**Temporary decommodification? Sorting things out in the capitalist value chain of soy in Argentina**

Short abstract:

Based on a rich empirical description of the capitalist value chain of soy in Argentina, I put a neglected technological device at the center of the analysis: “*silo bolsas*” allowing farmers to conserve their harvest. I show a blurring of the categories of commodity and asset in value creation.

Long abstract:

STS theorists usually characterize bioeconomic processes as commodity-based, stressing that the value of “bio”-products is derived from the production and commercialization of biological commodities. By contrast, others have emphasized the importance of attending to asset-based processes in any understanding of the bioeconomy. Based on fieldwork carried out between 2010 and 2016, this paper analyzes the “bioeconomy” of genetically modified soy in Argentina, the world’s third leading producer and exporter of GM crops. GM soy production is a central source of extraction of economic value, which has provided the economic oxygen to the country since it declared a partial default on its national debt in 2001. In the last decade, however, multiple conflicts arose between the government and farmers about the level of tax incomes from soy exports. In addition, to face the sharp drop of the price of soy on international markets, farmers increasingly use the (cheap) technology of “*silo bolsas*” to conserve their harvest and wait for better times to sell it to export. Rather than a narrow focus on technologies associated with GM soy production, I adopt a broader perspective that also includes the strategic use of “*silo bolsas*” during the commercialization phase. I show that for a limited period of time, soybeans in “*silo bolsas*” become assets, resources having/gaining value as property. I argue that not only do commodities and assets nestle beside each other, but they also incorporate each other’s characteristics, change into each other, or confuse different actors about their commodity-versus-asset identities.