



BARBETS DUET

Rewarding the abundance of life

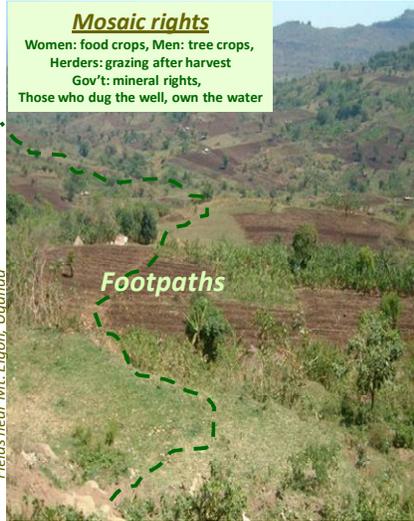
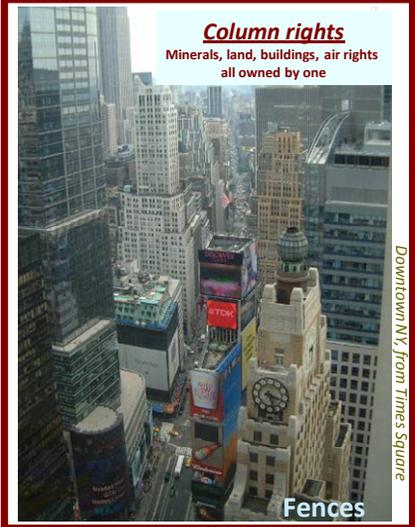


A Short Description of Mosaic v Column Rights

Legacies of Two Cultures in the Barbets Duet

The founding partners of the Barbets Duet make a distinction between ‘Mosaic Rights’ and ‘Column Rights’. Under a mosaic rights system, no one owns the land, but everyone has rights to some benefit of the land under specified conditions. Throughout Africa, different areas have had different systems of mosaic rights depending on the local ecology and the culture that lives there.

Two Cultures: Mosaic Rights & Column Rights

<p><u>Mosaic rights</u> Women: food crops, Men: tree crops, Herders: grazing after harvest Gov't: mineral rights, Those who dug the well, own the water</p> 	<p><u>Column rights</u> Minerals, land, buildings, air rights all owned by one</p> 
<p>Mosaic rights → high social equity, high biodiversity; Column rights → successful markets</p>	

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Mosaic rights can be contrasted with “column rights” which are most radical in the United States. Here, whoever owns an acre of land owns the air rights and the mineral rights underground as well as everything in between – a ‘column’ of rights. These ‘exclusive’ rights need fences to keep others out. In contrast, a mosaic rights landscape is crisscrossed by footpaths, because these rights are ‘inclusive’, offering everyone some share in the land’s wealth.¹ Today in East Africa, both systems co-exist, finely illustrating the duality of living with two contradictory cultures.

The Barbet partners believe that mosaic rights have been better at maintaining high social equity and high biodiversity while column rights have been better at supporting successful markets.

¹ This distinction between inclusive and exclusive rights was pointed out by Calestous Juma, Harvard University, during a personal conversation with Barbara Heinzen in 2009.