

STRUGGLES OF ACCESS TO LAND
The Land Question, Accumulation,
and Changing Politics in Kenya

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IDS/WORKING PAPER NO. 504

ABSTRACT

A fundamental element of the Kenyan politics has been the question of land and control. The country's 'land question' has roots in the colonial period when the state introduced the principal of land individualization. Since then, issues of ownership and control of land have dominated Kenya's political discourse. However, today, politics of land receive much less academic attention than in the period between 1950s and 1970s as if the 'land question' was definitively settled during the period. Also contemporary studies focus on specific and different aspects of the land question thereby obtaining a partial picture of the totality.

This paper discusses and builds a research agenda on the totality of Kenya's land question by examining its relations to the broad economic and socio-political processes. The paper also seeks to generate full knowledge on political and social struggles around questions of ownership and control of land.

The paper argues that the economic and political changes that have unfolded in the country since early 1980s, have reactivated different forms and struggles of ownership and control of land. It is argued significant implications for the organization of a nation-state project.