JYX JYVÄSKYLÄN YLIOPISTO UNIVERSITY OF JYVÄSKYLÄ

**This is a self-archived version of an original article. This version may differ from the original in pagination and typographic details.**

**Author(s):** Alava, Henni; Shroff, Catrine

**Title:** Unravelling Church Land : Transformations in the Relations between Church, State and Community in Uganda

**Year:** 2019

**Version:** Accepted version (Final draft)

**Copyright:** © 2019 International Institute of Social Studies

**Rights:** In Copyright

**Rights url:** http://rightsstatements.org/page/InC/1.0/?language=en

**Please cite the original version:**

Alava, H., & Shroff, C. (2019). Unravelling Church Land : Transformations in the Relations between Church, State and Community in Uganda. Development and Change, 50(5), 1288-1309. https://doi.org/10.1111/dech.12503

Development and Change
Published on behalf of the Institute of Social Studies, The Hague

# Unravelling church land: transformations in the relations between church, state and community in Uganda

| | |
|---|---|
| Journal: | *Development and Change* |
| Manuscript ID | DECH-17-365.R1 |
| Manuscript Type: | Original Article |
| Keywords: | legitimacy, belonging, Community < General, Development < General, Uganda, State < General, church, land |
| Abstract: | Christian churches control substantial areas of land in Africa and, while intensifying struggles over their holdings are due to the increased pressure on land in general, they also reflect transformations in the relations through which churches' land claims are legitimised, the increased association of churches with business, and churches' unique positioning as both institutions and communities. The article presents the trajectory of relations between church, state, and community in Uganda from the missionary acquisition of land in the colonial era to the unravelling of church landholding under Museveni. Drawing on long-term ethnographic fieldwork, it is shown that claims to church land in contemporary Uganda draw on 1) notions of belonging to the land; 2) views about the nature of churches as communities; 3) discontent regarding whether customary land owners gave churches user rights or ownership; and 4) assessment of the churches' success as custodians of the land working for the common good. Attention to the changing meaning of the landholdings of religious institutions can enrich ongoing discussions about land, politics, development and religion in Africa. |
| | |

SCHOLARONE™
Manuscripts

## INTRODUCTION

The growing recognition in Uganda of the extent of land held by the Catholic and Anglican Churches is sparking raised levels of contestation. In response, the Catholic Church in Uganda arranged the first of a series of one-week training courses on land management in 2014. Amongst the course facilitators were land commissioners, surveyors, and physical planners who instructed church leaders on topics including the registration of landholdings, boundary marking, and the contracting of tenants; course attendants came from all over the country. The Catholic Church has 32 dioceses, each of which controls up to thousands of acres, used for mission stations, parishes, chapels, health facilities, schools, and farming. The actual extent of the landholdings of the old missionary-established churches in Uganda is unknown, even to the churches themselves.

This article is primarily concerned with the changing legitimacy of church landholding over the twentieth century. Drawing on historical analysis and ethnographic case studies from the northern and eastern regions of Uganda, we argue that the recent increase in disputes over church land can be understood in light of transformations in the nexus of church, state and community.[1]

Throughout colonial Africa, large tracts of land were granted by colonial administrations or local kings and chiefs for the establishment of mission stations that in turn promised to provide Africans with education and health services alongside religious teaching (Henningsen, 2010; Hansen, 1984). Land acquisition was so substantial that Chitando argues that missionaries could be counted along with 'fortune hunters and speculative companies' among the early land-grabbers in Africa (Chitando, 2002: 146). By the turn of the twentieth century, for instance, mission societies in former Rhodesia had acquired almost a third of a

million acres, with nearly half of this allocated to Catholic missions (Palmer, 1977: 36).[2] Although land grants to mission societies in Southern Africa were considerably larger than elsewhere, they were critical throughout Africa in enabling missionaries to settle in what were often remote locations, build churches, schools, and health facilities, and support themselves and their converts through farming. The terms of these land grants were often unclear, however, leading to disputes between local communities and mission societies over boundaries, and whether missions had ownership or user-rights over the land (Henningsen, 2010: 256); these have increased in number and intensity in recent decades.

To date, church landholdings have largely been overlooked in the literature on land disputes and on religion, politics, and development in Africa and our ethnographic research contributes to debates in both fields. We argue that four main types of arguments are employed in disputes over church land in Uganda: 1) that long term residents have rights over the land that supersede those of churches due to notions of belonging; 2) that the churches were given user rights, not ownership, hence the land has retained its customary status; 3) that the land is communal due to the churches' roles as religious communities and service providers, that is, that the church as a community has ownership of the land rather than the church as an institution; and 4) custodian argumentation whereby the legitimacy of the landholding is questioned based on an assessment that the church is not a 'proper manager' of the land. These types can be employed in a single land dispute and in combination with diverse legal arguments; furthermore, they can be used both to support and to counter churches' claims to land. We contend, however, that explanation for the recent increase in church land disputes can only be established through analysis of the transformation in relations between church, state, and community in contemporary Uganda.

[2] In comparison, seven million acres were made available for African purchasers and 17 million acres for white settlers in former Rhodesia (Palmer, 1977).

The article is based on ethnographic research in southeast Uganda (1998-2010) and in the country's northern region (Kitgum District 2012-2016, Lira District 2014-2016). It presents two case studies which draw on interviews with the actors involved in land disputes and documents they made available to us. We have also conducted interviews with relevant members of the administrative bodies of the churches concerned in order to evaluate how representative the chosen case studies are of more general patterns. It is noteworthy that during our fieldwork we have not come across a critique of church landholding as such. Rather, the disputes that we present revolve around the question of how land claimed by a church should be managed and for whose benefit; however, some communities in Uganda have also vehemently questioned the grounds of churches' claims to land.[3]

The article begins by positioning our work within the literature on land, belonging, and custodianship. We then provide a historical trajectory of church landholding and the nexus of church, state, and community in Africa, particularly in Uganda, before turning to the two case studies to provide an understanding of the arguments used by those involved in church land disputes. In conclusion, we suggest that recognition of churches as a unique category of landholders can open fruitful avenues of inquiry concerning tensions between private and communal landholding, as well as relations between the state, communities, and churches in contemporary Africa.

## BELONGING TO LAND, DEVELOPING LAND

Belonging is commonly evoked as a justification for claims to rights and citizenship (Geschiere, 2009; Nyamnjoh, 2005; Onoma, 2013), but also to land and access to resources (Bøås and Dunn, 2013: 5; Lund, 2011). Following the basic premise that land tenure is a social relation (Peters, 2009: 1318), it is no surprise that increased pressure on land in Africa (Lund

[3] http://observer.ug/component/content/article?id=30488:-church-accused-of-land-grabbing

and Boone, 2013; Peluso and Lund, 2011), has led to an accentuation of the politics of belonging (Kuba and Lentz, 2005). In local disputes over user rights (Lentz, 2007) as much as in national debates about territory, land is a significant medium through which property and relations of power are determined.

While Peluso and Lund (2011) have called on scholars to refrain from overly cultural analyses of land and to look carefully into the material and structural aspects of land tenure, an emphasis on these aspects alone may also lead to crucial oversights, as pointed out by Parker Shipton:

> If biology, economy, and politics seem to furnish a basic toolkit for discussing land attachments and tenure policies, culture might seem to some just an add-on. But without attention to language and communication such as a social perspective provides, or to the symbolic, emotional, and aesthetic sides that a cultural, psychological, or literary turn might add, the kit will always be deficient. You might forget the graves or ancestors, for instance, and fail to understand the idiom when the fights break out. (2009: 58–59)

One indicator of the relevance of cultural aspects of land is the increasing intensity of debate concerning burials and ancestral graves in Africa (Ceuppens and Geschiere, 2005; Shipton, 2009; Fontein, 2011; Mujere, 2011), with the tangible materiality of gravestones and the bones of ancestors tying the intangible and imaginational aspects of belonging to the soil. Mujere observes that belonging is essentially 'about being locally embedded' (2011: 1125) and, for African peasants, tends to 'revolve around religion, autochthony and ownership of land' (ibid.). Yet it is only rarely that all three of these aspects – land, religion, and autochthony – are granted equal attention in the literature. Furthermore, when religion is discussed, the focus is almost exclusively on forms of 'customary' religion that pre-date colonialism. Lund, for

instance, analyses the authority of 'earth priests' in land disputes in Ghana (2013), while Shipton (2009) elucidates the importance of traditional burial rites for claims to land in Kenya. Whilst the existing literature frames embeddedness as something concerning individuals and communities, primarily attending to pre-colonial forms of religion as relevant to land disputes, the cases that we present also highlight that belonging is articulated within the context of social institutions such as churches in order to stake claims to land.

In her analysis of land regimes in Africa, Carola Lentz writes that 'access to land was, and still is, mediated by membership in specific communities or groups whose boundaries were and continue to be notoriously fuzzy. Membership, thus, needs to be negotiated' (Lentz 2007, 40). Wrangles between 'first-comers' and 'strangers' can be crucial, but autochthony is not the only relevant marker in negotiations of belonging. To make this point we expand on Mujere's (2011) concept of 'dual belonging', which refers to situations wherein migrant groups experience a sense of belonging to a number of place-based communities (see also Cohen and Odhiambo, 1992), producing 'multiple belonging' to multiple communities – whether ethnic, lineage-based, place-based, or religious – that can be employed when staking claims to land.

In church land disputes, claims based on belonging are employed alongside, and often intertwined with, **custodian argumentation** over land. Here, notions of 'proper management' and 'community development' are foregrounded, and disputes revolve around whether or not the holder has improved the piece of land in question, for example by constructing buildings (Lonsdale, 2008: 305). Individuals as well as institutions may use this line of argumentation; while individuals would emphasise the benefit of development to the user's family, institutions are ideally expected to benefit a broader group of people (Whyte and Whyte, 1998), resonating with the legitimacy that a state gains from using public land to widen roads or build dams (Berry, 2002). Custodian argumentation is crucial for church landholdings, which were originally justified by colonial administrations and local kings or chiefs alike by expectations of

missionary development. Through social service provision, churches gained and maintained legitimacy as landholders in service to 'the community' (Whyte and Whyte, 1998: 238). Since the local chiefs and communities usually offered communal land under customary tenure for the purpose of serving the community, church land is commonly perceived in this light.

In brief, taking as a point of departure the view that land tenure is 'embedded in social relations' (Peters, 2009: 1318), we approach church land disputes through analysis of the relations in which churches' claims to land are embedded, and within which the legitimacy of those claims are negotiated. This entails following changes in relations between the church, the state, and the community, from the acquisition of land during the colonial era to the unravelling of church landholdings in contemporary Uganda.

## MISSION, COLONIALISM, AND LAND IN AFRICA

Article 6 of the General Act of the Berlin Conference in 1885 specified that missionary activity must be permitted, irrespective of nationality, and that a colonial state must stay denominationally neutral, show religious tolerance, and not grant special concessions to missionaries of its own creed (Hansen, 2002: 158). The Article singled out Christian missionaries as objects of special protection due to their contribution to 'instructing natives and bring[ing] home to them the blessings of civilization' (ibid.). The instrumental value ascribed to Christian missions informed the colonial powers' policy of granting land to missionary societies in areas in which the colonial state was not present, or in which it did not have the manpower and resources to provide education, health facilities, or agricultural advancement. Through these, and evangelization, 'Africans were to be saved so as to become developed and civilized' (Spear, 1999: 4).

State-mission relations took various forms in different colonial contexts and were subject to change over time. For example, in the 1890s colonial agents in Uganda were few in

number and weak in firepower and required the support of missionaries and Christian chiefs; yet with time, missionary societies became increasingly economically and politically dependent upon the colonial state (Hansen, 1984). The British colonial administration also interpreted the agreement on missionary freedom in different ways in different settings. In Kenya, for instance, numerous European missionary societies were allowed to operate but within designated areas (Hearn, 2002), which led to the emergence of 'tribal churches' nurturing tribal identity (Lonsdale, 2009). The problems seen in Kenya led the British to allow only two missionary societies to operate in neighbouring Uganda, leading to a state bifurcated denominationally between Catholics and Anglicans (Hansen, 2002: 158). Colonial authorities attempted to ensure the missions equal access to land, which was the most important way of endowing them (Hansen, 1984: 163).

During the early 20th century, missionary societies' perceptions of landholding had great importance for subsequent developments. First of all, drawing from 'longstanding cultural preconceptions that set individual, private ownership as the superior to communal or collective forms of tenure' (Peters, 2009: 1317), mission societies exhibited a largely negative attitude to 'communal' landholding. Secondly, many pioneer missionaries 'felt that they had a right to land, whatever the African sentiments were' (Chitando, 2002: 146). The 'colonial church's insatiable lust for land' (Erasmus, 2007: 29) was particularly evident in former Rhodesia and South Africa, where local populations were often forcefully displaced by missions (see, e.g., Henningsen, 2010).

While there is extensive literature on church land in Africa during the colonial period (e.g., Lonsdale, 2009 on Kenya; Hansen, 1984 on Uganda; Sundkler and Steel, 2000; Hastings, 1967), the post-colonial situation has received far less attention, except for South Africa – where church landholdings were surveyed and some returned at the end of Apartheid (Gifford, 1995: 80; de Gruchy, 2002) – and Rwanda, where land interests influenced how churches

positioned themselves in the 1994 genocide (Longman, 210). In light of scholarly attention to land in Africa, and acknowledgement of the political and developmental relevance of religious institutions on the continent, there is a peculiar lack of research on where these two meet: the role of churches in land governance and disputes.

## CHURCH, LAND, AND DEVELOPMENT IN UGANDA

In colonial Uganda, missionary societies were granted land under two different arrangements. Within the kingdom of Buganda, missionary societies were granted so-called *mailo* land under a quasi-freehold tenure system. Outside of Buganda, land was declared *crown land,* formalised into freehold, leasehold, native freehold, and adjudicated freehold tenure systems (Batungi, 2002),[4] and granted to missionary societies through freehold and leasehold terms (Mugambwa, 2007). Customary land tenure was recognised but within limits:

> Under the Crown Lands Ordinance 1903, indigenous Ugandans had a right to occupy any land (outside the Buganda kingdom and urban areas) not granted in freehold or leasehold without prior license or consent in accordance with their customary law. However, the Governor had the power to sell or lease such land to any other person without reference to the customary occupants of the land. Compensation was payable to the displaced occupants at the discretion of the Governor. (Ibid.: 40)[5]

[4] 'Tenure systems' refer to how land is owned, occupied, used, and disposed of within a community (Boone, 2013; for Uganda see Amone and Lakwo, 2014).

[5] At present, about 80% of all land in Uganda and 90% in the northern region is held under customary tenure. According to the current Land Act, this means land may be held communally, by a particular clan, or by individuals, as governed by the rules accepted as binding by a particular community (Amone and Lakwo, 2014).

The colonial administration granted *crown land* to Anglican and Catholic missionaries in the expectation of their providing 'civilising' services to local populations. From 1923 onwards the conditions of Temporary Occupation Licenses (TOL) stipulated that a rent was paid and the sites were used for religious and educational purposes only (Hansen, 1984: 152-159). However, from the perspective of local chiefs, the land that they gave to missionaries in exchange for education and healthcare was *communal land*. Disagreement about the status of mission land – whether it was communal land owned by the community or crown land owned by the colonial state – is a common element in today's disputes over church land.

A core aim of mission education was to groom leaders for the church and the state, 'deliberately geared to the creation of a political elite, and a middle class in the socio-economic sense' (Hansen, 1984: 252). Mission schools thus played a formative role in fostering a sense of citizenship, and education became associated with social mobility and political influence. The close relations between the mission societies and the colonial administration were mirrored in the close relations between the burgeoning political elite and church leadership among the native Ugandan middle class and had a formative impact on Uganda's emerging political landscape. At independence, most Anglicans supported the Uganda People's Congress (UPC) whereas most Catholics supported the Democratic Party (DP) (Gifford, 1998). The victory of Milton Obote's UPC in the first election in 1962 kept the Anglicans close to the state while pushing the Catholic Church into league with the opposition. This bifurcation of the religious and political landscape remained largely intact until Yoweri Museveni and the National Resistance Movement (NRM) came to power in 1986.

The NRM regime initiated a transformation of the political domain and the religious sector. Local Resistance Committees, later transformed into a Local Council structure, connected the state at the national level with the village. This disrupted the churches' role as a key conduit between the state and citizens. The NRM also signalled its distance from the

Catholic and the Anglican Church by allowing previously banned Pentecostal churches to enter the country, instigating profound changes in the religious landscape. First of all, the churches' emphasis on individual commitment to God (being 'born again') over commitment to a church propelled a fluidity of religious membership.[6] Secondly, these churches' emphasis on the prosperity gospel has led to the view that 'nowadays the church is business' ([author]).

The emergence of a highly competitive religious market coincided with a turn to a neoliberal economy and the privatisation of health and education services. While the Catholic and the Anglican Churches have maintained public authority through a continued provision of social services, declines in donor funding for faith-based service provision have led them to charge fees (Green, 1995; Christiansen, 2010; Gifford, 2008). Meanwhile, Pentecostal pastors are seen as 'religious entrepreneurs, examples of an entire new class of religious professional, the church founder-owner-leader' (Gifford 2009: 154). The prosperity gospel considers wealth to be a sign of God's blessings; by sowing tithes and offerings in church, Christians may expect to harvest wealth and success for individual consumption, rather than for redistribution in the community (Lauterbach, 2015). Increasingly, therefore, churches have come to be seen as associated with money and their leaders as greedy, enhanced by cases of public co-optation of religious leaders into patronage relations with politicians. For instance, in the run-up to the 2016 elections, President Museveni appeared at a mosque waving a land title, prompting the cleric in charge to insist that his followers vote for the NRM (Alava and Ssentongo, 2016: 687). This has reduced the legitimacy of religious leaders as public authorities.

It is within this context of changing church-state relations, the growing association of churches with private business, the declining public authority of religious leaders, and

[6] These churches are part of a Christian movement that spread across Africa in the late twentieth century (Meyer 2004). Today about 11% of the population defines itself as Pentecostal, compared to 39% Roman Catholic, 32% Anglican, and 13% Muslim (Uganda Bureau of Statistics, 2016).

weakening links between churches and community development that we can understand the rampant disputes over church land in contemporary Uganda.

## GOVERNANCE OF CHURCH LAND IN CONTEMPORARY UGANDA

The extent of the churches' landholdings in Uganda is not known, neither is it easy to ascertain. Only a fraction of the land controlled by churches is formally surveyed and registered, because, as one diocesan land officer said, 'the church builds on trust'. Dioceses also lack the funds required for surveying and few steps have been taken to gather national-level data. Furthermore, land is a sensitive topic; during our research, high-level church authorities ignored formal and informal inquiries about church landholdings.

Some indication of the extent of land controlled by the mission-based churches can, however, be gleaned from information gathered from particular dioceses. For instance, the Catholic Archdiocese of Gulu comprises 27 parishes, each of which has 10-20 chapels. Each parish and most chapels control land for buildings and for farming. In and near Gulu town, the diocese has leasehold and freehold titles covering close to 500 acres of land. About half the parish plots have leasehold titles whereas smaller plots at the chapels have rarely been surveyed.[7] A recent land survey of the Anglican diocese of Bukedi claimed that 'the Diocese owns … nearly 4,000 acres of unused land for 640 parishes and sub parishes'.[8]

Not only are church lands vast, they are often in prime locations in towns, rural commercial centres, and the capital city. For example, the government recently paid the Catholic Church $550,000 in compensation for land near Entebbe airport, while the Church of Uganda owns a 16-storey office building on Kampala Road[9] that they rent out to generate

---

[7] Formal letter to the authors from the Archdiocese of Gulu.

[8] Email correspondence with a highly positioned clergyman, 8th January 2013.

[9] http://churchofuganda.org/about/departments/church-commissioners

revenue for other church affairs. In many cases, the tenant is the state, which can lead to conflict: the Church of Uganda has accused the government of failing to pay $46,000 in ground rent for land on Makerere University campus; the Catholic Church has demanded $74.5 million from the Uganda Police Force for rent accrued over 43 years for a plot of 60 acres housing 8,000 officers and their families in a Kampala suburb,[10] and more than $600,000 from the government for ground rent arrears accumulated during years of illegal occupation of land in Kampala's Catholic Archdiocese.[11] Land is thus a significant part of the churches' material wealth and often a source of much more revenue than church collections.

Landholding is also a cause of great concern for churches; interviewed church representatives all mentioned non-paying tenants and cases of land grabbing or encroachment. Boundary disputes occur with other churches, with neighbours, and with descendants of the people who originally gave the land to the churches, who now claim that churches were given user rights rather than ownership. The Catholic Church appears to have been more attentive to documenting its landholdings through official surveying and titling than its Anglican counterpart. Pentecostal churches' landholdings follow a different pattern as these churches are usually set up on the land of the founder of the church or on land bought for the purpose.

While caught up in their own land troubles, missionary-established churches take an active role in land debates in Uganda. Churches and church coalitions have commented on legislative debates, and the Acholi Religious Leaders' Peace Initiative (ARLPI) has lobbied for the protection of communal land rights from investors connected to the president (Sjögren, 2014:70–71). Churches have also acted as mediators in local land disputes (Burke and Kobusingye 2014, URI and ARLPI 2012). While these efforts can be seen as part of the scuffle

[10] http://www.monitor.co.ug/News/National/Catholic-Church-orders-police-off-Nsambya-land/688334-2327394-kauuoxz/index.html

[11] http://www.monitor.co.ug/News/National/Catholic-Church-asks-govt-for-Shs20b-compensation/688334-2638970-ejt0qx/index.html

to influence on-going debates over land matters in Uganda (Amone and Lakwo 2014; Giuliano, 2013; Sjögren, 2014), involvement in these debates must also be seen in light of church efforts to protect their own interests.

Churches are 'complex organisations with complex goals' (Kassimir 1998: 58), engaging in a broad range of activities through which people express and organise their moral, social and economic concerns (Jones 2009: 91). To a degree, churches are also collectively governed. The range of activities and the mode of governance make contestation and negotiation over balances of power integral to church practice (Christiansen 2010: 39). This is why we contend that churches form a unique type of landholder: church land entails both the private landholding of the church as an institution and the communal landholding of the church as a community. As the following case studies show, this tension provides the core challenge of church land governance.

## CONTESTATION OVER THE USE OF CHURCH LAND

Claims made to church land concern how the land is used and who it should benefit. The first case study, from Busia in Eastern Uganda, focuses on contestation over use wherein custodian debates about church provision of development for the common good are used to justify claims by two competing pastors and their supporters: a type of contestation that reflects the weakening connection between church and community development and growing association of church and private business.

### Case study 1: Church-based Community Development in Busia District

Rural Busia District, in the southeast corner of Uganda, is mostly inhabited by the Samia-Bagwe, with subsistence farming the main source of livelihood. Hopes of prosperity after recognition of 'their own' district in 1998 have faded, as the district administration has not

delivered the anticipated social services, infrastructure, and employment opportunities. On the periphery of the state and international aid, churches are important providers of 'community development' to the district, especially in terms of education and health services.

Catholic and Anglican missionaries started churches in Busia in 1910 on land given by local chiefs. The churches founded schools, trained catechists to teach students, and later set up a teacher training college to upgrade the teaching standard. Four generations of the local population have received education in church-founded schools, almost free of charge. Education is the clearest example of the historically close connection between church and community development, with the churches working towards 'the common good' (Whyte & Whyte, 1998). Pentecostal churches also provide education but from private schools that charge higher fees than state-supported mission schools. This has nurtured perceptions of mission-based churches enhancing the common good and Pentecostal churches working for their own profit. That said, and as the following case study shows, the latter may offer a form of development preferred by many members of the community.

*Pentecostal Purchase of 'Catholic Land'*

In May 2003, Lumino Catholic Parish filed a case at the Busia District court against a Mr Ojiambo (pseudonym), who had acquired five acres that the church regarded as its own. Ojiambo, from another part of the district but married into a Lumino family, had recently ventured into politics, founded an NGO, and started a Pentecostal church in Busia town.

Lumino Catholic mission has a primary school, a vocational school, a clinic, and the parish offices. The disputed land ran along one side of the primary school grounds and was used by the church as demonstration gardens for agricultural teaching. Chief Ong'ango, head of the Abatabona clan, gave the Catholic missionaries 25 acres of land in 1914, without any written documentation, and the first church was built in 1916, followed by an elementary school in 1936. The church had ample land and the contested piece was left as forest and later

used for farming.

In February 2003, when rumours spread that Mr Ojiambo wanted to acquire the land to establish a secondary school, the Catholic priest claimed furiously that 'a Pentecostal pastor wants to grab our land', a view supported by perceptions that the Pentecostal churches 'took' Christians from the Catholic Church. Some members of the parish council shared the view that the move was a provocation, asserting that the claimant could have chosen a location that was not adjacent to the Catholic-based schools, clinic, and parish offices. The bishop encouraged the priest to file the case in the district court. Other parish councillors supported plans for the secondary school, however, as the introduction of Universal Secondary Education had increased the number of students at Lumino High School and its performance had declined. From their perspective, the Pentecostal pastor was going to provide 'community development'.

The priest disputed the Pentecostal pastor's land claim on the basis that its original owners had given it to the Catholic Church, yet he had little proof as the Samia clans have declined to verify the donation. His second argument was that the Catholic Church had plans to build boarding facilities on the disputed land, reflecting a trend amongst primary schools to offer boarding facilities to the final-year students in order to enhance their performance. Most parish councillors (and other committed Catholics) endorsed the project, although some questioned whether boarding facilities should be perceived as community development or as a 'business', as the boarding option would be offered on a fee basis with part of that fee going to the church.

The priest was popular beyond the Catholic community because he was bringing 'development' to the area; he had 'pulled' an American-funded education project for 300 children, secured funding from the local MP for a vocational school at the mission, and got overseas funding to build hostel facilities for the vocational school students. Yet the land dispute raised questions about the priest's actual interests: more institutions for the Catholic

Church or a response to community development needs? Despite many Catholics' supporting the idea of a secondary school, the priest continued to battle for the church to 'keep its land'.

The district court ruled in favour of Mr Ojiambo, noting that he had legally acquired the land through the district land office, although there was a general suspicion that his wife, who held a key position in the district administration, had influenced the outcome. The Catholic priest was furious but followed the bishop's advice to respect the court decision. The land dispute lost the priest the support of the local community and created a cleavage amongst committed Catholics; the parish only returned to normal when the bishop transferred the priest five years later.

*Negotiating Custodianship*

This case highlights four aspects of church land disputes, beginning with the connection between church landholding and community development that frames church land as 'communal land' whose use should contribute to the common good. The land claim spurred a debate about how the church, as custodian of the land, could best contribute towards the common good, and what kind of development the 'community' needed most.

Secondly, the case draws attention to the church's struggle to balance its role as both institution and community. The priest represented the institutional interest to protect Catholic property and, as church land is held in trust by the bishop, followed the bishop's instructions to file the case and then respect the court's ruling. Many committed Catholic lay people supported the priest's standpoint and the plan to establish boarding facilities at the school where they had received their primary education. Others held that the community needed to enhance access to secondary education rather than improve the facilities at the primary level and they accused the priest of attending to institutional interest rather than community development.

Third, the speculation that boarding facilities would provide a source of revenue that

would benefit the church leadership more than the Catholic community shows the growing association between church operations and private business. What is also noteworthy is that the Pentecostal pastor, the Catholic priest, and many of the committed Catholics involved in the dispute belong to a rural elite increasingly investing in land for the construction of schools, guesthouses, and other businesses. This is privatisation trend is contributing to social differentiation in rural areas in ways that also profoundly influence churches (see Kandel 2017).

Fourth, the Catholic Church has a strong standing in the district, and the bishop's instruction to take the land dispute to the local court was most likely based on expectations of a favourable ruling. While the court ruling was generally viewed as exemplifying the influence of money and networks on local government administration, it also indicates weakened relations between church and state at the local level, as does the fact that the district land officer initially registered the land to Ojiambo without consulting the Catholic Church.

The ability of churches to protect their land thus depends *both* on their relationship with local administration and the state, *and* on their relationship with the community. We contend that the efficacy of churches' claims to legitimacy on the grounds of custodian argumentation depends on the extent to which the churches' plans for development coincide with the prevalent public mood. Where these plans highlight the dwindling connection between church and community development, churches are likely to lose, while, as the next case demonstrates, a local church that provides the desired forms of development to the community stands a good chance of gaining public support for land claims.

**Case study 2: Churches and land in northern Uganda**

The colonial administration established Kitgum town as the centre of Eastern Acholiland in 1912 and Catholic Verona missionaries (later renamed Comboni missionaries) and the

Anglican Church Missionary Society arrived soon after. Acholiland remained peripheral to political and economic power in colonial Uganda and the churches' role in service provision has been even more pronounced than in other parts of the country. During two decades of war between the Lord's Resistance Army and the Government of Uganda (1986-2006), insecurity led thousands of people to leave their rural homesteads, triggering the growth of urban populations, including in the area surrounding the Catholic mission. The church, which remains the largest in the region, was an early provider of emergency relief, gaining respect during the war for its leading role in the Acholi Religious Leaders Peace Initiative (see [author]). While these activities strengthened the sense of the Catholic Church as a locally embedded institution ([author]), the end of the war and increased pressure on land (Hopwood and Atkinson, 2013; Martiniello, 2015) has led to increasing contestation over its landholdings. Most disputes have concerned land around schools and chapels in rural areas, often between the church and descendants of those who originally gifted the land who are claiming it back, but in some cases also between the Catholic and the Anglican Church. The case of Kitgum Mission stands out because of the size and central location of the disputed land.

*Contestation over the extension of church land at Kitgum Catholic mission*

In 2004, a dispute broke out when the district land office granted the Catholic mission parish in Kitgum town an extension to its land title to expand its hospital and the farmland used to sustain itself and its many institutions. The provision of healthcare, in part through farming activities, had been at the heart of the mission's activities for almost a century. When Catholic missionaries arrived in Kitgum in the early 1900s, they were given rights to land a few kilometres away from the administrative centre by *both* colonial authorities *and* by elders of the Lemo clan, which had used the area in question for grazing. The Lemo remained at a distance, while new converts came from all over Eastern Acholiland to settle around the mission station. The colonial administration gave the missionaries a document giving the church the right to 50

acres of land for 49 years. This Temporary Occupation Licence, or TOL, covered under 10% of the land area that Lemo elders, Catholic clergy, former neighbours of the parish, and the local land officer take to be the land granted to the mission by the Lemo.[12]

During recent decades, when the church has wanted to construct new schools or extend the hospital it has renegotiated the mission boundaries with its neighbours, leading one village adjacent to the mission to rename itself *Nyiki nyiki* or 'move along a little'. Although some boundary shifts required resolution in a court, the expansions have proceeded amicably overall, with neighbours agreeing to shift elsewhere, often acquiring land in or near the town at affordable prices and remaining on good terms with the parish. By the time the extension was granted to the mission in 2004, however, some of the neighbours' tolerance was exhausted, in part due to the hiked prices of urban land. The extension accorded the mission a lease title to 234 acres of land, an area far larger than the 50 acres originally covered by the TOL, yet still smaller than the land that the Lemo elders insist their forefathers gave the church.

This latest request to 'move along a little' was presented to the churches' neighbours at a time when the Northern Ugandan war was heavily felt in Kitgum. The local community held the missionary priest who announced the extension in high respect: he had been one of the initiators of the religious leaders' peace initiative and had mobilised assistance for thousands of people who sought refuge at the mission during the war. Many of those who were affected by the suddenly announced extension had been educated through missionary sponsorship and had worked side-by-side with the priest for years. When various attempts to negotiate a solution failed, the affected neighbours eventually disputed the extension in court, claiming that it had been granted without proper consultation and that it was based on an unlawful survey of the

[12] There is no official documentation of the original agreement between the Lemo and the Catholic missionaries; contemporary understandings are based on recollections passed down by elders involved in the negotiations. It was also not possible to see a copy of the original TOL document or of the extended land title.

land during Idi Amin's regime, in the 1970s. According to informants alive at the time, it had been conducted without consultation with neighbours and those attempting to intervene had been chased away by armed soldiers.

In 2015, mission administration shifted from Comboni missionaries to the local Catholic diocese. With the missionaries' departure, external revenue to the parish effectively stopped, putting great pressure on the local parish to secure funds to maintain its staff and many parish buildings. Within a year of the hand-over, the new priest had pushed many of the neighbours and the church's own catechists off their farmland so as to increase parish income. At the time of writing (May 2018), those living on land claimed by the church have remained, but uncertainties and annoyance run high.

The question of how church land is managed, so central in the Busia case, is also pivotal in Kitgum: in the past, the church has increased its effective landholding due to its success in providing desired forms of development. Similarly, it was the church's goal to extend its service provision that secured the latest extension in 2004. Yet custodian argumentation did not take centre stage in the dispute that followed. Rather, three main groups of actors drew on notions of belonging and community to evaluate the legitimacy of the church's claims to land, and to make their own.

*The clergy.* Both missionary and local Acholi clergy underlined that people living near the mission had frequently been reminded that they were on church land and were not to construct permanent (iron-roofed) housing, lest the church later need the land for development. Priests emphasised that the land was given to the church by the colonial government, but that it was also given to the church by the Lemo people. In their view, the extension of church land was justified because it enabled the church to serve the community better. Following Catholic theology (see, e.g., Vähäkangas, 2006), the community *was* the church; thus, church land was the community's land which enabled provision of health, education, and religious services.

Priests wished the dispute to be resolved peacefully while observing that this seemed unlikely since so many people were 'greedy'.

*The neighbours*. Those who took the church to court over the extension of the land title claimed that their parents and grandparents had settled in the area at the request of the missionaries:

> so that they would be looked at as examples of families who had accepted Christ and also that they would start a Christian community. They made up their minds not to return to their ancestral homes but to continue living near Mission, BUT NOT ON THE LAND BELONGING TO MISSION, whereby they would be able to strengthen their faith with PRAYER as well as receiving SACRAMENTS regularly. (Undated letter, distributed to residents of the area after the announcement of the land extension; emphases in original.)

The claimants essentially argued that the area included under the TOL was the land of the church as an institution, whereas the land outside the TOL was the land of the church as a community of Christians. The heart of this community were those whose parents had come to the mission voluntarily; who had shown particular commitment to the Church; and who would come to the church's aid in case of an emergency such as a fire. They emphasised that they had already 'moved along a little' many times so as to allow development, but that the most recent extension of boundaries had not been conducted in a 'Christian' way. The extension would force people to move from homesteads in which their parents, siblings, and children had been buried (often by the very priests asking them to move). For those with few ties to their ancestral land in far-away villages, the land at Kitgum Mission has become *de facto* their ancestral land.

*The Lemo and other supporters of the church's land claims.* The Lemo did not claim user rights to the land; rather, Lemo elders argued that their forefathers had given their clan

land to the *church*, and not to the people who had moved to live near it. From their perspective, the land had never been the colonial government's to give: the TOL was not what counted, but the word-of-mouth agreement between the Lemo and the church. One Lemo elder asserted that the problem was that '[n]o one is telling the other ones to go back to where they came from'; others confided a sense of annoyance that the mission's immediate neighbours – 'foreigners' – had benefited more from the mission than had the original givers of the land.

The Lemo elders, together with a few key church members, some of whom had relinquished their land to the church in earlier expansions, wrote a letter to the court in support of the church. These former neighbours of the mission argued that the land should serve the community as a whole, and not only the church's immediate neighbours, for whom the request to move could not have come as a surprise. They argued that the claimants were greedy, since some of them had access to land outside Kitgum town, but also disrespectful, as the missionaries they were defying had provided many of them with education and jobs.

*Negotiating Belonging*

This case highlights three aspects of church land disputes. First, questions of belonging and communality are often at their centre. Much of the dispute at Kitgum mission focused on the parameters of the church community, on whom the church, as custodian of the land, should be serving. Multiple notions of belonging were employed in making claims and evaluating their legitimacy. The original givers stressed their gift was communal land designed to further the common good, whereas those who disputed the extension of the church's title argued that the church was wrong to overlook the welfare of so many of its key members – who belonged to the land, having been born and bred there – in pursuance of broader goals.

Second, the case draws attention to churches' struggles to balance their roles as both institutions and communities. As an institution, the church was interested in improving its self-sustenance and extending its provision of development to the local community. Yet to preserve

the legitimacy of its claims to land, the church also had to maintain good relations with its key members. Doing both proved in this case to be very difficult, resulting in a split within the church community.

Third, it is noteworthy that the churches' claims to land in Kitgum have repeatedly been backed by the state, which has benefited from the church's service provision. Our contention is that this is due to the ability of the Catholic Church to capitalise on the land it controls. In contrast, a dispute over the land of the Anglican mission in Kitgum, despite its almost identical settlement history, has unfolded very differently. Being endowed with less material resources than its Catholic counterpart, the Anglican Church has not been able to use its land effectively, ultimately losing most of it to neighbours, including a large area adjacent to the mission to a high-ranking NRM politician (see [author]).

All these points relate to how church land disputes are enmeshed within complex social relations. Although on the face of it the church land dispute at Kitgum Catholic mission was about divergent views of belonging, and on whom the church should serve, the dispute was also connected to a plethora of subterranean tensions and feuds related to political and economic competition. Here, as in other parts of rural Uganda, there are significant overlaps between the lay administrative bodies of churches, local administrations, and party politics ([author]). During the colonial era, missions were granted land in order to enable them to produce a well-educated elite, and in this the missions succeeded. This well-educated church core often plays key roles in disputes over church land, frequently split between those who support the institutional church's claims, and those who contest those claims and have the means with which to do so: education, money, and access to courts. If the Catholic Church could once rely on its members to vote for the DP, stand by its side against the Anglicans, and protect church land against encroachers, today very little remains of such allegiance.

## CONCLUSIONS: LAND IN THE NEXUS OF STATE, COMMUNITY, AND CHURCH IN UGANDA

The Berlin Act ascribed a key role to churches in the 'civilisation' of Africa, and the British colonial administration provided mission societies with land for these ends in Uganda; local chiefs did likewise in anticipation of benefiting from 'development'. The church land disputes that we have discussed have their roots in these century-old agreements, which exemplified the strong relations between church, state, and community. In recent years, however, these relations, and the landholdings embedded in them, have started to unravel. We contend that this relates to three principal developments. Firstly, the NRM state has distanced itself from the religious sector and has been careful not to back churches at the national level in their struggle to maintain land control; yet, as our cases imply, at district and sub-district levels, connections with benevolent members of the political-administrative elite can be decisive for the outcomes of church land disputes.

Secondly, the increased association of churches with business is influencing church-community relations, although we suggest that the legitimacy of church landholdings is challenged in part because of the different expectations that communities have of different types of churches. In the Busia case, those who opposed the Catholic priest's plans accused him of trying to make money out of the boarding facility, yet there was no critique of the Pentecostal pastor's plan to set up a secondary school as a private business. The Catholic priest was expected to serve communal interests, whereas the Pentecostal pastor's plans to profit by providing education for others was seen as legitimate. Pentecostal churches are generally built on land belonging to or purchased by the founder, whereas mission-based churches were gifted land by communities in exchange for services. Incidentally, this situation references the growing fluidity in religious commitments, another reason mission churches can no longer trust their members to support their claims to land.

Thirdly, the cases point to the particular nature of churches as both communities and institutions, which has shaped histories and relationships to church land. A century ago, converts moved to missions and formed the cores of the emerging church communities. Their children and grandchildren were educated by the missions and began forming an educated middle class, but also developed a sense of belonging to the land, for instance, by burying their dead in it. Now, those children are being evicted by the churches, which have new institutional priorities. Balancing the needs of the church institution and the church community is a key challenge for churches, while managing the fact that church land is both institutional and communal land is at the heart of church land governance.

This article has been concerned with church landholding in contemporary Uganda. Whilst looking into tangible disputes, we have argued that the growth in their number is not simply due to the increased pressure on land in general, but also to transformations in the relations in which churches' claims to land are embedded and which impact on the legitimacy of those claims. Even while much church land is splintered into small-sized holdings, the ubiquity of churches as part of both urban and rural landscapes, and the institutional reach of many national church institutions, make them noteworthy landowners. Churches are also a unique type of landholder as they are neither equivalent to lineage-based communities nor state institutions, and the land they hold can retain characteristics of both communal and institutional land. Furthermore, although churches may hold or gain leasehold or freehold titles to their land, church land stands apart from simply 'private' land: the notion of the church as a community, and as a community-serving institution, places negotiations over the boundaries of this community, and of who makes its decisions, at the heart of disputes over church land. From the evidence we have provided from Uganda, it appears that these inherent tensions are currently impacting on the nature of church landholding in ways that call for further research.

First, we suggest that church land disputes can contribute new insights to scholarship on land in Africa. Contests over church land play out in very different ways, depending on the particularities of different settings and relationships between churches, states, and local communities. Yet everywhere, we propose, they follow a different logic to conflicts over land owned by 'customary' communities, states, or private enterprises. Analysis of the similarities and differences in church land disputes in different contexts could thus tease out further insights about how notions such as 'community', 'legitimacy', 'private', and 'communal' are negotiated in relation to land. The cases we have presented also suggest the need for recognition of *multiple* belongings in relation to land. Meanwhile, dynamic, overlapping, and sometimes contradictory claims of belonging to religious, moral, kinship, class, ethnicity or autochthony-based communities are currently being reconfigured by the expansion of neoliberal norms and legislative frameworks that privilege individual property over communal landholding.

Secondly, church land disputes provide a fruitful lens through which to view on-going societal transformations for scholars of religion, politics, and development in Africa. Land has enabled churches' service provision to local communities and has been a key medium in relations between states and churches, particularly in countries with a strong Christian missionary presence during the colonial era. All these relationships are being put to the test by the pluralisation of the religious marketplace, which is impacting on the perceived legitimacy of church landholdings and the desire of states and communities alike to endorse it. The cases we have presented show the complex roles played in church land disputes by religious commitments, rivalry between religious groups, changes in the political environment, and communities' and individuals' aspirations for 'development', employment, and social status.

The conclusion to be drawn is that church land in Uganda is no longer sacrosanct. Churches are increasingly seen as businesses, as competitors in a religious market-place, as

complicit in relations of patronage, as uncommitted to community development, and as potential sources of individual profit for those capable of grabbing it. These changes in the nexus of state, church, and communities are triggering new questions about the legitimacy of church landholding, leading to the erosion of tacit agreements about it – processes which are likely to continue in the future.

REFERENCES [some references have been removed for anonymisation]

Alava, Henni and J.S. Ssentongo (2016) 'Religious (de)politisation in Uganda's 2016 elections', *Journal of Eastern African Studies* 10(4): 677-692.

Amone, C. and C. Lakwo (2014) 'Customary land ownership and underdevelopment in northern Uganda', *International Journal of Social Science and Humanities Research* 2: 117-125.

Batungi, N. (2002), *Land Reform in Uganda. Towards a Harmonised Tenure System*. Kampala: Foundation Publishers.

Berry, Sara (2002) *Debating the Land Question in Africa*. World Bank Group.

Boone, Catherine (2013) 'Land Regimes and the Structure of Politics: Patterns of Land-Related Conflict', *The Journal of the International African Institute,* 83(1): 188-203.

Burke, Christopher and D.N. Kobusingye (2014) *Women's Land Rights in Northern Uganda (West Nile, Acholi, Lango, Teso and Karamoja).* Oxfam

Bøås, M. and K. Dunn (2013) *Politics of Origin in Africa. Autochthony, Citizenship and Conflict.* London and New York, NY: Zed Books.

Ceuppens, Bambi and P. Geschiere (2005) 'Autochthony? Local or Global? New Modes in the Struggle over Citizenship and Belonging in Africa and Europe', *Annual Review of Anthropology* 34: 385-407.

Chitando, Ezra (2002) 'Church and Land in Zimbabwe: A Phenomenological Investigation', *International Congregational Journal* 2(2): 138-149.

Cohen, D. W. and E.S.A. Odhiambo (1992) *Burying SM: The Politics of Knowledge and the Sociology of Power in Africa,* Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press.

de Gruchy, Steve (2002) 'Towards a Congregationalist Theology of the Land' *ICJ* 2(2): 229-242.

Erasmus, Piet (2007) 'Koranna struggle against the colonial church: the case of Brandewynsfontein' *Anthropology Southern Africa* 30(1&2): 29-35.

Fontein, Joost (2011) 'Graves, ruins, and belonging: towards an anthropology of proximity', *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute,* 17(4): 706-727.

Geschiere, P. (2009) *The Perils of Belonging. Autochthony, Citizenship, and Exclusion in Africa and Europe,* Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press.

Gifford, Paul (2008) 'Evangelical Christianity and Democracy in Africa: a Response', in T.O. Ranger (ed.) *Evangelical Christianity and Democracy in Africa,* pp. 225-231. New York: Oxford University Press.

Gifford, P. (1998) *African Christianity: Its Public Role.* London: C Hurst & Co.

Green, Maia (1995) 'Why Christianity is the Religion of Business. Perceptions of the Church among Pogoro Catholics, Southern Tanzania', *Journal of Religion in Africa* 25(1): 25-47.

Gusman, Alessandro (2009) 'HIV/AIDS, Pentecostal churches and the 'Joseph Generation' in Uganda', *Africa Today* 56(1): 67-86.

Hall, R., I. Scoones, D. Tsikata (eds.) (2015) *Africa's Land Rush: Rural Livelihoods and Agrarian Change.* Woodbridge, Suffolk: James Currey.

Hansen, H. B. (1984) *Mission, Church and State in Colonial Setting. Uganda 1890-1925.* London: Heineman.

Hansen, H. B. (2002) 'The Colonial State's Policy Towards Foreign Missions in Uganda', in H.B. Hansen and M. Twaddle (eds) *Christian Missionaries & the State in the Third World,* pp. 157-175. Oxford, James Currey.

Hastings, A. (1967) *Church and Mission in Modern Africa,* London: Burns and Oates.

Hearn, Julie (2002) 'The 'Invisible' NGO US Evangelical Missions in Kenya', *Journal of Religion in Africa,* 32(1): 32:-60.

Henningsen, Anne F. (2010) 'Contesting Promised Land: Moravian Mission Land Conflict in South Africa around 1900', *Social Sciences and Missions,* 23: 254-275.

Hopwood, Julian, and Ronald Atkinson. 2013. "Land Conflict Monitoring and Mapping Tool for the Acholi Sub-Region. Final Report - March 2014." United Nations Peacebuilding Programme in Uganda and Human Rights Focus. http://www.lcmt.org/pdf/final_report.pdf.

Jones, Ben (2013) 'The making of meaning: Churches, development projects and violence in Eastern Uganda', *Journal of Religion in Africa* 43(1): 74-95.

Kandel, Matt. 2017. "Land Conflicts and Social Differentiation in Eastern Uganda*." *The Journal of Modern African Studies* 55 (3): 395–422

Kassimir, Ronald. 1998. "The Social Power of Religious Organization and Civil Society: The Catholic Church in Uganda." *Commonwealth & Comparative Politics* 36 (2): 54–83

Kuba R. and C. Lentz (eds) (2005). *Land and the Politics of Belonging in West Africa*. Leiden & Boston: Brill.

Lauterbach, K. (2017) *Christianity, Wealth, and Spiritual Power in Ghana, New York:* Palgrave Macmillan.

Lentz, Carola. 2007. "Land and the Politics of Belonging in Africa." In *African Alternatives*, edited by Leo de Haan, Ulf Engel, and Patrick Chabal. Leiden: Brill.

Li, T. M. (2002) 'Local Histories, Global Markets: Cocoa and Class in Upland Sulawesi', *Development and Change* 33: 415–437.

Longman, T. P. (2010) *Christianity and Genocide in Rwanda* New York and Cambridge:

Cambridge University Press.

Lonsdale, John (2008) 'Soil, Work, Civilisation, and Citizenship in Kenya', *Journal of Eastern African Studies* 2 (2): 305-314.

Lonsdale, J. (2009) 'Compromised Critics: Religion in Kenya's Politics' in B. Knighton (ed.) *Essays in Honor of a Meddlesome Priest,* pp. 57-94. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Lund, Christian (2013) 'The Past and Space. On Arguments in African Land Control', *Africa* 83(1): 14–35.

Lund, Christian and C. Boone (2013). 'Introduction: Land politics in Africa - constitution authority over territory, property and persons', *Africa* 83(1): 1-13.

Martiniello, Giuliano (2015). "Social Struggles in Uganda's Acholiland: Understanding Responses and Resistance to Amuru Sugar Works." *The Journal of Peasant Studies* 42 (3–4): 653–69.

Meyer, Birgit (2004). 'Christianity in Africa: from African Independent to Pentecostal-Charismatic Churches', *Annual Review of Anthropology* 33:447-474.

Mugambwa, John (2007) 'A Comparative Analysis of Land Tenure Law Reform in Uganda and Papua New Guinea', *Journal of South Pacific Law* 11(1): 39-55.

Mujere, Joseph (2011) 'Land, graves and belonging: land reform and the politics of belonging in newly resettled farms in Gutu, 2002-2009', *The Journal of Peasant Studies* 38(5): 1123-1144.

Nyamnjoh, F. (2005) *Africa's Media, Democracy and the Politics of Belonging,* London: Zed Books.

Onoma, Ato K. (2013) *Anti-Refugee Violence and African Politics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Peluso, Nancy L. and C. Lund (2011) 'New frontiers of land control: Introduction', *The Journal of Peasant Studies* 38 (4): 667-681.

Peters, Pauline E. (2009) 'Challenges in Land Tenure and Land Reform in Africa: Anthropological Contributions', *World Development* 37(8): 1317-1325.

Palmer, R. (1977) *Land and racial domination in Rhodesia*, London: Heinemann.

Shipton, P. (2009) *Mortgaging the Ancestors: Ideologies of Attachment in Africa.* Yale Agrarian Studies Series. New Haven & London: Yale University Press.

Sjögren, Anders (2014) 'Scrambling for the promised land: land acquisitions and the politics of representation in post-war Acholi, northern Uganda' *African Identities* 12(1): 62-75.

Spear, T. (1999) 'Toward the History of African Christianity' in T. Spear and I.N. Kimambo (eds) *East African Expressions of Christianity,* 3-24. Oxford: James Currey; Dar Es Salaam: Mkuki wa Nyota; Nairobi: East African Educational Publishers; Athens: Ohio University Press.

Sundkler, B. and C. Steel (2000) *A History of the Church in Africa.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Uganda Bureau of Statistics (2016) *National Population and Housing Census 2014- Main Report,* Kampala, Uganda.

URI and ARLPI (2012) "Mitigating Land Based Conflicts in Northern Uganda." Uganda: United Religions Initiative & Acholi Religious Leaders Peace Initiative. http://www.uri.org/files/resource_files/Mitigating%20Land%20Book%20final.pdf.

Vähäkangas M. (2006) 'Fraternity in Christ: Building the Church as Family', *Africa Theological Journal* (1) 69-71.

Whyte, S. R. and M. A. Whyte (1998) 'The Values of Development: Conceiving Growth and Progress', in H.B. Hansen and M. Twaddle (eds.) *Developing Uganda,* pp.227-244. Oxford:

James Currey.