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The politics of inclusion and exclusion in the emerging industrial tree plantation sector in China

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Yunan Xu

Abstract

In the last two decades, Industrial Tree Plantation (ITP) sector has gained ground and expanded rapidly and massively in the province of Guangxi in southern China, leading to important land-use and land control changes, involving both international and domestic investors. The villagers who are affected by the expansion of ITP have reacted in variegated and complicated ways: some of the villagers get incorporated, while some are excluded; some of the villagers embraced, while some, even those who have already been incorporated in the sector, expressed grievances; and some of the grievances remained latent and/or couched in acquiescence, while some turned into distinct forms of resistance, either overt or covert and are directed against different actors. This paper explores how and why various social groups affected by the expansion of ITP respond differently.

Based on primary data derived from three fieldwork trips in Guangxi, China, and secondary data, this paper reveals the dynamics of inclusion and exclusion of villagers to the ITP sector, including passive inclusion, active inclusion, passive exclusion and active exclusion, which result in villagers' different political responses. This paper hopes to contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of the political reactions and the complicated engagement of villagers towards large-scale land-use and land control changes.

Keywords: *political reaction, inclusion, exclusion, passive, active*

1 Introduction

Recently, Industrial Tree Plantation (ITP) sector gained ground and expanded rapidly and massively in Guangxi, China, leading to important land-use change (more than 1.65 million ha in 2010) and land control change, involving both international and domestic investors. Those villagers[1] in Guangxi who have been affected by the ITP expansion have reacted to such changes in a variegated and complicated ways: some of the villagers get incorporated, while some are excluded; some of the villagers embraced, while some, even those who have already been incorporated in the sector, expressed grievances; some of the grievances remained acquiescence, while some turned into distinct forms of resistances, either in overt or covert forms directed against different actors. The key questions that arise are: how do those affected villagers respond differently to the rise of ITP sector in Guangxi, China, and what are the respective political-economic reasons behind it?

Recent literature provides a rich analysis showing complicated trajectories of political reactions from below to land deals. In the literature, villagers are observed to enact diverse forms of resistance, ranging from individual covert forms of everyday resistance (Moreda 2015), individual overt "rightful resistance"(O'Brien et al. 2006), collective overt movements (Edelman 1999, Martiniello 2015) to more mixed and dynamic forms (McAllister 2015, Alonso-Fradejas 2015). In some cases, villagers sought different alliances during their resistances, with state actors/ elites (Gingembre 2015), indigenous people (Brent 2015) or different NGOs (Rocheleau 2015). While, in few cases, instead of resisting, villagers chose to adapt (Mamonova 2015) or even welcome the land-use or land control changes (Castellanos-Navarrete and Jansen 2015, Franco, Carranza, and Fernandez 2011). However, within the current literature on political reactions to land-use and land control change brought about by large-scale land deals, there are still three gaps, that, building on Hall et al (2015) and Borras and Franco (2013), need to be fully explored.

Firstly, recent literature is overly focused on villagers' resistance against corporations or the state, while intra- or inter-community conflicts along a "poor people versus poor people" axis (Borras and Franco 2013, Borras Jr, Franco, and Wang 2013, Hall et al. 2015) have received less attention, although these might be more common during land-use and land control changes. In the case of Guangxi, villagers are found to fight with each other for the unequal distribution of the "goods" (benefits) and "bads" (negative impacts). In other words, faced with the expansion of ITP sector, villagers in Guangxi not only act as resisters but also could be the ones who are being resisted against. In filling this gap, this paper attempts to make an in-depth analysis of varying and/or competing interests among villagers.

Secondly, contemporary literature largely emphasized villagers' struggles around land issues (e.g. for territorial security or against expulsion from land), but rarely mentioned their political actions around environmental or economic issues. In Guangxi, all these three types of struggles exist. Specifically, some struggles are related to land control, while some are against the low land rent or negative impacts of ITP sector on soil and water. Thus, it calls for a more comprehensive analysis, which is not only limited to land but based on the distinct demands of villagers according to their diverse engagements with the changes.

Thirdly, most academic studies are focused on those struggles of the excluded villagers, while the struggles of those included are neglected. In the case of Guangxi, villagers who are included, especially in subordinate positions, also took actions for the improvement of the terms of their incorporation, while some of the excluded villagers are indifferent to the rise of ITP sector. This paper

[1] In this paper, I use "villagers" to describe the already differentiated rural residents. These villagers are not the "peasants" defined by Chayanov who only conduct subsistence farming. Most of the villagers are doing off-farm works. Also, some villagers are not pure "smallholders". Although villagers in China usually have small and tiny plots distributed, but some acquired more land as will be analysed in the following parts.

goes beyond the simplistic analysis of inclusion/ exclusion, and makes a systematic analysis of villagers' distinct terms of inclusion/ exclusion.

In short, to redress the balance in the literature about political reactions from below, this paper will follow the framework of Borras and Franco (2013), for a more comprehensive understanding of (i) villagers, (ii) villagers' inclusion/exclusion, and (iii) their political reactions.

As reminded by Borras and Franco (2013, 1724) and Hall et al. (2015), villagers are not homogeneous. They have distinct resource endowments (e.g. land control, labour condition, financial resources and social relations) and are embedded in certain political-economic environment. When encountered with large-scale land-use and land control changes, as is the case of the rise of ITP sector in Guangxi, villagers make different choices based on their calculation, either actively (voluntarily) or passively (forcedly). Some of the villagers get incorporated when others are excluded in different terms. As a result, some of them could gain when others lose. In other words, they are affected differently and, respectively, have distinct interests.

As to villagers' inclusion and exclusion, Hall et al. (2011, 15) identified four powers that shape the process of exclusion, namely, "regulation, the market, force and legitimacy". Their analyses are mainly around land issue. Nevertheless, the conflicts are not always focused on land. On one hand, for villagers, land access is not necessarily empowering. In the case of Bolivia (McKay and Colque 2016), during the expansion of soybean, villagers who maintain their access to land might still be vulnerable and squeezed by the market when they lack access to financial capital and technology, which the authors call "productive exclusion". On the other hand, when villagers have profitable alternative livelihood sources, land access or inclusion is not their primary concern. In the case of Guangxi, some villagers actively chose not to expand their control over land to engage in the boom of ITP sector even when they have resources to do so. For a better understanding of villagers' inclusion/ exclusion, the analysis should not be limited to their land access, but be focused on their positions within the "dynamics of change in social relations" (Borras and Franco 2013, 1741) and, more specifically, on their ability to benefit from the changes, namely, whether and to what extent they can control over the means of production, production process and outputs.

Also, according to Borras and Franco (2013), the simple "exclusion versus inclusion" dichotomy cannot capture diverse outcomes (win or loss) for villagers and their different political reactions. On one hand, villagers who are excluded do not necessarily lose during the process. Rather, under certain conditions, "exclusion and separation can be valid strategies for the poor" (Du Toit 2004, 1004). On the other hand, according to Du Toit (2004) and McCarthy (2010), villagers who are adversely incorporated might be left in a more vulnerable situation. Thus, villagers who are excluded do not necessarily lose and have grievances towards the land-use and land control changes. Accordingly, villagers who get incorporated might suffer and take actions against the changes. It requires a systematical analysis of villagers' different engagements with the changes, and their respective gain or loss.

Situated in the different positions during the land-use and land control changes, villagers would have different attitudes. However, villagers' grievances might not be transformed into real actions. As argued by Borras and Franco (2013, 1724), villagers' political reactions "cannot be taken for granted", and are affected by "a whole range of variable and relative economic, political, social and cultural factors, conditions and calculations". It implies that villagers who are excluded and who have faced losses within the process might not choose to transform their grievances into real actions, as this might depend on the consideration of potential risks associated with their resistance.

When villagers took political reactions, they follow diverse trajectories with different aims and towards distinct actors. Some of the villagers' resistances are the type of "struggle against expulsion", while some are "struggle for, and within incorporation"(Borras and Franco 2013, 1731). Some are against cooperate actors or state actors, while some are against other "poor people" (Borras and Franco

2013, 1730). Thus, as suggested by Borras and Franco (2013), villagers' struggles should be analyzed more systematically and in a relational and dynamic way.

Following the above discussions, this paper tries to reveal a more complicated trajectory of political reactions from below, with particular focus on villagers' different linkages with the sector (namely, passive inclusion, active inclusion, passive exclusion and active exclusion) and their respective gain and loss during the changes.

Based on an extensive set of secondary and primary data from my three fieldwork trips in the Guangxi province of China (in spring 2014, 2015 and 2016), this paper analyzes villagers' political reactions towards the expansion of ITP sector using the lenses of agrarian political economy. In the next section, I briefly introduce some empirical issues about the rise of ITP sector in China, particularly in Guangxi. In section two, I discuss the framing about villagers' inclusion and exclusion. In section three, I provide a more comprehensive typology about villagers' inclusion and exclusion in the ITP sector. Based on the typology, I then analyzed villagers' distinct attitudes towards the rise of ITP sector and their corresponding political reactions. Before the conclusion, I highlight four points which are key to understand the trajectory of political reactions from below.

2 The rise of ITP sector in China

In this paper, ITP sector refers to the monocultures of non-food tree crops, mainly fast-wood forestry. Amongst the fast-growing tree species (e.g. pine tree, eucalyptus tree and acacia tree), eucalyptus tree, with faster growth rate, is the main choice of both domestic and foreign investors in their ITPs in Guangxi, which is the focus of this paper.

In the past two decades, ITP sector gained ground and expanded massively all over the world, including in Southern China (especially in Guangxi). It is mainly driven by ITP sector's high economic value, given its certain features, namely, fast-growing (fast economic return) and labour saving (less labour cost), though, at the same time, the sector also has significant effects on the local ecology due to its mono-cropping production methods and sharp demand for water and nutrition.

As shown in Figure 1, in the 25 years before the year 2000, the acreage of eucalyptus increased by about 3.5 times from 43.2 thousand ha in 1975 to148.8 thousand ha in 2000. Ten years from 2000, the area covered by eucalyptus expanded eleven times to the current (2013) total of 1653.3 thousand ha. To date, Guangxi has more than one-third of fast-growing forests in all of China, and by the eucalyptus area, Guangxi ranks the first in China.

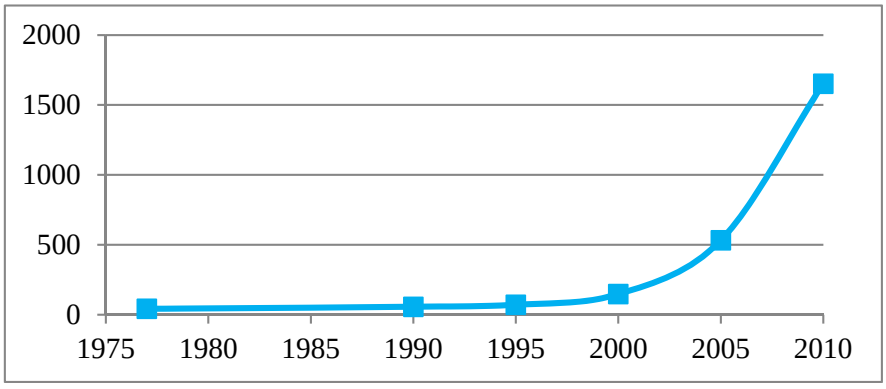

Figure 1 area of eucalyptus trees in Guangxi (1000 ha)

Source: the data of eucalyptus trees (1977-2005) are from Pang (2006), and the data of 2010 come from Wei (2011).

The expansion of ITP sector in rural China is the result of a series of state- and corporate pushes. Firstly, fast-growing eucalyptus tree species are introduced as part of the technological cooperation projects between the Chinese central government and Austrian government that started from 1981[2]. Secondly, subsidies and free seedlings are provided in some counties of rural Guangxi to promote ITP sector, as part of reforestation programme issued by the central state since 2002. Thirdly, corporations' large-scale land-based investment in ITPs, especially the "Plantation-Pulp-Paper integration" (*Linjiangzhi Yitihua*) project launched by Stora Enso and APP from 2002 and 1995 respectively, fuelled ITP sector in Guangxi.

Following the rise of ITP sector, the land system in rural Guangxi changed significantly in terms of land-use and land control. Regarding farmland, the land transfer (e.g. leasing) around ITP sector is not common in rural China, as most of farmland plots are fragmented when distributed to each rural household during the Household Responsibility System (HRS) in 1980s. Related to the expansion of ITP sector, some of these allocated farmland plots changed from food production to fast-growing eucalyptus trees.

The collectively-owned forestland has a different story. In some villages, collectively-owned forestland, especially those undistributed one, is (sub-)leased to different investors, ranging from foreign companies, domestic private companies, state-owned farms to individuals. Meanwhile, in some villages, the collectively-owned forestlands were distributed to rural households either based on the principle of fairness or customary ownership. Some of these allocated land plots, then, are changed hands to other investors either through leasing or cooperation. Some of these forestland plots remained at the hand of villagers, but the land-use changed to eucalyptus trees.

Such large-scale land control and land use changes, especially as the land acquisitions happened on the undistributed commonly-used land for the sector which brings few employment opportunities but significant environmental impacts. They typically led to the dispossession of villagers and, then, followed by a series of conflicts between affected villagers and companies (Gerber 2011, Overbeek W 2012), as in the case of ITP sector's expansion in Brazil (Kröger 2012) and Ecuador (Gerber and Veuthey 2010). However, there are also exceptions. In Vietnam, the rise of ITP sector is free of disputes, with smallholders included (Sikor 2012).

It implies a close relationship between the engagement of villagers and the practices of resistances within the expansion. To explain this linkage, according to Felstiner, Abel, and Sarat (1981), the practices of resistances are transformed from grievances. However, for villagers, their attitudes are associated with their terms of inclusion or exclusion. Thus, to understand villagers' political reactions, it is critical to analyse their inclusion and exclusion in the ITP sector.

3 Rethinking the dichotomy of villagers' inclusion and exclusion

With the expansion of ITP sector in Guangxi, some of the villagers get incorporated when they started to plant eucalyptus trees on the land either they own or they leased. Yet, some of the villagers were excluded, similar to the observations by Hall et al. (2011, 13) that pointed out "the inclusion of some land uses, and some land users, necessarily means the exclusion of others".

Following the definition of 'exclusion' by Hall et al. (2011, 7), in this paper, the exclusion of ITP sector refers to the situation of some villagers who are not able to benefit from planting eucalyptus trees in rural Guangxi. In this sense, villagers who are excluded are those who do not plant eucalyptus trees, ranging from those who do not have access to the land for eucalyptus tree cultivation to those who do not have interest in planting eucalyptus trees due to access to other profitable alternatives. Thus, it is clear that villagers who are excluded from ITP sector do not necessarily lose, as described

2 http://news.xinhuanet.com/world/2007-08/28/content_6614213.htm

by one villager I interviewed in Xiangzhou County in Guangxi who is involved in a transportation business and already owns two cars: "[our household] does not plant eucalyptus trees. [Because] it is very hard work to farm [the trees], and it did not bring money" (Field notes, 23rd Feb 2016).

Such mismatch between the engagement with a crop boom and the economic outcome (i.e. to gain or to lose) also can be proved in a qualitative way. As shown in Table 1, among the 105 villagers I interviewed in Guangxi, 76 villagers are planting eucalyptus trees, leaving other 29 villagers excluded from ITP sector. Those who are included have a slightly higher evaluation than the excluded (3.06 versus 2.63) on the economic value of ITPs. However, such difference between these two groups is not significant[3]. In other words, the included and excluded villagers do not show much difference in their attitudes on the economic value of ITP sector according to their experience. So, the economic gain and lose among these two groups are not even.

Table 1 Villagers attitudes towards the economic value of ITP sector

	N	Means	Sig
P	76	3,08	0,72
NP	29	2,62	

Source: interviews in Mar to Apr 2016 in Guangxi, P= planters, NP=non-planters; 1= very low economic value, 5=very high economic value.

This complicated phenomenon reminds us to go beyond the simple dichotomy of "exclusion versus inclusion". Instead, to understand villagers' actual position within the value chain, attention should be paid on (i) the term of inclusion and (ii) access to alternative livelihood opportunities.

For those who are included, the terms and conditions of the inclusion, especially villagers' vertical and horizontal links within the value chain, can lead to completely divergent outcomes (Du Toit 2004). When linked vertically, villagers' autonomy and capacity are related to their access to diverse resources (e.g. land, labour, financial and social resources) and the degree of dependency on upstream (e.g. agricultural inputs companies) and downstream actors (e.g. processing mills, retailers). When villagers control abundant resources (including both material and social resources) or even engage with upstream or downstream sector at the same time (e.g. selling seedlings, processing or trading timbers), they have more bargaining power, and, presumably, are able to benefit more than, or even exclude, other counterparts, as the case of "intimate exclusions"(Hall 2011, 844). When villagers control little means of production and are constrained by monopolized channels to access agricultural inputs and to sell products, they are very likely to be adversely incorporated: squeezed by the upstream and downstream market, and with limited or no control over the process of production and outputs, as in the case of "productive exclusion" in Bolivia (McKay and Colque 2016). Underlying the above scenario, villagers are sometimes left more vulnerable than they were before their enrollment into the scheme (McCarthy 2010).

Horizontally, villagers' capacity to survive or compete with large corporations in the market are also directly linked to villagers' differentiation. Such capacity is not only determined by villagers' agency *per se*, but also influenced by the intervention of the state. When the state particularly favors large-scale investors, smallholders might become vulnerable and even go bankrupt, as in the case of Ukraine (Mamonova 2015). When the state facilitates the smallholders, some villagers might be able to prosper, as demonstrated in the case of Vietnam (Sikor 2012). In China,Zhang (2012, 474) found that, "strong state support for agriculture and for market development has created competing paths of agrarian transition based on independent household commodity production".

3 Only when p<0. 05, it means the difference is significant.

Besides, another key issue relevant to both excluded and included villagers is whether he/she has access to alternative livelihood sources. In some countries, villagers' livelihood sources are highly diverse, ranging from farm works to non-farm jobs. For those who have better alternatives, the exclusion from a crop boom does not bring any loss. This is particularly true in China. As farmland is distributed according to the size of each household, considering the huge rural population in China, villager's landholding is usually tiny and fragmented, which brings little but relatively equal agricultural income. In this sense, "the primary source of rural inequality is access to non-farm incomes" (Zhang 2012, 469), which is similar to what was indicated by Chen Xiwen, the Deputy Chief of Office of Central Rural Work Leading Group, CPC, "if only farming 6 or 7 mu[4] land for food production, the annual income is almost equal to the wage obtained in one month for doing migrant work in the urban area" (Guo and Tong 2015).

4 Typology of villagers' positions within the expansion of ITP sector

Following the analysis above and for a better understanding of the impacts of ITP sector's expansion on villagers and their respective responses, this paper provides a more complicated typology of inclusion and exclusion, namely, active inclusion, passive inclusion, active exclusion and passive exclusion (see Figure 2).

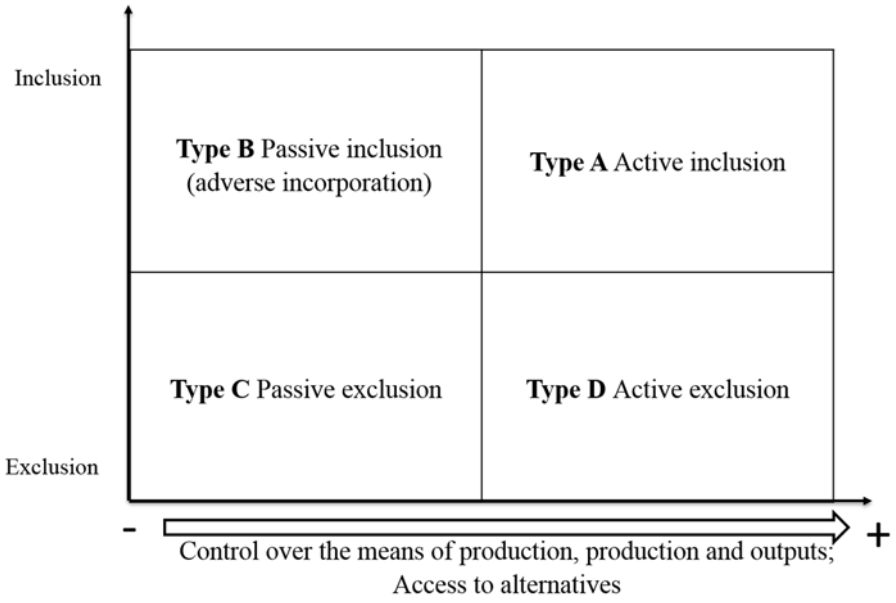

Figure 2 typology of villagers' positions

4.1 Active inclusion

Faced with the rapid expansion of ITP sector, some villagers seized the opportunity and got incorporated. This group of villagers is located in a relatively advantageous position within the value chain, because (1) they usually get control over sufficient means of production and (at least part of) production process; and (2) some of them even involved in the upstream and downstream business.

[4] It refers to a unit for the measurement of land. 15 mu equals to 1hectare.

Regarding the means of production, some rural households in rural Guangxi control more land resources, because of favorable geographic conditions, customary occupation, and individual land leasing. Firstly, due to various land resources endowment among villages in terms of quantity and quality, under HRS reform, land (mainly farmland) distribution is relatively equal within the village[5], but unequal between villages. Thus, in some villages, villagers have more land resources available to be allocated. Secondly, except for the equal distribution based on the size of households, there are also informal distributions based on customary arrangements, mainly for the "unused"/ "underused" or "waste" forestland. Thus, those households with abundant labour and money, sometimes even with special social capital (e.g. being village cadres), are able to get access to more land. Thirdly, motivated by the rise of ITP sector, some villagers leased large-scale forestland from their own or nearby villages with the financial and/or social capital they possessed. As one informant in Wuming County, a villager who contracted 30 mu of land from his own village collective, explained: "when the Gaofeng state-owned farm came (to lease forestland in my village), some villagers and I also asked to contract (forestland) with the same term (30 years) and same rent (6 Yuan per mu per year)" (Field notes, 18th Mar 2016).

Among these land-abundant villagers, some started to plant eucalyptus trees independently. These villagers are able to control over the whole process of production and the sales of outputs: they decide whether to employ labourers or entirely use household labour when sowing, weeding, fertilising and logging; they choose how to produce eucalyptus trees, with intensive, little or even no chemical inputs; and they make decisions on when and how to harvest, either to log and transport the products to whoever provides highest price or to sell the trees directly to "middlemen".

When competing with capital intensive investors (e.g. international corporations and state-owned farms), these independent planters in Guangxi are not in a disadvantageous position or even to be excluded as the case in Ukraine (Mamonova 2015). It is mainly because of (i) the certain features of the sector, (ii) the role of the state and (iii) the market condition of its outputs.

Firstly, high technological and machinery inputs are not necessary for ITP sector. Especially for those hilly and rocky forestland plots, machines are almost useless during the production and logging process. In this sense, villagers who can (at least partly) exploit their household labour have comparable advantage over those capitalist investors who have to spend extra cost on labour employment.

Secondly, these planters in Guangxi are not strongly, if at all, discriminated by the state. Contrarily, on one hand, according to the state policies, villagers have the priority to lease collective-owned land in their own villages (except for those who have already contracted out before the rise of ITP sector), and are provided with reforestation subsidies and free seedlings from the local government in some villages. On the other hand, villagers are usually monitored and managed in a looser way compared with big corporations as state-own farms and foreign companies. Although it is partly due to the difficulties of monitoring and managing nebulous individual behaviours, this is also because Chinese state, sometimes, deliberately conduct less severe control for social stability (as will be analysed below). Thus, villagers are sometimes overserved to plant eucalyptus trees on farmland where the policy issued by the provincial state forbids to plant.

Thirdly, the market for the outputs of ITP sector in Guangxi is not monopoly controlled by few companies, but involves diverse purchasers, including different middlemen, timber processing mills of different sizes and paper companies. In other words, villagers can freely sell their products to whomever provides a higher price in a relatively competitive market. However, this does not mean villagers can control the market or are particularly favoured by the market. In reality, villagers are inevitably affected by the fluctuation of market price caused by the dynamics between the supply and

[5] Except for a small part of hills already allocated within the HRS reform, most of the forestland remained in the hand of collective.

domestic demand on the sector's end products, as described by one villager who has planted 7 mu of eucalyptus trees:

> The price of tree originally (at the beginning of 2016) is 600 Yuan (per ton). In July, (the price) dropped to around 400 Yuan. For each ton, (the price) of the tree decreased 200 Yuan. The market is ruthless. (I asked: "so is this the reason why you do not sell your trees, although they have grown for 6 years and been ready for logging?"). Yes! I am waiting for the price (to increase). (Field notes, 16th Feb2016).

However, these independent planters are not homogeneous. The majority of them only changed part of their land plots, mostly the fallow forestland, into eucalyptus tree plantations. They are smallholders of ITPs, usually with the total area less than 30 mu. Thus, although in a relatively small share, they are able to gain profits from ITP sector: as said by a villager, "it is better than leaving the land abandoned" (Field notes, 22nd Feb 2016). Another villager interviewed pointed out that, "harvesting 8 - 10 mu (of eucalyptus trees) can bring big income as much as tens of thousands Yuan at one time" (Field notes, 13th Mar 2016).

A few others are big holders of eucalyptus tree plantations, who are called "Da hu". Compared with the smallholders mentioned above, they have a much larger scale of ITPs, which can reach as much as 500 mu according to data obtained during my fieldwork in Guangxi. Correspondingly, their investment in ITP sector is much more intensive, which means more potential profits as well as face higher risks (especially in the coastal region of Guangxi where there are frequent typhoon attacks in summer).

In addition to controlling the means of production and production process, some of these villagers are also involved in one or more upstream or downstream businesses of the ITP sector: some sell seedlings; some invest in mills for timber processing; some engage in the transportation of trees and timbers; some are middlemen, who purchase trees from other growers, harvest, and then trade the outputs. These people are able to gain more benefits with the expanded control of the value chain.

4.2 Passive inclusion

Not all the villagers who are included in the ITP sector are able to benefit from it. There are some villagers who are incorporated but under unfavorable terms, because (1) they control little or no means of production, and (2) they have little or no alternative opportunities.

Compared with the former group, these villagers have fewer land resources, due to either original geographic disadvantages or latest land control change. Firstly, as mentioned above, in some villages, there is little farmland and little or no forestland available for distribution. Secondly, in some of those villages with abundant forestland, their forestland had already been occupied by or contracted to other investors (including some of the individual villagers of the village) before the forestland reform in 2008, leaving little or no forestland for other rural dwellers. In most of such land leasing cases, villagers receive very little or even no land rent.[6] Thirdly, some villagers chose to transfer some land plots they controlled to other investors either through cooperation or leasing.

Little control over the means of production does not necessarily lead to loss to villagers. Another key issue is that these villagers have no better alternatives, especially the off-farm work opportunities. Because in rural China, "households with off-farm income-either local wages or migrant remittances-tend to be better off" (Murphy 2002, 72). A similar comment from a villager in Guangxi highlights this situation as follows:

[6] During my fieldwork in 2016, only villagers in one of seven villages where their collective land had been leased out mentioned they receive 100 Yuan per year as land rent. Villagers in other villages either said they never hear about the land rent or mentioned land rent is left in the collective for the expenses of pubic activities.

> If a household does not have anyone to be migrant worker and earn money back, the income only from farming is almost nothing to cover the living expenses of the whole family. If a villager does not go to work outside and depends only on farming, (he /she) may not be able to support his/her child to go to school. Working outside can get you 200 Yuan per day. How much can one earn from farming? (Field notes, 16th Feb 2016)

However, not everyone has the opportunity to do migrant work to earn extra money to support their family, especially considering the higher expenses in the urban areas. Therefore, this group of villagers engaged in the ITP sector in different ways but situated at subordinate positions.

Some villagers supply the land they controlled for eucalyptus tree cultivation, while other investors (either individuals, state-owned enterprises, domestic private companies or international corporations) provide financial support to cover the expenses of seedlings, chemical inputs, and labour. As a result, although these villagers still get a negotiated share of the benefits[7], they lose part of the control over the production process and complete control of the outputs. Thus, they can derive much less profit from the ITP sector, and sometimes they even have to face the arrears.

Also, a few villagers leased their land (usually forestland), even the land already planted with eucalyptus trees, to other investors to cover the shortage in family expenses or to avoid further investment on necessary infrastructures (e.g. to rebuild the road to be able to transport the timber) (fieldwork interviews, Mar 20th 2015). For these villagers, they lose the control over, at least part of, their means of production in exchange for some land rent, which is usually rather tiny compared with the benefit of ITPs (which can bring at least 1000 Yuan per mu per year, according to fieldwork interviews). A couple who leased their forestland to Sotra Enso in Hepu County explained that, "how much forestland can be distributed for (we) two? We only get some 200 Yuan per year through leasing to Finnish Company. What is the use of 200Yuan now? It can only buy several jin[8] pork, not even afford one jin seafood" (Field notes, 20th Mar 2015). In these sense, their inclusion into ITP sector can hardly bring any benefit.

Besides, some villagers have to shift their land-use of some plots for eucalyptus trees cultivation because of the negative ecological impact of the ITPs planted nearby. According to one villager in Binyang County, "there is no other crop that can be grown beside the eucalyptus trees…So if you plant eucalyptus trees, I have to also follow the same change in land-use" (Field notes, 30th Mar 2015). For them, their tiny ITPs, usually less than 1 mu, are not cost-effective to employ labourers to log and transport the limited outputs to processing millers or companies, on one hand. On the other hand, such a scale made them difficult to negotiate a good price with the middlemen who purchase the trees. Thus, their inclusion do not bring more profits than their original land-use.

Worse off, some villagers are incorporated into ITP sector through employment opportunities provided by the investors who leased their collective-owned forestland. As ITP sector is a labour-saving sector, villagers' employment is usually temporal and seasonal, ranging from 4 to 90 days per year (Interviews, 2016). Among these workers, some are able to do relatively skillful jobs (e.g. logging), which can get higher wages at around 150-200 Yuan per day; while some can only do simple and replaceable jobs (e.g. weeding and fertilizing), with a much lower wage at around 50 to 100 Yuan per day. So, for these villagers, their incorporation only brings a few unstable incomes, but induces a lot of losses. Their losses are not only the inclusion of the originally commonly-owned forestland which used to bring incomes, but also the reduction of their agricultural outputs due to the negative ecological impacts of the nearby eucalyptus tree plantations. In this case, the villagers were dispossessed and (partly) converted into workers but did not migrate to urban areas. In a way, this is similar to what Watts and Little (1994, 81) describe as the 'disguised proletariats'.

[7] According to my interviews, the percentage is ranging from 30% to 50%.
[8] Unit for the measurement of weight; 1jin=0,5kg.

In short, these villagers are included in ITP sectors in a subordinated position due to their limited or no control of means of production and no or limited access to alternative opportunities. As a result, they do not benefit from ITP sector and some even become more vulnerable because of their incorporation.

4.3 Passive exclusion

Similar to the previous type of villagers, this group of villagers also control little means of production and limited access to alternatives. But they are left in a worse situation, that is, they are completely excluded from the ITP sector.

In one of the villages I visited in Guangxi, the village's collectively-owned land has been leased out to other investors to build ITPs. Most of the villagers do not receive rent directly. The majority of them do not have financial or social resources to acquire forestland anywhere else to plant eucalyptus trees, and their allocated tiny farm plots are for necessary food production. Thus, with the rise of the ITP sector, villagers have no land available to plant eucalyptus trees. As expressed by a leader of a production team in that village: "at that time, we did not know that the price of the tree is so high. If we had known, we would have distributed the forestland to each household to plant trees by ourselves" (field notes, 2nd Mar 2016).

Without employment, even without temporary work in the eucalyptus tree plantations nearby or access to alternative off-farm jobs, these villagers are left in a vulnerable situation, as described by a villager interviewed, "all the land (forestland) in the village has been contracted. Where can I find land to cultivate? Now I just stay at home. No work (referring to off-farm work) can be found" (Field notes, 3rd Mar 2016). This resonates to the emblematic example of Tania Li's (Li 2011) observation that, when "their land is needed, but their labour is not".

In addition to being excluded from the ITP sector, some villagers have lost their original income and borne the negative impacts of ITP sector due to the land control and land use changes to the collectively-owned land.

Firstly, such land control changes tend to exclude some villagers who used to get some income from such common land plots, as illustrated in the case of a household interviewed in the village in Hepu County, Guangxi:

> In the past, my household income came from farming and cutting firewood. We have no other income. The food we grow was not enough to eat (because the farmland is in shortage in this village), so we all depended on cutting firewood to buy food. Now no firewood can be obtained. Because the Finish Company plants eucalyptus trees here and there is no brushwood (to be picked as firewood). (Field notes, 3rd Mar 2016)

Secondly, the land-use change affects nearby villagers' farming, because of the significant negative ecological impacts of ITP sector. One villager interviewed explained that: "since planting of eucalyptus trees, the land almost has no water. No springs comes out. Now here no matter what corps are planted, they do not grow" (Field work, 3rd March 2016). Similarly, affected by sharp water demand of eucalyptus trees, all of the 25 villagers interviewed in this village either stopped cultivating paddy or reduced the cultivation of paddy from 2 rounds per year to 1 round on their already tiny farm plots (usually less than 0,1 mu per capita).

In this sense, these villagers are completely excluded and not able to benefit from the ITP sector, as they do not have a touch of the value chain. Moreover, when they lack alternative livelihood sources, these villagers are more vulnerable, as they are left exposed to the negative influences caused by the large-scale land control and land-use changes.

4.4 Active exclusion

Not all villagers excluded are as vulnerable as the above group. Some villagers do not plant eucalyptus trees as they have better choices which is related to their abundant resource endowments (material, financial and social resources).

Some of them have controlled sufficient means of production, but choose not to plant eucalyptus trees. Some villagers prefer sugarcane. While some villagers use their land for fruit trees. Their choices are based on careful calculations around benefit and cost, as one villager cadre explained:

> In the countryside, the price of eucalyptus trees is not stable. The trees need 3, 4 and even 5 years to get us income. While sugarcane can bring income within one year. As to fruit trees, when the trees bear fruit after cultivating for 3 years, the products of one year can bring profit to compensate for those three years. And the trees can bear fruit every year later on. (Field notes, 17th Feb 2016)

Some of the villagers might not have control over large landholdings, but have access to other profitable off-farm work, including those upstream and downstream businesses around the ITP sector (e.g. trading, transportation or timber processing). For these villagers, although they only owned tiny land plots, they can still acquire enough land with the financial capital they possessed if they want to engage in the ITP sector. Thus, their exclusion from the ITP sector is out of their own willingness and calculation. A villager who did not plant eucalyptus trees but doing transport business in Guangxi explains as follows:

> Farming is just to get enough food to eat. My household does not have any land, so small, not a big patch. If we plant eucalyptus trees, the trees will shade neighbour's crops. Neighbours who plant sugarcane will curse you, and do not agree with your cultivation of eucalyptus trees. And, farming makes much less money than work (refers to non-farm jobs). Working for one day can earn you as much income to buy two bags of rice. (Field notes, 23rd Feb 2016)

So, these group of villagers have the capability and autonomy to engage in the ITP sector. They choose to get excluded actively after their own calculation. For them, they do not benefit directly from the ITP sector *per se*, but might gain profits with the rise of the ITP sector when they engage in some related businesses.

Based on the typology above, villagers' attitudes towards the economic value of the ITP sector are reconsidered. As shown in Table 2, villagers who are actively included in the ITP sector have the highest evaluation, and those who are passively excluded have the lowest rating on the economic value of the ITP sector. Meanwhile, villagers who are incorporated in a subordinated way have a lower judgment than those who are excluded out of their own willingness. And the difference between their attitudes is significant. In other words, villagers' different engagements with the ITP sector notably affect their idea about gain or loss associated with the expansion of the ITP sector. Villagers who control the production process and outputs of the ITP sector (Type A) believe they can gain from the ITP sector. Contrarily, villagers who are adversely incorporated into the ITP sector (Type B) do not think so. For those who are passively excluded in the ITP sector (Type C), most of them claim their loss with the expansion of the trees, which is much more pessimistic than those who are excluded actively (Type D). The result is aligned with the qualitative analysis above.

Table 2 Different types of villagers' attitudes towards the economic value of ITP sector

	N	Means	Sig
Type A: active inclusion	66	3,121	0,045

Type B: passive inclusion	14	2,643
Type C: passive exclusion	13	2,385
Type D: active exclusion	11	3,000

Source: interviews in Mar to Apr 2016 in Guangxi; 1= very low economic value, 5=very high economic value.

So, underlying the expansion of the ITP sector, the scenario in rural Guangxi is not as simple as "villagers being dispossessed or even displaced" by capitalists related to large-scale land control and land use changes. With different resource endowments (both material and social resources) and embedded in the certain political-economic environment, some villagers are able to get incorporated, while some are excluded, either actively (voluntarily) or passively (forcedly). In a more complex way, because of their distinct capability and autonomy in controlling the means of production, production process and outputs, and accessing to alternatives, those who are incorporated might become more vulnerable, and those who are excluded might not lose.

However, such typology is not static: villagers who are actively included, might lease out their land (due to emergencies) and shift their situation into passive inclusion; villagers who are temporarily hired in the ITPs might lose their work and become the excluded; and villagers who actively excluded might decide to get involved in the ITP sector with changes in the market.

5 Grievances from affected villagers

As analyzed above, these four types of villagers are affected differently by the expansion of ITP due to their distinct positions within or outside the value chain. Accordingly, they have different perceptions about the ITP sector, especially about its impacts on land control and environment.

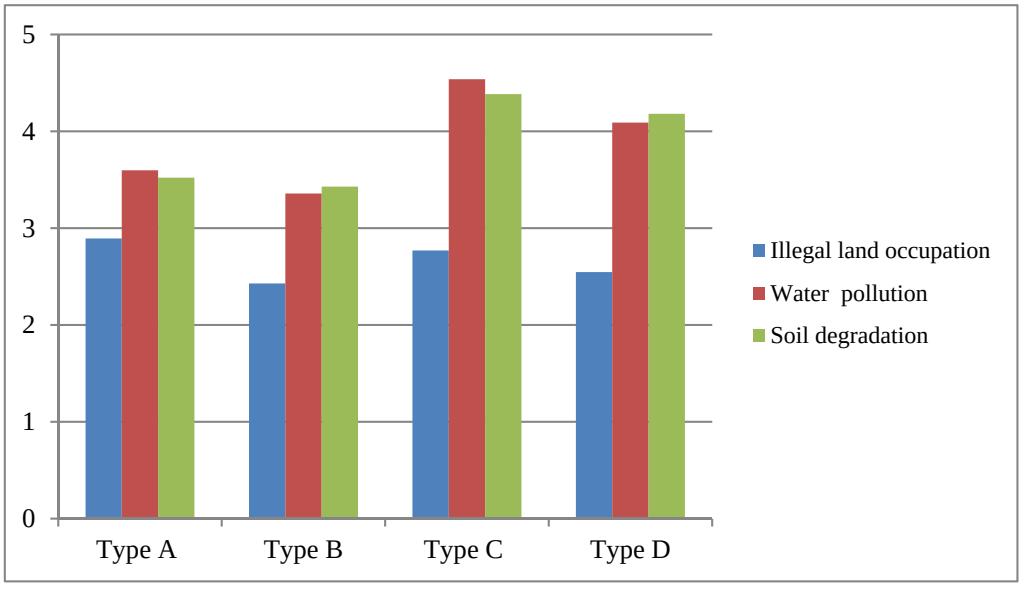

Figure 3 villagers' grievances towards land and environmental issues

Source: interviews in Mar to Apr 2016 in Guangxi, and 1= low grievance, 5=high grievance

As shown in Figure 3, villagers' grievances are concentrated in environmental degradation caused by planting eucalyptus trees. Some villagers complained that eucalyptus trees absorb too much nutrition

and water, which will affect crops (e.g. sugarcane) planted nearby. Some villagers mentioned the negative ecological impacts on their livelihoods: "now the paddy is not able to be cultivated. Since the investors started to plant eucalyptus trees, here is very little water and becomes very dry. We can only plant some maize and peanuts. But (whether to harvest) still depends on weather" (Field notes, 2nd Mar 2016). Some of the villagers are worried about health problems caused by the ITPs. They claim that: "eucalyptus trees are poisonous. Now the water flowing down from mountains (where eucalyptus trees are planted) is all black" (Field notes, 18th Feb 2016). Among these villagers, those who are excluded (both actively and passively) express more grievances on the grounds of environmental issues caused by the ITPs. Meanwhile, a lot of those who are included also mentioned such negative environmental impacts.

With regard to land issues, villagers' grievances were not significant during my fieldwork interviews. In the villages where collectively-owned forestland is allocated to each household equally, most of villagers claimed that land has been distributed to every household, therefore illegal land occupations have not occurred. Within this group of villagers, there exist some complaints about the shade of eucalyptus trees planted in the nearby farmland plots, which they believe is a kind of land occupation and will affect their food production. While, in villages where forestland is distributed based on the principle of "first occupation" or customary occupation, some villagers complained that some elites are able to occupy more land due to better access to information. As explained by a villager during a focus group discussion:

> In the past, here is undistributed waste hill...That one (refers to the ex-leader of the village) must know it (refers to information about the economic value of eucalyptus trees) from the county government. The (collectively-owned) forestland would have been distributed that year. But he occupied a lot of land himself. Other people around saw it. Then they also started to occupy the land. (Field notes, 11th Mar 2016)

As to the villages where collectively-owned forestland has been leased to outside investors, the villagers' concerns are more about land rent. According to a news report in *Economy & Nation Weekly*, a staff from Guangxi forestry department mentioned that the price of forestland in Guangxi has increased more than 10 times since the land leasing started, so "there are huge conflicts" (Zhang 2010). While, for those who leased the land in for planting eucalyptus trees, their complaints are usually about the land encroachment onto their ITPs by local villagers.

In short, villagers who are passively excluded (Type C) generally expressed more grievances towards the ITP sector, especially related to the environmental concerns. On the contrary, villagers who are incorporated in the ITP sector have significantly fewer grievances on its negative ecological impacts. However, among these four types, the differences in villagers' attitudes towards the land grab issue caused by the ITP sector are not significant, partly due to their distinct understandings about land occupation.

6 Differentiated political reactions from the villagers

Although almost every villager has some grievances towards the ITP sector, not all of them have transformed their grievances into resistances. In rural Guangxi, some villagers support the expansion of ITPs, while some resist in either overt or covert ways.

Their distinct reactions are closely linked with their different engagements with the ITP sector. As summarized in Table 3, villagers who benefit from the ITP sector (Type A) generally embrace and even try to push the development of ITPs. For villagers who are adversely incorporated in the ITP sector (Type B), they do not show obvious oppositions towards the sector itself, but engaged in political struggles for the improvement of their inclusion (e.g. increasing the land rent). As the most vulnerable group, villagers who are passively excluded (Type C) are usually tend to enact resistances

against the sector. Villagers of Type D mostly are indifferent towards the rise of ITPs, except covertly against it in a few cases where their livelihoods are affected by its negative ecological impacts.

Table 3 Villagers' different political reactions towards the rise of ITP sector

Types of villagers	Gain or loss within ITP sector	Political behaviours	For land right	For environmental justice	For economic gain
A	Benefit from ITP sector	Support			X
B	Very little benefit and some even loss	Modification	X		X
C	Loss	Resistance, modification	X	X	X
D	No loss, but even benefit	Indifferences		X	

Note: summarized from the in-depth interviews and observations of the author in Guangxi

Specifically, for villagers of Type A, although most of them agreed that the ITP sector has negative ecological impacts, they still keep planting eucalyptus trees. Because "we farmers are practical (for making a living)". (Field notes, 22nd Feb 2016). In a more extreme way, one villager in Xiangzhou County explained: "we farmers will run for where there exist the greatest profits. As long as it will not poison people immediately, we will plant what can bring the most money" (Field notes, 17th Feb 2016). In this sense, villagers' support for ITPs is out of their individual pursuit of profits.

Instead of taking actions against the ITP sector, this group of villagers (Type A) takes measures to secure and expand their control over it. To give an example, one villager who leased 200 mu of forestland in another village to plant eucalyptus trees, paid around 2000 Yuan per month to a local villager to protect his ITPs from being stolen or destroyed (Field notes, 12th Mar 2016). In another case, a villager who has already had150 mu of ITPs lent money to another planter, enabling him buy chemical inputs, in exchange for the contract to purchase his tree at a certain price after 4 years (Field notes, 18th Mar 2015).

Different from villagers of Type A, villagers who are passively included (Type B) do not benefit much from the ITP sector. For them, their priority is to improve their terms of incorporation rather than resisting the ITPs' encroachment into their villages. As described by a villager in Hepu County, "we are poor. There is no other choice. [Leasing the land] can get some money, so we all want to lease the land out." (Field notes, 3rd Mar 2016).

Thus, these villagers' actions are mainly against underpaid/unpaid land rent and underpaid labour in the ITPs, ranging from overt litigation to covert pilfering and sabotage. Some of the actions are against investors, as the conflicts between villagers and Stora Enso mentioned by Ping and Nielsen (2010). Similarly, according to the report of *Economy & Nation Weekly*, in one village of Pubei County, villagers contracted their land to APP through the cooperation mode. They received no payment after two rounds of logging. So they refused APP to log again, as explained by one villager in Pubei County in Guangxi, "Seedlings are from APP, but the land is mine. Why do they think they can log the trees when the price (of the land share) is not acceptable"(Zhang 2010). Besides, some of these actions are against other villagers. Such disputes are concentrated on ambiguous land rights which is related to the distribution of the benefit. As a villager in Hepu County stated: "Here family A (here I replaced

villagers' family name with A and B) used to have a gang fight with family B over a boundary of forestland which has already been leased out to Stora Enso. (I asked: "for the land rent?") Yes." (Field notes, 3rd Mar 2016).

For villagers who are passively excluded (Type C), they suffered the most with the expansion of the ITP sector. Accordingly, their opposition is more significant. It can be encapsulated in the case of a village in Hepu County where a large number of villagers are passively excluded (as has mentioned during the analysis of passive exclusion). According to a villager interviewed,

> In our village, all of the 10000 ha eucalyptus trees have not been harvested… Like recently, the trees are all burnt down. It is burnt while there is only one year remaining before the trees are ready to be logged. Also, individuals tend to steal their trees. They (the thieves) are hardly caught. They steal the trees to sell… I do not know about the situation in other villages, but in our village, the investors of ITPs have never harvest their trees. (Field notes, 1st Mar 2016)

These villagers of Type C resist the ITP sector through litigation, pilfering, arson, sabotage and land encroachment, which are in the forms of both "rightful resistance"(O'Brien et al. 2006) and "everyday forms of peasant resistance" (Scott 2008).Those who are engaged in the struggles are mainly out of two reasons. On one hand, their resistances can be understood as a revenge to the undermining of their livelihoods. On the other hand, some of their actions are for incorporation. To give some examples, encroaching onto the land acquired by large landowners enables the villagers to get access to some land to plant eucalyptus trees; stealing the tree is a way for villagers to share part (although very little) benefit from the ITP sector; and blocking the road is a strategy for villagers to get some compensation.

Different from the above group, the villagers of Type D have alternatives. They seldom conduct any overt actions towards ITPs. As claimed by one villager in Guangxi, "the trees belong to Stora Enso. How does it have anything to do with us?" (Field notes, 3rd Mar 2016). But there are some covert resistances for environmental justice. Mostly, they posted their blames through the Internet. In few cases, they took more radical actions (e.g. subtle sabotage) when their livelihoods are affected, as explained by a villager in Guangxi:

> When planting eucalyptus trees too close, another villager will burn down trees. Because the root of eucalyptus tree will stretch towards where the sugarcane grows. Then, the nutrition will be extracted by eucalyptus trees. And trees will shelter the sunshine. For those households who plant eucalyptus trees in the middle of farmland and migrate out, their trees will be destroyed. (Field notes, 17th Feb 2016).

In short, the four types of villagers tend to take different reactions towards the expansion of the ITP sector. However, the contours outlined above do not intend to build automatic linkage between the individual's situation and a certain type of political reaction. In reality, villagers' behaviors are the result of a far more complex process, influenced by political-economic context and individuals' own experience, interpretation, and calculation. Thus, not all of villagers will take actual actions, especially when the actions are of high risks.

Also, such scenario portrayed above is not static, but dynamic with the changes in villagers' engagement and political opportunity structure. As mentioned above, villagers might change their position within or outside the value chain of the ITP sector. Accordingly, their attitude and possible reactions towards the expansion of the sector will also alter. For the latter one, as reminded by Borras and Franco (2013, 1733)

> Changing political opportunity structure can partly influence poor people's decision to engage in overt political contention to struggle around their expulsion, either against their expulsion or to demand some kind of compensation or better terms of compensation.

This explicates that affected villagers will adjust their response strategies to the expansion of the ITP sector, with social and institutional changes (e.g. policy change and social relation changes.).

7 Some discussions about the political actions of villagers

Following the analysis above, there are four points this paper wants to highlight for a more comprehensive understanding of political reactions from below.

7.2 The flexibility of the villagers' actions

For those who resist against or struggle within the expansion of ITPs in Guangxi, their actions have more or less affected some forms of exploitation that they confront. It is partly because of the flexible strategies villagers chose.

In this case, villagers' weapons are ranging from litigation to pilfering, arson, sabotage and land encroachment. On one hand, villagers typically avoid direct confrontation with the powerful group, making their resistances more tolerable by the authority. On the other hand, as "leaderless and nebulous movements like Karen-style village resistance" (Malseed 2008, 504), most of the villagers' resistances in Guangxi are spontaneous, adaptable and difficult to be attacked or co-opted. These features are explicit according to a staff of a state-owned farm:

> Villagers who live near our forestland come and chop the trees (the state-farm planted). They sometimes even put some herbicide. Once the trees die, the villagers will occupy the land through growing some vegetables or sowing some hemp seeds. Villagers encroach the land little by little every year….Villagers have time. Their land is just a few mu, and locates where they can easily monitor. So no other people are able to occupy their land. (Field notes, 10th Mar 2015)

Moreover, with the development of technology, villagers have an additional tool to facilitate their resistances, namely, the Internet. In the case of rural Guangxi, most of the villagers currently have Internet access, due to the promotion of information technologies in rural areas. Thus, encountered with the negative impact of the ITP sector, villagers are able to post their grievances on the Internet, such as through "Weibo" (the Chinese version of Twitter), or on a web forum. The anonymous feature of the Internet reduces the cost and risk of their resistance, and the prevalence of the Internet makes it easier to raise public concern. When a piece of news about illegal forestland expropriation is posted on Weibo (especially if there are photographs attached to prove it), it may be shared millions of times within a couple of minutes and soon get the public's attention, as well as that of the authorities.

Following the discussion above, villagers are not purely defenseless victims. They have their own weapons, sometimes useful under certain institutional context.

7.3 The role of the state

Except for the agency of the villagers, the role of the state in (re)shaping these villagers' political actions should never be neglected. On one hand, state, especially the local state, is the target that villagers resist against (So 2007). It is usually related to state's role in facilitating land grabs, which might lead to the expulsion or dispossession of villagers (Borras and Franco 2013, Wolford et al. 2013, Borras et al. 2012). In the case of Guangxi, the state at the local level acts as a broker to help big investors (e.g. Stora Enso) get access to land to build ITPs. Moreover, state-owned farms and even some cardres (or their relatives) are directly involved in the large-scale land acquisitions for ITPs. Thus, the state actors (mainly local state actors) sometimes are sued for illegal land expropriation.

On the other hand, the state sometimes facilitates and even fosters villagers' resistances. This is because of the dual functions of the state. As proposed by Fox (1993), except for facilitating capital

accumulation, the state has to maintain its political legitimacy. This is also the case in rural Guangxi. Faced with the villagers' resistances related to the expansion of ITPs, the local state is sometimes observed to connive at these actions. As described by a staff from a state-owned farm:

> Recently, villagers' land encroachment is very serious. To this illegal phenomena, the government usually turns a blind eye… We used to catch villagers' (illegal behaviour) at the scene, and sued them. Then, the judgment is that the land belongs to the state-owned farm and is illegally occupied by villagers. The state (staff) said that this land plot is certainly belonging to ours. But (he or she) do not support us to get the land back. Because the recapture with coercion will lead to resistances. Finally, villagers will go to the state for petitioning (shangfang). So (the land) is kept in the "bogged" status. The state just Da Tai Ji (which means to pass the buck). In normal time, (the state) says to support us, while final, it has to consider the general interest. (Field notes, 10th Mar 2015)

In this sense, the contradicted role of the state further complicates the trajectory of the villagers' political reactions.

7.4 Beyond the "villagers against foreign companies"

In this paper, villagers' political reactions are much more diverse than the popular "villagers against foreign companies" scenario. Firstly, villager's actions are not limited to "resistances", but also include "support, compliance, modifications and evasions" (Kerkvliet 2009, 233). It is because villagers have different control over the means of production, production process and outputs and distinct access to alternatives. Thus, villagers are impacted differently by the rise of the ITP sector: some gain, while some loss. Their variegated positions then lead to their diverse perceptions towards the ITP sector. Combined with their own complicated calculation under certain political-economic context, their political reactions are correspondingly different.

Secondly, those foreign companies are not the only actors that the villagers resisting against. On one hand, in line with the analysis by Borras and Franco (2012), foreign capital is not the sole power that leads to large-scale land control changes. In the case of the ITP sector in Guangxi, domestic private companies, state-owned companies, individual entrepreneurs, the state and local elites all play a role in the expansion, either as direct land recipients or indirect facilitators. Thus, they all might become the targets of the resistance when villagers' interests or even subsistence are seriously affected. On the other hand, villagers' struggles are not only around land control and targeted at "grabbers", but also related to the distribution of benefits among the villagers. Thus, villagers sometimes also resist against other counterparts. So, villagers' conflicts have more complicated contours. It could be "poor people versus corporate actors, poor people versus the state, and poor people versus poor people" (Borras and Franco 2013, Borras Jr, Franco, and Wang 2013, Hall et al. 2015).

In sum, an over-simplified frame cannot capture the complicated trajectories of political reactions of the villagers on the ground.

7.5 Beyond the land issue

In most of the literature about political reactions towards large-scale land-use and land control changes, the focal points of contradictions are usually on land. But as noticed by Paige (1978), the sources of income will lead to different conflict focuses. According to Paige (1978, 18),

> A noncultivating class drawing its income from land tends to be economically weak and must therefore rely on political restrictions on land ownership. These restrictions tend to focus conflicts on the control and distribution of landed property. A noncultivating class drawing its income from commercial or industrial capital is usually economically strong and requires fewer political restrictions on land ownership, and conflicts therefore tends to be focused on the distribution of income from property, not the ownership of property itself.

Applying it to the case of Guangxi, when villagers draw their income only from land, the conflicts are focused on the control of the land. In rural China, a large part of villagers draw their income from non-agriculture sectors rather than land *per se* (Ye, Wang, and Long 2009). For them, "farming income is just pocket money" (Field notes, 22nd Feb 2016). Thus, with the expansion of ITPs, some conflicts are focused on the distribution of profits derived from the sector and protecting villagers' livelihood from being affected by the sector, rather than the land issue itself.

To push the discussion a step further, villagers' concern is always centred on how to make their ends meet or get more income. When land is villagers' primary source of income, they are more likely to take actions when they loss or are threatened to loss their control over land. While, when land only brings very little income, villagers pay less attention on maintaining their land control. During my fieldwork in Guangxi, a large part of villages welcomed land consolidation programme (called as "*Shuang gao"* or "*Xiaokuai bian dakuai*")[9]. Some villagers are even eager to transfer their land control for the rent, as was pointed out repeatedly by one villager from a village in Xiangzhou County where the programme has not been introduced: "after my land is expropriated (refers to joining the programme and leasing the land out), I started to have money." (Field notes, 21st Feb 2016). Also, those villagers whose incomes are mainly driven from alternative off-farm work are less likely to enact resistances around land control. If this group of villagers resist, it is usually covert and for the negative impacts on their livelihoods.

So, to understand the complicated trajectory of political reactions within the large-scale land-use and land control changes, we should take the real interests of villagers as a unit of inquiry rather than simply put focus on the land issue.

8 Conclusion

This paper presents a more comprehensive analysis of the political reactions from below based on villagers' different linkages with the land-use and land control changes. It notes that the affected villagers are differentiated with varying interests and different resource endowments (e.g. land, labour and social resources). Also, it considers the certain political-economic environment that these land-based changes embedded in, including relevant institutional settings, market access and the intervention of the state.

This paper challenges the dichotomy of "exclusion versus inclusion". As it oversimplified the reality. In other words, the exclusion to a booming sector might not be a passive choice from the villagers under certain political economic context. Thus, it does not necessarily lead to the loss of villagers. In some cases, it even benefits villagers. Contrarily, the inclusion might not happen on villagers' own initiatives. Under certain terms, the incorporation even puts villagers in a more vulnerable position. The empirical data demonstrate that the term of inclusion and villagers' access to alternative livelihood opportunities are closely related to the win and loss of the affected villagers. Based on these two factors, this paper offers a more complicated typology, namely, passive inclusion, active inclusion, passive exclusion and active exclusion.

[9] The project started from the land exchange among the villagers within the community in Guangxi in 1996. At the beginning, such land consolidation was driven by the villagers spontaneously to exchange the fragmented land awarded in the HRS reform (as mentioned above) based on the social relations. Later the state (refers to provincial and county government) involved in and soon became the driving force. To be specific, the provincial state provided the bonuses for those villagers, rural cooperatives and companies who invested in the land levelling and infrastructure construction (including the road and irrigation construction) to encourage land consolidation from 2012; and the county state helped the villagers/rural communities seek for loans and firms specialised in land levelling/ infrastructures construction to facilitate the project. According to document issued by the provincial government, the area of the consolidated land is targeted to reach as large as 500000 mu in 2015 (equalling to 33333ha) (http://www.gxdlr.gov.cn/News/NewsShow.aspx?NewsId=9595 , accessed on 22nd Apr 2016)

Following this nuanced typology of the inclusion and exclusion, this paper analyzes the affected villagers' distinct positions within the value chain, their different attitudes towards these changes and their varied political responses correspondingly.

This paper investigates that the political reactions from the villagers are far more complicated than the "rural villagers resisting against the expulsion/ dispossession" scenario portrayed by recent land grabbing literature: villagers do not only resist against exclusion, but also struggle for better terms of their incorporation and reducing negative impacts on their livelihoods; villagers are resisting against not only land investors, but also other villagers; the conflicts are not only about land issue, but also about the distribution of benefits and environmental impacts. To understand such dynamics, this study indicates the need for a systematic examination of villagers' real interests within the changes based on their different positions within the value chain.

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