

Research Question:

Why do sub-Sahara African states conduct forced relocation projects despite the negative social and economic consequences? Land rights in Sub-Saharan Africa take on a variety of forms, yet a common theme among these rights is that the state has the power to seize, dictate production, or give away land seemingly at any time. Land is used as a method of patronage during elections, as a hostage during civil unrest, and as key elements in government reforms programs. My Honors Thesis, if chosen, will ask questions concerning the motivations and impact of such government intervention.

Significance:

State leaders often claim that their relocation projects are meant to better the social and economic welfare of citizens, yet that is not often the outcome. The Batwa tribes in Central Africa are considered the first tribes of the region and are known for living in harmony with the land. In 1995, leaders of Uganda and Rwanda forcibly removed the Batwa from the forest, claiming a variety of reasons for the relocation- ranging from promoting logging to saving the Gorillas. The Batwa now reside in unworkable government plots with little access to education, food, work, and health care (Woodburn). Economic development leaders of Ethiopia last year undertook an enormous project to urbanize the state. With the intention of providing all citizens with better access to basic needs, state leaders uprooted rural citizens and transferred them to different regions. The results have actually been a large reduction in access to basic needs and a severe maladjustment to the new conditions (Horne and Bader). In Kenya, land is used as a patronage tool during elections. It is given as a reward to party extremists for causing civil unrest and it is used as a punishment by forcibly removing citizens who are known opposition supporters (Boone).

Methodology:

My goal in this Honors Thesis is to do a quantitative analysis of the ways in which governments intercede in local land rights and the impacts of those interventions. Focusing primarily on East African states, I will create a dataset on incidents of land intervention, type of intervention, economic output prior and post intervention, and social health indicators prior and post intervention. I intend to analyze the relationship between type of intervention and the change in conditions prior/post intervention. I will rely heavily on the World Bank Database, CIA Factbook, and news reports to gain this information.

Qualifications:

I am honored that Professor Arriola has agreed to advise my senior thesis, as he has been the one to most shape my topic and understanding of the subject this last year. African Politics and the Junior Seminar on Electoral Violence with Professor Arriola developed my understanding of land as a tool in patronage politics and as an incentive to participate in political violence. In addition, International Relations with Professor Gurowitz and International Political Economy with Professor Aggarwal have contributed to my understanding of the influence (or lack of) international regimes have in shaping the behavior of developing states. Religion and Conflict with Professor Hassner allowed me the opportunity to write a thirty-page research paper on the Batwa tribe (mentioned above) in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. In addition, I have also taken Intro to Statistics, PS 3, and am currently taking Stats 139 Descriptive Statistics, which have inspired me to take a quantitative approach to my thesis.

Citations:

- Boone, Catherine. 2011. "Politically Allocated Land Rights and the Geography of Electoral Violence: The Case of Kenya in the 1990s." *Comparative Political Studies* 44 (8): 1-32.
- Horne, Felix, and Laetitia Bader. *"Waiting Here for Death": Forced Displacement and "villagization" in Ethiopia's Gambella Region*. [New York]: Human Rights Watch, 2012.

-James Woodburn, "Indigenous Discrimination: The Ideological Basis for Local Discrimination against Hunter-gatherer Minorities in Sub-Saharan Africa," *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 20.2 (1997): 345-61.