Land Research

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Land & Agrarian Studies Research Team

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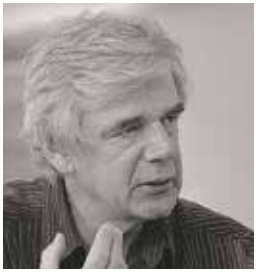

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The question of Land

There are few issues as pivotal to the future of South Africa as the question of land. It has direct implications for food security and the political and economic stability of the country.

A century after the 1913 Natives' Land Act and 20 years into its democracy, South Africa's land reform and land restitution programmes are in disarray and widely regarded as having failed in their current form.

There is a land crisis in South Africa today

"There is an impasse and deadlock around land in South Africa and the government is very definitely to blame; it is not just about farmers who are reluctant to enter into an arrangement so that things can move forward," says the Dean of Humanities at Rhodes, Professor Fred Hendricks.

"As scholars we need to recognise this and play our part in addressing land and land reform through relevant, novel academic research and by organising summits where we bring together social movements, NGO activists and formal agricultural organisations such as Agri SA to jointly debate the land issue and become part of the solution. This is engaged academia and engaged research of the most critical kind."

Not just a rural issue

There are many dimensions to the land crisis. Contrary to the common perception of 'land' being a rural issue, it is as relevant to the urban areas as it is to the commercial farming areas and communal areas. In all these areas South Africa needs a fundamental change in approach to move beyond the impasse in both policy and thinking about land.

This highly relevant postgraduate research programme has achieved significant research output in the past five years, including eight PhDs and 24 MAs

How are we to understand the many dimensions of this crisis so that we can realistically and proactively move beyond the current inertia?

How are we to rectify a situation where those who should have benefitted most have benefitted least? What recourse should there be to the fact that there is little to show for the billions that have been spent on the purchase of commercial farms for land reform? Why have government-led farming projects collapsed?

South Africa is not alone in this. Land and land reform remains a major issue in South Africa, Africa and developing countries throughout the world.

By far the most controversial and most radical approach has been the fast track land reform pursued by the government of Zimbabwe from 2000. Is this the way of the future for South Africa or are there less violent, more constructive alternatives?

Four prominent Rhodes University academics

In response to the pressing need for solutions, four prominent Rhodes University academics are part of a cohort of academics at the University who are proactively addressing the question of land.

They are:

- **Prof Fred Hendricks**, Dean of Humanities
- **Prof Kirk Helliker**, Head of the Department of Sociology
- **Prof Thembela Kepe**, Visiting Professor in the Rhodes Geography Department and Associate Professor of Geography at the University of Toronto
- **Prof Monty Roodt**, Department of Sociology

Their work is supported by the following international academics who specialise in the land and development field, who have been appointed as Honorary Visiting Professors and Research

Associates in the Sociology Department at Rhodes University:

- **Prof Sam Moyo** – Professor of Agrarian Studies, founder member and Executive Director of the African Institute for Agrarian Studies (AIAS), Zimbabwe
- **Prof John Holloway** - Institute for Humanities and Social Sciences at the Autonomous University of Puebla, Mexico
- **Prof Praveen Jha** – Centre for Economic Studies and Planning Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, India

The research, teaching, publishing and community engagement in which the Rhodes Sociology Department is involved includes:

The Agrarian Studies Research Group, Department of Sociology, Rhodes

This highly relevant postgraduate research programme has achieved significant research output in the past five years, including eight PhDs and 24 MAs, either currently registered or graduated. The MA course comprises 70% South African students, while the PhD students are currently a mix of South African and Zimbabwean students.

Prof Helliker, who initiated the programme in 2010, is aiming to significantly expand it into a leading Land & Agrarian Studies Research Programme, with a focus on increasing the number of South African PhD students.

Situated in the rural Eastern Cape, Rhodes is well placed to lead land and agrarian studies in the province and nationally.

The African Institute for Agrarian Studies (AIAS) & the Agrarian Studies Summer School

Prof Hendricks and Prof Helliker are key drivers of the AIAS and the Agrarian Studies Summer School. They work closely with Prof Sam Moyo, the Executive Director of the AIAS and Honorary Visiting Professor in the Rhodes Sociology Department.

The AIAS (*www.aiastrust.org*) is a regional organisation that seeks to influence land and agrarian reform policies through multidisciplinary social science research, policy dialogues, training and information dissemination. The main focus of the AIAS is to mediate in the policy-making processes so as to enhance rural livelihoods through an improved policy framework.

The AIAS strives for agrarian systems that enhance equitable land rights and sustainable land uses throughout Africa.

In its work, the institute interacts with and provides policy advice and capacity support to various stakeholders who include, governments, regional bodies, universities, NGOs researchers, students and the donor community.

The AIAS approach entails encouraging continuous policy debates and refinement of policy. This is achieved through the generation and provision of research-based information, platforms for dialogue, and creating and nurturing a policy community in Africa.

The ambition of the AIAS is to provide leadership in land and agrarian policy processes, to become a Centre of Excellence and remain an independent and credible institute.

The Agrarian Studies Summer School
This is an international consortium of approximately 60 attendants from South Africa, Zimbabwe, India, Brazil, West Africa and the Netherlands.

The 3-4 day annual summer school has been organised by the African Institute for Agrarian Studies (AIAS) since 2009, supported through funding from various organisations including the South Africa Netherlands research Programme on Alternatives in Development (SANPAD). The summer school was hosted by Rhodes in 2011 and has subsequently been hosted by the African Institute for Agrarian Studies (AIAS) in Harare.

It offers an invaluable global networking platform for academics, doctoral students and land activists around the development of agrarian land systems that enhance equitable land rights and sustainable land use.

The Agrarian Studies Summer School is continuously developing young scholars and civil society activists with the aim of developing a critical mass of young intellectuals and activists who can play a leading role in the analysis and design of solutions to Africa's agrarian and land problems.

Actively participating in land reform solutions through engagement with social movements, NGOS and formal agricultural organisations
Social movements in South Africa represent a diverse range of social groups, including residents in communal lands, first nations people (such as the Khoisan), workers and dwellers on white commercial farms, shack dwellers in urban areas, farmers on current land redistribution projects, women, youth and fisherfolk.

The movements include: Tshintsha Amakhaya, Food Sovereignty Campaign, Makukhanye, Mawubuye Land Rights Forum, Coastal Links, Siyazakha, Ilizwi Lamafama, Urban Food and Farming, iThemba Farmers, Mopani Farmers' Union and Rural People's Movement.

These movements work in many different parts of the country, as do food and agriculture NGOs such as the Trust for Community Outreach and Education (TCOE), the Surplus People Project (SPP) and Khanyisa, which work closely with rural social movements.

Formal agriculture is represented by several bodies, the largest of which is Agri SA, which recognises and supports the need to engage in structured, sustainable land reform. Formal agriculture's approaches to government to be part of the land and farm reform solution, have not, in the main, been recognised or taken up.

As Prof Hendricks points out, although the social movements and commercial farmers emanate from completely

Publishing of books on the land question, including two in 2012/2013

The Promise of Land – Undoing a Century of Dispossession in South Africa (Jacana Media 2013)
Edited by Prof Fred Hendricks, Prof Kirk Helliker and Prof Lungisile Ntsebeza (Professor of Sociology at the University of Cape Town and DST/NRF Chair in Land Reform and Democracy in South Africa).

The book, which was launched at the Land, Race and Nation in South Africa Conference at the University of Cape Town in June 2013, focuses on unresolved land questions in contemporary South Africa and argues that the colonial condition remains in the country because dispossession of land along racial lines has yet to be addressed by the post-apartheid state.

In examining questions of dispossession, marginalisation and exclusion, the book addresses three different socio-territorial spaces, namely, the communal areas (the former Bantustans of apartheid South Africa), the commercial farm sector still dominated by white agrarian capital, and urban land challenges as expressed in struggles around housing.

Rural Resistance in South Africa: The Mpondo Revolts after Fifty Years (UCT Press, 2012)
Edited by Prof Thembela Kepe and Prof Lungisile Ntsebeza.

This book focuses on the anti-apartheid resistance in the rural Eastern Cape by the Mpondo people. The Mpondo Revolts, which began in the 1950s and reached a climax in 1960, rank among the most significant rural resistances in South Africa. Mpondo villagers emphatically rejected the introduction of Bantu Authorities and unpopular rural land use planning that meant loss of land.

The contributing authors in this book offer a fresh understanding of the uprising as well as its meaning and significance then and now, particularly relating to land, rural governance, party politics and the agency of the marginalised.

different socio-economic backgrounds and ideological standpoints, many of their frustrations with government are shared. The time has come to break the deadlock and bring together opposing and dissident corners of the land and land reform standoff, to actively work towards achieving a more just and stable future.

In this publication

In this publication we elaborate on the activities outlined above, including:

- Discussing the role Rhodes University is playing in seeking solutions through scholarly, research and teaching activities to the land, land reform and rural development challenges in South Africa and other developing countries;
- Featuring interviews with the four leading 'land academics' at Rhodes;
- Profiling the departments, programmes and postgraduate research at Rhodes that are directly addressing land and land reform issues through relevant and engaged research.

...although the social movements and commercial farmers emanate from completely different socio-economic backgrounds and ideological standpoints, many of their frustrations with government are shared.

Shaping the interaction between research and society

Message from Rhodes University's Deputy Vice-Chancellor of Research & Development, Dr Peter Clayton

Rhodes University's land and land reform research, and its Agrarian Studies Research Group in the Department of Sociology is a strong example of the kind of engaged research that is reframing the role of universities in South African society.

"As a research-led university situated within South African society, Rhodes regards research and the production of knowledge as integral to its community engagement mandate and vice versa.

"It is one of the principle ways in which we advance our understanding of the natural and social world, using our knowledge to benefit society, and enhancing our knowledge through our work with real world issues," says Rhodes' Deputy Vice-Chancellor of Research & Development, Dr Peter Clayton.

"What we've seen in South Africa and other parts of the world in more recent times is a far more explicit research engagement with the challenges of our society and the world.

"Co-discovery and knowledge co-creation, researchers developing knowledge together with societal stakeholders and practitioners, is not just a fad; it is a reframing of the role of universities in society."

This, Dr Clayton explains, gives different emphases to academic research and the form it takes, in line with South Africa's national strategic imperatives. "If we look at

the funding agencies, for example, they are not just looking at growing the number of PhDs in our universities, but at growing the number of PhDs who can make a positive impact on our society."

Based on this approach, research cannot be meaningfully undertaken without some form of community engagement.

A key factor of engaged research is that it is "a mutually respectful and beneficial relationship between the university's students and researchers, and community stakeholders. The crude data-gathering approach sometimes evident in the past is obsolete today."

It draws its relevance from the society in which we live, where the society, of which we are all members, becomes part of the laboratory for doing research.

The Agrarian Studies Research Group is producing precisely the type of engaged research that is highly relevant to South Africa today.

"The programme is aimed at addressing the complex social problems surrounding land ownership and usage, resulting from rural poverty and inequality. It is also aimed at making informed contributions to the critical debate and policy development around these issues, and at capacity development in terms of high quality post graduates who may be taken up in the government, NGO, private, and tertiary education sectors," says Dr Clayton who adds that the group has the full support of the University to grow into a fully fledged Land and Agrarian Studies Research Programme.

While certain disciplines lend themselves more naturally to engaged research, Dr Clayton emphasises Rhodes' approach is that it is the responsibility of every discipline and every researcher to consider the impact and benefit to society of what they do. "At Rhodes we pride ourselves on producing not only exceptional graduates, but also well-rounded, responsible, caring citizens."

The opportunities for engaged research are enormous for a university like Rhodes, which is situated in a rural setting in one of the poorest provinces in South Africa. "One of the strengths of Rhodes is that because it is a small university, it creates the space for the kind of collegiality where researchers can readily engage across disciplines and in partnership with communities."

"In this space," says Dr Clayton, "boundaries between disciplines start to blur in the most positive way, led by our Vice-Chancellor, who is highly responsive to transdisciplinarity as a springboard to addressing the needs of the province and the broader macro issues of South Africa.

"We invite partners and stakeholders to work with us in building the much needed Land and Agrarian Studies Research Programme, which will be run under the leadership of Professor Kirk Helliker, Head of the Department of Sociology, who has led the Agrarian Studies Research Group for several years.

"Prof Helliker would be happy to visit partners, stakeholders, and funders to discuss any aspect of the programme. We look forward to working with you in this exciting and widely beneficial venture."

"The programme is aimed at addressing the complex social problems surrounding land ownership and usage, resulting from rural poverty and inequality …"

Rhodes University, the Department of Sociology and Rural Development Challenges

By Dr Saleem Badat, Vice-Chancellor Rhodes University

About Rhodes University

Rhodes University is a 109-year old institution with a well-established reputation for academic excellence. Located in Grahamstown in the Eastern Cape province of South Africa, Rhodes is a small university that enjoys the distinction of having among the best undergraduate pass-rates and graduation rates in South Africa, outstanding postgraduate success rates and the best research output per academic staff member. This is testimony to the quality of students that Rhodes attracts, of its academic provision, and to the commitment of Rhodes staff to student development and success.

Of our some 7 500 students, 2 294 (30%) are postgraduates and 20% are international students from 66 countries around the world, making Rhodes a dynamic and cosmopolitan knowledge institution. Students are able to undertake an extensive range of undergraduate and postgraduate degrees in the faculties of Humanities, Science, Commerce, Pharmacy, Law and Education. With the most favourable academic staff to student ratio among South African universities, Rhodes students are guaranteed direct access to academics and close supervision.

The University takes pride in its motto, ***Where Leaders Learn***, and produces graduates who are knowledgeable intellectuals, skilled professionals, and critical,

caring and compassionate citizens who can contribute to economic and social development and an equitable, just and democratic society.

Education at Rhodes is a partnership between students, academics, administrators and support staff in the pursuit of knowledge and understanding of our natural and social worlds. Research, teaching and community engagement at Rhodes is alive to the social and economic challenges of the local, national, African and international contexts.

Rhodes strives to be a vibrant and innovative knowledge institution that forms professionals, thinkers and actors. Research seeks to extend the frontiers of knowledge and to inform initiatives that promote equity, justice and economic and social development. An active community engagement programme provides numerous opportunities for students to develop and share expertise and contribute to social development.

Almost 50% of Rhodes students and the majority of undergraduates live in the University residences, and there are also special residences for postgraduates. Through a well-established structure of wardens, sub-wardens and residence committees, the residences play an important role in overall student development, including developing leadership skills. Numerous clubs and societies provide extensive opportunities for students to participate in a variety of intellectual, social, cultural, and sporting activities.

At Rhodes the partnership between students, academics and other staff extends to the governance of the University. Through the Students Representative Council and other representative bodies of undergraduates and postgraduates, students participate in the Council, Senate and other decision- and policy-making committees of the University. Apart from enabling students to shape the character and direction of Rhodes, these structures provide students invaluable opportunities to develop leadership skills.

Rhodes University looks to the future with confidence, secure that as *indawo yolwazi* (a place of knowledge) and through the pursuit of excellence in teaching, research and community engagement, it produces outstanding graduates who are sought after and make a vital contribution to human and social development.

I invite you to explore our website (*www.ru.ac.za*) and discover what makes Rhodes University such an attractive proposition and the institution of first choice for anyone seeking an exceptional and meaningful higher education experience.

The Department of Sociology

Professor Kirk Helliker, Head of the Department of Sociology

The Department of Sociology is a long-standing and vibrant department with one of the largest student enrolments at the university. It has two main programmes at undergraduate level: Social and Economic Development, and Industrial and Economic Sociology.

The postgraduate programme, from Honours through to PhD, has, over the years, drawn students from throughout the African continent, including, currently, South Africa, Nigeria, Uganda, Democratic Republic of Congo, Kenya, Zimbabwe, Botswana and Lesotho.

Rural Development Challenges

South Africa is marked by persistent rural development challenges that derive in part from the legacies of apartheid. Rural space continues to be dominated by a dual land-holding structure, with private freehold on the one hand (formerly, white South Africa) and customary lands on the other (formerly, the 'Bantustans'). This is particularly noticeable in the Eastern Cape Province. This dual structure is an important source of the inequalities and poverty that continue to plague rural South Africa.

The post-apartheid government – for a range of reasons (including institutional incapacity and policy hesitancies) – has been unable to significantly improve the livelihoods of marginalised rural communities.

The vast majority of rural South Africans currently pursue their livelihoods through a diverse range of strategies and activities; these include agriculture, migrant remittances, formal employment (for instance, on commercial farms), petty trading and social grants.

Food security, although existing at the national level in terms of basic foodstuffs, is problematic at community and household levels because of challenges surrounding distribution and entitlement.

Land and agrarian change is fundamental to addressing problems of rural inequality and poverty in South Africa (and indeed elsewhere), but – in terms of policy prescriptions and programmes – is rarely given sufficient attention.

Land reform relates to forms of ownership, possession and access to land and land-based resources (including water, forests, fisheries and minerals). It raises complex questions about land redistribution and land tenure, and how these may contribute to broad-based rural development.

However, land reform fails to address poverty in a systematic manner unless agrarian reform is simultaneously pursued. Agrarian reform refers to the multi-faceted support system (provided by government and non-government actors) that is needed for empowering rural communities and building sustainable rural livelihoods.

Specialised knowledge of land and agrarian issues is critical to addressing rural development challenges in contemporary South Africa, and this knowledge needs to be constantly and systematically developed.

Prof Fred Hendricks

Professor Fred Hendricks
Dean of Humanities, Rhodes University

"There is a dangerous impasse and deadlock around land in contemporary South Africa. It is a huge issue that is not being given the attention it deserves and as scholars we need to acknowledge this and take it upon ourselves to take the next step forward," says Prof Hendricks, adding that as a matter of urgency scholars need to proactively address land and land reform issues through activism and engaged research.

"We need to create the kind of scholarship that is not separate from what people in South Africa are going through in terms of addressing the land debate."

Prof Hendricks is one of several Rhodes University academics who are part of an Agrarian South Network of scholars and activists committed to addressing South Africa's enormous land distribution and land use challenges. The network, which includes South Africa, Zimbabwe, Botswana, Namibia and Brazil, launched a journal called Agrarian South and it runs annual summer schools where land and land reform issues are debated by scholars, citizens and social movements.

Scholarly expertise on land and land reform at Rhodes

Rhodes has considerable scholarly expertise on land research and teaching located mainly in the Sociology Department, but which ties in with the work being done by scholars in other departments at the University, including the Geography and Environmental Science Departments and the Institute for Water Research. Scholars in these

departments are working on a range of environmental challenges affecting the rural poor, including climate change and the supply of clean water.

Prof Hendricks launched a Masters degree in Rural Development several years ago when he was a professor in the Sociology Department. "This course, which attracted a good number of postgraduates, was moved to East London for practical reasons of enabling easy access to participants. The course was later moved to the University of Fort Hare, which has a Faculty of Science & Agriculture, following the incorporation of the Rhodes East London campus into Fort Hare," he explains.

Prof Hendricks believes resuscitating this key engaged research area at Rhodes is long overdue. "There is a huge need to expose students to the land and land reform issues, on which the future of South Africa rests."

Land is as much an urban land rights issues as it is a rural issue

Prof Hendricks emphasises that land is not just a rural issue – it is as much an issue of urban land rights and property ownership as it is a rural issue. This point is thoroughly explored in various chapters in the book, *The Promise of Land*, including Chapter 5, titled: *Urban land questions in contemporary South Africa*, which Prof Hendricks co-authored with Rhodes Politics lecturer Mr Richard Pithouse.

In the book he has also written a critique of the *Peasant Path* which is by and large the Zimbabwean model of land reform, and which he presented at a conference in India in 2013. He argues that this model is not viable for the South African population.

"To try and push a peasant path is inappropriate in South Africa where the main locus of struggle is not in the rural areas, it is in the urban areas, in the cities, the townships and the mines. South Africa's struggle for land and land reform naturally includes all the rural areas, but it begins with an urban-based struggle."

Rhodes has considerable scholarly expertise on land research and teaching located mainly in the Sociology Department, but which ties in with the work being done by scholars in other departments at the University...

SA government to blame for lack of progress

Prof Hendricks is outspoken about the South African government's approach to land and says it is very definitely to blame for the lack of progress around land and land reform in South Africa.

"It's easy to blame their failures on white commercial farmers but it is long overdue to bring together all the players to address both the property ownership and land reform issues, including dispossessed communities in the urban and rural areas, land claimants, and commercial farmers," says Prof Hendricks who is deeply disenchanted with the lack of engagement from government.

"All our attempts at engagement with the state around these issues have not come to anything. We have begged them to participate in our programmes and made very serious efforts to engage the state at all levels but trying to engage with government officials has been hugely challenging. The lack of accountability is frightening," he says.

In the absence of input and partnership from government, Prof Hendricks says all the other stakeholders need to come together and collaborate. This will hopefully put sufficient pressure on the state to participate.

A nuanced, thoroughly researched manner

"We need to start dealing with land issues in South Africa in a nuanced, thoroughly researched manner rather than narrowing it to one area only, namely farming, and then, as is currently the case, trying to squeeze all the complex land and farming issues into a one size fits all," he says using the minimum farm labourer wage as an example.

"Of course a just and fair wage is appropriate but while farmers owned by big capital can afford the minimum wage, most small-scale and emerging famers cannot."

Inequalities around property ownership

Prof Hendricks explains that the property clause in the constitution is a key stumbling block in the land issues. "The inequalities around property ownership are blatant for everyone to see on every level of South African society – from the chieftainship control in communal lands to forced removals in the urban centres, to the situation of low-income housing developments on the outskirts of the cities, which considerably adds to the transport cost burden of the poorest of the poor, to the transfer of communities to commercial farms where the state retains ownership."

Numerous social movements in the rural and urban areas are now mobilising around these issue in a number of ways:

- Rural dwellers in the former 'homelands' such as Transkei, are, for example, objecting to the traditional leadership structure of ownership where citizens cannot own land and therefore at the mercy of their chief. Women are particularly vulnerable under this system.
- Western Cape farm workers are

demanding a just wage for all farm workers.
- Citizens who wish to make their living as small-hold farmers are demanding to be accommodated in the land reform system.

A declaration of demands by South African social movements and NGOs was presented in June 2013 to parliament and to the largest commercial farming organisation in South Africa, Agri SA.

Agri SA has committed to being part of the solution

Agri SA has taken this very seriously and committed to being part of the land issue debate and solutions. This engagement follows the same strategy as happened in the 1970s in South Africa when the trade unions stopped trying to engage with government and started engaging directly with employers. The state soon realised that they had lost control of labour relations.

Social movements to engage directly with agri capital

"The social movements are going to do the same: engage directly with agricultural capital, which will give farm workers and farmers the direct platform they require and which the National Economic Development and Labour Council (Nedlac) has thus far not provided."

A national summit of social movements and NGOs is planned for October 2013 to discuss land and land reform strategies. "Hopefully representatives from the government and Agri SA will attend," says Prof Hendricks who has been instrumental in the imminent launch of a new engaged research grant Unit for the Humanities at Rhodes called UHURU, which will, inter alia, address new approaches to South Africa's land and property ownership issues.

Unit for the Humanities at Rhodes University (UHURU)

The objectives of the Unit include:

1. Engage through research with the vibrant theoretical debates that are emerging in and around popular politics, public engagement as well as artistic and literary expression in the Global South;
2. Provide a space for cutting edge debates tied to the ongoing problems of our society through the development of a critical dialogue with various organisations in civil society as well as the state. This dialogue could encompass a wide range of activities including regular seminars, meetings, lectures, as well as plays and artistic performances in order to reach a much wider public audience;
3. Engage in discussions about curricular changes in the light of the work of the Unit as part of the process of transformation of the university.

Rationale for the Unit:

Humanities and social science disciplines played a central role in rewriting South African history and in recasting approaches to the study of our complex and ever-changing social and aesthetic worlds, especially in the period leading up to the demise of apartheid.

"There were often very intimate connections between university-based scholars and the anti-apartheid movement, and a sense of relevance and vitality animated Humanities disciplines and excited its students.

"Whether you were in Fine Art, Journalism, English, Drama or Anthropology or any other Humanities discipline, the generations of the 1960s right up to the late 1980s were preoccupied with understanding apartheid in all it many dimensions," Prof Hendricks explains.

"The changes in our society since 1994 together with a wide variety of global changes have had a significant impact on the role of university-based academics.

"Mounting pressures to meet performance targets have decisively shifted the terrain away from a dialogue with popular struggles towards an instrumentalist professional agenda."

Fewer cutting edge debates emerging from university disciplines

"Consequently, there are fewer cutting edge debates emerging from our disciplines tied to the ongoing problems of our society. While there is some unevenness between various disciplines in the Humanities, it is safe to say that we have not navigated the post apartheid terrain with quite the same confidence as we challenged apartheid."

In the last decade or so there has been a massive upsurge in popular protests in South Africa accompanied by an escalation in state repression. In stark contrast to the rebellion against apartheid, Humanities scholars, besides a few notable exceptions, have been conspicuous by their absence in these ongoing struggles.

Instead of providing leading analyses premised on active involvement, academics have in general been reactive to the ongoing struggles.

A clear need to think differently as university based scholars

"There is clearly a need for us to think differently about our mission as university-based scholars in relation to the ongoing problems and struggles in our communities, not only to revive our own intellectual activity, but also to make a sustained contribution to the public good.

"New paradigms and approaches are clearly required for a critical engagement with present conditions," Prof Hendricks continues.

There is a great deal of new theoretical and empirical work emerging in the Global South on the relation between universities and the public spheres they inhabit.

UHURU could become very significant in global terms if it moves beyond constructing South Africa as just another site in an international neo-liberal system.

"Instead, the uniqueness of our situation provides a ready laboratory for generating new conceptual frameworks enabling us to take responsibility for theorising our own conditions.

"The Unit we are proposing would commit itself to being an insurgent node in a developing network of engaged scholarship from the Global South."

Prof Kirk Helliker

Professor Kirk Helliker
Head of the Department of Sociology, Rhodes University

"For me the main issue is to emphasise the importance of land and agrarian studies in South Africa, and to interest more South African students to undertake postgraduate studies on land related issues," says Prof Helliker whose area of expertise is around questions of emancipation and social transformation.

"I have serious reservations about any land transformations led by the state because the state inevitably reproduces existing forms of domination and poverty in the name of maintaining social cohesion," continues Prof Helliker who adopts an anti-vanguardist view that places faith and confidence in transformation from 'below': the people on the ground, the poor and the dispossessed who are typically patronised and ignored in the decision-making process, as a result of some misguided view that they cannot work out what they need.

An indepth body of new research on land and land reform required

"We need to develop an indepth body of new research into the issue of land and land reform in South Africa with a view to offering new models of land equity and community participation, as well as innovative platforms for sustainable agricultural development.

"These can include a range of disciplines and focus on the full spectrum of associated issues, such as climate change and the impacts of HIV/Aids."

The opportunities for this avenue of postgraduate research are extremely exciting and wide open, including:

- International collaboration with partners in Argentina, India, Zimbabwe, the Netherlands;
- International collaborations with leading global theorists such as Professor John Holloway of the Institute for Humanities and Social Sciences at the Autonomous University of Puebla. His work is closely associated with the leftist Zapatista social movement in Mexico, the membership of which is predominantly rural people;
- Multidisciplinary research in partnership with Rhodes Professor Sheona Shackleton of the Department of Environmental Science, who is leading a climate change and livelihoods research programme.

The Eastern Cape has strong agri-focused social movements

The Eastern Cape has strong agri-focused social movement representation and NGO involvement, such as the Rural People's Movement (RPM) and the Eastern Cape Agricultural Research Project (ECARP) respectively. The members of the movements are predominantly small-scale farmers and farm workers who are proposing a range of agricultural alternatives including:

- More localised forms of economic activity, such as establishing local markets for small-scale farmers;
- More environmentally-friendly agricultural practices, such as veld-raised beef, as an alternative to feedlots.

They are also offering critiques of:

- Existing export-focused agricultural products;
- The widespread use of genetically modified maize and the growth of international seed control monopolies like Monsanto; and
- Labour conditions on commercial farms.

Prof Helliker explains that the history of social movements in South Africa has been problematic but they are gaining grassroots support and are growing. Organising across urban and rural divides they are partnering with international social movements such as the International Peasant's Movement *La Via Campesina*.

Poor people the world over share land and food security concerns

"Poor people the world over share the same land and food security concerns," he explains. The following La Via Campesina declaration of the First Assembly of the Alliance for Food Sovereignty of Latin America and the Caribbean, spells this out:

"Food is not a commodity but a human right, recognised by states through different legal instruments. By recognising this right, states have the obligation to respect, protect and guarantee the people's right to food - especially of food producers - to guarantee the right to decent work and employment as well as to a fair wage, based on the principles of social justice and human dignity."

Land, Race and Nation Conference

In June 2013 a wide range of social movements from across South Africa attended the 'People's Assembly' at the Land, Race and Nation Conference in Cape Town. These included:

- Tshintsha Amakhaya
- Food Sovereignty Campaign
- Makukhanye
- Mawubuye Land Rights Forum
- Coastal Links
- Siyazakha
- Ilizwi Lamafama
- Urban Food and Farming
- iThemba Farmers
- Mopani Farmers' Union
- Rural People's Movement

At the end of the conference they presented a declaration to the Presidency, calling for a meeting with the Presidency and relevant ministeries to address their issues. In the declaration they stated:

"For years we have been making demands for a comprehensive land and agrarian transformation. We made these demands in our Land Charter in 1994, our next Land Charter in 1997, our Rural Development Initiative Charter in 1999, our Landless People's Movement demands at the World Summit on Sustainable Development in 2002, our Alliance for Land and Agrarian Reform at the National Land Summit in 2005 and our Rural Women's Assembly demands at COP-17 in 2011. There are also hundreds of local charters, petitions and demands at local level. Have you (the Presidency) lost these documents? We will send them to you again to remind you, so that you do not forget again."

"The declaration highlights the significance of rural mobilisation and movements in trying to resolve the ongoing land questions. In this light, struggles from below are crucial for rethinking purely statist efforts at land reform and it is important to grapple with the interplay between oppositional campaigns of social movements and the state's land policies and programmes," says Prof Helliker.

Extract from the Preamble and Vision of the Declaration: People's Assembly Land, Race and Nation Conference 22 June 2013 Declaration

Preamble

1. Nearly twenty years after the end of apartheid, the 1913 Natives' Land Act continues to haunt the South African countryside. The land question, which was so central to the struggle against apartheid, remains unresolved. Millions of South Africans continue to be dispossessed of their lands, and the rural geography of apartheid (Bantustans and white South Africa) continues to exist. Urban areas also reflect the spatial geography of apartheid. The massive social and economic inequalities under apartheid have deepened since 1994, and remain racialised.

2. The new democratic government has failed to address the land question in any meaningful way, in both rural and urban areas. The government's land reform programme has failed to bring about any meaningful change to the lives and livelihoods of people. This has brought about tremendous pain and suffering.

3. The government is not serious about historical redress with regard to land. The property clause in the constitution reflects this, as does the government's reliance on a market-led land redistribution programme. The government has adopted a neo-liberal macro-economic programme that further integrates the South African economy into a global system dominated by large multi-national corporations. Small-scale farmers, landless people, farm workers and dwellers, and poor urban black people do not benefit from this.

4. Only limited mobilisation and organisation around land has taken place since the end of apartheid. Struggles have been isolated and sporadic. But only mass mobilisation and sustained organisation will lead

to meaningful land and agrarian transformation. We can no longer wait for the government. Action needs to be taken now. We will take action.

5. These struggles must be based on a new imagination that is based on a total re-configuration of South Africa, re-connecting the urban and rural areas and breaking down the racialised apartheid countryside. This re-configuration must ensure the humanity and dignity of all South Africans.

Vision

Our vision is for a comprehensive land and agrarian transformation. Our vision is that all people, rural and urban, who want and need land can access it. Those who want land for their own livelihoods should take priority over those who want land for accumulation and profit. Our demand for land and agrarian transformation is a demand of today.

It is a demand to overcome the legacies of colonial and apartheid rule.

Comprehensive land and agrarian reform is based on ensuring full rights over land for indigenous peoples, rights to their territories, fishing communities' rights to marine resources and pastoralists' rights to grazing and migratory routes.

We want land reform, support for settlement and production. We should get all the resources that can make the land productive: water, capital, and other support. We want the democratisation of seeds, the commons and water: we oppose the distribution of technological packages with GMO seeds and pesticides.

We want a world without violence and discrimination against women. We want a redesigned city that takes into account the needs of the poor. We want an end to the squalor of the RDP houses and the informal settlements. Urban agriculture must be part of making healthy cities and overcoming spatial apartheid in our cities; greening the cities must help to overcome this, not entrench it.

Professor Monty Roodt

Sociology Department, Rhodes University

"According to the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform, only 12% of South Africa's land is agriculturally viable and of that only 3% is highly productive, with irrigation facilitating intensive farming. The rest has to be farmed on an extensive scale. In parts of the Karoo, for example, one adult cow needs 16 hectares to survive," says Prof Roodt, whose PhD is on Land Restitution.

"What this means is that much of South Africa does not lend itself to commercial farming and hence we need to make sure that land reform and land restitution is not equated with farming. Some claims are certainly situated in viable farming areas; many are not.

"In addition, there are also a significant number of claims in urban areas. Urban land reform is as important as the rural environment to the land restitution process."

Prof Roodt has focused on land development issues for the past 25 years.

Since 1987 he has been a member of the Border Rural Committee Executive, which fought against forced removals in the apartheid years and which post 1994 developed into a land development and rural mobilisation organisation. Of late it led the campaign to re-open the land restitution process, which has since been extended to 2018.

Commission on Restitution of Land Rights

In 1998/9 he worked for the Commission on Restitution of Land Rights as the Manager of the Investigative Division for the Eastern Cape and Free State.

"I was in charge of 20 researchers, half of them were doing fieldwork to verify the claimants were bona fide and to collect information from them; the other half were doing archival research on the validity of the claims and preparing them for the Land Claims Court."

His division won the Minister of Land Affairs' Award for the best land restitution office.

Large urban claims

"It was an upbeat, exciting time and we pioneered a successful approach to processing claims, especially large urban claims in a faster, more efficient way," he explains. This approach included forming steering committees comprising the claimants, the people who owned the land and provincial and local government representatives.

One such large, successful urban claim was that of the Port Elizabeth Land and Community Restoration Association (PELCRA) for an area next to the suburb of Walmer called Fairview and Salisbury Park. Another was the West Bank Claim in East London.

This claim was originally for the land where the Mercedes Benz factory is situated but because it is a mainstay employer in the city, the claimants settled for alternative land on the West Bank. There were also large, successful rural claims in the Eastern Cape, such as in the area around the Katberg and in the Macleantown region near East London.

"When I first started working with the Restitution Commission, the mandate was simply a granting of land rights. Any development on that land was completely up to the claimants," Prof Roodt continues.

"A group of us disagreed with this and felt that local and provincial government needed to be included in some form of development contract with the claimants and to deliver within specific deadlines. Like all things the settlement was agreed but the implementation slow."

Still nowhere with the land issue

Regrettably as a country we are still nowhere with the land issue, says Prof Roodt. "It's very complicated and the more we are immersed in it the more we realise how naïve we were initially to think it could be relatively easily resolved.

"We are now at a stage where we understand the major problems that face land reform. Although we have all kinds of fantastic bills of rights and policies around land reform, land restitution and land rights, there are so many contradictory processes that it is a miracle we have achieved what we have, which is very little. Only 3% of the 30% land target has been redistributed, despite a considerable amount of money having been spent."

A chunk of the land chest has gone into financial compensation as an alternative to land, especially amongst the urban claimants. A lot of the money has also been wasted and corruption is rife.

There are huge problems where people have got their land back

"There are also huge problems where people have got back their land – a major issue is that there is very little professional support for them. There is also considerable in-fighting between claimants, such as happened with the PELCRA case in Port Elizabeth and with one of the first rural land restitution cases in Salem near Grahamstown," Prof Roodt explains.

With the latter there has been acrimonious dissent between the descendants of claimants who have no intention of returning to the land but whose forebears once lived there. This has also led to bitterness amongst the white farmers who were removed from their farms, albeit with proper compensation, as a result of the claim.

"Productive farms have since gone to ruin, and the provincial Department of Agriculture does not have the finance or skills to help those who are trying to work the land to succeed.

"The Minister of Rural Development and Land Reform, Gugile Nkwinti's Consolidate Rural Development Programme looks fantastic on paper but there is a lack of mid-level management to implement it, which leads to failure. Sadly, the provincial Department of Agriculture is in a similar state to the Department of Education."

Where land reform has succeeded

Prof Roodt says that where land reform has succeeded is in an area like Elliot where the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform redistributed a large number of farms and where several white commercial farmers have helped mentor emerging black farmers.

Prof Roodt adds that the communal areas, notably in the former homelands or 'Bantustans', are another major headache. The debate around who should control the land – the traditional authority or some form of community organisation - has never been resolved.

Most young South Africans not interested in farming

"Underlying the many, many issues around land is that the majority of people who are interested in farming in South Africa are older or retired," he explains. "Most young South Africans are not interested in farming and would not dream of toiling for eight hours in the hot sun – they are plugged into a completely different mindset focused on working in the urban areas and the associated lifestyle."

The government needs to take an extremely strong lead in turning around negative perceptions of farming amongst the youth of this country if it wishes to promote agriculture as a profession.

So where to from here? What does the future of land and agriculture hold?

A positive trend

"A positive trend is the growth of democratic cooperative movements all over the world," Prof Roodt replies. "The global financial crash has added considerable impetus to these movements because people feel the need for

alternative economies (or what is now known as the solidarity economy) where they have far more control over their own destinies."

Democratic cooperative movements are a far cry from the old state-controlled, top-down cooperatives we once had in this country. Democratic co-operatives, and there are longstanding, strong examples in countries like Spain and Brazil, are run by the people for the people and they all have a share in the co-operative in which they work, be it a farming enterprise or an engineering company. Irrespective of their job description they recognise each other's vital role in the organisation's success and are equitably compensated.

Globalisation from below

"It's all about globalisation from below," says Prof Roodt. "It's the coming together of networks of people who are environmentally and socially oriented and who recognise that 'local and smaller' is the founding basis for a sustainable economic model." It's the opposite of the multinational model, which, in a time of climate change is not sustainable and which does not improve the basic living standard of the majority of people.

Doctoral student assessing agricultural projects

Researchers are reviewing the large agricultural projects that once employed considerable numbers of people from rural communities in the former Bantustans. These have long since collapsed but researchers are re-thinking how to restructure them in a far more just way that benefits the people on the ground.

One of Prof Roodt's PhD students, Ms Kosi Yankey, who is from the Eastern Cape, is looking at two existing agricultural projects in the former Transkei area of the Eastern Cape: the Kei Fresh Produce and a project in Port St Johns run by the Agricultural Research Council (ARC) and Is'Baya Development Trust, against the background of former largescale agricultural projects in the former 'Bantustans'.

"We are also in the process of setting up a Masters by coursework programme that will have a strong focus on land and land use," says Prof Roodt who believes the only way to thoroughly kickstart such an initiative at Rhodes is to form an institute or unit that brings together academics from a range of disciplines and faculties who can address the land question in a far more structured, focused way.

Cooperative marine farming in Hamburg

"For example, my Masters student Ms Simone Marais and I are involved in a research partnership with the Rhodes Department of Ichthyology and Fisheries Science in the coastal community of Hamburg in the Eastern Cape.

"We are looking at establishing a marine farm for perlemoen and oyster production by establishing beds in the sea. As sociologists we are looking at the kind of community structure and value chains that will benefit the community, while the members of the Ichthyology Department are researching the science required to establish these farms.

"We have a far more expansive definition of land where, for example, the beach and tidal zones and the resources they offer are included in our definition.

"Poor people in the coastal areas use multiple strategies and resources to sustain their livelihoods," says Prof Roodt who would like to see more students doing participatory research that can benefit communities at a local level.

"Collaborative, interdisciplinary research between the Physical Sciences and the Humanities is increasingly the direction in which we are going to have to move in," he adds.

"Our research also needs to be grounded in the South African reality, and the best way to achieve this is to work with community organisations and NGOs that are rooted in and respected by the communities with which we partner, so that the research is used.

"As academics we need to be far more proactive about helping to mobilise communities to take control of their own development."

Researchers are reviewing the large agricultural projects that once employed considerable numbers of people from rural communities in the former Bantustans. These have long since collapsed but researchers are re-thinking how to restructure them in a far more just way that benefits the people on the ground.

Prof Thembela Kepe

Associate Professor, Department of Geography,
University of Toronto, Canada
Visiting Professor, Geography Department, Rhodes University

"The land struggle continues," says Prof Kepe who describes himself as a human geographer who lives, breathes and eats the subject of land.

"I teach geography and I cannot fathom how I would talk about geography without talking about land."

He emphasises that it is the duty of all South African universities to significantly increase their profile on the land question and to drive postgraduate programmes in land and land reform research; such is its importance to the future political and economic stability of South Africa.

"Twenty years into our democracy land reform gains have been marginal, land tenure issues have been chaotic, the debate around the re-opening of land claims remains extremely tense and the government does not have any better solutions towards peaceably and sustainably resolving the land issue lined up.

The land reform process has been based on political motives

"Many, many land reform projects have failed, tractors are standing still, infrastructure has collapsed and the land issue is still not being addressed, neither in the rural areas, nor in the urban areas where land for residential purposes is much needed." At the heart of the failure, Prof Kepe believes, is the fact that the land reform process to date has been based on political motives rather than addressing the real needs of the people.

Prof Kepe counts himself as one of 'the people'. He was born in Grahamstown and spent the first years of his life on a farm 50kms from town where his grandparents lived and worked. At the age of six he returned to Grahamstown to attend school and lived with his parents in the township.

"My mother was a domestic worker in Grahamstown and my father was a labourer in the transport department at Rhodes University," says Prof Kepe who did well at school and chose to study agriculture at the University of Fort Hare on completing his matric.

Farming is often misperceived as being backward

"People in our community made fun of me for choosing agriculture because farming is often misperceived as being backward even though it's quite the opposite. I enjoyed it and it reconnected me with my concerns about issues of poverty and justice and respect for what the land means.

"A strong memory from that time that stuck with me was when a Belgian professor of mine at Fort Hare asked us why we are studying agriculture when black people were not allowed to own land in South Africa at the time. It was a question that I was to think about many times over," says Prof Kepe who taught at a school in King Williams Town in the Eastern Cape before taking up an opportunity to study in Canada where he lived until 1994.

Masters in Rural Studies

"By then I knew that I wanted to work on land issues and I did my Masters in Rural Studies at the University of Guelph, Canada, and later turned myself into a geographer because of my strong links to land, space and place."

He now teaches courses that focus on land, land reform and development, land and justice, and political ecology at the University of Toronto and Rhodes University.

A living laboratory

"I love being back in Grahamstown and we have a living laboratory right here around us. I take my students on walkabouts in the townships of Grahamstown to examine aspects of rural life in an urban setting, where livestock and food gardens are part of the environment," says Prof Kepe who chose to stay at home in the township with his mother during his visiting lecturing stint at Rhodes.

"I wanted to plug back into the place and the community where I grew up," says Prof Kepe who has been made an Honorary Visiting Professor at Rhodes.

"It was my father's dream for me to one day attend Rhodes, and now I am here in a different role. I will also be spending time lecturing in the Geography Department every year, and it feels great to be back."

His latest book on land

In June 2013 he launched his latest book on land, which he co-edited with Professor Lungisile Ntsebeza - who is based at the University of Cape Town –

titled, *Rural Resistance in South Africa: The Mpondo Revolts after Fifty Years.*

In 2013 Prof Kepe spent several months lecturing in the Department of Geography in his hometown of Grahamstown where Rhodes University is situated.

"It's an exceptionally important year in the history of the struggle for land in South Africa because it marks the centenary of the 1913 Natives Land Act, which dispossessed black South Africans of all but 13% of their land," says Prof Kepe who selected the historical revolts in Pondoland in the former Transkei to determine what led to that famous struggle and revolt in the 1950s that culminated in 1960, and whether it can shed light on what is happening in terms of land and land reform in South Africa today.

"In Pondoland people continue to have aspirations about their land but today, as was the case over 50 years ago, they are either dispossessed of land ownership or they have land but it is of a poor quality or they have land but cannot work it because they have to go and make a living elsewhere.

"These are issues facing millions of people in the rural areas of South Africa and in the book we wanted to look at how these issues connect the past with the present."

According to Prof Kepe, not much has been written about the Mpondo revolts despite their notable place in South African political history as the first high-profile display of violent black resistance to their land being taken from them, since the frontier wars in the 1800s.

Prof Kepe and Prof Ntsebeza brought together a strong team of academics who understand Pondoland to discuss this epoch in the book. The team includes, among others, Prof Allison Drew (University of York, England), Prof William Beinart (Oxford University), Prof Fred Hendricks (Rhodes University), Prof Jeff Peires (Rhodes University), Prof Ari Sitas (University of Cape Town), Dr Jonny Steinberg (Oxford University), Prof Dunbar Moodie (Hobart and William Smith Colleges) and several younger scholars who added fresh ideas to the debate.

Shedding light on the meaning of land in South Africa today

"I like to use the analogy of a child crying and the child's mother assumes the child needs food," says Prof Kepe. "She gives the child food but after the child has finished eating s/he continues to cry. The mother says: 'What now?' and that is where we are with the land issue in South Africa today.

"We are left questioning whether land reform has done anything to address what people lost in this country," says Prof Kepe who in 2010 co-edited a book titled: *Land, Memory, Reconstruction and Justice: Perspectives on Land Claims in South Africa* (Ohio University Press and University of Kwa-Zulu Natal Press).

Crying about land

"Is it enough to say 'here is another piece of land' and hope that people will be satisfied and stop 'crying' about land?"

asks Prof Kepe who believes it is not enough; that the philosophy behind land and land reform, and what it means to people, is missing.

"The Mpondo revolts were precisely about this – about what land means to people and what freedom means to people," he says. "The land reform and restitution process tells you that you can get your piece of land back or an alternative piece of land or cash compensation or a combination of land and assistance to develop it or farm it.

"But people need more than this. The need to look back on what they felt they lost to understand what land means to them today, what they need to do with it and how they are going to go about this.

"Giving land to people to address the land inequalities in South Africa without engaging in this deep process of retrospection and understanding is part of the reason why the land reform programme has failed in the land reform programme," he explains.

The government has failed in the land reform programme

"The government has failed in the land reform programme, especially in the land redistribution process, both in the ideology and practice of it," says Prof Kepe.

"One of their ideas was to give people collective farms where all kinds of people with different goals and skills are put together and expected to work together. It is a questionable process from the outset and it is not surprising that it hasn't worked.

"Then the government tried what they called Land Reform for Agricultural Development (LRAD), followed by a shift to Agri BBBEE but that also didn't offer a solution as it marginalised people who have real land needs and real needs to farm and real attachments to the land based on their history. Instead of addressing these needs, the land issue has become a political tool to be used ahead of elections or by politicians trying to make their mark. But politicians come and go and the unresolved issues around land remain."

Prof Kepe feels South Africa has reached a stalemate in the land reform issue "where we cannot go forwards or backwards".

The few farming reform successes

The few farming reform successes to date, he adds, are not government led. "There are some examples of commercial farmers taking the process on themselves and either giving land to their workers at a reduced price or buying land with them so that they can afford it."

The government has had some successes, such as in Kruger National Park where a community successfully claimed back their ancestral land and a profit-sharing partnership with the Park and the community is proving sustainable.

Another example is the redevelopment of District Six where people who were removed from their land in this renowned urban area of Cape Town, have been given the opportunity to lodge a claim to new developments in that area. But District Six is no longer what it used to be; it's now a trendy precinct and property is extremely pricey.

Equity, justice and sustainability

"The question we keep having to come back to is who is benefitting from the land reform process, how are they benefitting and is it sustainable," says Prof Kepe. "Is the successful land claim, irrespective of whether it is in the city or rural areas, based on equity, justice and sustainability?" he questions.

"I don't want to be seen as an armchair critic but it has been proven throughout history that only when you willingly listen to the voices of all the people, will you have a better understanding of how to meet their needs.

"We find ourselves in a period of our country's history where there is supposed to be change and where we are supposed to raise issues and not mince our words when we don't see change."

The duty of academics to strongly respond to the land issue

Prof Kepe believes it is the duty of academics to strongly respond to the land issue and to run high profile conferences on land, as Prof Fred Hendricks, Prof Kirk Helliker and Prof Lungisile Ntsebeza are doing to raise the profile of the importance of the land issue in scholarly circles.

"We need to see far more South African postgraduate students doing research on land, we need more PhD students focusing on the land issue, we need the NRF to fund this research and for universities to increase their profile on the land issue to emphasise how important it is to South Africa's stability and its future. This will contribute to positive change."

Honorary Visiting Academics, Rhodes University

The work of the Rhodes University Sociology Department's Agrarian Studies Research Group is supported by the following international academics who specialise in the land and development field, and who have been appointed as Honorary Visiting Professors in the Sociology Department at Rhodes University:

- Professor Sam Moyo – Professor of Agrarian Studies, founder member and Executive Director of the African Institute for Agrarian Studies (AIAS), Zimbabwe
- Professor John Holloway - Institute for Humanities and Social Sciences at the Autonomous University of Puebla, Mexico.
- Professor Praveen Jha - Centre for Economic Studies and Planning Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, India

Short biographies on these academics follow:

Professor Sam Moyo

Prof Sam Moyo is Professor of Agrarian Studies, founder member and Executive Director of the African Institute for Agrarian Studies (AIAS), Zimbabwe, and has a PhD in Rural Development and Environmental Management from the University of Northumbria, United Kingdom

Prof Moyo has led and managed a wide range of policy research, university and civil society organisations in Africa over the last 30 years, and serves as Editor-in-Chief of an International Journal on Agrarian Studies.

He has worked on numerous policy research papers and

publications concerning a variety of agrarian issues (including land reform, food, agriculture, energy and environment policies) facing Zimbabwe, the SADC region and Africa. These studies included high-level contacts with- and advice provided to African Ministers, Permanent Secretaries and leaders of various United Nations agencies.

Organisations in which he has played a key role include:

- *CODESRIA (Council for the Development of Social Research in Africa)*

  He served as the President (2009-2011), Vice President (1998-2002) and Executive Committee Member (1995-1997) of CODESRIA, a pan-African council that promotes social science research, provides grants and is a publisher in Africa.

- *African Institute for Agrarian Studies (AIAS)*

  He is the founder member and since 2002 has served as Executive Director of AIAS, which undertakes and coordinates policy research on agrarian issues in Africa and maintains collaborative research networks in the Global South.

- *Southern Africa Regional Institute for Policy Studies (SARIPS)*

  Between 1995 and 2001 he led the establishment and maintenance of a Regional Masters Degree in Policy Studies, based in Harare, and served as the Director of SARIPS (1998-2001). The SARIPS provided policy research and training services to high-level policy makers and managers in the SADC region and beyond, including publishing numerous policy monographs, books and journal articles on critical issues.

- *University of Zimbabwe/Institute of Development Studies*

  He was a founding research fellow of the Zimbabwe Institute of Development Studies between 1983 and 1986, and became the head of the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development from 1987 to 1995. He led numerous policy research teams that undertook primary and secondary research activities on various agrarian questions facing Zimbabwe.

- *Government of Zimbabwe*

  He was head of the Land Reform of the Government of Zimbabwe's Technical Advisory Team (TAT) from 1998 to 1999.

Professor John Holloway

Prof John Holloway is based at the Institute for Humanities and Social Sciences at the Autonomous University of Puebla, Mexico, and has PhD in Political Science from the University of Edinburgh, United Kingdom.

Lecturer, lawyer, author, Marxist-oriented sociologist and philosopher, Prof Holloway is widely regarded as one of the great contemporary thinkers on

social emancipation. His work reflects the concerns of global justice movement activists everywhere and he has been strongly influenced by the practices of the Zapatista movement in Mexico - his home since 1991. His most recent book is *Crack Capitalism* (Pluto Press 2010).

His work has influenced the Abahlali baseMjondolo – the South African Shackdwellers' Movement (http://abahlali.org), the Piquetero Movement (uniting impoverished unemployed workers in an effort to secure a sustainable livelihood in Argentina) and the Anti-Globalisation Movement in Europe and North America.

His 2002 book *Change the World Without Taking Power* has been the subject of much debate in Marxist, anarchist and anti-capitalist circles, and contends that the possibility of revolution resides not in the seizure of state apparatuses, but in day-to-day acts of abject refusal of capitalist society – so-called anti-power, or 'the scream' as he repeatedly puts it.

Professor Praveen Jha

Prof Praveen Jha is based at the Centre for Economic Studies and Planning at Jawaharlal Nehru University in New Delhi, India, and has a PhD in Economics from this university.

A widely published academic, Prof Jha specialises in labour and development economics, land reform, poverty and public finance. His published work ranges from land reform in India and issues of equity to agricultural labour in India to the causes of poverty in developing countries.

One of this most recent works is a chapter titled *Labour Conditions in Rural India: Reflections on Continuity and Change* in a book titled *Rural Wage Employment in Developing Countries: Theory, Evidence and Policy*, edited by Carlos Oya and Nicola Pontara (Routledge, 2013).

Prof Jha is the Chairperson, Centre for Informal Sector and Labour Studies (CIS&LS) at Jawaharlal Nehru University. The major part of the working people in India is located in what is known as the 'Informal Sector', which includes agricultural labourers, non-agricultural labourers, peasants, fishermen and craftsmen.

He has also taught at St. Stephen's College, University of Delhi and at Lal Bahadur Shastri National Academy of Administration, Mussoorie. He has been a Visiting Fellow at University of Bremen, Germany; Tianjin University of Finance and Economics, Tianjin, China, and Visiting Senior Research Economist at the International Labour Organisation, Geneva, Switzerland.

Rhodes University's Department of Sociology & the Agrarian Studies Research Group

The Agrarian Studies Research Group was established by the Rhodes Department of Sociology in 2010 to develop and consolidate the multi-faceted research activities in the department relevant to land and agrarian reform in Southern Africa.

It is based on the work undertaken by two staff members in the Department of Sociology at Rhodes University, namely Prof Kirk Helliker and Prof Monty Roodt, as well as the thesis projects being pursued by a number of PhD and Masters students in the department.

Over the past five years, over twenty PhD and MA students have registered in the department as part of the Agrarian Studies initiative.

For example, five Zimbabwean students have focused their PhD studies on Zimbabwe, including conservation farming in Masvingo Province; gender and land reform in Goromonzi District; informal institutions on redistributed farms in Mazowe District; and HIV/AIDS livelihoods in an informal settlement near Masvingo town.

In addition, two South African Masters students have been looking at small-scale fisheries along the Wild Coast and farm labour on white commercial farms in the Eastern Cape Province.

Seminars on Land conflicts in South Africa

The Agrarian Studies Research Group has hosted several successful

LOVIS BOTHA
FARMER
WARRIOR
WUBUYE:
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Another
Countryside
NOW!

seminars on *Land conflicts in South Africa* over the past three years with presentations by social movement and NGO activists together with leading South African land academics, including:

Ms Fatima Shadbodien (Women on Farms Project in the Western Cape) Topic: *The 17th Century slave foundation of commercial agriculture in South Africa, and its implications for the transformation of the sector in the 21st Century.*

Prof Ben Cousins (DST/NRF Chair in Poverty, Land and Agrarian Studies (PLAAS), University of Western Cape) Topic: *Social differentiation and 'accumulation from below' in Msinga, KwaZulu-Natal.*

Mr Bantoe David Ntseng (ChurchLand Programme) and Ms Nomsa Mayvis Mkhize (Abahlali baseMjondolo) Topic: *Current resistance to urban and rural evictions in KwaZulu-Natal.*

Significant expansion planned for the Agrarian Studies Research Group

Prof Helliker, who initiated the programme in 2010, is aiming to significantly expand it into the Land & Agrarian Studies Research Programme, with a focus on increasing the number of South African PhD students.

Academic work on land and agrarian reform has existed in the department for many years. It has been the subject of many postgraduate theses and continues to be so. In fact, three current members of the department are land/agrarian specialists, namely, Prof Fred Hendricks, Prof Kirk Helliker and Prof Monty Roodt (all of whom have work experience in both government and the NGO sector).

Land & Agrarian Studies Research Programme

The Land & Agrarian Studies Research Programme hence seeks to formalise an already-existing research focus in the department and, in doing so, takes it to another level. Notably, the Programme has the full support of an African-wide Agrarian Studies Consortium, which includes, amongst others, Prof Issa Shivji (Department of Law, University of Dar es Salaam, Tanzania) and Prof Sam Moyo (African Institute for Agrarian Studies, Harare, Zimbabwe).

The Programme is designed to foster engagement and partnerships with a range of key stakeholders – notably government and civil society. Various links already exist between the initiators of the Programme and key stakeholders, but these are to be broadened and deepened through specific forms of collaboration tailored to meet the needs of each partner.

The Programme entails research and dialogue. Research is undertaken by Masters and PhD students, post-doctoral fellowship researchers, and dedicated academic staff. Many Masters and PhD students will be individuals drawn from stakeholders such as government, civil society and NGOs who are currently involved in rural development initiatives, and this research will feed into their respective organisations.

The Department is also in a strong position to facilitate dialogues around

land and agrarian change, involving both government and civil society.

The Programme will be evaluated in two ways, namely, from the perspectives of the University and of the stakeholders. First of all, this involves measuring the sheer contribution the Programme makes in advancing our knowledge of land and agrarian reform, as identified by the awarding of relevant post-graduate degrees and academic research outputs.

Secondly, forms of measurement will be put into place to monitor and evaluate the Programme from the viewpoint of key stakeholders – the aim is to maximise the value of the Programme to the rural development activities of stakeholders.

Current Funding and Budget

The Programme is housed within the Department of Sociology at Rhodes University, and it has access to the full infrastructure and personnel of the department and university. This ongoing support directly enhances the sustainability of the Programme, and has allowed it to operate on an informal basis over a number of years. The present value of this support is estimated at R300 000 per annum.

During the first three years of this Programme, the following number of students would enter the Programme: Masters (6), PhD (9), and Post-Doctoral Fellowships (3).

The university's contribution during this three-year period would amount to just under R1-million.

The Land & Agrarian Studies Research Programme is without doubt a unique initiative in South Africa, particularly in relation to the Eastern Cape Province. It will not only raise the academic profile of land and agrarian studies in the country, but will also make an important contribution to rural development initiatives by government and civil society.

Agrarian Studies Research Group – Doctoral and Masters students

The Doctoral and Masters students and their theses listed below offer an indication of the type of research being produced by students in the Rhodes Sociology Department's Agrarian Studies Research Group.

PhD students supervised by Prof Fred Hendricks:
Prof Hendricks supervised the **PhDs of Prof Kirk Helliker, Prof Monty Roodt, Prof Lungisile Ntsebeza** and **Dr Tendai Murisa**.

Prof Ntsebeza is Professor of Sociology at the University of Cape Town and DST/NRF Chair in Land Reform and Democracy in South Africa. He co-edited ***The Promise of Land: Undoing a Century of Dispossession in South Africa*** with Prof Hendricks and Prof Helliker (Jacana, SA, 2013).

Dr Tendai Murisa is a programme specialist at the Dakar-based TrustAfrica, where he is responsible for the coordination of the Pan-African agriculture development programme in Africa. Dr Murisa has published numerous journal articles and book chapters on rural development, civil society, agency, social relations of production within smallholder agriculture systems, and agrarian reforms in Africa. Dr Murisa co-edited two books with Prof Helliker, namely *Contested Terrain: Land Reform and Civil Society in Zimbabwe* (Nutrend Publishers, 2008) and *Land Struggles and Civil Society in Southern Africa* (Africa World Press, 2011).

Students supervised by Prof Kirk Helliker and Prof Roodt:
The following students are being or have been supervised by Prof Kirk Helliker and Prof Monty Roodt.

Completed theses can be downloaded from the following Rhodes University Main Library website:
www.ru.ac.za/sociology/post-gradprogrammes/mastersandphd/mastersphdthesis

Students supervised by Prof Helliker:
Abstracts from three completed MA and PhD student theses are as follows:

MA thesis by Loveness Chakona, December 2011: *Fast Track Land Reform Programme and Women in Goromonzi District, Zimbabwe*

Abstract:
From the year 2000, land became the key signifier for tackling the unfinished business of the decolonisation process in Zimbabwe, notably by rectifying the racially based land injustices of the past through land redistribution. This took the form of the Fast Track Land Reform Programme (FTLRP). However, the racialised character and focus of the FTLRP tended to mask or at least downplay important gender dimensions to land in Zimbabwe. Colonial and post-colonial Zimbabwe (up to 2000) had instigated, propagated and reproduced land ownership, control and access along a distinctively patriarchal basis which left women either totally excluded or incorporated in an oppressive manner. This patriarchal structuring of the land question was rooted in institutions, practices and discourses.

Although a burgeoning number of studies have been undertaken on the FTLRP, few have had a distinctively gender focus in seeking to identify, examine and assess the effect of the programme on patriarchal relations and the socio-economic livelihoods of rural women. This thesis makes a contribution to filling this lacuna by offering an empirically rich study of land redistribution in one particular district in Zimbabwe, namely, Goromonzi District. This entails a focus on women on A1 resettlement farms in the district (and specifically women who came from nearby customary areas) and on women who continue to live in customary areas in the district. My thesis concludes that the FTLRP is seriously flawed in terms of addressing and tackling the patriarchal structures that underpin the Zimbabwean land question.

PhD thesis *by* Manase Kudzai Chiweshe, December 2011: *Farm level institutions in emergent communities in post fast track Zimbabwe: case of Mazowe district*

Abstract:
The thesis seeks to understand how emerging communities borne out of the Fast Track Land Reform Programme in Zimbabwe have been able to ensure social cohesion and social service provision using farm level institutions. The Fast Track Programme brought together people from diverse backgrounds into new communities in the former commercial farming areas. The formation of new communities meant that, often, there were 'stranger households' living next to each other.

Since 2000, these people have been involved in various processes aimed at turning clusters of homesteads into functioning communities through farm level institutions. Fast track land reform

precipitated economic and political crisis in Zimbabwe characterised by a rapidly devaluating Zimbabwean dollar, enormous inflation and high unemployment figures. This economic crisis has impacted heavily on new farmers who find it increasingly difficult to afford inputs and access loans. They have formed social networks in response to these challenges, taking the form of farm level institutions such as farm committees, irrigation committees and health committees.

The study uses case studies from small-scale A1 farmers' in Mazowe District, which is in Mashonaland Central Province. It employs qualitative methodologies to enable a nuanced understanding of associational life in the new communities. Through focus group discussions, in-depth interviews, narratives, key informant interviews and institutional mapping the study outlines the formation, taxonomy, activities, roles, internal dynamics and social organisation of farm level institutions. The study also uses secondary data collected in 2007-08 by the Centre for Rural Development in the newly resettled areas in Mazowe.

The major finding of the study is that farmers are organising in novel ways at grassroots levels to meet everyday challenges. These institutional forms however are internally weak, lacking leadership with a clear vision and they appear as if they are transitory in nature. They remain marginalised from national and global processes and isolated from critical connections to policy makers at all levels; thus A1 farmers remain voiceless and unable to have their interests addressed. Farm level institutions are at the forefront of the microeconomics of survival among these rural farmers. They are survivalist in nature and form, and this requires a major shift in focus if they are to be involved in developmental work. The institutions remain fragmented and compete amongst themselves for services from government without uniting as A1 farmers with similar interests and challenges.

MA thesis by Eddah Vimbai Jowah, December 2009: *Rural livelihoods and food security in the aftermath of the fast track land reform in Zimbabwe*

Abstract:
Land reforms are back on the development agenda. Different types of land reforms have been adopted globally in recent years, but by far the most controversial and most radical has been the fast track land reform pursued by the Government of Zimbabwe from 2000. There is general scholarly agreement that the fast track process has been accompanied by various socio-economic and political challenges, including an increase in levels of food insecurity. This thesis examines fast track reform in specific relation to the livelihoods of smallholder households and household food security amongst land beneficiaries. It argues that the problem of food insecurity in Zimbabwe is a complex social, political and economic issue, which cannot be simplistically reduced to the failures of fast track.

Understanding household food insecurity post-2000 needs to go beyond the notion that the nation's food security hinges on overall levels of production alone. In

particular, livelihoods and food security need to be conceptualised at community and household levels. Therefore, while addressing the broad macro-level analysis and discourse around the process of fast track, the study also adopts a micro-level analysis to look at the varied impact of fast track on the actual beneficiaries. The research focuses on small-scale beneficiaries in the Goromonzi District of Zimbabwe and, through the use of the sustainable livelihoods framework, looks at how their local contexts have been influenced by the wider socio-economic and political processes, and how beneficiaries have sought ways of coping with the challenges they face.

Other recent graduates of Prof Helliker under the Group include:

PhD Loveness Makonese (2013)
Coping with HIV and AIDS in marginal communities: a case study of Chivanhu settlement in Nemanwa, Masvingo, Zimbabwe

MA Sipho Nkambule (2013)
A critical analysis of sustainable human settlement in housing – the case of Hlalani, South Africa

Tendai Wapinduka (2013)
Rural livelihoods and adherence to HIV and AIDS antiretroviral therapy in Chivanhu settlement, Nemamwa Village in Masvingo District, Zimbabwe

Some of Prof Helliker's current PhD and MA students under the Agrarian Studies Group include:

PhD students:

1. **Ernest Chimuka**
   Community participation, development and NGOs in Zimbabwe
2. **Tarryn Alexander**
   Autonomous politics and feminism in rural Zimbabwe
3. **Loveness Chakona**
   NGOs and food security in Zimbabwe

4. **Jonathan Mafukidze**
Land and water politics at Mushandike Irrigation Scheme, Masvingo, Zimbabwe

5. **Tafara Marazi**
An investigation into the survival strategies of the elderly in Zimbabwe: a case study of Bulilima District

6. **Takunda Chabata**
Rural livelihoods and natural resource utilisation in post-fast track Zimbabwe: the case of Sovelele Resettlement area

7. **Innocent Mahiya**
Innovation platforms among small-scale farmers in Murehwa, Zimbabwe

8. **Takunda Chirau**
Livelihoods strategies of female-headed households in the former bantustans of post-apartheid South Africa: the cases of Nonaliti and KwaNdindwa

9. **Sandra Bhatasara**
Encountering climate variability: local perceptions and adaptation in rural Zimbabwe

MA students:

1. **Wadzanai Takawira**
Sex in the simmering heat: Sex work as a livelihood strategy in the border town of Chirundu, Zimbabwe

2. **Desmond Jaricha**
The impact of Decentralisation on Land redistribution in the Eastern Cape

3. **Nomzamo Kheswa**
Labour process on White commercial farms in South Africa

4. **Kayla Knight**
Rural development and NGOs in Matabeleland, Zimbabwe

Students supervised by Prof Roodt:

Prof Roodt is currently supervising five Masters and PhD students in the Agrarian Studies Research Group, namely Kosi Yankey, Gcobani Vika, Simone Marais, Zyangani Chirombo and Kelly Hitchcock.

Two examples of the type of research being undertaken are as follows:

Abstract for Kosi Yankey's Phd:

Title: *The change, progression and sustainability of rural development projects in the Eastern Cape.*

This thesis will look at the experiences of black South Africans regarding rural development and farming over a period of approximately 100 years. More specifically, the research looks at the Eastern Cape's rural dwellers' experience with rural development projects funded or implemented by the state. Focus will particularly be on the running, the ownership, the benefits and the internal processes of these rural based projects, both in the past and in present day rural South Africa.

The concept of rural development and rural upliftment is a relevant and realistic research subject. This is mainly because the majority of people living in rural Eastern Cape are still poor and without any employment opportunities, regardless of the fact that they are surrounded by vast expanses of arable land. What options do they have and what do programmes for economic development in South Africa hold for the rural based, poor and marginalised? Deeper observation into this subject can fill the research gap concerning agricultural support and rural change. This is due to the fact that different rural development projects were implemented in the past and information is needed to see how they functioned, in a bid to aid the development of future rural projects.

Extract from Simone Marais's Masters proposal:

Title: *Examining the concept of co-management and rural livelihoods in a coastal community: A case study of Hamburg, Eastern Cape Province.*

While the recently gazetted Small-scale Fisheries Policy may be able to provide jobs and livelihood opportunities through fishing rights, this is only possible if fisher communities are involved in developing appropriate governance structures and are part of the entire supply chain (FAO, 2003: 20). Therefore in order for the policy to be implemented, co-management committees need to be formed. Currently in Hamburg there are no such arrangements and for abalone ranching to become a reality, a local governance structure will need to be established.

An important aspect of this research is therefore contributing to the establishment, by the community and other stakeholders, of participatory mechanisms essential to the sustainable harvesting of abalone. As such the main purpose of this study will be directed at surveying existing institutional models and case studies and proposing a co-management model of equitable development that promotes the inclusion of local communities in the ranching operations. The community will have to be the active agents of change, but as researchers we can provide the information and support required to facilitate an operational co-management structure based on community rights. As a result this research hopes to contribute to the empowerment of the local fishing community of Hamburg - a small coastal village situated south of East London and has a population of approximately 3 000 inhabitants, the majority of which are classified as living in poverty (Stern, 2010: 4).

A large number of people in this area are involved in the harvesting of marine resources as a form of livelihood and source of income (Andrew, Béné, Hall, Allison, Heck & Ratner, 2007). This vast number of resource users and stakeholders presents an array of problems for the implementation of co-management, due to the uneven powers, conflicting interests and different stakeholder values. These variables are bound to make deliberation and consensus a difficult process and as such participatory democracy more difficult to achieve (Hara, 2003: 27). However, it is for this very reason that there is a great need for co-management as including user groups into the planning process can improve communication and increase the political legitimacy of management regimes.

The African Institute for Agrarian Studies (AIAS) & the Agrarian Studies Summer School

Prof Fred Hendricks and Prof Kirk Helliker are key drivers of the AIAS and the Agrarian Studies Summer School. They work closely with Prof Sam Moyo, the Executive Director of the AIAS and Honorary Visiting Professor in the Rhodes Sociology Department.

Background

The past three decades have witnessed the further weakening of rural livelihoods, exclusive growth and the promotion of land markets. The failure of the development project in many parts of the Global South (Asia, Latin America and Africa), particularly connected to the structural adjustment programmes in the past decades has increased the dependence on 'development experts' whilst weakening African scholarship.

In this context, the AIAS has sought to reinvigorate the debates by promoting critical thinking and analysis among a wider range of African scholars and activists in the context of a South South Collaboration.

Since 2009, the AIAS has organised the Annual International Agrarian Summer School. This event provides an important platform for African Scholarship and their counterparts in the Global South, to engage with alternative perspectives, reflect and deepen dialogue about the challenges of Agrarian change.

Established scholars, researchers, activists and young scholars from universities and other institutions in a broad spectrum of countries in both the Global South and North:

including South Africa, Botswana, Angola, Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania, Senegal, Mali, Brazil (Brasilia and Belo Horizonte), India, US, UK, France, Germany and Norway have participated in this event.

Agrarian Summer Schools 2009-2013 themes

The first edition of the Agrarian Studies Summer School in 2009 was held in Harare under the theme *Social Movements and the Agrarian Question*.

The 2010 Agrarian Studies Summer School was held in Tanzania under the theme: *"The Agrarian Question: Historical Trajectories and Contemporary Policy Alternatives"*.

The 2011 Agrarian Studies Summer School was held under the theme *"Global Crisis, Scramble and Agrarian Reform in the South"* at Rhodes University from the 17th to 22nd of January.

The 2012 Agrarian Studies Summer School was held under the theme *"Agrarian Question in Africa in the face of multiple Global Crises"* in Harare from the 16th to 20th of January.

The 2013 Agrarian Studies Summer School was held under the theme *"Political Economy of Food Sovereignty in the Global South"* in Harare from the 14th to 18th January.

What we have achieved

The Agrarian Studies Summer School has enabled the AIAS to maintain institutional space for African academics, young scholars and CSOs to engage in land and agrarian reform debates. It provides a forum to engage diverse interests drawn from academic, research, policy, and activist milieus internationally, around the neglected Agrarian Question.

To date, Agrarian Studies Summer School has welcomed participants from the 'Global South' continents of Latin America, Africa and India, as well as from the US, and Europe in the 'Global North' which has significantly contributed to deeper understandings about the consequences of particular problems in different contexts.

Countries represented at this year's event included: Brazil, the US, France, Senegal, Norway, Germany, Mali, Uganda, Tanzania, Angola, South Africa, Kenya, Mauritania, Botswana, India and Zimbabwe. The ensuing debates have served as a springboard for critical new research studies on contemporary agrarian problems such as the New Scramble for Africa's natural resources.

As a regular forum centred on Agrarian questions affecting primarily the Global South, it has been a catalyst to the development the South-South Network which brings together African, Latin American and Asian scholars to conduct comparative studies, policy dialogues and publishing through a free e-journal titled *Agrarian South: Journal of Political Economy*. A significant achievement was the emergence of an Agrarian Studies Consortium to support postgraduate training and promote collaborative research and policy analysis activities with CSO activists.

From: *www.aiastrust.org*

Agrarian South: Journal of Political Economy

This publication, launched in April 2012, has a range of fascinating articles, such as the one mentioned below. The full articles are available at no charge on this website: *ags.sagepub.com*

South Africa and the 'New Scramble for Africa': Imperialist, Sub-imperialist, or Victim? By Prof William G. Martin, Professor of Sociology at Binghamton University, State University of New York. Email: *wgmartin1@gmail.com*

Abstract: Is South Africa a 'sub-imperialist' state, a leader of the Global South, or a victim of imperial power from the North? This essay unpacks the debate surrounding South Africa's role in the 'new scramble for Africa' by critically contrasting competing theoretical conceptions against historical and empirical evidence. The conclusion projects a radical – and unexpected – rupture in South Africa's power and position in the world-economy as North-South networks are broken and East-South relations replace North-South relations.

Books on land, land claims and land struggles

The Promise of Land

Rhodes news article,
2 September 2013

In an effort to address the ensuing land crisis in South Africa, *The Promise of Land: Undoing a Century of Dispossession in South Africa,* explores the many dimensions of the crisis with the aim of encouraging meaningful debates on alternative approaches.

According to authors Prof Fred Hendricks, Dean of Humanities at Rhodes University, Prof Kirk Helliker, Head of the Department of Sociology at Rhodes University, and Prof Lungisile Ntsebeza, Director and Holder of the AC Jordan Chair in African Studies and the NRF Research Chair in Land Reform and Democracy in South Africa at the Centre for African Studies, the starting point for this book is that current land reform policies in the country fail to take the colonial context of division and exclusion into account. In analysing urban, commercial farming and communal areas the book argues for a fundamental change in approach to move beyond the impasse in both policy and conceptualising of land.

Arguing that the transition to democracy in 1994 has not translated into a meaningful process of decolonisation in South Africa, the book suggests that the very structures of colonialism and apartheid remain intact, since racial inequalities in both access to, and ownership of land continue today. With state-driven attempts at land reform having failed to meet even their own targets, a fundamental change in approach is necessary for South Africa to move beyond the deadlock that prevails between the

Reversing the
Legacy
of the 1913
Natives' Land Act

objectives of the policy and the means for realising them.

According to the authors, social movements have a critical role to play in initiating the necessary changes, both in respect of access to land and in influencing broader policy options. Struggles from below are crucial for rethinking purely statist efforts at land reform and the book grapples with the interplay between oppositional campaigns of social movements and the state's policies and responses. According to Prof Hendricks, the book flows out of a SANPAD-funded research project and was launched at a conference of social movements in Cape Town, 'Land, Race and Nation'.

Prof Fred Hendricks holds a PhD in Sociology from Uppsala University, Sweden. His research interests include land and agrarian questions, and pensions and development.

Prof Kirk Helliker has a PhD in Sociology from Rhodes University. His research interests include agrarian reform, civil theory, theories of emancipation, and Zimbabwe.

Prof Lungisile Ntsebeza has a PhD from Rhodes University. His research interests include the role of traditional authorities in democracy.

Rural resistance in South Africa: The Mpondo Revolts after Fifty Years
(Brill and UCT Press, 2012)

Much has been written about anti-apartheid resistance by the marginalised people of South Africa, as well as its violent repression by security forces in urban areas (e.g. Sharpeville massacre; Soweto riots). Very little attention has been paid to resistance by rural people. The Mpondo Revolts, which began in the 1950s and reached a climax in 1960, rank among the most significant rural resistances in South Africa. Here Mpondo villagers emphatically rejected the introduction of Bantu Authorities and unpopular rural land use planning that meant loss of land. The volume presents a fresh understanding of the uprising; as well as its meaning and significance then and now, particularly relating to land, rural governance, party politics and the agency of the marginalised.

Editors: Prof Thembela Kepe, Prof Lungisile Ntsebeza

Review: Leading scholars in South African history provide an engaging retrospective of the nature and meaning of a series of important rural revolts by Africans against the apartheid government. As the authors show, the revolts in the Pondoland area of the Transkei during the 1950s comprised a series of protest actions against the introduction of the hated Bantu Authorities Act. These culminated in killings and open rebellion in 1960. Thereafter, widespread rural opposition to the state persisted through the decade. The well-crafted chapters explore the revolts in three related sections. Chapters in Part 1 re-examine

the nature of resistance and the context in which it emerged. Chapters in Part 2 explore the broader implications of the revolts for other forms of African resistance. Part 3 provides chapters that analyse the meaning of the revolts and

Published Books

Books by Professor Kirk Helliker

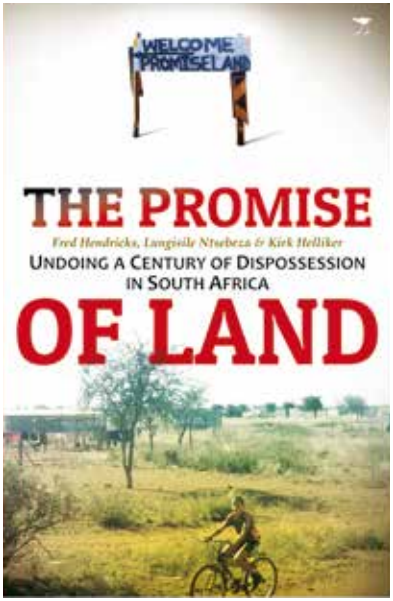
The Promise of Land: Undoing a Century of Dispossession in South Africa. Edited by Prof Fred Hendricks, Prof Lungisile Ntsebeza and Prof Kirk Helliker (Jacana, SA, 2013)

Prof Helliker is the main editor of *Land Struggles and Civil Society in Southern Africa*, published in 2011 by Africa World Press (New Jersey, USA). This volume is based on original field research on land struggles and civil society in Southern Africa, with chapters on South Africa, Zimbabwe, Botswana, Namibia, Democratic Republic of Congo, Mozambique and Zambia.

Prof Helliker, Prof Sam Moyo and Dr Tendai Murisa co-edited a book titled *Contested Terrain: Land Reform and Civil Society in Contemporary Zimbabwe* (Nutrend Publishers, 2008), including a chapter written by Prof Helliker titled *Dancing on the same spot: NGOs*. This book was undertaken under the auspices of the African Institute for Agrarian studies (AIAS) in Harare. Z.

Books by Professor Fred Hendricks

The Promise of Land: Undoing a Century of Dispossession in South Africa. Edited by Prof Fred Hendricks, Prof Lungisile Ntsebeza and Prof Kirk Helliker (Jacana, SA, 2013)

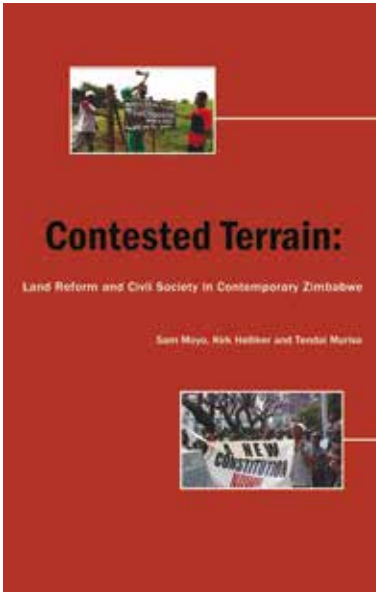


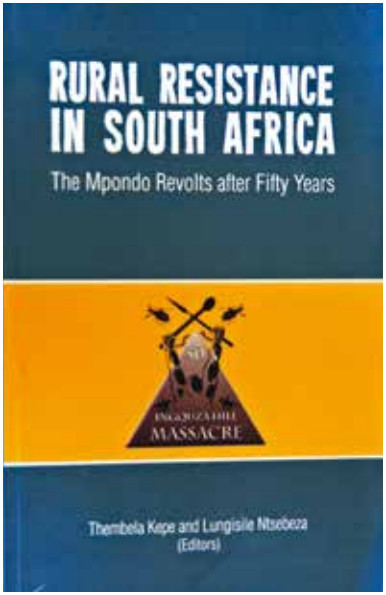
how they influenced historical memory in South Africa. Despite its limited focus, this volume sheds new light on a critical period in the country's history as well as on rural African history and the post-colony in general.

Books by Professor Thembela Kepe

Land, Memory, Reconstruction and Justice: Perspectives on Land Claims in South Africa (Ohio University Press and UKZN Press, 2010). *Edited by Prof Cherryl Walker, Dr Anna Bohlin, Prof Ruth Hall and Prof Thembela Kepe.*

Rural resistance in South Africa: The Mpondo Revolts after Fifty Years (Brill and UCT Press, 2012). Edited by Prof Thembela Kepe and Prof Lungisile Ntsebeza.





The Land Question reflected in South African media

The following selection of articles that appeared in the South African media from 2011-2014 are simply intended to give the reader a sense of the intense debate generated around land issues in South Africa.

None of the opinions expressed in the articles necessarily reflect the views of the four Professors who are leading the Land and Land Reform programme through Rhodes University

Cool heads needed in land reform debate

By Max Du Preez, *The Mercury,* 3 September 2013

It is time for a clear perspective on the emotive issue of land reform in South Africa. Only if we cut through the disinformation, bad analysis and political opportunism can we approach consensus and make the progress we need to make.

Just in the past few weeks the waters were again muddied by the Afrikanerbond's grossly insensitive, offensive and ahistorical analysis of land ownership and reform; former president Thabo Mbeki's condonation of the violent land grabs in Zimbabwe; and ANC MP and chief Mandla Mandela's renewed threats that commercial farms would be expropriated.

Mbeki's statement came as a surprise. Speaking at the Thabo Mbeki African Leadership Institute at Unisa on August 23, Mbeki said he had engaged Robert Mugabe years ago to discourage the way land was redistributed in Zimbabwe. And then Mbeki added: "But fortunately the Zimbabweans didn't listen to us, they went ahead."

If the ANC and the government could for once paint a true, clear picture of agrarian reform and land redistribution, a lot of the heat around the issue would dissipate and we could proceed sensibly and with better focus.

Nineteen years after liberation, the 1913 figures of 87 percent land in white hands and 13 percent in black hands are still bandied about. It is completely wrong.

The total surface area of South Africa is 122 081 300ha. Cities, towns and municipal commonage make up 8 percent of that – the eight metropolitan areas account for just 2 percent of the land, but are home to 37 percent of the total population. Another 10 percent is owned by national or provincial departments: conservation areas, military, police and prisons, schools, hospitals, etc. Communal land represents 15 percent.

Which leaves 67 percent to privately owned commercial farmland, until 1994 owned almost exclusively by whites. That has since changed substantially. The figure already includes farms transferred to black owners or groups through the redistribution and restitution programmes. Minister Gugile Nkwinti told Parliament early this year that 4 813 farms had been transferred to new black owners between 1994 and January 2013. It translates into 4 123 million

hectares benefiting 231 000 people. An unknown but probably substantial number of commercial farms have also been bought privately by black farmers and black-owned companies, like those associated with Cyril Ramaphosa and Tokyo Sexwale.

Giving land to new black farmers has been a painfully slow process, but land restitution, the handing back of land to people who had previously been forcibly removed, has progressed well. But it also skewed the figures – of the 80 000 land restitution claims received by 1998, only 5 856 preferred land, the rest preferred cash payouts, totalling R6 billion. But farmland is not just farmland, and this is where the numbers game the government is playing makes little sense. A thousand hectares of fertile land with good rainfall are simply not equal to a thousand hectares of arid, undeveloped land such as the Northern Cape.

The government keeps on blaming the principle of willing buyer, willing seller. I agree that it should never be an impediment. But it is far from clear that this policy was responsible for the slow progress of land reform.

Here is the astonishing truth: the amount of money spent on land reform since 1994 could have bought 37 percent of all commercial farmland at market value, 7 percent more than the government's yet unmet target. So, even if the state had been forced to use the willing buyer, willing seller guideline and never expropriated any land, we would have been well beyond the target for land redistribution by now if the money spent had been used properly. The only conclusion: billions must have been lost through bureaucratic bungling, bad management and corruption.

It is time South Africans clearly understood the distinction between the need for successful and productive agrarian reform and the political, symbolic need felt by the black communities to see a reversal of the dispossession of land during the colonial and apartheid eras.

Smallholder farms are part of the solution, but the cold facts tell us that food security will always depend on large-scale commercial farming, which is a capital-intensive and risky business.

The government needs to be politically brave to change the 18 023 102ha of communal land into private ownership to make it more productive.

Unlike Zimbabwe or anywhere else in southern Africa, almost two-thirds of South Africans live in cities and towns. To these people, home ownership is more crucial.

We should guard against the hotheads on all sides of the debate and methodically get on with this important task. The National Development Plan's proposal to form local bodies of stakeholders in every district to identify and transfer 20 percent of land to emerging black farmers and then for commercial farmers to provide them with support is the way to go.

District Six 'stands for failure of land restitution'

By Bekezela Phakathi, *Business Day*, 16 July 2013

District Six has become the "face of the failure of land restitution" in South Africa, according to Khoi activists who were recently evicted from the area following a Western Cape High Court order.

Former residents have waited for years to move back to District Six after they were forcibly removed by the apartheid government between 1969 and 1980. Although more than 60,000 people were removed from the area, there are only 1,060 registered claimants.

The District Six saga has continued to be a highly emotive issue over the years and the activists' illegal occupation last month of an apartment complex in the area has again highlighted this.

The activists claimed that what was their ancestral land as aborigines had been taken away. They said they had not broken any laws by occupying the apartment complex as two of their members owned land where some of the flats in District Six were built.

The District Six Beneficiary and Redevelopment Trust and the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform approached the courts to have the illegal occupants evicted.

The Western Cape High Court served the final eviction order last week, but at the weekend the activists applied for leave to appeal against the order.

The group of Khoi activists has not ruled out occupying the area again, even when the matter is still before the courts in coming weeks.

Institute for the Restoration of the Aborigine of South Africa co-founder Tania Kleinhans, one of the occupiers of the flats last month, said on Monday that the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform refused to engage with the activists even though the high court had suggested that it engage with her and her group to see how it could help them.

"District Six has become the face of the failure of land restitution in SA … we have exhausted all the internal processes and there has been no meaningful engagement with the department, that is why we

have approached the courts again to apply for leave to appeal," Ms Kleinhans said.

Western Cape High Court Judge Robert Henney said in his ruling last month that the respondents had failed to show that they have legitimate reasons to have illegally occupied the housing units.

"This court cannot sit back and allow people to forcefully and brazenly occupy property if they have no legitimate claim … or where there is no lawful means to do so," he said.

Ms Kleinhans said that the activists – now calling themselves District Six claimants – were applying for leave to appeal against the court order to evict them from the flats because the judge had, among other things, "overlooked our right to be legally represented and ignored our request for a postponement".

The group said at the weekend that the eviction was also in contravention of the Prevention of Illegal Eviction from and Unlawful Occupation of Land Act, which aims to protect citizens against illegal evictions.

"The land on which the current flats have been built belongs to claimants who have not authorised the development taking place on their land.

"We remain committed to sitting down with government in finding a resolution to this matter. All we seek is justice through our return home to District Six," the group said.

The department said on Monday it would not comment on the issue until it had been finalised in the courts.

Land reform & food security or a politically driven disaster

By Heather Dugmore, *De Kat*, April 2012

Seventeen years into our democracy the overwhelming majority of land redistribution farming projects have dismally failed, which has serious implications for food security, political security and the stability of the South African economy.

As Agri Eastern Cape President, Ernest Pringle puts it: "The whole Land Reform effort so far has been a politically driven disaster."

"South Africa needs to differentiate land redistribution from farming and hang on to all the commercial farmers it has if the country is to have enough food," he says. The only way that land redistribution – which has been a politically driven disaster so far – is going to succeed is in collaboration with commercial farmers."

Instead of focusing on the ever-increasing percentage of white commercial farms that need to be redistributed, the government needs to hang on to all the commercial farmers it still has, says Pringle. Since 1985 the number of commercial farmers in South Africa has dropped from 64 000 to 33 000 today.

"Instead of condemning farmers, the government needs to go out of its way to support all farmers, black and white, to enhance food security in the face of a rapidly expanding and increasingly urbanised population," adds Pringle.

Commercial farming is not attractive to the majority of people because the returns are generally low and it is damn difficult to farm successfully. "Farming is no 'get rich quick' scheme; you are more likely to get poor quick, and then you get lumped with droughts over which you have no control and which can go on for years."

The government also needs to encourage and mentor the young people of our country, black or white, who still want to farm. And there are young people who do, as is evident from the number of graduates from the surviving agricultural colleges, such as Grootfontein Agricultural Development Institute in Middelburg, Eastern Cape.

Equally important is that the Departments of Land Affairs and Land Reform urgently attend to the commercial farmers who are sitting with land claims and/or still waiting to be paid. "To not have resolved this situation is a horrible, absolute injustice to the farmers and the claimants, and it is a recipe for violence," says Pringle.

He adds that as farmers, landowners and South African citizens we need to make ourselves heard. "Silence can too easily be regarded as consent, and we are then going to have to accept the consequences of this. Because if agriculture collapses, the economy collapses, such is its terrific multiplier effect across the land."

Pringle believes we need to actively counter the voice of stone-throwing politicians whom he describes as "Capunists" (a hybrid of a Capitalist and a Communist). "They are normally very rich and can eloquently preach Das Kapital but have no understanding of farming and they ignore the realities of sustainable food production.

"We need to look no further than Zimbabwe for proof of this. Zimbabwe's collapse can be traced to a single policy: its fast track land reform programme, under which the Mugabe government, beginning in the year 2000, seized thousands of white-owned commercial farms, leading to a sharp drop in agricultural output and leaving everyone far worse off than before," says Pringle. "Zimbabwe now has a 90% unemployment rate, out of control inflation and a collapsed economy. Yet this is the country that Julius Malema touts as a model for South Africa when he has highly successful commercial farmers in his own country offering their knowledge, mentorship and skills to make a success of land reform. Instead of being embraced, white commercial farmers are criticised, undermined and threatened. The time has come to halt this destructive trend and get on with the business of securing South Africa's future."

Farmers want to help

By far the majority of successful white farmers would be only too eager to assist new black farmers to make a success of their farms. Their help is, however, not welcomed.

Andries Pienaar, SA Sheep Farmer of the Year

"I am not interested in politics because in most cases economic reality and political aspirations don't gel. What I am interested in is systems that work and people who are committed to farming or agri business as I prefer to call it," says Andries Pienaar whose family has been farming Merino sheep on the farm Klipplaatsfontein in the Northern Cape district of Colesberg for 123 years.

Pienaar's agri business today comprises three Mega Merino stud farms (in Colesberg, Australia and New Zealand), an irrigation pasture farm in Luckhoff, Free State and an empowerment sheep farm in Hanover, which Pienaar together with his son Jacques and ten of their staff bought ten years ago.

"When the farm came up for sale, the grants offered to our staff as previously disadvantaged individuals only amounted to 50% of the payment required. Jacques and I then paid in the rest, we became 50/50 partners with our staff and today our empowerment farm is very successful," says Pienaar who says the principle of ownership is essential. People simply don't invest in the land when it is not their own.

The empowerment farm has since produced two SA Merino champions

on the natural veld grazing show; it annually produces outstanding wool branded as 'Charisma Fleece', and it produces free-range lamb branded as 'Shepherd's Selection' for Checkers. The empowerment farm is registered as Sheep Power Pty Ltd and it is in the top 5% of net profit in the district. Profits are divided according to shares.

"It is run as an agri business and not as a project," says Pienaar. "The dictionary definition of project is a 'scheme' and too many land reform initiatives end up being nothing more than schemes.

"I have mentored my staff in business systems that work, with a focus on the five key performance disciplines in any agri business: marketing, finance, the product (i.e. the animal or the crop), the factory (i.e. the farm) and the people. You have to get 80% for each one of these for your business to flourish. And if you don't know how to achieve this, then you get people who do know to help you," says Andries who regularly runs empowerment agri business courses. Last year alone he trained 400 new farmers from all over South Africa and Lesotho.

"I make the courses very practical and I tell the new farmers that they must forget fighting about the past which I tell them is as useful as drinking brandy to get sober. All it does is waste time while the rest of the world gets ahead of us."

Pienaar is the Chairperson of Pro Agri, a group of all the award winners of SA Farmer of the Year for the past 35 years. They have offered their skills and support to the Minister of Agriculture who has said she would like their help.

"What we need to do is put race and ethnicity aside, and pool our collective skills and brainpower to work together for South Africa," he says. "Our motto is 'God is our Source of Supply' and 'Discipline Creates Freedom', and our mission is 'to make South Africa number one in the world of agri business'."

Hopefully the Minister actively secures their help without delay.

Gerdie Landman, Leading South African dairy farmer and Pro Agri member

"In every district in this country there are top notch, highly experienced, successful farmers who want to help empower new farmers, including their staff, but the state needs to work with us," says Gerdie Landman, leading South African dairy farmer from the Cookhouse/Fish River Valley and founder, owner and manager of Mooimelk Koeihotel which produces 15 million litres of milk a year.

Several years ago Landman sent a proposal and business plan to Land Affairs motivating them to purchase the farm next to his, which would then be sold to- and developed by his staff under his mentorship.

Land Affairs' response was that they do not buy irrigation land because it is too expensive. This is not true because they are buying plenty of irrigation land in the selfsame Fish River Valley for a sugar beet scheme, which is far from proven as an economically viable form of agriculture.

Farm staff with farming experience

who are assisted by or partner with commercial farmers are the ideal candidates to be offered the opportunity to develop their own farms.

"We don't need to reinvent the wheel. There are excellent models of farmer development and land reform in South Africa that are highly appropriate to the land situation today," says Landman. "I see great potential for farming once the powers that be recognise that it does not work to simply hand over land to people whom you call 'emerging farmers'.

"New farmers need to be put into projects; they need support, structure and financial responsibility in order to rise to the many challenges of ownership of a farm. This is the only way to nurture people who really want to farm. Otherwise it is as nonsensical as putting someone behind the wheel of car who has never driven and wondering why they crash."

Landman himself was part of a new farmer project as a young man without means. In 1983 the government launched a dairy-farming project where 19 farmers under the age of 35 were selected out of 2000 applicants to purchase 19 state-owned pieces of land in the Tsitsikamma region, 200 hectares each. Amongst the successful applicants, some had been farm foremen or managers and one was an agricultural extension officer.

"The land cost R200 000 for the 200 hectares but it was completely unfarmed. It was just a piece of bushveld, it had no infrastructure, no fences, no house, nothing," Landman explains. Through Landbou Krediet en Grond Besit the successful applicants were offered a fixed interest rate of 8% at a time when the general interest rate was between 18% and 24%.

The success of the project was measured after ten years. Eighteen of the 19 made a success of farming in the Tsitsikamma. Most were milking 500 or more cows on their 200-hectare farms after ten years; the rest established themselves as successful sheep and beef farmers.

Clearly the project was a success. And it was a success despite subsequent complications, notably that the nineteen farms were reclaimed as part of the post 1994 land restitution process. "I lost my farm," says Landman, "but I am a farmer, that is what I love and do best and I continued to farm my Tsitsikamma farm for a further fifteen years, renting the land from the successful land claimants, until I bought my current farm in the Fish River Valley.

"It must be stressed that the government paid market related prices for our Tsitsikamma farms and the process of payment on registration was properly and timeously executed. There can be no other way," he adds.

Time restrictions need to be placed on restitution claims. Otherwise the government is infringing on property rights, which have to be market driven. Property rights constitute one of the cornerstones of good rule of law. If we fall victim to the collapse of property rights, we fall victim to the collapse of our economy.

Willem Symington, Northern Cape sheep farmer and Agri Northern Cape member

"The government owns thousands of hectares of commonage outside each rural town that can be effectively used to build up new farmers if the municipalities are willing to support this," says Willem Symington, a successful Dorper sheep farmer from Williston.

In his part of the world known as the Karoo Highlands for example, Williston's commonage is 6000 hectares, Sutherland's is 3000 hectares and Fraserburg's is over 8000 hectares.

Symington developed a model of small-scale farmer development that could work throughout the country.

"Three years ago I started a partnership with a new farmer named Isak Fritz on the Fraserburg commonage," Symington explains. "The problem facing new farmers is that it is so difficult for them to get started because even if they have access to land they need stock or access to capital to buy stock, which they mostly don't have.

"Isak leased 1200 hectares from the municipality and started with 34 Dorper ewes on a piece of land that can carry 120 ewes. A commercial farmer gave him some sheep to get him going and he bought the rest. He paid R84 per ewe per year to the municipality for the lease of the land when the going commercial rate is R200 per ewe.

"I then offered him a partnership where I would graze 80 of my ewes on his leased piece of commonage and I would pay him R200 per ewe per year, to be paid at the end of each year in the equivalent amount of ewes."

At the end of the first year Fritz received 24 ewes from Symington and his flock increased to 60 as he also kept some of his own lambs.

"I then reduced my ewes to 60 to compensate for his increased numbers and so it went. He will reach his full quota of 120 ewes in February 2012 and he is doing well," says Symington who has mentored Fritz since the outset, and assisted him with his sheep health programme and infrastructure maintenance. "He had not farmed before but I saw he had potential and that his personal finances were in good order."

With a successful model in hand, Symington went to the municipality with a proposal to develop two other new farmers in the same way when the 3-year tenders for commonage lease came up for renewal. "They are both young, steady chaps with potential whom I could help build up," says Symington.

Regrettably the municipality turned down the proposal and rented the commonage to commercial farmers.

"The new farmers and I were very disappointed and I feel frustrated because there is so much potential in this partnership model," says Symington, adding: "I'm not giving up, and I will re-approach the municipalities next time round. In the meantime, perhaps there are other farmers who can approach their municipalities with this small-scale empowerment method that works."

(Mis)understanding land reform: an issue ripe for political plucking

By Greg Nicolson, *Daily Maverick*, 31 October 2013

Two books were launched on land reform on Wednesday night. The land issue is poorly understood but crucial to the country's politics. As the ANC propose new policies to win votes, the authors of the books hope to add critical insight before the political football is kicked into the elections.

The Umhlaba exhibition at the Wits Art Museum chronicles the land issue. One hundred years after the passing of the Land Act, the photography, carefully chosen, imbues a sense of the tragic dispossession and landlessness that runs through so many South African veins and still determines lives today. With a slow walk through the extensive exhibition, including work from around 30 photographers, the photos give a sense of the issue, an understanding that one can relate to, whether you're an academic or just dropping by, intrigued.

Discussion around land reform struggles to convey such an understanding of the intricacies. Speaking at the launch of a new book on land reform on Wednesday at the museum, Professor Ben Cousins says it is hard for academics to talk to the nation about the issue, so emotional yet so poorly understood. People in urban areas have difficulties getting issues of the land, he said, at the launch of *In the Shadow of Policy* - which Cousins and Paul Hebinck edited. It's time for novelists and filmmakers to stand up.

Failed percentages of redistribution and restitution, issues of communal land, agrarian productivity, subsistence farmers, rural class divides, farming mentorships, and business models - the issues of land reform are complex. Check the proposed legislation and you'll find multiple Bills ready to address problems with what has been a largely continuously failing attempt at land reform since 1994. But to understand what's on the table you'll need to look at the goals and results, which are contested, sift through the current legislation and policy documents, and read studies on what's worked, what hasn't and why.

In all that, there's the emotional issue. With 20 years of failed attempts at land reform, the issue is ripe for populist politicians, says Cousins. "There's little doubt the Restitution of Land Rights Amendment Bill is a vote catching

exercise," he says of proposed legislation. Cousins says an official high up in the Presidency told him as much. The populist rhetoric around land reform dominates discourse and the ANC's policies are positioned to build black bourgeoisies, says Cousins.

The Restitution of Land Rights Amendment Bill, which the public can submit comments on until Friday, will allow new claims until 2018, after criticism that the 1998 cut-off date meant many people had missed out. But even that has problems. The Department of Rural Development and Land Reform issued a warning on Tuesday against people trying to swindle land claimants. "It has come to the attention of the department that there are people who are collecting money from unsuspecting community members saying that they will help them with their land claims," said Mtobeli Mxotwa, spokesperson for Minister Gugile Nkwinti. Applications and the lodging material are free of charge.
"It has very little to do with poverty reduction," said Michael Aliber on the current policy. He was also launching the book Trajectories of Change in Northern Limpopo Province, South Africa. The ANC in 2009 named land reform as one of their priorities but the recent medium-term budget shows a decline in funding, he added.

The Department of Rural Development and Land Reform estimates that 397,000 valid claims will be lodged once the restrictive timeframe on claims is extended, to cost between R129 billion and R179 billion if the claims are settled within 15 years. Before announcing the medium-term budget, Finance Minister Pravin Gordhan reportedly www.ecr.co.za/post/no-extra-money-for-land-claims-bill-gordhan/ told journalists the department would need to pay the costs from its own budget. Figures from the Institute for Poverty, Land and Agrarian Studies suggests www.plaas.org.za/blog/just-elections-less-money-land-reform the midterm budget cut funds for land restitution by 12% and reform 19% compared to the February allotment.

In the Shadow of Policy discusses the separation between state policy and actual experiences of land reform. "There's a severe if not disastrous disconnect between the aims of policy and the reality on the ground," says Cousins. Policy often constrains new farmers, ignores improvisation and innovation. Cousins says there's a blueprint being used pushing large-scale commercial farming and ignoring small-scale needs, which is influenced by our "naïve 21st century version of modernisation".

The problems are largely political. There's an election on the way and voters know land reform is far from successful. Meanwhile, Julius Malema's Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF) are campaigning on a platform of radical policies to address poverty and inequality, one of the key issues being land reform. "To get rid of the curse you must give back the land. You are in possession of stolen property," Malema said to white South Africans at the party's Marikana launch. The first of the party's seven policy pillars is: "Expropriation of South Africa's land without compensation for equal redistribution in use."

The ANC understands the political issue and has a raft of new policies on the table. There's the extension of land claims, proposals to scrap the "willing buyer willing seller" model and the green paper on land reform.

Critics say the changes are just electioneering. For all Malema's bluster, EFF's proposals haven't the meat to be convincing either.

But it's hard to get to the bottom of the problem and find strategies that would actually help. As some of the top land reform academics discussed the problem on Wednesday night, the discourse was academic, suspended in the lofty heights of those who spend their lives trying to understand the issue. Unlike the photos, which draw the viewer in, frame after frame, shot across generations, the land reform discussion is stuck in the paralysis of electioneering and academia.

The authors of *In the Shadow of Policy* and *Trajectories of Change in Northern Limpopo Province, South Africa* hope they can change that and, crucially, offer critical insight as the political football is kicked into the elections.

The indignity of black life will not stop without land

By Sipho Hlongwane, Opinion & Analysis, *Business Day,* 25 July 2013

It has been 100 years since the promulgation of the Native Lands Act in 1913. As Sol Plaatje famously put it: "Awaking on Friday morning, June 20 1913, the South African native found himself, not actually a slave, but a pariah in the land of his birth." In one fell swoop, the government of the day restricted black land ownership to just 7% of the available land, and later, under the 1936 Native Trust and Land Act of South Africa, that portion was extended to 13% — most of it a collection of "native reserves" that could not possibly support the country's growing black population.

The results of this political act were immediately apparent. Blacks were either forced into unsustainable slivers of land or forced to move to white areas where they were ruthlessly exploited as cheap labour. As the Congress of South African Trade Unions (Cosatu) put it: "The forced removals from agricultural land left African people with little alternative but to work as cheap labour for the colonial masters and to live in filthy, flee-ridden, single-sex hostels."
As the "tribal reserves" became overpopulated, more and more people were forced to leave the rural areas to search for jobs. As an additional "incentive", the regime brought in taxes that could only be paid if you earned a wage.

Later acts such as the Group Areas Act of 1950, the Prevention of Illegal Squatting Act of 1951, the Bantu Authorities Act of 1951, the Promotion of Bantu Self-Government Act of 1959, the Urban Bantu Councils Act of 1961 and the Bantu Homelands Citizens Act of 1970 reinforced the idea that blacks had no claim to their historical land. Combined with the advent of bantu education, the various land acts constitute apartheid's grossest crimes against humanity.

The effects of those acts are still obvious today. It can be argued that the grave problems we have experienced at Marikana (and in the mining industry in general) would not exist had the migrant labour system been ended. And till today, broken homes are an entrenched fixture of rural and township black life.

Our constitution provides that a "person or community dispossessed

of property after June 19, 1913 as a result of past racially discriminatory laws or practices is entitled, to the extent provided by an act of Parliament, either to restitution of that property or to equitable redress". This is an unambiguous provision. If land was stolen, it must be returned or suitable payment to the victims must be made.

According to Rural Development and Land Reform Minister Gugile Nkwinti, 4,813 farms (4.2-million hectares) have been transferred to blacks, to the benefit of 230,886 people, between 1994 and 2012. The Reconstruction and Development Programme aimed to put 30% of agricultural land in black hands within five years. So far, only about 2.5-million hectares of private land have been redistributed.

The government of the day would like us to believe that this terrifically slow pace of land restitution is the fault of the willing-buyer, willing-seller principle, which essentially keeps negotiating power with land owners, even when it can be shown that the land they claims to own was stolen. This is only partly true.

Another reason is that the government has not adequately sized up the problem. We finally know the government owns about 22% of the land. However, a breakdown of land ownership by race is not yet complete. Until that figure can be resolved, land restitution and redistribution will be a target that is impossible to meet.

It is about time that the willing-buyer, willing-seller principle come to an end, because all it really does is to force the hand of the state as a buyer.

Nkwinti said: "The state has paid twice as much for land for restitution as it has paid for land for redistribution, because the state is a compelled buyer. The numbers clearly show who has benefited from the programme. The small, white, landed class has benefited R10.8bn from land acquired, while the 71,292 working-class claimants benefited R6bn."

The establishment of a land valuer general and the passing of the revised Expropriation Bill should help stop this sort of thing. The bill allows for the courts to help decide the true value of land.

Even these meagre gains on the land question will be quickly reversed if the government just dumps black people on land and expect them to compete with established commercial farmers.

Ruth Hall, an associate professor at the Institute for Poverty, Land and Agrarian Studies of the University of the Western Cape, told the Mail & Guardian that there was strong evidence that large areas of redistributed and restored land were being appropriately used.

She continued: "Of course, there have been failures in the sense that land has been acquired but people haven't moved to it for a variety of reasons, or farming started and then stopped, funds dried up, and so this public investment was wasted and the so-called beneficiaries didn't in fact benefit.

"Many of these failures stem from inappropriate project planning, which expects poor people to take over whole commercial farms while facing the same market conditions as their predecessors, many of whom had the benefit of years of state subsidy, trade protection and experience, but with little outside support and limited operating capital."

One solution is the proactive land acquisition strategy, through which the government has bought and then leased out land to emerging black farmers. However, there are problems with the transparency and selection criteria, which could lead to abuse. Can you imagine being able to lease vast farms from the government at below-market rates without needing to explain yourself?

The temptation is to abandon all caution and relentlessly pursue the social-justice aspect of land redistribution and restitution. The pace is certainly too slow, for whatever reason. But doing so without providing the right kind of support for emerging black farmers, or having communities just moving back onto stolen land, would be an own goal. We will keep seeing stories of redistributed or restored land being sold back to commercial white farmers. And, of course, South Africa's precarious food security position would become even worse. Endangering that would be even more anti-transformation than our existing poor land-redistribution record, as it would condemn even more black people to poverty and starvation.

But at this point, the landlessness of black people should be the most pressing priority. Land brings dignity and is capital to fund a better education, new businesses and an improved quality of life. We should have solved the restitution question many years ago and redistributed 30% of land to blacks by now. Without it, black lives will continue to suffer indignity and upward mobility will still be largely in the hands of the government.

Small-scale farming: simple, successful, sustainable

By Jay Naidoo, *Daily Maverick*, 13 June 2013.
Jay Naidoo is founding General Secretary of Cosatu, former Minister in the Mandela Government and Chair of GAIN – a global foundation fighting malnutrition in the world. *www.jaynaidoo.org*

On a recent visit to Japan, I was struck by the remarkable success of smallholder farming. I left the country convinced that small-scale farming can eradicate Africa's hunger crisis.

I wade into the paddy fields, nestled in the gentle mountains, hugged by the forests, along with Seiji Sugeno-san and his family. Rice occupies a historical place in Japanese history, society, and political economy. But for me it was my first experience of planting. The earth feels warm and the soft clay soils wrap around the feet in a tender clasp.

Sugeno-san is the president of the Fukushima Organic Farmers' network. His rugged frame advertises his dedication, hard work and love of the land. He embraces me like an old friend. I am from the country of Mandela, who is an icon in his community, admired for his integrity, sacrifice and compassion for the oppressed of the world.

We are barely 50 kilometers from the epicentre of the Fukushima meltdown. I am here to pay my respects to a community that has suffered the traumatic hardships of nuclear conflagration. Across the region, farmers dumped millions of gallons of milk and tons of ripe vegetables, unable to sell their products legally on the open market. Fukushima's 70,000 commercial farmers lost billions of dollars in income.

But Sugeno-san does not dwell on the past. He talks matter-of-factly about how the community is pulling itself up.

Yet all around us is the evidence of the radiation threat. A Geiger meter to measure radioactive levels is an ever-present companion. He waves it around ceaselessly. The levels fluctuate wildly as we encounter 'hotspots' higher up in the mountains and forests that surround this region, where they are more concentrated.

Sugeno-san is a philosopher. His love affair with the land is poetry. "These trees are planted by our ancestors. These 'tambos' - the orderly descending terraces of rice paddy fields - are blessings from our communal mountains and forests.

We smallholder farmers are the guardians of this Earth. It is our ancestral connection with their spirits. We pay our respects by respecting the land." I realise that this deep and profound link between our planet and our humanity is being shattered by our human greed and ever-rising consumption.

Here, even in these mountainous areas, his fields are organised and more productive than any agro-industrial farm I have seen. His four hectares gives the highest yields, and all of it is based on a sustainable organic farming model. A motley bunch of urban students and activists have arrived to help him. I am not sure whether we are a hindrance or help, but his humour is infectious. I think he knows that he is educating us on what is important in life. He is a born teacher.

It feels so good to connect back to nature. The waters are abuzz with life, insects and sparkling green fluorescent frogs. The government has recommended that farming be suspended. But Sugeno-san is a farmer, the land is his canvas and planting his paintbrush that brings life. I sense he would die if he did not touch the earth with his hands each day. "The farmer is the bridge between humankind and nature. Disrupt that bond and the balance of our world is destroyed," he reflects quietly, almost to himself.

As we spread through the paddy fields I see a box with technical measurement devices connected to the ground. "What is this?" I ask.

"It is a university experiment that measures the levels of radioactivity in the water and eventually in the food. We can be contaminated through the air or the food we eat or water we drink. But we must fix our soils: only working it will help it to heal," he says.

I see why smallholder farmers like him are the true guardians of our planet. They breathe and feel the land. They are the extension of nature. But they have perfected productivity. A simple, inexpensive mechanical machine plants a hectare of rice seedlings in a few hours. He teaches me to use it in a few minutes. I wonder why we have not prioritised linking farmers with his expertise to farmers in Africa. Unlike a consultant or expert, he has learnt his skills in the fields, not a classroom.

Seeing my interest, he herds us into his farm truck and we go to the local organic composting facility.

"We do not use chemical fertilisers here. We have aggregated cattle-rearing in our community and use the cow dung as the base of our organic fertilisers. Linking to local businesses, they collect natural vegetable waste and produce several tons a day. It helps the soils recover their strength, and we build social solidarity as the foundation of our community."

I visit a local co-operative centre the community has established, and witness the social solidarity they have built at a grassroots level. I recognise the human values that Nelson Mandela represents in their actions. I wonder why we have not done more to build human dignity. No-one is left behind. I reflect on the influence Mandela had on my life, when he

powerfully said, "Fighting poverty is not an act of charity. It is an act of justice."

Why have our leaders forgotten this most profound wisdom? Why have we not planted the seeds of social solidarity, human dignity and compassion that are the legacy of Nelson Mandela?

That evening we gather to hear the tales of a village elder recounting cultural stories of the ancestors. It reminds me of my time spent with Mandela - the simplicity of village life in India and Africa. The stories are expressive and traditional, but with the underlying morality we have forgotten.

As we share a supper, I understand how deeply entrenched nutrition is in Japan. I did not see a single obese person around the table or in my journey here. The meal has an astonishing variety of delicious vegetable dishes that have been planted locally, with the appropriate carbohydrate mix, usually rice, and fish or animal protein. Culture has developed a tradition of balanced nutritious diets that has ensured that Japan has largely resisted the western junk food invasion.

I think about what we need back home. We need farmers like Sugeno-san to connect to farmers in Africa. He demonstrates that organic farming can be done at scale and be productive. Smallholder farmers, especially women, who produce 80% of our food, do not need charity. They need legal land ownership, the support to build their own seed banks and finance for power, irrigation and water in the first few years. Smallholder farmers are the most valuable part of the market, of the entrepreneurial value chain.

Yet they are largely excluded. They are the unrecognised foundation of the market system. Many have said to me, "Help us improve their productivity through provision of extension support, and ensure that we are able to connect to the market and keep the major part of the value - then we will feed Africa and the world."

The next day in a GAIN-hosted workshop on agriculture and nutrition, President Jakaya Mrisho Kikwete of Tanzania says in his keynote speech:

"I know that my ancestors who lie in the ground will not allow me to take the land that belongs to my people and give it away. We need smart partnerships that ensure that value goes to the smallholder farmer also. We also need to change our eating habits, even if it goes against what our tradition teaches us. Science has shown us that it is not just the amount of food we eat but the quality of the food that is important. Our mothers and children must get the right nutrients to be healthy and productive."

Professor Ruth Oniang'o, speaking on a panel, remarks, "You look good, Mr. President, because your mother and your wife feed you. Talk to your counterparts in Africa that nutrition and food security are two sides of one coin. Make them understand that women smallholder farmers are the centre of the agriculture value chain. If they go on strike, Africa will starve."

I return from Japan convinced that we can make malnutrition history. As Oniang'o said, "I hate to see an African child starving on our TV screens. African children are beautiful when they have the right nutrition. Let us work together to eradicate stunting as the poster child of Africa."

I completely concur.

Warnings of conflict over re-opening of land claims

By Robyn Joubert, *Farmer's Weekly*,16 September 2013

The Department of Rural Development and Land Reform (DRDLR) was urged not to recommend the re-opening of the land claims process as the delayed transfer of gazetted claims heavily affected agriculture.

This was according to Anwhar Madhanpall, SA Sugar Association's land reform manager speaking at the recent Ad hoc Committee meeting at Tala Game Reserve outside Durban. Madhanpall said the re-opening of the land claims window would be destructive to the agricultural economy. According to Madhanpall, 38% of sugarcane land (130 400ha) was already under unsettled gazetted claims.

"Should government choose to re-open claims, it will stall resettlement and redistribution programmes. Claims could be made on land that has already been restored and cause serious conflict … and there won't be any land available to the market. We appeal to government not to gazette (any more claims) until the Regional Land Claims Commission has the resources to settle. Otherwise it will encumber the land and stop investment," he said.

Madhanpall said 21% of South Africa's commercial sugarcane growing area (70 627ha) had been transferred to freehold black farmers. "By March 2014, the Regional Land Claims Commission would have transferred 18 000ha in the sugar industry, which will bring the industry close to 25% black ownership by the end of the financial year," he said.

Advocate Bheki Mbili, chief director of DRDLR KZN Restitution Support, said 15 000 claims in KZN had been settled or restored and 2 000 claims were outstanding, of which 1 300 had not yet been researched. Reference group representative, Thokozane Zondi said he hoped the re-opening of claims would be delayed until these claims had been finalised. Kwanalu CEO Sandy La Marque said she had seen little progress with restitution in KZN over the past four years.

"Implementation challenges are not being addressed, so delays in restitution will continue. There is no list of gazetted claims. Let's find out what we are dealing with before we start the new process," she said. Recently-released results of government's land audit found that 50% of KZN land was state-

owned, with 46% in private hands and 4% unaccounted for. “There is a perception that private land is white-owned, but it is here that you will find companies like Sappi and Mondi, foreign-owned or BEE-styled businesses and trusts,” said La Marque.

Kwanalu’s land audit, indicated that out of 9,2 million hectares in KZN, 46,29% was state owned or held by the Ngonyama Trust. “Our audit found that 15,61% of farms were white-owned, 2,3% were black-owned, and 35,8% was unaccounted for,” La Marque said. Nhlanhla Mndaweni, chief director for DRDLR KZN agreed that government’s next big audit would be to determine the race of land owners.

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