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Worker, peasant or entrepreneur? Analysis of the entrepreneurial logics and practices of family farmers in agrarian reform cooperatives in the Saiss (Morocco)

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Presentation outlines

1. Introduction and analytical framework

- *Three typical modes of farming*
- *The distinction between logics and practices in the modes of farming*

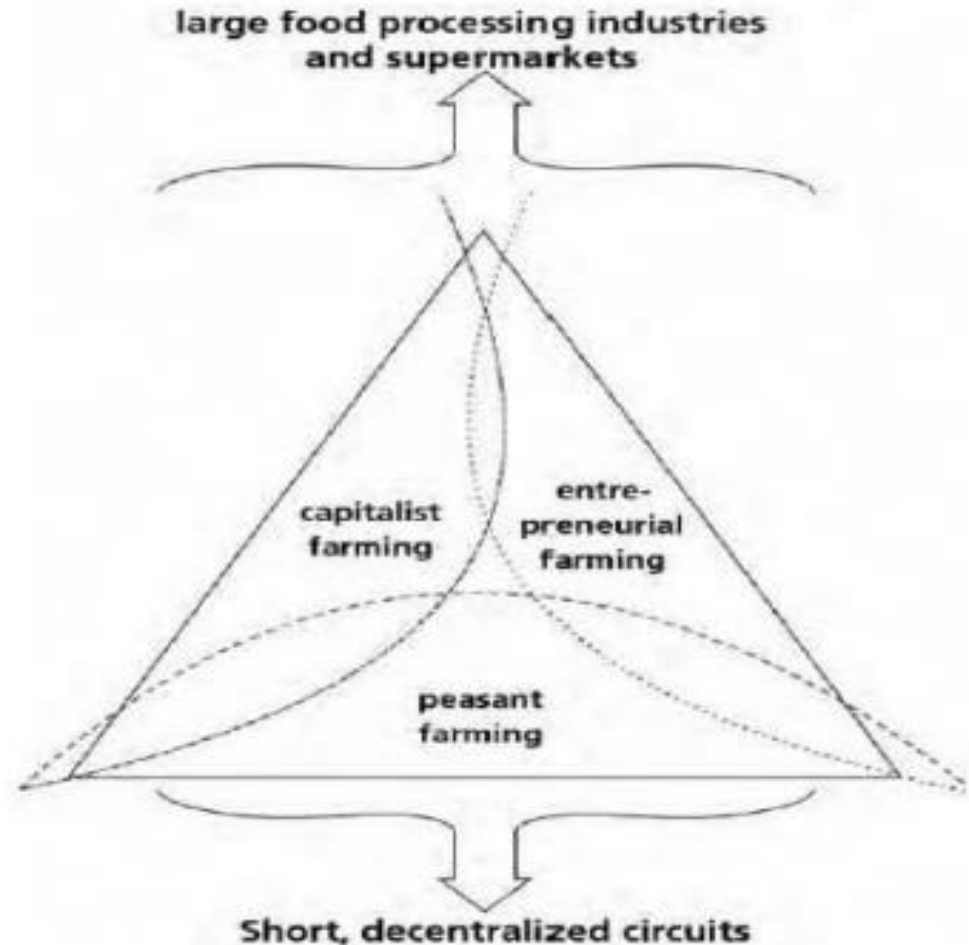
2. Analysis of the entrepreneurial logics and practices of family farmers in the Saiss

- *Presentation of the case study and context of the Groundwater Economy in the Saiss*
- *The emergence of entrepreneurial practices*
- *The underlying logics of farmers*

3. Discussion and conclusion - New peasantries? Hybridization in peasant and entrepreneurial practices and logics

Introduction and analytical framework

Three typical modes of farming



(source: Van der Ploeg, 2009)

The distinction between logics and practices in the modes of farming

- Practices describe how farmers act and how a mode of farming is concretely implemented
- Logics refer to the strategy and organization of the mode of farming

Entrepreneurial practices

The entrepreneurial practices aim at developing processes of production and commercialization more or less connected to the market, generating an added-value, which will enable to expand the investment and capitalization capacities.

These practices are based on an increased use of wage-labor force and on a strong investment in technologies. They are also based on a dependence on markets for :

- 1) input provision such as seeds, fertilizers and pesticides,**
- 2) productive resources such as land and water, and**
- 3) financial means (credit)**

Entrepreneurial logics

- The entrepreneurial logics are grounded on a will to generate **higher profits** so as to develop, expand and intensify food production.
- **Subsistence food producing** agriculture is **not considered as a satisfactory end**.
- **Attachment to land is weak**.
- **Land** is much more considered as an **input** whose profitability must be maximized.
- This way of thinking is intrinsically based on a **short-term horizon**
- Finally, the entrepreneurial logics are based on **an organization of the farm developed on a shareholder basis** or according to a hierarchical logic: in all cases **outside of the family sphere**.

Peasant practices

Peasant practices are based on :

- loose ties with the market economy, concerning the employment of workforce (the workforce used is mainly related to the extended network of the family),
- the use of inputs (natural fertilizers, coming from their own livestock)
- Financial aspects (no bank loan contracts but informal credit).

Peasant logics

Peasant logics are characterized by :*

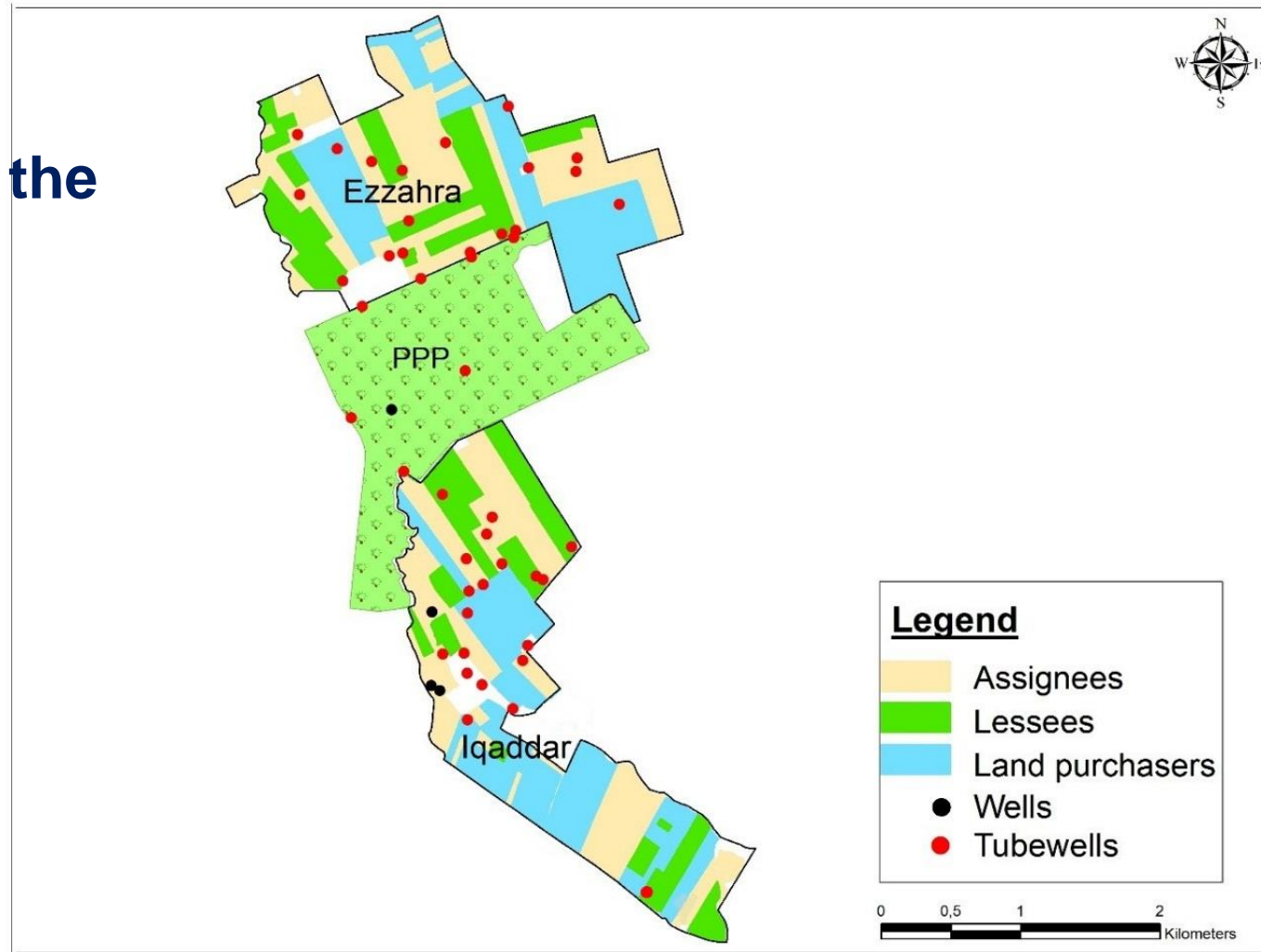
- a mode of development aiming at subsistence food producing agriculture or turned towards the acquisition of comfort.
- The added value generated by agricultural production is intended neither to fund the expansion of the farm, nor the degradation of productive resources such as land or water
- Moreover, the peasant logics are based on the idea of land transfer towards future generations
- Thus, the organization is primarily turned towards the family.

Analysis of the entrepreneurial logics and practices of family farmers in the Saiss

- Empirical study conducted in 2013 (Papin-Stammose, 2013) and 2014 (Martin, 2014) in two agrarian reform cooperatives located in the Saiss plain (Morocco): Ezzahra and Iqaddar.
- We tried to analyze the factors explaining the emergence of entrepreneurial agricultural practices
- However, we contrast this trend by showing the persistence and resurgence of peasant practices

Analysis of the entrepreneurial logics and practices of family farmers in the Saiss

Presentation of the Study area



Analysis of the entrepreneurial logics and practices of family farmers in the Saiss

The emergence of entrepreneurial practices

We have more particularly focuses on five factors

- (1) the financial factors (investment, credit),
- (2) the factors linked with the functioning of the farm: rotation of the crops, the use of inputs such as workforce, fertilizers and pesticides, seeds, etc.)
- (3) the factors linked to the access to water resources and especially to groundwater,
- (4) the commercialization practices adopted by farmers
- (5) the informational factors

The underlying logics of farmers

The logics of farmers deal basically with:

- (1) the logic of capital use,
- (2) the relationship to land,
- (3) the capacity to expand the size of the farm (inside and outside of the cooperative), and finally
- (4) the farm organization.

New peasantries? Hybridization in peasant and entrepreneurial practices and logics

The porosity of the worlds, idealized in our presentation following the methodology we chose to adopt, is the main lesson we can draw from our study.

What happens in reality is a subtle process of hybridization between the peasant and entrepreneurial modes of farming, with a wide range of profiles, ranging from a pure 'peasant', to a pure 'entrepreneur' and integrating, in between, the figures of the peasant-entrepreneur and of the entrepreneur-peasant.

New peasantries? Hybridization in peasant and entrepreneurial practices and logics

The figure of the **entrepreneur**, as idealized by the Moroccan agricultural policy (Green Morocco Plan of 2008) seems to operate as a powerful and strange magnet to small farmers, especially young men, who continue to develop their activities in a structure and organizational mode of farming inherited from their ancestors (the Peasant mode of farming), but try, on a trial and error basis, to progressively integrate the knowledge, techniques and innovations developed in the entrepreneurial mode of farming.

New peasantries? Hybridization in peasant and entrepreneurial practices and logics

If we only focus on the political discourse in the field of agriculture, the trend in the development of new modes of farming seems inescapable.

Our study stresses the persistence and resistance of practices and logics of ancestral modes of farming which can mix with a 'modern' vision of agriculture.

However, in several cases, the siren songs of entrepreneurship can lead to bankruptcy, an exit from agriculture, which could also have a strong impact on the social cohesion of the Moroccan society, particularly in rural areas such as the one we have studied.