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THE IMPACT OF LAND COMMODIFICATION ON SMALLAND LANDLESS FARMER'S ACCESS TO RENT LAND IN THE SUB-URBAN VILLAGE^{*} DAMPAK KOMODIFIKASI LAHAN TERHADAP AKSES PETANI KECIL DAN PETANI TUNAKISMA PADA PENYEWAAN TANAH DI DESA-SUBURBAN

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Intisari: Artikel ini membahas akses petani untuk menyewa lahan untuk pertanian padi di desa di pinggir Yogyakarta. Penelitian ini menggunakan teori ekonomi politik untuk mendeskripsikan beroperasinya kelembagaan penyewaan lahan. Pengumpulan data dilakukan melalui wawancara mendalam dengan informan kunci, observasi dan survei. Informan kunci itu adalah seorang pejabat desa, dua kepala sub-desa, tiga ketua kelompok tani, dan lima penyewa tanah. Mereka diwawancarai tentang berbagai bentuk lembaga penyewaan tanah, posisi dan kuasa para pelaku dalam praktik penyewaan tanah. Pengamatan dilakukan untuk mengidentifikasi penggunaan lahan yang menjadi objek sewa, dan survei dilakukan di tiga dusun sampel untuk menghitung jumlah petani dan pengusaha agribisnis dan nonpertanian yang menyewa lahan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa petani kecil dan petani tunakisma menyewa lahan untuk ketahanan pangan. Ada tiga jenis lahan yang menjadi objek sewa, yaitu tanah milik pribadi, *bengkok* sebagai gaji pegawai desa, dan tanah kas desa. Komodifikasi telah mengurangi akses petani kecil dan petani tunakisma untuk menyewa lahan, khususnya tanah *bengkok* dan kas desa. Sebaliknya, komodifikasi telah meningkatkan akses lahan bagi pelaku agribisnis dan investor di sektor nonpertanian.

Kata kunci: Petani kecil dan tunakisma; komodifikasi lahan; institusi penyewaan tanah; tanah privat; *bengkok*; tanah kas desa

Abstract: This article discusses farmers' access to rent land for rice farming in a suburban village on the outskirts of Yogyakarta. This study uses a political economy theory to describe the operation of land leasing institutions. Data collection was carried out through in-depth interviews with key informants, observations and surveys. The key informants were a village official, two sub-village heads, three farmer group leaders, and five land tenants. They were interviewed on the various forms of land leasing institutions, the positions and powers of actors in land leasing practices. Observations were conducted to identify land uses that were the object of lease, and surveys were conducted in three sample sub-villages to calculate the number of farmers and agribusiness and non-agricultural businessmen who rented land. The results showed that small farmers and landless farmers rent land for food security. There are three types of land that are the object of lease, namely privately owned land, *bengkok* as village employee salaries, and village treasury land. The commodification has reduced the access of smallholders and landless farmers to rent land, especially *bengkok* land and village treasuries. Conversely, commodification has increased land access for agribusiness actors and investors in the non-agricultural sector. **Keywords:** Small and landless farmers; land commodification; land leasing institutions, private land; *bengkok*; village treasury land

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A. Introduction

This paper highlights the problem concerning the bargaining position among small and landless farmers to rent land in suburban villages. Land rent refers to leasing land which has legal status as wet rice agriculture land (*sawah*). In practice farmers, still need to rent the land for growing rice, while the investors used them for sugar cane agribusiness or commercial areas such as shops, cafes, restaurants and other non-farm sectors. Farmers were faced with the problem of the availability of leased land because the availability of land was reduced as a result of many villagers renting out land to investors. Meanwhile, urbanization has also led to a decline in the number of farmers, thus affecting the supply of rented land.

Following the classical economy theory on supply-demand relation, the cost of land lease decrease, if there is a large proportion of supply with a stable/small proportion of demand (Needham, Segeren and Buitelaar 2011). Therefore, decreasing number of farmers will benefit the farmers, because smaller number means easier access to land (Needham, Segeren and Buitelaar 2011). However, while recent studies have explored contemporary problems faced by farmers, very little is known about farmers' livelihood to land rent. Most of them focused on the farmers' effort in facing economic crisis (Hekmatyar & Nugroho 2018), farmers' conflict against agribusiness companies in land rights usage competition (Antoro, 2013), land reform movement (Resosudarmo et al 2019; Anugrah 2015; Lestari & Purwandari 2014); improving food security and sovereignty (Mujib 2020; Suharko & Hudayana 2020; Umanailo 2018; Yunindyawati 2014), and farmers' income and empowerment (Listiani, Setiadi & Santoso 2019; Hekmatyar & Nugroho 2018; Simanjuntak, Subejo & Witjaksono 2016; Lestiani et al 2016; Setiawan, Haidar, Pakniany & Mutiar 2015; Nurmanaf 2015; Fridayanti & Dharmawan 2013)

Several recent agrarian studies, in the reform era, have focused on farmers in a suburban context. For instance, a study highlights a phenomena of farmers sold their land to improve their welfare (Hidayati & Kinseng 2013). Conversely, a recent study explored the reasons for farmers' reluctance to sell their land (Aprildahani, Hasyim & Rachmawati 2017). Others have discussed the impact of land conversion on the decrease of agricultural production and farmers' welfare, and agricultural institution needed for protecting farmers (Hidayat, Ismail & Ekayani 2017; Janah, Trisetyo, & Dalmiyatun 2017; Rondhi et al 2017; Wibowo 2015; Setiawan, Haidar, Pakniany & Mutiar 2015; Lestari & Purwandari 2014). Nevertheless, very few have discussed such impacts on small and landless farmers' access to land lease.

Previous studies have dealt with farmers' access to rent land in the village (Utomo dan Wulandari 2020; Nursiyamsih 2015; Parmono 2009). These studies have investigated the socioeconomic factors influencing farmers to rent out their land on long term lease (Nursiyam 2015), the economic institutions that regulate village land lease and the influence of patron-client relation in the leasing process (Pramono 2009), as well as the ways in which land renting practices are organized by rational economic principle (Utomo and Wulandari 2020). Nonetheless, none of these studies have addressed the impacts of land commodification on farmers' access to rent agricultural land in semi-urban settings.

The studies in China showed that urbanization had decreased the amount of farm land which threatened farmers' livelihood (Wong 2015; He & Xue 2014). Urbanization had changed the land value and function as non-agricultural commodity which decreased the land supply for the farmers (Giles & Mu 2018; He & Xue 2014). As the result, the farmers would resist the urbanization process in their village (Wong 2015; He & Xue 2014). In Indonesia, the studies showed that industrialization in the village had weaken the agricultural communities such that the farmers' interests in their economic activities were not accommodated (Setiawan, Haidar, Pakniany & Mutiar 2015).

Studies in India showed different research finding. Urbanization in villages did not always have negative impact toward the farmers. In India, urbanization decreased the number of small and landless farmers in the villages. As the result, the farmers were able to increase their bargaining power in land contract and sharecropping (Mughal 2019; Brown, Ganguly-Scrase & Scrase 2016).

In Indonesia, beside urbanization, reformation also affected the agrarian relationship pattern in the village. Political reform of Indonesia began in 1998 has created democratic and autonomous village government (Antlöv, Wetterberg & Dharmawan 2016). The impact of the democratic village and autonomy created new power relations, in which village citizen have better position rather than during the new order (Antlöv, Wetterberg & Dharmawan 2016; Hudayana 2011). Meanwhile, the political reform also influenced new policies and the use of regarding village treasury land; but there were no studies which examined its effect, for example, on farmers.

This article aims to explore farmers' access to rent land in a suburb village, to examine the impact of urbanization on those in agricultural sectors. The village in this study was Sariharjo, located in Yogyakarta suburb region. Located in Yogyakarta Special Region, the regulation stated that the lands do not belong only to individuals, but also to villages. The land area which is owned the villages are vast. According to Chapter four Rijksblad Kasultanan No. 16, 1918 on land reform, the village treasury land comprises one fifth of village area. Therefore, besides focusing on private land, this article examines the land rent institution for *bengkok* as village customary land which yield given to village officers as salary substitute, and village treasury land.

This article begins by proposing the hypothesis that land commodification has changed land leasing institutions, thereby threatening access to land leases for small and landless farmers, particularly for *bengkok* and village treasury land. To confirm that hypothesis, this article used a political economy theory perspective in village land rent market. One of the perspectives in political economy argue that to control economic resources, actors make use of their political power (Caporaso & David Levine 2012). The basis of political power can take the form of material capital, social capital, authority, ideology and mass power (Kurtz 2001). In controlling economic resources, actors rely on the political power. Institutionalists argue that actors have a stake in controlling economic institutions because these institutions play a significant role in regulating individual rights, duty and behaviors in the context of economic transaction (Needham, Segeren & Buitelaar 2011; Acheson 1994).

This paper argues that to examine the operationalization of political economy approach in this topic, it is important to look at the institutions regulating land leasing. In using their political power, economic actors-including farmers, entrepreneurs, and village officials-attempt to control the leasing institutions for their own benefit. Therefore, from an institutional point of view, the land rent rate is not determined by the law of supply and demand, but by how the economic institutions work in determining the availability of land supply, access for farmers, and cost of land lease (Needham, Segeren and Buitelaar 2011; Acheson 1994). In this way, economic institutions are not singular in practice. Some protect small farmers rights and access to village land, while others threaten to reduce their access.

Economic institution is an arrangement made by farmers, village institution, and the state. The strong or weak position of an actor in the power relation determines their influence in various arrangements in any institution that meet their interest. Institutions that protect farmers 'interests will control rental rates so that they have the capacity to guarantee farmers' access to land. In fact, institution of land distribution that needed to facilitate and protect small farmers, often controlled by powerful actors, and therefore some researchers consider government as the protector of small farmers (Mujib 2020; Shohibuddin 2019). In countries such as India, the landreform protected the land renters, because they have weak bargaining in land contract agreement without the intervention of the state policy (Besley et al 2016; Ray 2016; Sharma 2010).

By using a political economy perspective, this

paper considered that individuals or organizations could influence land rent institution that control land distribution in the village (Ray 2016). Therefore, a political economy approach is relevant for understanding how land leasing institution works. With this approach, several studies in India and China have focused on how the political power of farmers and village elites can play an important role in economic transactions. These studies shown how village elites defended their interests and used their power to control land rental institutions (Xu 2018; Giles & Mu 2018; Ray 2016; Wong 2015).

This research mostly relied on qualitative data, besides applying relevant quantitative data that collected by conducting survey. The qualitative data consisted of farmers' knowledge and experiences about their access to land rent, and the land rent institutions, either private land, *bengkok*, or village treasury land. Other qualitative data are the practice of village officials and the government in using their power to regulate the rental of *bengkok* and village treasury lands. These data describe their political actions during the reform era.

Researcher is a resident who lived in the farmer communities in the village for more than 10 years, hence the researcher know the farmers well, and are easy to collect qualitative data through indepth interview and observation. While living among them, the researcher conducted in-depth interview with some key informants. They were two sub-village heads, one village official, six heads of farmer-breeders groups, three land tenants from farmers, and two land tenant from nonfarmer, and three land owners who were rented out. The data gathering was conducted intensively from the end of 2019, and April-May 2020.

Qualitative data was used to describe the forms of institutional land leasing, including individualowned, *bengkok*, and village treasure land. Qualitative data analysis describe and explain the people's knowledge, and the ways land commodification work in the context of those three kinds of land institution.

To complement the qualitative data, a survey was conducted to collect quantitative data, includ-

ing the number of land owners, renting and nonrenting farmers, and number investor who rent the land. The quantitative data also comprised the land area, the number of small scale and landless farmer who rent land, and the number of land owners. These data were collected with the help of key informants: sub-village chiefs, farmer group organizers in each sub-village.

The survey was conducted in three sub-village samples. From 16 sub-villages of Sriharjo, six subvillages were located in the north. From those six sub-villages, three sub-villages were sampled, namely Ngetiran, Tegalrejo, and Tambakrejo. To verify tenant distribution data on individual land, village treasury land and *bengkok*, researcher conducted field observations guided by farmer figures and at the same time some tenant farmers.

In this paper, farmers are classified into three categories. A middle farmer owned land area of 0.251 to 0.50 hectares, a small farmer 0.005 to 0.250 hectares, and a landless farmer is those who has no own land. This classification was made based on the point of view of local farmers which described the real phenomena of land ownership and distribution in the village.

Survey data was analyzed to described the statistical pattern of land tenant distribution based on their occupation status, and the distribution pattern of *bengkok* and village treasury land lease based on the status of farmers and investors. Statistical data from the survey was analyzed to find patterns of land lease.

B. Sariharjo Village: Urbanization and Decreasing Number of Farmers

Sariharjo village is located at Ngaglik Subdistrict, Sleman District, Yogyakarta Special Region (See *Figure 1*). As an area of urban expansion, parts of the village are increasingly used for housing areas by people working in the city. Decreasing number of village residents work in agricultural sector, with majority working in non-agricultural sector (Kurnianingsih 2011). This village is categorized as sub-urban area for three reasons. First, Sariharjo Village is a hinterland of Yogyakarta City. The area of the village is 6.9 km², populated by 28.834 inhabitants, with the density of 4.185 inhabitants per km². The high density was caused by the growing suburb industries in Sariharjo village since 10 years ago. Urbanization attracted immigrants from outside the village, and urban economic sector displaced the agricultural rural sector in the village (Li et al 2018; Jedwab, Christiaensen & Gindelsky 2017).

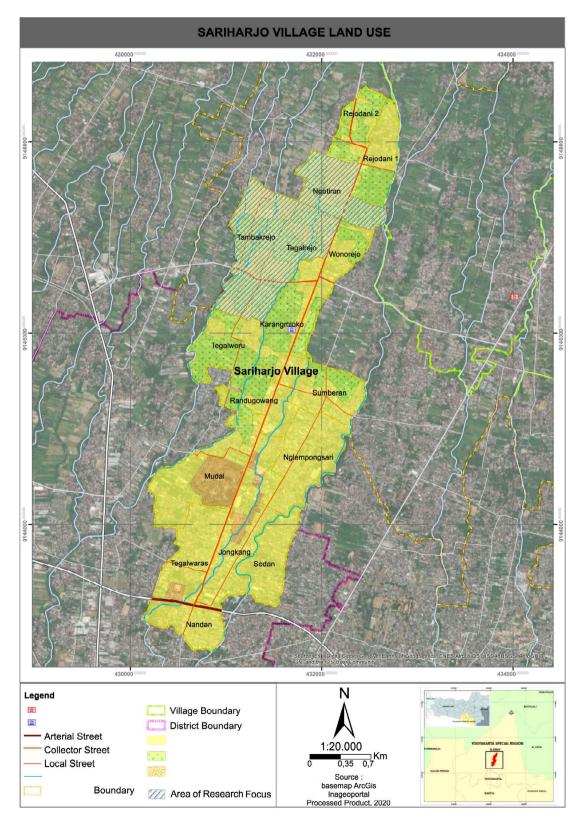


Figure 1. Map of Sariharjo Village.Source: Research Data 2020

The urbanization of Sariharjo was caused by the growing of Yogyakarta City as the city of education and tourism. Sariharjo, as one of industrial area, functions as a buffer region for Yogyakarta. There were 12 starred hotels and 16 nonstarred hotels, 250 homestays in this region. There were also many restaurants, cafes, department stores along Palagan Street and along the paved road in several sub-villages. This region also had four private universities which created demand for many boarding rooms. Located near Yogyakarta City, the growing number of immigrants generated dozens of housing complexes, three luxurious real estates, and two apartments.

Second, as part of Yogyakarta buffer zone, there has been a significant increase of Sariharjo population, particularly with newcomers coming to reside in the village. The population of Sariharjo grew rapidly, from about 12.000 persons in 2001 to 26.000 persons in 2019. The number of household in 2019 was 6.181 unit; among them many were immigrants. The immigrants even dominated several sub-villages located only 500 meters from the ring road of Yogyakarta. The immigrants lived in housing complexes or villages. Many of them bought farm land, either to build houses or just for investment.

Third, with the transformation into sub-urban area, the majority of Sariharjo residents who were descendants of farmers worked in non-agricultural sector, such as in microbusiness, private sectors, or as public servants. The social mobility as shown in this village can be seen in many villages of Indonesia (Janah, Trisetyo & Dalmiyatun 2017) and villages in India (Brown, Ganguly-Scrase, & Scrase 2016).

Urbanization had lowered the number of farmers in Sariharjo. The number of farmers could be estimated from the information collected from sub-village chiefs and officers. In 2019, there were only 669 (11%) out of 6.181 households which were farmers. The farmers could be divided into middle, small, and landless farmers. There were 161 (24%) households of middle farmers, 335 (50%) small farmers, and 173 (26%) landless farmers.

Further data collection in three sub-villages

namely Ngetiran, Tambakrejo, and Tegalrejo, show the total number of farming household was 154 units (27%). The distribution was as follows: 21 units (13.6%) middle scale farmers, 82 units (53.2%) small scale farmers, and 51 units (33.1%) landless farmers. While the numbers of farmers have continued to decrease, villagers who worked in the agricultural sector still lack access to do farm work. Increasingly, land in the village were converted into housing complexes.

The land area for rice field (*sawah*) in Sariharjo was 220 hectares, and non-rice field farm land (*tegalan*) was 203.2 hectares, and non-farming land was 265.8 hectares. Many rice fields and nonrice field farm lands were converted to housing complexes every year. In 2018, more than three hectares of rice field was converted to housing complexes. In the three sub-villages, more than 10 hectares of land have been converted into housing complexes, such as Tegalrejo Asri, Palagan Asri, and Green Village. This conversion continued because there were no regulation and budgeting policies from the government to protect the farm land and farmers' livelihood (Hidayati, Siregar & Falatehan 2017).

Many villagers chose to work in non-agricultural sector because of the urbanization as a rational choice (Firdaus & Ateeque 2011). Most of inhabitants in Sariharjo thought that it was better to work in non-agricultural sector instead of working as landless farmers. As manual laborers, they could earn Rp 120.000,00 per day. However, there are a small proportion of villagers who remain farmers because they still owned land for rice fields and still had access to rent land. Similar to farmers in several studies, Sariharjo farmers perceived importance of rice field to ensure food security; hence they were reluctant to sell their land (Wibowo 2015).

Besides working in farm, small and landless farmers could earn their livelihood by raising cows and goats. In every sub-village in northern Sariharjo, there were livestock raising farmers group. Each farmer could have 1-2 cows, or 4-6 goats. In addition, several small scale and landless farmers and their wives also worked as manual laborers to earn additional income.

From the discussion with the farmers, they said that they could meet their basic needs, especially food, from farming and raising livestock. By working on 0,25 hectares rice field and having 1-2 cows, one household could earn Rp 9-12 million per year, and they could earn additional income by working as manual laborers as much as Rp 4,5-6 million per year. To work on 0,25 hectares land, farmers, especially landless farmers, had to rent land either from individual owners, *bengkok*, or village treasury land.

Farmers, especially small and landless farmers, still expected to get access to land leases from private land, *bengkok* or village treasury land. However, only about 60 percent have this access. According to key informants, most of them have strong access to leasing privately owned land than *bengkok* and village treasury land. The low level of access to land leases in the village was influenced by the political economy and the operation of land rental institutions as described below.

C. Farmers Access to Rent Land from Private Owners

From the information gathered in three subvillages, there were always rice field for rent each year, either for investors, middle scale, small scale, or landless farmers. The first category of land supply was from non-farmer land owners, usually owned by inheritance. The second category of supply was from middle scale and small scale farmers.

The first category, non-farmer land owners, leased their land because they did not possess any farming skill. Considering the labor cost, the farming business did not give significant profit. They also knew that it was not easy to obtain farm workers. Many farm workers have moved to become daily workers in the construction sector. Therefore, they could easily get additional income by renting the land.

The second category, middle class and small class farmers, leased their land because they needed substantial cash for urgent matters, such as building house, paying loan, or giving extra money for their children to get a job in non-agricultural sector or to migrate to other cities to get a job. The lands were usually rented for more than three years. Most farmers who rented the land were middle to large scale farmers, because they possessed more capital compared to small scale farmers.

Farmers are bound to certain institution when renting individually owned land. This institution regulates the agreed rate, and uses as reference in bargaining. The rate implicitly assumes that the land is used to grow rice. Therefore, this institution is in accordance with the farmers' expectation, especially small scale and landless farmers, which engage in farming to get their food supply and ensure food security.

The rent rate of private land is based on the net yield of the land, divided by two between the owner and renter. The net earnings is calculated from the total gross earnings, deducted by production cost and labor cost. In Sariharjo, 1.000 m² of rice field usually yields a gross earnings of Rp 4.400.000 per year for two harvests. A renter farmer for the 1.000 m² spends about Rp 400.000 for production cost and Rp 1.700,000 for labor cost, so that the total cost is Rp 2.100.000; hence the net earnings is Rp 2.300.000. The net earnings is divided between the land owner and the renter, Rp 1.150.000 each. The farmer then fixes the rate about Rp1.100 per meter squared, such that the total rent for 1.000 m² of rice field is about Rp 1.100.000, close the earnings of Rp 1.125.000 as calculated above. Bargaining could happened, but the final rate usually is approximately Rp 1.000 per meter squared.

The farmers, especially small scale and landless farmers, could have access to rent land, because their institution allowed them to rent the land at affordable rate, which they could work on to get their food supply and ensured food security.

Table 1 showed that most land supplies were from non-farmer land owners, while most renters were small scale and landless farmers, followed by middle class farmers and business investors. The high number of land renters from the small farmer group (35,00%) and landless farmer group (37,50%) demonstrate that these two groups have the biggest interest to rent the land of non-farmers. Compared to middle farmers, these two groups were more active in approaching landowners to rent their land. Without external investors, these two groups only competed against middle farmers to access land. However, the growing number of business investors had threatened small and landless farmers, and they started to rent land near the center of the village. In 2019, for example, some new investors rent three pieces of land for agribusiness, cafe, and repair workshop.

Table 1. Numbers and Percentage of Land Renters Owned by Individuals in Three Subvillages

			Land renter category				
No	Land Owner	Investors	Middle	Small	Landless	Total	
			Farmers	Farmers	Farmers		
1	Non-farmers	6	5	14	15	40	
		(15.00%)	(12.5%)	(35.00%)	(37.50%)	(100%)	
2	Middle	3	4	7	3	17	
	Farmers	(17.60%)	(23.50%)	(41.20%)	(17.60%)	(100%)	
3	Small	2	1	5	4	12	
	Farmers	(16.70%)	(8.30%)	(41.70%)	(33.33%)	(100%)	
	Total	11	10	26	22	69	
		(15.90 %)	(14.50%)	(37.70%)	(31.90%)	(100%)	

Note: The data were collected by researcher based the information given by key informants about farmers and renter's profile in each sub-village.

The small and landless farmers also faced competition from middle farmers because the middle farmers had more capital. They didn't need additional land for food security, but using it to grow chilies, tobaccos, and vegetables. They also chose better irrigated land to reap better harvest. Thus, private land commodification benefited investors, and middle farmers as they had access to financial capital and strong bargaining position. While the number of investors and middle farmers was small, they had access to relatively more fertile and larger land. Findings from the qualitative research demonstrated that these investors and middle farmers were able to lease land for a longer period. In Java, the system is called oyotan (Nursiyam 2015).

In addition, the qualitative findings also revealed that small and landless farmers were not able to rent land located in the strategic area, such as by the road, and land with good access to irrigation. For landless farmers, even renting infertile land was difficult. Many had no financial resource to rent land; hence, they opted for selling their cattle or seeking loan.

Furthermore, although this institution allowed farmers, especially small scale and landless farmers, to rent private land, in the long-term process they would face land supply scarcity caused by the impact of urbanization. First, it is because of population growth. Because of the population growth of 2,28% per year, and the growing of urban housing complex, there was only 30% of land used for wet rice cultivation in Sariharjo (Riyandi & Putra 2016). Second, it is because of commodification, the non-farmers who owned the land did not need their land to meet their livelihood, thus they treated it as a commodity that could be sold or converted to build a house for their own children.

D. Small Farmers and Landless Farmers' Access to Rent *Bengkok* Land

In Sariharjo, the area of land traditionally assigned as salary substitute land for the village officers or *bengkok* land was approximately 30 hectares. There were 32 village officers (including the head of village), so that each officer got on average 0.9 hectares. Each piece of *bengkok* land is divided into three section—each section is called one "persil"—so each officer had three *persils*. Each *persil* could be rented separately.

Unlike the private land, *bengkok* leasing institution was controlled by the village officers. The village officers would lease the land to the highest bidder for the term of two until three years. As a result, the most potential renters were agribusiness owners, who used the land to grow sugar cane, and shop owners (Table 2). The rent rate depends on the location and land usage. If the land is located on the road side and is used to build a shop, the rate could reach Rp 4.000,00 per meter squared per year. For a rice field area of 500 m², an village officer could earn Rp 2.000.000,00 per year. For agribusiness purpose, the rent could reach Rp 2,500,00 per meter squared per year. Table 2. The Distribution of *Bengkok* Renters,
by Category in Sariharjo Village

No	Renter's Category	Number and Percentage of Renter		
		Number	Percentage	
1	Agribusiness	29	25.2	
2	Shop owners	26	22.6	
3	Middle Farmers	22	19.1	
4	Small Farmers	18	15.6	
5	Landless Farmers	20	17.4	
	Total	115	100.0	

Note: The data were collected by researcher based the information given by key informants about farmers and renter's profile in each Sub-village.

Considering the economic opportunity, officers preferred renters from businessmen rather than farmers. The businessmen also preferred to rent *bengkok* land because the regulation permit to rent for farm or nonfarm business and in practice the land is permitted to be rented for more five years. Nevertheless, there were middle scale, small scale, and landless farmers who also rented *bengkok* land (see Table 2). This was caused by the condition that the businessmen only rented the land on the road side.

Unlike in private land, the rent rate of bengkok land was fixed by village officers unilaterally. Farmers actually tried to control the distribution and leasing of *bengkok* for their welfare. In 2009, for example, farmers in Tegal Sub-village protested a new village officers for renting out crooked land to a sugarcane plantation entrepreneur. In keeping with his promise, the new village official was supposed to lease the land to the peasants as promised when he campaigned to be elected as village officers. However, the protests were dismissed because the village officers felt that the rental price was equivalent to land for rice crops. For many village officials, they needed to increase income by leaving *bengkok* land for investors rather than for farmers.

The village officers chose to apply open market system for the land rent institution. In open market system, the highest bidder could rent the land. Therefore, small scale and landless farmer, with lower purchase power, could not have the opportunity to rent the land. There are two factors why village officials choosen *bengkok* land

rent institutions using the open market system. First, land had become a commodity which could generate high revenue if used for commercial sector instead of for small scale agricultural sector. Second, democracy and village autonomy had increased the competition among village elites for the position as village head or officers. This competition required political support from many interest groups, rather than gaining support from a small number of farmers. Therefore, they didn't think that they need to maintain the patron client relationship, which required them to provide lands for farmers to rent. To get political support from residents, village elites then used money politics or relied on their credibility (Hudayana 2011).

E. Small Farmers and Landless Farmers' Access to Rent Village Treasury Land

Land commodification in Sariharjo caused by urbanization also encouraged village government to cater the businessmen's interest rather than the farmers' in village treasury land rent institution. The village officers were tempted to rent the land to businessmen in order to get greater revenue to finance village operational cost and development. They wanted to follow several villages that have high village income because they have converted the village treasury land from agriculture to nonagriculture, and rented it out to investors. As shown in Atmasari (2015) in the Jogja Daily, it is stated that the original income of Condongcatur Village is IDR five billion a year. As shown in Atmasari (2015) in Harian Jogja stated that the local revenue of Condongcatur Village was Rp5 billion a year

The investors needed the village government for providing land supply. They preferred to rent village treasury land because the price of the road side land owned by individuals were very high. The land price on Palagan road side could reach Rp16.000.000 per m², while the rent rate was only Rp5.000 per m² per year.

The village treasury land area in Sariharjo village was approximately 45 hectares. About eight hectares was used for village commercial area such as village marketplace, and public facilities such as schools, kindergartens, mosques, sub-village and community meeting halls. About 32 hectares was allocated for business sectors and farmers. Those 32 hectares was spread equally in 18 sub-villages, so each sub-village had approximately two hectares. The available land for the farmers also decreased because each village embarked on new enterprises, such renting for shophouses in 2001, and building recreational park in 2019 which covered area of one hectare.

The village government did not easily choose lease village treasury land to increase local revenue. The government had to accommodate the people while ensuring the village budget cash flow. In the beginning of reformation era in 1999, farmers had resisted against the village officers who chose to get more revenue by renting the land to businessmen. Dozens of middle scale, small scale, and landless farmers staged demonstration at village office to demand the government to limit the access of land rent for sugar cane agribusiness. The government met their demand, but still leased about three hectares to sugar cane businessmen since 2000. When the farmers lost the access to rent land because of agrarian conflict, farmers' movement served as a reaction to the degradation of farmer's social economic status (Anugrah 2015; Lestari & Purwandari 2014).

The village officers still had another trick up their sleeve to respond to the farmer's demand for renting village treasury land. The village officers in Sariharjo applied a strategy to give access to farmers to rent only the land within their own sub-village with low rate. By limiting access, farmers in one sub-village could not build alliance in the entire village to gain greater political power. By localizing the access to village treasury land, farmers in one sub-village competed with each other to get access instead of demanding the right to rent the village treasury land to the village government.

The village government in Sariharjo did not implement open land leasing system based on auction. Such open auction system gives better access for farmers to earn a living by providing a fixed quota of land for farmers (Pramono 2009). However, the village officers of Sariharjo granted access to farmers for renting the village treasury land with strict procedure. They had to give a proposal to the sub-village chief, and the sub-village chief would send it the village government. The government would process the proposal later on. The farmers would be given access to rent a *persil* if the previous renter did not renew the rent. The farmers usually had to wait for three to five years before they could rent the village treasury land.

The survey in three sub-villages in 2020 provided descriptive data on the village treasury land allocation. The total area of village treasury land in Sariharjo village was approximately 45 hectares, distributed about 2-3 hectares each sub-village. In the three sub-villages being surveyed, the area of village treasury land was more than 4.9 hectares, and this land was leased to farmers and businessmen.

First, a group of farmer, collectively, rented 1.5 hectares of the land for raising their livestock in three sub-villages. The farmer group started to rent the land in 2007-2008. The village government accepted the farmer's proposal because they were supported by the entire village to keep the village clean from animal's manure. However, the village government used this opportunity to increase the rent rate, knowing that the profit from livestock raising was quiet high. The village government then increase the rent rate from Rp 800 to be Rp 2.000 per m². Farmers did not accept increases in land rental prices, but the village government insists that rents are cheap compared to non-agricultural businesses.

Second, farmers rented 1.1 hectares of the land for rice agriculture. There were 28 person (19,3 % of total farmers), especially small and landless farmers; each farmer rented about 400 m², with the rate of Rp 800 per m² per year. There are 120 person (80,7 % of total farmers) who have not access to rent village treasury land even though they generally need it.

Third, investors rented 2.3 hectares of the land,

in which for sugarcane farming covering an area of around 1.5 hectares; for shops, cafe, and nonfarm business covering an area of 0.6 hectares; for garden and monument of around 0.6 hectares, and volleyball court of 0.1 hectare.

Being hegemonized, some farmers with no access to rent land were still trying to find another opportunity. They got the opportunity during the village chief election in 2015. Several farmers tried to force the chief candidate to prioritize the farmers for the village treasury land rent allocation. But during the office term from 2015-2019, the village chief and village representative council if fact increased the allocation of land to be leased to businessmen to get more revenue. Meanwhile, the province government tended to grant permits to change the use of village land treasury as rice fields to be non-farm businesses land rather than protecting them for the benefit of farmers.

Within farmer's organization, they realized the importance of leasing village treasury land to improve farmers' welfare instead of catering to the investors' interest. However, considering the agrarian conflict, farmers' view was hegemonized by the point of view of authorities and business enterprise (Muji 2020). Village officers in Sariharjo said that the village treasury land had to serve the interest of the public interest, not just of the farmers. They also stated the policy of leasing the village treasury land was formulated by the village representative council, representing the public interest. The argument of the village officers was against the regulation stating that the function of village treasure land is to serve the farmers' interest. Therefore in 2018, for example, village officials later agreed as a village youth proposal to build sport business by developing volleyball installation on the village treasury land covering an area of about 1000 m².

The strong power of the ruling elite in Sariharjo is similar to the findings of a number of studies which noted that village elites still control their citizens. As mentioned in Aspinall & Rohman (2017) and Firdaus (2018), village officers held substantial power within the democratic village government since the reformation era. The studies in China showed as well that the village elites also had substantial power either according to regulation or politically to gain benefits from village land (Liu et al 2016; Xu 2018; Giles & Mu 2018; Wong 2015).

On the contrary, studies in India showed that the farmers got access to rent land because they were protected by the government against the corruption of village elites (Besley et al 2016; Ray 2016; Sharma 2010). Therefore, the policy of village treasury land leasing should be based on the agrarian politics, on the principle of positive discrimination which favors smallholders' interests (Shohibuddin 2019).

The power of village officer's in Sariharjo was exercised when they leased the land to a cafe owner and at the same time increased the rent rate of village treasury land to Rp 3.000 per m². The farmers tried to discuss this issue informally. They felt that this plan was not appropriate because it would give burden to the farmers by increasing the production cost, not to mention the effect of climate change and increasing cost of living. They expected to be able to rent the land with the rate under Rp 1.000 per m². The farmers threatened not to reelect the village chief if he increased the rate. But this threat did not affect the village elites, because the farmers did not put up organized resistance.

Only participative organization could control the village elites and government. The farmers only possessed advocative function, more like an informal resistance against village elites (Kan 2019). Farmers in Sariharjo, just like the farmers in general, did not have powerful organization to protect their interest (Anantanyu 2011). Like the results of the study in the village, the farmer institution in Sriharjo experienced a weakening process (Setiawan, Haidar, Pakniany & Mutiar 2015). They actually dream of obtaining land rights in the village in the midst of the process of urbanization and village democracy and autonomy. Meanwhile, the farmer's groups in Sariharjo were mostly involved in distributing subsidized fertilizer instead of organizing a collective resistance.

Discussion and analysis of the decline in access of small farmers and farm laborers to private, *bengkok* and village treasury land leases reveals that urbanization is the main cause of the emergence of land commodification. First, land conversion from agricultural to non-agricultural reduces farmers' access to land lease. Despite a significant decrease in the number of farmers who transition into non-agricultural sector, farmers' access to renting paddy fields has decreased. This is because the land is commodified and used for non-agriculture and for non-agricultural business rather than for paddy farming.

Small and landless farmers also have lower chance of renting farmland, including private, *bengkok*, and village treasury land. Land commodification tends to benefit investors and agribusiness entrepreneurs rather than small and landless farmers. Small farmers and landless farmers are able to access private land leasing rather than *bengkok* and village treasury lands. This is because the land rental price for rice is lower than for chili and sugar cane agribusiness and for non-agricultural businesses. Businessmen got a much higher profit than planting rice, thus providing a high rental price for land.

Through private land leasing institution, small and landless farmers still have access to rent land because of the existence of a mutual agreement that positions land not as a commodity but as resource for rice agriculture. However, commodification of private land continues to limit small farmer and landless farmers' access to leasing strategic and fertile land.

The commodification of *bengkok* and village treasury land has reduced small farmers and farm laborers to rent them. Commodification occurred at the request of investors and agribusiness entrepreneurs, as well as the interests of the village government and village elites. Investors desperately needed large tracts of land for their business at high prices and the village government and elites needed to increase their income from renting *bengkok* land and village treasuries.

F. Conclusion

This article explains that urbanization has transformed a village on the outskirts of Yogyakarta into a suburban village. As a result, a lot of land were converted to housing and non-agricultural businesses. Urbanization has also accelerated land commodification process which drastically lower the access of small and landless farmers to land lease. In addition, in the long term, the conversion of land to housing complexes or commercial areas will threaten their access to agriculture and their food security.

Small and landless farmers are marginalized in political economy sense due to lack of material and political resources to be involved in the land conversion process from agricultural to non-agricultural use. As a result, the access of small farmers and landless to rent private land has also declined. Meanwhile, the institutions that regulate land leasing of *bengkok* and village land treasury are controlled by village elites and are deliberately formatted to increase the value of land commodification. Village officials prefer to rent the land to investors rather than to farmers in order to increase their salary and village income.

Under new democracy and village autonomy in the reform era, farmers lack strong control over the government and village elites. Both village government and elites transform *bengkok* and village treasury land institutions from agricultural lands into an open commodity accessible by general public through market mechanism. In conclusion, urbanization has increased land commodification, and amid the weak control of farmers who was the minority group, democracy and village autonomy are hijacked by elites so that land is not for the welfare of farmers, but for elite and businessmen.

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