by Ferguson (2005). According to Ferguson (2005) these projects represent a process in which the economic inequalities between North and South are believed to stem from the latter being at the start of the modernisation process. In time (with the North signifying the final stage of modernisation), by adopting a 'modern' form of life encompassing elements such as industrial economies, scientific technologies, liberal democratic politics, nuclear families and secular world views, the South will supposedly become 'modern' and their economic and societal troubles will be solved (Ferguson, 2005). These assumptions are rooted in Modernisation Theory, which emphasises the importance of science, technology and capital required for 'development' and claims that the cause for underdevelopment in the Global South is due to the absence of these fundamentals in their societal relations, also termed 'problems of underdevelopment' (Esteva,

⁴ In this dissertation, 'post-war' refers to the period following the Second World War, unless otherwise specified.

2010:1; Escobar, 2007:18; Ferguson, 2005; Brigg, 2000:10; Blaikie, 2000:1042; Pieterse, 1991:6; Escobar, 1995:36; Pieterse, 1991:6). By framing the societal organisation of the Global South as 'problematic', the opportunity for development 'experts' from the Global North to invade African, Latin American and the Asian countries was created in order to assist them with their problems of underdevelopment. The key objective of these activities was to transform the social organisation of societies in order to supposedly facilitate the creation of wealth – seen as the main requirement for the welfare of a society (Escobar, 2007:20).

For example, Walter Rostow's book *The Stages of Economic Growth: A Non-Communist Manifesto* (1960), which profoundly influenced development discourse after Truman's presidential inauguration in the US, suggests that governments of the Global South ought to mimic the successes of the already 'developed' world (Chari & Corbridge, 2008:127). Rostow proclaims that the governments of the Global South should mobilise high levels of savings in order to promote industrial development within a capitalist framework. According to Rostow, economic steps of modernisation can be identified within every society, which implies that every society is essentially destined to become 'developed'/'modern' (Chari & Corbridge, 2008:127; Mallick, 2005:7). The steps that ought to be taken are linear, and divided into five stages, the first being *The Traditional Society*, which is characterised by agrarian activities, subsistence farming and little productivity. Eventually, due to increasing economic investments, *The Traditional Society* evolves into a stage called *The Preconditions for Take-Off*. This stage is characterised by commercial agricultural activities and investments in infrastructure to promote economic growth through increasing productive labour. The third stage is known as the *Take-Off*, which is characterised by vigorous economic growth, extensive industrialisation, and advances in technology to promote production. Subsequently, *The Take-Off* evolves into *The Drive to Maturity*, where economic and technological progress dominates. Industrialisation intensifies through emerging neo-technical industries such as the electrical and chemical industries or mechanical engineering. In this stage, there is also a significant investment in social services such as hospitals, universities, schools, etc. Finally, societies reach *The Age of Mass Consumption*, where most individuals live in prosperity and are offered a wide range of products, goods and services to consume, which supposedly represents the stage of societies in the Global North, according to Rostow (Mallick, 2005:6-7).

Modernisation Theory suffered severe criticism by Dependency theorists who claim that the root of underdevelopment stems from these countries' external dependence on industrialised countries (Blaikie, 2000:1042; Escobar, 1997:19). Franko (2003:53) interprets this position as 'hooked': 'industrialised countries defined the rules; the periphery, or developing counties were pawns in the international pursuit of profit'. Dependency resulted from the fact that countries in the Global South exported primary commodities to industrialised countries that then

manufactured products out of these commodities and sold them back to poorer countries, accumulating large profits (Ferraro, 1996). Prebisch (1959) also referred to the latter phenomenon as ‘unequal terms of trade’, occurring when the value added to these manufactured products costs more than the primary products used to create those products (Franko, 2003:54; Ferraro, 1996). Development policies informed by Dependency Theory, known as Import Substitution Industrialisation (ISI), typically required an excessive amount of state interference in the economy. With the main goal of ‘detaching’ themselves from the core countries, ISI was an attempt to industrialise the economy by substituting domestically produced goods for manufactured items previously imported (Oatley, 2012:378). This detachment required large amounts of capital investment from the state in order to finance industrialisation projects, rendering many governments into extensive debt. Therefore, despite its short-lived success in for example Mexico and Argentina, the 1970s Global Debt Crisis gave way to the return of ‘the roll-back of the state’ and a reliance on the market to promote societal development, which became known as Neoliberalism (Brigg, 2000:10; Blaikie, 2000:1040).

In this dissertation, Neoliberalism is described as a theory of political economic practises which proclaims that the ultimate way to improve the wellbeing of individuals in society is by ‘liberating individual entrepreneurial freedom and skills with an institutional framework characterised by strong private property rights, free markets and free trade’ (Harvey, 2005:2)⁵. According to neoliberal thought, the state has the responsibility to create and preserve an institutional framework (such as the military, defence, police, and legal structures) appropriate to such practises (Harvey, 2005:2). More importantly, the state ought to secure (by force if need be) the proper functioning of markets, and where they do not exist, for example in public goods and services (land, water, education, health care, social security), they must be created (Harvey, 2005:2). Yet, the state should not go beyond these activities, for it is seen not only as an ‘evil’ actor (*monstre froid*), but also as inefficient, and that the private sector would do a better job with regard to the provision of goods and services (Foucault, 1979). Additionally, as discussed later in Chapter Two, this dissertation also draws attention to the way in which Neoliberalism is manifested in the ontological constitution of governing entities (which include a multiplicity of actors: not only the individual but also governmental departments, private corporations, TNCs etc.) in the broader sense (Joronen, 2013; Read, 2009:27). Nevertheless, when referring to the ways in which Neoliberalism informs the conceptualisation of development, the Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs) that were imposed on the Global South by international financial institutions such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) from the

⁵ For the purposes of this chapter, an analysis of the successes or failures of neoliberal policies as part of a political programme do not suffice, but space and time do not allow me to focus on every conceptual dimension of Neoliberalism (for example as a political philosophy, ideology or economic theory).

1980s onward, exemplifies development practices informed by neoliberal thought (Berthoud, 2010:74; Collier & Gunning, 1999; Escobar, 1995:140).

Rooted in the assumptions of Modernisation Theory, SAPs required the adjustment of political and economic policies in order to receive financial loans from the World Bank and the IMF, so that the development process could be reinforced (Young, 2012:91; Cornelissen, 2009:11). Conditions for 'receiving' financial assistance required the reform of political and economic policies so that they took on the neoliberal character of the Global North, i.e. the privatisation of public services, minimal government intervention, the liberalisation of markets and liberal democratic reform (Balaam & Veseth, 2008:486). Consequently, governments were required to cut expenditures on public services such as health and education, which typically resulted in worsened social indicators like malnutrition, child mortality, unemployment and poverty (Navarro 1998, 1999; Navarro & Shi, 2001; Collier & Gunning, 1992:2). For example, when Malawi agreed to a SAP in the early 1980s, it was expected of the government – in an attempt to privatise the fertiliser industry – to discontinue the provision of fertiliser subsidies (Harrigan, 2003:849). This policy reform had a severe impact on the livelihoods of Malawi's population, as it led to a significant increase in the price of maize, the country's staple food. The price hike was caused by high demand and declining production rates, as a large proportion of smallholders – the largest proportion of maize producers – were unable to buy fertilisers (Harrigan, 2003:489). Similar to most of its continental counterparts, agriculture constitutes the mainstay of Malawi's economy and is a significant source of food security, by providing a means of income for a large part of the population engaged in smallholder farming (Chilowa, as stated by Frankenberger *et al.*, 2003:8). Hence, the price increase in maize caused severe food insecurity in large parts of the country, not only because people had to buy less, but also because smallholders produced less and in the process saw their incomes shrink.

Although the content of the SAP differed at times, Malawi's experience is representative of the majority of SAPs on the African continent (Hanlon, 1997; Ferguson, 1994; Collier & Gunning, 1992; Due & Gladwin, 1991). Indeed, the damaging outcomes of SAPs rendered these programmes to be seen as the cause for Africa's 'lost decades', i.e. years that they could have 'developed' (Lapeyre, 2004; Easterly, 2001; Weisbrot *et al.*, 2001; Ridell, 1992; Due & Gladwin, 1991). They also reveal the significant role played by international finance institutions (IFIs) such as the World Bank and the IMF in the institutionalisation of development and the consolidation of the assumption that neoliberal reforms promote development. The extent of their influence relates to their ability to generate knowledge, influence ideas and shape policy (Feldman & Biggs, 2012:146). McNeill and St. Claire (2011:104) explain that the process of knowledge formation, embedded in policy recommendations, exists within sets of social relations among professionals in the World Bank as well as in relations between the Bank and

others outside of it. World Bank experts need audiences that legitimise their knowledge, where these audiences frequently comprise of other bureaucrats or actors that are dependent on funds promoted by the Bank to carry out activities that have been defined and promoted by the Bank's experts (McNeill & St. Clair, 2011:104). The circular dynamic between the Bank's expertise, its audience, and the legitimacy of that expertise preserves the 'art of paradigm maintenance' (Wade, as explained by McNeill & St.Clair, 2011:104). This paradigm is one that ascribes to neoliberal, free market ideas and excludes alternative or critical inputs.

Dating back to its formation in 1944, the World Bank fulfils the role of information intermediary among the different partners of the development process, where it dedicates a substantial amount of human and capital resources to collect and generalise data about the economies and poverty trends of the Global South (St.Clair, 2006a:78). Today, the Bank's research covers a host of topics including, amongst others, the environment, social policy, health reforms, education, rural and urban development as well as governance, empowerment and social capital (St.Clair, 2006a:79; Mawdsley & Rigg, 2002:96). Since most of these themes relate to economic problems identified in 'mainstream' development discourse, the quantitative nature of the research reports published by the World Bank creates the assumption that the Bank possesses the best experts in the fields of development, used by most other UN institutions and donors (St.Clair, 2006b:58). Hence, the World Bank's influence on the development policy generated in-house by the Bank or it's appointed to actors, such as policy advisors or consultants, renders it to be not only a major global governance actor but also a global knowledge actor (McNeill & St. Clair, 2011:105; St. Clair, 2006a:79; Goldman, 2005:xviii; Sarfaty, 2004:1972). As claimed by St. Clair (2006a:79), the Bank 'is a transnational expertised state-like institution that sets the scene for both global politics and global knowledge'.

In this dissertation, I examine how this paradigm is maintained by South-South cooperation, by examining the neoliberal rationality underpinning the assumptions that biofuel land deals will 'bring development to Africa', and the attempts by BRICS countries to promote them. In order to look at how biofuel land deals embody the 'art of paradigm maintenance', it is necessary to examine historical, political and economic dimensions that regulate them. In the following section, I look at the representation of land in Africa and attempt to explain the manner in which land deals embody neoliberal discourses of development.

Representations of land in Africa: what's new about land grabbing?

As mentioned previously, in the past decade Africa's farmland, along with many other contexts in the Global South, has been subjected to an enormous amount of interest, driven by a range of crises that motivate actors to acquire land abroad – a phenomenon also sometimes referred

to as 'land grabbing'. For the purposes of this dissertation, land grab refers to the acquisition of farm land⁶:

[...] through buying, leasing or otherwise accessing productively used or potentially arable farmland by corporate investors to produce food and non-food crops, in order either to boost supply for domestic and/or world markets or obtain a favourable financial return on an investment (Akram-Lodhi, 2013:125).

As such, the terms 'land grab', 'land deals' and 'land acquisitions' referring to the concession of land to investors for commercial purposes are used interchangeably⁷ in this study. The scale of the 'recent' land grab phenomenon can be seen in the amount of hectares of farmland acquired in the past decade. For example, Oxfam (2011:5) indicates that since 2001 and especially since 2008, as many as 227 million hectares of large-scale land has been sold, leased, licensed or is under negotiation. This surface compares to an area approximately the size of North-West Europe, where almost half of the deals concern land in Africa and nearly two-thirds of these are for the production of biofuel. It should be noted however, that due to the nature of land deals frequently taking place secretly and coupled with misinformation, it is difficult to measure the extent of this phenomenon, and findings may be inaccurate (Coluta *et al.*, 2014; Franco *et al.*, 2013:12; Anseeuw *et al.*, 2012). Land deals indicated on databases such as the Land Matrix are divided into 'reported' and 'cross-referenced' deals. The latter refers to deals that are referenced from multiple sources, which involves an assessment of the reliability of the source of information, triangulation with other information sources as well as confirming with in-country partners in the network of the Land Matrix partners. Reported deals on the other hand, may include deals that are announced which reflect the intention of transaction, but where no actual land allocation has taken place. Hence, due to aspects such as a lack of transparency, the unwillingness of actors to provide information and their biases towards land deals, figures indicating land acquisitions should be taken as estimates. Indeed, some may be overestimated, while others underestimated. In addition, due to the land-grabbing phenomenon being quite recent, it is difficult to determine the scope of influence of land transactions (Coluta *et al.*, 2014; Anseeuw *et al.*, 2012:18; Borras & Franco, 2010:3).

Apart from the 'biofuel bonanza' driving the surge in land interest, other factors include food security as previously mentioned, as well as the speculation in agricultural commodities for

⁶ In his article *Contextualising land grabbing contemporary land deals, the global subsistence crisis and the world food system*, Akram-Lodhi (2013:125) specifies his definition of land grab to 'large-scale acquisitions'- i.e. more than 200 hectares. However, I choose not to focus on the size of land deals, not only because of running the risk of excluding the many land deals that take place under 200 hectares, but also as I am more interested in the discourses that drive the land grab phenomenon.

⁷ I recognise the different connotations coupled with each term. For example, 'land grab' is often criticised for the manner in which it is used to describe land acquisitions that took place illegally when, in fact a large proportion of deals are actually legally facilitated (Franco *et al.*, 2013:8; Anseeuw *et al.*, 2012:11). At the same time, a 'land deal' denotes meanings of democratically negotiated land concessions, when the reality is typically the opposite (Vermeulen & Coluta, 2010; Borras *et al.*, 2010). Nevertheless, such specificities are not concerned here, and simply refer to acquisition of land through various methods, for commercial purposes.

financial returns (Stephens, 2011:3; Ghosh, 2011:76; Hari, 2010; Grain, 2008:2). The latter is particularly related to the de-regulation of agricultural commodities in the late 1990s, which allowed for the rapid development of financial instruments to be tied to agricultural commodities, rendering agro-commodity financial instruments such as futures contracts⁸ to become a tool of speculative investment strategies. Consequently, due to the unattractiveness of other markets, such as the collapsed house market as illustrated by the Global Financial Crisis of 2007/08, investment houses that manage workers' pensions, private equity funds looking for a fast turnover or grain traders seeking new strategies for growth are turning to land as a new source of profit (Hari, 2010; Coluta *et al.*, 2009:5; Grain, 2008:2).

According to McMichael, the surge in land acquisitions exemplifies what is known as 'commodity fetishism', the commodification of food and fuel, which has contributed to reframe agricultural land as a desirable target for foreign investment (Stephens, 2011:6). Consequently, land gets transformed into zones of food and fuel production for foreign markets, by foreign companies and governments (Akram-Lodhi, 2013:125; Franco *et al.*, 2013; Borras *et al.*, 2011:576; Hall, 2011:194; Daniel & Mittal 2010). The underlying narrative concerning the acquisition of farmland is the assumption of a global reserve in agricultural land that is marginal and under-utilised. It is assumed that, if land deals are properly regulated, they could facilitate the transfer of land rights from less to more efficient producers – an assumption that illustrates the market-based logic underlying land and agricultural reforms over the past two decades (Hall, 2011:194). By transforming land into zones of food and biofuel production for export, local societies would supposedly benefit from increasing food security as well as the generation of employment and the improved livelihoods of the local people, i.e. they will move further along the road to becoming 'developed' (Borras *et al.*, 2011:216).

However, according to Franco *et al.* (2013:3), the framing of land deals as 'development opportunities' obscures more than it illuminates, especially when it is used by actors aiming to cast the phenomenon as an opportunity to extend capitalist agro-industry in the name of pro-poor and ecologically 'sustainable economic development'. In a series of cases, when the local

⁸ A futures contract entails a contractual agreement to buy or sell a particular commodity at a predetermined price in the future (Investopia, 2014; Black *et al.*, 2012:168). For example, a farmer could enter into a futures contract to sell his/her crop at the end of a cultivation season, at a price he/ she set at the start. If for example, the crop is worth more at the end of the season, then the other participant gains. If the crop is worth less, the farmer still sells his/her commodity at the predetermined price (Black *et al.*, 2012:186). Prior to 2000, these instruments served as a hedging function, used by actors with a direct interest, such as farmers and traders, as a means to protect themselves against the price and production volatility inherent in a sector influenced by the unpredictability of the weather or other plant infestations (Akram-Lodhi, 2013:123). However, large American organisations saw the potential profit to be accumulated through future contracts and successfully lobbied against the regulation thereof. Consequently, it became possible to use these contracts as 'derivatives' that could be bought and sold among traders who had no relation to agriculture. For example, a farmer agrees to sell his/her crop in advance to a trader for \$20, 000. After the US implemented the Commodity Futures Modernization Act (2000), this contract could then be sold to speculators, who could treat the contract as a source of potential wealth and sell it on for double the price (\$40, 000), to another trader. This process of buying and selling can continue until it bears no relationship to the farmer at all (Hari, 2010).

community's⁹ labour is not required, they get evicted from their land, often without compensation. Other times, when peoples' land and labour are needed and they do get incorporated into new emerging enterprises, they are not privy to wage negotiations and often receive minimum remuneration (Franco *et al.*, 2013:15; Borras *et al.*, 2011; Vermeulen & Coluta, 2010). This is because, in the process of land acquisitions, large numbers of people are vulnerable to dispossession as a result of changes in land use (Vermeulen & Coluta, 2010:900). Despite the existence of land laws in most countries to secure the property rights of the local inhabitants in the area, land deals nevertheless continue to threaten the livelihoods of farming households and the prospects for the continent's 80 million smallholding farms (Hall, 2011:194). Therefore, a variety of authors claim that it is necessary to look at the phenomenon through a political economy lens, rendering land-grabbing to essentially be 'control-grabbing' (Borras & Franco, 2013; Franco *et al.*, 2013:3; McCarthy *et al.*, 2012; White *et al.*, 2012). Such a perspective focuses on the centrality of agendas coupled with land acquisitions, which McCarthy *et al.*, (2012:523) explain as 'projects which attempt to fix or consolidate forms of access to land based wealth'.

Framing the land-grab phenomenon as a form of land control suggests a continuity of historical North-South encounters, such as the European colonial enclosures, especially in Africa, Madagascar and Indochina during the nineteenth century (Rist, 2014:42; White *et al.*, 2012:623; Borras & Franco, 2012:35; Peluso & Lund, 2011:672). Enclosures and privatisations as mechanisms for gaining control of a territory function through the establishment of physical or institutional fences around certain resources to secure access for the actors in control (Rose, as stated by Peluso & Lund, 2011: 672). Historically, enclosures mean the dispossession or exclusion of certain users and the inclusion of other forms of rights of use and control, typically for the accumulation of capital (Peluso & Lund, 2011:672; Makki & Geisler, 2011:3). Enclosures therefore entail a process of 'accumulation by dispossession', as noted by Harvey, and have embodied capitalism since the 15th century (Makki & Geisler, 2011:3).

In Africa's history of colonisation, land control was obtained by the colonial powers through forms of domination, violence and legally rendering land 'empty' by applying the principle of '*terra nullius*' (UNPFII, 2012; Makki & Geisler, 2011; Palmer, 2010). The *terra nullius* principle was used by colonial authorities to justify the non-recognition of indigenous peoples' land uses. This principle was combined with a twin discriminatory concept that only cultivation of land by

⁹ In this dissertation, 'local community' refers to the group of people living in an area targeted by foreign investors. Despite being an elusive concept (MacQueen *et al.*, 2001; Kepe, 1998), 'local community' in this dissertation can be defined as a group of people who historically share a particular geographical location. By solely focusing on 'local community' as a spatial unit, I do not analyse the common ties and social interaction between members. However, such a narrow focus by no means implies that I am ignorant of alternative dimensions associated with the use of 'local community' such as economic ties, kinship, beliefs and culture. Rather, due to time and space constraints and the fact that 'local community' does not form the core of my study, the use thereof is solely to refer to a group of people who share a certain location.

agricultural production could be considered effective use of land, or '*mise en valeur*'. Broadly described, the concept *mise en valeur* entails the justification of colonial powers' land access, as it will lead to the 'civilisation' of the subaltern (Hodge, 2014). Today, despite being free from direct colonial rule, Africa's soil is again being rendered 'empty', 'marginal' or 'available', in order to make way for 'productive' uses that will supposedly contribute to the continent's development/modernisation, mirroring the mentality that informed the colonial practises from the 15th century (Alden-Wily, 2012). As such, Liz Alden-Wily (2012) claims that it is necessary to see the current trend of land acquisitions in Africa in its historical context, and less as a new phenomenon, but rather as a surge in the continuing capture of ordinary people's rights and assets by capital-led and class-creating social transformation.

Yet, despite having historical precedents, the current surge of land grabs is driven by new mechanisms and justifications for gaining access to land, and occur on a different scale and pace within a different political-economic context (Margulis *et al.*, 2013:3; Peluso & Lund, 2011:672). For example, Sassen (2013:27) explains how, in the current era, land acquisitions occur in a world organised into – at least formally – sovereign nation states, indicating the substantive assemblage of elements that co-exist and enable these large-scale acquisitions of land in a foreign country. Indeed, in postcolonial societies the state owns most of the land, which renders them far-reaching control over a country's soil. By implication, in contrast to land acquisitions during colonialism, Künnemann and Suárez (2013:129) explain that states now play a major role in facilitating large-scale land acquisitions by changing national legislation in ways that encourage deepened privatisation and commodification of natural resources, dismantle social and environmental regulations of economic activities, and by promoting investment and development policies that foster corporate control over agriculture, mining and energy. This, according to Sassen (2013) signals the transformation of the state that is evermore inserting itself into transnational processes that operate according to other logics.

In this dissertation, I look at how land access is shaped by the political economic context of Neoliberalism¹⁰ that not only dominates contemporary discourses of governing land use but also constitutes the ontology of state and non-state actors seeking to buy land in a foreign country (Joronen, 2013; Peluso & Lund, 2011:672). The neoliberal assumptions underpinning the land-grab phenomenon relate to the unconditional belief in the free market as the ultimate mechanism to organise the exchange of goods and services in society (Thorsen & Lie, 2006).

¹⁰ International governmental organisations such as the World Bank and IMF have played a significant role in the internationalisation of neoliberal discourse, as most countries in the Global South were indebted to these organisations due to the 1970s Debt Crisis. As a condition for a financial loan, recipient countries had to reform their economic and political policies, so that they took on the character of the neoliberal, free market paradigm. In addition, the IMF and WB assumed responsibility for the recipient countries' development policy, which prescribed two main solutions: that governments should retreat from development policy and that state revenues should be earned from the liberalisation of economic policy and associated increases in export earnings (Young, 2012:188).

This specifically means that there should be no governmental interference concerning the provision of public goods and services, as unfettered markets, free trade and private property rights lead to a richer and more tolerant world (Wittmeyer, 2012:20; Berthoud, 2010:74). Although farmland cannot be traded *per se*, the land rights stipulating the uses thereof can be sold. Consequently, since the 1980s, the uses and systems of farmland in countries in the global South increasingly became subjected to the interests of foreign investors (De Schutter, 2011; McMichael, 2010; Grain, 2008). Here, land use can be defined as the ability of certain actors to obtain benefits from land-based activities, arrangements and inputs people undertake in a certain land cover (FAO, 1999). The *ability* to use land implies the necessity to enjoy access to land, which is not only granted by land rights, but also shaped by social and power relations, including control over markets, capital and technology, authority and social identity (Coluta *et al.*, 2008a:8; Coluta, 2008c; Ribot & Peluso, 2003). Justified by economic rationalities that praise the ability of the market to identify the most 'efficient' owners of land, determined by economic criteria, I aim to show how neoliberal discourses of development produce power relations that shape land access. I do this by focusing on land deals that exemplify cases of FDI.

According to the IMF (2001:23), FDI can be defined as 'international investment by an entity in one economy in an enterprise resident in another economy that is made with the objective of obtaining a lasting interest'. 'Enterprise' refers to an 'institutional unit engaged in production', where the 'host' governments – in their capacity to produce goods and services – represent the enterprises (as legal owners of the land) in the biofuel land deals (OECD, 2013). The 'lasting interest', as mentioned earlier, 'implies the existence of a long-term relationship between the direct investor and the enterprise and a significant degree of influence on the management of the enterprise' (IMF, 2001:23). It should furthermore be noted that my analysis does not solely concern foreign investments made by state actors, but largely those by private investors. My interest in BRICS relates to the manner in which they (individually or as a group) employ certain strategies to facilitate land deals in order to promote FDI as a South-South cooperation strategy to enhance the development of the Global South. In other words, I look at the role they play in shaping or maintaining power relations across the Global South that enables certain actors to benefit from natural resources.

FDI as a development strategy is justified by the rationality that it triggers certain 'spill-overs' in the host country that would supposedly spur modernisations such as technology, human capital formations, international trade integration, a more competitive business environment and enhanced enterprise development (Matondi *et al.*, 2011:12-13; Hermes & Lensink, 2003; OECD, 2002:5; Loungani & Razin, 2001). These 'spill-overs' supposedly contribute to higher economic growth – seen as the 'most potent tool for alleviating poverty in developing countries'

(OECD, 2002:5). Indeed, when analysing the discourse of development, it is important to note the emphasis placed on economic growth¹¹ as a requirement for development (Esteva, 2010:2; Brigg, 2000:86). This emphasis is based on the image of Third World inhabitants being 'poor'; suggesting that if the Third World were to adopt the economic activities of the North, their development problems would be solved (Esteva, 2010:2; Rahnema, 2010:178; Escobar, 1995:52).

Though a contested concept (see Rahnema, 2010:173; Townsend, 1987; Sen 1983), Rahnema (2010:174) explains that this construction of 'poor' essentially refers to individual's lack of disposable income, measured by the country's Gross National Product (GNP) per capita¹². According to the World Bank (2004), countries with an average annual per capita income of less than US\$1 000 are considered poor, and categorised as 'underdeveloped'. By measuring a country's stage of economic growth – allegedly the final remedy for alleviating poverty – the GNP per capita indicator systematically divides the world into arenas inhabited by 'civilised' and 'developed' societies and 'underdeveloped', 'poor' and 'uncivilised' societies (Rahnema, 2010:178; Zanotti, 2005:481; Brigg, 2000:85-86). In the latter societies, as Rostow's five stages of economic growth suggest, 'traditional' forms of social organisation, for example subsistence farmers, pastoralists, centralised agrarian empires or hunter-gatherers are seen as the culprit preventing economic growth, and simultaneously, development (Brigg, 2000:83; Escobar, 1995:53; Alvares, 1992). For example, in a report compiled by the United Nations' Department of Social and Economic Affairs (1951), the organisation notes:

There is a sense in which rapid economic progress is impossible without adjustments. Ancient philosophies have to be scrapped; old social institutions have to disintegrate; bonds of caste, creed and race have to burst; and large numbers of persons who cannot keep up with progress have to have their expectations of a comfortable life frustrated. Very few communities are willing to pay the full price of economic progress (as quoted by Escobar, 1995:3).

By dividing the world into 'developed' or 'underdeveloped' regions based on measurements of economic growth, the responsibility of 'developed' or 'richer' countries to help poor countries raise their living standards, is expressed (Rahnema, 2010:178). Since development connotes the means to transform a society into 'ways thought desirable' through economic growth, the presence of the neoliberal regimes of truth in the post-war era (especially from the 1970s

¹¹ Economic growth is defined by the World Bank (2004) as a quantitative change or expansion in a country's economy, measured by the gross domestic product (GDP) or gross national product (GNP) during one year.

¹² The World Bank (2001) defines GNP per capita as 'the dollar value of a country's final output of goods and services in a year, divided by its population. It reflects the average income of a country's citizens'.

onward) has stipulated (and still does) the manner in which economic growth ought to be obtained (Ove, 2013:318; Slater, 1995:367)¹³.

Land deals are justified by the rationality that they will 'bring development to Africa' (Matondi *et al.*, 2011:13; Widengård, 2011:52; Coluta *et al.*, 2009) – hence governments' attempts to create a more 'investor friendly environment'. Thus, following Makki and Geisler (2011:2), I suggest that biofuel land deals symbolise the appreciation of land in an era of neoliberal accumulation and the continuous reordering of social nature that constitutes the ontology of development. In order to comprehend the ways in which development acts as a driver of the current surge in land acquisitions, it is necessary to look at the *very idea of development* (Escobar, 2007:19). Also termed 'post-development' or a 'post-structural critique of development', such a perspective sees development as a discourse that is representative of the time in which it was written, and more importantly, the viewpoint of the actors producing its meanings (Edkins, 2007:94). Although the idea of development is rooted in the historical processes of capitalism and modernity, I focus on the development paradigm that emerged after the Second World War, as it was in this period that development 'experts' from the Global North, started to arrive massively in Asia, Africa and Latin America, giving reality to the construct of a 'underdeveloped society', in need of 'development' (Escobar, 2007:21). The next section provides a brief description of the main theoretical assumptions of a post-structural analysis as employed in this dissertation, along with its relevance for the current study.

A post-structural critique of development

Despite the divergent assumptions of development theories, they nevertheless share similar characteristics that form the core of developmentalism. The first is the essentialist assumption that the inhabitants of the Global South are a homogenous entity. Secondly, these development theories are based on the unconditional belief in the concept of progress: a kind of evolutionary thinking directed at the Third World that is both unilinear and teleological¹⁴ (Esteva, 2010; Escobar 2007; Schuurman, 2000:8; Escobar, 1995; Manzo, 1991). Based on the essentialist manner in which these theories aim to define the process and the circumstances for development to occur, Post-development criticises not only the adverse effects of development interventions on societies and individuals in the Global South, but is also critical of it as a discourse (Sachs, 2010; Escobar, 2007:19; Nustad, 2001; Blaikie, 2000; Brigg, 2000, 2002; Schuurman, 2000). This critique is influenced by Michel Foucault (1971:51),

¹³ Although the emphasis placed on economic growth as the sole requirement for development evolved to include aspects such as 'social'; 'cultural'; or 'environmental' development, economic growth – measured by GNP per capita – remained the chosen yardstick to measure development (Esteva, 2010:14; Rist, 2007:487; Escobar, 2007:24; Brigg, 2000:85). The underlying narrative concerning this choice of measurement is that, if 'man is deprived of access for the satisfaction of his material needs', the development of society cannot occur.

¹⁴ In this sentence, teleology refers to the manner in which the North saw it as their duty to 'help' the Global South 'transform' their societies. In other words, their support of the assumption that there is a definite goal for every person or group of persons to transform, that the world is in a constant state of 'backwardness' (Westra, 2010).

who describes discourse as being 'at once controlled, selected, organised and redistributed by a certain number of procedures'. A central attribute of these procedures is that they entail, at some point or another, the exclusion of knowledge, or as Foucault dubs them, 'subjected knowledges' (Foucault as stated by McHoul and Grace, 1993:16). Subjected knowledges refer to the 'blocs of historical knowledge which were present but disguised...a whole set of knowledges that have been disqualified as inadequate to their task or insufficiently elaborated' (Foucault, 1980:81-82). By implication they are always one-sided, a product of power relations producing the 'truth' about a certain object. Therefore, the production of discourse – seen as a collection of knowledge – represents the embodiment of power, as it is subjected to the ability of certain actors to produce knowledge. Though discussed at length in the following chapter, in order to comprehend the manner in which knowledge shapes land access, it is first necessary to elaborate on Foucault's conceptualisation of power.

Contrary to modernist perceptions of power, Foucault suggests that power should not be thought of as a possession, owned by an entity and exercised over another, for example a master and his slave. Power in the Foucauldian sense is not to be 'had' at all. In his essay *The Subject and Power* (Foucault, 1982:790), he explains that: 'the exercise of power is not simply a relationship between partners, individual or collective; it is a way in which certain actions modify others...power exists only when it is put into action'. Power modifies the actions of others by shaping their subjectivities, which influences their interests, perceptions, values and behaviour. The central mechanism enabling these operations of power is knowledge. Indeed, Foucault (1977a:27) claims that the two cannot be separated, and unites the two concepts as power-knowledge. He claims that 'power and knowledge directly imply one another' and that there is no power relation without the constitution of a field of knowledge (discourses) and conversely, no knowledge that does not presuppose and constitute power relations (Foucault, 1977a:27). For example, knowledge about development produces the ability for investors to enjoy access to Africa's soil, as they are represented in economic discourses as the most 'efficient' owners of land and resemble the ability of the market to allocate the best opportunity for capital accumulation (Escobar, 2007:20-21; Slater, 1995:369; DuBois, 1991:6; Pieterse, 1991:5).

Power, in this sense, is always considered to be in a discursive relation, acting in an autonomous way and producing subjects just as much as subjects reproduce it (McHoul & Grace, 1993:12; Foucault, 1982). Instead of focusing on the manner in which power is located in the hands of an individual, sovereign law etc., power in a Foucauldian sense is 'everywhere, not because it embraces everything, but because it comes from everywhere' (Foucault, 1978a:93). Thus, power has an omnipresent character that circulates through a net-like organisation where individuals function as the vehicles of power, producing new subjects and

simultaneously, new power relations (Foucault, 1980:98). Furthermore, parallel to the relationship between power and knowledge, is also the complex reciprocity between power and 'truth'. In producing knowledge, power produces 'truth' (DuBois, 1991:7; Foucault, 1975:134). Foucault's explanation of 'truth' denotes an abstract 'system of ordered procedures for the production, regulation, distribution, circulation and operation of statements' (DuBois, 1991:7; Foucault, 1975:134). These 'truths' are linked in circular relation with systems of power that produce and sustain it, i.e. the entities producing knowledge about a certain object regarded as 'truth' (Foucault, 1975:134). Flowing from this is a hierarchy of knowledge, where the discourse of actors producing knowledge dominates (DuBois, 1991:7). For example, consider the relationship between the multinational corporation and the Mozambican farmer being dispossessed of his/her land in order to allow the production of biofuel to commence. According to neoliberal 'truths' circulating in development discourse, this investment would supposedly benefit the Mozambican farmer as well, as she/he would reap financial benefits from the investor, and in the process secure the wellbeing of her/his family. In this case, it is clear the multinational corporation's truth, being validated by 'scientific' methods, takes precedence over the farmer's land uses and social relations in the area targeted for investment.

According to DuBois, (1991:7), this 'devaluation of local knowledge' and 'specific experiences' is modernist development knowledge's most fatal flaw, rendering numerous development interventions to fail. As suggested previously, 'specific experiences' typically reflects the historical trajectories in terms of capital accumulation and political organisation of the Global North, specifically in the US. Indeed, President Truman's inauguration speech in January 1949 is frequently regarded as the 'initiation' of the development age (Esteva, 2010:1; Escobar, 1995), as he declared it the Global North's 'duty' to 'embark on a bold new program for making the benefits of [their] scientific advances and industrial progress available for the improvement and growth of underdeveloped areas'. From that day, according to Esteva (2010:2), a billion people became 'underdeveloped', implying that:

In a real sense, from that time on, they ceased being what they were, in all their diversity, and were transmogrified into an inverted mirror of others' reality: a mirror that belittles them and sends them off to the end of the queue, a mirror that defines their identity, which is really that of a heterogeneous and diverse majority, simply in the terms of a homogenising narrow minority.

This dissertation is an analysis of the manner in which South-South cooperation represents an attempt to transform this 'underdeveloped' identity attached to the Global South in development discourse. Through a Foucauldian perspective of power and knowledge, I examine the manner in which development discourse circulates in such a way that it shapes the subjectivities, interests and perceptions of actors in the Global South. By focusing on the diplomatic behaviour of BRICS, I consider not only how they shape land access in Africa, but also the rationalities

informing their foreign policy behaviour. Such an analysis of international relations is called governmentality – or the mentality of government to ‘conduct the conduct’ of others – as I will explain in the following section and at length in Chapter Two.

Sovereign power, disciplinary power, biopower and governmental power

Foucault identified three historical forms of power: sovereign power, disciplinary power and governmental power (Joseph, 2010:226; Death, 2008:30; Foucault, 1978b:218-218). The first type of power – sovereign power – is associated in law as the highest executive power. By adopting this form of power, according to Foucault (1980:120), ‘one identifies power with a law that says no – power is taken, above all, as carrying the force of prohibition’. Sovereign power operates by prohibiting the actions of individuals, as manifested in legislation. Though not discarding sovereign power, Foucault claims that sovereign power is merely one means among many to control individuals and no longer the primary expression of power. He explains that at the turn of the seventeenth century, new forms of power emerged which aimed to ‘foster life’ rather than take it (Death, 2008:30). Foucault refers to this type of power as disciplinary power, which focused on training or ‘disciplining’ the actions of the individual body through means such as punishment, reward and surveillance techniques (Death, 2008:30; Brigg, 2000:37; DuBois, 1991:9; Foucault, 1978a:136). Foucault then extended his conception of disciplinary power as a mechanism of power to biopower as control over the human body to that of the population, aimed to increase productivity, through ‘regulatory controls’ (Brigg, 2000:44; DuBois, 1991:8; Foucault, 1979:6; Foucault, 1977a:220;). The latter is also referred to as the ‘biopolitics of the population’, which became the focus of government towards the end of the Middle Ages, coinciding the onset of capitalism. The ‘biopolitics of the population’ is directed towards the vitality of a country’s inhabitants for example, in propagation: births and mortality; levels of health; life expectancy and longevity, and all the conditions that can cause these to vary (Brigg, 2000:42; DuBois, 1991:9; Foucault, 1978a:139).

However, during the Middle Ages, the right of the state to control the life of individuals became resisted by populations, a phenomenon Foucault refers to as ‘the problem of government’ (Death, 2008:31; Foucault, 1982:777). The ‘problem of government’ alludes to the question of how the state ought to legitimise its authority by explaining the manner in which a population should be ruled ‘how strictly, by whom, to what end, by what methods’ (Brigg, 2000:49; Foucault, 1982:78; Foucault, 1979:6; Foucault, 1978b:202). Based on this ‘problem of government’ Foucault developed a new theory to explain how power is exercised, referred to as governmental power or governmentality, meaning the rationality upon which governmental power is exercised (Joseph, 2010:223; Death, 2008:30; Brigg, 2000:49; Foucault, 1978b:210). Here, rationality means the ways of reasoning, or thinking about the problem of how to secure

the wealth, health and security of the population, also known as the 'problem of government' (Foucault, 1978b:202).

In his work on governmentality, Foucault was specifically interested in the political rationalities used to address the 'problem of government'. For example, in the *Birth of Biopolitics* (1979:319), Foucault looked at the liberal rationality informing the activities of government. As noted previously in the discussion on Neoliberalism, a distinct form of liberalism, the wealth of the population ought to be secured through minimalist state intervention in the economy by relying on the market's invisible hand to increase capital accumulation. However, in the aftermath of the Second World War, Foucault (1979:296) explains that the rationality of governing the economy according to market principles extended to the governing of civil society, giving way to a new rationality of government, namely Neoliberalism. As seen in the discussion of SAPs, the neoliberal rationality of government entails not only minimalist state intervention in the economy, but also the provision of public services such as education, health, agricultural inputs, and infrastructure, to name a few (Haman, 2009; Harvey, 2005:2; Foucault, 1979:296). Underpinning this rationality is the assumption that the state is not only an 'evil' actor (*monstre froid*), but also inefficient and that the private sector – governed by market principles – would do a better job with regard to the provision of public goods and services. Yet, it is important to point out that governmental power does not replace biopower or sovereign power (Death, 2008:31). Rather, they co-exist in a triangle, with the population as its central mechanism (Foucault, 1978b:219). For example, in the case of biofuel land deals, legislation constructed in favour of private investors represents sovereign power, while the objective of rural development can be seen as an attempt to 'foster life'. However, these manifestations of sovereign and disciplinary power are products of a certain rationality of governments attempting to secure the wealth of the population by structuring possible fields of action.

In this dissertation, I identify the neoliberal rationality of government by looking at the ways in which governing takes place through development practice. More specifically, I discuss how this form of governing justifies biofuel land deals and show the manner in which development discourse has opened up space to govern the Global South, i.e. conducting the conduct of others by structuring possible fields of action. By doing this, one could argue that South-South cooperation can be seen as power relationships where the actions of actors in cooperation are a means toward creating 'the right disposition of things, arranged so as to lead to convenient ends.' Compared to conventional analyses in International Relations, such a perspective looks at how hierarchical global power relations are constructed through discourses that enable certain actors to benefit from cooperation, and others not. Therefore, instead of focusing on *why* states undertake certain actions, this dissertation looks at *how* certain actions were made possible by examining:

[...] how meanings are produced and attached to various social subjects/objects, thus constituting particular interpretive dispositions which create certain possibilities and preclude others (Doty, 1991:303).

Consequently, I suggest that BRICS governs the Global South according to neoliberal rationalities of development, where biofuel land deals embody the outcomes of the group's governing activities. This implies that their proclamation to provide an alternative paradigm for 'development' does not escape the essentialist knowledge of the 'Third World' as labelled in development discourse and in effect, reproduce them.

Research questions:

The primary question of this research is:

- How does neoliberal development discourse inform biofuel land deals conducted by BRICS in Africa?

This question can be divided into the following secondary questions and sub-questions:

- How can post-structuralism account for the manner in which land-grabbing is legitimised through neoliberal development discourse?
 - How can the gap between the global dimensions of governmentality and its relevance to the study of international development be bridged?
- What is the socio-political and economic context that leads to a new surge in land acquisitions for the production of biofuel?
- What are the rationalities underpinning biofuel land deals, and how do they determine who gets to benefit from land access?
 - How do neoliberal discourses of development produce power relations that shape land access?
 - How do these discourses transfer to specific contexts?
- To what extent are South-South cooperation and North-South development interventions the same?
 - In what manner is the current neoliberal development paradigm maintained by BRICS, under auspices of South-South cooperation?

Research Objectives

Flowing from the problem statement, the following objectives are identified. The primary objective of the dissertation was to:

- Analyse and explain the manifestation of neoliberal development knowledge in biofuel land deals conducted between members of BRICS and African governments.

The primary objective was attained through the following secondary objectives and sub-objectives:

- To analyse how post-structural theory can serve as an explanation for the phenomenon of land-grabbing as a development programme;
 - Explain the manner in which the gap between global dimensions of governmentality and the study of international development can be bridged by
- To describe the socio-political and economic context relating to the new surge in land acquisitions for the production of biofuel;
- To examine the rationalities underpinning land deals and the types of power relations they establish, determining land access;
 - I aimed to show how neoliberal discourses of development produce power relations that shape land access, by focusing specifically on FDI;
 - To situate this discussion in relation to specific countries namely: Ethiopia, Mozambique, Zambia, Mali, Sierra Leone and Tanzania;
- To explain the similarities between South-South cooperation and North-South development interventions;
 - To illustrate the manner in which the current neoliberal development paradigm is maintained by BRICS under auspices of South-South cooperation by looking at the rationalities underpinning assumptions that biofuel land deals will 'bring development to Africa';
 - Indeed, I aimed to illustrate the manner in which the very essence of South-South cooperation is a product of development discourse.

Methodology

This study is qualitative by nature, making use of existing literature to reach the primary objective. Such an approach is defined as a literature-based study. According to Winch *et al* (2005), a literature-based study entails a theoretical analysis: 'selection and discussion of theoretical material and descriptive material, in context, and detailed comparison of theories of their applicability'. This theoretical analysis will be conducted by a post-structural methodological tool called discourse analysis. The concept of discourse is informed by a Foucauldian perspective of discourse embodying the meeting place of power and knowledge produced by particular regimes of truth. Although discourse analyses tend to entail the study of text or 'things said', a Foucauldian-inspired discourse analysis also draws attention to the way in which it shape ideas, concepts and practises (Jacobs, 2006; Sharp & Richardson 2001). Following Sharp and Richardson (2001:196), the research methodology in this dissertation makes use of a Foucauldian definition of discourse that interprets discourses as multiple and competing sets of ideas and metaphors that embraces both text and practise:

[...] a specific ensemble of ideas, concepts, and categorisations that are produced, reproduced, and transformed in a particular set of practises through which meaning is given to physical and social realities (Hajer, as cited by Sharp & Richardson 2001:196).

The data I analysed entails development-related policies of African countries such as strategies to alleviate poverty, promote economic growth as well as renewable energy policies, in order to identify the manifestation of discourses. I also look at BRICS' summit declarations, press statements made by political leaders and manifestos of South-South cooperation. Such an approach enables one to locate the regimes of truth responsible for the production, distribution and circulation of statements of power relations and, as conducted in this study, draw attention to the way in which discourses shape and/or maintain power relations in society (Jacobs, 2006:43; Jorgensen & Philips, 2002:21). Hence discourses manifested in policies, declarations, speeches etc. could be framed as complex bodies of values, thoughts and practices, including communicative acts and scientific knowledge alongside unspoken actions, and the deployment of lay knowledge within webs of power relations (Sharp & Richardson, 2001:198). According to Sharp and Richardson (2001:198) this notion of contingent rationality suggests an understanding of policy-making that is more related to the 'messy world of policy', compared to approaches that sought rational objectivity, or made normative prescriptions of how policy-making ought to be made.

Having referred to the strengths of the discourse analysis approach, it is also necessary to identify the weaknesses of this methodology and its implications for the study. However, due to time and space constraints, I cannot delve into a detailed critique of discourse analysis and thus only highlight the most relevant criticisms with regard to the stated objectives of this dissertation. In line with Sharp and Richardson's (2001:198) specified strength of discourse analysis approaches to policy-making, a prominent criticism against discourse analysis, especially those inspired by Foucault, relates to the absence of praxis – i.e. not putting forward an alternative discourse than the one studied by making use of discourse analysis (Grbich, 2013:251; Jacobs, 2006:46). As such, discourse-based analyses are often dismissed by researchers who claim that they are insular and of little practical relevance (Jacobs, 2006:46). According to Jacobs (2006), such criticisms can be countered by referring to the instrumental role discourse analysis has played in highlighting the way in which language (i.e. development rhetoric) is used in policy-making and in providing a framework for critiquing contemporary practices.

Another critique often levelled against discourse analyses that has particular relevance for this study is the accusation of researchers being biased and employing discourse-based methods to select evidence that confirms their arguments and to ignore contrary data (Jacobs, 2006:47). Recognising the tendency of researchers applying the discourse-based approach to validate their own arguments, I aim to overcome this objection by explicitly claiming that I wish to identify and illustrate the neoliberal rationality and regimes of truth that underpin the production of

development. By looking at the manner in which Neoliberalism forms the criteria for producing 'scientific' or 'acceptable' knowledge, I indicate the manner in which it constructs hierarchical power relations in society as well as to explain the types of actors it enables to benefit from land uses. This focus by no means claims that all biofuel land deals are necessarily bad, which hints at another drawback concerning my methodology: i.e. the absence of field-work to explore the manner in which neoliberal rationalities of development, which tend to frame agricultural land as a reserve of capital, shape people's lives and experiences. As such, my discussion of conducted biofuel land deals is not very detailed and does not capture the many possible ways in which they influence social realities. Instead, my approach helps to uncover the rationalities legitimising them in the policy-making process and emphasises the myriad possible practical implications that discourses of development may entail for rural communities in Africa.

Chapter Outline

Since the first objective is to explain how post-structuralism accounts for the manner in which land acquisitions are legitimised through neoliberal development discourse, Chapter Two is an extensive explanation on post-structural theory, especially Michel Foucault's notion of power-knowledge, discourse and governmentality. This chapter also provides a theoretical application of Foucault's work on power-knowledge, discourse and governmentality on South-South development cooperation. Here, I aim to explain the manner in which development governs the Global South according to neoliberal rationalities, where the activities of BRICS are not only informed by neoliberal rationalities of government, but also produce new power relations that shape the conduct of others according to neoliberal rationalities.

The third objective aims to provide context to the global surge in land interest in Africa for the production of biofuel, which cannot be divorced from the fourth objective: to study the rationalities underpinning land deals for biofuel production. Although this is touched on in the first chapter, in Chapter Three I examine some of the particular discourses governing biofuels and land acquisitions in Africa. The countries I chose to focus on were primarily selected based on the manner in which their governments embraced the 'development' opportunities associated with biofuel investments. I rely on countries' development policies, poverty reduction plans, and biofuel strategy papers along with other forms of texts to illustrate the manner in which development discourse shapes the subjectivity of actors and how measures implemented to promote development, shape and reshape the reality of an 'underdeveloped' Africa. Additionally, the countries discussed in Chapter Three also constitute significant interest for individual BRICS countries, facilitating my discussion and comparison of South-South cooperation being an 'alternative' development strategy.

However, a few limitations should be noted. Firstly, it is necessary to reiterate that in attempting to quantify the phenomenon of land grabbing such as the Land Matrix or Grain, one

is vulnerable to inaccurate information from governments, news reports or published reports concerning the scope of the land deal (Oram, 2014). Also, though my discussion of biofuel land deals is portrayed in a negative light, it is necessary to mention that this is not always the case; in some instances, these deals have brought desirable changes, such as more roads and bridges, water access, fewer floods and diseases etc. (see for example Negash & Swinsen, 2013; Gilfoy, 2014; Boamah, 2011). Yet, this is not the focus of the study, as I am rather interested in comprehending some of the discourses driving biofuel land deals and how these intersect with the rhetoric of South-South Cooperation. Furthermore, my analysis of South-South cooperation is limited to the study of BRICS' relations with African countries, and this therefore excludes other forms of South-South cooperation. As such, my findings and discussions pertain solely to the BRICS countries and strategies to obtain land access.

Finally, in order to comprehend the implications of biofuel land deals for the idea of South-South cooperation being an alternative development strategy, the fourth chapter looks at ways in which the BRICS countries facilitate biofuel land deals in Africa, by reviewing how their diplomatic strategies promote foreign direct investment (FDI) in land, and the implications thereof for BRICS' ambition to be different from North-South relations. I argue that the group utilises diplomatic techniques to shape the 'conduct of conduct' of actors in the Global South, by 'structuring possible fields of action' according to neoliberal rationalities, thus establishing power relations in favour of private investors.

Chapter Five is the concluding chapter of this dissertation, in which I summarise my analysis of BRICS-Africa development cooperation and reinterpret, from a post-structural perspective, their international relations with Africa. By doing this, I explain the implications of their international relations with Africa being informed by neoliberal development knowledge, despite being in the spirit of 'South-South development cooperation'.

Chapter Two

Biofuel land deals and development: A post-structural explanation

This chapter is a theoretical explanation of Michel Foucault's conceptualisation of power, knowledge, discourse and government that guides the analysis of this dissertation. In the first section, I look at the development concept and its historical roots in Western perspectives of human nature and evolution, and the manner in which it has informed North-South relations for the past centuries. I refer to the role of power in the domination of this knowledge, by engaging with Foucault's theory of power and knowledge, the one shaping (implying) the other. Consequently, I look at the manner in which knowledge is produced and filtered by regimes of truth upheld by a certain society and its implications for the neoliberal regimes of truth that produce discourses of development, biofuels and land in Africa. The chapter then goes on to discuss specific formations of power, focusing particularly on governmental power, or governmentality, followed by an explanation of the ways in which governmentality is exercised in global politics, especially in terms of South-South cooperation.

Social evolutionism, Colonialism, Development and North-South relations

In the previous chapter, I identified some of the main theories defining development, i.e. the Modernisation Theory, the Dependency Theory and the Neoliberal Paradigm. Despite their divergent assumptions regarding the development process, these theories all subscribe to the idea of social evolutionism¹⁵, broadly defined as the unconditional belief that societies progress through stages and that development represents the movement from 'traditional' to 'modern' (Rist, 2014:40; Long & Chakov, 2009; Crewe & Harrison, 1997:25). Social evolutionism draws extensively on Darwin's¹⁶ theory of evolution and natural selection, which helped to construct into a theoretical form the element of motion in the evolution process and the idea that 'backward' people might be able to move to a 'higher phase' (Mazrui, 1968:70). Rooted in the preoccupation with race science in the nineteenth century, Western academics utilised social evolutionism to demonstrate that the major differences in human capacity and organisation can be traced to the biological distinctions between races (Dennis, 1995; Mazrui, 1968:70). Consequently, by identifying the Caucasian, Nordic and Anglo-Saxon races as superior in their endowments, with Europe leading the way in the trajectory of evolution, social evolutionism

¹⁵ Prominent theorists of social evolutionism are, amongst others, the Western anthropologists Lewis Henry Morgan, Sir Edward Burnett Tylor and Herbert Spencer (Rist, 2014:42-43; Long & Chakov, 2009). By drawing on Darwin's theory of natural selection evolution, social evolutionism aimed to illustrate that the major differences in human capacity and human organisation were to be traced to biological distinctions among races (Mazrui, 1968:70).

¹⁶ It should be noted that Darwin's theory essentially had a biological basis, and not necessarily implicated the development of social evolutionism.

served as a means to explain and justify European supremacy (Pieterse, 1991:7; Lévi-Strauss, 1952:14). According to Lévi-Strauss, social evolutionism conveniently ‘arranged’ history – based on the assumptions of human progress – and consequently produced an imperial vision of the Global South which de-historicised, or rather, granted the Global South a history narrated from a Western perspective (Lévi-Strauss, 1952:18). In addition, their assumed ‘superiority’ also legitimised the West’s intervention to ‘help’ the ‘backward’ countries along the road to civilisation, as seen in North-South colonial encounters (Rist, 2014:40-42; Crew & Harrison, 1997:26; Ferguson, 1995:3; Pieterse, 1991:7; Lévi-Strauss, 1952:14).

Although, in theory the racist element associated with social evolutionism faded (Mazrui, 1968:75), development theories in the post-war period exemplify its replacement with ethnocentrism. For the purposes of this discussion, ethnocentrism refers to the tendency for societies to regard diversity as something abnormal or outrageous (Lévi-Strauss, 1952:11). It entails the practice of comparing other cultural practices with those of one’s own and rendering the opposing practices inferior. Former United States President Harry Truman’s ‘Four Point’ speech of January 1949 illustrates Western ethnocentrism. As part of his inauguration, Truman’s Four Point speech, which serves as the initiation of the ‘development age’ – proclaimed the United States’ assumed responsibility to make ‘the benefits of [their] scientific advances and industrial progress available for the improvement of growth of underdeveloped areas’ (Rist, 2014:70). In the Point Four program, the ‘underdeveloped areas’ are characterised as places where people live in misery and hunger, are victims of disease and whose economic activities are primitive and stagnant, with the answer to a ‘better and prosperous’ life lying in the knowledge and skill of the West. This not only includes the adoption of industrial and economic activities, with a preference to ‘greater production’ through the ‘application of modern scientific and technological knowledge’, but also through the political system of democracy. The latter is especially seen as ‘the only vitalizing force to stir the peoples of the world into triumphant action, not only against their human oppressor, but also against the ancient enemies of hunger, misery and despair’ (Rist, 2014:44). Thus, by contrasting the social, political and economic conditions of the so-called ‘underdeveloped’ areas with those of the West, and rendering differences as ‘problematic’ in the sense that they are obstacles in the path of ‘development’, the ethnocentric element of social evolutionism emerges. In essence, the latter example illustrates how social evolutionism represents the manner in which what passes for the ‘truth’ of the history of humankind (i.e. to progress through stages to ultimately resemble Western society), actually represents the manner in which the West – to the exclusion of all others – has conceptualised its relationship to the past and the future (Rist, 2014:44).

With the dominance of Western knowledge regarding history and human nature, one is reminded of the intertwined relationship between power and knowledge (Pieterse, 1991:5; Lévi-

Strauss, 1952:18). The analysis of power-knowledge relations in the production of discourse constitutes a central task of the post-structural thinkers, and is also called genealogy. Foucault – influenced by Nietzschean philosophy – describes genealogy as an analysis that accounts for the constitution of knowledges, discourses or domains of objects whose meanings continue to guide our daily lives (Devetak, as quoted by Bleiker, 2005:163; Foucault, 1976:118). These meanings represent the perspective of the time in which they were written, and more importantly the viewpoint of the actors producing meanings - for example, 'development' (Edkins, 2007:94). A variety of scholars have conducted genealogies of development discourse. Their work is often labelled as 'post-development' or post-structural analyses of development (Rist, 2014; Esteva, 2010; Sachs, 2010; Rahnema & Bawtree, 1997; Escobar, 1995; Ferguson, 1990; Crush, 1995; Schuurman, 1993; DuBois, 1991). However, the aim of this chapter is not to conduct a genealogy of development, but, through a Foucauldian perspective, to theoretically explain the operation of power-knowledge, in order to comprehend the domination of Western narratives in the discourse of development, and consequently their implications on land access (Rist, 2014:40; Escobar, 1995:4). Therefore, this chapter consists of two sections, the first being a theoretical explanation of the intertwined and reciprocal relationship between power-knowledge, 'regimes of truth' and discourses. In addition, this section will also contain an explanation of the different manifestations of power-knowledge throughout history – especially the functioning of governmental power – characteristic of modern society. The second section explains the manifestation of governmental power in international relations and the role that international organisations, partnerships and programmes play in the production of neoliberal discourses of development. The reason for this discussion is to draw attention to the ways in which these discourses govern land access in Africa, the types of power relationships it shapes, and how these determine who will benefit from land use.

A Foucauldian explanation of power and knowledge

The discussion of power answers the question of how Western knowledge has been able to produce the 'truth' about human nature, history and development. Digeser (1992) dubbed Foucault's notion of power as 'the fourth face of power', the first being that of Robert Dahl where power is captured as: 'A has power over B to the extent that she can get B to do something that B would not otherwise do'. This conceptualisation was altered by Bachrach and Baratz, who suggested that power is not solely a matter of getting B to do something that she does not want to do, but also preventing B from doing what she wants to do (Hayward, 2000; Digeser, 1992:978). The third face of power, according to Digeser (1992:978-979), was significantly influenced by Steven Lukes who claimed that power could be exercised in a way that is not captured by the first two faces of power. According to Lukes, power not only influences whether actors behave as they want, but can also shape the ways they perceive their wants, desires and

interests (Hayward, 2000:4). 'A exercises power over B when A affects B in a manner contrary to B's interests' (Lukes, as quoted by Hayward, 2000:4). In other words, as opposed to the first two faces of power, which claim that if B acts voluntarily, power is not exercised, the third face of power contends that power could be exerted even if B consciously wants to do what A desires (Digeser, 1992:979). The first two faces are therefore blind to a form of power in which the very desires and wants of B are manipulated (Lukes, as stated by Digeser, 1992:979).

The fourth face of power entails that A and B is subjected to power, rendering them both to be objects. The fourth face of power does not take as presupposed the subjects (the A's and B's), but rather focuses on how historically and contingently produced discourses have shaped the subjectivities of the subjects (their interests, desires, aspirations) (Barnett & Duvall, 2005:12; Digeser, 1991:980; Foucault, 1982). Following Jenny Edkins (1999:21), post-structuralism rejects the idea of a sovereign, unified human subject, since the subject which power constitutes becomes part of the mechanism of power (McHoul & Grace, 1993:22). Power, in this sense, is always considered to be in a discursive relation, acting in an autonomous way and producing subjects just as much as subjects reproduce it (McHoul & Grace, 1993:12; Foucault, 1982).

Instead of focusing on the manner in which power is located in the hands of an individual and in sovereign law etc., power in a Foucauldian sense is 'everywhere, not because it embraces everything, but because it comes from everywhere' (Foucault, 1978a:93). According to Foucault, the omnipresence of power can be seen as a result of the manner in which it gets produced from one moment to the next, in every relation from one point to another. Therefore, it is necessary to analyse power as something that circulates, whose functioning resembles the form of a chain instead of a localised commodity (Foucault, 1980:98). Power is employed and exercised through a net-like organisation where individuals (subjects A and B) not only circulate between the threads, but are also in the position of undergoing and exercising this power. Indeed, individuals are the vehicles of power and not its points of application. The mere existence of certain gestures, discourses or desires that constitute individuals, societies, organisations or institutions can be seen as effects of power (Foucault, 1980:98). Yet, the existence of these gestures, discourses, or desires is not a product of the functioning of power that prohibits, punishes or excludes. Indeed, one of the underlying arguments concerning Foucault's explanation of power is that it is productive, rather than something owned by an entity and exercised over another with the aim to limit, control, forbid, punish or exclude, as identified in the first three faces of power (McHoul & Grace, 1993:21; DuBois, 1991:4; Foucault, 1982:786-788). Though not denying the existence of the first three faces of power – termed negative power – Foucault (1977a:194) de-emphasises them and asserts that power is primarily

productive. He claims that: ‘... power produces; it produces reality; it produces domains of objects and rituals of truth’ (Foucault, 1977a:194).

The mechanism through which power operates to produce truths, realities and subjectivities or domains of objects is knowledge. Indeed, Foucault (1977a:27-28) unites the two concepts into a single entity, namely power-knowledge. He claims that:

We should admit rather that power produces knowledge...that power and knowledge directly imply one another; that there is no power relation without the correlative constitution of a field of knowledge, nor any knowledge that does not presuppose and constitute at the same time power relations (Foucault, 1977a:27-28).

Consider, for example, the knowledge about human nature and the concept of progress affiliated to the assumptions of social evolutionism during colonial and developmental encounters. In both instances, the Global North produced knowledge about human nature and progress, which propelled into power new groups and institutions capable of exploiting it (DuBois, 1991:6). Although power was in both instances exercised over other entities as captured in the negative identifications of power, this could not have been done without domains of knowledge about human nature and the construction of the Global South as ‘barbaric’ or ‘underdeveloped’ that shaped the subjectivities, actions and desires of subjects around the globe (Rist, 2014:40-45). In terms of development discourse in the post-war period, the power of knowledge becomes especially evident when referring to the ways in which actors in the Global South have embraced their imposed identity of being ‘underdeveloped’, along with the neoliberal rationalities that would supposedly transform their underdeveloped state. Focusing on the state, Joronen (2013) explains this devotion to neoliberal rationalities of economic growth as manifestations of *ontological violence*, which does not merely govern the conduct of individuals by encouraging a particular form of subjectivity, but also enframes all entities for the use of market forces. Ontology can broadly be defined as a philosophical belief system about the nature of social reality, including what we can learn about this reality and how we can do so (Leavy, 2014:3). Inspired by Heidegger’s *Being and Time*, ontology – as used by Joronen (2013) – studies the mode of being of subjects and explains how neoliberalism constitutes the belief system about the nature of social reality and argues that:

‘the neoliberal state is not based on the ideological or discursive turn in political practices, but on the extending drive, through which the real itself, including the ethical constitution of human conducts, natural entities, and life (with its possibilities) is ontologically positioned to serve the interests of profit-making.

Hence, the ontological violence of neoliberalism lies in the way it infiltrates the subjectivity of subjects as the *only* way to govern civil society, suppressing and silencing any ‘alternative’ knowledge systems of experiencing and interpreting phenomena (Walker, 2004).

From this explanation, the existence of power essentially lies in the ability to produce knowledge. Yet, the central argument of a post-structural critique proposes that no knowledge

claiming to be the 'truth' should be considered as a universal or essential claim. This is because, as knowledge and power imply one another, knowledge is always in a 'certain strategic relation in which man is placed', which will ultimately define the effect of knowledge, rendering knowledge to be partial, oblique and perspectival (Foucault, 1977b:81; Foucault, 1976:14). Here it is important to incorporate the role of 'regimes of truth' in the production of knowledge, as these will determine what kinds of knowledge can be accepted as 'true', and ultimately be collected in discourses, as explained in the following section.

Truth, the scientific method and discourse

The reciprocity between power and truth, as power produces truth, parallels the intertwined relationship between power and knowledge (DuBois, 1991:5; Foucault, 1976:131). The notion of 'truth' in Foucault's conceptualisation of power-knowledge entails the manner in which it influences the techniques of knowledge production, and can be likened to the concept 'episteme'¹⁷. For the purposes of this discussion, 'episteme' is used interchangeably with epistemology, which refers to a stance on what should pass as acceptable knowledge (Bryman, 2012:711). 'Truth' should therefore be understood as a 'system of ordered procedures for the production, regulation, distribution, circulation and operation of statements' (Foucault, 1976:132). This system operates according to a specific 'regime of truth' (Foucault, 1976:132), which entails the types of discourse a society accepts in order to make it function as true,

[...] the mechanisms and instances that enable one to distinguish true and false statements; the means by which each is sanctioned; the techniques and procedures accorded value in the acquisition of truth; the status of those who are charged with saying what counts as true' (Foucault, 1976:132).

An example of a 'regime of truth' is that of the scientific method which enjoys primary importance in Western society, also dubbed the Western 'episteme' (Rouse, 2003:106; McHoul & Grace, 1993:32; DuBois, 1991:6). The role of an 'episteme' is to distinguish those statements which can be characterised as scientific or not (Du Bois, 1991:6; Foucault, 1980:197). This episteme refers to the scientific method rooted in the Enlightenment era and the belief in science to generate 'truth' (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011:102; Patton, 2002:100). The scientific method entails the search for universal laws through empirical verification of logically deduced

¹⁷ Foucault used the concept 'episteme' in his book *The Order of Things* (1966) as well as *The Archaeology of Knowledge* (1972) to refer to the orderly 'unconscious' structures that underlie the production of 'scientific knowledge' in a particular time and place (O' Farrell, 2007). The effects of episteme are always discursive, as it constitutes the 'epistemological field' that forms the conditions of possibility for knowledge in a given time and place. However, though not discarding the use of 'episteme' he later replaced the concept with 'apparatus' (*dispositif*) which entails strategies of the relations of forces supporting, and which are supported by, types of knowledge, in a discursive as well as non-discursive form (Foucault, 1980:196-197). Apparatus indicates the various institutional, physical and administrative mechanisms and knowledge structures which enhance and maintain the exercise of power within the social body (O'Farrel, 2007). In other words, the use of apparatus *encompasses* episteme. However, for the purposes of this discussion, I use episteme to explain the manner in which the production of knowledge is based on regimes of truth *a priori* and as grounds for knowledge and its discourses, thus representing the condition of their possibility within a particular epoch.

hypotheses, where knowledge is gained through supporting theories and operational measurements which are empirically replicated (Patton, 2002:92). The quantitative physics of Galileo Galilei and Isaac Newton in the seventeenth century have played a significant role in the development of the scientific method that characterises Enlightenment thinking, according to Denzin and Lincoln (2011:44). However, these methods of knowledge acquisition mainly existed in examples of mathematics and physics. Yet, during the eighteenth century, philosophers such as Auguste Comte (1798-1857) and Emile Durkheim (1858-1917) argued that quantitative methods of knowledge acquisition could also be used to study social phenomena - a paradigm known as positivism.

Positivism asserts that the only verifiable claims are those based on 'direct experience' and that only these can be considered as genuine knowledge. In addition, positivism also advocates the application of research methods rooted in the natural sciences, for the study of social reality (Bryman, 2012:28; Patton, 2002:92). For example, anthropologists such as Morgan and Tylor used the assumptions of Darwin's theory of evolution to enhance their understanding regarding the processes of change across time in the physical and cultural ways of being human, in order to construct the stages of development from 'barbarianism' to 'civilisation', mentioned previously as social evolutionism (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011:44). Like Comte, these anthropologists saw that the purpose of social inquiry is to discover causal laws that can be applied to all cases, using methods akin to those of physics and chemistry (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011:44; Bailey, 1994:9). The conditionalities imposed by the World Bank and the IMF on countries in the Global South during the post-war period are also illustrative of the manner in which economists, politicians or social scientists support the belief in causal laws to be applied in every country. Due to the Global North's (specifically the US) success with neoliberal economic and political policies, they are assumed to be a blueprint for countries worldwide. Moreover, the unconditional belief in science also assumes the continuity of knowledge over time, implying that as 'genuine knowledge' expands, its accumulation constitutes continuous progress towards 'deeper and deeper truths' (Patton, 2002:100).

Conversely, Foucault rejects not only the existence of a universal truth, but also claims that knowledge is discontinuous rather than progressive and cumulative (Patton, 2002:100-101; McHoul & Grace, 1993:4). Contrary to positivist epistemology, knowledge, according to Foucault (1976:14) is not a 'faculty or a universal structure' but is always subject to the order of results, events and effects. Referring to 'sciences' which are accumulated through empirical methods such as biology, political economy, psychiatry or medicine, Foucault (1976:115) claims that their rhythm of transformation does not resemble the continuous schemas of knowledge accumulation. Unlike mathematics or physics, the sciences that take 'man' as its object (biology, political economy, psychiatry, medicine, the human sciences) possess not only the strongest

epistemological structure 'but the densest and most complex field of positivity'. Using medical discourse as an example, Foucault (1991:66-67) explains how a political event such as the French Revolution altered the consciousness of society (on a European scale) under the influence of other economic, social or political changes. Simultaneously, the perception of disease was altered in a sense that recognised the political and economic implications¹⁸ of an unhealthy body for the functioning of a society¹⁹, a recognition that replaced the preoccupation of the salvation of the body (Foucault, 1991:67). Accordingly, the medical question imposed on society revolved around the application of a universal medicine in two distinct fields: the hospital for the poor classes and liberal, competitive practise for the rich (Foucault, 1991:66). Not only did medical science break with its 'true' propositions but also, and more profoundly, its ways of speaking and seeing a whole ensemble of practices which supported medical knowledge (Foucault, 1976:132). By studying medical discourse, Foucault (1991:67) aimed to illustrate not only the discontinuity of knowledge, but also the manner in which an event such as the French Revolution signified the transformation of not only the meaning of medical discourse, but the conditions of its emergence, insertions and functions. In other words, the 'regime of truth' that determines the production of knowledge regarding a certain object; for example, what may be said or not, and what counts as 'scientific' or not. In this sense, the production of knowledge always follows a filtering: not only should particular statements submit to the regime of truth, but only they, from a multiplicity of possible statements, are constructed by it (DuBois, 1991:6).

Furthermore, 'episteme' is undeniably connected to the power relations that define and maintain it as well as to the network of power it constructs and legitimises. Thus, truth is always related to a network of power relations that is able to produce it, rendering one to be sceptical of claims purporting to be the 'absolute truth' (McHoul & Grace, 1993:19). Consequently, Foucault claims that it is necessary not to challenge 'truths' claims, but to question the law of the *existence* of statements that produced them in the first place – them and none other in their place (McHoul & Grace, 1993:19; Foucault, 1991:59). One must analyse the 'conditions of their emergence, their correlation with alternate previous or simultaneous events, discursive or otherwise' (Foucault, 1991:59). These conditions may entail, amongst others, the economic, social and political conditions that influence the 'consciousness of men' and their perception of the 'truth' (Foucault, 1991:66). Central to this investigation is the analysis of discourse, which represents the conjunction between power and knowledge.

¹⁸ In his essay *Politics and the Study of Discourse*, Foucault (1991:66) claims that political implications include for example, social malaise, discontent or revolt in populations whose health is deficient. On the other hand, economic implications at the time entailed the concern of employers to have a healthy workforce or the desire of elite groups to transfer to the state the costs of assistance.

¹⁹ This recognition coincides with the onset of capitalism and the importance of the human body for the accumulation of capital, discussed later under the heading 'Disciplinary power'.

Foucault's use of discourse does not entail the study of linguistics, but rather the analyses of why and how 'one particular statement appeared rather than another' (Foucault, as stated in Edkins, 1999:46). For example Escobar (1995), following Foucault, explains the manner in which neoliberal ideology serve as a 'regime of truth' for the production of 'development economics', which informed the practices and policies of international development agencies such as the World Bank, the IMF and the WTO and played a crucial role in the institutionalisation of development – made possible by the systematic linkage of knowledge and practise (Escobar, 2007:20). Strategies to promote 'rural development' for example, served as a mechanism to link expert knowledges (informed by neoliberal logics) regarding agriculture or food security through relations established in the form of credit, infrastructure or extension. These relations typically resulted in a profound transformation of the countryside and the social relations of many societies in the Global South, justified by the belief in development to promote the 'wealth of society' (Escobar, 2007:20). Here, Foucault's explanation of power-knowledge to operate in a net-like organisation becomes clear. By producing knowledge about development, new relations of power were established, enabling actors to exploit it. Therefore, without discourses, power relations cease to exist. Indeed, according to Foucault (1980:93):

[...]in a society such as ours, but basically in any society, there are manifold relations of power which permeate, characterise and constitute the social body, and these relations of power cannot themselves be established, consolidated nor implemented without the production, accumulation, circulation and functioning of a discourse.

Since discourse represents the statements, values and ideology of the actors producing it, one is reminded of the exclusion of the 'masked Other' (Foucault, 1977b:108). For example, the knowledges and practices of social organisation of those who are being 'transformed' by 'development programmes' (Escobar, 2007:20). According Foucault (1991:63), one has to recognise that in discourse:

Something is formed according to clearly definable rules, that this something exists, subsists, changes, disappears, according to equally definable rules; in short; that alongside everything a society can produce (alongside: that is to say, in a determinate relationship with) there is the formation and transformation of 'things said'.

Analyses of discourses therefore enables one to determine the relations of power producing knowledge, as well as the regimes of truth upon which knowledge is constructed. A post-structural analysis of discourses also recognises the partial character of knowledge and regimes of truth and is therefore determined to analyse the conditions and power relations that rendered their existence in the first place. To summarise: the fourth face of power operates through the production of knowledge, filtered according to the regimes of truth a society accepts. These regimes of truth are influenced by certain events, movements and effects of previous power-knowledge relations. Consequently, knowledge is to be collected in discourses, which in turn establish new power relations.

The discourse analyses Foucault conducted were on criminality, sexuality and madness – which focused on the different formations and rationalities of power-knowledge throughout history (Dean, 2008:30). Here, rationality means the ways of reasoning or thinking about the problem of how to secure the wealth, health and security of the population – also known as the ‘problem of government’ (Foucault, 1978b:202). Instead of focusing on the forms of domination used by the state to address ‘the problem of government’, Foucault was more interested in the political rationality underpinning the exercise of power, i.e. the rationality of government, also known as governmentality (Lemke, 2002:50). Governmentality served as a guideline for Foucault’s analyses of the different rationalities of power, ranging from ancient Greece through to modern Neoliberalism (Foucault, as stated by Lemke, 2002:50).

Through his analyses, Foucault identified three dominant, co-existing but distinct manifestations of power-knowledge, each with their own rationality, to address the ‘problem of government’: sovereign or judicial power, disciplinary power and governmental power (Dean, 2008:30). It is important to note though, that Foucault’s notion of ‘government’ encompasses more than the mere political meaning thereof and rather indicates the close link between forms of power and processes of subjectification/subjectivation²⁰ (Hamann, 2009:36; Lemke, 2002:50-51). This notion of government is influenced by the older meaning of the term, referring not only to political tracts but also philosophical, religious, medical and pedagogical texts, signifying problems of self-control, guidance for family and children, the management of the household, salvation of the soul etc. Based on these meanings, Foucault defines government as the ‘conduct of conduct’, which ranges from the ‘governing of the self’ to the ‘governing of others’ (Lemke, 2002:51; Dean, 2002:30; Foucault, 1980:790). Here, to ‘conduct’ means to lead, direct or guide as well as a sort of calculation (rationality) as to how it should be done (Dean, 2010:17). By adopting a governmentality lens to analyse how discourses of development shape land access, i.e. the abilities to use land, it is necessary to identify the rationalities by which land access is governed. In other words, the rationalities shaping the ‘conduct of conduct’ of others and how this intersects with biofuel land deals. In order to comprehend Foucault’s conceptualisation of governmental power and its implications for global land access, it is necessary to contrast and compare governmental power with his other theories regarding the

²⁰ Following Milchmand and Rosenberg, Hamann (2009:39) explains the distinction between subjectivation and subjectification as the latter being the ways in which others are governed and objectified through processes of power/knowledge, i.e. the biopolitical governance of populations. On the other hand, subjectivation refers to the conducts of individuals to govern and fashion themselves into subjects on the basis of what they take to be the truth. In other words, the governing of the self (subjectivation) and the governing of others (subjectification).

Sovereign power, disciplinary power and governmentality

Sovereign power

As mentioned in Chapter One, the first type of power Foucault identifies is sovereign or juridical power, which is mainly associated with monarchical rule during the Middle Ages (prior to the sixteenth century). Sovereign or juridical power operates through prohibitions manifested in its legislation: 'one identifies power with a law that says no – power is taken, above all, as carrying the force of prohibition' (Foucault, 1980:120). Foucault uses Niccolò Machiavelli's text *The Prince*, where Machiavelli gives advice to the Prince on how to secure his sovereignty, in order to explain the rationality behind sovereign power. According to Foucault (1978c:93), the main focus of the Prince (as told by Machiavelli) was to ensure his safety and security 'in the reality of its territorial power' – a rationality known as mercantilism. Mercantilism took the sovereign's authority as its main objective and focused on 'how to ensure not only that the country is rich, but that the sovereign has wealth and funds at his disposal, and can build an army with which to pursue his policies'. The instruments used to secure the might of the sovereign consisted mainly of 'traditional weapons of sovereignty' such as laws, edicts and regulations (Foucault, 1978c:139). Compared to power being a positive force as explained previously, sovereign power is primarily seen as a restrictive, negative form of power since it operates on the 'right of seizure: of things, time, bodies, and ultimately life itself; it culminated in the privilege to seize hold of life in order to suppress it' (Foucault, 1978a:136).

Disciplinary power

At the turn of the seventeenth century, coinciding with the intensification of capitalist economic activities, a new rationality of power became prominent (alongside sovereign power) which sought to 'foster life' rather than 'suppress it' (Foucault, 1978a:138). The emphasis placed on securing the health of the human body forms an intrinsic element in the development of capitalism (Foucault, 1978a:140). According to Foucault (1977a:231), the accumulation of capital and the accumulation of men according to the principles of capitalist production cannot be separated, as it would be impossible to accumulate men without the apparatus of production capable of producing and sustaining the human body. Conversely, the techniques that made the accumulation of men utilisable accelerated the accumulation of capital (Foucault, 1977a:231). The technique of power that produces 'utilisable men' is discipline, which emphasises the importance of the human body as an object of productive force (Foucault, 1978a:137). The central aim of disciplinary power is to produce 'docile bodies', i.e. bodies that are subjected, used, transformed and improved through disciplining practises that constitute the functions of social institutions in society (Foucault, 1977:73; Foucault, 1976:124; McHoul & Grace, 1993:143). These institutions include, amongst others, universities, secondary schools, barracks, workshops, hospitals or psychiatric centres (Foucault, 1978a:140). Disciplinary power

is therefore manifested in social institutions with the aim to implement micro-techniques of teaching the body efficient and correct behaviour, in order to increase the body's usefulness, obedience and economic utility, and in the process, decreasing its political danger (Shiner, 1982:393). In *Discipline and Punish* (1977a) Foucault famously showed how the criminal justice system produced disciplined and docile individual bodies through techniques of examination and surveillance; for example, in Jeremy Bentham's *Panopticon*. A panoptic form of power – also referred to as 'panopticism', can be described as:

A type of power that is applied to individuals in the form of continuous individual supervision, in the form of control, punishment and compensation, and in the form of correction, that is, the moulding and transformation of individuals in terms of certain norms (Foucault, 1975:70).

Panopticism embodies the functioning of disciplinary power as it operates through modes of examination to attach individuals to certain norms, specified in discourses. Therefore, institutions such as those mentioned earlier, i.e. universities, secondary schools, barracks, workshops, hospitals or psychiatric centres, do not aim to exclude individuals, but rather to 'attach' them to accepted norms in a society (Brigg, 2006:45; Foucault, 1975:78). For example, the school attaches the individual to the apparatus of knowledge transmission; the psychiatric centre and prison attaches the individual to the apparatus of the normalisation of people. In other words, these institutions share the objective of binding the individual to a process of production, training or the correction of procedures in terms of a particular norm (Foucault, 1975:78). Following DuBois (1991:8), 'the key to discipline is normalisation, and the keymakers are the members of various disciplines'. The process of normalisation, realised through disciplinary power, brings five distinctions into play:

[...] it refers individual actions to a whole that is at once a field of comparison, a space of differentiation and the principle of a rule to be followed. It differentiates individuals from one another, in terms of the following overall rule: that the rule be made to function as a minimal threshold, as an average to be respected or as an optimum towards which one must move. It measures in quantitative terms and hierarchizes in terms of value the abilities, the level the 'nature' of individuals. It introduces, through this 'value-giving' measure, the constraint of a conformity that must be achieved. Lastly, it traces the limit that will define the difference in relation to all other differences, the external frontier of the abnormal [...] (Foucault, 1977a:128-183).

With regard to development, the members responsible for 'normalising' the inhabitants of the 'Third World' – so that their social, political and economic circumstances resemble that of the North – entails a vast network of organisations and individuals armed with 'expert' knowledge from all types of disciplines²¹ of development (Escobar, 2007:20). These 'expert' knowledges entails the professionalisation of development 'problems', with the aim to deal with every aspect of 'underdevelopment': demographers, pedagogics, rural development, agricultural experts,

²¹ I follow McHoul and Grace's (1993:26) explanation of discipline as referring to *scholarly disciplines* (which is) more in line with the description of discourse, i.e. a body of knowledge) such as medicine, psychiatry, economics and so on, as well as to disciplinary *institutions* of social control such as the school, the hospital, the confessional etc.

nutrition, medical experts, economists, infrastructure experts and so on (Escobar, 2007:21; Alvares, 1992:93; DuBois, 1991:9). Through their 'expert' knowledge of every aspect of 'underdevelopment', the activities, programmes or consultations of 'development professionals' served as a means to legitimately exercise calculated control over the inhabitants of the Third World where their knowledge of development infiltrated almost every aspect of their economic, political and social reality (Escobar, 2007:20; Rose & Miller, 1992:182). Panopticism is manifested in the calculated administration exercised by the 'keymakers of normalisation' as mentioned previously. Through development discourse, disciplinary power can be identified in the manner in which it operates at the individual level, with the aim to construct 'calculable individuals' (Mansen, as stated by DuBois, 1991:18). In this dissertation, I examine the disciplinary power of development by looking at the ways in which individual states undertake reforms that will attach them to 'accepted norms' in the global environment, as well as how these reforms influence land access.

With the health of the human body at the core of Foucault's examination of power, he extended his focus on disciplinary power and the actions of individuals to populations, dubbed biopower. Where disciplinary power is about training the actions of bodies, biopower aims to manage the births, deaths, reproduction and illnesses of a population (Brigg, 2000:44; DuBois, 1991:8; Foucault, 1979:6; Foucault, 1977a:220). Biopower, or the 'biopolitics of the population', is a type of power directed towards the vitality of a country's inhabitants: for example propagation; births and mortality; the level of health; life expectancy and longevity; and all the conditions that can cause these to vary (Brigg, 2000:42; DuBois, 1991:9; Foucault, 1978a:139). In fact, the emergence of a population as a means to obtain control over the individual led to the development of the third form of power, namely governmental power.

Governmentality

Governmental power emerged in the eighteenth century and operates through the 'conduct of conduct' to ensure 'the right disposition of things so as to lead to a convenient end', as opposed to control over territories or individual bodies (Death, 2008:31; Foucault, 1982:789; Foucault, 1978b:208). As mentioned earlier, Foucault (1982:790; 1978b:205) explains that during the sixteenth century, 'government' did not solely refer to political structures or the management of states, but designated the way in which the conduct of individuals or groups may be directed, such as the government of children, souls, communities, families or the sick. With the sixteenth century realisation that the vitality of the population has certain economic consequences, the management thereof became a primary focus for government, a practise known as the 'art of government' (Foucault, 1978b:207). Thus, the rationality of government that once referred to the 'conduct' of the family, children, souls, communities etc. soon extended to the population, with the aforementioned being only secondary targets of government (Foucault, 1978b:217).

Moreover, with the introduction of 'economy' into management of the state, the population became the ultimate end of government – not the act thereof as in the case of sovereign power – but rather in 'improvement of its condition, the increase of its wealth, longevity, health, and so on' (Foucault, 1978b:216-217).

Yet it should be noted that governmental power does not replace sovereign or disciplinary power, since the population encompasses the target of both sovereign and disciplinary power, i.e. territory and individual bodies. Although territories possibly refer to unpopulated areas, Foucault (1977c:26) claims that the daily exercise of sovereignty through the implementation of legislative instruments, mainly concerns a certain multiplicity (people). Similarly, disciplinary power is exercised over individual bodies but solely exists insofar as there is a multiplicity and an end, or an objective to be obtained on the basis of multiplicity (Foucault, 1977c:26). For example, Foucault (1977c:26) claims that discipline in schools, the military, penal discipline or worker disciplines are all ways of managing the multiplicity. In this sense, discipline is a:

[...]mode of individualisation of multiplicities rather than something that constructs an edifice of multiple elements on the basis of individuals who are worked on as, first of all, individuals (Foucault, 1977c:26).

Thus, sovereignty, discipline and governmental power co-exist in a triangle, with the population as its central mechanism (Foucault, 1978b:219).

The management of the population through the 'conduct of conduct' with the aim to ensure the 'right disposition of things so as to lead to a convenient end' suggests that governmental power do not act directly on its objects, but rather through 'the structuring of possible fields of action', that will ultimately ensure the wealth of the population (Foucault, 1980:790). In other words, 'governing' or the 'conduct of conduct' takes place 'from a distance' over free subjects who are faced with a structured field of possible actions, as opposed to the activity of exercising direct control over territories or individual bodies (Foucault, 1980:790). These conducts are firstly applied to oneself: a form of self-direction considered to be appropriate in certain situations such as at work or at home, when doing business, or in relation to clients or friends (Dean, 2010:17-18). In another sense, to 'conduct' also refers to our articulated sets of behaviour, where self-guidance or self-regulation is also involved, for example concerning our 'professional conduct' or the conduct of schoolchildren (Dean, 2010:17). These 'conducts' are inevitably evaluative and normative: they presume a set of standards or norms of conduct according to which behaviour can be judged, which simultaneously acts as an ideal towards which individuals or groups should strive (Dean, 2010:18; Rose & Miller, 1992:184). Accordingly, it is assumed that the behaviours and actions of individuals and groups can be rationally controlled and regulated: for instance, teachers or those in professional associations, as their 'codes of conduct' assume the responsibility of ensuring that regulation occurs (Dean, 2010:18). This form

of rule gets established in institutional spaces such as government departments, community organisations, service deliverers or self-managing local centres, which are governed according to formal standards of accountability and norms of conduct (Foucault, as stated by Death, 2008:32).

These sets of standards and norms exist in discourses, reminding us once again of the prominent role that knowledge plays in the functioning of power. Indeed, knowledge is central to the activities of government and the formation of its objects, where 'experts' play a prominent role in this process through, for example, countless attempts and tactics of education, persuasion, inducement, management, incitement, encouragement etc. (Rose & Miller, 1992:175). From this explanation, 'government' can be broadly defined as:

Any more or less calculated and rational activity, undertaken by a multiplicity of authorities and agencies, employing a variety of techniques and forms of knowledge, that seeks to shape conduct by working through the desires, aspirations, interests and beliefs of various actors, for definite but shifting ends and with a diverse set of relatively unpredictable consequences, effects and outcomes (Dean, 2010:18).

The idea of 'development' can therefore be seen as an ideal or aspiration born directly from the interplay of activities of government. Rist (2014:1) explains that the strength of development discourse relates to the manner in which it succeeds to 'seduce, in every sense of the term: to charm, to please, to fascinate, to set dreaming'. Likewise, Tanya Murray Li (2007) links the idea of development with the desire to '*improve*' followed by a host of calculated programmes and policies to infiltrate the desire of development in every sphere of society. From this explanation, it should be noted that governmental power does not reside in the hand of 'the State', but rather in the calculated actions of multiple actors. Development discourse therefore permeates the creation of manifold relations of power to constitute the social body, aimed to realise the objective of development. These relations of power can be identified in the activities of the vast network of organisations responsible for the deployment of development knowledge, ranging from state and non-state actors within global as well as national spheres. Hence, a governmentality analysis of power is not concerned with accounting for government in terms of 'the power of the State', but of determining the manner and extent to which the state is articulated into the activity of government, a phenomenon termed by Rose and Miller as the 'governmentalization of the state' (Rose, 1999:18; Rose & Miller, 1992:177). As explained by Rose (1999:18), the governmentalization of the State entails:

The invention and assembly of a whole array of technologies that connected up calculations and strategies developed in political centres to those thousands of spatially scattered points where the constitutional, fiscal, organizational and judicial powers of the state connect with the endeavours to manage economic life, the health and habits of the population, the civility of the masses and so forth (Rose, 1999:18).

Rationalities of governmental power: Liberalism and Neoliberalism

Governing from a distance, therefore, clearly draws on the assumptions of Liberalism as advocated by economists and philosophers such as Adam Smith, John Locke, Jean-Baptiste Say and Jeremy Bentham, to name a few. According to the liberal rationality of 'governing', the best way to manage the population is to let civil society and the economy 'be free' by limiting the legitimate exercise of political authority (Dean, 2010:23-24; Rose & Miller, 1992:179; Foucault, 1979:63). This argument is supported by the assumption that both civil society and the economy are naturally self-governing, and any attempt by the state to interfere with the autonomic regulation of these spheres, will immediately render negative consequences for all actors involved (Dean, 2008:33; Foucault, 1979:16; Polanyi, 1944:269). At the heart of these assumptions is the free, rational, self-interested individual, also termed *homo œconomicus*, or the economic man (Foucault, 1979:147, 279; 291,292; Polanyi, 1944:43). *Homo œconomicus* refers to the empirical conception of the subject of interest, whose actions – when left alone – supposedly have a multiplying and beneficial value as they spontaneously converge with the interests of others (Foucault, 1979:270,276; Polanyi, 1944:112). The convergence of interests between an ensemble of *homo œconomicus* (civil society) can be seen as the result of 'the invisible hand' – a teleological concept that presumes the existence of a ubiquitous being that ensures the interests of each individual will benefit society in a broader sense (Foucault, 1979:280). Once again, 'the invisible hand' can only operate solely without the direct interference of government, since the government's interference would allegedly obstruct the interests of individuals and consequently the 'natural order of things' (civil society and the economy). The act of 'governing' according to a liberal rationality is therefore to:

[...] arouse, to facilitate, and to *laisser faire*, in other words to manage and no longer control through rules and regulations. The essential objective of this management will not be so much to prevent things as to ensure that the necessary and natural regulations work, or even to create regulations that enable natural regulations to work [...] the fundamental objective of governmentality will be mechanisms of security, or, let's say, it will be state intervention with the essential function of ensuring the security of the natural phenomena of economic processes or processes intrinsic to population (Foucault, 1978c:451).

From this explanation, one gets the idea that 'good governance'²² takes place when it does not interfere with the 'natural' order of things. 'Good government' governs according to a certain 'natural truth', where the 'free market' serves as a privileged domain to determine the effects and excesses of government (Dean, 2002:41; Foucault, 1979:32). Similar to the notion of *homo œconomicus*, the market also appears as something that functions according to 'natural laws' i.e. spontaneous mechanisms. Consequently, it is assumed that when left alone, the market reveals the 'natural' and therefore 'true' price of commodities and services, rendering it to be the

²² I acknowledge the conceptual baggage associated with this term (see Doornbos, 2001; Weiss, 2000). However, used in this context, 'good governance' refers to the manner in which the act of government is judged based on the principles of liberalism. Liberal government is considered 'good', since it governs according to 'natural truths'.

optimal way to regulate society (Berthoud, 2010:74; Foucault, 1979:32-33). Based on the natural mechanism of the market and the formation of 'natural prices', we are able to examine what government does, the measures it takes, and the rules it imposes (Foucault, 1979:32). For that reason, Hindness (2005:395) explains that the image of the market as a decentralised mechanism within a liberal rationality becomes a powerful metaphor for good government on two different levels. Firstly, individuals are thought to be governed by the reactions of others with whom they interact – or at least those that constitute the population governed according to a liberal rationality – where these interactions are expected to be peacefully conducted, with the market itself providing the most obvious example (Hindness, 2005:395). Secondly, it is assumed that in the long term these interactions with others will influence the internal standards that individuals use to regulate their own behaviour, for example by influencing their sense of good and bad, acceptable or unacceptable and so forth (Hindness, 2005:395).

Foucault specifically identified this type of governmentality with the emergence of Neoliberalism in the twentieth century, a distinct form of Liberalism²³ (Hamann, 2009:38; Death, 2008:34; Foucault, 1979:131). Similar to the classical forms of liberalism, neoliberalism is wary of interventionist government policies and seeks to extend the rationality of the market, the schemes of analysis it offers and the decision-making criteria it suggests, to domains which are not exclusively or primarily economic (Foucault, 1979:323). This can be seen in the privatisation of traditional public responsibilities such as health care, education, welfare or social security. According to a neoliberal governmentality, social issues such as poverty, unemployment, racism, sexism or environmental degradation are all private matters and best left to be addressed by the market principles, since the state does not have the capacity to govern everything for the best, as opposed to the ability of the market to pick out winners (Hamann, 2009:40; Rose & Miller, 1992:198; Foucault, 1979:323).

Neoliberal government therefore strives to create social conditions to ensure that individuals feel compelled to assume market-based values in all of their judgments and practices, in order to accumulate sufficient quantities of human capital and thereby become 'entrepreneurs of themselves' (Hamann, 2009:38; Rose & Miller, 1992:198). When individuals' self-esteem is improved, they will supposedly be more sensitised toward others, and consequently the previously mentioned social issues can be addressed through voluntary incentives (Binkley,

²³ Though rooted in classical forms of liberalism, Foucault explains that the difference between liberalism and neoliberalism is the distinct manner in which neoliberal government applies the principles of the market into the overall government of the population, i.e. civil society. In liberal terms, civil society appeared as an arena separate from the economic sphere and the role of government was to let market principles determine the functioning of the economy, without extending these principles to the regulation of civil society. For example, whereas *homo oeconomicus*, according to liberal thought is a man of exchange, acting towards his rational interests; *homo oeconomicus* in neoliberal terms is an entrepreneur of himself (Foucault, 1979:226). *Homo oeconomicus* is responsible for his own capital, for the production of his own satisfaction. Those individuals, who fail to thrive under such social conditions, have nothing to blame but themselves (Hamann, 2009:38).

2009:68; Hamann, 2009:39). For example, churches, universities and large corporations institutionalise the mandatory training of employees in areas such as personal development and self-management, to encourage individuals to become 'better' through the promotion of fitness training, lifestyle management programmes, self-help or personal power technologies (Hamann, 2009:39; Binkley, 2009:67; Donzelot, 1991:278). Through the empowerment of free, responsible and self-governing subjects, the values of the market are paralleled and mirrored by the 'freedom of civil society' (Death, 2008:35). Hence, *homo œconomicus* and civil society are two inseparable entities, as civil society represents the ensemble of 'free economic beings' (Foucault, 1979:296). To be 'free' in this sense is therefore to:

[...] be attached to a polity whose certain civilised modes of conducting ones existence are identified as normal, and simultaneously to be bound to those 'engineers of the human soul' who will define the norm and tutor individuals as to the ways of living that will accomplish normality (Rose, as cited by Death, 2008:35).

In other words, although they appear 'free' in neoliberal discourse, *homo œconomicus* as well as civil society are managed by an ensemble of governmental procedures. Indeed, they constitute 'technologies of government' instead of being historical-natural givens as often described in neoliberal discourse (Foucault, 1979:297). The technologies of government refer to strategies, programmes and techniques used by governmental entities to shape the 'conduct of conduct' of others, by structuring possible fields of action that will impel individuals to take market-based actions that will eventually secure the wellbeing of society. By referring to them as 'technologies of government', Foucault (1979:298) does not deny the existence of civil society or *homo œconomicus*, but suggests that they are transactional realities, i.e. born from the interplay of relations of power and everything which eludes them. In addition, civil society and *homo œconomicus* are essentially two inseparable elements:

Homo œconomicus is, if you like, the abstract, ideal, purely economic points that inhabit the dense, full, and complex reality of civil society. Or alternatively, civil society is the concrete ensemble within which these ideal points, economic men, must be placed so that they can be appropriately managed²⁴ (Foucault, 1979:296).

Described in the manner above, civil society and *homo œconomicus* gets redefined from being passive objects of government 'to be acted upon' into entities that are both subjects²⁵ and objects of government (Sending & Neumann, 2006:658). Civil society becomes an object of government as it's inherently variable contours create a 'problem of security', requiring governmental intervention through the construction of programmes in order to making 'the real programmable' (Rose & Miller, 1992:183) Indeed, Rose and Miller (1992:181) claim that the act

²⁴ Therefore, although I mainly mention 'civil society' from here on, it is not meant to exclude *homo œconomicus*, since the reality of both will cease to exist without the other.

²⁵ Here, Hindness's metaphor of the image of the market becomes relevant. Civil society becomes objects and subjects of government in the sense that the *homo œconomicus* or economic men 'conduct' their action according to governmental knowledge-power (through governmental interventions) that have influenced the internal standards that regulate their behaviour (Hindness, 2005:395). As mentioned previously in the Foucauldian notion of power, *homo œconomicus* becomes the point of application in the network of power-knowledge.

of 'governing' has always been a '*problematizing*' activity, destined to be addressed through the construction of programmes – a realm of designs put forward by philosophers, political economists, philanthropists, government reports, committees of inquiry, proposals by charities, professionals and so on. Therefore, civil society's inherently variable contours open the space for the innovation of a range of political technologies of government, as its transactional reality enables the invention of 'problems' that require governmental intervention (Rose & Miller, 1992:184; Burchell, 1991:141).

Governing a 'global civil society' through programmes

According to Gordon (1980:245), the notion of constructing programmes for the formation of a social reality has been characteristic of Western discourses on 'governing' for the past four centuries. In these discourses, objects-domains such as 'civil society' are defined and portrayed as target areas of intervention, subject to certain determinants, rules, norms and processes that can be acted upon and improved by authorities. Programmes make the objects of government conceivable in a way that their 'problems' appear susceptible to diagnosis and prescription, and cured by calculating and normalising interventions (Rose & Miller, 1992:181). Thus, every programme either articulates or presupposes *knowledge* of the field of reality upon which it is destined to intervene and calculated to construct (Gordon, 1980:248). The underlying assumption of this technology of government is that, for programmes to be effective, an adequate amount of knowledge has to be accumulated regarding the objects upon which this form of governmental power is exercised (Gordon, 1980:248). Here, the images of Western governments' programmes to address 'problems of underdevelopment' in the Global South become apparent. For example, Escobar (1995) famously analysed and explained the invention of the 'Third World' as an object-domain in Western development discourse, defined and described as in dire need to be configured through normalising interventions such as development programmes. In this example, the image of civil society as explained by Foucault extends to an image of a 'global civil society'²⁶, requiring the governmentality analysis to be applied to global relations of power. Indeed, one of the main critiques against governmentality scholars has been the neglect of relating governmentality to study forms of power relations beyond national borders (Hindness, 2005).

The adoption of a governmentality 'lens' to study global politics means to analyse the manner in which the 'conduct of conduct' is carried out from a distance by a multiplicity of actors transgressing conventional barriers such as state/non-state and international/domestic (Death,

²⁶ I acknowledge that this is a contested concept (Joseph, 2010:234; Lipschutz, 2005). However, as applied in this sense and specifically to the governance of 'international development', it exemplifies the manner in which the Third World became a problem of government in a 'global civil society'. As applied in this context, global civil society represents a transactional reality constructed by power-relations in the North, and for the Global South to be part of this society, it needed improvement through development programmes (Sabogal, 2009:78).

2008:36). Governmentality scholars are therefore concerned with the technologies of global governance: the strategies, techniques and procedures through which a variety of different forces seek to render programmes operable as well as the means by which a multitude of connections are established between the aspirations of authorities and the activities of individuals or groups (Rose & Miller, 1992:181). This dissertation draws attention to the relation between the conceptualisation of development and the aspirations, desires or interests of authorities, individuals or groups which result in the justification of biofuel land deals (Ove, 2013:318). More specifically, I look at the governing effect of development, i.e. the ways in which it shapes the 'conduct of conduct' of others, based on neoliberal rationalities of 'how to develop'. Furthermore, I aim to study the manner in which the neoliberal governmentality of development establishes a multitude of connections/ power relations that determines land access in Africa. I refer to a variety of biofuel investments in Africa for the cultivation of crops to produce biofuel, which have attracted large amounts of money through foreign direct investment (FDI). These investments can be seen as attempts of governing in response to a host of 'problems' in global civil society. As mentioned, the surge in land acquisitions for the production of biofuel in the past decade is a result of the convergence of a host of crises: climate change, depleting energy sources and, in order to justify these land acquisitions, the on-going problematisation of underdevelopment in the Global South (Akram-Lodhi, 2013:121; Borras *et al.*, 2011:215; Cotula *et al.*, 2009).

Although a governmentality perspective of global politics does not share the ontological assumptions of global governance literature typically grounded in positivist analyses of zero-sum politics, it nevertheless covers similar ground. For example, a variety of studies have been conducted to examine the manner in which governance is exercised by and through actors such as the UN, the WTO, the World Bank, the IMF, NGOs and social movements as well as states, regional organisations, scientific bodies, multinational organisations, international development partners and so forth (Death, 2008:38; Abrahamsen, 2004). However, compared to mainstream global governance analyses, a governmentality perspective does not see power as a zero-sum game, where an increase in the power and influence of non-state actors simultaneously equals a reduction in state power and authority. Rather, the changing role of state and non-state actors involved in global governance functions ought to be seen as the manner in which this transformation forms part of a certain rationality of government (Sending & Neumann, 2006:652). For instance, I look at how the changing role of the state is shaped by neoliberal discourses of development that promotes the establishing of a land market and incentives to promote 'investor friendly' environments that necessitates minimal state interference. Thus, a governmentality analysis of global politics looks at how discourse shapes the subjectivities, interests and actions of actors in the global sphere, and how these produce global power relations.

The discourses I focus on in this dissertation include, as mentioned, development, biofuels, the discursive representations of farmland in Africa as well as South-South Cooperation. I analyse the manner in which these discourses enabled the innovation of global governance technologies to govern the 'conduct of conduct' of societies in the Global South, and their implications for land access. However, despite the advantages that a governmentality perspective entails for the comprehension of rationalities and modalities of power, there has been very little interest in the global dimensions of governmentality and its relevance to the study of international development (Ove, 2013:311). In this dissertation, I attempt to bridge this gap between the global dimensions of governmentality and its relevance to the study of international development, by analysing the manner in which development discourse produces power relations as a result of a range of global governing activities that seeks to normalise the Global South. More specifically, despite being rooted in North-South relations, I aim to illustrate the manner in which development knowledge constitutes the ontological being of actors in the Global South, namely BRICS. I look at the ways in which the group's activities 'govern' Africa; how their activities shape the conduct of states and the implication of these conducts for land access.

Global governmentality and development discourse

Lie (2005:3) explains that the concept of 'development' can be understood in two ways: as a reflection of imminent or as intentional change (Lie, as stated by Cowen & Shenton, 2005:3). In the case of imminent change, development refers to the natural change and advancement of society over time, captured by Esteva (2010:4) as 'the transformation that moves towards an ever more perfect form'. In the case of intentional change, it is implied that this transformation requires the external assistance and guidance by someone who already knows the perfect form through the active interference in society, for example development agents and institutions (Lie, as explained by Nustad, 2005:3). Post-development thinkers tend to refer to actors having 'expert' knowledge in fields such as food security, gender equality, agriculture methods, the economy, rural livelihoods etc. in the deployment of development programmes as examples of intentional change to 'transform' society (Escobar, 2007:21; Rist, 2014). These 'experts' supposedly comprehend the required knowledge to address every problem of 'underdevelopment' in the Third World, a construct coined by the West to refer to 'backward' societies (Coronil, 2008). Here, Derrida's notion of Logocentrism becomes relevant in order to comprehend the manner in which Western discourses give reality to identities such as the Third World (Tyson, 2006:255-257; Derrida, 2005; Hall, 2000; Edkins, 1999:70; Laclau, 1996:48;).

Derrida asserts that Western thought occurs in binary terms, for example: spoken/written; good/evil; man/woman and in this case, developed/underdeveloped (Edkins, 1999:66). Logocentrism assumes the priority of the first term and conceives the second term in relation to

it as a compilation, negation or disruption of the first (Edkins, 1999:66; Tyson, 2006:256). Hence identities such as developed/underdeveloped are oppositional, they are 'never simply neutral but are inevitably hierarchical' (Devetak, 2005:168). This hierarchy of binary opposites occur as one of the two terms (i.e. one of the two societies, or groups of people) are more privileged and consequently more able to connote an identity, propriety or fullness and thereby determining what the opposing entity requires in order to be 'normal' (for example developed, versus underdeveloped) (Edkins, 2007:98; Edkins, 1999:77; Devetak, 2005:169; Zalewski, 2006:29).

'Development' supposedly serves as a means to address this hierarchy, with the North being in the position to not only define the opposing identity, but also the processes required to 'normalise' the opposed identity, the 'Other'²⁷. For example, Chandra Mohanty (1988) notes how western feminist discourses homogenise women in the Global South as experiencing the same kinds of oppression, exploitation, needs or problems. In particular, Mohanty explains the manner in which these scholars refer to the implementation of stricter development policies as a remedy for the hardship that all women in the Third World experience. Similarly, Bankoff (2001) writes how Western discourses of development, disasters and tropicity have rendered the Third World unsafe, due to the high frequency of natural and man-made disasters supposedly occurring in these areas²⁸. In addition to being unsafe, inhabitants of the Third World are especially described vulnerable, as they risk losing the little that they have, which will ultimately worsen their condition of 'underdevelopment'. It is suggested that Western medicine, investments and science can be used as remedies to prevent disasters from happening (Bankoff, 2001:28).

Thus, processes of normalisation through 'development' constitute a central task of global governance. For example, Zanotti (2005:471) shows how the UN applies discourses of 'good governance' to normalise 'disorderly states'. This process of normalisation entails the creation of quantitative monitoring mechanisms that not only hierarchize statal development performance, but also allow states to conduct self-assessment with regard to its achievements of international 'development' benchmarks, for example the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)²⁹ (Zanotti,

²⁷ Here, 'Other' refers to the identity of the opposing group of people in Western binaries. Rooted in post-colonial critique, Tyson (2006:421) explains that the North saw themselves as the embodiment of what human being should be, 'the proper 'self'; native people were considered 'other', different' and therefore inferior to the point of being less than fully human'. This practice is called *othering*, which divides the world between an 'us' (the 'developed' world) and a 'them' (the underdeveloped world).

²⁸ Though not denying the occurrence of disasters, Bankoff focuses on how these discourses entail practises of othering, by contrasting the 'unsafe' Third World with the 'safe' world of the Global North. However, he points out that statistics on the occurrence of disasters should be understood as indicators of trends, rather than precise data, since a precise definition of disasters or the methodological tools for collecting information on them do not exist (Bankoff, 2001:32).

²⁹ Established by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), MDGs form part of the United Nations Millennium Declaration signed by governments across the globe in September 2000, where eight time-bound targets were identified as an attempt to alleviate the development problems faced by the Global South. The MDGs include:

2005:473). Each MDG is accompanied with a set of targets and indicators that monitor the progress of each country that signed the Millennium Declaration in 2000 (United Nations Statistics Division, 2008). In line with Foucault's explanation of normalisation discussed earlier, these performance indicators serve the function of differentiating individual states in a field of comparison, governed by the objective to develop by stipulating the constraint of conformity that must be achieved, in order not to be considered 'abnormal' (Foucault, 1977a:128-183).

Once the 'abnormal' is identified and defined, it translates into a problem, destined to be measured and calculated through quantitative indicators (Esteva, 2010:7; Escobar, 1995:45; Rose & Miller, 1992:183). By making use of economic indicators such as GNP per capita; daily calorie consumption; education; infant mortality; foreign direct investment etc., it is possible to lay claim to a certain knowledge of the problem to be addressed (Brigg, 2000:86; Escobar, 1995:45-46; Rose & Miller, 1992:182). In other words, from a governmentality perspective, the measuring of socio-economic phenomena relating to the 'underdevelopment' of the Third World enables the construction of programmes to 'configure specific locales and relations in ways thought desirable' (Rose & Miller, 1992:182). Development discourse therefore intensifies attempts of governing in the Global South, by creating a problem of 'underdevelopment' which consequently requires the attention of governmental interventions (Ove, 2013; Li, 2007; Lie, 2005; Zanotti, 2005; Watts, 2002). As stated by Watts (2002:12):

To understand development is to grasp how the possible fields of action of others (Foucault, 1982:221) is structured through a variety of technics and micropolitics of power (from the map, to the national statistics, to forms of surveillance) to accomplish, or attempt to accomplish, stable rule through certain sorts of governable objects.

However, as discussed in Chapter One, development relations in the post-war period have frequently been characterised as exploitative and in reality, they worsen the problems of underdevelopment in the Third World (Mkandawire, 2005; Ismi, 2004; Logie & Woodroffe, 1993:307). A central theme of critique of these interventions, for example from dependency theorists such as Andre Gunder Frank (1966:28), is that underdeveloped societies cannot progress in the chain of development, due to the lack of agency in 'setting the rules of the economic game', especially in terms of trade. A state of dependency or underdevelopment results from the notion that countries in the Global South export primary commodities to industrialised countries that then manufacture products out of these commodities and sell them back to poorer countries (Ferraro, 1996). By cooperating with the West, according to Frank (1966:28-29), the so-called Third World will remain 'backward' and never achieve their

the eradication of poverty; the achievement of universal primary education; the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women; the reduction of child mortality; improvement of maternal health; to combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases; ensuring environmental sustainability as well as the development of a global partnership for development (UNDP, 2014).

aspiration of becoming developed. Therefore, only when countries on the periphery³⁰ detach themselves from the core countries, in other words become independent from the core countries, will they develop, specifically through modes of industrialisation. Prior to this process of detachment, the periphery is 'hooked': 'they cannot exist without their dependence, but they also cannot exist with it' (Smith, 1979:279). A popular strategy employed to stimulate industrialisation in Latin American countries such as Argentina, Mexico and Brazil was called Import Substitution Industrialisation (ISI). With the main goal of detaching themselves from the core countries, ISI was an attempt to industrialise the economy by substituting domestically produced goods for manufactured items that had previously been imported (Oatley, 2012:378).

South-South cooperation

Similarly³¹, South-South cooperation shares the objective with Dependency theorists of minimising the Global South's dependence on the Global North. For example, a central objective of South-South cooperation is to strengthen trade relations between the Global South countries, in order to increase 'economic independence and self-reliance' (G77 Ministerial Declaration, 2009). According to the United Nations Organisation for South-South Cooperation (UNOSSC, 2014), South-South cooperation can be defined as:

[...] a broad framework for the collaboration among countries in the Global South within political, economic, social, cultural, environmental as well as technical domains... Developing countries share knowledge, skills, expertise and resources to meet their development goals through concerted efforts.

More importantly, in order to combat exploitation 'South-South cooperation must not be seen as a replacement for North-South cooperation' and the relations between these countries ought to be pursued 'as an expression of South-South solidarity' (G77 Ministerial Declaration, 2009). This entails the recognition of exploitation by the West – ranging from colonial encounters to development interventions – by adhering to principles such as 'equality, mutual respect and mutual benefit' (G77 Ministerial Declaration, 2009; Indonesia Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1955). The Final *Communiqué* of the Bandung conference³² outlines the supposed attempts to address

³⁰ Instead of focusing on the individual society, Dependency theorists' units of analysis are the relations between societies and the manner in which these sets of relations form a world system. These theorists favour a structuralist approach to study phenomena such as inequality and poverty by claiming that one needs to study the nature of the relationship between different countries, which brought about the poverty or inequality (Friedman & Wayne, 1977:401). In addition, it is also assumed that the main relationship between countries in the global political economy is exploitative, simultaneously creating wealth at the poles or the core (Global North) and poverty at the other pole, namely the satellite or periphery (Friedman & Wayne, 1977:401; Ayres & Clark, 1998:89).

³¹ I acknowledge that the methods to achieve economic independence, based on the perspective of Dependency Theorists and South-South cooperation are not the same. Whereas policies formulated as a response to Dependency critique encouraged Import Substitution Industrialisation (ISI), this was not necessarily the case in South-South cooperation (Oatley, 2012:378).

³² The Bandung conference took place from 18 to 24 April 1955 in Bandung, Indonesia. The delegations consisted of 29 countries from Africa and Asia, where the proceedings of the conference emphasised the need for decolonisation and the collective demand for development. In essence, the conference signified the beginning of economic and political cooperation between countries in the Global South (Rist, 2014:82; Indonesia Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1955).

the worsening problems of underdevelopment as a consequence of North-South relations. A prominent solution is promoting and supporting development objectives, regarded as a necessary process that ought to take place through the integration of the Global South into the world economy (Rist, 2014:85-90).

Yet, a careful reading of the *Communiqué* indicates that the concept of development resembles the discourse, hence also the knowledge and 'truths' of the West, namely that the development process can be realised through economic effort, stimulated by foreign capital and modern technology (Rist, 2014:85; Indonesia Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1955). Similar to North-South development encounters, the process of development can also be enhanced through outside assistance, as noted in point two of the Final *Communiqué* (1955):

The participating countries agreed to provide technical assistance to one another, to the maximum extent practicable, in the form of: experts, trainees, pilot projects and equipment for the demonstration purposes, exchange of know-how and establishment of national, and where possible, regional training and research institutes for imparting technical knowledge and skills in co-operation with the existing international agencies.

Thus, although South-South cooperation should theoretically not replace North-South relations, one cannot ignore that qualitatively, South-South development ambitions resembles the knowledge and 'truths' of the Global North. Here, South-South cooperation once again shares a point in the critique made against Dependency theorists, namely that the discourse of development remains unchallenged. Rather, they accept its necessity as well as the supposed requirements to realise the stages of economic growth or modernisation (Rist, 2014:121; Escobar, 1995:80; Manzo, 1991:4-5). Indeed, by intensifying their diplomatic relations through the establishment of multilateral organisations, regional trade agreements, development programmes etc. South-South cooperation contributes to the attempts of 'normalising' the Global South. For example, in this dissertation I look at the diplomatic behaviour of the BRICS countries to promote FDI in land in African countries, with the aim to stimulate development in Africa. I explain the neoliberal rationality of FDI and the attempts to create favourable investor environments, thus establishing power-relations that determine the actors who will benefit from land access.

I follow Ribot and Peluso's (2003) definition of access as 'the ability to benefit from things – including material objects, persons, institutions and symbols'. The focus on *ability* instead of land *rights* as in property theory, relates to the way in which the former brings attention to the wide range of complex and frequently uneven power relations that often prohibit or enable people to benefit from resources (Ribot & Peluso, 2003:155). Hence, by focusing on land I aim to:

...explore the range of powers – embodied in and exercised through various mechanisms, processes, and social relations – that affect people's ability to benefit from

resources. These powers constitute the material; cultural and political-economic strands within the 'bundles' and 'webs' of powers that configure resource access (Ribot & Peluso, 2003:155).

In other words, I argue that the diplomatic activities of the BRICS countries establish certain power relations in favour of neoliberal development actors that determine land access. Thus, as long as a 'developed' society is accepted as an ideal 'state' to be reached, South-South cooperation not only mimics North-South development interventions but is also prone to be characterised as 'exploitative' (Ferrando, 2013; Makki & Geisler, 2011; Woodhouse, 2003; Escobar, 1995:80-82; Manzo, 1991).

From a post-structural perspective, this exploitation stems from the essentialist and universal character of development discourse, articulated through relations of power in the Global North, to be imposed on the 'underdeveloped societies' of the Third World through a host of programmes and interventions. As stated previously, programmes refer to a technique of government that presupposes a certain amount and type of knowledge or 'truth' of the objects upon which it is destined to intervene. However, post-structuralism also recognises the partial character of knowledge: knowledge is always a misconception, as it is always 'in a certain strategic relation which man is placed' which will ultimately define the effect of knowledge (Foucault, 1977b:81; Foucault, 1976:14). As Foucault (1975:9) suggests: there is by no means a relation of natural continuity between subjects of knowledge and the things that knowledge must know. 'There can only be a relation of violence, domination, power, and force, a relation of violation. Knowledge can only be a violation of the things to be known' (Foucault, 1975:9).

For example, in the case of biofuel land investments, I show how the neoliberal ontology of development shape practises of defining land-based activities pursued by the rural communities targeted for investment as 'inefficient', resembling the practice of *terra nullius* implemented by colonial powers' exhibitions to the Global South. Indeed, Coluta *et al.*, (2009:62) specifically note how concepts such as 'idle', 'available' or 'wasteland' are used to justify land-acquisitions, referring to land that is not productively used (i.e. not commercialised). In other words, these concepts frequently entail an assessment of land used for productive means rather than the existence of resource uses. As stated by Coluta *et al.* (2009:62): 'these terms are often applied not to unoccupied land, but to land used in ways that are not perceived as 'productive' by government'. Here, we are reminded of the neoliberal regimes of truth that constitute the episteme of development knowledge production that enframes human existence, and natural entities such as placing land into bare reserves of capital, which increasingly becomes the means through which states succeed in global competition (Joronen, 2013:366). With a focus on biofuel land deals, the following chapter seeks to analyse, through the theoretical perspective outlined in this chapter, the discourses driving biofuel land deals and the manner in

which they embody neoliberal government. Hence, I also look at the governing effects of these discourses, i.e. how they shape the conduct of conduct of actors, especially the state.

Chapter Three

The governmentality of land deals for biofuel production: developing Africa through agricultural industrialisation

This chapter is a discourse analysis of biofuels, land and agricultural development, with the aim to comprehend their implications for land access. To recall, a Foucauldian inspired discourse analysis entails the examination of data – in this case development and poverty reduction policies – in order to identify not only the power-knowledge relations that rendered their existence in the first place, but also to draw attention to the ways in which it shapes ideas, concepts and practises. Ultimately, I aim to illustrate the manner in which the rationality and practises attached to discourses govern land access, by examining how they shape power relations on a national and global level that facilitates the conduction of land deals. In the first section, I situate the land-grab phenomenon in the broader framework of agricultural development, by explaining how the agricultural sector is framed as a ‘sleeping giant’ – i.e. an unproductive, unexplored frontier that supposedly has the potential, through sufficient and sustained capital investment, to realise Africa’s development trajectories. The aim of this section is to explain the power-knowledge relations shaping ideas, concepts and practices that promote land acquisitions for the production of biofuels. In the second section, I focus on the rhetoric of biofuel land deals and how it is often disconnected from social and political realities, by exposing its ignorance towards the uneven and hierarchical power relations that prohibit local communities to benefit from land deals. Lastly, I explain how these discourses govern the action of states, by looking at the range of conducts utilised to create an ‘investor-friendly’ environment that allows the proper functioning of market mechanisms to allocate the fictitious land commodity to its ‘rightful’ owner.

Development discourse and the agricultural sector

In the previous chapter, I discussed how the development concept can be understood as imminent or of intentional change, which requires the adoption of a process that leads to ‘an ever more perfect form’ (Esteva, 2010:4; Lie, 2005:3). I also explained how the Global North has historically been in the position not only to define this process but also represent its ‘perfect form’. Their hegemonic position served as a justification for a range of global interventions with the aim to ‘civilise’ the Other: to ‘assist’ the process of change to reach ‘an ever more perfect form’. Although development interventions in this dissertation typically refer to North-South relations in the post-war period, the previous chapter indicated how this narrative is essentially

rooted in colonialism and the idea of social evolutionism (Coronil, 2008:535; Tyson, 2006:421; Pieterse, 1991:8).

The ideas of social evolutionism underpinning colonial and development endeavours are based upon socially constructed identities of the Global South. These constructs are manifestations of power, attaching particular meanings to the subjects/objects upon which they intervene (Hall, 2000:20). As explained by Stuart Hall (2000:17), identities are constructed within discourses,

[...] produced in specific historical and institutional sites within specific discursive formations and practices, by specific enunciative strategies [...] they emerge within the play of specific modalities of power, and thus are more the product of the marking of difference and exclusion [...]

From this perspective, it is important to view identities and the discursive representations associated with them as subjected to a play of *difference*, constructed across a lack and division from the place of the Other (Hall, 2000:18). Identities solely signify certain meanings because of their capacity to exclude the opposite, by determining – despite being silenced – what the Other ‘lacks’, in order to represent the ‘normal’ (Hall, 2000:18). Derrida explains this process of identification as Logocentrism and characteristic of Western thought: always based on excluding something and establishing a violent hierarchy between the two resultant poles, for example spoken/written; good/evil; white/black; man/woman (Hall, 2000:18; Edkins, 1999:66). As explained previously, Logocentrism assumes the priority of the first term and conceives the second term in relation to it as a compilation, negation or disruption of the first, rendering identities to always be oppositional, they are ‘never simply neutral but are inevitably hierarchical’ (Devetak, 2005:168).

This hierarchy of binary opposites is especially visible when referring to the ways in which development attaches discursive interpretations of the Global North and South as ‘developed/underdeveloped’. In the aftermath of the Second World War, the Global North found themselves in the privileged position – economically, politically and militarily – to connate an identity, propriety or fullness to the Global South, by determining what is needed for them in order to ‘develop’ (Rist, 2014:72; Esteva, 2010; Escobar, 1995). This was especially the case for the US who significantly influenced the discourse of development: the requirements necessary to embark on this process of change; the sacrifices that need to be made; reasons for its necessity, etc. (Rist, 2014:71-72; Esteva, 2010:2; Escobar, 1995:5; Pieterse, 1991:5). Their remarkable influence can be seen in the manner in which the US informed the ideology, policy agenda and activities of international governmental organisations such as the IMF and World Bank (Wade, 2011; Escobar, 2007:21; St.Clair, 2006a; Brigg, 2000:82-83).

Indeed, when discussing the production of development discourse the significance of the close-knit relationship³³ between the World Bank and the US cannot be overlooked, as the World Bank can arguably be described as the most influential agency in the production of development 'knowledge' (Wade, 2011; St.Clair & McNeil, 2011:104; St.Clair, 2006a; Broad, 2006). Due to the World Bank's research capacities, the influence of its lending role in the Global South and the support it draws from the US and other global financial actors renders its activities and ideas to have a unique influence in the production of development discourse, policy ideas and development policy agendas (McNeill & St. Clair, 2011:104; St. Clair, 2006a:77).

In this chapter, I illustrate the manner in which biofuel land deals epitomise World Bank development thinking, by looking at how they intersect with attempts to promote economic growth and reduce poverty. Through a Foucauldian perspective of power and knowledge, this chapter shows how World Bank development discourse exercises and creates global power relations through a net-like organisation where states not only circulate between the threads, but are also in the position of undergoing and exercising this power. Recognising the Western regimes of truth filtering the production of development discourse, as done by international organisations like the World Bank, the implications for BRICS-Africa development cooperation to embody the principles and objectives of South-South cooperation becomes clear. Indeed, the central idea I wish to bring to light is to illustrate the manner in which the very essence of South-South cooperation is a product of development discourse (produced by the neoliberal rationalities that constitute the episteme of the World Bank). To do this, I illustrate the manner in which states, in attempting to promote development, govern land access in their countries. In other words, the ways in which their activities shape the 'conduct of conduct of others' by structuring possible fields of action, and how these activities maintain and extend the network of global power relations historically produced by the West.

This chapter presents a three-fold analysis: I firstly examine the rationalities in which biofuel land deals are 'made right' through representations of the agricultural sector as a frontier of capital accumulation, and how such framings commoditise land. In this discussion, I argue that these framings have paved the way for foreign investors' land access in the current wave of land-grabs. Secondly, I focus on the discourse of biofuels and the manner in which they are represented to the Global South as a 'development opportunity', favouring large-scale intensive

³³ The significance of the World Bank's relationship with the US relates to its privileged position to choose the president of the Bank, which has always been a US citizen (Wade, 2002:217). In addition, the US also enjoys the largest share of votes in the Bank; it's the only member state allowed to exercise a veto on constitutional issues and it makes the single biggest contribution to the International Development Agency (IDA) – the World Bank's soft loan affiliate dedicated to lending financial loans to the poorest countries. Hence, based on the discussion of truth, knowledge and discourse above, the notion of 'how to develop' significantly resembles the historical economic, political and social pathways of the US (Slater, 1995:369; Pieterse, 1991:6).

farming methods that would supposedly stimulate the industrialisation of the agricultural sector. However, by referring to a range of land deals conducted on the continent, the second section of this chapter highlights some of the typical realities associated with biofuel land deals such as, inter alia – environmental destruction, competition for access to water resources as well as the dispossession of local communities.

Lastly, I explain how these discourses govern the action of states, by looking at a range of conducts that create an 'investor-friendly' environment allowing the proper functioning of market mechanisms to allocate the fictitious land commodity to its 'rightful' owner. I look at attempts made by a variety of African states such as Mozambique, Zambia, Ethiopia, Sierra Leone, Tanzania and Mali to create an investor-friendly environment to promote foreign investments in land. Reasons for selecting the latter group of countries include the extent to which these countries' governments embraced the development opportunities purported by the biofuels discourse, along with the amount of available information with regard to not only certain land deals, but also the attempts made to facilitate land deals. Essentially, the aim of this chapter is to look at the ways in which foreign actors' land access is shaped by emphasising how the production of knowledge, collected in discourses of development, biofuels and land, morally justify the subordination of human life to be regulated by the market.

Development, agriculture and land: shaping hierarchies for land access

Initially, the agricultural sector as a source of economic growth received little attention in development discourse (Poole *et al.*, 2013:158; Feldmann & Biggs, 2012:109; Havenik *et al.*, 2007:9; World Bank, 1981:15). When referring to Rostow's stages of economic growth as discussed in Chapter One, one can argue that this neglect is largely a result of the assumption that agricultural activities have little potential to increase economic growth (measured in GNP terms), required for development (see for example, Rosenstein-Rodan, 1943; Lewis, 1954; Scitovsky, 1954; Hirschman, 1985; Jorgenson, 1961; Fei & Ranis, 1966, as identified by Vogel, 1994:136). However, from the 1980s onwards, as noted in World Development Reports (WDR) this image of the agricultural sector was reframed into one that possesses significant potential for addressing development problems in the Third World.

For example, the WDR of 1982, *Agriculture and Economic Development*, suggests that:

The discussion of agriculture stresses a key feature of development experience – the strong experience between agricultural advance and overall economic growth. In virtually all countries where agricultural development has been strong, economic growth has advanced at a rapid rate (WDR, 1982: iii).

Similarly, twenty-six years later, the WDR of 2008, *Agriculture for Development* states:

While the worlds of agriculture are vast and varied, and rapidly changing, with the right policies and supportive investments at local, national and global levels, today's agriculture

offers new opportunities to hundreds of millions of rural poor to move out of poverty (WDR, 2008:1).

In another World Bank (2009) report, *Awakening Africa's Sleeping Giant: Prospects for Commercial Agriculture in the Guinea Savannah Zone and Beyond*, Africa's agricultural sector is described as a 'Sleeping Giant' – a metaphor signifying the potential of agricultural development to alleviate the continent's economic, political and societal problems. The report compares Africa's Guinea savannah – an area that stretches across West Africa and covers an additional belt in southern Africa – with the Cerrado region of Brazil and the Northeast Region of Thailand (World Bank, 2009). The reason for comparing these regions with the Guinea savannah stems from their resemblance in agroclimatic features such as rainfall, soil, and agricultural potential (World Bank, 2009:2; Schoones, 2014). A central argument purported in these reports is that agricultural activities should be industrialised, where Asia's 'Green Revolution' serves as a motivation for the Bank's policy recommendations (Poole *et al.*, 2013:158; Feldmann & Biggs, 2012:109; Havenik *et al.*, 2007:9; World Bank, 1981:15). The Green Revolution refers to a surge of public investments and policy support in agricultural supply-side technologies, which proved to be a successful development strategy (in the sense that it increased GNP) between the 1960s and 1980s in Latin American and Asian countries (Poole *et al.*, 2013:158). To a large extent, this development 'advice' for Africa's agriculture resembles once again the Bank's tendency to apply essentialist, homogenous and universal assumptions to the Global South by arguing, 'if it worked in Asia, it will work in Africa' (Feldman & Biggs, 2012:146; Havenik *et al.*, 2007:15).

Having referred to the significance of the World Bank's influence on development discourse and policy agendas, their reports, especially the WDR – known as the organisation's flagship publication – play a significant part in the generation of development knowledge (McNeill & St.Clair, 2011:104-105; Mawdsley & Rigg, 2002). According to McNeill and St.Clair (2011:104-5), the report serves the purpose of synthesising and advancing what the Bank perceives as 'state-of-the-art development thinking', relating to the topic of that year, for example agriculture, which constituted the theme of the 1982, 1992 and 2008 WDRs. The association of the WDR with the World Bank not only lends them considerable weight and legitimacy, but WDRs have also been an important vehicle for the promotion of 'development thinking' that mirrors the views, values and ideology of hegemonic institutions such as the IMF and the US government (Mawdsley & Rigg, 2002:94; Wade, 2002). In addition, the report's affiliation with the World Bank also grants them a significant research and production budget, which allows the WDR to disseminate a minimum of 50 000 printed English copies (Wade, as explained by Mawdsley & Rigg, 2002:93). By implication, when the image of agriculture became framed as a lucrative source of economic growth and development, as noted in the WDR reports above, it had an

extensive audience and potential to influence the ideas and interest of policy-makers, academics, NGOs, politicians and practitioners.

Based on the 'expert knowledge' purported by the World Bank, from the late 1980s and onwards, an increasing number of African governments adopted a strategy along the lines of Agriculture Development-Led Industrialisation (ADLI), to promote their development status (Prabhakar & Alemu, 2013; Diao, 2010; Jensen & Tarp, 2004). As a development strategy, ADLI emphasizes the necessity of intensifying agricultural productivity through technological innovations and by increasing investment in raising incomes (Adelman, as explained by Vogel, 1994:137). Due to the agricultural sector's productive and institutional links with the rest of the economy, the stimulation of agriculture supposedly produces strong demand incentives (increased rural household consumer demand) and supply incentives (increased food supply without raising prices), which promote industrial expansion (Prabhakar & Alemu, 2013:238; Diao, 2010:5; Teshome, 2006:11; Vogel, 1994:137). Although the measures and policies implemented to promote agricultural development in Africa differ to a certain degree, the main objective of development strategies such as ADLI is to transform agriculture to such an extent that farmers are able to compete in global markets. This is often portrayed by the World Bank as the only means to survive (Poole *et al.*, 2013:158; Hall, 2011; Matondi *et al.*, 2011:5; Havenik *et al.*, 2007:10).

A twin measure coupled with intensifying agriculture is the commercialisation process, which entails the monetisation of agricultural inputs (such as farmland; irrigation; fertilisers; labour; seeds; chemicals and farm equipment) and outputs (crop yields, i.e. the production of a specific commodity) to market evaluation (Sikoni, 2008:158; World Bank, 2008:8; Havenik *et al.*, 2007:57; World Bank, 1982:68). It usually implies a transformation from subsistence production to market-orientated production, where smallholders³⁴ become integrated into the global market economy as global goods and services penetrate rural markets (Sikoni, 2008:158). As such, institutions outside a farming system have significant influence on smallholder agricultural production as they become increasingly integrated into corporate value chains, despite obvious limitations such as a lack of resources, high transaction costs, or biases against smallholder production in policy and procurement practices (Greenberg, 2013:4). Biases against smallholder

³⁴ The conceptualisation of smallholders is contested (see Greenberg, 2013:2; Cousins, 2010; Aliber *et al.*, 2009). Typically, smallholders are defined by using disposable income and the size of farms as measures. For example, Kirsten (as stated by Greenberg, 2013:3) claims that any producer with an annual gross income of less than R500 000 on a holding of 20-80 hectares, can be considered as a smallholder. However, according to Cousins (2011:2) this definition obscures the economic- and race-based differences within the large population of households engaged in agricultural production on a relatively small scale. Such a homogenous perspective of smallholders can have adverse effects on land-reform policies. However, due to limited space, I cannot explore all the contestations associated with conceptualising smallholders. Therefore, based on the limitations indicated by Cousins (2011), smallholders in this dissertation refer to semi-commercial producers. Semi-commercial producers refer to smallholders engaged in commercial agricultural activities that constitute the main source of their income (Cousins, 2011:7; Aliber *et al.*, 2009:150).

production typically stem from the perception that smallholdings, as opposed to intensive, large-scale farming, do not have the potential to contribute significantly to the economic growth of a country. Hence, strategies to stimulate the productivity of the agricultural sector through mechanised farming practices increasingly became statal solutions to address poverty, food insecurity and other problems of underdevelopment.

For example, the Growth and Transformation Programme (GTP) of Ethiopia argue that:

The potential impact of agricultural transformation and food security programs [...] will liberate millions of small farmers from hunger and their historical exclusive concentration on traditional cultivation of subsistence crops, allowing them to significantly contribute to the economic life of the country (MoFED, 2010:82).

Similarly, one of the focus areas in the Mozambican government's plan to combat poverty is to promote economic development through, inter alia:

[stimulating] the structural transformation of agriculture, which involves increasing that sector's productivity and integrating it into the rural sector, the rest of the economy and competition on world markets (GoM, 2007:33).

As the name suggests, the ADLI development strategy therefore aims to intensify the commercialisation of agriculture by emphasising the necessity of industrial processes to increase productivity – resembling Rostow's stages of economic growth as discussed in Chapter One. These processes include for example, the promotion and introduction of agricultural technologies to increase productivity such as higher-yielding and drought resistant crops, improved marketing infrastructure, fertilisers or communication strategies to provide information to farmers about agricultural markets (Diao, 2010:11; Jensen & Tarp, 2004:455). Combined with the commercialisation and industrialisation of agriculture, additional development policy reforms related to agriculture entails the liberalisation of agricultural commodities, the devaluation of domestic currencies, the removal of substantial taxation of agriculture as well as the leasing of land to foreign investors at cheap rates (Prabhakar & Alemu, 2013:238; Anseeuw *et al.*, 2012:10 Hårsmar, 2006:11).

These policy reforms, originating primarily from the SAPs and imposed by the World Bank and the IMF have significantly facilitated and augmented the acquisition of farmland in the recent decade, especially when referring to the manner in which land commodification was amplified. Commodification entails a process whereby objects are turned into a commodity that can be exchanged in the market (Prodnik, 2012:274). Historically rooted in the socio-economic system of capitalism, the commodification process is generally organised around markets and money-mediated exchanges, where their property, or temporary control is transferred between individual or collective actors, and their value crystallised in a price (Carvalho & Rodrigues, 2008:268). According to Polanyi (1945:72), commodities are empirically defined as objects produced for sale on the market, where markets empirically represent actual contacts between

buyers and sellers. For that reason, every element of industry can be regarded as having been produced for sale at some stage, which renders it subject to the supply-and-demand mechanism that interacts with price. However, when referring to the notion of land as a commodity to be exchanged on the market, Polanyi (1945:72) warns that land obviously does not fit the definition of a commodity, as it is not produced or created by human beings and therefore land, along with labour and money, is a fictitious commodity. He explains that:

Labour is only another name for a human activity which goes with life itself, which in its turn is not produced for sale but for entirely different reasons, nor can that activity be detached from the rest of life, be stored or mobilized; land is only another name for nature, which is not produced by man; actual money, finally, is merely a token of purchasing power which, as a rule, is not produced at all, but comes into being through the mechanism of banking or state finance [...] The commodity description of labour, land, and money is entirely fictitious (Polanyi, 1945:72).

Polanyi (1945:71-73) goes on to explain that the inclusion of these fictitious commodities into the market mechanism are means to subordinate the substance of society itself to the laws of the market, as the market mechanism would then be the sole director of the fate of human beings and their natural environment and would eventually result in the demolition of society. This destruction can be seen as a result of the fact that land, as an element of nature, is inextricably interwoven with our institutions, and especially labour (Polanyi, 1945:178). According to Polanyi (1945:178), labour cannot be separated from land: labour forms part of life whilst land remains part of nature, together forming an articulate whole. As such, land is tied up with organisations of kinship, neighbourhood, craft, creed etc. and therefore serves more than an economic function: it ensures stability; it is a site of habitation and a condition of physical safety (Polanyi, 1945:178). The incorporation of land (along with labour) into market mechanisms as a source of wealth creation, either as a result of the wealth buried in it or the exploitation of labour to produce a surplus of food and raw materials essentially requires the destruction of the social and cultural systems of the native community (Polanyi, 1945:178).

Though amplified in the current neoliberal epoch that characterise the dominant rationality for governing social existence, the commodification of land is essentially rooted in colonial endeavours, as mentioned. To recall, in Africa's colonial history, land access was obtained by colonial powers through forms of domination, violence and legally rendering land 'empty' by applying the principle of *terra nullius* (UNPFII, 2012; Makki & Geisler, 2011; Palmer, 2010). The *terra nullius* principle was used by colonial authorities to justify the non-recognition of indigenous peoples' land uses, based on the concept of *mise en valeur* that regards land use as 'effective' only if the land is cultivated by agricultural production (Hodge, 2014). These twin discriminatory concepts therefore justified the colonial powers land access as it was assumed that their land usage would lead to the 'civilisation' of the subaltern (Hodge, 2014).

Despite being free from direct colonial rule, in the past decade land access is once again granted to foreign actors based on assumptions of abundant, uncultivated and idle land in Africa and that – especially in the case of biofuel land deals – the commodification of land will lead to agricultural industrialisation (Franco *et al.*, 2013:5; Clementes & Fernandes, 2013:53; Young, 2012:130-132; Coluta *et al.*, 2009:62; Coluta *et al.*, 2008a:3). Indeed, studies have indicated that in Africa, unforested marginal land amounts to 154 million hectares (Coluta *et al.*, 2008b:14; Matondi *et al.*, 2011:8). However Coluta *et al.*, (2009:62-63) explain that agricultural land described as ‘idle’ typically reflects an assessment of productivity rather than the existence of resource uses: ‘these terms are often applied not to unoccupied lands, but to lands used in ways that are not perceived as productive by government’. Widengård (2011:48) also states that land for biofuel production is identified for the consumption of others by means of satellite imagery, which she describes as a ‘global gaze’ that is ignorant of what is taking place on the ground, in the local social context.

Similar to the *mise en valeur* principle, agricultural lands are considered unproductive if there is little to no support of commercial activities, for instance in the case of pastoralism. For example, the Ethiopian government in 2010 implemented a ‘villagisation’ programme, where communities situated in the Gambella and Omo regions were relocated to give way to land that was simultaneously advertised to foreign investors (Oakland Institute, 2013). Local communities typically engage in land-based activities such as shifting cultivation (where one parcel of land is worked for several years before moving to another area), subsistence farming, fishing and agro-pastoralism, where cattle constitute not only a central part of their livelihood strategy, but also their ethnic identity and cultural patterns (Human Rights Watch, 2012:17). Despite the central role that land plays in community livelihoods, these areas are portrayed as idle, unused and marginal by government officials in order to optimise opportunities for capital accumulation required for development. In this sense, and with some resemblance to the discussion of *homo economicus* in Chapter Two, Carvalho and Rodrigues (2008:274) explains the role of neoliberal rationalities that act as a cognitive simplifier that facilitates commensurability among different goods, thus generating a market evaluation that ignores the value dimensions that cannot be translated into monetary terms. Since land can be translated into monetary terms and it represents an avenue for capital accumulation required for the development and simultaneously the wellbeing of society, its incorporation into the market becomes justified.

With regards to biofuel investments, the depiction of land as ‘marginal’ frequently denotes to an area of farmland characterised by low moisture (semi-arid), poor soil quality and little to no land use (Wendimu, 2013:6; Palmer, 2011; Matondi *et al.*, 2011:5; Coluta *et al.*, 2008a:20). Wendimu (2013) explains that these depictions are often used to attract investors who are interested in cultivating jatropha- a so-called ‘miracle’ crop for the biofuel industry due to its perceived ability

to grow in so-called marginal areas (Wendimu, 2013). According to Bettami and Litaladio (2010: xii), *jatropha* has the ability to grow in semi-arid regions with low nutrient requirements and little care. The non-edible seed typically contains 35 per cent oil, which can be used to make biodiesel. Compared to other crops cultivated to produce biodiesel, *Jatropha* requires minimal irrigation, suggesting that it will not lead to people being dispossessed of their land or threaten food security by influencing the supply and demand signals of food crops which lead to food price increases (Wendimu, 2013; Ribeiro & Matavel, 2009). Franco *et al.* (2010:674) add that the portrayal of land as 'degraded/marginal' can also play more subtle roles, such as providing a means to normalise past degradation to the extent that agro-industrial monoculture becomes an improvement, or to devalue and/or conceal land uses as 'marginal' to global markets. As such, they argue that the concept of degraded/marginal land is an ambiguous normative measure for investigating, classifying and colonising land in the Global South (Franco *et al.*, 2010:674; Borras & Franco, 2010).

In the attempts of African states to un-underdevelopment themselves by focusing on agriculture, land uses such as shifting cultivation, subsistence farming or pastoralism are rendered 'traditional' and problematic, since they neither promote the industrialisation of agriculture nor enable farmers to compete in commodity markets. In this sense, they are not only seen as a culprit preventing economic growth and development, but also unproductive and problematic. For example, Dr Joseph Sam Sesay, Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Food Security of Sierra Leone stated that:

You need to commercialise by providing machinery, labour-saving equipment. You know hoes and cutlasses are not anything for agriculture anymore. You can use them for small jobs, but go out in the West, in America, we are talking about machines (cited by Mousseau & Sosnoff, 2011:12)

Similarly, in the villagisation programme action plan of the Gambella's Peoples' National Regional State (GPNRS, 2003³⁵:1), the regional Ethiopian government claimed that:

Although the Gambella Region is endowed with natural resources suitable to expand agricultural production it is one of [the most] food unsecured areas of the country. Traditional/ cut&burn farming practises, scattered settlement; and river side settlement are the causes for the vulnerability among others [...] This program has got support from the beneficiaries and is meant to give access to socio-economic infrastructures and to exercise good governance [...] to find solution to this paradox.

These arguments exemplify the manner in which development is equated with the values of the market, efficiency and profit-making which act as 'cognitive simplifiers' that generate a market evaluation which ignores value dimensions that cannot be translated into monetary terms (Wood, as stated by Carvalho & Rodrigues, 2008:273). Likewise, it illustrates how the neoliberal

³⁵ The principal calendar used in Ethiopia is the Amharic calendar. On the Gregorian (Julian, or Western) calendar, the year of publication is 2010. The reason for the seven year difference is a result of alternate calculation in determining the annunciation of Jesus (Blunt, 2007).

rationalities of government informing the activities of states, become a mode of power with new spatial formations justified with regard to its survival in a whirlpool of global capital (Joronen, 2013:357). According to Joronen (2013:357), this role of the state shows how neoliberalisation is a process of ontological violence, which does not merely govern the conduct of individuals by encouraging a particular form of subjectivity, but also depicts all entities for the use of market forces. These processes violently frame human existences, as well as natural entities such as land, into bare reserves of capital, which increasingly become the means through which states succeed in global competition (Joronen, 2013:366). The following section looks at biofuel land deals in Africa: the size of land acquired, the type of farming associated with biofuel land deals and their effect on social organisation within the local community. In this discussion, I aim to illustrate the manner in which the discourses of biofuels and development underpinning land deals frame, as Joronen (2013) suggests, human existence and land as reserves of capital.

Commercial agriculture, land and biofuels: discourse versus realities

The recent surge in land interest brought by the convergence of a number of global crises has specifically intensified the commodification of farmland in Africa, especially for the production of biofuels. As mentioned, the specific interest in farmland for biofuels stems from the mandatory blending quotas placed by countries across the globe, between biofuels and fossil fuels, to be used in the transport sector. The promotion of renewable energy sources such as biofuels for transport use was intensified by situations of peak oil and the realisation of depleting energy sources, but specifically the lingering fear of climate change. According to Barry (as cited by Widengård, 2011:47), the construct of climate change brought with it the conceptualisation of a 'planetary consciousness' as it embodies a result of man's economic activities and his relationship with nature. The global scale of this consciousness entails an interconnectedness that is bound by the notion that we, as humans inhabiting the planet, 'share the same blame, fate and responsibility for the problems and for the solutions' (Barry, as quoted by, Widengård 2011:47). Biofuels are therefore considered 'green' or 'environmentally friendly', giving them a rather persuasive element by tapping into the 'planetary consciousness', and presenting a solution to both the global environmental crisis of climate change and energy insecurity.

Moreover, to the Global South, biofuels represent an opportunity to address an additional problem: that of underdevelopment. Based on the assumption that Africa has large reserves of unused or under-utilised farmland, these areas are enframed as 'reserves of capital', which can potentially enhance Africa's development prospects (Matondi *et al.*, 2011:8; McMichael, 2010). Since biofuel plantations typically require intensive, large-scale farming practices to produce a small percentage of usable liquid for blending, they signify a means to industrialise agriculture, i.e. making it more 'productive' by replacing subsistence farming with commercial farming (Poole *et al.*, 2012; Coluta *et al.*, 2008; Havenik *et al.*, 2007; Holt-Giménez, 2007:2). Biases

towards large-scale farming are justified by the rationality that large-scale producers are more able to compete on global markets, hence more likely to flourish (Havenik *et al.*, 2007:11). For example, the size of farmland allocated to foreign investors producing biofuels in Mozambique is usually more than 5000 hectares and has escalated to 30 000 ha, as the 2007 ProCana³⁶ land transfer illustrates (Nhantumbo & Salamá, 2010; Sulle *et al.*, 2014; Borrás *et al.*, 2011). The same goes for Ethiopia, which has allocated land for biofuel production to foreign investors up to the size of 100 000 ha and more. Table 3.1 summarises the size of land demand for biofuels in Africa from investors situated in the Global North and South.

Table 3.1: Size of land demand for biofuel plantations

Investor	Country of Origin	Target country	Size
Karuturi Global	India	Ethiopia	100 000 ha
Hunan Dafengyuan Agriculture Co Ltd.	China	Ethiopia	25 000 ha
Greater Kingdom Group	China	DRC	10 000 ha
ZTE China Oil, palm	China	DRC	100 000 ha
Petromoc	Mozambique	Mozambique	74 000 ha
Odebrecht	Brazil	Angola	55 000 ha
Emami Biotech	India	Ethiopia	80 000 ha
Chadha Agro	India	Ethiopia	122 000 ha
Altie Steenkamp, Mozambique Biofuel Industries (MBFI)	South Africa	Mozambique	11 000 ha
Grown Energy	South Africa	Mozambique	15 000 ha

³⁶ In November 2010, the Mozambican government revoked ProCana's contract as it failed to meet its planned targets within three years, as specified by the country's investment act (Sulle *et al.*, 2014). In October 2011, the same area of land was allocated to another company named Massingir Agro-Industrial (MAI), a consortium made up of a 51 per cent shareholding by the South African company Transvaal Suiker Beperk (TSB) and 49 per cent by a conglomerate of Mozambican businessmen known as SIAL (Limpopo Agro-Industrial Investment Company) (Sulle *et al.*, 2014; Hall & Paradza, 2012).

Zambeze			
Petromoc	Mozambique	Mozambique	74 000 ha
MAI-TSB	South Africa and Mozambique	Mozambique	30 000 ha
Siva Group	India	Cameroon	200 000 ha
ADERCI	Côte d'Ivoire	Côte d'Ivoire	1 000 000 ha
Indian Government	India	Guinea	180 000 ha
Indian Government	India	Guinea	2 000 000 ha
Indian Government	India	Guinea	150 000 ha
ZTE	China	Kenya	50 000 ha
Green Waves	Italy	Benin	250 000 ha

Sources: *Biofuels Digest* (2011); Mousseau & Sosnoff (2011a); Rahmato, (2011); *Land Matrix* (2015) and *GRAIN* (2013).

These figures, though not exhaustive, illustrate the vast tracts of land required for industrial biofuel production, typically accompanied by large-scale, commercial farming methods. These farming methods include the use of modern farming technologies to increase yields, such as fertilisers, tractors and other machinery replacing human labour to improve productivity. Since such methods represent the most efficient means to promote economic growth through agriculture, they are seen as a means to promote rural development in African countries as they are coupled with 'knowledge transfers' concerning the use of large-scale farming methods. In addition, they will presumably create job opportunities and trigger certain spill-over effects such as infrastructure, schools, or local public services such as hospitals, shops, etc. (Franco *et al.*, 2013; Widengrård, 2011:52; Hall, 2011:194; McMichael, 2010:615; Coluta *et al.*, 2008;).

However, it should be mentioned that in the majority of land deals, the promised spill-overs did not accrue and often led to the further marginalisation of rural communities and increased competition for access to resources, especially water. For example, when the Indian floriculture giant Karuturi obtained a land lease from the regional government in Gambella, the company promised to build schools, health facilities and infrastructure (Mousseau & Sosnoff, 2011a:30; Rahmato, 2011:13, 26). Yet, reported outcomes of the Karuturi land deal did not illustrate a 'win-win' situation for the people in Gambella (Mousseau & Sosnoff, 2011a:30; Rahmato, 2011:13, 26; ASO, 2013). According to the Anywaa Survival Organisation (ASO), Karuturi

illegally cleared 300 000 hectares in the area, causing serious destruction to locally protected trees, holy sites and wild animals as well as destroying local construction materials and blocking water passage routes (ASO, 2013). The Anuak community living along the Openo River have especially been impacted by increased flooding that was caused by Karuturi's practices, which destroyed their crops and grazing lands.

Karuturi's practices, enabled by Gambella's villagisation programme also contributed to increased food insecurity in the region. For example, according to Obang Metho, Executive Director of the Solidarity Movement for a New Ethiopia, before the government's villagisation programme, they were food secure. 'But now, they are pushed to depend on food aid [provided by international donors to the government]. The system is backwards to make the self-reliant people dependent on the government' (Oakland Institute, 2013:7). Indeed, on a macro-level, it is also important to point out the irony regarding the government's claim that the villagisation programme will improve food security in the region, as biofuel production is frequently associated with worsening food insecurity. Food insecurity caused by biofuel production can be seen as a result of the manner in which large-scale agricultural lands are cultivated for the production of edible, carbohydrate-rich crops, which are not to be eaten, but used for transport. This sends misleading signals to farmers regarding supply and demand of a certain food commodity, rendering food prices to increase, as seen in the 2008/09 global food crisis. Although the relationship between the production of food crops for biofuel purposes and rising food prices is complex (Babcock, 2008), the linkage can be seen as a result of the manner in which the global biofuel complex³⁷ sends out distorted signals with regard to the demand and supply of a certain food commodity. Since the majority of a certain food crop gets used for non-food purposes the supply decreases, which causes food prices to rise. In other cases, demand and supply signals are linked to derivatives used by financial speculators who send out misleading signals to farmers concerning the demand of a specific agricultural commodity. In the latter example, farmers would overproduce a certain food crop, leading to financial loss for farmers (Akram-Lodhi, 2013:123; Hall, 2011:169-197; McMichael, 2010; Borras *et al.*, 2010; Coluta *et al.*, 2009:12-14). Moreover, the increasing demand for arable land that constitutes a significant source of food security for rural communities, threatens the land access to millions of smallholders or subsistence farmers whose land uses are labelled inefficient or unproductive, according to market-based rationalities.

³⁷ Borras *et al.*, (2010:576) refers to the global biofuel complex as the process that expanded the global biofuel industry in the past decade as a response to an assumed energy crisis. Accordingly, they explain that this process of increased interest in biofuel production implies the global commodification of a time-honoured local energy supplement and the consolidation of corporate power in the energy and agribusiness sectors (Borras *et al.*, 2010:576).

In addition, in his fieldwork conducted in the Gambella region where Karuturi's investment took place, Rahmato (2011:25) claimed that the company did not make any significant infrastructural or social investments in the area, except for repairing and widening an old dirt track leading from the main road to the project site, as well as providing some plastic sheeting to a community school. Likewise, in another land acquisition conducted for biofuel production in Oromia, a region that stretches across central Ethiopia and supposedly most suitable for biofuel production, Emami Biotech, an Indian company based in Kolkata, promised to establish schools, health services and water wells in the Mieso District, where it acquired land (IANS, 2009; MME, 2007:8). According to Wendimu (2013:12), the company created jobs for about 160 people during the initial phase of the project for land clearing, land preparation and the planting of jatropha seedlings. When asked about the promises made by the company in return for the allocation of communal land, the community and company project managers got into conflict, creating an atmosphere of insecurity and sprouts of violence in the region (Wendimu, 2013:12).

Similarly, in a Mozambican biofuel land deal conducted by Massingir Agro-Industrial (MAI), the local community's land-based livelihood strategies were also disrupted as they increasingly competed for land access with MAI. Quoting Rauline Baloyi (2013), president of the local small-scale farmers' association in Massingir, at a Pan African Land Hearing:

[...] As women, we don't have access to the forest for firewood-collecting – we as women have to work harder, and walk further, to fetch water and firewood, because the company has taken all the land around us. Now a new company, MAI, has come to take over [...]

Indeed, the question of gender poses a serious threat concerning land deals, as the majority of agricultural activities are conducted by women, yet women are rarely involved in the consultation process and almost never sign the respective reports or documents (Nhantumo & Salamão, 2010:35; Vermeulen & Coluta, 2010:909; Coluta *et al.*, 2009:28). According to Alano (2015) gendered power relations shaping land access and control can often be traced up to the national level, where the formal procedures conducted by the investor and the implementation of the state's land governance policy that confines the parameters of tenure rights are normally in favour of the company. A number of cases illustrates how biofuel land deals are typically conducted in a way that disproportionately benefits men more than women, as a result of incentive mechanisms used by the investors, local state actors and community elites, rendering land control over to the company (Alano, 2015; Park & Maffi, 2015; Borras *et al.*, 2010; Coluta *et al.*, 2008:24). Vermeulen and Coluta (2010) state that community consultations often constitute of village elders, officials and elites, where little effort is being made to include specific significant social groups, such as women or pastoralists. Additional challenges concerning community consultations entail the absence of mechanisms to identify or resolve different priorities and preferences among members of communities as well as poor information flows to communities. The latter is reflected in records of meeting often being incomplete, where

communities do not have the opportunity to approve minutes. Also, consultations are frequently a once-off event opposed to recurring interaction throughout the implementation of the project (Vermeulen & Coluta, 2010:910).

For instance in 2009, UK-based³⁸ Sun Biofuels acquired approximately 8 211 hectares in Kisarawe, Tanzania – of which 2000 hectares were used for jatropha plantations. According to the Oakland Institute (2012), when Sun Biofuels began the process of acquiring land in Kisarawe, they approached the eleven villages surrounding the targeted area, which involved meetings between representatives and village assemblies. According to local individuals who reported to the Oakland Institute, Sun Biofuels apparently made populist promises of employment generation and the construction of roads, schools, water wells and clinics, aiming to portray the land deal as a ‘win-win’ situation. Based on the local communities’ verbal consent, Sun Biofuels continued to emphasise the material benefits that would be realised from the land deal, but never codified these into a formal contract, making it hard for the local people to hold the company accountable for its failure to deliver on the promises. Overall, apart from the destruction of the local communities’ livelihoods, Oakland Institute (2012) framed the consultation process as being ‘one-sided’, where only information about material benefits was given and not how much and where land would be acquired. As stated by an inhabitant from the Palaka Village (cited by the Oakland Institute, 2012):

We agreed verbally to give our land to the investors because we wanted their promises of social services in the area, but we don’t know exactly how much land per person was taken as we have no documents and plans to let us know where our land starts and finishes. I did not know my land laws and land rights so didn’t understand what I had agreed to until my land was gone, and I received no compensation.

Another potential threat posed by biofuel land deals for local communities is increasing competition for water resources. According to Borras *et al.* (2011:223), land deals for biofuel production are almost always accompanied by water-grabs: not only do they require extensive irrigation which limits a community’s water supply, but the chemical fertilisers used for cultivation can potentially pollute water sources. For instance, to produce a litre of ethanol, three to five litres of irrigation water is required, which amounts to up to 13 litres of waste water. Consequently, 113 litres of natural gas is needed to treat this waste, which increases the likelihood of waste being released into the environment, polluting streams, rivers and groundwater (Holt-Giménez, 2007:2).

The likelihood of biofuel land deals becoming water-grabs is also increased by discourses around jatropha’s perceived ability to grow on so-called ‘marginal’ land (Wendimu, 2013).

³⁸ I recognise that this example does not entail South-South land investments. However, due to the limited literature capturing the effects of biofuel land deals, I add this example merely to provide some insight to the ways in which land acquisitions often take place and how it contrasts with its discursive representations. Also, these examples are illustrative of the manner in which development discourses create a hierarchy of power relations in favour of commercial interests.

However, recent jatropha plantations disproved initial claims of the crop's ability to grow in semi-arid areas and with minimal irrigation (Wendimu, 2013; African Biodiversity Network *et al.*, 2010). For example, in 2009 Emami Biotech stated that it will take up plantation of biofuel crops, mainly jatropha, but also other edible and non-edible oil seeds, on the 100 000 acres of land allocated to them by the Oromia Investment Commission (IANS, 2009). When the project came to an end in 2011, the jatropha crops not only delivered disappointing results but also led to the exploitation of workers, as companies pay farmers lower prices per unit compared to traditional food crops. Additionally, jatropha (as well as other biofuel crops) does not necessarily improve domestic energy security, as most of the biofuel feedstock is exported for processing and sale in the European and Asian markets (Wendimu, 2013; Borras *et al.*, 2011; African Biodiversity Network *et al.*, 2010; McMichael, 2010). Moreover, due to the poor performance of jatropha in marginal areas, more and more companies are requesting nutritious and arable soil for biofuel investments (Vermeulen & Coluta, 2010:903). Due to the quality of soil, these areas are typically more populated, threatening land access and the livelihood strategies of millions of communities.

Although the discussions above refer to a small number of biofuel land deals, they are nevertheless representative of the majority of deals conducted in the Global South, reminding one of Polanyi's depiction that the incorporation of land to the market essentially necessitates the destruction of social and cultural systems of the local community (Franco *et al.*, 2013; Anseeuw *et al.*, 2012; Borras *et al.*, 2011; Li, 2011; Vermeulen & Coluta, 2010; Borras *et al.*, 2010; McMichael, 2010; Ntantumo & Salamá, 2010; Coluta *et al.*, 2008a). Yet, despite the often controversial results of biofuel land deals, they are nevertheless justified based on the perceived ability to accelerate Africa's agricultural modernisation, not only by the World Bank but also by African governments. Indeed, discourses of development and the agricultural sector, biofuels and climate change has significantly influenced the way in which land access is governed in Africa.

As mentioned, I follow Ribot and Peluso's (2003:153) conceptualisation of access being the *ability* to derive benefit from things, including material objects, persons, institutions and symbols. The focus on ability brings attention to the wide range of complex and frequently uneven power relations that often prohibit or enable people to benefit from resources (Ribot & Peluso, 2003:155). In the discussion thus far, I have aimed to explore the ways in which processes of *knowledge* production collected in discourses prohibit or enable people to benefit from land. Based on Foucault's explanation of power, knowledge, discourse and government, this section showed how actors' land access is shaped by discourses that incorporate land into global markets, based on assumptions that actors acquiring land on the market are the most rightful owners of the fictitious land commodity. Such patterns of land use can be seen as a result of the

ways in which neoliberal rationalities that underpin discourses of development, biofuels and land, govern land access, i.e. determining who gets to benefit from land access, by creating 'investor-friendly' conditions that allow the 'invisible hand of the market' to determine who gets to benefit or not from land access. As illustrated thus far, the legitimacy of market mechanisms to be the director of land access is based on the ways in which discourses of agricultural development and biofuels have framed land as a frontier of capital accumulation, supposedly much-needed for the wellbeing of society. In the following section, I look at another dimension of land governance: the manner in which discourses conduct the conduct of the state.

Governing Africa: incentives to facilitate FDI

Burdened with the identity of being 'underdeveloped', along with the framing of agriculture as the Sleeping Giant of Africa's development trajectories, biofuel production signifies an opportunity for Africa to promote the continent's development and simultaneously the wellbeing of its inhabitants. As previously discussed, the development opportunities associated with biofuel discourses relate to its inherent relationship with the agricultural sector and the opportunity for stimulating large-scale farming methods, along with assumptions of higher production and thus more capital accumulation, as well as other 'spill-overs' such as job opportunities, knowledge transfers and, through FDI, the implementation of social services such as infrastructure, schools and hospitals. Although land acquisition for biofuel production is frequently conducted by domestic investors, including the state, I focus on land deals conducted through FDI and look at how FDI has become a technique of governing:

Any more or less calculated and rational activity, undertaken by a multiplicity of authorities and agencies, employing a variety of techniques and forms of knowledge, that seeks to shape conduct by working through the desires, aspirations, interests and beliefs of various actors, for definite but shifting ends and with a diverse set of relatively unpredictable consequences, effects and outcomes (Dean, 2010:18).

FDI as a form of governing typifies the manner in which development opens the meaning of 'governing' the Global South, resulting in a myriad of practises, and justification of practices (Ove, 2013:318). In this section, I look at the attempts taken by a number of African states to enhance or facilitate FDI in land, justified by a market rationality that renders the most 'efficient' actor the rightful owner of a certain commodity.

As mentioned in previous chapters, the assumption that FDI promotes development is based on the rationality that investments trigger spill-overs in the host country that would supposedly spur modernisation such as technology, human capital formation, international trade integration, and a more competitive business environment, thus enhancing enterprise development (Matondi *et al.*, 2011:12-13; Hermes & Lensink, 2003; OECD, 2002:5). With regard to foreign investments in land, FDI represents an opportunity to strengthen the previously neglected agricultural sector, especially for the Global South, which often lacks domestic, private and governmental

capacities (Görge *et al.*, 2009:8). Recognising these constraints, and in a context of rising oil prices, climate change and depleting energy sources, African governments increasingly conduct measures to 'open up' their investment climate (Prabhakar & Alemu, 2013:238; Anseeuw *et al.*, 2012:10; Matondi *et al.*, 2011; Matondi & Mutopo, 2011:70; Daniel & Mittal, 2010; Hårsmar, 2006:11).

Based on the assumption that biofuel-led FDI will bring development to Africa, African governments are competing for FDI inflows by implementing measures to create investor friendly environments, such as selling land at dirt-cheap rates, implementing tax breaks, easing profit repatriation, suspending workers' rights to strike, etc. (Matondi & Mutopo, 2011:70; Widengård, 2011:48). In Ethiopia for example, the Agricultural Investment Support Directorate (AISD), an association established at the federal level within the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MoARD), issued standard rates for land leases, depending on the land's proximity to the central market of Addis Ababa or to the sea ports. For a farm site located 700 km away from Addis Ababa, an investor is expected to pay as little as 111 birr (about US\$5.4)³⁹ per hectare per annum. From there, the price either increases by 4.05 birr/km as the location draws closer to the central market, or declines by the same rate as it moves further away from it (Makki & Geisler, 2011:13-14). Similarly, in Mozambique, although an investor cannot legally own land, it can be leased for 50 years with the option of renewal for another 50 years. Prices for a hectare of land can be as little as US\$50, with an annual leasing fee of US\$1.5 to US\$3 per hectare (NiassaTourism.com, 2015).

With the acceleration of the global biofuel complexes and increasing interest in Africa's land, African governments employ commissions to undertake land zoning exercises to identify 'available' land for foreign investors, and incorporate these findings into development-and poverty reduction strategies. For instance, in 2009, the government of Mozambique approved the *Policy and Strategy for Bio-fuels* which was based on a study conducted primarily by Ecoenergy under the sponsorship of the World Bank and the Embassy of Italy for the Ministry of Agriculture and Energy, which identified Mozambique as a country that possesses one of the largest biofuel production potentials in Africa (Clements & Fernandes, 2013:54; Borrás *et al.*, 2011:219; Nhantumo & Salamá, 2010:3). The study entailed a lengthy document (over 500 pages) assessing the potential competitiveness of Mozambique's biofuel production in the domestic, regional and international biofuels market. In addition, it identified the most promising feedstocks for development and recommended strategies for promoting the biofuels sector (Ecoenergy, 2008: ES-1). According to the study, the most suitable regions for agricultural expansion in Mozambique are in the central and northern regions of the country, due to the abundance of water resources and good agro-ecological conditions (Nhantumo & Salamá,

³⁹ On the day of calculation, US\$1 equalled 20.5450 ETB (Ethiopian Birr).

2010:18). Attempting to attract foreign investment to development of the country's biofuel sector, Sapp (2007) explains that according to Mozambique's Minister of Energy, Salvador Namburete:

Mozambique's 36 million hectares of arable land could be used for biofuel production 'without threatening food production', while another 41 million hectares of marginal land would be suitable for raising jatropha, a tree that produces non-edible seeds which can be used for making biodiesel.

Similarly, the Ethiopian government in 2006 launched its development policy, *A Plan for Accelerated and Sustained Development to End Poverty (PASDEP)* (MoFED, 2006). Based on ADLI, PASDEP highlights the necessity to increase production by placing emphasis on 'greater commercialisation of agriculture', where the private sector will supposedly play an increasingly important role (MoFED, 2006:1). In addition, the agricultural strategy will support the:

[...] intensification of marketable farm products – both for domestic and export markets, and both by small and large farmers. Elements of this strategy include the shift to higher-valued crops, promoting niche high-value export crops, a focus on selected high-potential areas, facilitating the commercialisation of agriculture, supporting the development of large-scale commercial agriculture where it is feasible, and better integrating farmers with markets – both locally and globally' (MoFED, 2006:47).

Similar to Mozambique, the intensifying biofuel complex that increased the demand for biofuels and land prompted the Ethiopian government's attempt to realise its strategy under PASDEP, as cited above. This realisation can be seen in *The Biofuel Development and Utilisation Strategy of Ethiopia* (2007), where 23.3 million hectares of suitable available land was allocated to biofuel production (MME, 2007:8). In order to promote large-scale investments, the government established the AISD to allocate land to investors exceeding 5,000 hectares, instead of leaving it to regional authorities (Lavers, 2011:8). By doing this, the government aims to promote an investor-friendly environment in order to attract potential investors by speeding up the land allocation process, especially in regions where regional processes of land redistribution are considered slow (Lavers, 2011:8). Despite obvious challenges concerning land rights and the local community's access to land, the government's commitment to create an investor-friendly environment rendered Ethiopia to be one of the most popular destinations for conducting land deals. As stated by Aditya Agarwal, director of Indian corporation Emami Biotech, who plans to produce jatropha for biodiesel in Oromia, 'We have chosen Ethiopia for investment because of availability of cheap labour, contiguous land and congenial business environment' (IANS, 2009).

The creation of investment centres like Ethiopia's Agricultural Investment Support Directorate is another example of measures taken to encourage FDI in land in the past decade, as investors encountered numerous difficulties when trying to acquire land in Africa. These included unclear policies, delays in investment proposals, restrictions in the granting of permits to external technical experts, unclear rules on the remittances of profits, limitations on exports, etc.

(Matondi & Mutopo, 2011:70). To promote a business-friendly climate and embrace the development opportunities presented by demand for arable farmland, investment agencies seek to prevent these difficulties by acting (often autonomously) as a gateway for investors trying to acquire land abroad. For example, the Investment Promotion Agency of Mali (API-Mali), a public agency created in 2005 under the authority of the Ministry of Industry, Investment and Trade, claims to be the point of entry for all procedures for starting a business, assisting investors and granting licences under the Investment Code of Mali (API, 2015). The agency offers services such as providing investors with key information for each sector, arranging meetings with government structures, organising visits to investment sites and providing advice to investors concerning investment opportunities in Mali (API, 2015). With regard to providing information to potential investors, the agency claims that:

The available land for agriculture and stockbreeding covers nearly 46 million hectares. 3.5 million hectares are cultivated out of a total of about 12 million hectares of arable land. Mali has an irrigable potential of more than 2 million hectares with more than half using flow irrigation. The Niger Authority alone has an irrigable potential of nearly one million hectares (API, 2015).

According to Mousseau and Sosnoff (2011b:11), the available land identified by API and offered to investors entails more than 2.5 million ha of Mali's arable land, of which its most precious water and natural resources are offered to investors, as seen in the citation above. About 4.7 million ha of arable land is available to sustain Mali's population of about 14 million, where the figure advertised by API constitutes almost half of this territory (Mousseau & Sosnoff, 2011a:11). Yet, the government justifies these land allocations by claiming that foreign investment promotes the country's agricultural modernisation and contributes to Mali's economic development (Mousseau & Sosnoff, 2011b:9; MIGA, 2006; UNCTAD, 2006; Bélières *et al.*, 2002). Similarly, Sierra Leone's President, Ernest Bai Komara, also emphasises the importance of foreign investment to address the country's poverty and unemployment rate (Melik, 2012; Mousseau & Sosnoff, 2011c:12; Koroma, 2010). With the aim to attract investments, the President claims that:

[...] to take advantage of these untapped opportunities, private investors will rightly expect a stable investment climate and a pro-business reform agenda. As a former businessman, I understand this [...] We know that it is only by attracting investment and growing the private sector that African countries will sustain their economic growth and transform their societies (Koroma, 2010).

In order to promote a stable investment climate that is open for business, the government of Sierra Leone, similar to her continental counterparts, established an investment promotion agency, the Sierra Leone Investment Export Promotion Agency (SLIEPA). Officially, SLIEPA was implemented in 2007 to operate under the Ministry of Trade and Industry; however, Mousseau and Sosnoff (2011c:13) claim that it operates independently and is physically located apart from the complex that houses most government ministries. According to Mousseau and Sosnoff (2011c:13) the establishment of SLIEPA can be seen as the most

important tool in the government's efforts to portray Mali as a profitable and safe place for FDI. Similar to Mali, the agency seeks to draw investors' attention to the supposedly vast amounts of arable land in Sierra Leone, claiming that 75 per cent of the arable farmland is available for acquisition (SLIEPA, 2015). SLIEPA also advertises key points such as the country's low wage levels, where agricultural labour costs range from US\$2 to US\$3 per day, flexible labour regulations, cheap lease rates for agricultural land, no charge for water utilisation and attractive tax rates: zero per cent corporate income tax and zero per cent duty on imported inputs (SLIEPA, 2015; Mousseau & Sosnoff, 2011c).

In 2006, the Zambian government established the Zambian Development Agency (ZDA) with the aim, like API and SLIEPA, to foster economic growth and development by promoting trade and investment through a private sector-led economic development strategy (ZDA, 2015). The latter development strategy, called the Private Sector Development Reform Programme (PSDRP) was designed in 2006, with its main objective being the creation and sustainment of an investment climate that would allow private sector-led economic growth (PSDRP, 2006). Similar to the investment agencies of Mali, Ethiopia and Sierra Leone, along with many other African countries such as Mozambique (CPI, 2015), Tanzania (TIC, 2015), Cameroon (CIPA, 2015), the ZDA supposedly plays a vital role in implementing Zambia's development strategy. These agencies represent attempts made by African governments to fashion themselves into subjects that resemble the image of *homo oeconomicus*, as mentioned previously. To recall, *homo oeconomicus* refers to the conception of the subject of interest, whose actions, when left alone, have a multiplying and beneficial value as they spontaneously converge with the interests of others (Foucault, 1979:270,276; Polanyi, 1944:112). Hence, the opening up of land markets and abolishment of rules and regulations that prevent the 'invisible hand of the market' to allocate goods and services to 'rightful' owners can be seen as attempts of government to ensure that mechanisms are in place to facilitate capital accumulation and simultaneously, development. Governing land access according to market rationalities necessitates minimal government interference, hence the creation of investment agencies, often operating autonomously, to ensure that 'natural' regulations work: i.e. that mechanisms are in place to enable the market to pick out the most efficient owners of commodities.

Ironically, the creation of social conditions that will promote the prosperity of the 'invisible hand' entails excessive governmental intervention, to the extent that the activities of 'liberal governments' can be characterised as authoritarian (Dean, 2002). Dean (2002:39) argues that the neoliberal government's use of authoritarian measures is a necessary component of statal attempts to govern free individuals. He explains that:

[...] the liberal reliance on authoritarian techniques is a consequence of the understanding of government as a limited sphere that must operate through forms of regulation which obtain within what has been conventionally called 'civil society' (Dean, 2002:40).

The authoritarian dimension of government with regard to the regulation of civil society includes, inter alia, spheres such as the national and international economy. In the discussion of African governments' attempts to promote FDI, this authoritative dimension can not only be seen in the creation of land markets and regulating bodies such as investment agencies, but also in attempts to ensure investors' land access over the local community, in order to create social conditions that will enable the market to thrive. For example, in Article 6.6 of the Ethiopia-Karuturi land contract, the Ethiopian government promises to create conditions that will promote an investor-friendly environment, and in the process subordinate the local community's land access in favour of the foreign investor, as such actions will, eventually benefit all:

The Lessor shall ensure during the period of lease, [that the] Lessee shall enjoy peaceful and trouble free possession of the premises and it shall be provided adequate security, free of cost, for carrying its entire activities in the said premises, against any riot, disturbance or any other turbulent time other than *force majeure*, as and when requested by the Lessee (MoArd, 2008).

Hence the manner in which FDI, along with discourses such as agricultural development and biofuels govern land access, relates to how they produce power relations that enable actors who have access to markets and capital to benefit from land uses. However, these discourses also govern land access by governing the conduct of states, producing the legal niceties to shape foreign investors land access. These conducts resemble the process of the subjectivation of the state, as it governs and fashions itself into subjects on the basis of what they take to be the truth (Hamann, 2009), exemplifying Rose's (1998:18) explanation of the governmentalisation of the state as stated earlier. Thus, the state is an essential component of the intersection between power, globalisation and the production of subjectivities, a process where market rationalities aim to extend their power over all aspects of social existence (Joronen, 2013:357). With regard to land access, the governmentalisation of the state has especially enabled the creation of power relations that enable the most 'efficient owner' of land to derive benefit from agricultural farmland in Africa, by creating investor friendly environments that characterise conditions of a 'liberal society'.

Conclusion

The aim of this chapter was to illustrate the manner in which development discourse intensifies the 'governing' of the Global South, by identifying homogenous 'problems of underdevelopment' associated with the socio-economic and political characteristics of societies in the so-called Third World. Also explained was how this problem of underdevelopment is translated into an economic problem, to be solved by the values of neoliberal assumptions, such as the creation of land markets, the commercialisation of agriculture and the enhancement of the private sector. Since agriculture constitutes the mainstay of the majority of countries in sub-Saharan Africa, the World Bank has played a prominent role in identifying this sector as having significant potential

for economic growth and simultaneously, development. Hence, the development of agricultural sectors constitutes the central mechanism for countries' realisation of their development objectives. The development of the agricultural sector entails the overarching goal to increase production, realised through the commercialisation of agriculture, which attracts foreign and domestic investors.

The global biofuel complex, coupled with increasing demand for agricultural land presented the opportunity for African countries to achieve their development goals, as it attracted investors acquiring large tracts of land to produce crops for the production of biofuel. Thus, by addressing the lingering crises of energy security and climate, the Global South also has the opportunity to address the prevailing crisis of 'underdevelopment' in their countries. These development opportunities brought about by biofuel investments entailed that local farmers would be incorporated into large-scale plantations, hence generating job opportunities. In addition, these investments would also facilitate a knowledge transfer to the host community, 'assisting' the other actors in the 'partnership' in reaching their development goals.

However, in the examples discussed, the proclaimed 'development' opportunities associated with biofuel investment suggests the opposite: not only are a number of communities displaced in the process, but their livelihood strategies are immensely transformed for the worse. In the case of Karuturi's land deal in Gambella, the Annuak community's displacement resulted in their dependency on international donors for food security. Indeed, case studies illustrate how biofuel land deals contribute to increased food insecurity in the affected regions, mainly as a result of these communities competing with investors for land access. Additionally, the land investments also failed to create employment opportunities for the communities involved or improved infrastructure in the regions. In contrast, the investments illustrate a sense of ignorance for the land uses practised by the local communities, as shown by the absence of consultation and the manner in which the investors' land use restrained local communities' water access. Following Tanya Li, as indicated in her book *The Will to Improve: Governmentality, Development and the Practice of Politics* (2007), these biofuel land deals, portrayed as development opportunities, in many cases draw 'attention to the inevitable gap between what is attempted and what is accomplished'.

The aim of this chapter was not to condemn land deals, but rather to illustrate the manner in which they epitomise the effects of neoliberal governance, along with the actors involved in the governing process. In the following chapter, I look at the manner in which the BRICS countries facilitate biofuel land deals in Africa, by examining how their diplomatic strategies promote foreign direct investment (FDI) in land and the implications thereof for BRICS' ambition to be different from North-South relations.

Chapter Four

BRICS: strategies, tools and techniques for developing the Global South

This chapter analyses the manner in which the BRICS countries facilitate biofuel land deals in Africa, by looking at how their diplomatic strategies promote FDI in land and the implications thereof for BRICS' ambition to be different from North-South relations. I argue that the group's use of diplomatic techniques shapes the 'conduct of conduct' of actors in the Global South, by 'structuring possible fields of action' according to neoliberal, market rationalities that establish power relations in favour of private (foreign) investors. The chapter is divided into two sections. Firstly, building on the discussion of FDI in the previous chapter, where I looked at the governing effect of FDI and the ways in which it shapes land access by shaping the conduct of the state, this chapter looks at the role of BRICS' governing of others in the Global South. By making use of a variety of techniques to promote FDI under the auspices of South-South cooperation, I look at how BRICS' diplomatic behaviour governs land access in Africa by producing global power relations that facilitate the acquisition of farmland on the market. Secondly, I discuss the implications these techniques entail for BRICS' ambition to embody southern solidarity and their aspiration to be different from North-South development interventions. Acknowledging the obvious similarities, I argue – from a governmentality perspective – that similarities are a result of the manner in which knowledge of development has produced the reality of an 'underdeveloped Africa', coupled with discourses produced by neoliberal regimes of truth that would 'un-underdevelop' the continent. These discourses have shaped the subjectivities of individuals, government departments and multinational corporations in the Global South, by producing the desire 'to develop' a Logocentric discourse governing the global South by proclaiming what African societies 'lack' (i.e. development).

Developing Africa through South-South FDI

In a recent television interview aired on *Russia Today* (RT, 2015) President Jacob Zuma, speaking about BRICS' New Development Bank (NDB), claimed:

[...] Some of the countries, who were former colonies, they look at us as former subjects. They don't look at us as equals. Now, if we are dealing in terms of the BRICS, we are not

looking at one another as former subjects etc. We look at some as partners who may not be of the same strength, but there is that kind of respect, and understanding [...]

President Zuma's comparison between BRICS' NDB and western IFIs like the IMF or World Bank, embodies the rhetoric of South-South cooperation: to be markedly different than North-South relations, as countries in the Global South cooperate with each other on the basis of southern solidarity, in sharing the experience of being historically exploited by the Global North. As a result, instances of South-South Cooperation are said to take cognisance of these historical experiences and seek to cooperate with each other on the basis of respect for national sovereignty, national ownership and independence, equality, non-conditionality, non-interference in domestic affairs and mutual benefit (GA resolution 64/222, 2009). For example, the 2009 Nairobi outcome of the UN General Assembly defined the rationale of South-South cooperation as follows:

South-South cooperation is a common endeavour of peoples and countries of the South, born out of shared experiences and sympathies, based on their common objectives and solidarity, and guided by, *inter alia*, the principles of respect for national sovereignty and ownership, free from any conditionalities (GA resolution 64/222, 2009).

The objective of the NDB is to operate as an alternative source of funding to existing IFIs in order to promote the development of the Global South. Loans accorded to countries in the Global South will be granted based on the principles of South-South cooperation, signifying that they will be free from 'conditionalities' (BRICS, 2015). Indeed, Zuma stated that North-South development relations are often associated with unfavourable conditions that hamper the continent's development (RT, 2005). For example, Zuma dismayed the 'strings attached' policy typically attached to World Bank and IMF loans and claimed that BRICS 'respects national sovereignty' (G77 Ministerial Declaration, 2009). Throughout the interview, Zuma iterated the principles of South-South cooperation to frame BRICS' relations with Africa by emphasising that BRICS cooperation fosters an atmosphere of mutual respect, equality, fairness and harmony (RT, 2015).

As a group, BRICS has yet to embark on a joint development project but has rather focused their attention on intensifying intra-BRICS cooperation and establishing relations with other members of the Global South (Ferrando, 2013). Characteristic of South-South cooperation and specifically the emerging middle powers like BRICS^{40 41} is the strengthening of diplomatic⁴²

⁴⁰ I do recognize the limitations of referring to the BRICS as emerging middle powers, as there is no consensus over what counts as a 'middle power' (Jordaan, 2003; Hamill & Lee, 2001; Ravenhill, 1998; Cooper *et al.*, 1993). For example, China is often regarded as a super power, due to her large and growing economy, nuclear capabilities, permanent status in the UNSC and dominance in global political economic structures like trade, finance and production (Fishman, 2005; Jordaan, 2003; Johnston, 2003). Identifying middle powers based on indicators such as population size, geography or economic growth is referred to as the aggregate approach. However, due to a range of shortcomings associated with the aggregate approach, i.e. producing controversial and incoherent sets of lists of middle powers, I follow the alternative, behavioural approach (Hamill & Lee, 2001:34; Ravenhill, 1998; Cooper *et al.*, 1993;). Broadly described, the behavioural approach entails the identification of countries as middle powers by looking at the way in which they 'act' the part, with reference to their foreign policy behaviour. Countries 'act' like

endeavours to promote the development of the Global South (Stuenkel, 2013; Cornelissen, 2009; Shaw *et al.*, 2009; Jordaan, 2003:167). Indeed, when referring to the increasing amount of BRICS-Africa summits and cooperation forums, along with the institutionalisation of the NDB, the group's tendency to apply their diplomatic skills to seek solutions to 'international problems' like 'underdevelopment', become clear (Shaw *et al.*, 2009:29; Cornelissen, 2009). For example, with Africa's development trajectories dominating the agendas of global governance institutions, BRICS aims to act as 'good international citizens', by assisting Africa to reach its development objectives and hence contribute to the activities of global governance (Shaw *et al.*, 2009; Cornelissen, 2009; Shaw *et al.*, 2007). A prominent feature of the group's strategy is to pressure for democratic reform of international organisations such as, *inter alia*, the World Bank and the IMF as well as the UN Security Council (UNSC). By doing this, the group argues that the unique development interests of the Global South will be represented, which will ultimately lead to a more 'equitable world', as representatives from the Global South will enjoy better negotiating terms in determining the activities of influential international organisations (Petropoulos, 2013; Cornelissen, 2009:21; Shaw *et al.*, 2007:1264).

Drawing on the middle power literature, 'good international citizens' refers to the manner in which the BRICS countries, despite their activist foreign policy agenda at times, aim to

middle powers by using their diplomatic 'skills' to seek multilateral solutions to international problems, advocating compromise and in general being part of the solution to 'problems' at the international level (Jordaan, 2003:165; Hamill & Lee, 2001:35; Cooper *et al.*, 1993:23). According to Cooper *et al.* (1993:24), middle powers' behaviour typically resembles three patterns. Firstly, middle powers act as *catalysts* by using their diplomatic skills to provide intellectual and political energy in order to initiate and lead foreign policy initiatives. Secondly, middle powers are known to be *facilitators*, where they apply their diplomatic abilities to facilitate the creation of coalitions on international or regional issues. Lastly, middle powers, again using their diplomatic skills, act like *managers*, by building institutions and regimes, where the BRICS group serves as a prime example. In the introductory section of this chapter, I draw on their structural characteristics described in middle power discourses solely to acknowledge – though contested, yet significant – the constitutive and behavioural differences between middle powers countries and other countries in the global political economy. I do recognise the possible ontological conflicts associated with drawing on middle power literature in a post-structural study (Barnett & Duvall, 2005:18; Price & Reus-Smit, 1998). Hence, the use thereof is solely to acknowledge the hierarchical power relations within the Global South (Cornelissen, 2009:14).

⁴¹ By referring to the BRICS countries as 'emerging' middle powers, I follow Jordaan's (2003) distinction between middle powers as either 'traditional' or 'emerging'. According to Jordaan (2003), traditional middle powers like Canada, Australia or Norway emerged during the Cold War, as their insecure position between two superpowers resulted in a foreign policy concerned with military and political issues (Jordaan, 2003:171). These countries are also characterised by their egalitarian and social democratic societies, in contrast to emerging middle powers who are typically 'new' democracies and of high inequality in terms of the distribution of wealth and social services like education and health. Behaviourally, emerging middle powers are regionally more influential and typically dominate trade relations, investments and economic growth and are prominent in multilateral governance organisations on a regional, continental or global level (Stuenkel, 2013; Alden & Schoeman, 2013:124; Morazán *et al.*, 2012:4). Traditional middle powers on the other hand, are rather ambivalent to regional integration and do not exert regional influence (Jordaan, 2003:171). Yet, both types of middle powers share the behavioural attribute of benefiting from the contemporary neoliberal character of the rules and norms governing relations between actors on a global scale. By implication, middle powers' foreign policy interests and diplomatic behaviour typically support this hegemonic neoliberal order (Jordaan, 2003:176; Nel *et al.*, 2000; Cox, 1989).

⁴² Although the conceptualisation of diplomacy and foreign policy is not of major concern here, it should nevertheless be noted that these concepts are mutually influential (White, 2001:325-326). This reciprocity relates to the way in which diplomatic activities, by gathering information, negotiating with actors abroad or representing home countries in the process, influence the making of foreign policy.

contribute to global stability which, in effect, typically perpetuates the *status quo* (Jordaan, 2003:176; Nel *et al.*, 2000; Ravenhill, 1998; Cox, 1989). In other words, although emerging middle powers like BRICS want to reform international governmental organisations such as the UN Security Council, such reformist ambitions are not fundamental by nature as they act in accordance with the norms defining 'good governance' (Du Preez, 2007; Zanotti, 2005). To recall, 'good governance' in this dissertation refers to the manner in which actors govern populations according to certain 'natural truths', which see market principles as the only 'true' way to regulate society (Dean, 2002:41; Foucault, 1979:32). With particular reference to this dissertation, previous chapters explained the extent to which this market rationality informs discourses of development, which has opened up space for a variety of actors to govern Africa, by problematizing the 'underdeveloped' framing of African societies (Ove, 2013; Zanotti, 2005). For example, as explained in Chapter Two, the activity of governing is essentially a problematizing activity, destined to be addressed through the construction of programmes, strategies and technologies in order to make 'the real programmable' (Rose & Miller, 1992:181).

Lee (2007:303) sees the framing of the African continent in development discourses as a 'basket case' that is in need of being 'saved', and thus creates a 'Saving Africa' image that depicts the continent's extra-continental relations in the 20th and 21st centuries. Indeed, 'Saving Africa', by 'assisting' African countries to achieve their development trajectories, especially their MDGs, has become a norm in the activities of global governance such as summits, conferences, bilateral and multilateral forums, etc. In order to comprehend how the 'Saving Africa' image embodies a norm in global relations, it is necessary to refer to Finnemore and Skikkink's (1998) conceptualisation of norm creation. According to Finnemore and Skikkink (1998:891), a norm can generally be defined as a standard of appropriate behaviour which essentially couples with it a prescriptive or evaluative quality of 'oughtness' that sets it apart from other kinds of rules. For example, we only know what 'appropriate' or 'proper' behaviour is when we refer to the judgments of a community, where norm-breaking behaviour is identified by a sense of disapproval or stigma by a certain community, and norm conforming behaviour produces praise or acceptance. Yet, Finnemore and Skikkink (1998:896) claim that 'norms do not emerge out of thin air, as they are actively built by agents fostering strong notions about appropriate or desirable behaviour. As such, they identify three stages in which norms are created, the first being norm emergence, where agents (individuals, states, or societal actors) act as norm entrepreneurs by calling attention to issues, or even create issues by using language that names, interprets and dramatizes them (Brunnee & Toope, 2005:11; Ingebritsen, 2002:12; Finnemore & Skikkink, 1998:899). Here, one is reminded of President Harry Truman's 'Four Point' speech, which depicted societies in the Global South as poor, hungry and miserable. The US relationship with the UN and its myriad of constituencies provided it the means to use the international organisation as a platform to communicate these framings of the

Global South to the rest of the world. According to Smith (2006:154), the UN has a unique character in terms of promoting 'appropriate' behaviour, as it enjoys near-universal membership, implying that nearly every country or international institution (organisation, agency, programme) is confronted with the norms promoted by the UN.

The next stage in norm creation, according to Finnemore and Skikkink (1998:896-904), is norm cascade, which signifies the stage where there is sufficient evidence of a contagion or socialisation effect having taken place, and states conform to norms in the absence of domestic pressure. This stage occurs after norm entrepreneurs have persuaded a critical mass of states to adopt new norms, where the norm consequently reaches a tipping point, followed by more countries beginning to adapt to new norms. In this stage, socialisation is crucial and is seen as the dominant mechanism of the norm cascade, forming a mechanism through which norm entrepreneurs persuade others to adhere to certain norms. Socialisation can be identified when states and state elites fashion a political identity in relation to the international community, which implies the cumulative effect of many countries in a region adopting new norms, and is analogous to 'peer pressure' among countries. Here, South Africa's post-apartheid identity of being the leader in Africa's Renaissance, by taking the lead in helping Africa reach its development goals, is evidence of the manner in which development discourses inform actors' identities in a specific community.

In the final stage of norm creation, norms are internalised to the extent that conformance with the norm becomes almost automatic (Ingebritsen, 2002:12; Finnemore & Skikkink, 1998:896-904). When norms reach this stage, they are not only extremely powerful (as behaviour to the norm is not questioned) but also hard to discern because actors do not seriously consider or discuss whether or not to conform (Finnemore & Skikkink, 1998:905). When referring to BRICS' ambition to be characterised as 'good international citizens' by helping Africa reach its development objectives, such as MDGs, the extent to which the norm of global development assistance or 'partnerships' with African states have been internalised as 'appropriate' behaviour, becomes clear. For example, at the group's fifth annual summit hosted in Durban, South Africa, where Africa constituted the theme of the conference, *BRICS and Africa: Partnership for Development, Integration and Industrialisation* (BRICS, 2013), the group claimed that:

We believe that the internationally agreed development goals including the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) address the needs of developing countries, many of which continue to face developmental challenges, including widespread poverty and inequality [...] We reiterate that individual countries, especially in Africa and other developing countries of the South, cannot achieve the MDGs on their own and therefore the centrality of Goal 8 on Global Partnerships for Development to achieve the MDGs should remain at the core of the global development discourse for the UN System.

Furthermore, apart from the high priority Africa's development enjoys on the agenda of the group's annual summits (BRICS, 2013; 2014; 2015), the BRICS countries often conduct bilateral Africa summits and cooperation forums to persuade global audiences that they are serious about assisting Africa in her development objectives through South-South cooperation (Cornelissen, 2009:18; Shaw *et al.*, 2009; Coluta *et al.*, 2008:32). These include for instance, the Forum of China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC), the India-Africa forum summit, the New Africa-Asia Strategic Partnership (NAASP) and the Africa-South America Summit (ASA), to name just a few. Although the land deals discussed in Chapter Three are mainly conducted by the private sector, Coluta *et al.* (2008:32) explains that inter-governmental activities play a key part in the promotion of land acquisitions as they contribute to the creation of regulatory mechanisms and instruments in favour of the investor. These incentives include not only international legal tools such as bilateral investment treaties (BITs) and domestic legislation but also create platforms where foreign investors and host state representatives can interact, negotiate and discuss possible land deals (Ferrando, 2013; Alano, 2015). Moreover, apart from the actual material documents produced at summits or conference meetings, Death (2011:1) explains that they are also moments of political theatre, 'performative enactments of legitimacy and authority' which play a key part in inspiring, directing and governing the conduct of global politics.

Post-structural perspectives of foreign policy

Following Death (2011:1), the current chapter discusses the governmentality of South-South cooperation, by analysing the manner in which BRICS-Africa relations, as a manifestation of South-South cooperation, govern land access in African countries. I look at the power relations shaped by the discourse of South-South cooperation and the manner in which these relations promote the acquisition of land for biofuel production. To recall, discourses embody the unification of power and knowledge that functions in the form of a chain by reproducing power relations based on discourses. Foucault (1980:93) explained that:

[...] in a society such as ours, but basically in any society, there are manifold relations of power which permeate, characterise and constitute the social body, and these relations of power cannot themselves be established, consolidated nor implemented without the production, accumulation, circulation and functioning of a discourse. There can be no possible exercise of power without a certain economy of discourses of truth which operates through and on the basis of this association. We are subjected to the production of truth through power and we cannot exercise power except through the production of truth.

Through a Foucauldian perspective of power, knowledge and discourse, I demonstrate in this chapter how South-South cooperation produces the interests, actions, beliefs and values of BRICS that form the substance of the group's development relations with Africa. I explain not only the rationality underpinning the group's attempt to encourage South-South development cooperation, but also how these activities govern land access by establishing power relations

that enable market actors to benefit from land uses. Thus, through a Foucauldian perspective, the focus of this chapter is to illustrate the productive abilities of power: the manner in which it produces subjects and subjectivities, realities, domains of objects and 'rituals of truth' (Foucault, 1977a:194). Here, Foucault's depiction of power to be employed and exercised through a net-like organisation may provide clarity. To recall, Foucault (1980:98) suggested that power is exercised through a net-like organisations where individuals not only circulate between the threads but are also in the position of undergoing and exercising this power. This has a governing effect in international relations, characterised by a neoliberal rationality that advises subjects as to the 'right way' of controlling populations.

Moreover, this chapter seeks to address the central objective of this dissertation: namely the similarities between South-South cooperation and North-South development relations. With reference to the discussion of biofuel land deals in the previous chapter, this objective is rooted in the study of International Relations, where I examine how the discourse of South-South cooperation shapes the foreign policy behaviour of BRICS countries, and the manner in which these activities 'structure possible fields of conduct' for land deals to take place. In this chapter foreign policy can be seen broadly as trends of behaviour and particular actions conducted by state and non-state actors as directed toward other collective actors within the international system. These actions can be undertaken through the utilisation of different tools, ranging from the adoption of declarations, speech-making, negotiating treaties, aid and summits, as well as military force (Beach, 2012:3).

A post-structural perspective differs from conventional approaches to study foreign policy, which typically analyse the reasons *why* states conduct diplomatic behaviours such as summits and inter-governmental cooperation forums (Bevir *et al.*, 2013; Doty, 1993). For example, focusing on the anarchic character of the international landscape, realists argue that foreign policy can be seen as a function to secure power (traditionally defined in military strategic terms) in order to secure the state's survival, which is seen as being the principal national interest (Schmidt, 2011:87; Walt, 1998; Rose, 1998; Waltz, 1979). In contrast, neoliberal institutionalists de-emphasise the role of the state by claiming that foreign policy is also shaped by non-state actors, such as TNCs, private individuals, NGOs etc. According to neoliberal institutionalists, actors need to cooperate with each other in order to secure prosperity and the welfare of the population (Hasenclever *et al.*, 2000; Walt, 1998; Levy, 1994; Keohane, 1984). Marxists on the other hand, maintain that foreign policy is driven by the distribution of material assets of global capitalism, where interactions between countries generate a particular form of global hegemony, produced by inequalities in terms of agency, resources and opportunities (Hobden & Jones, 2011; Linklater, 2005:127; Cox, 1981).

Sharing similarities with post-structural analyses of International Relations and foreign policy, constructivists analyse how foreign policy behaviour is shaped by – and reshapes their social identity. Hence, similar to post-structuralists, constructivists tend to emphasise the importance of ideas, norms and discourses in shaping the foreign policy of states. Indeed, the nature and extent of the relationship between post-structuralism and Constructivism is a subject of considerable debate (Houghton, 2007; Reus-Smit, 2005; Price & Reus Smith, 1998; Adler, 1997), which I do not wish to explore here. For the purposes of this discussion, I suggest that the main difference between post-structural and constructivist approaches to foreign policy analysis is the latter's approach of emphasis on empirical analysis (Reus-Smit, 2005:195). Whereas post-structuralists reject the rationalist depiction of humans as atomistic egoists and society as a strategic domain used by realists and neoliberal institutionalists, proffering an alternative image of humans as socially embedded, communicatively constituted and culturally empowered, constructivists have applied epistemologies that explain and interpret aspects of global politics similar to rational approaches (Reus-Smit, 2005:195). As such, constructivist approaches to the study of International Relations are often described as the middle ground between rational theories such as Realism or Neoliberal institutionalism and Post-structuralism. Another difference between Post-structuralism and Constructivism is their analytical focus: post-structuralists seek to comprehend the power relations produced by knowledge and the manner in which knowledge produces power relations, constructivists tend to analyse social structures and how they shape the actions and identities of actors (Adler, 1997).

A post-structural analysis of foreign policy looks at the manner in which discourses shape foreign policy preferences, therefore posing a *how* question instead of a *why* question. By so doing, one examines:

[...] how meanings are produced and attached to various social subjects/ objects, thus constituting particular interpretive dispositions which create certain possibilities and preclude others (Doty, 1991:303).

Following Doty (1991; 1996), this chapter does not aim explain *why* particular outcomes were obtained, but rather *how* the subjects, or objects and interpretive impositions were socially constructed, and their implications for biofuel land deals and land access.

This 'how' analysis builds on the discussions of previous chapters, where I explained the rationality of development underpinning biofuel land deals by looking at how discourses of development have produced certain identities, subjects and objects that have shaped the desire to transform the Global South into an image that resembles a 'developed' society. As mentioned, this discourse has, and continues to form the essence of South-South cooperation which significantly influences the interests and actions and identity of emerging middle powers from the Global South, like BRICS. In contrast to the previous chapter, where I analysed the role of the state and the manner in which discourses govern the conducts of the state and how the

assembly of these interactions produces land access, this chapter focuses specifically on manifestations of global governing. Whereas in the previous chapter I looked at how the state fashions itself into a subject – a process called subjectivation – this chapter looks at the foreign policy activities of BRICS as embodiments of subjectification: the governing of others by fashioning them into objects through processes of power/knowledge. I am particularly interested to examine how discourses of South-South cooperation shapes the foreign policy behaviour of BRICS, and the manner in which these activities govern land access in Africa. In other words, the ways in which it shapes the conduct of conduct of others, by structuring possible fields of action that prohibit or enable actors to benefit from land uses.

Having explained the overall objectives, and the notion of a post-structural analysis of foreign policy, this chapter is further divided into three sections. In the following section, I discuss the manner in which discourses of South-South cooperation shape the foreign policy interests of BRICS countries and their relations with biofuel land deals. However, it is important to emphasise that the relationship between the foreign policy behaviour of BRICS and biofuel land deals should not be seen as a definitive causal relationship, i.e. the one leading to the other. Such an interpretation conflicts with the epistemological assumptions of my dissertation, since a post-structural epistemology denies the existence of causal laws or events (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011:44; Bailey, 1994:9). Rather, their relations should be seen as ‘governing’ effects:

[...] undertaken by a multiplicity of authorities and agencies, employing a variety of techniques and forms of knowledge, that seeks to shape conduct by working through the desires, aspirations, interests and beliefs of various actors, for definite but shifting ends and with a diverse set of relatively unpredictable consequences, effects and outcomes (Dean, 2010:18).

Consequently, by referring to the manner in which discourses shape the foreign policy interests of BRICS, I explain how these relations contribute to the governance of the Global South. Here, I also discuss the similarities between the identities benefiting from land deals under the banner of South-South cooperation and those that typically benefit from North-South development programmes. Lastly, I look at the implication of these similarities and the objective of South-South cooperation to be depicted as an ‘alternative’ development strategy as North-South development relations.

The discourse of South-South cooperation and the foreign policy behaviour of BRICS

President Zuma’s explanation of the NDB and the principles of South-South cooperation regulating the bank’s activities, confirm the BRICS objective to define the nature their development relations with the African continent as based on ‘alternative’ strategies. Indeed, when referring to the title of their seventh conference, *BRICS Partnership – a Powerful Factor of Global Development* (2015), the word ‘partnership’ serves as a reminder of equality, mutual gain and solidarity discursively associated with South-South relations. Previously, I continuously

referred to the concept of South-South cooperation which is coupled with a set of principles, strategies and objectives to promote the development of the Global South. To recall, UNOSSC (2014) defines South-South cooperation as:

[...] a broad framework for the collaboration among countries in the Global South within political, economic, social, cultural, environmental as well as technical domains [...] Developing countries share knowledge, skills, expertise and resources to meet their development goals through concerted efforts.

Likewise, at the 2009 High-level UN conference in South-South Cooperation in Nairobi, the General Assembly adopted the 64/222 resolution that describes South-South Cooperation:

[...] a common endeavour of peoples and countries of the South, born out of shared experiences and sympathies, based on their common objectives and solidarity, and guided by, inter alia, the principles of respect for national sovereignty and ownership, free from any conditionalities. South-South cooperation should not be seen as official development assistance. It is a partnership among equals based on solidarity. In that regard, we acknowledge the need to enhance the development effectiveness of South-South cooperation by continuing to increase its mutual accountability and transparency, as well as coordinating its initiatives with other development projects and programmes on the ground, in accordance with national plans and priorities. We also recognise that the impact of South-South cooperation should be assessed with a view to improving, as appropriate, its quality in a results-oriented manner.

In this sense – seen as a ‘development strategy’ – it is important to note that South-South cooperation is essentially produced by development discourse, exemplifying the productive character of power. South-South cooperation as a development strategy also represents the accepted notion of the Global South as ‘underdeveloped’, as it embodies an attempt of the Global South to, echoing the words of Escobar (1995:6), ‘un-underdevelop’ themselves. Therefore, foreign policy interests shaped by South-South cooperation stem from the meanings produced and attached to various social subjects/objects of the Global South, as depicted by development discourse. Indeed, the most prominent theme underpinning conceptualisations of South-South cooperation entails an exchange of knowledge concerning development experiences, ranging from technical cooperation, to skills and expertise with regard to agricultural production, education, finance, trade etc. (PPD, 2015; Stuenkel, 2013; Stahl, 2012; Schoeman, 2011; Meukalia, 2010). This theme is also evident in the BRICS summit declaration:

We are committed to further strengthening and supporting South-South cooperation [...] We intend to strengthen partnerships for advancing international development and to begin interaction through dialogue, cooperation and exchange of experience in advancing international development of mutual interest to our countries (BRICS, 2015).

The ProSavana programme serves as an excellent example to illustrate the rhetoric of South-South cooperation. By emphasising its shared historical experience of Portuguese colonisation, where almost half of Brazil’s population claims descent from African slaves, Brazil aims to ‘repay historic debts’ to Lusophone countries such as Mozambique and Angola, through their increasing development cooperation (Schoeman, 2011:35). This compensation can be seen as a result of the systematic racial discrimination, initiated under slavery that remains deeply

entrenched in the consciousness of Brazil's class society. According to Clements and Fernandes (2013:52), pervasive inequalities continued to be encountered by former slaves, contributing to the marginalisation of Afro-Brazilians, particularly those attached to their cultural roots and identity, by systematically excluding them from employment and educational opportunities. Interest in increasing Brazil-Africa ties was particularly expressed by former Brazilian President, Lula da Silva, who conducted 28 visits to the African continent during his tenure, as well as 67 visits by Foreign Minister Celso Amorim (Vilas-Bôas, 2013:24). The Brazilian government also cancelled 95 per cent of Mozambique's debt, so that she can meet her Millennium Development Goals, illustrating not only Brazil's commitment to 'repay historic debt' to Mozambique, but also contributing to the country's development (Stolte, 2012:5). The ProSavana programme strongly exemplifies the latter commitment.

Despite generous financial backing by Japan, ProSavana is a programme bastioned by the Brazilian government, which seeks to industrialise agriculture in Mozambique by transplanting the Brazilian agribusiness and agricultural expertise to the savannahs of Mozambique (Clements & Fernandes, 2013:43). The ProSavana programme is especially encouraged due to similarities regarding the agroclimatic features between Brazil's Cerrado region and Mozambique's Nacala Corridor, situated in the northern parts of Mozambique. ProSavana is based on Brazil's own Cerrado development programme, which also received financial support from Japan between the late 1970s and 1990s, namely PRODECER (Program of Brazilian and Japanese Cooperation for the Agricultural Development of the Brazilian Cerrado) (Whitehead, 2013; Clements & Fernandes, 2013:46). The implementation of PRODECER resulted in extensive industrial production of soybeans in the Cerrado region, now one of the most productive agricultural areas in Brazil. Through PRODECER, substantial areas of land have been transferred to approximately 717 large-scale producers, who received significant subsidies from the Brazilian government (Clements & Fernandes, 2013:45). The economic results stemming from the PRODECER program have led to Brazil being recognised as an expert in agricultural development (Whitehead, 2013; Thaler, 2013). As noted by Habiba Ben Barka, a senior planning specialist of the African Development Bank Group:

Given its ground-breaking technical expertise in a range of areas relevant to Africa's development needs (e.g. agricultural research, social protection, anti-retroviral treatments, etc.), Brazil can play an important role in contributing to the continent's socioeconomic development (Barka, 2011:1).

A central part of Brazil's agricultural expertise entails the production of food crops to biofuels in order to provide for increasing energy demands, dating back to the 1970s oil crisis. According to Thaler (2013:147), Brazil began to pursue the production of ethanol from sugarcane as a substitute for imported gasoline. As a result of this early start; Brazil became an international leader in biofuel production, only to be surpassed by the US (Thaler, 2013:147; Barka, 2011:3).

In addition, the more recent emergence of the biofuel complex has sparked even more interest in Brazil's agricultural soils, provoking an influx of investment in the country's sugarcane-ethanol industries (Clements & Fernandes, 2013:47). However, compared to land in Mozambique, Brazil's agricultural land is significantly more expensive, and increasingly so since the 2008/09 Food Crisis. For example, although land in Mozambique is possessed by the state, investors pay US\$1 per hectare for a 50 year lease, when granted a DUAT⁴³. In Brazil, investors acquiring agricultural land in 2008 paid US\$2, 500 per hectare and in 2010, this figure increased by 14 per cent to US\$2,900 (Chiara, as indicated by Clements & Fernandes, 2013:47).

Following the implementation of ProSavana, several Brazilian companies invested in Mozambique wanting to produce biofuel, especially bioethanol from sugarcane. Amongst these is the Brazilian energy giant, Petrobras which aims to produce 1.2 million litres of ethanol per year (Mangwiro, 2012). Others include Odebrecht, the construction company, and Vale, Andrade Gutierrez, Camargo Corrêa, Queiroz Galvão and Marcopolo (Schlesinger, 2014; Thaler, 2013). Due to the tendency of favouring large-scale farming methods to produce biofuels, foreign companies enjoy access to Mozambique's land based on the assumption that they will intensify agricultural production and simultaneously capital accumulation, where profits will be distributed in such a manner that both parties will benefit from the cooperation.

However, as a government-led biofuel programme, ProSavana is a unique example embodying South-South diplomacy and its implications for land access, popularly known as track-two diplomacy, involving a mix of state and non-state actors to encourage interaction between two societies (Du Plessis, 2006:141). In other cases, biofuel land deals are facilitated through a range of other diplomatic activities, characterised as multi-track diplomacy as they involve diplomatic conducts undertaken on several levels simultaneously, sometimes led by governments, civil society organisations, companies etc. (Du Plessis, 2005:15). With regard to attempts to promote FDI, multi-track diplomatic initiatives include, inter alia, trade fairs and exhibitions, business to business meetings or other government-to-government deals that incorporate civil society actors (Coluta *et al.*, 2008:32). For example, the South African Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) recently invited South African companies to participate in the South African National Pavilion at the Feira Internacional De Maputo (FACIM), a trade exhibition that intended to promote South African FDI in Mozambique (DTI, 2015). These trade fairs and exhibitions form part of broader government-to-government deals to promote South-South FDI, for example the bilateral agreements that were signed during President Jacob Zuma's 2011 state visit to Mozambique (Ikaneng, 2011). Similarly, in recent years India has

⁴³ DUAT (*direito de uso e aproveitamento dos terras*) refers to the piece of legislation granted by the Mozambican government to individuals (local communities or investors) stipulating their right to develop a piece of land.

embarked on a range of projects and cooperation initiatives to bolster engagement with Ethiopia. Recently, the most significant of these is the Focus Africa Programme, launched in 2002 by India's Export Import Bank (EXIM). The programme is divided into two phases where initially, seven African countries were identified as focus partners for cooperation. In this phase of the programme, which took effect on 31 March 2002, the countries included in the programme were South Africa, Nigeria, Mauritius, Tanzania, Kenya, Ghana and Ethiopia⁴⁴ (Indian Department of Commerce, 2010). The initiative endeavours to enhance commercial links between India and African countries by offering export subsidies to Indian companies trading with Africa, and tied lines of credit to African governments and regional entities (Kragelund, 2013:5; Indian Department of Commerce, 2010). Under this programme the Indian government also promises her support to actors wishing to undertake visits to the selected African countries, organise trade fairs and exhibitions, and hold business to business meetings (Indian Department of Commerce, 2010).

Likewise, China's influential presence on the African continent cannot be ignored, where her growing economy over the past few decades enabled her to increase FDI outflows to Africa by 46 per cent per year over the past decade (Renard, 2011:20). In 2000, the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) was initiated, with the goal of providing a platform for 'collective consultation and dialogue and a cooperation mechanism between the developing countries which fall into the category of South-South cooperation' (Shelton & Paruk, 2008: vi). Through this forum a variety of China-Africa cooperation initiatives was established in order to promote Sino-African relations, for example the China-Africa development fund (CADF), which aims to encourage Chinese companies to invest in Africa and provide support to them (Hon *et al.*, 2010:8; Shelton & Puruk, 2008:156). Since its initiation, more than 14 BITs have been signed between China and African governments (2000-2010) to the extent that African countries hold more BITs with China than with any other of their traditional trading partners (Ofodile, 2013:143).

Although the abovementioned diplomatic activities often do not enjoy the same amount of media attention as state visits, they nevertheless play an important role in the structuring of power relationships between state and non-state actors as they often include incentive mechanisms from the investor, state actors or community elites that enable the investor to gain access to land (Alano, 2015). Indeed, Du Plessis (2006:120) cautions against the superficial, privileged and exclusive view of foreign policy and diplomacy, by emphasising that they essentially entail very human and practical issues that are difficult to distinguish from most other human activities. For example, by 2010 AgriSA, the main commercial farmers' association in

⁴⁴ In the second phase of the Focus Africa Programme (taking effect from 1 April 2003), the group of countries was extended to include Angola, Botswana, the Ivory-Coast, Madagascar, Senegal, Uganda, Zambia, Namibia and Zimbabwe (Department of Commerce, 2010).

South Africa was engaged in discussions with 22 African governments concerning land acquisitions in their countries. The MAI and TSB sugar land acquisition is one example of a land deal established through these discussions (Hall, 2011:199). According to Coluta *et al.* (2009:29), state and non-state actors, often utilise diplomatic ‘talks’ as a mechanism to establish deals, or win over investors’ trust.

Furthermore, these cooperation programmes – typically dominating the agenda of BRICS-Africa summits, often lead to the establishment of collaboration frameworks or declarations that tie governments to a host of obligations related to foreign investment protection (Coluta *et al.*, 2008:32; Ferrando, 2013). For example, at the India-Africa summit hosted in New Delhi in 2008, the Africa-India Cooperation Framework was signed, which coupled with it a range of agreements and commitments in areas such as trade, agriculture, finance, technology etc. With regard to the question of how these agreements facilitate the acquisition of land, Coluta *et al.* (2008:32) explain that they are often worded so as to encourage private sector investment in agriculture. For instance, in terms of their agreement on economic cooperation through trade, industry and investment, the India-Africa Cooperation Framework reads:

Africa values private investment and financial flows on a concessional basis, which have been received from India and wishes to enhance their usage for building its infrastructure and enhancing the capacity of Africa [...] Support to the legal and regulatory environment for public private partnerships [...] operationalisation of bilateral agreements on investment promotion and protection between India and Africa Countries [...] (India-Africa framework for enhanced Cooperation, 2011).

Similarly, at the 2013 Africa-South America Summit⁴⁵ hosted in Malabo, Equatorial Guinea, the summit’s declaration iterated the commitment to:

[...] underscore the vital role of investment and recognize the need for funding to promote development and sustainable growth and in this regard, agree to promote policies conducive to investment, both public and private [...] (ASA, 2013).

According to Von Moltke (2000:v), in the past two decades FDI as a source of development funding has increased to such an extent that they now dwarf bilateral and multilateral official development assistance (ODA). The assumption that FDI equals income generation is captured in the report *Foreign Direct Investment for Development: Maximising Benefits, Minimising Costs* (OECD, 2002:5), where it is claimed that:

[...] a preponderance of studies shows that FDI triggers technology spillovers, assists human capital formations, contributes to international trade integration, helps create a more competitive business environment and enhances enterprise development. All of these contribute to higher economic growth, which is the most potent tool for alleviating poverty in developing countries.

⁴⁵ The Africa- South America Summit refers to the cooperation forum that originated in 2006, initiated by President Lula’s state visit to Nigeria when then Nigerian President, Olesegun Obasanjou, expressed interest in establishing a mechanism to promote Africa-Brazil cooperation. According to the forum’s website, the creation of ASA ‘represented an historic opportunity for the two regions to build the foundations of a new paradigm of South-South cooperation’ (ASA, 2015).

The above excerpt clearly resembles the 'win-win' assumption coupled with the promotion of biofuel investments, as discussed in Chapter Three. To recall, the win-win narrative refers to the manner in which biofuel land deals are presented to African countries as a package solution to energy security, environmental protection and rural development (Widengård, 2011:51-52). When referring to the discourse analyses conducted in Chapter Three, it is obvious that the 'rural development' narrative especially justified biofuel investments, as it was expected that the land deals would bring development to Africa by creating job opportunities, knowledge transfers regarding commercial farming methods, or through spill-over effects like infrastructure, schools, local social services such as hospitals, shops etc. (Franco *et al.*, 2013; Widengrård, 2011:52; Hall, 2011:194;; McMichael, 2010:615; Coluta *et al.*, 2008). The latter assumptions of FDI also exemplify how the South-South cooperation interests underpinning BRICS' foreign policy derive from the meanings produced and attached to various social subjects/objects of the Global South, as depicted in development discourse.

As manifestations of South-South development cooperation, the biofuel case studies symbolise an escalating trend in the international investment regime: the intensification of FDI between members of the Global South (Ferrando, 2013; Paulsen, 2010; Malik, 2010; Gelb, 2005). According to Aykut and Ratha (2004), South-South investment flows rose from US\$4.6 billion in 1994 to an average of US\$54.4 billion between 1997 and 2000, where it accounts for approximately 36 per cent of total FDI inflows to the Global South. Similarly, Aykut and Goldstein (2006) claim that the growth rate of South-South FDI from emerging powers like BRICS, now exceeds that of North-South FDI. Hence the intensification of BRICS-Africa diplomatic relations to promote South-South FDI becomes clear.

The significance of this investment regime for the current discussion relates to the way in which FDI, as a development strategy, governs land access. FDI governs land access as it shapes the conduct of others by working through the desires, aspirations, interests and beliefs of various actors (Dean, 2010:18), where the outcome of these activities produces 'self-organising networks that arise out of the interactions between a variety of organisations and associations (Rose, 1999:17). For example, (when referring to Chapter Three) the manner in which FDI governed land access can be seen in the 'self-optimisation' conducts of African governments to attract foreign capital, which produced the ability to use land for foreign investors. However, it is impossible to capture all the governing effects of FDI since they are not confined to domestic legislation but can also be seen in the manner it promotes the signing of international tools to promote and protect foreign investment, for example BITs – as the excerpts from the summits mentioned above illustrate (Ferrando, 2013; Poulsen, 2010; Malik, 2010; Guzman, 1997).

With the exception of BITs, alternative international investment incentives used to promote FDI include for example, Double Taxation Treaties (DTTs) as well as Preferential Trade and Investment Agreements (PTIs) (UNCTAD, 2004). However, due to time- and space constraints, the following section discusses BITs as a tool to promote FDI. Thus far, I have examined how foreign policy activities such as government-led cooperation programmes like ProSavana, trade fairs and exhibitions, business-to-business meetings and government-to-government deals structure possible fields of action that facilitate land acquisitions. It has been explained *how* these BRICS activities were accrued through discourses of South-South cooperation which influenced the foreign policy interests and diplomatic activities that typically promote biofuel land deals. Similarly, by focusing on BITs, the next section looks at how these foreign policy and diplomatic activities have the effect of ‘governing’ the Global South. In other words, ‘the pattern or structure that emerges as the result of the interactions of a range of political actors...’ where:

‘Governance refers to the *outcome* of all these interactions and interdependencies: the self-organising networks that arise out of the interactions between a variety of organisations and associations (Rose, 1999:16-17).

South-South BITs and land access

Despite being varying in content, BITs can be seen as legal mechanisms that provide protection to foreign investors (for example, Karuturi, Emami Biotech or MAI) and in the process, stimulate FDI (Büthe & Milner, 2008; Te Velde, 2006; North, 1990). According to Paulsen (2010:101), following the 1955 Bandung conference, BITs between members of the Global South increased to such an extent that in 2010, South-South BITs accounted for nearly 40 per cent of the global BIT network. One explanation for the latter trend relates to the manner in which economic development was seen as ‘urgent’ for the Global South in the post-war period, where South-South FDI supposedly promoted development as it served as an opportunity for capital accumulation (Indonesia Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1955; Amanor, 2013; Matondi *et al.*, 2011:2). Moreover, with the growing economies of emerging middle powers like BRICS possessing significant potential for investments, BITs often serves as a useful strategy to attract greater flows of international investment by allowing governments to ‘tie their hands’ against uncompensated expropriation (Tobin & Rose-Ackerman, 2010:2). As Tobin and Rose-Ackerman (2010:2) explain, since Third World countries are often associated with perceptions of political risk that could potentially harm foreign investors’ money, BITs typically serve as a solution, as they signal a commitment from host governments to investor-friendly domestic institutions (Stephenson & Carroll, 2012; Tobin & Rose-Ackerman, 2010:2; Guzman, 1997:644). This commitment can be seen, for example, in the opening paragraph of the BIT between the governments of Mozambique and India signed in 2009, where the latter is referred to as the Contracting Party:

[...] Desiring to create conditions favourable for fostering greater investment by investors of one State in the territory of the other State; [...] encouragement and reciprocal

protection under international agreement of such investment will be conducive to the stimulation of individual business initiative and will increase prosperity in both States [...] (Mozambique-India BIT, 2009).

Likewise, the China-Ethiopia BIT signed in 1998 stipulates (China-Ethiopia BIT, 1998):

The Government of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia and the Government of the People's Republic of China (hereinafter referred as the Contracting Parties), intending to create favourable conditions for investments by investors of one Contracting Party in the territory of the other Contracting Party: Recognising that the reciprocal encouragement, promotion and protection of such investments will be conducive to stimulating business initiatives of the investors and will increase prosperity in both States; Desiring to intensify the economic cooperation of both States on the basis of equality and mutual benefits.

The commitments verbalised by BITs are supported by commanding financial costs on host countries if the terms of agreement are violated, i.e. costs in time and money of international arbitration as well as any ultimate financial liability levied on the state. Secondly, echoing the values of Neoliberal Institutionalism⁴⁶, treaty violators suffer reputational costs that discourage future potential investors (Tobin & Rose-Ackerman, 2010:4; Krasner, 1982:187).

In diplomatic practise, treaties can be described as formal written agreements between state and non-state actors, which are legally binding under international law. According to Constantinou (2005), treaties are unlike other international agreements as they are tied to the fundamental principle of *pacta sunt servanda*, meaning that agreements must be observed, unless forced upon or concluded in bad faith. In this sense, they serve as a disciplinary mechanism, by controlling individual countries through continuous supervision, 'punishment and compensation, and in the form of correction [...] the molding and transformation of individuals in terms of certain norms' (Foucault, 1975:70). Here, Foucault's individual bodies in *Discipline and Punish* (1977a) can be used as a metaphor to comprehend the manner in which BITs act as an instrument for monitoring and assessing a state's individual performance on their path of development ('normalcy'). Following Zanotti (2005:473), each 'patient' or disorderly state (which refers here to the host countries where FDI is allocated) is normalised in a process that is both standardising and individualising. It is standardising, because the final goal is the achievement of standards that in this case, resemble a 'developed country. At the same time, they are also individualising as each state continuously compares its own behaviour to international criteria, and uses tools such as BITs for self-improvement'. Should the state fail to improve in

⁴⁶ Neoliberal Institutionalism refers to the International Relations theory, whose main assumption is that due to the intensification of globalisation, states become more dependent on each other and are more likely to cooperate, in order to secure wealth. Cooperation is achieved through interactive activities such as negotiation and bargaining, where multilateral forums like that of BRICS, IBSA or the UN to name a few, are formed to facilitate these negotiations. Because it is assumed that states cannot survive without cooperating with each other, the fear of discord gets mitigated, as it will influence future possibilities for cooperation and the accumulation of capital (Keohane, 1984; Mersheimer, 1995; Walt, 1998; Keohane & Martin, 1995; Krasner, 1982).

accordance with certain values and criteria and thus become labelled as risky, punishment occurs through a reduction in FDI and simultaneously, in less development.

Despite risk being a loaded concept⁴⁷ (see Van Riet, 2015, 2013; Dean, 1998; Lupton, 1993) investors' risk perceptions essentially relate to political risk that could influence their return on investment in another country. For the purposes of this discussion, risk can be seen as the likelihood that an event may occur, determined by quantitative, mathematical methodologies to assist decision-making in areas of foreign investment (Lupton, 1993:426). In risk assessment, political risk often involves an analysis of non-business factors that could lead to negative outcomes for investors typically informed by neoliberal rationalities supporting minimal state interference in the economy (Korbin, 1979:4). For example, the Political Risk Services Group, an organisation conducting political risk assessments, analyse the likelihood of certain types of government intervention that could influence the business climate. Amongst the factors that could negatively influence return on investment is turmoil, defined as 'actions that can result in threats or do harm to people or property', such as riots, politically motivated strikes, disputes with other countries that may affect business, terrorism etc. Other risk factors include: equity restrictions limiting foreign ownership of local commodities; taxation policies discriminating against investors; restrictions placed on local operations that prescribe procurement of foreign personnel as well as the efficiency and honesty of local populations in the host country; repatriation restrictions influencing the compensation of profits, dividends or investment capital; exchange controls regulating the conversion of foreign currency and lastly, labour costs that are influenced by government policies, trade union activity and the productivity of the labour force (PRS methodology, 2015:5-6). Consequently, countries get categorised according to their scores obtained from the political risk assessment, where less restriction or control policies equate to a 'less risky' investment destination.

Thus, BITs also represent self-governing attempts where individual states, through certain conducts, fashion themselves into neoliberal subjects representing the depictions of *homo oeconomicus*, as explained in previous chapters (Foucault, 1979:147, 279; 291,292; Polanyi, 1944:43). To recall, *homo oeconomicus* in neoliberal terms is an entrepreneur of himself, responsible for his own capital and the production of his own satisfaction (Haman, 2009:38; Foucault, 1979:226). In other words, by signing BITs to promote FDI, countries like Ethiopia and Mozambique, according to the neoliberal rationality that informs their governing activities, supposedly promote their entrepreneurial qualities that would allow them to accumulate capital.

⁴⁷ For example, though not denying the existence of 'danger', Van Riet (2015) explains how the construction of 'risk' is a Logocentric practise that labels Third World populations in order for them to be 'managed'. In a similar sense, Dean (1998:25) claims that 'there is no such thing as risk in reality'. Drawing on Foucault's work of governmentality, both Van Riet (2015) and Dean (1998) explain how discourses of 'risk' are an attempt to 'order reality' (Dean, 1998:25) and interpret events so that they might be governable in particular ways.

BITs therefore signal environments that are regulated according to market rationalities that prohibit government intervention in the economy, where investors' money would be less at risk. The following statement made by AgriSA's public relations manager, Kobus Visser (as pointed out by Ferrando, 2013:14), exemplifies the manner in which BITs create an illusion of safety for investors. Visser states that:

Agri SA is trying to make it safe for its members to expand their farming activities elsewhere in Africa in order to enjoy economies of scale and make use of the abundance of resources such as land, water and production incentives. Before becoming involved in any country, the content and enforceability of bilateral trade agreements and agreements relating to the protection of investments must be carefully scrutinised.

Within this investor friendly environment, the land use of local communities targeted by foreign investors is subordinated in order to make way for practises of capital accumulation (Ferrando, 2013; Hall & Paradza, 2012:9; Makki & Geisler, 2011; Borras *et al.*, 2011:222; Nhamundo & Salamá, 2010:36). To recall, I follow Hunt's notion of 'use' as the enjoyment of some kind of benefit or benefit stream (as explained by Ribot & Peluso, 2003:155). Land use is 'characterised by the arrangements, activities and inputs people undertake in a certain land cover type to produce, change or maintain it' (FAO, 1999). The ability to use land therefore translates into the ability to benefit from the produce obtained from the land as well as the land management actions carried out by humans to produce products and benefits (FAO, 1999). Hence, a central requirement to use land in order to benefit from its resource is land access. As mentioned, land access refers to the processes by which people, individually or collectively are *able* to use land, which includes processes like participation in the market, social networks, social identities etc. (Coluta *et al.*, 2008:8; Ribot & Peluso, 2003:153).

The discussion of BITs as a mechanism to attract FDI exemplifies how biofuel land deals are products of governmental power-knowledge, i.e. the manner in which power and knowledge imply one another. To recall, Foucault (1977a:27-28) suggests that 'there is no power relation without the correlative constitution of a field of knowledge, not any knowledge that does not presuppose and constitute at the same time power relations'. For example, in the Karuturi land acquisition, the ability allocated to the company to use the land in Gambella was justified by the perception that the private, foreign investor 'rightfully' has access to the land, as he/she is 'handpicked' by the market. The adoption of market principles to regulate land access entails the assumption that the latter is the best mechanism to allocate goods and services, since the state does not have the capacity to govern everything for the best, opposed to the ability of the market to pick out winners (Hamann, 2009:40; Rose & Miller, 1992:198; Foucault, 1979:323).

Investors' abilities (land access) are therefore supported and sustained not only by government's commitments to protect FDI but also by the assumption that capital generates development. In this process, land uses that do not generate capital, for example pastoralism,

fishing, grazing etc., are rendered non-existent, as seen in their portrayal in government policies as 'under-utilised', 'idle' or 'marginal'. Such framings of agricultural land are produced by neoliberal subjects (government departments, multinational corporations, private investors, etc.) and establish new power relations that enable foreign investors to exploit the 'idle' or 'marginal' land. These activities are simultaneously supported by, as previously discussed, diplomatic actions, international legal tools such as BITs as well as municipal law that 'protects' foreign investments.

Hence, investor's land access forms part of a network of powers shaped by discourses of land, efficiency, agricultural development, biofuels and South-South cooperation. Their land access typifies the *outcome* of governance as stated by Rose (1999:16-17), the power structure that emerges as the result of the interactions and interdependencies between a wide range of political actors, of which the state is just one. The extent of these interactions and interdependencies that produce an investor's ability to use land is captured in this chapter by looking at the foreign policy and diplomatic activities between state and non-state actors and the outcome of these interactions, for example domestic legislation and international treaties. Furthermore, investors' land access is also shaped by the representation of African societies as 'poor', 'hungry' and in need of investment, where the foreign investor symbolises the 'efficient' owner of land, handpicked by the market. The investor represents someone that will promote capital accumulation and in the process not only stimulate development but also solve 'problems of underdevelopment'. In this sense, power emerges from not only the capability of some actors to influence the ideas, interests or practises of others, but is also attached to people by being manifested in the meanings coupled with their identity (Ribot & Peluso, 2003:155). Though subjective, discursive identities or representations of subjects/objects are constructed and get reconstructed through interactions and relationships that emerge from or flow through the intended and unintended consequences or effects of social relations (Ribot & Peluso, 2003:156). In the following section, I conclude the chapter by looking at the possible implications of BRICS' governing activities for the objective of South-South cooperation as an 'alternative' development strategy.

Conclusion: BRICS and the global governance of the Global South, what are implications for South-South cooperation?

As a group of emerging middle powers, BRICS continuously iterate their intention to counter the hegemonic world order, which is characterised by the dominating structural influence of, amongst others the United States, Japan and the European Union (BRICS, 2015; Schoeman, 2011; Cornelissen, 2008; Shaw *et al.*, 2007, 2009). Structural influence in this sense can be comprehended in accordance with the third face of power, as discussed in Chapter Two. To recall, the third face of power entails the ability of actors to not only influence the desired

behaviour of others, but also shape the ways in which they perceive their wants, desires and interests (Hayward, 2000:4). As stated by Steven Lukes, in the third face of power, 'A exercises power over B when A affects B in a manner contrary to B's interests' (as quoted by Hayward, 2000:4). Structural power therefore refers to the social capacity of the Global North in relation to the Global South to shape the interests and simultaneously structural capacity of others (Burnett & Duvall, 2005:18). By lobbying for structural change, the BRICS aim to increase their capacity in relation to other actors and in the process promote the development interests of the Global South. These activities typically entail the reform of international institutions, especially the United Nations (Landsberg & Monaye, 2010; Cornelissen, 2009:18; Inglis, 2009:73; Du Preez, 2007:25; Smith, 2006:155; Meukalia, 2004:10). For example, in their seventh summit declaration the group iterated the need for:

[...] a comprehensive reform of the United Nations, including its Security Council with a view to making it more representative and efficient so that it could better respond to global challenges. China and Russia reiterate the importance they attach to the status and role of Brazil, India and South Africa in international affairs and support their aspiration to play a greater role in the UN (BRICS, 2015).

The increasing amount of BRICS-Africa summits, bilateral and multilateral forums, cooperation programmes and other diplomatic activities signifies the group's interest to transform global power relations, commonly under the banner of South-South cooperation. Undoubtedly, the BRICS' growing presence in the Global South, whether individually or acting together, has been scrutinised and is sometimes referred to as 'sub-imperialist' (Bond, 2014; Bond, 2013; Flynn, 2007). To differing extents, these authors construct their arguments in line with the material dimension of imperialist activities, which typically focus on 'the molecular processes of capital accumulation in space and time' (Harvey, 2005:26). The latter entails a range of political-economic processes where command over and use of capital takes primacy (Harvey, 2005:26). Hence the interdependent link between imperialism and the capitalist interests underpinning colonial encounters, which shape the modern world-system as depicted by Immanuel Wallerstein (1974). According to Wallerstein (1974), the current world-system, dating back roughly 500 years, is capitalist by nature and can be divided into three categories: the core, the periphery and semi-periphery. Though dynamic and ever-changing, the 'core' refers to the countries typically benefiting from capitalist activities, which initially entailed Western European countries and later the United States. Core countries benefit from capitalism due to their structural and material capabilities that render them control over international commerce and able to extract capital surplus from their relations with other countries. At the other end lies the periphery, constituted by the countries relying on exploitative labour relations with core countries in order to generate income. They typically export raw materials to the core countries, which then expropriate the capital surplus generated by the periphery. Lastly, between the two poles lies the semi-periphery, which either refers to core countries in decline or to new emerging

actors benefiting from capitalist relations either with the core or the periphery (Martínez-Vela, 2001; Halsall, 1997).

In line with Marxist perspectives of international relations, the aforementioned interpretations of BRICS as sub-imperialists entails the argument that the group's relations with the Global South promote capitalist interests, despite aiming to be characterised as 'anti-imperialist' as they sustain relations of exploitation (Bond, 2014). According to Jordaan (2003), the reason for their support of the current world-system can be seen as a result of the manner in which they benefit from the rules, norms and values that shape the modern world-system. As emerging middle powers, the BRICS play a supporting role in the current hegemonic neoliberal order, where the rules, practices and ideologies of this order conform to the interests of the 'core' countries as mentioned previously (Jordaan, 2003; Nel *et al.*, 2000; Cox, 1989).

My discussion in the current and previous chapters, analysing BRICS-Africa relations makes a similar conclusion. However, by framing BRICS-Africa relations as practises of governing, the emphasis of my analysis focuses on non-material factors such as discourses shaping foreign policy behaviour, the interests of the BRICS countries, and the manner in which these interests reinforce the hegemonic, neoliberal world order. Such an analysis is similar to Walter Mignolo's work on modernity and coloniality, which emphasises the ideational aspects of North-South relations (Van Riet, 2013). Taking Wallerstein's world-system analysis as his point of departure, Mignolo de-emphasises Wallerstein's materialist focus and suggests that discursive modes of sub-alternation have been applied to the Global South as a function of the capitalist world economy and interstate system (Van Riet, 2013; Mignolo, 2007:49). Mignolo (2000) looks at the manner in which the modern world system, driven initially by Europe and later North America, systematically produce western supremacy by emphasising colonial differences. These differences are then converted into values, which in turn facilitate the production of ontological and epistemological hierarchies that suppress subaltern knowledge and hierarchies in human beings.

From this perspective, BRICS are sub-imperialists (in the sense that they promote western power-knowledge) not only as a result of the manner in which their subjectivities are produced by neoliberal discourses that shape their interests in international relations, but also due to the manner in which their relations reproduce neoliberal subjects. By framing their relations with Africa as forms of South-South cooperation, BRICS invokes specific technologies of global neoliberal governance with the aim to produce developed, self-disciplined states that can be trusted to govern themselves according to neoliberal rationalities (Abrahamsen, 2004:1454). BRICS' emphasis on promoting South-South FDI as seen in their diplomatic activities is one example of the group's governing technique. Not only do discourses of FDI appeal to neoliberal economic and political policies such as trade liberalisation, devaluation of domestic currencies,

privatisation of public services etc. to promote an investor friendly environment, but they also produce neoliberal subjects governing land access in domestic spheres. Here, the statement made by Abera Deressa, former minister of Agriculture and Rural Development of Ethiopia, serves as an excellent example to present the manner in which knowledge produces subjects, which at the same time produce certain power relations. With regard to pastoralism, the minister stated:

Pastoralists have enough land for their cattle...but at the end of the day we are not really appreciating pastoralists remaining as they are. We have to improve their livelihood by creating job opportunities. Pastoralism, as it is, is not sustainable. We want to change the environment (Butler, 2010).

Deressa's statement demonstrates a commitment to market principles to regulate land access, which entails an emphasis on capital accumulation. In other words, the land-based activity that accords the most value (measured in economic terms), enjoys a 'natural right' to use land. This view is furthermore supported by the discursive representation of African societies in development discourse as 'poor', 'underdeveloped' or 'illiterate' and hence in need of capital investment. Thus, despite BRICS' foreign policy and diplomatic activities embodying forms of South-South cooperation and burnished by the rhetoric of 'mutual gains', 'respect', equality' and 'solidarity', they nevertheless facilitate the production of colonial difference, which reinforces existing hierarchies between human beings and 'knowledges'. By way of explanation, the group's international relations with Africa not only reproduce the discursive representations of the Global South, but also strengthen existing hierarchies and reinforce economic inequalities, as seen in the land deals. In Roxanne Doty's (1993:316) words, BRICS international relations can be characterised:

[...] To the extent that similar kinds of subjects are reproduced in various sites and over periods of time, this tells us something about the prevalence of particular representations that construct a hierarchical world.

In light of this discussion, the most prominent and obvious implication for South-South cooperation is that it does not represent an 'alternative development strategy'. Indeed, as the conceptualisations of South-South cooperation suggest, the entire notion is constructed on the discursive representations of the Global South by the Global North as 'underdeveloped'. South-South cooperation therefore serves as an attempt for the Global South to 'un-underdevelop' themselves, where BRICS symbolises the opportunity for the transfer of 'south-based' development experiences. However, when referring to the group's strategies to promote development through South-South FDI, the neoliberal rationality underpinning discourses of development, and the market, continue to inform their interests, desires and behaviour. Coupled with the governing effect of their relations, the group becomes part of the mechanism of power that operates through neoliberal knowledge, producing subjects just as much as subjects reproduce it (Edkins, 1999:21).

Chapter Five

Conclusion: BRICS, South-South cooperation and biofuels, framing land in the twenty-first century

The primary objective of this dissertation was to analyse claims of South-South cooperation to be 'different' from the ways in which North-South relations have historically been characterised. As explained, the latter essentially refers to the Global South's historical experiences of colonialism as well as the patronising character in which development interventions took place in the post-war period. By portraying North-South relations as 'condescending' and consequently unsuccessful in their goal of promoting the wellbeing of the Global South through a range of development programmes, assistance or loans, South-South cooperation promises to recognise the importance of different histories and reaffirm its role as being a manifestation of solidarity among the peoples and countries of the Global South (GA resolution 64/222). As such, instances of cooperation between members of the South are said to contribute to:

[...] their national well-being, national and collective self-reliance and the attainment of internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals. South-South cooperation and its agenda have to be set by countries of the South and should continue to be guided by the principles of respect for national sovereignty, national ownership and independence, equality, non-conditionality, non-interference in domestic affairs and mutual benefit (GA resolution 64/222).

In other words, as implied by President Jacob Zuma (RT, 2015), development cooperation between members of the Global South would, in contrast to North-South development programmes, further the wellbeing of societies, not only because it is cognisant of the particular histories shared by the South, but also because it is conducted in a mutually beneficial, uncondescending manner.

I addressed the primary objective by making use of post-structuralism, drawing extensively on the works of Michel Foucault to inform my analysis. By making use of Foucault's notion of power, knowledge and discourse, I wished to expose the condescending nature of development discourse by highlighting its roots in social evolutionism that produced a particular idea, image and identity of how society ought to be organised, and informed and legitimised colonial and development endeavours in the Global South. Since power and knowledge directly imply one another, there is no power relation without a correlative constitution of a field of knowledge, and no knowledge that does not presuppose and constitute at the same time power relations

(Foucault, 1977a:27-28), I explained how the production of development discourse is based on the knowledge and truths of the West (Pieterse, 1996), producing and reinforcing power relations domestically and globally.

I also emphasised the productive workings of power, according to Foucault and aimed to illustrate how the idea of South-South cooperation is produced from the interplay between development discourse, where discourse represents the unification of power and knowledge. Following Escobar (1995:6), I looked at development as a historically produced discourse, and referred to the reasons why many countries saw themselves as underdeveloped in the post-war period; 'how to' development became a fundamental problem for them, and how, finally they embarked upon the task of 'un-underdeveloping' themselves by subjecting their societies to increasingly systematic, detailed, and comprehensive interventions. The methodology used to illustrate how development is produced by western regimes of truth is called discourse analysis. By employing this methodology, I allude to the way in which development discourse, manifested in policy documents, multilateral summit declarations and international treaties, can be understood as a bundle of exchanges that give shape through text as well as practices (Sharp & Richardson, 2001:195). As such, I illustrate how discourse in text has an existence beyond the text itself (Sharp & Richardson, 2001:195), coexisting and producing multiple other discourses, for example, of biofuels, agricultural development and efficient land use (Death, 2008:27).

The second objective of this dissertation that formed part of the examination of South-South cooperation was to describe the socio-political and economic context relating to the new surge in land acquisitions for the production of biofuel. I address this objective in Chapter Three by locating contemporary land-grabs with the convergence of global crises, i.e. climate change, depleting energy sources and the remaining challenge of rural development. Hence I emphasise the manner in which biofuel land deals are represented as a win-win opportunity for the Global South: a package solution to address the aforementioned crises. This win-win narrative is endorsed by discourses of biofuels, suggesting that biofuels will bring development to Africa if African governments improve market access for foreigners to conduct land deals, and create hospitable environments for FDI. As such, development will accrue, as the most efficient actors improve the productivity of the agricultural sector by introducing commercial farming methods to countries where farmers are mostly engaged in traditional, unproductive land practices as well as creating spill-over effects by establishing social services. Yet, by referring to a number of biofuel land deals, it can be argued that the optimism with which biofuels are represented is ignorant of the frequent uneven and hierarchical power relations that enable or prohibit some people to benefit from resources. For example, not only did the biofuel land deals lead to increased competition for resources such as water, but they were also associated with intensified food insecurity and further marginalisation as companies failed to

deliver on their promises. However, this discussion cannot be comprehended without referring to the rationalities underpinning land deals and the types of power relations they establish and their implications for land access.

For example, I explain how the neoliberal rationality of development enables actors to acquire agricultural land in Africa for biofuel production by, inter alia, shaping the beliefs, interests and actions of actors across the globe, including the state. The neoliberal rationality underpinning development entails a normative description that prescribes the way in which development ought to take place. This prescription is based upon an unconditional faith in the market as the ultimate mechanism to regulate the wellbeing of society, typically favouring, inter alia, minimal state interference not only in the economy but also civil society in general. For example, I refer to the manner in which African states aim to fashion themselves into 'good governments' by increasing their openness towards FDI and foreign control of land. Furthermore, also explained is the role of the multilateral forum BRICS, representing South-South cooperation, in governing the Global South, i.e. the way in which the group's actions conduct the conduct of others (i.e. African governments). As such, I illustrate the governing effect of development discourse:

[...] the pattern or structure that emerges as the resultant of the interactions of a range of political actors [where] governance refers to the outcome of all these interactions and interdependencies: the self-organising networks that arise out of the interactions between a variety of organisations and associations (Rose, 1999:16-17).

Ultimately, I emphasise how the neoliberal rationality underpinning discourses of development, biofuels and agricultural development governs land access. Defining access as the *ability* to benefit from things (Ribot & Peluso, 2003), I allude to the way in which the neoliberal ontology of development enframes natural entities and human existences as bare reserves of capital accumulation (Joronen, 2013). I focus specifically on the manner in which agricultural land in Africa is framed by development and biofuel discourses in such a way that it appears susceptible to market forces, in order to secure its economic efficiency. This entails the systematic production of land as a market commodity which includes a process whereby objects are transformed into entities that can be exchanged on the market for capital purposes (Prodnik, 2012:274; Carvalho & Rodrigues, 2008:268). However, as shown in the discussions of biofuel land deals in Chapter Three, processes of land commodification essentially require the generation of market evaluations that ignore or discard the value dimensions of land that cannot be translated into monetary terms, such as systems of kinship, neighbourhood, craft, creed, etc. (Polanyi, 1945:178).

Lastly, by locating the development rationality underpinning biofuel land deals, I explain the similarities between South-South cooperation and North-South relations, rejecting opposite claims. In other words, by referring to the hierarchical power relations shaped by discourses of development and in line with my biofuel land deals analysis, I concluded that South-South

cooperation is qualitatively the same as the North-South relations and that there is a significant possibility that cooperation will also lead to exploitation or unequal benefits. I argue that these similarities are essentially a result of the power of development, produced by particular regimes of knowledge and truths that shape the subjectivities of subjects. Hence, by analysing the diplomatic strategies employed by BRICS and identifying the manner in which the group's ambitions are produced by neoliberal rationalities of development, I argue that BRICS' reformist ambitions should not be mistaken for being fundamental by nature (Du Preez, 2007:26). Rather, by viewing BRICS' development relations with Africa from a governmentality perspective, it highlights the productive effects of discourse, as its operation produces certain meanings attached to various social subjects/objects, deploys particular regimes of truth manifested in texts, practises and techniques to transform society in 'ways thought desirable'. As illustrated in Chapter Three of this dissertation, BRICS-Africa development relations tend to have a disciplinary effect on Africa, as they inspire attempts to 'normalise' the Global South into an image produced by the West.

However, these findings should be interpreted in full recognition of the significant limitations of my study, the first being the selected geographical and governing scope of my discussion regarding BRICS-Africa development cooperation. Since I looked solely at the manner in which BRICS employ strategies and techniques to promote South-South FDI in certain African countries under the banner of promoting the development of the Global South, alternate manifestations of BRICS-Africa or South-South relations were not examined. This limitation opens up space for future research to explore additional manifestations of South-South cooperation and their implications for the governance of the Global South. These alternatives include, for example, different member countries than the BRICS as well as other issues and areas, such as food production, trade, peace operations and knowledge transfers.

In addition, I relied on secondary data to inform my discussion of biofuel land deals, which has the obvious drawback of not being informed by real-life experiences of biofuel land deals. Indeed, during the research phase of my dissertation, I came to the conclusion that little fieldwork has been done to capture the ways in which biofuel land deals, legitimised by development discourse, influence host communities' lives, suggesting possible future explorations on this subject matter.

Lastly, since the objective of this dissertation was to highlight the role of discourses, manifested in texts such as policies, declarations and treaties that produce certain concepts, ideas, practices and power relations in society, I do not proffer an alternative discourse or recommendation to ensure that South-South cooperation or BRICS-Africa development relations are mutually beneficial. Although it is possible to recommend approaches to development or 'promoting the welfare of society' established at grass-roots level as often

implied (Seyfang & Smith, 2007; Chambers, 1995; Burkey, 1993; Uphoff, 1993), such an argument remains grounded upon the idea that transformation ought to take place according to certain sets of standards and criteria. From a Foucauldian perspective of knowledge always being partial, and 'in a certain strategic relation which man is placed' (Foucault, 1977b:81), I argue that alternative development recommendations cannot escape the hierarchical relations of power between the subjects (wanting to change society) and objects upon whom sets of knowledge will be imposed. Yet, this is not to imply that all development programmes will be exploitative, and reaffirms the need for field work to comprehend ways in which successful programmes have been implemented. I do, however, argue for the necessity to recognise the existence of these hierarchies, along with the possible implications for the objects upon which the programmes are said to be implemented.

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