

Financial capital and land control: New rentiers on the Brazilian agricultural frontier

Rodrigo Cavalcanti do Nascimento

Universidade Estadual Paulista (UNESP) – Rio Claro, São Paulo, Brasil.
e-mail: rodrign80@gmail.com

Samuel Frederico

Universidade Estadual Paulista (UNESP) – Rio Claro, São Paulo, Brasil.
e-mail: samuelfrederico7@gmail.com

Yuri Martenauer Saweljew

Universidade Estadual Paulista (UNESP) – Rio Claro, São Paulo, Brasil.
e-mail: yurimartenauer@yahoo.com.br

Abstract

Although not new to capitalism, Brazil experienced a dizzying increase in the Initial Public Offering (IPO) between 2004 and 2008. In the case of agribusiness, 18 companies made IPOs in this short period. Who are these companies? What were the objectives with the IPO? What are your drivers? What is the relationship of these companies with the global land grabbing? These are some of the questions that this article seeks to answer, when analyzing more specifically, two pioneering companies in their respective areas to open stock capital: one linked to agricultural grain production and another specialized in the land real estate market. These examples allow us to analyze the transformation of land into a financial asset, with the unprecedented integration between financial capital and land ownership, a *sine qua non* characteristic of the land grabbing process. Instead of a barrier to capital inflows, as the classic theory of ground rent points out, the examples demonstrate how land can be used as fictitious capital, with serious social and environmental impacts in areas of expansion of modern agriculture in Brazil.

Keywords: Financial capital; land control; land rent; agricultural companies; modern agricultural frontier.

Capital financeiro e controle de terras: a monopolização neorrentística da terra

Resumo

Apesar de não ser um fenômeno novo no capitalismo, entre 2004 e 2008, o Brasil conheceu um aumento vertiginoso na oferta pública de ações. No caso do agronegócio, 18 empresas fizeram IPO neste pequeno período. Quem são essas empresas? Quais os objetivos com o IPO? Quais os seus controladores? Como a abertura de capital levou as empresas a novas estratégias de acumulação (rentismo) e formas de uso do território? Como a financeirização dessas empresas se relaciona com o fenômeno global de land grabbing? Essas são algumas questões que este artigo procura responder. Mais especificamente, o artigo dedica-se à análise de duas empresas pioneiras nos seus respectivos ramos de atuação a abrir capital em bolsa: uma vinculada à produção agrícola de grãos e outra especializada no mercado imobiliário de terras. Estes exemplos, permitem analisar a transformação da terra em ativo financeiro, com a integração sem precedentes entre o capital financeiro e a propriedade da terra, característica *sine qua non* do atual fenômeno de land grabbing.

Ao invés de barreira de entrada de capitais, como assinala a teoria clássica da renda, os exemplos analisados neste artigo, demonstram como a terra pode ser utilizada como uma forma fictícia de capital, negociada no mercado em função da renda gerada.

Palavras-chave: Capital financeiro; Controle de terras; Renda da terra; Empresas agrícolas; Fronteira agrícola moderna.

Capital financiero y control de la tierra: la monopolización neorentista de la tierra

Resumen

Aunque no es un fenómeno nuevo en el capitalismo, entre 2004 y 2008, Brasil experimentó un fuerte aumento en la oferta pública de acciones. En el caso de la agroindustria, 18 empresas hicieron IPO en este corto período. ¿Quiénes son estas empresas? ¿Cuáles son los objetivos con la salida a bolsa? ¿Cuáles son tus conductores? ¿Cómo el IPO llevó las empresas a nuevas estrategias de acumulación (rentismo) y formas de uso de la tierra? ¿Cómo se relaciona la financiarización de estas empresas con el fenómeno global del acaparamiento de tierras? Estas son algunas preguntas que este artículo busca responder. Más específicamente, el artículo está dedicado al análisis de dos empresas pioneras en sus respectivos campos para hacerlas públicas: una vinculada a la producción agrícola de granos y otra especializada en el mercado inmobiliario. Estos ejemplos nos permiten analizar la transformación de la tierra en un activo financiero, con la integración sin precedentes del capital financiero y la propiedad de la tierra, que es una característica sine qua non del fenómeno actual de apropiación de tierras. En lugar de una barrera de entrada de capital, como lo señala la teoría clásica de la renta de la tierra, los ejemplos analizados en este documento demuestran cómo la tierra puede ser utilizada como una forma ficticia de capital negociada en el mercado por el ingreso generado.

Palabras clave: Capital financiero; control de la tierra; renta de la tierra; empresas agrícolas; frontera agrícola moderna.

Introduction

In 2007, SLC Agrícola became the first company dedicated to agricultural production to go public on the world stock markets. One year earlier, BrasilAgro, a company created for the exploration and negotiation of rural real estate, had also been a pioneer when it realized its own IPO (Initial Public Offering)¹. Although public offering is not a new phenomenon in capitalism, between 2004 and 2008, Brazil experienced a vertiginous increase in public stock offerings. In the case of agribusiness, 18 companies went public on the São Paulo Stock Exchange (BM&FBovespa) in that short time. This phenomenon is due largely to the great availability of capital in the

¹ To have shares traded on the BM&FBovespa, the companies need to publicly list their stock and request to register as a *companhia aberta*, or publicly traded company, with the Comissão de Valores Mobiliários (CMV)—the body that regulates and monitors the Brazilian capital market. Upon meeting this condition, companies are authorized to sell their shares to the public in an initial public offering, or IPO (GRAS; NASCIMENTO, 2016, p. 124).

international market, and to the strong increasing trend in the prices of food and agricultural land and the expectation of agrofuel expansion.

The acquisition of shares capitalizes these companies while simultaneously facilitating the inflow of financial capital in agribusiness. Generally averse to high-risk and low-liquidity investments such as land/agriculture, shareholder participation enables interest-bearing capital to participate in this promising market without losing its investment flexibility. The great availability of capital makes the companies' expansion projects feasible, in some cases resulting in the acquisition of large extents of land, especially in areas of the modern agricultural frontier within the Brazilian territory.

But, who are these companies? What are their drivers? How does opening capital enable the creation of new accumulation strategies through the capture of ground rent? How is the financialization of these companies related to the global phenomenon of land grabbing? What are the territorial consequences of these investments? These are some of the questions this article seeks to answer. To that end, the article is dedicated to the analysis of two previously mentioned companies: SLC Agrícola and BrasilAgro.

These companies' modes of operation permit an analysis of the transformation of land into a financial asset, with unprecedented integration between financial capital and land ownership, a *sine qua non* of the current phenomenon of land grabbing. Characterized by the strong relationship between financial capital and the land market, land grabbing can be defined by the intensive use of capital to appropriate control (control grabbing) over land and resources, as a means of accumulation and a response to current crises (financial, energy, food security, ecological) of neoliberal globalization (BORRAS et al, 2012; MCMICHAEL, 2012; COTULA, 2012; SAUER; BORRAS, 2016).

In the eagerness of financial investors to enter into the promising land market, the analyzed examples demonstrate how land can be interpreted as fictitious capital, negotiated on the market according to the expectation of future revenue, rather than a barrier to capital inflows, as the classical rent theory states.

However, as Ioris (2016) emphasizes, the theory of ground rent is not restricted to payment made to a landowner for the use of their land, but also involves a series of disputes and power relations between social classes. In this context, this article seeks to demonstrate how large investments in land in agricultural frontier areas resulted in a series of contradictions, amplifying land conflicts between agribusiness companies and peasant's communities, as well as causing various environmental impacts.

To address the questions stated above, this article is divided into four parts in addition to this introduction and the final considerations. The first item lists the agribusiness companies that made an IPO on the BM&FBovespa (Sao Paulo Stock Exchange), as well as their main drivers, analyzing in greater detail the public listing processes of the companies SLC Agrícola and BrasilAgro. The second item discusses the ground rent theory, emphasizing the approaches that consider ground rent a fictitious capital (HARVEY, 2006) as well as a financial asset (LI, 2014; OUMA, 2016; DUCASTEL; ANSEEUW, 2016; VISSER, 2016). The third item analyzes more concretely the two aforementioned companies' strategies of accumulation through extraction of different forms of ground rent. Finally, the fourth item demonstrates how financial capital imposes pressure on companies to grow and incorporate new lands, resulting in various territorial consequences such as significant environmental damages and an increase in land conflicts.

In terms of methodology, the data and information used in item 1, regarding the corporate structure of agribusiness companies, were collected directly from the BM&FBovespa website. More specific information about the companies BrasilAgro and SLC Agrícola, such as the quantity and price of controlled lands, was gathered and systematized from the institutional reports produced by the companies themselves and made available on their respective websites. Visits, including semi-structured interviews, were also made to the BrasilAgro headquarters in the city of São Paulo in 2015, and to SLC Agrícola's farms in the states of Maranhão and Piauí in 2017. The interviews enabled qualification of the data available in the reports, particularly regarding investment strategies and forms of ground rent extraction. Information on the environmental impacts and territorial conflicts between agribusiness and farming communities were surveyed during fieldwork and visits, in 2017, to eleven communities in the south of Piauí and Maranhão. These communities are assisted by the Comissão Pastora da Terra (Pastoral Land Commission, Piauí and Maranhão regions) in their fight to remain on the land. In addition to on-site observation, the communities' reports allowed us to catalog the main problems caused by the land grabbing in the region.

Interest-bearing capital and public offering of agribusiness companies in BM&FBOVESPA

Although companies going public on the stock exchange is not a new phenomenon in capitalism, from 2004 to 2008, Brazil saw an acceleration in public stock offerings from firms in different sectors of the economy. Attracted by the

abundant supply of capital in the international market, many companies saw an IPO as an opportunity to capitalize and expand their investments.

In the case of agribusiness, the global expectation, during most of the 2000s, of a long-term increase in demand for, and prices of, food and agrofuels, combined with the domestic possibility of territorial expansion of agro-industrial production, led 18 companies to put forward initial public offerings in that short period (2004–2008): Cosan and São Martinho (sugarcane biofuel), Laep Investments and Guarani—currently, Tereos Internacional (diverse foods); Marfrig, Minerva, BRF and JBS (meats and by-products); Nutriplant and Heringer (fertilizers and agrochemicals); Suzano and Duratex (paper and cellulose); SLC Agrícola, Vanguarda Agro, Renar Maçãs and Pomifrutas (agriculture); Agrenco (agricultural trading); BrasilAgro (rural real estate exploration)².

The following table shows companies connected to the agricultural, sugar and alcohol, and property exploration sectors, that have public offerings on the Novo Mercado da Bolsa de Valores, Mercadorias e Futuros (BM&FBovespa); their majority shareholder (April 2016), total value of their assets, and year of their IPO are also shown.

Table 1: Agribusiness companies with public offerings – BM&FBovespa, Brazil, 2016.

Company	Sector	Shareholder position	%	Total assets (billion Reals) 31/12/2015	Year of IPO
SLC Agrícola S.A.	Agriculture	Slc Participações S.A.	51.03	5.3	2007
		Others	31.73		
		Deutsche Bank	6.28		
		Verde Asset Management	4.6		
		Neuberger Berman Llc	4.55		
Vanguarda Agro	Agriculture	Laplace Invest. Gestão de Recursos Ltda.	22.95	2.4	2007
		Ewz Investments Llc - Socopa Corretora	15.62		
		Gavea Investimentos	14.95		
		Fim Cp Vnt	11.99		
		Silvio Tini de Araújo	10.65		
		Others	23.82		
Pomifrutas S.A.	Agriculture	Edgar Rafael Safdié	28.63	0.11	2005
		Siwa Fundo de Investimento Multimercado	14.09		
		Efc Participações Sa	11.88		
		Willyfrey Participações	9.82		
		Merav Bender Safdie	6.17		
Others	30				
Suzano Papel	Paper and	Suzano Holding S.A. ¹	95.47	28.2	2004

² Before 2004, only three companies linked to agribusiness had public offerings in Brazil—the pioneer Sadia (1971), Perdigão (1980) and Fosfértil (1992); similarly, after 2008, only four companies made an IPO: Fibria Celulose (2010); Biosev (2012); Vigor Alimentos (2012) and Raizen (2013).

e Celulose	Cellulose	Iplf Holding Others	2.69 1.83		
Duratex S.A.	Paper and Cellulose	Itaúsa - Investimentos Itaú S.A. Companhia Ligna de Investimentos Commonwealth Bank of Australia Others	35.4 14.69 5.02 40.77	9	2007
Fibra Celulose	Paper and Cellulose	Bndes Participações S.A. - Bndespar Votorantim S.A. Others	29.08 29.42 41.44	29.4	2009
São Martinho S.A.	Sugar and Alcohol	Ljn Participações Others	55.96 44.04	7.1	2007
Biosev S.A.	Sugar and Alcohol	Sugar Holdings B.v. International Finance Corporation Santa Elisa Participações S.A. Hédera Inv. E Participações Ltda. NI Participations Holdings 4 B.v. NI Participations Holdings 2 B.v. Others	59.58 5.84 5.51 4.47 4.06 4.06 16.48	10.2	2012
Cosan Limited	Sugar and Alcohol	Queluz Holdings Limited Usina Costa Pintos.a. Açúcar E Álcool Fundos Gavea Skaden As Blackrock Inc. Others	26.44 11.09 8.24 5.16 3.52 43.35	52.3	2007
Raízen Energia	Sugar and Alcohol	Cosan Investimentos E Participações S.A. Shell Brazil Holding Bv	50 50	24.5	2013
Marfrig Global Foods S.A.	Meats and By-products	Mms Participações Ltda. Bndes Participações S.A. Brandes Investment Partners. L.p. Skagen S.A. Others	26.21 19.62 12.28 5.43 36.41	20.9	2007
Minerva S.A.	Meats and By-products	Vdq Holdings S.A. Brf S.A. Fmr Llc Others	32.87 15.1 6.17 45.85	8.3	2007
BRF	Meats and By-products	Petros – Fund. Petrobras de Seg. Social Tarpon Gestora de Recursos S.A. Previ Caixa Previd. Funci.B. do Brasil Blackrock Inc. Others	11.64 11.27 10.73 5.01 60.64	40.3	2006
JBS S.A.	Meats and By-products	Fb Participações S.A. Bndes Participações S.A. - Bndespar Caixa Econômica Federal Others	42.17 23.9 10.37 23.55	121.7	2007
Vigor Alimentos	Dairy	Fb Participações S.A. Jbs S.A. Arla Foods International A/s Others	72.35 19.43 8 0.22	4.5	2012
Tereos Internacional	Diverse Foods	Tereos Agro-industrie Tereos Participations Tereos Do Brasil Participações Ltda. Others	52.65 13.23 3.95 30.17	15.2	
Brasilagro	Real Estate Exploration	Cresud S.A.c.i.f.y.a Autonomy Capital Cape Town Llc Elie Horn Others	39.76 15.09 4.53 1.09 38.05	0.9	2006

Nutriplant	Fertilizers and Agrochemicals	Tripto Participações Ltda Others	76.61 23.3	0.08	2005
Fertilizantes Heringer	Fertilizers and Agrochemicals	Dalton Dias Heringer Ocp International Cooperatieve U.a. Potashcorp Sales Dalton Carlos Heringer Juliana Heringer Rezende Others	39.16 10 9.5 6.19 6.13 29.02	3.3	2007

Source: Novo Mercado, BM&FBovespa, 2016.

Public offerings by agribusiness companies further facilitated the inflow of financial capital toward livestock activities, agro-industries, and the land market. Among the largest shareholders in the companies, most notable is the participation of pension funds of large Brazilian public companies (Petros/Petrobrás and Previ/Caixa Econômica Federal); investment funds of the companies' founding families (FB Participações, MMS Participações, etc.); high-income individuals (Heringer family, Otaviano Piveta, Silvio Tini de Araújo, etc.); as well as national and foreign asset management companies (Autonomy Capital, Cape Town, Tereos Participations, Gavea, Tarpon, Blackrock, Deutsch Bank, Investimentos Itaú, BNDESPar, etc.)

In most cases, financial investors acquire minority shareholder positions, entering through funds managed by specialized companies, as is the situation with Deutsche Bank and the asset manager Neuberger Berman in SLC Agrícola. As Fix (2010) states, this form of insertion allows greater flexibility and mobility of capital, since its application does not require a long-term commitment.

In the specific case of companies linked to the land grabbing phenomenon, such as those dedicated to agricultural production and to the land market, a public offering was innovative in the second half of the 2000s. While SLC Agrícola was the first grain production company to have shares listed on the stock exchange (2007), BrasilAgro was the pioneer in the rural property exploration sector (2006). The public offering process of the latter is emblematic of the combination between excess financial liquidity on the international market and institutional investors' heightened expectations of the opportunities offered by investments in natural resource exploration at that time.

Unlike other companies that are first formally constituted and later enter the stock market to attract more resources (SLC Agrícola and Vanguarda, among others), BrasilAgro began to operate on Novo Mercado without having a single asset (goods and rights to receive). Only with a proposal in hand—for purchase, valuation and sale of agricultural properties—the company's initial public offering, in April 2006, attracted US\$ 270 million. The company first emerged in 2005, a product of Argentinian businessman Eduardo Elsztein's interest in expanding his rural property investment

model, developed in Argentina in the 1990s, through the company CRESUD (*Sociedad Anónima Comercial Inmobiliaria Financiera e Agropecuaria*).

As Gras and Nascimento (2017, p. 121) note, from the outset, CRESUD “operated as a vehicle of entry for financial capital in the Argentinian countryside” (translated from Portuguese). By the end of the 1990s, with public listings on the Buenos Aires Stock Exchange (BCBA), the company became the largest owner of Argentinian land, from an initial 20 thousand hectares to its current 475 thousand hectares. Subsequently, CRESUD began a forceful expansion into other South American countries, with capitalization coming from its public listing on the New York Stock Exchange as well.

To create BrasilAgro, CRESUD partnered with the Brazilian businessman Elie Horn, whose experience includes urban real estate investment³. Currently, BrasilAgro controls CRESUD, with 39.63% of its shares; Autonomy Capital holds 10.62%, and Elie Horn himself holds 5.76%, followed by other minority shareholders (BOVESPA, 2018). Just as BrasilAgro constitutes a rural extension of the business dealings linked to the urban real estate of Brazilian businessman Elie Horn, in Argentina, CRESUD is part of the group *Inversiones y Representaciones S.A.* (IRSA), owner of commercial buildings and shopping centers in Buenos Aires and of Banco Hipotecário, which specializes in property mortgage lending.

Thus, BrasilAgro’s constitution and mode of operation demonstrate how the strong financialization of the urban real estate market, particularly in the 2000s (FIX, 2010; HARVEY, 2006), is extended to the countryside, with a strong speculative bias. In its more than ten years of operation, BrasilAgro acquired a total of 319 thousand ha, located in agricultural frontier expansion areas in seven Brazilian states (Piauí, Maranhão, Bahia, Mato Grosso, Mato Grosso do Sul, Minas Gerais and Goiás) and in Paraguay. This acquisition also included the transformation of 110 thousand ha and the sale of around 80 thousand ha, with an investment of more than US\$ 200 million in the purchase and development of land, and a revenue of around US\$ 600 million from the sale of eight farms (BRASILAGRO, 2016).

SLC Agrícola’s history is quite distinct from BrasilAgro’s. While the latter can be considered an extension of the dealings of urban real estate owners into the rural environment, SLC Agrícola is a company with its origin in the livestock sector. However, with the IPO in 2007 and the sharp increase in land prices in subsequent years, the organization and operations of both companies eventually converged, to a

³ Elie Horn is a Brazilian entrepreneur and businessman with shareholdings in various real estate companies, including Cyrela Brazil Realty S.A., Brazil Realty Cia Securitizadora de Créditos Imobiliários, Cyrela Commercial Properties S.A. and Brazil Realty (a product of the union between Cyrela and the Argentinian Inversiones y Representaciones S.A. – IRSA).

large degree, with the constant pursuit to price their lands to generate income (dividends) for their shareholders.

SLC Agrícola was founded in 1977, in the state of Rio Grande do Sul, by Grupo SLC, which has manufactured automated harvesters since the 1940s. The subsidiary was created to expand operations to the production of agricultural commodities, particularly cotton, soy and corn in Cerrado areas. Even prior to the IPO, SLC Agrícola was already one of the largest Brazilian land owners and agricultural producers, with control of around 250 thousand ha and a planted area of 150 thousand ha. However, after the capitalization prompted by the stock offering⁴, the quantity of controlled lands increased significantly, reaching a planted area of approximately 380 thousand hectares in the 2015/16 crop year (323 thousand ha owned, 94 thousand ha leased, 81 thousand ha of second harvest, and 49 thousand ha in joint-venture).

Like other publicly held companies, after the IPO, generating value for shareholders became the principal objective, as affirmed by SLC Agrícola itself: “our objective is to expand production with an attractive return rate for our shareholders” (p. 50; translated from Portuguese). As Plihon (2005) and Guttman (2008) argue, the emergence of value creation for the shareholder as a fundamental principle of so-called corporate governance (AGLIETTA; RIBÉRIOUX, 2004) imposes great pressure on companies to demonstrate high performances to the capital market. Inserted into a highly competitive context, the firms are pressured to achieve rapid responses and high returns for their investors.

To that end, the company emphasizes the importance of “expanding production and productivity, taking better advantage of properties” and renting neighboring properties, as well as “identifying and acquiring properties in the Cerrado that present attractive conditions, potential for valuation on the market and importance for the development of our operations” (p. 40; translated from Portuguese). Thus, the company emphasizes the importance of constantly expanding production, productivity and planted area through the incorporation of new lands, as a way to ultimately remunerate the share capital.

Consequently, Chesnais (2005) argues the idea of the “insatiability of finance”, *i.e.*, the propensity of interest-bearing capital to demand from the real economy “more than it can give” (p. 61; translated from Portuguese). Thus, the immediacy and the pressure to grow and achieve high rentability obligates companies to adopt a series of mechanisms, including hyper-exploitation of labor and nature. The latter case is most notably the acquisition of vast extents of land, especially in areas still unexploited by

⁴ More than US\$ 150 million were collected in the IPO alone (SLC Agrícola, 2014).

modern agriculture, with repeated implantation of large monocultures, labor-saving technologies and intensive expropriation of resources such as soil, vegetation and water.

In 2016, SLC Participações (a company belonging to the founding Logemann family) owned 51.03% of the shares of SLC Agrícola; followed by Deutsche Bank, which owned 6.28%; Verde Asset Management and Verde Serviços Internacionais S.A., belonging to the Credit Suisse Hedging-Griffo Asset Management S.A., holding 4.6%; the asset management company Neuberger Berman LLC., holding 4.55%; and the rest of the minority shareholders holding 31.73%⁵.

The increasing valuation of agricultural lands, added to the expertise gained in the negotiation and transformation of Cerrado lands since the 1980s, led SLC Agrícola to create, in 2012, SLC LandCo Empreendimentos Agrícola S.A., which specializes in the purchase and development of new land. The subsidiary was created in partnership with the English fund Valiance Asset Management Ltd., which holds 18.7% of the shares (against 81.3% held by SLC Agrícola), and which made an initial input of US\$ 238 million to purchase new farms. Currently, SLC LandCo controls three farms, with a planted area of approximately 80 thousand ha (2015/16 crop year). The farms' lands are leased to SLC Agrícola itself, which is responsible for developing the plantation.

Lending continuity to its expansion plan through the formation of partnerships with national and foreign companies, in 2013, SLC Agrícola created two other joint-ventures: MIT-SLC, with the Japanese Mitsui, and SLC-Roncador, with the Brazilian group Dois Vales Participações. In the first case, to circumvent the land law nº 5.709 (7/10/71), which restricts foreigners' acquisition of land in Brazil⁶, SLC Agrícola holds 50.1% of the shares (against 49.9% held by Mitsui); in the second case, ownership of the joint-venture is divided equally between the two parties. Currently, MIT-SLC controls two farms, with almost 40 thousand hectares planted (2015/16 crop year), and SLC-Roncador manages only one farm of 27 thousand ha in the state of Mato Grosso (SLC Agrícola, 2016).

⁵ Neuberger Berman LLC is a company specialized in asset management of diversified investments, including agricultural commodities. Deutsche Bank, in Brazil since 1911, is a multi-purpose bank, but also acts as an asset management company. Credit Suisse Hedging-Griffo Asset Management S.A. (CSHG) originated from the purchase of 51% of Hedging-Griffo—a national company active in the asset management market and private banking—by the Swiss bank Credit Suisse in 2006. Hedging-Griffo, in the 1980s, was one of the largest national brokers of agricultural commodities. The fund qualifies as “one of Brazil's largest private banking, asset management and stock brokerage institutions”, managing around R\$ 94.4 billion in investments, with net equity estimated at R\$ 52.8 million.

⁶ In 2010, with the promulgation of Law 5.709/1971, at Federal Executive request, the Attorney General of the Union (AGU) restricted the acquisition of lands by foreign persons or companies. This 2010 ruling, which was based on the first federal law of 1971, established a maximum limit of 50 undefined exploratory units, which can vary from 05 to 100 hectares, according to the municipality; the foreign possession of a maximum of 25% of the total area of the municipality. These limits can only be overcome by the authorization of the National Institute of Colonization and Agrarian Reform (INCRA), the Presidency of the Republic or the National Congress.

Ground rent: fictitious capital and the transformation of land into financial asset

Ground rent is one of the most debated and controversial categories in the history of political economics. It can be defined generally as a category referring to payment, by capitalists to landlords, for the right to use the land for grain production. The set of formulations, by economists ranging from Adam Smith (1776) to Marx (1864), including David Ricardo (1817) and Malthus (1820), is known as rent theory. Adam Smith (1776) is credited as being the first author to identify ground rent as an economic category. He was the pioneer in relation to ground rent, questioning the determination of values and prices and the distribution of income among distinct social classes, as well as examining its trajectory throughout the process of economic development of national wealth (LENZ, 1993). For Smith (1776), rent can be defined as the transfer payment from the capitalist class to the landlord class, for the 'original and indestructible' properties of the soil.

David Ricardo (1817) showed, based on the theory of diminishing returns, the connections between ground rent and profit rate and the accumulation of capital, and the consequent antagonism between landowners and capitalists. For the author, the cost of producing wheat on low-quality (or distant) land is exempt from ground rent. The continuous process of incorporating marginal lands would lead to successive diminution of producers' profit rate, whereas rent on better land would increase. For Malthus (1820), ground rent is closely related to his population growth theory. Increasing rent derived from the increasing demand for food by an expanding population. Thus, an increase in rent is a natural consequence of a growing economy; *i.e.*, rather than being considered a negative for capitalist development, as proposed by Ricardo (1817), rent would be an expression of the increase in national wealth.

It was Marx (1864), even after an inconclusive critique, who suggested, albeit hypothetically, the existence of absolute rent and monopoly rent in addition to differential rents. The assumption of the existence of absolute rent derives from the inconsistency of Ricardian theory by admitting the payment of rent for low-quality soils. While differential rents derive from the land's natural differences (Differential Rent I) or from the set of additional capitals applied to the land (Differential Rent II), absolute rent is directly linked to the existence of private land ownership. Absolute rent is obtained by the surplus of value over the general price of production, due to the lower organic composition of capital in agriculture when compared to industry (CARCANHOLO, 1984). Monopoly rent would be a special case of rent derived from an increase in price

above market value, due to the existence of exceptionally favorable natural conditions, such as in the production of high-quality wines.

After the Classical School arguments, rent theory evolved little between the end of the 19th century and the first half of the 20th century. According to Ioris (2016), in that period, works were focused on the notion of utility of the land, considering it as basically another form of capital⁷. Since the 1970s, however, with the increase in land and housing prices in the USA, discussion about ground rent has emerged and evolved significantly within a critical perspective based particularly on the propositions of Marx⁸. For Haila (1990, p. 278), this period can be subdivided into three phases: a) consensus phase; b) transition phase; c) rupture phase. The first phase, beginning in the 1970s, not only refuted neoclassical propositions, which disregarded the social relations of rent appropriation, but also aimed to construct a rent theory applicable to the urban question. The consensus had three aspects: a) the argument about absolute rent and monopoly rent, in disregard of the concept of differential rent (considered very technical and ahistorical); b) the conception of rent as a pre-capitalist/neo-capitalist element, and c) as a barrier to the process of accumulation.

In the second phase, at the turn from the 1970s to the 80s, the previous consensus began to fragment. Many of its widely-accepted conceptions were being criticized and rejected, and new theories and redefinitions emerged. Many of the proposals developed in this period served as the background for the perspective adopted in this article, with increasing interest in differential rent to the detriment of absolute and monopoly rents; the desire to interpret rent as something intrinsic to capitalism (and not as a pre-capitalist element)—which, rather than a barrier to capitalist development, can be coordinated and utilized within the capitalist logic of accumulation—and as not appropriated by a homogeneous class (landowners) but by diverse agents and interests.

As Haila (1990, p. 284) emphasizes, this period of transition did not create a new consensus, but rather a division into two camps that characterized the following phase (Third Phase: 1980s). This division revolves around the argument concerning the possibility of constructing a general theory of rent, *i.e.*, the opposition between idiographic and nomothetic approaches. While the first advocated the impossibility of a

⁷ Ioris (2016) cited some exceptions that enabled the advance of “Rent Theory”, such as Lenin, in 1901, on the agrarian question; Hilferding, in 1910, on “cartel rents”; Schumpeter, in 1934, on “entrepreneurial rents”; and Sraffa, in 1960, on the neo-Ricardian Theory of Value. In the 1960s, due to the rapid increase in land and housing prices in the USA, Ioris (2016, p. 458) reported the resurgence of the study of rent, highlighting neo-classical authors such as Alonso, who, in 1964, advanced the concept by maintaining that “the supply of land cannot be increased when the demand and its price increase” (translated from Portuguese).

⁸ For Haila (1990), this debate includes, among others, Emmanuel (1972), Harvey (1973), Walker (1974), Scott (1976), Edel (1976), Ball (1976), Fine (1979), Massey and Catalano (1978), Lipietz (1980).

general theory of rent, invoking instead the need to analyze concrete situations (MASSEY; CATALANO, 1978), the second defended the possibility of a general theory of rent in the context of advanced capitalism.

This debate gave rise to a central argument in the analysis of the relationship between financial capital and land. Within the nomothetical approach, Harvey (2006), in *The Limits of Capital*, introduced a new perspective in which land is considered a financial asset. For the author, the financialization of the world market (post-1970s) led gradually to the consideration of land as a form of fictitious capital. In other words, the expectation of future income from land determines its use and negotiation (purchase, development, rental and sale). From this perspective, rent stops being a barrier to capitalist investments (MASSEY; CATALANO, 1978) and is instead considered as a determinant of the form of land use.

In the current land grabbing phenomenon, various authors adopted the perspective of land as a financial asset—*i.e.*, as fictitious capital—in the attempt to interpret the institutional investors' interest and modes of operation in agriculture (CLAPP; 2012; GUNNOE, 2014; FAIRBAIRN, 2014; LI, 2014; OUMA; 2016; DUCASTEL; ANSEEUW, 2016; VISSER, 2016). As Visser (2016, p. 02) observes, the commodification of land is old, far preceding the recent financialization of agriculture. The author emphasizes that “land has been sold, hired, valued, and taxed for many centuries in various parts of the world”. Thus, more than a binary transformation of common lands into new commodities, the current insertion of financial agents into agriculture represents a new step in the commodification of land.

Land is understood not only as a commodity but also as a financial asset. Thus, besides meeting various requirements for its comparison and negotiation (standardization, profit potential, liquidity, legitimacy, specific rules, etc.), future creation of positive revenue is not enough for land to be considered an asset; also necessary is that its anticipated rentability is equal or higher, and the investment risk lower, than the other financial instruments available in the market (OUMA, 2014; 2016; DUCASTEL, ANSEEUW, 2016).

Despite seeming contradictory due to the aversion of institutional investors to capital immobility, the recent investments in land are entirely related to the “insatiable” logic of financial accumulation (CHESNAIS, 2005). According to Paulani (2012), it is a matter of rentier capitalism par excellence, whether by interest earned through the monopoly of money, or by rent derived from the monopoly of land. As Harvey (2006, p. 369) argues, these investors understand land as a fictitious capital, *i.e.*, equivalent to an investment that earns interest. For the author, from the capitalist perspective, “what is bought and sold is not the land, but title to the ground-rent yielded by it. The money

laid out is equivalent to an interest-bearing investment. The buyer acquires a claim upon anticipated future revenues, a claim upon the future fruits of labour”. The growing intensification in capital and labor on the land assures the elevation of future rents, constituting an attractor of interest-bearing capital.

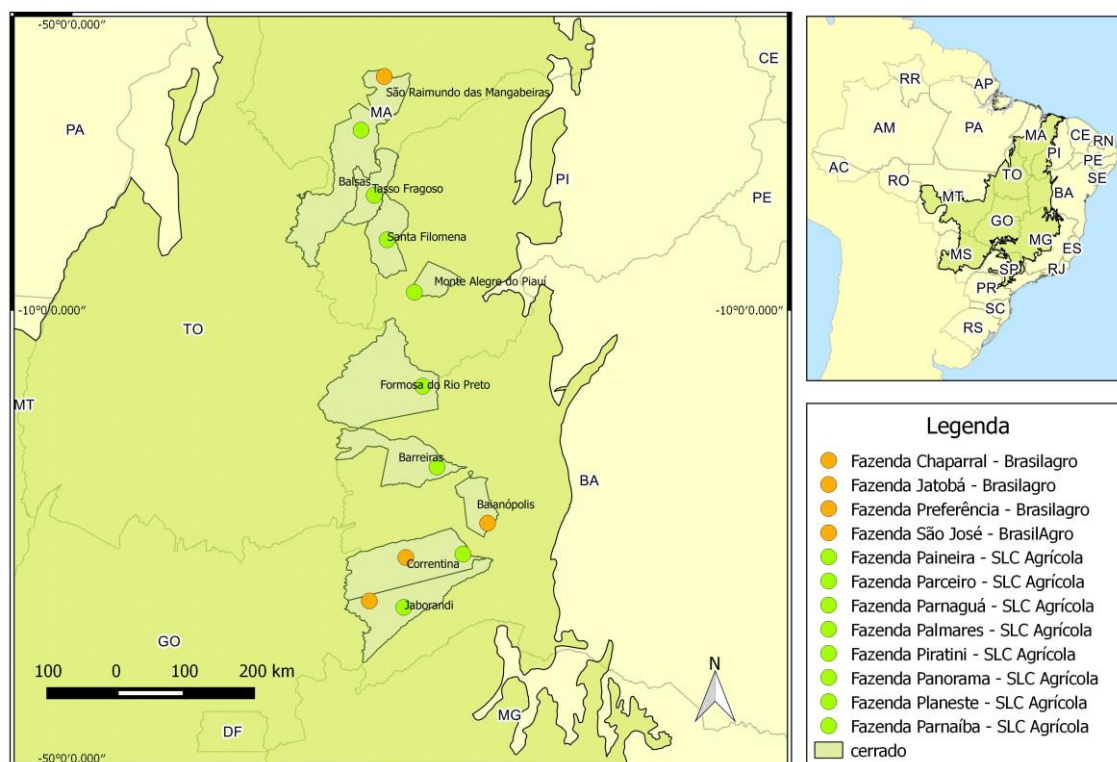
Strategies of accumulation through ground rent: The case of BrasilAgro and SLC Agrícola

The pressure exerted by interest-bearing capital, via ever-increasing appropriation of rent produced from the land, subjects ‘financialized’ agricultural companies to an endless cycle of intensifying productivity and increasing the scale of production. When artificially increasing quality and productivity, capital investments—in machinery, equipment, inputs and state-of-the-art infrastructure—also promote the pricing of agricultural properties. This, incidentally, is the main strategy used by companies dedicated to the land market, such as BrasilAgro and SLC Agrícola.

According to information obtained in reports from the aforementioned companies, what they call the “thesis on investments in land development” generally implies the acquisition, transformation and sale of lands that have high pricing potential in an average five-year term. For this, they seek to acquire lands at relatively low prices, generally located in areas of agricultural frontier expansion, with adequate edaphoclimatic and pedological conditions for unirrigated production and, if possible, the development of two harvests per crop year. Thus, the constant pursuit of an increase in productive efficiency results in rising costs, which enforces the continual incorporation of new areas to decrease the expenditures per hectare.

Among the most sought-after areas, the region known by the acronym Matopiba stands out. The region is a more or less continuous area of Cerrado at the intersection of the states of Maranhão, Piauí, Tocantins and Bahia. The Matopiba has been noted by various authors (ALVES, 2015; FREDERICO; BÜHLER, 2015; PITTA; MENDOÇA, 2015), and by the State, as the new area of expansion of the modern agricultural frontier in the Brazilian territory (IMAGE 01).

Image 1: Location of the BrasilAgro and SLC Agrícola farms in the Matopiba region, 2018



Source: SLC Agrícola; BrasilAgro; IBGE, 2018.
Elaboration: SAWELJEW, 2018.

Currently, SLC Agrícola holds 457 thousand ha of land in the Brazilian territory. Of this total, around 290 thousand ha, or 63% of all the company's lands within the country, are in the Matopiba. BrasilAgro has 141 thousand ha of land in the Brazilian territory, with 47% of that total, or just over 100 thousand ha, in the Matopiba. Most notable is the western region of Bahia, where both companies collectively control around 230 thousand ha of land.

One of the main factors that attracts companies to the Matopiba is the availability of relatively inexpensive land. According to Rudorff et al. (2015), in 2015, the Brazilian Cerrado had around 40 million ha of unused arable land. In that same year, while one productive hectare of soy in the state of Iowa (primary grain-producing state in the USA) cost around US\$ 20 thousand, an unconverted area of Cerrado in the state of Piauí (expansion area of the agricultural frontier) cost an average of only US\$ 1.6 thousand/ha (APPRAISAL DELLOITTE, 2015; FNP, 2015).

Currently, almost all Brazilian companies operating in the land market have teams specialized in prospecting and mapping arable land. First, they seek to appropriate the most naturally fertile tracts for appropriation of differential rent I. As Marx (1986) asserts, the owner of lands of high natural fertility can appropriate not only the normal profit, but also additional profit derived from the difference in productivity relative to less fertile lands. In the Brazilian agricultural frontier, a direct relationship

exists between productivity and edaphoclimatic conditions. The greater the rainfall in a given region, the greater its productive capacity (two harvests per crop year; use of the most productive cultivars; exploitation of larger areas, even with low clay content).

For appropriation of the best lands, the relationship between producers, companies and local brokers is now indispensably supplemented by the use of satellite images and by cross-referencing soil quality with historical rainfall databases. BrasilAgro claimed that, by 2015, the company had completed a preliminary survey of georeferenced information of approximately 30 million hectares in Brazil, Colombia and Paraguay. Of this total area, around six million hectares were visited, and “due diligence” (investigation of business opportunity to assess the risks of the transaction) was done on approximately 2.5 million hectares.

Selection of the best lands is followed by the collection of differential rent generated from the land (Differential Rent II). As Paulani (2016) noted, this rent does not arise by an accident of nature, but rather from the application of different amounts of capital on tracts of equally fertile land. In those lands with the highest capital investment, the individual price of production is lower than the regulated market price, enabling the creation of additional surplus value. Such a condition can be demonstrated concretely by the differences between the soy productivity (kg/ha) of SLC Agrícola (considered one of the most efficient in terms of productivity and reduction of production unit costs) and the average productivity of the main producer regions and countries. Averaging five crop years (2010/11 to 2014/15), the company obtained a productivity of 3,006 kg/ha, higher than the averages of the Brazilian (2,922), American (2,919), and Argentinian (2,673) producers and of its main region of operation, Western Bahia (2,819).

In addition to increasing productivity, the intense application of capital also increases the prices of agricultural properties. According to information available from SLC Agrícola (2014), once the land has been productive for a five-year period, a natural area of Cerrado initially acquired for an average of US\$ 2 thousand/ha can be sold for an average of US\$ 6.5 thousand/ha.

However, the more interesting situation is that of BrasilAgro. In its first years of operation, the company was dedicated mainly to the acquisition and transformation of land. After maturation of the agricultural development (five years), the company began the process of liquidating its properties. In total, the company invested around US\$ 250 million for the acquisition of 319 thousand hectares, including the transformation of 110 thousand ha, and then received more than US\$ 200 million from the sale of only 77 thousand ha. Currently, the company has around 240 thousand ha, with 86 thousand

ha of legal reserve, 15 thousand ha developed, just over 50 thousand hectares in transformation, and almost 90 thousand ha to be transformed (BRASILAGRO, 2016).

The land appropriation and transformation strategies of large agricultural enterprises illustrate the existence of another type of ground rent, which Marx (1986) called absolute rent. In his own words, “The mere legal ownership of land does not create any ground rent for the owner. However, it does give him the power to withdraw his land from exploitation until economic conditions permit a valuation that will yield him a surplus” (p. 225; translated from Portuguese). When acquiring large extents of land covered by native vegetation, the conversion of the property occurs gradually, from the most naturally fertile areas to those that demand greater capital expenditure to meet the requirements of modern agriculture.

The untransformed land stock, referred to by investors as the land bank, does not provide its owner an income, as Marx (1986) noted, but is used by companies in different ways: in marketing strategies that demonstrate its potential for growth and, consequently, attract investors; and to obtain credit for defrayment and investment, without disregarding its function as a value reserve and its future pricing potential.

As part of BrasilAgro’s business, for example, the continuous transformation of land requires existing reserve areas for future pricing. In 2006, 94% of the company’s 56 thousand hectares of arable land were undeveloped. With its first cycle of transformation, this percentage was reduced, even with the acquisition of new land, to a minimum of 45% of the total in 2012, or about 50 thousand hectares in absolute terms. Then, with the acquisition of another 141 thousand hectares, the land bank again grew in percentage (57%) and absolute (98 thousand ha) terms, allowing the company to continuously transform and sell land.

Ground rent and territorial conflicts

However, the pressure that financial capital imposes on companies to expand and incorporate new lands results in various territorial consequences. As Ioris (2016) proposes, ground rent is not only the payment to the owner for use of the land, but also involves the establishment of different and complex class relations. For the author, it can be defined by the obtainment of gains through an unequal power relationship and through private possession of an economically valuable asset. In the case of agricultural frontier areas, as in the Matopiba region, extraction of ground rent entails various problems, from environmental issues related to deforestation of the Cerrado and pollution by agrottoxins, to fraudulent appropriation and land conflicts.

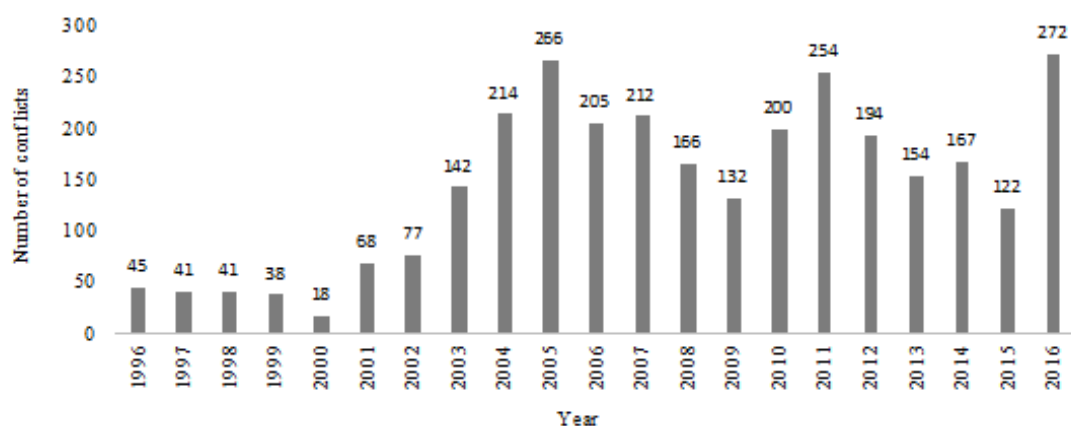
In addition to the rents extracted by agricultural companies, acquisition of lands in frontier expansion areas is also of great interest to agents involved in the local land market. Growing demand for lands results in the proliferation of illegal and violent schemes to appropriate public lands, a mechanism known in Brazil as *grilagem* (squatting, in English). The term, according to Benatti (2009, p. 18), can be understood as the illegal transfer of public lands to the private domain through the falsification of documents, fraudulent negotiations, corruption and expropriation from small occupiers.

From a legal standpoint, most of the Cerrado lands are unsettled; *i.e.*, they are public properties that, although occupied, have never officially belonged to anyone and therefore constitute a good of the Union (Brazilian federal government). The local people have never had formal land-tenure documents, and their occupation of the land derives from its customary use established over generations. However, with the implantation of modern agriculture, the unsettled lands of the Cerrado were gradually appropriated as private property—either officially, by state colonization policies of the 1970s and 80s⁹ which offered titles of ownership of public lands to colonizing companies (public and private), or by illegal appropriation through squatting.

The enclosure of lands and the prohibition of their communal use results in a series of conflicts between local people and capitalist agricultural producers, with armed disputes, forces expropriations of *campesinos* (peasants) and indigenous groups, as well as numerous judicial processes (MARTINS, 2009; PITTA; BOECHAT; MENDONÇA, 2017). According to the data of the Comissão Pastoral da Terra (2017), the number of conflicts over land grew significantly throughout the Matopiba region beginning in the early 2000s, peaking in 2016. This period coincided with an accelerated rate of expansion of agribusiness in the region. Between 1996 and 2016, the number of conflicts increased over five-fold, from 45 to 272, as illustrated in the graphic below.

⁹ For a deeper analysis of the policies on colonization of the Cerrados, see Pessoa (1988) and Cleps Jr. (1998).

Graphic 1: Matopiba region, Land Conflicts, 1996 – 2016.



Source: Comissão Pastoral da Terra, 2017.

The areas of the Chapada, currently occupied by large farms, were always used communally by local populations for extensive animal husbandry and plant extraction. There were no fences or boundaries. They were public areas occupied without any constraints. Upon appropriation by agribusiness, the Cerrado vegetation was deforested, and communities were prohibited from using the lands, resulting in conflicts and in serious impacts on the communities' forms of reproduction. Furthermore, the lands currently occupied by the local communities have also been the target of squatters' interest, for the creation of a legal reserve. According to the Brazilian Forest Code, farms in Cerrado areas need to preserve the native vegetation on 20% of their total area. With the depletion of plateau lands, many companies have established their reserve areas on valley floors, where the local peasant's communities reside.

Beyond the land conflicts between local populations, squatters and agricultural companies, land grabbing processes also result in a series of environmental problems. Due to the proximity of agribusiness plantations, farming communities are directly affected by deforestation and agrototoxic pollution. The most common cases are contamination by aerial spraying of agrottoxins, which destroys subsistence crops; siltation and contamination of rivers, traditionally used for fishing, feeding and personal hygiene; the spread of new pests theretofore nonexistent in the region, such as whitefly; and the disappearance of bees and of certain types of animals used for food.

Final considerations

Characterized as an innovation in the second half of the 2000s, public offering on stock exchanges enabled strong capitalization of various Brazilian agribusiness companies. The most interesting cases involved an unprecedented supply of shares by companies engaged in agricultural production and the land market. On the one hand, the inflow of financial capital into their corporate structure enabled companies' rapid capitalization; on the other hand, however, it imposed new logics of control and expectations of profitability and growth.

As Chesnais (2005) asserts, the insatiability of finance—*i.e.*, financial capital's imposition of immediacy and strong pressure for growth—results in the hyper-exploitation of labor and nature. In the case of companies dedicated to agricultural production and to the land market, this is becoming ever more evident. The demand for high profitability, derived largely from the extraction of ground rent, results in many contradictions.

In this perspective, ground rent is not limited to payment to the landowner for use of the land, but involves disputes and power relations (IORIS, 2016). Access to the land market requires a network of relationships, from large financial investors who are connected to global power networks and think about their strategies on a worldwide scale, to the squatters, politicians, landowners and local notaries, without disregarding the crucial role of the State (in the standardization of lands and in the construction of infrastructure).

By providing an outlet for overaccumulated capital—often allocated to tax havens and of dubious origin—large investors animate the regional land market through speculation. Attracted by the great demand for land, local and extra-regional squatters illegally appropriated unclaimed public areas, which are then resold to agricultural companies. Although financial investors are not, in most cases, directly responsible for squatting on the land, they indirectly encourage it by fostering the land market.

Despite being an old practice in agricultural frontier areas, squatting is intensified by financial capital's recent interest in land. In addition to harming the State, land appropriation promotes a series of environmental damages and territorial conflicts, such as indiscriminate deforestation of Cerrado areas and expropriation of farming communities.

The space is thus dialectically produced. The confrontation of such different logics of land use sets in opposition a global order, which includes the financialized agricultural enterprises, and a local order, represented by peasant's communities. In

this dialectical pair, proposed by Santos (2012), the former is characterized by the imposition of a dominant rationality and a hegemonic discourse, while the local order establishes the scale of shared daily life, cooperation and resistance. On the one hand, investors and agricultural companies are inducers of entropy, creating a topology of points of exclusivist interests, with little or no relationship to their surroundings; on the other hand, the interaction and socialization created by communities are what confer meaning and future.

Bibliography

- AB'SÁBER, A. **Os domínios de natureza no Brasil**. Potencialidades paisagísticas. São Paulo: Ateliê Editorial. 2003.
- AGLIETTA, M.; REBÉRIOUX, A. **Dérives du capitalisme financier**. Paris: Albin Michel, 2004.
- AGROESTAT. **Estatísticas de Comercio Exterior do Agronegócio Brasileiro**. 2014. Disponível em: <http://sistemasweb.agricultura.gov.br/pages/AGROSTAT_CADASTRO.html>. Acesso em: 15 de março de 2014.
- ALVES, V. E. L. A formação das condições para a instalação do agronegócio nos cerrados piauienses e as mudanças nas formas de uso da terra dos Gerais. In: **Rede Social de Justiça e Direitos Humanos**. A empresa Radar S/A e a especulação com terras no Brasil. Disponível in: www.social.org.br. 2015.
- BALL, Michael. **Marx's theory of rent and the role of landed property**. Department of Economics of the Birbeck College of the University of London, 1976.
- BENATTI, J. H. A lei de regularização fundiária e o debate sobre justiça social e proteção ambiental na Amazônia. **Hiléia – Revista do Direito Ambiental da Amazônia**, no. 11, Jul.-Dez. de 2008, e no.12, Jan-Jun de 2009, p. 15-30.
- BORRAS Jr, S.; KAY, C., GÓMEZ, S.; WILKINSON, J. Land Grabbing and Global Capitalist Accumulation: Key Features in Latin America. **Canadian Journal of Development Studies** 33 (4): 402–416, 2012.
- BRASILAGRO, Companhia Brasileira de Propriedades Agrícolas. **Relatório de Demonstrações Financeiras** – Brasilagro, 30 de junho de 2015. Disponível em: <http://www.brasilagro.com/brasilagro2011/web/conteudo_pt.asp?tipo=36826&id=0&idioma=0&conta=28&submenu=0&img=0&ano=2015>. Acesso em: 20 de janeiro de 2016.
- CARCANHOLO, Reinaldo A. Renda da terra: uma concreção teórica necessária. **Revista de Economia Política**, v. 4, n. 4, p. 108-123, 1984.
- CASTILLO, R. A. Agronegócio e logística em áreas de cerrado: expressão da agricultura científica globalizada. **Revista da ANPEGE**, v.3, p. 21 – 27, 2007.
- CHESNAIS, F. O capital portador de juros: acumulação, internacionalização, efeitos econômicos e políticos. In: **A finança mundializada: raízes sociais e políticas, configuração e consequências**. Tradução: Rosa Marques e Paulo Nakatani. São Paulo. Editora: Boitempo. 2005.

CHIARA, M. **Novo eixo exportador valoriza terras**. O Estado de São Paulo (Jornal), 10 de março 2014.

CLAPP, J. **Food**. Malden, MA: Polity Press. 2012.

CLEPS JUNIOR, João. Dinâmica e estratégias do setor agroindustrial do cerrado: o caso do Triângulo Mineiro. 291f. **Tese** (Doutorado em Geografia). Instituto de Geociências e Ciências Exatas. Universidade Estadual Paulista “Julio de Mesquita Filho”. UNESP – Campus Rio Claro, São Paulo, 1998.

COTULA, L. The international political economy of the global land rush: A critical appraisal of trends, scale, geography and drivers. **The Journal of Peasant Studies**, 39 (3-4), 649-680 pp. 2012.

CPT, COMISSÃO DA PASTORAL DA TERRA. **Conflitos no campo - Brasil 2017**. Disponível em: <www.cptnacional.org.br>. Acesso em: 15 de abril de 2018.

CRESUD, SOCIEDAD ANÓNIMA, COMERCIAL, INMOBILIARIA, FINANCIERA Y AGROPECUARIA. **Memoria y Estados Financieros 2015**. Disponível em: <<http://www.cresud.com.ar/archivos/Memoria-Cresud-FY15-vF.pdf>>. Acesso em: 25 de junho de 2016.

DELGADO, G. C. **Do capital financeiro na agricultura à economia do agronegócio**: Mudanças cíclicas em meio século (1965-2012). Porto Alegre: UFRGS Editora, 2012.

DUCASTEL, A.; ANSEEUW, W. Agriculture as an asset class: reshaping the South African farming sector. **Agriculture and Human Values**. Online First, 2016. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/s10460-016-9683-6>.

EDEL, Matthew. **Marx's theory of rent: urban applications**. University, Department of Economics of the Birkbeck College, 1976.

EMMANUEL, A. **Unequal Exchange**: A Study of the Imperialism of Trade. Monthly Review Press, New York, 1972.

FAIRBAIRN, M. 'Like gold with yield': evolving intersections between farmland and finance. **J. Peasant Stud.** 41 (5), 777–795, 2014.

FERNANDES, B. M. Land grabbing for agro-extractivism in the second neoliberal phase in Brazil. The 5th International Conference of the BRICS Initiative for Critical Agrarian Studies October 13-16, **RANEP**, Moscow, Russia, 2017.

FINE, Ben. **On Marx's theory of agricultural rent**. *Economy and Society*, v. 8, n. 3, p. 241-278, 1979.

FIX, Mariana. Financeirização e transformações recentes no circuito imobiliário no Brasil. **Tese** (Doutorado em Economia Aplicada). Instituto de Economia, Universidade Estadual de Campinas, São Paulo, 2011.

FNP- CONSULTORIA. **Relatório de Análise do Mercado de Terras**, 2012.

FREDERICO, S. **O Novo Tempo do Cerrado**: Expansão dos Fronts Agrícolas e Controle do Sistema de Armazenamento de Grãos. São Paulo: AnnaBlume, 2010, 259 p.

FREDERICO, S. Território, Capital Financeiro e Agricultura: Investimentos financeiros estrangeiros no agronegócio brasileiro. **Relatório de Pós Doutorado**. Laboratoire Dynamiques Sociales et Recomposition des Espaces (Ladyss), Universidade Paris 8, 213 f, 2016.

FREDERICO, S; BÜHLER, E. A. Capital financeiro e expansão da fronteira agrícola no Oeste da Bahia. In: **Modernização e regionalização nos cerrados do Centro-Norte do Brasil**: Oeste da Bahia, Sul do Maranhão e do Piauí e Leste de Tocantins.

Organizadores: Vicente Eudes Lemos Alves. – 1. Ed. Rio de Janeiro: Consequência Editora, p. 199-225, 2015.

GRAIN. SEIZED! The 2008 Land Grab for Food and Financial Security, 2008. Disponível em: <<http://www.grain.org/article/entries/93-seized-the-2008-landgrab-for-food-and-financial-security>>. Acesso em: 15 de fevereiro de 2012.

GRAS, C; NASCIMENTO, R. C. Monopólio de terras e capital financeiro: a atuação da empresa Cresud na América Latina. In: BERNARDES, J. A.; FREDERICO, S.; GRAS, C.; MALDONADO, G.; HERNANDEZ, V.. (Org.). **Globalização do agronegócio e land grabbing**: a atuação das megaempresas argentinas no Brasil. 1ª ed. Rio de Janeiro: Lamparina, p. 118-134, 2017.

GUIBERT, M.; FREDERICO, S. Trajectoires de grandes entreprises agricoles en Amérique Latine. Rôle de la ressource foncière, logiques productives et logiques financières. In: Purseigle, F.; Nguyen, G; Blanc, P. (Org.). **Le nouveau capitalisme agricole. De la ferme à la firme**. 1ed. Paris: Science Po Les Presses, v. 1, p. 153-182, 2017.

GUNNOE, Andrew. The political economy of institutional landownership: Neorentier society and the financialization of land. **Rural Sociology**, v. 79, n. 4, p. 478-504, 2014.

GUTTMANN, R. **Uma introdução ao capitalismo dirigido pelas finanças**. Novos Estudos. Nov. 2008.

HAILA, Anne. The theory of land rent at the crossroads. **Environment and Planning D: Society and Space**, v. 8, n. 3, p. 275-296, 1990.

HARVEY, D. **Social Justice and the City**. The Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, MD., 1973.

HARVEY, D. **The Limits to Capital**. London and New York: Verso, 2006.

IBGE – INSTITUTO BRASILEIRO DE GEOGRAFIA E ESTATÍSTICA. **Agricultura**. Disponível em: <<http://www.sidra.ibge.gov.br/bda/agric/>>. Acesso em: 20 de janeiro de 2016.

IBGE – INSTITUTO BRASILEIRO DE GEOGRAFIA E ESTATÍSTICA. **Censo Agropecuário 1970**. Disponível em: <<http://seriesestatisticas.ibge.gov.br>>. Acesso em: 10 de novembro de 2015.

IORIS, A. **Rent of agribusiness in the Amazon**: A case study from Mato Grosso. *Land Use Policy* 59, p. 456–466, 2016.

KNUTH, S.E. Global finance and the land grab: mapping twenty-first century strategies. **Canadian Journal of Development Studies**, 36:2, p. 163-178, 2015. DOI: 10.1080/02255189.2015.1046373.

LAZONICK, W; O’SULLIVAN, M. Maximizing shareholder value: a new ideology for corporate governance. **Economy and Society**. Volume 29. Number 1. February 2000: 13 – 35.

LENZ, Maria Heloisa. A teoria da renda da terra em Adam Smith. **Ensaio FEE**, v. 14, n. 1, p. 144-178, 1993.

LI, Tania Murray. What is land? Assembling a resource for global investment. **Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers**, v. 39, n. 4, p. 589-602, 2014.

LIPIETZ, Alain. **The structuration of space, the problem of land, and spatial policy**. Centre d'études prospectives d'économie mathématique appliquées à la planification, 1980.

- MARTINS, J. de S. **Fronteira: a degradação do outro nos confins do humano**. São Paulo: Editora Contexto, 2009, 187 p.
- MARX, K. **O Capital**, Livro III – Tomo 1. São Paulo, Abril Cultural (Coleção "Os Economistas"). 1986.
- MASSEY, D.; CATALANO, A. **Capital and land: landownership by capital in Great Britain**. Edward Arnold, London, 1978.
- MCMICHAEL, P. The land grab and corporate food regime restructuring. **J. Peasant Stud.** 39 (3–4), p. 681–701, 2012. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/03066150.2012.661369>.
- MORGAN, D. **Les Géants du Grain**. Fayard: Paris, 1979, 317 p.
- OLIVEIRA, F. de. **Crítica à razão dualista**. São Paulo: Boitempo, 2003.
- OUMA, S. Situating global finance in the land rush debate: A critical review. *Geoforum*, v. 57, p. 162-166, 2014.
- OUMA, S. From Financialization to Operations: Historicizing and Disentangling the Finance-Farmland-Nexus: In: **Geoforum** 72: 82-93. 2016. doi:10.1016/j.geoforum.2016.02.003
- PAULANI, L. Acumulação e Rentismo: resgatando a teoria da renda de Marx para pensar o capitalismo contemporâneo. Paper, Rio de Janeiro, **ANPEC**, 2012.
- PAULANI, L. M. Acumulação e rentismo: resgatando a teoria da renda de Marx para pensar o capitalismo contemporâneo. **Revista de Economia Política**, vol. 36, nº 3 (144), pp. 514-535, julho-setembro/2016.
- PEREIRA, L. I. Liberação na aquisição de imóveis rurais por estrangeiros no Brasil e o controle de terras. **Boletim DATALUTA** n. 112 – Artigo do mês: abril de 2017. ISSN 2177-4463.
- PÊSSOA, V.L.S. Ação do Estado e as transformações agrárias no Cerrado das Zonas de Paracatu e Alto Paranaíba. 239f. **Tese** (Doutorado em Geografia). Instituto de Geociências e Ciências Exatas. Universidade Estadual Paulista “Julio de Mesquita Filho”. UNESP – Campus Rio Claro, São Paulo, 1988.
- PITTA, F. T.; MENDONÇA, Maria Luisa. A empresa Radar S/A e a especulação com terras no Brasil. **Rede Social de Justiça e direitos humanos**, GRAIN, Inter Pares, and Solidarity Sweden Latin America, São Paulo, 2015.
- PITTA, Fábio; BOECHAT, Cássio; MENDONÇA, Maria Luisa. A produção do espaço na região do MATOPIBA: violência, transnacionais imobiliárias agrícolas e capital fictício. Belo Horizonte: **Estudos Internacionais**, v.5 n.2, p.155 – 179, 2017.
- PITTA, F. T.; VEGA, G. C. Impactos da expansão do agronegócio no MATOPIBA: Comunidades e meio ambiente. **Rede Social de Justiça e direitos humanos**. Actionaid. Rio de Janeiro, 2017.
- PLIHON, D. As grandes empresas fragilizadas pelas finanças. In: **A finança mundializada: raízes sociais e políticas, configuração, consequências**. (Org.) CHESNAIS, F. São Paulo: Boitempo Editorial, 2005.
- POLANYI, K. **A grande transformação: as origens da nossa época**. 2ª ed. Rio de Janeiro: Campus, 2000.
- RUDORFF, et al. Análise geoespacial da dinâmica das culturas anuais no bioma Cerrado: 2000 – 2014. **Relatório Síntese**. Agrosatélite Geotecnologia Aplicada. Florianópolis, SC, 2015.
- SANTOS, M. **Por uma outra globalização: do pensamento único à consciência universal**. Rio de Janeiro: Record, 20ª edição, 2011, 174 p.

SANTOS, Milton. **A natureza do espaço**: técnica e tempo, razão e emoção. São Paulo: Edusp, 7ª ed., 2012, 392 p.

SAUER, S; PIETRAFESA, J. P. Cana de açúcar, financiamento público e produção de alimentos no Cerrado. **Campo-Território**: revista de geografia agrária, v. 7, n. 14, p. 1-29, agosto, 2012.

SAUER, Sérgio; BORRAS JR, Saturnino. 'Land Grabbing' e 'Green Grabbing': uma leitura da 'corrida na produção acadêmica' sobre a apropriação global de terras. **Revista Campo-Território**, Ed. Especial Land Grabbing, Grilagem e Estrangeirização de terras, n. 23, v. 11, p. 06-42, 2016.

SCOTT, Allen John. **Land and land rent**: an interpretative review of the French literature. *Progress in Geography* 9, 102 - 145, 1976.

SPADOTTO, B. R; SAWELJEW, Y. M; FREDERICO, S; PITTA, F. T. Financial capital, land grabbing, and multiscale strategies of corporations specializing in the land market in the Matopiba region (Brazil). The 5th International Conference of the BRICS Initiative for Critical Agrarian Studies October 13-16, 2017, **RANEP**, Moscow, Russia.

STOCKHAMMER, E. Some stylized facts on the finance-dominated accumulation regime. **Political Economy Research Institute** (PERI). University of Massachusetts Amherst. Working paper series. Number 142. July 2007: 01 – 26.

STOCKHAMMER, E. Financialization and the Global Economy. **Political Economy Research Institute** (PERI). University of Massachusetts Amherst. Working paper series. Number 240. November 2010: 01 – 17.

SWYNGEDOUW, E. Rent and landed property. In: Fine, B., Saad-Filho, A. (Eds.). **The Elgar Companion to Marxist Economics**. Edward Elgar, Cheltenham, UK, pp. 310–315, 2012.

VISSER, O. Running out of Farmland? **Agriculture and Human Values** (print), 2016. doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/s10460-015-9679-7>

WALKER, Richard A. **Urban ground rent**: Building a new conceptual framework. *Antipode*, v. 6, n. 1, p. 51-58, 1974.

WILLIAMS, James W. Feeding finance: a critical account of the shifting relationships between finance, food and farming. **Economy and Society**, v. 43, n. 3, p. 401-431, 2014.

Sobre os autores

Rodrigo Cavalcanti do Nascimento – Graduação em Geografia pela Universidade Federal de Uberlândia (UFU) (2012); Mestrado em Geografia pela Universidade Estadual de Campinas (UNICAMP) (2014) e Doutorado em Geografia pela Universidade Estadual Paulista (UNESP) (2018). **Orcid**: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-7627-6906>.

Samuel Frederico – Graduação (2002) e Mestrado (2004) em Geografia pela Universidade Estadual de Campinas (UNICAMP), Doutorado em Geografia Humana pela Universidade de São Paulo (USP) (2009) e Livre-Docência pela Universidade Estadual Paulista (Unesp) (2018). Professor Adjunto da Unesp, campus de Rio Claro. **Orcid**: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-1586-0794>.

Yuri Martenauer Saweljew – Graduação em Geografia pela Universidade Estadual Paulista (UNESP) (2016); Mestrando em Geografia pela Universidade Estadual Paulista (UNESP), campus de Rio Claro. **OrcID:** <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-4797-7623>.

Como citar este artigo

NASCIMENTO, Rodrigo; FREDERICO, Samuel; SAWELJEW, Yuri Martenauer. Financial capital and land control: New rentiers on the Brazilian agricultural frontier. **Revista NERA**, v. 22, n. 50, p. 261-286, set.-dez., 2019.

Declaração de Contribuição Individual

Este artigo deriva do projeto de pesquisa Fapesp 2017/12100-0, intitulado “Território, Capital Financeiro e Agricultura: O controle de terras pelo capital financeiro na região do Matopiba”, coordenado pelo coautor **Dr. Samuel Frederico**, assim como da tese de doutorado defendida pelo coautor **Rodrigo Cavalcanti do Nascimento**, sobre a empresa BrasilAgro, e da dissertação de mestrado do coautor **Yuri Martenauer**, sobre a empresa SLC Agrícola. Tanto a tese quanto a dissertação derivam diretamente da temática geral do projeto Fapesp anteriormente mencionado. Dessa forma, enquanto o coautor **Samuel Frederico** ficou responsável, sobretudo, pelas discussões mais teóricas do artigo - sobre renda da terra, capital fictício, transformação da terra em ativo financeiro, capital portador de juros e abertura de capital das empresas agrícolas -, os autores **Rodrigo Cavalcanti do Nascimento** e **Yuri Martenauer** se debruçaram no levantamento e análise de dados e informações mais empíricos (incluindo pesquisas de campo), especialmente, sobre as empresas analisadas em seus trabalhos de pós-graduação.

Recebido para publicação em 28 de maio de 2019.
Aceito para a publicação em 27 de julho de 2019.
