Discipline, Governmentality and ‘Developmental Patrimonialism’:

Insights from Rwanda’s Pyrethrum sector

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This is an Accepted Manuscript of an article published by in Journal of Agrarian Change Volume 14, Issue 4; published online on 2nd October 2016, available online: http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/joac.12189/full

Introduction

Following the austerity measures of the 1980s and 1990s, and despite the continuing widespread influence of neoliberal policy prescriptions, state-driven development is again a significant feature of academic and policy debates about economic development and poverty reduction in the global South. In Africa, some states have embraced, to varying degrees, a broadly neo-liberal economic programme, but often intervene in strategic markets to favour corporations owned by the ruling party or political allies, and formulate policies through centralized forms of decision-making and political control. Through their links with multinational corporations and partial acceptance of neoliberal economic paradigms and programmes, these governments can enjoy considerable legitimacy and influence at the global level. Their legitimacy, in some cases, is also based on an image of technical and administrative efficiency and proficiency. Several contemporary market authoritarian states are regularly described as examples of developmental patrimonialism, as they, ‘blend modern bureaucratic and more personal forms of authority’ (Booth, 2012, 25), using centralized forms of power to distribute economic rents to ‘clients or cronies’ (Kelsall, 2011, 1); but invest the proceeds of those rents in infrastructure, education, healthcare
and other sectors that can benefit sustained economic development. Examples of such countries in Africa include Eritrea, Ethiopia, Uganda, and Rwanda (Booth and Golooba-Mutebi 2011; Meyns and Musamba 2010).

From a critical materialist perspective (influenced implicitly by a broadly Marxist, as well as classical political economy), Behuria (2015), Booth and Golooba-Mutebi (2012) and others have argued that under certain conditions, profit-making companies controlled directly or indirectly by governmental allies, and hence protected by the ruling party from certain forms of competition and uncertainty, can play important roles in economic growth in such countries. Companies closely linked to the ruling party may be termed ‘party-statals’ (Gökgür 2012), or party-owned enterprises (Behuria 2015; Abegaz 2013). Rwanda is a key case study for this debate over the benefits and drawbacks (or risks) of party capitalism and developmental patrimonialism. Proponents of the Rwandan model (such as, broadly, Behuria, and Booth and Golooba-Mutebi) argue that the economic benefits from party capitalism is being used to achieve long-term development objectives, while critics, such as Gökgür, argue that the politically connected-status of such companies lead them to exclude competitors from the market, and encourages corruption (Gökgür 2012). Behuria (2015) adds important nuance by recognizing that the ruling Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) pursues different strategies (either allowing more competition, or imposing quasi-monopolies) in different sectors, and changes strategies over time, under an overarching objective of economic growth. Behuria (2015) and Abegaz, (2013), and to a lesser extent Booth and Golooba-Mutebi (2012), use a broadly materialist critical political economy or ‘development economics’ approach, which focuses on institutional dynamics. Because of this materialist-economics focus, they tend to underemphasize the important discursive aspects of state intervention, such as the use of socio-cultural motifs in government narratives, the use of the mass media to create particular visions of ‘development’, and processes of subjectification (which will be described below); furthermore, they tend to focus on the macro-economic level and pay less attention to micro-level practices through which
party-enterprises actually intervene in the production of, for example, agricultural commodities. Papers on party capitalism in constrained political contexts often implicitly privilege elite bargaining (i.e. political and economic relationships between elite factions) as the most important political process, rather than broader citizen-state relations. However, the ways in which non-elites are ‘enrolled’ (materially and discursively) into the implementation of national development plans are important from political, ethical, and poverty reduction perspectives. On what basis do citizens contribute labour, funds, or political and discursive support to projects identified as important for national development? How does the state respond to citizens’ attempts to resist contributing to such projects? Governmentality (Foucault 2007) usefully deconstructs notions of ‘coercion’ and ‘consent’, exploring ‘arts of government’ which shape the range of actions available to individuals and the larger populations that they compose. Whereas disciplinary technologies operate at the level of the individual, targeting and controlling individuals as corporeal bodies, governmentality works at the level of the population. Governmentality relies upon the idea that an existing set of psycho-social desires can be guided and moulded in order to create willing subjects of ‘development’ that do not need to be directly coerced. Governmentality is therefore the ‘conduct of conduct’: the putting in place of schemes, ideologies and systems which facilitate the development of certain kinds of conduct. In advanced liberal states, the ideal subject is self-governing and ‘responsible’, managing him/herself in ways which accord with state ideas of good conduct (Rose 1999). Non-state actors, including commercial operators, may contribute to the diffusion of such a model, with ideas of consumerism and citizenship becoming intertwined in complex ways and co-created by various actors. Governmental approaches may be contrasted with disciplinary technologies that operate at the level of the individual, targeting and controlling individuals as corporeal bodies though systems of spatial organization, punishments of various kinds, and other direct means (Foucault 1995 [1977]). The disciplinary and governmental forms of power are not mutually exclusive, and states typically use both (Foucault 1991 [1978], 102). The image of the ideal subject encouraged by
the state is connected not only to nationalist, culturally- and historically-rooted concepts but is often shaped by the demands of international capital: local labour must respond to global markets (Moore 2005).

State intervention in the governance of land and agricultural production has particular social resonance because of the multi-dimensional nature of land, which is not just an economic asset but also a powerful symbol of social identity, household autonomy and livelihood security. There are documented historical examples of popular resistance to rural state ‘development’ projects in Rwanda. As the price of coffee plunged during the 1980s, peasant farmers uprooted hundreds of thousands of coffee trees (Verwimp 2002 and Newbury 1995). ¹ Peasants are also known to have burned government woodlots and uprooted trees in Gishwati forest (Longman 1995, cited in Waldorf 2006). However, although it does examine resistance, this article does not seek to oversimplify matters by contrasting an ‘oppressive’ form of state-imposed rural production with ‘an idyllic vision of small farmers’ (Moore 2001, 912) that treats rural life outside the reach of the state as somehow outside of power relations (Moore 2005, 23).

First, while state coercion is problematic from ethical, legal, and political perspectives (not least because of the risk of escalation due to resistance and counter-resistance), it should be noted that Rwanda is not unique in using coercive methods to manage labour; historically, many countries around the world have done so. Second, the status quo of ‘customary’ agriculture in Rwanda is neither idyllic nor sustainable, due to land scarcity, soil erosion and other factors (Huggins 2009), so that many smallholders unaffected by coercive government policies and projects would still face a severe set of household-level stresses. Neither do we assume that Rwandan farmers are resistant to change (unwilling, for example, to change their choice of crops, technologies of agricultural production, or institutional affiliations). Despite the stereotypes of ‘traditional attitudes’ (Rwembeho 2010) often found in the Rwandan media, smallholder

¹ Coffee prices were set by the government, but the price of other commodities increased, so that the exchange value of coffee was drastically reduced.
farmers are not resistant to change and innovation, but prioritise risk minimisation instead of profit maximisation (see f.e. Van Damme, J et al. 2014) When they can do so without overly exposing themselves to financial and other risks, Rwandan farmers ‘seize new varieties and input availability with alacrity... quickly moving away from crops that are no longer profitable’ (Donovan et al. 2002, 13). Third, use of the governmentality and discipline theoretical framework enables the ideas of coercion and resistance to be deconstructed and understood as more than simple binary opposites.

This article therefore seeks to engage with the literature on developmental patrimonialism and more specifically party capitalism in Rwanda, especially claims by Booth and Golooba-Mutebi (2011), that the military-owned company that manages the pyrethrum sector in Rwanda has ‘strategic social objectives’ and has significantly benefited local citizens. It provides a particular contribution in the form of a more discursive political economy method, inspired by the work of Michel Foucault, that considers the micro-level socio-political impacts of pyrethrum production. Moreover, unlike many of the key academic publications in this debate (Behuria 2015; Booth and Golooba-Mutebi 2012; Gökgür 2012) this article is based on numerous interviews with farmers, cooperative managers, and cellule- and sector-level mediators, administrators and agronomists, rather than only mid-or high-level managers and policymakers. By critically examining claims that the company has increased farmer incomes, and by detailing various impacts of the implementation strategies used, the article demonstrates how companies with links to the ruling party and local administration may create particular ‘spaces of governance’ which shape the range of livelihood strategies available to rural citizens.

Methods
Fieldwork was conducted in parts of the sectors of Cyuve, Nyange, and Kinigi, Musanze District, Northern Province, during several periods of fieldwork between April 2011 and February 2013.² A total of 63 interviews were conducted. This area was selected because it is easily accessible by public transport. Cellules and villages (imidugudu) in this area were selected at random from a list assembled from interviews with administrators and farmers (and cross-checked using online resources). Key informants included local mediators (Abunzi) (10 interviews), cell-level land committee members (13 interviews), leaders of pyrethrum cooperatives (four interviews), and SOPYRA ‘delegates’ (who monitor local pyrethrum production: four interviews). Other informants included agronomists, land registration personnel, leaders of local farmer’s organizations, local administrators, and SOPYRWA personnel.³ Such key informants were identified and interviewed without any process of randomization. In addition, 27 local farmers were selected for interviews in a random fashion. Villages were divided approximately into four parts (east, west, north, and south) and, transect walks were made through each part, with every fifth house being visited (if empty, the adjacent house was selected for interview). As the transect walks led through pyrethrum fields, this method also allowed direct observation of pyrethrum production practices. Interviews were conducted using a check-list of questions but the format was semi-structured. Efforts were made to talk to equal numbers of men and women, though approximately 60% of respondents were male. This is partly because the research targeted cooperative members, and many cooperatives are dominated by men. In addition, many key informants were disproportionately likely to be male.

² Since 2013, the global market price for pyrethrum fell from $250/processed kilo to a low of $169.93 (Tumwebaze, 2015), though the price had since recovered slightly. During this time, production fell in Rwanda (Nkurunziza, 2014). This suggests that the coercive tactics described below have been relaxed; Rwandan journalists have confirmed this, though other sources suggest that the same system remains in place (van de Klundert, 2015). At the time of writing, it is unclear how SOPYRWA will react if and when global prices increase significantly.

³ This is in addition to numerous other interviews on themes relating to land use and farming, but not specifically to pyrethrum, which have not been counted here (see Huggins, 2014b).
Post-Genocide Governance in Rwanda

Rebuilding the Rwandan state after the 1994 genocide, the ruling Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) rapidly created and enacted economic policies associated with neoliberalism (Cannon 2005). Import and export taxes were reduced and most parastatal corporations were privatized (Malunda 2012; Cherif 2003). At the macro-economic level the economy remains dependent upon the export of commodities, primarily minerals, coffee and tea, and to a much lesser extent pyrethrum, and is hence vulnerable to price volatility on world markets (Holden 2012). The manufacturing sector plays a small role in the economy, while the service economy is growing but still minor compared to the amount of aid money received each year. The government has generally adopted a ‘user pays’ approach to development, and urges citizens to become entrepreneurs and ‘modern farmers’, willing to take loans, mechanize, and produce exclusively for the market. It has welcomed foreign investment in almost all sectors of the economy, following ‘a growth model based on large-scale investments’ (Ansoms and Murison 2013, 251). Incentives for FDI include export processing zones and industrial parks (Malunda 2012). Foreign investment has increased from U.S.$7,660,000 to over U.S.$110 million since 2004 (Matfess 2015, citing World Bank 2014), and though many investors have complained of poor treatment by government agencies, as well as excessive taxation, (Davis 2013, 116-117) the country has performed well in the World Bank’s ‘Doing Business’ report (it is currently ranked 2nd in Sub-Saharan Africa and 62nd in the world).

Since about 2006, the Rwandan state has implemented ambitious land and agricultural reforms, involving multiple donors, private actors, and international and local research institutions and NGOs (Ansoms et al. 2014a; Huggins 2014a; Pritchard 2013). Marshlands, previously leased by smallholders, were made available as concessions to private investors (Ansoms et al. 2014b; Veldman and Lankhorst 2010). The state is also ‘actively negotiating public-private joint ventures’ in the agricultural sector.
However, the contemporary political economy of Rwanda cannot be simply characterized as neoliberal, as direct state intervention is a feature in every sector of the economy. The RPF is essentially attempting to achieve legitimacy and ensure its political survival not primarily through political-administrative systems of direct accountability to the electorate (as democracy is curtailed in numerous ways), but through delivering significant increases in income and improvements in life-chances for the majority of the population. Rather than participation in decision-making, Rwandan citizens are offered economic development, political ‘stability’ and effective controls on bureaucratic corruption, delivered through a centralized power structure and institutions headed by RPF loyalists. Indeed, external actors have argued that the RPF ‘can only achieve legitimacy by delivering results’ (Sommers 2012, 213). This model is similar, of course, to the ‘developmental patrimonialism’ concept (Booth and Golooba-Mutebi 2012); but has alternatively been described as ‘market-oriented authoritarianism’ (Huggins 2014a), as the government seeks to promote foreign investment, increase agricultural commercialization and rural economic differentiation whilst tightly controlling the political and economic environment.

Both critics and supporters of the current policies agree that high-level decision-making is based on elite-level ‘consensus’, which involves central patronage, while disagreeing over the extent of self-interest involved in such patronage (Behuria 2015). Booth and Golooba-Mutebi (2011) argue that Horizon Inc. (a company owned by Rwandan Ministry of Defence) and other similar corporations play an important role in Rwanda, similar to ‘venture capital’ enterprises, in expanding strategic sectors of the economy and taking risks that private corporations are unwilling to take. Critics emphasize elite capture and ‘extractive economic and extractive political institutions’ (Gökgür 2012: 28; see also Reyntjens 2013). Matfess notes that, where the classic developmental regime intervenes primarily in the
economic sphere, government-led action in Rwanda is ‘part of larger state intervention in the social sphere’ (Matfess 2015, 185).

Ideology plays a key role in the national development project (Abegaz 2013, 1470; Behuria 2015, 417; Purdeková 2012). Specifically, this ideology emphasizes self-sufficiency at both national and individual levels, pride in Rwandan culture, ‘modernization’ through planning and technology, and entrepreneurship (Kagame 2009). Some authors suggest that a corporate governance model and international image as a place ‘open for business’, summed up in the concept of ‘Rwanda Inc.’ is key to the country’s relative macro-economic success (Crisafulli and Redmond 2012).

In addition to ideology, Abegaz also emphasizes that countries where ‘party capitalism’ predominates have strong organizational capacity, and a highly centralized state structure (2013, 1470). Using Foucauldian concepts, we can identify ways in which the mechanisms for ‘organizing’ smallholder labour are congruent with, or in broad opposition to, the ideology of the state, as understood from various official and unofficial discourses. As noted above, governmentality concerns the indirect administration of the population through processes of subjectification – the creation of particular types of subjects. Such approaches require sophisticated and extensive systems and networks and are hence associated with advanced liberal states with highly developed technological and managerial capacities; however, the Rwandan government, with its omnipresent administrative and surveillance machinery, is also able to use such strategies. Broadly speaking, the discourse of pro-market, entrepreneur-driven economic development, the so-called ‘Rwanda Inc.’ model, is based on a governmental framework.

The Rwandan state also utilizes disciplinary technologies, which operate on a more routinised basis and function through control of particular spaces, as well as schedules, quotas, and other forms of demands upon labour (Foucault 1995). As will be shown in the case study below, the production of pyrethrum depends heavily on disciplinary approaches. In many cases, smallholder farmers in Rwanda have
explicitly resisted elements of the contemporary agricultural reform, such as regional crop specialization policies (Van Damme et al. 2014). Nevertheless, in interviews, smallholders often agree with state calls for them to become more profit-oriented and see farming as a business. These observations suggest that processes of subjectification – the creation of new kinds of subjects – neither completely ‘fail’ nor completely ‘succeed’ in Rwanda, but tend to result in identities which are co-created by state influence and by the pre-existing, personal worldviews of individual citizens (Huggins 2014b). This point will be elaborated further below.

**Pyrethrum production in Rwanda**

Pyrethrum is a variety of chrysanthemum flower which can be dried and processed to produce an insecticide, pyrethrin, used in common household products such as Raid® and Baygon®. Since 2011, pyrethrum has also been purchased by Agropy, a company based in Musanze and jointly owned by Horizon Inc. and a UK firm. Agropy produces locally-made products for pest management on farms, as well as domestic insecticides, and has created local jobs (Agropy 2015).

Pyrethrum can only be grown at high altitudes on volcanic soil, and is therefore produced by a few countries (including Kenya, Tanzania, Tasmania, and Ecuador). This makes it a potentially highly profitable export crop, and one often targeted for government regulation. Nevertheless, its overall value to the economy has never reached $10 million per year (Behuria 2015, 432). It is very labour-intensive: seedlings are hand split and hand sown, weeding must be done very regularly, and the flowers are hand-picked over a period of up to six months.

The political economy of pyrethrum in Rwanda differs from other crops, particularly because the land tenure situation in pyrethrum-producing zones (described further below) effectively makes pyrethrum
farmers tenants of the pyrethrum company. This is a key aspect that makes the Rwandan pyrethrum sector different from that of Kenya, for example. In Kenya the pyrethrum industry has, as in Rwanda, historically been characterized by a state-imposed monopoly in purchase and processing. However, in Kenya, pyrethrum is grown on land owned directly by smallholder farmers, not the state or a company (Monda, 2014). Kenyan pyrethrum farmers have therefore been free to abandon the crop when prices are low. In Rwanda, pyrethrum farmers have not had that option. It is difficult to avoid monopoly in pyrethrum purchasing in Rwanda because only one processing factory exists and the relatively low production levels of pyrethrum do not justify construction of more. However, this single-buyer situation does not preclude other financial or land-related arrangements that would provide farmers in the pyrethrum zone with more, and better, livelihood choices.

Pyrethrum was introduced to Rwanda by Belgian commercial farmers in the 1930s. In 1963, the post-colonial government excised part of the Volcanoes National Park, in the North of the country, to put land under pyrethrum production. The postcolonial government offered free leases to plots of two hectares to land-poor households, on condition that they grow pyrethrum on 40% of the plots. Households could grow other crops on the remaining 60%. If they did not follow these regulations, the land could be temporarily confiscated and the family could eventually be evicted. According to staff of the Rwandan pyrethrum company Société du Pyrethe au Rwanda (SOPYRWA), the leases did not permit sub-division, sub-leasing, sale or inheritance of the land parcels. However, the restrictions on inheritance have not been enforced, and most of the two hectare parcels of land are currently occupied and farmed by descendants of the original leaseholders. According to SOPYRWA, there are about 7,000 households currently producing pyrethrum over four Districts.

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4 Interview A of May 12 2011 with senior SOPYRWA staff, SOPYRWA factory, Ruhengeri town.
In 1970 a processing factory was built in Ruhengeri town, which is now the administrative centre of Musanze District. In 1978, a para-statal Office of Pyrethrum in Rwanda, OPYRWA, was established to manage the factory and the pyrethrum industry more broadly. After the 1994 genocide, OPYRWA was inoperative, and smallholder farmers replaced pyrethrum with food-crops. OPYRWA slowly became operational again, but was poorly managed. In 2000, the government privatized the parastatal, which became SOPYRWA. During the 2000-2008 period, the factory and commodity chain received funding from the European Union (OECD/WTO 2011) but were poorly managed once more. The amount of dried flowers harvested declined from 1300 tonnes per year in 2004, to just 300 in 2008 (Pyramid Project n.d. citing SOPYRWA data). This may have been due to diminished enforcement of production regulations in the pyrethrum growing zone.

In 2008, SOPYRWA was acquired by Horizon Inc., a company created as an ‘investment arm’ of the military (Booth and Golooba-Mutebi 2011) and staffed mainly by former military personnel (Anonymous 2011). Its finances are opaque, and the resources of such companies ‘may well be used to fund the RPF’s extensive intelligence network and other more hidden enterprises’ (USAID 2011).

Since Horizon took control of SOPYRWA, a discourse associated with ‘professionalisation’ and liberalisation of the sector has been put forward by Horizon, the pro-government media, and donor organizations working in the pyrethrum sector. However, the fundamental structural aspects of production remain unchanged, and the sector continues to be monopolised by SOPYRWA, which owns the only pyrethrum processing plant in the country.

The Destruction and (re) Creation of Pyrethrum Cooperatives
In 2009, SOPYRWA directed pyrethrum farmers to organize themselves into producer cooperatives. This process was initiated by SOPYRWA, rather than by farmers. SOPYRWA staff described how they dismantled two existing cooperatives and formed 24 new ones.\(^5\)

Pyrethrum cooperatives lack the characteristics of voluntarism and democratic governance used in the liberal literature to define cooperatives (International Co-operative Alliance 2015). This is often the case for agricultural cooperatives more generally in Rwanda (Ansoms et al 2014b; Huggins 2014), and indeed for most civil society organizations, which tend to be controlled by politically-connected individuals (Gready 2011). Authorities, such as government agronomists and staff of SOPYRWA, told farmers that if they did not join a cooperative, their fields would be confiscated.\(^6\) Because they perceive the cooperatives to be controlled by SOPYRWA, many local people feel there is no point in participating in the decision-making of cooperatives. The presidents of the cooperatives are elected, but some respondents stated that elections were highly controlled by SOPYRWA.\(^7\) Farmers see cooperative managers as vulnerable to being changed or intimidated by SOPYRWA. Some of the cooperatives force farmers to purchase fertilizer for pyrethrum cultivation. Fertilizer is taken on credit, which is paid back at the time of the harvest.\(^8\) Through the institutional partnership described below, SOPYRWA ‘integrated its extension agents into cooperatives’ (Rwanda Pyrethrum Program 2015), further consolidating its control.

SOPYRWA purchases pyrethrum only from cooperatives (not individuals), at a blanket price of 1035RWF/kg at the time of field research (2011-2013). Of this, 35 RWF was retained by the

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\(^5\) Interview A of May 12 2011 with senior SOPYRWA staff, SOPYRWA factory, Ruhengeri town

\(^6\) Interview I of May 3, 2011 with pyrethrum farmer, Kinigi Sector, Musanze District. See also Cowan, 2014.

\(^7\) Interview B of October 5 2011 with local mediator, Kinigi Sector; Interview A of October 5 2011 with land cell committee member, Kinigi Sector

\(^8\) Interview I of May 4, 2011 with pyrethrum farmer, Kinigi Sector
cooperatives, so that farmers receive 1000 RWF/kg. This price is higher than the 800 RWF/kg paid before the 2008 buy-out by Horizon Inc. The price increase was made possible, according to donors, by increased profits for SOPYRWA (OECD/WTO 2011). However, since 2008, Horizon has shifted the responsibility for drying the flowers to individual farmers. The state, as well as the Pyramid Project (see below) has constructed basic drying facilities for several cooperatives, which can be used without payment. Nevertheless, the drying process represents a significant investment of time, and can be technically difficult. If SOPYRWA’s laboratory tests determine that the humidity of the dried flowers is above their maximum figure, the farmer receives a lower price.

All testing is done in SOPYRWA’s laboratory, without any transparency. Farmers sometimes complain that the laboratory results differ from recorded or estimated data at collection points; but there is no procedure of appeal or arbitration. These issues of price, quality control, and lack of independent arbitration reflect a broader structural issues. The coercive nature of the structures of pyrethrum production arises from SOPYRWA’s monopoly in purchasing, and the inability of farmers to shift agricultural production from pyrethrum to other crops due to the risk of eviction. The land tenure arrangement allows SOPYRWA, with the support of the state, to deploy disciplinary technologies which farmers have few, if any, formal or legal tactics to resist.

**Donor and Private Sector Intervention: The Pyramid Project and the Rwanda Pyrethrum Program**

In 2009, the ‘Pyramid Project’ was launched, with the involvement of SOPYRWA, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the US-based multinational pharmaceutical corporation S.C. Johnston, and the US-based Norman Borlaug Institute. This project was an extension of an existing

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9 The price to cooperatives has since risen to 1085 RWF/kg, though it is not clear from USAID documents how much the cooperatives retain as calculations are incorrect (USAID, 2015)
project (‘SPREAD’) which intervened in the coffee sector. The Pyramid Project aimed to ‘help increase incomes and the quality of life for thousands of Rwanda pyrethrum farmers, while boosting the sustainable supply of pyrethrum in East Africa’ (Schattenberg 2009). However, internal documents emphasize the economic motivation of the actors concerned, citing the objective to: ‘Achieve growth, profitability and sustainability [of SOPYRWA’s operations] as a source for high-quality pyrethrum oil for S.C. Johnson’ (Pyramid Project n.d). In 2012, the project was extended in the form of the ‘Rwanda Pyrethrum Project’, which involved the National University of Rwanda, and the National Agricultural Export Development Board. The project closed in June 2015.

An assessment of the pyrethrum sector conducted during the project design phase identified many of the inequitable and problematic structural aspects of pyrethrum production, finding that: ‘farmers felt they were being forced to grow an unprofitable crop that took time and effort away from producing a profitable one [potatoes]... farmers never made any money producing pyrethrum.’ (Pyramid Project n.d. Italics added). Despite this blunt assessment, the project did not attempt legal and economic restructuring to alter control over the means of production, but focused instead on supporting SOPYRWA’s disciplinary mechanisms, technical improvements to seed quality and cultivation regimes, and mostly non-material support (e.g. education and training) to farmer ‘well-being’. A new chrysanthemum variety was introduced which, while higher in levels of pyrethrin, requires more fertilizer than other varieties. Pyrethrum farmers were trained in new cultivation techniques, which according to Pyramid Project documents, could result in per hectare yields tripling (Pyramid Project n.d.); but involve substantial increases in labour investments. For example, the number of plants cultivated per hectare is increased by 60%, and duration of the harvest period is doubled (Pyramid Project n.d.).
SOPYRWA has supported credit schemes, and, through various partners, also provides farmers with information on health issues and promotes family planning. In order to provide some incentives for increased production, annual ‘Farmers’ Days’ were established, at which prizes (such as agricultural equipment) are given to the farmers and cooperatives that produced the most pyrethrum.

**The Mechanics and Economics of Pyrethrum Production**

The industry depends upon daily policing of the pyrethrum fields by employees of SOPYRWA, locally known as ‘delegates’. Monitoring of the pyrethrum zone by SOPYRWA is intense: in one administrative cell for example, there is one delegate for every 86 households. The effectiveness of disciplinary technologies such as those used by the delegates has been improved since Horizon Inc. took control of SOPYRWA. Farmers contended that, ‘since about 2 years ago, since the cooperatives were founded, there has been more pressure to cultivate pyrethrum’. If farmers do not follow SOPYRWA’s directives, the fields in question are requisitioned and cultivated by others; or the farmers are fined. In the past, fields could be confiscated for several years, but this was reportedly reduced to one year, after local people appealed to the local authorities in 2008. Nevertheless, a delegate boasted that, ‘we can even spend three years cultivating their land.’ Temporary confiscation of land seems relatively common – several of those farmers interviewed knew of neighbours in their village whose land was confiscated in the previous few years. Other respondents signaled that this issue was the source of a dispute between SOPYRWA and the local authorities. This shows that while the assemblage (Li 2007) incorporating SOPYRWA and local authorities is effective, it is not completely frictionless.

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10 Interview E. of May 6 2011, Kinigi Sector
11 Interview C of May 6 2011 with SOPYRWA delegate, Kinigi Sector.
12 Interview B of May 3 2011 with SOPYRWA delegate, Kinigi Sector.
SOPYRWA delegates are quite open about the coercive nature of their methods: ‘We intimidate them to work – we threaten to take their land from them.’ Several farmers mentioned that the cooperatives were unable to help them if they were threatened with sanctions by SOPYRWA. The delegates are intensely disliked by many local farmers, and according to interviews, occasionally have their food-crops uprooted by unknown persons, or are physically attacked.

Disciplinary technologies are necessary because of the economics of production and marketing, which are unfavourable to producers. The structural conditions under which they operate mean that farmers cannot increase their bargaining power through negotiation with multiple potential buyers or the threat of a strike. USAID documentation suggests that the Pyramid Project has improved the ‘market links of Rwandan farmers’ (USAID 2010, 14); however the reality is that there is only one market for pyrethrum, controlled entirely by SOPYRWA, and the deepening of ‘market links’ entails farming households becoming further enmeshed within SOPYRWA’s disciplinary systems.

The economics of pyrethrum cultivation are unfavourable to producers. It requires at least nine months in the field from planting to the end of the harvest; under the new cultivation regimes introduced by the Pyramid Project, this increased to a full year. In interviews, pyrethrum farmers indicated that on a per-hectare basis, pyrethrum provided only 10%-38% of the value of potato production, which is generally the most economically viable crop in the area. These figures are supported by various documents which show that pyrethrum provides only between 5% and 28% of the value of potatoes (calculations based on data from IFDC 2011; Nyesiga 2012; Ten Hove 2012; Tindwensi 2011; UNIDO 1995). One study found that while farmers earned 1,000 Rwf per dry kilogram of flowers, the average production cost was about 2,000 RWF per one kilogram (Tibrichu and Buykusenge 2009). Even a government of Rwanda document

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13 Interview B of May 3 2011 with SOPYRWA delegate, Kinigi Sector.
14 In comparison, other crops, such as potatoes, can be harvested at least twice a year.
promoting Agropharm cites farmer concerns over prices (REMA 2013). As a result, farmers do not cultivate pyrethrum unless forced to: for example, there is no formal or informal land rental market for land under pyrethrum cultivation, even though active rental markets exist for fields where potatoes and other crops can be cultivated.

Pyramid Project documents claim to have improved farmer incomes: ‘from a total of 250,000 USD in 2008, to 1,186,800 USD in 2011’ (Pyramid Project n.d.) and $1.5 million in 2015 (Rwanda Pyrethrum Program 2015). Documents and videos produced by USAID report that women’s savings groups formed by pyrethrum farmers have managed to accumulate thousands of dollars. However, these ‘increases in farmer incomes’ represent only the total amount of money paid by SOPYRWA to farmers, rather than profit, and it is not clear if the savings groups have accumulated money from sales of pyrethrum, or other crops. These aggregate figures obscure micro-level patterns: project documents do not include data on household-level incomes. Increases in pyrethrum production are partly the result of increases in the amount of land under pyrethrum production, and therefore represent a disinvestment from more profitable crops, such as potatoes. No attempt is made in the project documents to estimate the opportunity costs of this spatial expansion of pyrethrum production. Increased income also results from increases in investments of labour and artificial fertilizer; which are not costed in the publicized figures. Unsurprisingly, a 2011 US government audit of the project found that: ‘Although the project had enhanced drying facilities, conducted business training, and exceeded its annual target for production of pyrethrum, few farmers interviewed stated that their incomes had improved because of those activities’ (Office of the Inspector General 2011, italics added). Whereas the project does not seem to have increased smallholder incomes, SOPYRWA achieved a 380% increase in export revenues from

[15] A pyrethrum farmer is quoted as saying, “We are paid 1080 Rwf per dried kilogram, but I think enough should be 2,500 Rwf.”
[16] An approach similar to that taken by Ansoms (2009), who calculates total productivity under different production regimes, and estimates the number of people who could be supported on an area of land under such regimes, would provide a more balanced viewpoint.
US$1,125,000 in 2009 to $4,315,000 in 2011, though a fall in world prices led to a reduction more recently.

**State Discourse on Pyrethrum Production**

SOPYRWA often uses the pro-government media to put forward a narrative in which both farmers and the nation benefit financially, embedded within a broader national narrative of entrepreneurship (Kagame 2009). However, official government documents emphasise the benefits at the national level, rather than local level (MINICOM 2011), and government officials sometimes implicitly acknowledge that the crop is primarily of value not to the smallholders, but to SOPYRWA. During a speech the Provincial Governor of Northern Province recognised that ‘there are some [people] who don’t value the cultivation of pyrethrum, saying that it’s for the government, but I tell you that one must have the passion of the state and look to the future of the country....’ 17

This linkage between private profit and state strategising is not only rhetorical. Corporate pyrethrum production is linked to centralised state planning. Pyrethrum cultivation was included in the government’s regional crop specialisation programme (Tibrichu and Buykusenge 2009), and the state administrative machinery, in addition to the disciplinary technologies of SOPYRWA, is part of the dense institutional and spatial field of control within the pyrethrum zones. For example, the Musanze District Performance Contract (Imihigo, in Kinyarwanda) includes quantitative targets for increasing the amount of land under pyrethrum production.

Huggins (2014a) argues that some ‘approved crops’ under the regional crop specialization programme have been chosen so that Rwandan agro-processing facilities can purchase sufficient quantities of raw

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17 Field observation October 7, 2011 during SOPYRWA’s ‘farmers’ day’ event, Musanze District.
commodities so that they do not continue to operate under-capacity, and become more profitable. This seems to be true for the pyrethrum sector. The SOPYRWA factory is capable of processing 3,000 tons of flowers annually but received only about 1,000 tons in 2011, for example. In order to become more profitable, the firm is seeking to geographically expand pyrethrum production (Majyambere 2011). Pyrethrum is prioritized by the ruling party and USAID primarily because of its macro-economic export value.

Coverage of the pyrethrum sector in the pro-government Rwandan media emphasizes the uptake of new technologies, such as improved seedstock and fertilizers. There are also references to a need to encourage a ‘savings culture’ amongst farmers (Majyambere 2011) to change their ‘mindset’ (Habimana 2013), and mention of positive farmer responses to improved prices (Anonymous 2011). These are elements of the composite image of the ‘modern farmer’ that is promoted in Rwanda, and these governmental approaches are supplemented through some incentive based systems, such as the annual ‘Farmers’ Days’. Through the Pyramid project, the government and donors communicated health and family planning ‘messages’. A SOPYRWA manager stated that: ‘they have to control population growth. We have a medical arm to sensitize them to control the population: to reduce the number of mouths to feed.’

Here, the population is self-governing to the extent that it controls its own fertility; at the same time, rather than framing health and family planning interventions as part of the public good, this project manager sees it as part of SOPYRWA’s operations, which are geared towards improving productivity. SOPYRWA’s approaches are consciously diffuse, intended to achieve as much spatial and temporal coverage as possible. The use of ‘peer educators’ (a training-of-trainers’ model) ensures that the training infiltrates the social milieu, as well as the professional setting. In short, SOPYRWA uses a strategy of saturation of the target zone, reminiscent of the governmental strategies outlined by Foucault (2007).

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18 Interview B of May 12 2011 with senior SOPYRWA staff, SOPYRWA factory, Ruhengeri town
There are paradoxes within the intensive ‘development’ interventions of the Pyramid Project. On the one hand, the pro-government media seeks to create the impression that SOPYRWA has put in place financial conditions, like access to credit, that allow pyrethrum farmers to ‘develop’ themselves into ‘self-governing subjects’. Health and family planning messages also involve the ‘responsibilisation’ of the subject (Lemke 2002). This emphasizes farmer choice. Nevertheless, subjectification by the state and SOPYRWA of farmers as rational development actors or ‘modern farmers’ is undermined in the pyrethrum zone by disciplinary technologies, which operate largely at the level of the individual household, and which rely heavily on constant case-by-case monitoring, and enforcement through punishments.

**Land Tenure Tensions**

Tensions between discipline and governmentality are also visible in the land tenure system in the pyrethrum zone. The national land registration process, intended to stimulate the formal market in land, and part of a broadly governmental modernization paradigm, led to the emergence of social and legal-administrative contradictions. According to individuals involved in land demarcation and registration, SOPYRWA claimed ownership of all land under its institutional control. However, the National Land Centre (NLC) staff conducting the registration exercise refused to register the land under the name of SOPYRWA. NLC staff communicated the same discourse of ‘ownership’ of the land by the local householders as was disseminated in other parts of the country. According to local citizens; ‘the Land Centre people said, “now, the land is for you”’. At the same time, local authorities and SOPYRWA continued to emphasize in public meetings that the policy of compulsory pyrethrum cultivation would continue, no matter how the land was registered. Both discourses were sometimes presented

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19 Interview A of October 8 2011 with member of cell land committee in Kinigi Sector; Ruhengeri town
simultaneously, as SOPYRWA staff were often invited to speak during the ‘sensitization’ sessions of the National Land Centre staff.

Leases issued in 2012 in the pyrethrum-producing zones of Kinigi Sector included household members as the leaseholders, but listed SOPYRWA as amongst those having an interest in the land.\(^{20}\) This gives SOPYRWA a veto over land transactions. Importantly, the leases also stipulated, amongst the ‘conditions’ of lease, that pyrethrum should be grown upon 40% of each parcel. A similar system has been used to register the land of those living in tea-growing areas, and working as out-growers for tea plantations. These leasehold documents protect the user rights of the land-users and allow for market transactions of land, but reinforce corporate or party-statal controls over land use and transactions. As such, they embody the tensions between disciplinary and governmental modes of agricultural development in Rwanda.

**Farmer Perceptions of the Pyrethrum Production and Marketing System**

The changes to SOPYRWA over recent years have led to some improvements – as mentioned previously, the price of pyrethrum per kilo has increased since 2008; farmers are paid on time, unlike during the period before 2009; and cooperatives provide credit and some other benefits to farmers. However, in interviews, farmers focused on the structural injustices in the sector. None of the 27 pyrethrum farmers interviewed during the course of fieldwork gave a positive assessment of pyrethrum as a crop; one respondent stated bluntly that, ‘no-one wants to grow pyrethrum’\(^{21}\). Even two Presidents of pyrethrum cooperatives acknowledged that the price is too low to be profitable for farmers,\(^ {22}\) and SOPYRWA staff

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\(^{20}\) Usually, close family members such as spouses and children are registered as interest-holders.

\(^{21}\) Interview A of October 6 2011 with member of cell land committee in Kinigi Sector; Ruhengeri town.

\(^{22}\) Interview A of May 7 2011 with President of a pyrethrum cooperative, Ruhengeri town; Interview D of May 3 2011 with cooperative President, Kinigi Sector
admitted that farmers would prefer to grow potatoes. The younger generation, in particular, is resistant. Several respondents compared the current regime of pyrethrum cultivation to slavery.

Local people see themselves as part of a larger machine, as ‘instruments of SOPYRWA’ or ‘workers’ for SOPYRWA, which reinforces the popular sense that they exist, at least in the eyes of SOPYRWA, not as independent, self-governing subjects, but primarily as a part of an integrated system for the extraction of profits from the land and the population.

In addition to the opportunity costs that pyrethrum represents – with households losing significant amounts of potential earnings every year - the social impacts of forced pyrethrum cultivation are also severe. The original landholdings of 2 hectares are now occupied by extended families who cultivate as little as 0.2 hectares (USAID 2015). These households have to negotiate the labour and land requirements of pyrethrum production between themselves. Arguments amongst families have ended in physical violence, including machete wounds.

The local ‘conciliators’ (abunzi in Kinyarwanda), legally empowered to mediate disputes, have been forbidden by local authorities from mediating pyrethrum-related disputes. This demonstrates the power enjoyed by SOPYRWA, which is supported by local authorities in the imposition of sanctions on farmers. To some extent, state services available to other Rwandan citizens have been suspended inside the pyrethrum zone. This erosion of citizenship illustrates the ‘exceptional’ nature of the pyrethrum zone, based on the strategic value of pyrethrum production and the vulnerable land tenure situation of farming households. However, across Rwanda, administrators have threatened to confiscate land from farmers refusing to follow the agricultural policy, leading to perceptions amongst farmers that ‘there is

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23 Interview A of May 12 2011 with senior SOPYRWA staff, SOPYRWA factory, Ruhengeri town
24 Interview A of 29 April 2011, Kinigi Sector; Interview D of May 1 2011 with pyrethrum farmer, Kinigi Sector; Interview F of 4th May 2011 with pyrethrum farmer, Kinigi Sector; Focus Group discussion A of 18th February 2013, Kinigi Sector.
25 Interview F of October 6 2011 with cell land committee member, Kinigi Sector.
nothing you can do’ to seek recourse (Pritchard 2013, 190; see also Dawson et al. 2016; Huggins 2009 and Ansoms 2009). The situation in the pyrethrum zone is therefore not unique.

In response to what they see as an unfair situation, farmers use several tactics to invest as little as possible in pyrethrum cultivation. A few have attempted to directly oppose SOPYRWA’s directives. For example, one man planted eucalyptus trees. When the delegates cut them down to grow pyrethrum, he uprooted the pyrethrum. He was arrested and spent almost two weeks in the local police station. Respondents provided several other such examples. However, most farmers avoid direct acts of resistance, preferring various forms of trickery, foot-dragging or corruption. In order to avoid planting, farmers often pretend to have health or family problems, and may bribe the delegate to support their claim. If delegates uncover the truth, they uproot food crops and give fines. Many farmers also attempt to plant pyrethrum in the rockiest, least fertile areas of their landholdings, or in remote fields that are inconvenient for delegates to visit. However this is a difficult strategy to maintain over multiple seasons, as SOPYRWA insists that pyrethrum is rotated between different fields each season.

Farmers often try to minimize the amount of land under cultivation. However, delegates know the area well, and fields tend to have standard dimensions and visible boundaries. This is therefore difficult. Much easier is resistance through omission: failing to keep up with weeding schedules, for example. Because fields are rotated regularly, pyrethrum fields almost always have some seed potatoes under the soil, which delegates insist should be uprooted. If they can, pyrethrum farmers allow the potatoes to mature, at the expense of pyrethrum. However, with the support of the USAID-supported Pyramid Project, policing of the pyrethrum fields by the delegates became more intense and effective, rendering such micro-practices of resistance more difficult.

26 Interview A of October 9 2011 with member of cell land committee in Kinigi Sector, Ruhengeri town
The final form of resistance identified was covert sale of land. Such sales are not uncommon, but this is a risky strategy as it is prohibited by SOPYRWA, and those buying land secretly are at risk of losing it. Normally, those leaving the area sell the land to relatives, who if challenged can argue that they are merely managing the land, temporarily. Such sales, along with other covert sales in other parts of the country under intense government surveillance and enforcement of the agricultural policy (Huggins 2014b), are part of a pattern of household dispersal and movement. Households may become multisited and are alienated from customary forms of belonging and landownership, and seeking to avoid state scrutiny. Simultaneously, they may seek new commercial opportunities and are hence reconfigure their relationship with the state, land, and commerce. This reinforces a finding that smallholder households do not attempt to resist growing pyrethrum because they prefer subsistence livelihoods. Farmers explained that they opposed pyrethrum production based on its poor profits, but did not oppose other cash crops. Similarly, farmers outside of the pyrethrum zone interviewed by Van Damme et al. (2014) provided rational economic arguments in cases where they resisted government policies. Indeed, ‘fugitive farmers’ from the pyrethrum zone who seek new economic opportunities through strategies of dissenting, dissembling, and moving are demonstrating not only ‘resistance’ but also a willingness to be a flexible, more entrepreneurial subject, as the state exhorts them to be. This suggests that processes of subjectification in Rwanda should be approached not through the idea of a stable, unified individual ‘self’ which makes a decision to either resist or support government policies; but rather a more post-modern idea of a more fluid individual identity reacting to multiple external influences in complex ways.

Implications for Agrarian Change in Rwanda
Scholars of party capitalism who have studied the SOPYRWA case argue that, the ‘negative consequences for segments of the population’ (i.e. those growing pyrethrum) are similar to those seen in other ‘processes of capitalist accumulation’ (Behuria 419). However, it is useful to pay greater attention to the precise forms of those ‘negative consequences’. The processes of commoditization and land concentration which can be expected to follow the implementation of market-based agricultural policies (along the ‘Green Revolution for Africa’ model) and land registration processes are indeed associated with a ‘conflict-ridden process of proletarianisation’ (Moore 2001). However, it matters from many perspectives how those conflicts play out in practice. For example, Rwandan smallholders may perceive economic struggles based on market linkages (i.e. around changing markets for food crops) differently from economic struggles related to pyrethrum production monopolised by the Rwandan military. In short, it matters whether negative consequences are seen as an unintended by-product of policies, or whether the state is perceived as willfully imposing costs on smallholders in the interests of macro-economic growth. From the socio-political perspective, following emphasis on ideology in developmentalism (Abegaz 2013, 1470; Behuria 2015, 417; Meyns and Musamba 2010) it is therefore important to ascertain to what extent processes of state-facilitated rural transformation follow the models put forward in government discourse. In the words of one analyst, we should ask whether ‘ordinary Rwandans feel part of the Rwanda Inc.’ (Biedermann 2015, 16). Government discourse on ‘entrepreneurship’ and market-driven approaches is contradicted by the pyrethrum production system, which farmers associate with ‘instrumentation’ or exploitation of their labour. As such, the system undermines the broader attempt to build a ‘social contract’ through market-oriented developmentalism.

As mentioned above, it is important to note that disciplinary processes in the pyrethrum industry are not unique to this sector. Research on agricultural production in marshlands (which are government-
owned but were historically used by smallholders under customary or state-facilitated leases) shows that under both corporate and cooperative models, some ‘elite-capture of economic opportunities’ has occurred, as ‘a few powerful key actors—politically well connected—have largely seized the opportunity to enhance their own access to wetland’ (Ansoms et al. 2014b, 245). While labour practices in the marshlands are not policed in the same way as in the pyrethrum zone, financial requirements for cooperative membership act as a form of discipline, and farmers are told exactly what, and how, to cultivate (Ansoms et al. 2014b; Ansoms. 2009). In a different example from a rice cooperative cultivating marshlands, the cooperative leadership visited members’ homes to monitor household spending and the hygiene of members’ homes and bodies. If householders were perceived to have spent too much money on alcohol or other undesirable things, they could be publically sanctioned at cooperative meetings (Ratcliffe 2013).

Behuria criticizes Huggins (2014) and Gökgür (2012) for ‘simplistically’ assuming that companies such as Horizon Inc. ‘are being used to make elites rich’ (Behuria 2015, 428). However, rather than suggesting that the Rwandan state intends that new institutional arrangements promote elite capture, Huggins (2014) suggests that administrative mechanisms such as imihigo performance contracts, as well as situations of quasi-monopoly, tend to create an environment in which elite capture can take place. Ansoms et al. likewise stress the importance of institutional structures and norms, arguing that, ‘local authorities in Rwanda (at the district, sector, and village level) derive their legitimacy mainly from compliance with national priorities and policies; regardless of their appropriateness at the local level ...

As a result, authorities typically did not preempt or oppose the elite-capture’ (Ansoms et al. 2014b, 245). While the pyrethrum example may not be typical of the broader rural landscape, the tendency towards disciplinary systems, that limit the agricultural strategies of farmers and expose them to the risk of financial loss, is found in other situations where administrators, businesspeople, and other powerful actors exert control. Ansoms argues that intensification of marshland agriculture is ‘a pilot experience
for ambitions of national and international development actors with the African agrarian space more widely: introducing commercially-oriented production techniques’ (Ansoms 2009, 5). In some case, those production techniques may be imposed through various disciplinary mechanisms. Land-use conditionalities in the pyrethrum zone mirror the conditionalities which are increasingly attached to all private land-leases across Rwanda (Huggins 2014).

**Conclusion: Development and Discipline**

It might be expected that multinationals and donors would contribute to a lessening of coercion in the pyrethrum industry, to reduce ‘reputational risk’. However, the opposite has occurred in this case. The structural conditions under which pyrethrum is produced in northern Rwanda have enabled a tightly controlled space of discipline to emerge. These interventions also demonstrate the ways in which donors may contribute to the Rwandan state’s efforts to create a totalizing field of interventions in the name of ‘development’, which comprises surveillance and dense institutional connections. The involvement of donors such as USAID in partnership along with an opaque military-owned company such as Horizon Inc., in the name of ‘improving smallholder livelihoods’, provides the pyrethrum industry, as well as Horizon and similar companies, with legitimacy. For its part, USAID benefits through the extension of the methodologies developed in the SPREAD project (in the coffee sector) and hence the legitimization of these approaches; the project also indirectly subsidizes a major US-based corporation, SC Johnston.

The defining characteristic of the pyrethrum zone is that local people are subjected to particular governance systems, crafted to enable and sustain extraction, that differ to some extent from those in other parts of Rwanda. The disciplinary systems of this enclave are integrated into the governance software and legal architecture of the state (the local administrative and land tenure system). The
military, in the form of SOPYRWA, influences state mechanisms – the local district performance contracts (*imihigo*), for example, with their targets for land under pyrethrum – in essence colonizing aspects of the administrative system. Some state functions, such as the *abunzi* dispute-resolution mechanism, have been deactivated regarding pyrethrum production. The funds of the Rwandan state have also been used to subsidise the pyrethrum sector and hence boost SOPYRWA’s profits, through construction of drying equipment, for example. While, as noted above, the government is increasingly attempting to control agricultural land use across the country (through land use zoning, requirements of land leases and *imihigos*, for example), the constellation of discipline and governmentality in the pyrethrum zone represents a specific ‘space of governance’ within Rwanda. This is a significant aspect of the debate regarding the Rwandan state’s different approaches to capitalization, technological transformation, and the organization of labour. Behuria (2015) notes that, in relation to different strategies in the pyrethrum and mining sectors, ‘choices to use investment groups [i.e. political allies] or embrace market forces depend on politics pertaining to particular sectors’ (pg. 443). However, within the agricultural sector, there are questions not only of politics but of differences in the capacity of the state to control land and labour, particularly related to land tenure systems in different agro-ecological niches (e.g. state owned marshlands, SOPYRWA-controlled pyrethrum zone, and the broader privately-leased ‘hillside’ farm landscape). There are different opinions between different agencies and companies regarding how such lands should be controlled: the tensions between the National Land Commission and SOPYRWA over the pyrethrum zone are one example. We can therefore add further detail to Behuria’s argument: in the agricultural sector, a choice to maintain monopoly (which can facilitate disciplinary regimes of production) or rely primarily on more governmental strategies (associated with the market and the ideological capacities of the state) will depend on many factors, including legal tenure regimes, global agricultural commodity prices, and multi-scale political tensions between the RPF’s desire for control and its discourse of ‘entrepreneurship’.
Booth and Golooba-Mutebi (2011), without providing detailed evidence, argue that the commitment of the government of Rwanda to the ‘public good’, and particularly the official stance against corruption, means that Horizon Inc.’s profits are likely to be ploughed back into the development of the country. Further, they contend that purchase of SOPYRWA by Horizon, ‘was necessary to avert the collapse of a privatised parastatal which would have had harmful employment and smallholder income effects’ (Booth and Golooba-Mutebi 2011). Indeed, the jobs and income created by Agropy might be seen as one positive impact of SOPYRWA’s activities.

However, our research suggests that the ‘social objective’ narrative, like the ‘entrepreneur’ narrative, is undermined by SOPYRWA’s farmgate price policies, use of surveillance and discipline. Such forms of exploitation of labour are leading to actions and discourses of resistance. Moreover, the arguments of many supporters of ‘development patrimonialism’ in Rwanda focus too heavily on the economics of development, and ignore the less tangible aspects of ‘state-building’ that, in Rwanda, comprise a heavy-handed attempt to create ‘modern farmers’ through both governmentality and discipline.

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Brief: MINAGRI/USAID/SC Johnston/The Borlaug Institute/NAEB/HORIZON-SOPYRWA/NUR. Kigali


