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RURAL STRUGGLES AND EMANCIPATION IN SOUTHERN AFRICA

AGRARIAN NEOLIBERALISM, RURAL POLITICS AND AGRARIAN MOVEMENTS IN MOZAMBIQUE, SOUTH AFRICA AND ZIMBABWE

PhD Thesis in Postcolonialisms and Global Citizenship (Sociology) directed by Professor Maria Paula Meneses and presented to the Faculty of Economics, University of Coimbra

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Dedication

To Christian, my son.

To my father, Eugénio Monjane, and my brother, Jaime Monjane, who saw me begin this journey and are not here to see me finish it.

To all progressive agrarian social movements in southern Africa and beyond.

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[1] ALICE is a research project coordinated by Boaventura de Sousa Santos and financed by the European Research Council (ERC). The project seeks to re-think and renovate socio-scientific knowledge by drawing upon "Epistemologies of the South, an approach proposed by Boaventura de Sousa Santos. The objective is to develop new theoretical and political paradigms of social transformation. More on ALICE: https://alice.ces.uc.pt/en/index.php/about/?lang=en [Accessed on 07/07/2020]

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Abstract

Adopting a transdisciplinary approach, this thesis explains current land struggles in southern Africa by offering an intimate account of the nature of agrarian movements, their ideological basis, social base, leadership, tactics and strategies as well as identity processes. Based on qualitative research, this study builds upon social and human science methodologies to draw information through oral testimonies with ordinary citizens and societal leaders, as well as documentary evidence, to delineate the nexus between neoliberal agrarian policies, rural politics and rural agency in Mozambique, South Africa and Zimbabwe. This multi-spatial dimension allows me to identify a diversity of agrarian questions and the various nuances of rural politics in the region. While in Mozambique the study addresses rural struggle against a capitalist agrarian extractivist project, the result of an alliance between the government and agrarian capital, in South Africa the struggle studied is focused on land owned by a Protestant church of German origin, while in Zimbabwe I focus on a form of emancipatory alternative to agrarian capitalism.

In southern Africa, a region that widely experienced settler colonialism, rural people's agency played a crucial role in the overall process of liberation and emancipation. This because the most direct forms of colonial oppression were harshest in rural areas (for example, forced labour, culture imposition, expropriation, punishment, colonial tax, among others). In the current period of neoliberalism, rural politics continue to occupy a central place in national politics.

The thesis places emphasis on the countryside, where the introduction of neoliberal agrarian policies and the contradictions derived from their implementation shaped new agrarian (power) relations, especially in terms of access to and control of both the means and the processes of production. This has triggered the emergence of new agrarian movements and the revitalization of "old" ones, propelling current rural politics in the continent.

This thesis demonstrates that rural and land struggles in southern Africa are both reactive (when the peasantry reacts to the penetration of capital or neoliberal state policies) as well as active (when they happen in the absence or independently of such penetration). It shows that land grievances in the region also involve faith-

based organisations, which confronts the dominant idea that current land disputes are exclusive to corporate capital and the peasantry.

While arguing that, due to the contradictions inherent in agrarian capital, the most militant popular struggles and experiences of emancipatory alternatives to capital are today to be found in the countryside (encompassing class and identity processes), the study makes a necessary contribution to knowledge by opening up the spectrum of the agrarian question in the region, re-examining the composition and nature of agrarian movements in the contemporary context and exploring the issue of active rural agency, through the lens of the Epistemologies of the South, which was not sufficiently done in existing literature.

Key Words: Agrarian Movements, Rural Politics, Southern Africa, Emancipation and Epistemologies of the South.

Resumo

Adotando uma abordagem transdisciplinar, esta tese explica as atuais lutas pela terra na África Austral, oferecendo um relato intimista da natureza dos movimentos agrários, da sua base ideológica, base social, liderança, táticas e estratégias, bem como dos processos de identidade. Baseado em investigação qualitativa, este estudo assenta em metodologias das ciências sociais e humanas para extrair informação através de testemunhos orais com cidadãos comuns e líderes sociais, bem como provas documentais, para delinear o nexo entre políticas agrárias neoliberais, políticas rurais e agência rural em Moçambique, África do Sul e Zimbabué. Esta dimensão multiespacial permitiu-me identificar uma diversidade de questões agrárias e as várias nuances da política rural na região. Enquanto em Moçambique o estudo aborda a luta rural contra um projeto agrícola capitalista, resultado de uma aliança entre governos e o capital agrário, na África do Sul a luta estudada centra-se na terra pertencente a uma igreja protestante de origem alemã, enquanto que no Zimbabué me concentro numa forma de alternativa emancipatória ao capitalismo agrário.

Na África austral, uma região que experimentou amplamente o colonialismo de povoamento, a agência da população rural desempenhou um papel crucial no processo global de libertação e emancipação. Isto porque as formas mais diretas de opressão colonial foram as mais duras nas zonas rurais (por exemplo, trabalho forçado, imposição cultural, expropriação, punição, imposto colonial, entre outras). No atual período do neoliberalismo, a política rural continua a ocupar um lugar central na política nacional.

Focando-se em três países da África Austral — Moçambique, a África do Sul e o Zimbabué —, este estudo visa explicar as atuais lutas fundiárias na região, através de um relato intimista sobre a natureza dos movimentos agrários, a sua base ideológica, as suas narrativas discursivas, a sua base social e a sua liderança social, bem como as suas táticas e estratégias. O enfoque nestes países permite-nos perceber a diversidade das questões agrárias e os vários matizes da política rural na região. Embora, no caso de Moçambique, o estudo aborde a luta rural contra um projeto de desenvolvimento agrário capitalista que resultou de uma aliança entre governos e o

capital, no caso da África do Sul, este estudo visa analisar a luta rural contra uma organização religiosa de origem alemã. Quanto ao Zimbabué, o estudo centra-se numa forma de alternativa emancipatória ao capitalismo agrário. Assim se demonstra que as lutas agrárias e fundiárias na África Austral são reativas (quando o campesinato reage à penetração do capital ou das políticas neoliberais do estado) e, ao mesmo tempo, proactivas (quando surgem na sua ausência ou independentemente desta). Além disso, demonstra-se que os ressentimentos relacionados com a terra na região também estão associados a organizações de cariz religioso — o que contraria a ideia dominante de que as atuais disputas fundiárias implicam exclusivamente o capital empresarial tradicional e o campesinato. Este estudo faz o necessário contributo para o conhecimento, alargando o âmbito da questão agrária na região, reanalisando a composição e a natureza dos movimentos agrários no contexto contemporâneo e explorando a problemática da agência rural ativa, sob a perspetiva das Epistemologias do Sul, o que não foi suficientemente feito na literatura existente.

Palavras-chave: Movimentos Agrários, Política Rural, África Austral, Emancipação e Epistemologias do Sul.

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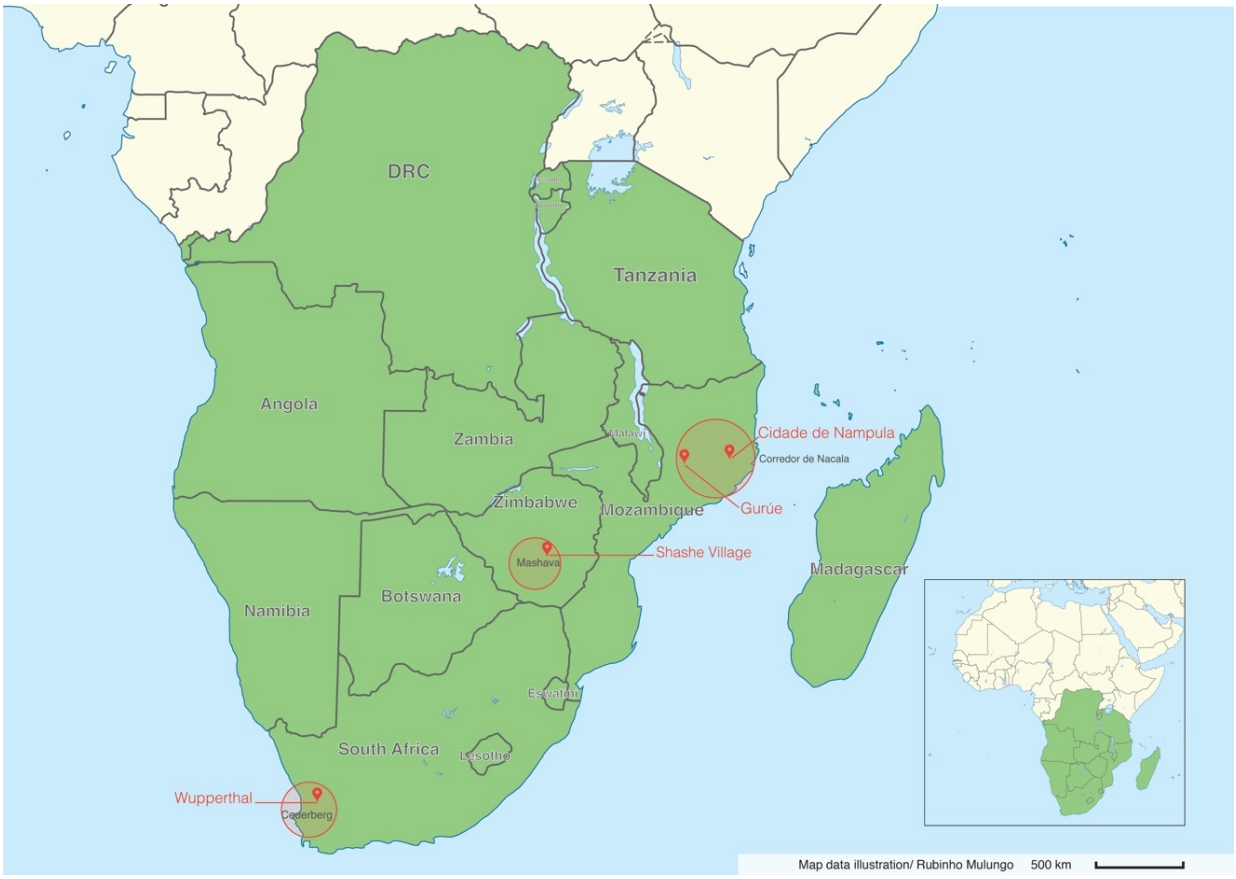
List of acronyms and abbreviations

ANC	African National Congress [South Africa]
AZTREC	Association of Zimbabwe Traditional Environmental Conservationists
CES	Centro de Estudos Sociais (Centre for Social Studies) [Portugal]
DUAT	Direito de Uso e Aproveitamento de Terra (Right to use and exploitation of land) [Mozambique]
EFF	Economic Freedom Fighters [South Africa]
ESAFF	Eastern and Southern Africa Small-Scale Farmers' Forum
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation (United Nations)
FRELIMO	Frente de Libertação de Moçambique (Mozambique Liberation Front [political party, Mozambique]
FSC	Right to Agrarian Reform for Food Sovereignty Campaign
FTLRP	Fast Track Land Reform Programme
LVC	La Via Campesina (The peasant's way)
MDC	Movement for Democratic Change [Zimbabwe]
MCSA	Moravian Church in South Africa
MCiSA	Investment arm of the MCSA
PELUM-ZWE	Participatory Ecological Land Use Management - Zimbabwe
PRODECER	Japan-Brazilian Cooperation Programme for Cerrado Development
ProSAVANA	Triangular Co-operation Programme for Agricultural Development of the Tropical Savannah in Mozambique
RENAMO	Resistência Nacional Moçambicana (Mozambican national resistance) [Political party, Mozambique]
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SMAIAS	Sam Moyo African Institute for Agrarian Studies [Zimbabwe]
SPP	Surplus People's Project
UGC	União Geral das Cooperativas Agro-pecuárias de Maputo (General Union of Agro-pastoral Cooperatives of Maputo) [Mozambique]
UNAC	União Nacional de Camponeses (National Peasants' Union) [Mozambique].

WSSD	World Summit on Sustainable Development
ZANU-PF	Zimbabwe African National Union – Patriotic Front
ZIMSOFF	Zimbabwe Smallholder Organic Farmers' Forum
ZNLWVA	Zimbabwe National Liberation War Veterans' Association

INTRODUCTION: Land as a central element in rural organisation and agency in Southern Africa

This thesis analyses how and the extent to which the emergence and strengthening (or consolidation) of agrarian movements are confronting, challenging, questioning, and resisting agrarian neoliberalism, and proposing alternatives for rural emancipation and societal transformation. Further, it examines these agrarian movements' consistency and how they deal with their internal dynamics and inherent contradictions and potentials. This study comes at a time when rural agency is viewed as weak and agrarian movements and their leaders as having lost radicalism. The more sceptical voices even question the very existence of agrarian movements on the African continent.



Picture 1: Research sites | Map illustration: Rubinho Mulungo

Presently, there are hardly any narratives in available scholarly works or the mainstream media that discuss or acknowledge the agency of ordinary people from rural organisations and their leaders in southern Africa. There is evidence, however, from both a historical and a contemporary perspective to show that there have been stunning cases of rural mobilisation and organizing that resulted in significant social and political effects in many places throughout southern Africa. Indeed, the countryside has been the most important space for political mobilisation and organisation in Southern Africa, despite the consistent marginalisation and peripheralization of rural dwellers and particularly peasant farmers' political potential and transformative agency in mobilisation and political capital.

In South Africa, the Mpondoland rural revolts, which began in the 1950s and reached a climax in 1960, rank among the most significant forms of rural resistance, and later inspired anti-apartheid struggles (Kepe & Ntsebeza, 2011). It is also known that peasants were the main force of the nationalist armed struggle in Mozambique and Zimbabwe (José Negrão, 1995; Mondlane, 1969; Mupfuvi, 2014). In Mozambique, they were among the key social groups to inhabit the liberated zones where one lived free from the colonial state and forced labour, compulsory production of agricultural crops and displacements (Meneses, 2013, p. 55).

Since the dream of industrialization and transformation of the peasantry into proletarians was not realized in most of southern Africa, there was no significant agrarian transition and the peasantry remains a significant force (Adésiná, 2004). Today, decades after independence, peasants continue to be the largest social group in southern African countries,[2] but also the one that suffers the most from the penetration of capital into the countryside in the form of agrarian neoliberalism. Over the past few years, agribusiness, investment funds and government agencies have been acquiring long-term rights over large swathes of productive land in Africa in forms and on terms that are exposing fractures and division among African societies, within communities, and between citizens and states (Cotula, 2011; Hall, 2011). Globally, Africa remains the most significant target area for land deals for agriculture

[2] Perhaps with the exception of South Africa, but where nonetheless much of the African urban proletariat engages in activities such as occupying land for raising livestock, a quintessential peasant activity (Jacobs, 2018b).

and "it accounts for 422 concluded agricultural deals (42% of all deals in the global South) and 10 million hectares (37%). It also has the highest number of intended deals (147 deals; 13.2 million hectares)", (Nolte, Chamberlain & Giger, 2016, pp. vi–vii).

Africa, as well as most of the global South[3], is undergoing new dynamics of agrarian transformation, forcing changes in social and power relations, and restructuring the balance of forces between the state, society and capital. The imposition of neoliberal reforms on the African continent, especially since the 1980s, has been galvanizing new forms of penetration of local and (mostly) foreign capital into almost all sectors, but particularly in the continent's countryside, through neoliberal agrarian policies. The implementation of such policies and their contradictions created new agrarian relations. This is the context in which new agrarian movements germinated and have grown on the continent.

Zimbabwe offers perhaps one of the most vivid examples of peasant agency and the quest for land, food sovereignty and self-determination. The following statement by one of the leaders of a rural agrarian movement not only captures peasants' relationship with their land, but also explains the fundamentals that shaped their resistance to agrarian neoliberalism:

> Land is central. That is why we fought to get it back in Zimbabwe. Without land no farmer has dignity. Of course, having access to land, alone, is not enough. But it all starts with access and control over land. That is what we call sovereignty, food and national sovereignty. (Elizabeth Mpofu, interview, Shashe, January 2018).

The day had been extremely hot. The forecasts indicated above 40 degrees Celsius. It was mid-January, 2018. The sun was setting, but the remnants of the heat of the day were still being felt. This period of the year is considered to be the rainy season in Zimbabwe, but no rains had fallen for five weeks in the Masvingo area, south-eastern Zimbabwe. Elizabeth Mpofu was concerned about the dry spell as it could severely compromise crops which farmers in Shashe had already planted.

[3] In this thesis, the concept of the Global South is understood in line with what Boaventura de Sousa Santos (2006; 2018) describes as the "non-imperial south", thus a geopolitical South and not a geographical South.

Elizabeth herself had sowed sorghum, finger millet, maize, groundnuts, *bambara* nuts, and cowpeas in her *minda* - the Shona word for farm fields.

While waiting to make the final visit of the day to the fields, Elizabeth took the opportunity to talk to me about my research. It was not the first time we had conversed, but that interview was particularly special because we delved deeper into Elizabeth's past as a leader. It was then that I learned in detail about her active involvement in the massive land occupation movement of the early 2000s in Zimbabwe.

I had already spent a few days in Shashe, her village, interviewing other farmers, many of whom are members of the Zimbabwe Smallholder Organic Farmers' Forum (ZIMSOFF). On several occasions my interviewees suggested that I delve into some of the issues from conversations I had with *mai* (mother, in Shona) Mpofu. Besides being a communal leader, her insights and perspectives are crucial because she identifies with the gender that is mostly involved in agrarian production in Africa. Women constitute the majority of the people engaged in agricultural productivity, although most of them do not have rights to the land they till (FAO, 2011; Tsikata, 2016).

Shashe residents recognise in Elizabeth an indispensable voice for understanding the processes that turned Shashe from a privately owned cattle range and commercial farm into the vibrant, agro-ecological village that it is today.

Elizabeth had just returned home from a trip overseas; she had been representing *La Via Campesina* (LVC), an international peasant movement, in a meeting in Rome, Italy. She had served as the general coordinator of LVC since 2013. Our conversation lasted for at least two hours and it focused on her roles as a community organiser in Shashe and as the founder and chairperson[4] of ZIMSOFF.

The concept of food (and national) sovereignty that Elizabeth Mpofu talks about is a central element in this study. Proposed by LVC, food sovereignty is defined as:

> … the right of peoples to healthy and culturally appropriate food produced through ecologically sound and sustainable methods, and their right to

[4] In 2018 ZIMSOFF elected a new chair. Elizabeth Mpofu was named honorary president of the movement.

> define their own food and agriculture systems. It puts the aspirations and needs of those who produce, distribute and consume food at the heart of food systems and policies rather than the demands of markets and corporations (La Via Campesina, 2007).

It seems food sovereignty lies not only in the productive autonomy of the communities, but it "somehow serve[s] to bring together, or convene, many of the relationships necessary for people to live well, gain their dignity and be able to plan for the future" (Meneses, 2018b). 'Dignity' is perhaps the quality that best describes the quest among the people in Elizabeth's village. Shashe is a farmers' community created by formerly landless peasants who occupied the land and obtained formalization from the government two years later (Rosset & Martínez-Torres, 2012). Elizabeth was one of the people who occupied land in Shashe when the village was still a large, cattle-range farm, owned by a commercial white farmer. What has been developing in Shashe is a "deeply emancipatory initiative" that "challenges the pre-land-reform dominant models [which state that] only large-scale cash and monocrop options were sustainable in Zimbabwe", (Nelson Mundzingwa, interview, cited in Monjane, Bruna, and Gilolmo 2019).

The whole village occupies an area of about 15 020 hectares, in which 365 families have been allocated eight hectares of land each. Among them, 12 families were allocated 184 hectares collectively as a project in what are called "centers of excellence" (Nelson Mudzingwa, interview, Shashe, January 2018).

Shashe was the first area to be occupied in Masvingo province when the popular countrywide land occupation movement began in the early 2000s. This movement filliped the government to embark on the Fast Track Land Reform Programme (FTLRP). The FTLRP, which formally began with the Land Acquisition Act of 2002,[5] was introduced to speed up the redistribution of land in Zimbabwe, and also as a way of regularizing the massive land occupations that were still ongoing across the country at the time.[6] The programme sought to redistribute land from white-owned farms and estates, as well as state lands, to more than 150 000 small-scale farmers, following two models: one aimed at small-scale farmers and the other at black commercial farmers who had the skills and resources to farm profitably

[5] Available at , consulted on 28/06/2020
[6] As this topic is beyond the scope of this thesis, please see the repository of the Zimbabwe Legal Information Institute: https://zimlii.org/zw/legislation/act/1992/3

(Mkodzongi & Lawrence, 2019, p. 1). The FTLRP in Zimbabwe constituted "the first radical shift in agrarian property rights in the post-Cold War world" (Moyo & Yeros, 2005b, p. 3) and "perhaps the most important state-implemented land reform carried out in recent decades anywhere in the world" (P. Rosset, 2013, p. 722).

The land occupation movement that resulted in the adoption of the FTLRP was led by the Zimbabwe National Liberation War Veterans' Association (ZNLWVA) in alliance with traditional spiritual leaders and traditional indigenous authorities, as well as key rural organisations. One such organisation was the Association of Zimbabwe Traditional Environmental Conservationists (AZTREC), in which Elizabeth was serving as the board's chairperson at the time of the land occupations.

The Zimbabwe Land Reform Programme, dubbed "land invasions" by its critics, is generally associated with former president Robert Mugabe and his party, the Zimbabwe African National Union – Patriotic Front (ZANU-PF), and seen as a way to hijack the agenda "in order to save himself from electoral consequences of years of economic mismanagement and political repression" (Zimudzi, 2002, p. 220). This account, which discounts the agency of the (rural) people in the radical redistributive land reform process, is challenged by other scholars (Moyo & Chambati, 2012).

1. Agrarian transformation and rural agency

Peasant farmers' organisations and movements have been making efforts to coordinate at the national level in Mozambique, South Africa, Zimbabwe and elsewhere, by leading direct protest actions, building organicity, influencing legislation and public policies and, in most cases, without any direct alliance with urban groups or trade union movements. For instance, the National Peasants' Union (UNAC, from União Nacional de Camponeses, in Portuguese) in Mozambique has been leading a resistance process for almost a decade to halt the implementation of ProSAVANA, a capitalist, large-scale, agribusiness project. The driving political forces behind ProSAVANA, namely the governments of three countries (Mozambique, Brazil and Japan) and agribusiness capital, have been deemed too powerful. Nevertheless, the implementation of ProSAVANA has failed to move forward and the resistance to the programme is already considered to be one of the strongest movements against a

rural development programme in post-colonial[7] Mozambique (Monjane, 2016). Yet existing academic research on ProSAVANA has concentrated its analysis especially on comparing ProSAVANA to similar projects in Brazil, by investigating the dynamics of South–South development or the role of Brazil in expanding its agribusiness empire and models (Cabral & Leite, 2015; Shankland & Gonçalves, 2016; Wolford & Nehring, 2015; Zanella & Milhorance, 2016). By and large, the debates on proSAVANA favoured the analysis of macroeconomic impact and the possibility that Mozambique would benefit from Brazilian know-how and Japanese markets or the dynamics of foreign agrarian capital in a development corridor. Therefore, less was explored about the agency of peasant movements in shaping the way in which ProSAVANA is officially presented today and their impact on the programme's current hibernation stage.

Today, South Africa is one of the countries where the most popular protests occur in the world, with, on average, 30 protests happening every day (Africa Check, 2016), many of which take place in the countryside. The available – but still limited – body of academic research on collective agency in South Africa pays attention especially to urban-based protests, where people mostly demand better services and higher levels of political accountability (Mottiar, 2013). However, there is paucity of studies on rural-based protest and uprising, even if in recent times some of the most significant achievements made by popular (class) struggles were rural-based. A good example is the farm workers revolt of 2012, where farmworkers decided to go on strike, demanding an increase of their living wage. After a long sequence of strikes, farmworkers won a landmark victory when the South African government agreed to increase the minimum wage by 52% within the sector (Andrews, 2013; Iob, 2013).

Although occurring in different countries at different times and in relation to apparently different issues, the above cases of active rural agency are not casual, isolated or scattered. Indeed, one generalization that can be made with confidence - as this study demonstrates - is that active agency is the rule rather than the exception in rural southern Africa.

It is a curious phenomenon that in Africa, a mostly rural continent characterized by the everyday search for resources and shaped by class-based

[7] I use 'post-colonial', with an hyphen except for postcolonial theory; this works to distinguish the period after colonialism from postcoloniality.

conflicts and grievances, academic analyses exclude rural agency. In fact, the bulk of research on the agrarian political economy in Africa - that is, research that takes a relational approach concerning social relations[8] (Bernstein, 2010; Mckay, 2017a) - tends to overlook the countryside's political potential, generally looking at the peasantry through a lens of victimhood. The focus is generally put on a passive and precarious subjectivity, whereby peasants are generally facing problems related to productivity (inefficiency).

Furthermore, very little focus is given to people's imaginaries (*imaginários*), to explore active subjectivity. This is partly due to the excessively economistic view of the "material" aspect of agrarian social relations. As Hilary Tovey asserts,

> rural and agricultural sociologists have generally not much interest in social movements perspectives, being concerned more with the analysis of macro-structures shaping food systems and regimes than collective agency (Tovey, 2002, p. 2).

While there has been a tendency to view peasant movements as only fighting for economic interests, evidence shows that peasant movements are not struggling for material gains alone (Mannathukkaren, 2011).

Although the Zimbabwean situation is somewhat unique, at least to the extent that the Zimbabwean state responded to the war veterans (I return to this in Chapters Three and Four) and popular pressure to embark on an unprecedented land redistribution programme, similar contexts of rural agency and peasant resistance to land and agrarian neoliberalism exist elsewhere in southern Africa. Thus, this thesis uses three case studies in the region to examine peasant agency around increasing encroachment by capital, and the character, extent and impact of their struggles for land democratisation. The social, economic, political and ideological imperatives shaping their activities are explored in the thesis.

[8] Henry Bernstein (2010) refers to social relations of access, of divisions and conditions of labour, of income and value distribution, and of consumption, reproduction and accumulation.

2. The case studies in this thesis

At the core of this thesis is long term field research in Mozambique, South Africa and Zimbabwe, carried out with a higher intensity between 2017 and 2018. In Mozambique, the field research was conducted along the Nacala Corridor, Central and Northern Mozambique, specifically in Ribaué and Malema districts in Nampula province and Gurué district in Zambézia province. This is the region in Mozambique that has received the most agricultural investment in recent years, making it the region where agrarian capital has penetrated the most. The Nacala Corridor was the preferred area for the implementation of ProSAVANA, the agrarian development programme proposed by the governments of Mozambique, Brazil and Japan, as mentioned earlier. The programme was inspired by another intensive agriculture programme called PRODECER which was implemented in the 1960s in the Brazilian *cerrado* area to produce agricultural commodities such as soybeans. Although PRODECER is said to have galvanized the region's economy, it also had devastating social and environmental effects, as it expelled local peasant farmers and destroyed biodiversity (Ganem, 2007; Machado & Aguiar, 2010).

Fearing that the aspirations of the Mozambican peasantry would be endangered, UNAC, together with other civil society movements and organisations, resisted ProSAVANA. They argued that the programme could lead to landlessness due to massive land grabbing, forced removals and resettlements, as well as social upheavals along the Nacala Corridor and beyond; impoverishment of rural communities and reduction of survival alternatives; pollution of water resources as a result of the excessive use of pesticides and chemical fertilisers; soil impoverishment; and ecological imbalance as a result of deforestation of extensive forest areas to give way to agribusiness, among others (UNAC, 2012) This resistance movement resulted in the programme being put on hold for almost a decade now. In 2012, UNAC stated that:

> We remain firm and faithful in our commitment to peasant agriculture and the agro-ecological production model based on Food Sovereignty as an alternative for the development of the agricultural sector in Mozambique, a model that considers all aspects of sustainability (UNAC, 2012).

Like other agribusiness initiatives involving the exploitation of extensive farm lands, ProSAVANA was viewed as a threat that could reverse the "gains" achieved with national independence through the nationalisation of land and the establishment of a regime that was intended to be socialist (this is analysed in detail in Chapter Four). Resistance to ProSAVANA will be framed as a political effort to reverse the agrarian reform that was supposedly achieved with independence.

In South Africa the study focuses on Wupperthal, a village on the west coast in Cederberg municipality in the Western Cape province. The village was founded in 1830 by two German missionaries from the Rhenish Missionary Society, Theobald von Wurmb and Johann Gottlieb Leipoldt. In 1965, a decision was taken that Wupperthal should become part of the Moravian Church. The village remains a Moravian mission station to this day under the full control of the Church. For almost a decade, a group of landless peasants, members of the Moravian Church and residents of Wupperthal have been overtly challenging the leadership of the church, pushing for land democratisation.

The fact that churches own immense tracts of land in South Africa does not constitute a novelty. What makes this case unique and interesting for this research is how a small group of believers has dared to protest against a rigid and highly hierarchical faith-based organisation, claiming ownership of land in a context where the norm has been for people to relegate their agency to the church's leadership for almost everything. The concerned Moravians, on the contrary, have been articulating their demands very creatively by asking the church's leadership to "take care of the souls and leave the land to the people" (Dennis Bronton, interview, Wupperthal, December 2017), a clear strategy of separating questions of faith from matters of political economy. The Wupperthal case will be framed as a political effort to force agrarian reform, which was not achieved with the end of apartheid and democratization in South Africa.

Picture 2: Sign indicating a demarcated piece of land during the land occupation movement in Zimbabwe. Credit: AFP

In Zimbabwe, the thesis studies the experience of ZIMSOFF in Shashe Village, in Masvingo province. Shashe was the birth place of the national movement which is now ZIMSOFF. The movement was founded with about 20 000 members, and the village also represents one of the most successful cases of land reform in 2002. Shashe was a cattle breeding farm owned by a white farmer. The land was democratised and today more than 300 families live in Shashe. Shashe is now a vibrant agroecological village inspiring peasant groups all over Zimbabwe. The farmers produce with low industrial inputs and it is almost self-sufficient in food. The Shashe case will be framed as a political effort to defend land reform (achieved through the FTLRP).

These cases, which are not unique, were chosen because of my proximity to key people who participated in this research owing to previous contacts I had with their organisations, as I explain in detail in the methodological chapter. For now, I will emphasise that the issue of trust between me and the leaders of the organisations in this research allowed the existence of epistemic proximity. This allowed me to ask certain questions and receive the answers without many 'filters' from the respondents.

3. Framework and contribution

As this thesis demonstrates, access to and control over land remain the most critical struggles in rural Mozambique, South Africa and Zimbabwe, and these three offer a good lens through which the reality experienced in most of southern Africa may be viewed. These struggles form part of class dynamics, but also contain other identity and cultural elements and processes, such as the connection with ancestry, the sense of belonging, and the recovery of ancestral knowledges and practices. Class, a putative analytical category in the Marxian tradition, has been useful in explaining expropriation, accumulation of land and exclusion of the peasantry. However, if viewed from a narrow Eurocentric perspective, the concept can obscure other immaterial elements and hence risk a misinterpretation of rural African agency.

This study challenges the widely accepted assumption that "rural movements have become the 'natural' leaders of progressive change, **not by virtue of being exploited by capital, but by being expelled from it**." (Moyo & Yeros, 2005a, p. 55 emphasis added). Of course, this assumption might find resonance with other contexts, especially in Latin America. However, my research reveals that struggles can also be about expelling capital - the case of resistance to ProSAVANA in Mozambique - or about transcending it – the case of Shashe in Zimbabwe. The case of South Africa, where the landed 'elite' in question, the Moravian Church, established with Wupperthal's residents a relationship closer to a feudal system[9] than that of capitalism, is even more peculiar.

The study puts forth an analytical and methodological framework that builds bridges between the class-based approach and Epistemologies of the South; the former is used to understand the dynamics of mechanisms of power, property institutions and the social relations that result in the current development of agrarian capitalism [(Lenin, written in 1899 (1960); Moyo & Yeros (2005c), Bernstein, (2010)], and the latter to understand agrarian struggles and the knowledges they produce (Santos & Meneses, 2009, Santos, 2016, 2018). Following the challenge

[9] The social and power relations in Wupperthal approach those of the feudal period insofar as the church owns the land and has an oppressive relationship with the residents and believers, without exploiting their labor for capital accumulation purposes.

advanced by Du Bois (2007), regarding the intimate relationship between capitalism and colonialism, the utility of Epistemologies of the South is in the ability to frame the current globalised neoliberal capitalist and colonial regime as one that is separated by an abyssal line, "dividing metropolitan and colonial societies and sociabilities in Western-centric modernity" (Santos, 2018, p. 3). The analytical procedures that Epistemologies of the South offer include the ecology of knowledges and intercultural translation, which are:

> …the tools that convert the diversity of knowledges made visible by the sociology of absences and the sociology of emergences into an empowering resource that, by making possible an expanded intelligibility of the contexts of oppression and resistance, allows for broader and deeper articulations between struggles combining the various dimensions or types of domination in different ways (Santos, 2018, p. 32).

I develop on this analytical and methodological framework in Chapter Three.

Empirical data from the field combined with in-depth analysis of political, ideological and practical proposals of the agrarian movements provide fresh insights, offering an intimate account of the nature of UNAC, FSC (Right to Agrarian Reform for Food Sovereignty Campaign) and ZIMSOFF in Mozambique, South Africa and Zimbabwe respectively. The study of these countries allows me to discuss and analyse the diversity of the agrarian question and the various nuances of rural politics in the region, while also encountering common trends.

4. Structure of the thesis

This thesis consists of five chapters, plus this introduction and the conclusion. Chapter One outlines in detail the research strategy, methodology, process of data collection and analysis, ethical issues, and research limitations. The study was conducted from the positionality of a scholar-activist. Chapter Two deals with the conceptual and analytical frameworks of the study to understand agrarian movements and rural politics in southern Africa. In terms of methodology and concepts, this interdisciplinary study triangulates a *Marxist class-based* perspective and *moral economy* – these perspectives coincide in a number of issues to the extent

that some of the latter identify largely with Marxism – with the *Epistemologies of the South*. The analysis of rural politics in terms of power relations, as useful as it might be, tend to be limited to focussing on material and economic aspects. This study goes beyond the materialistic dimension of 'who owns what' and explores aspects of history, identity, knowledges, and practices. To do so, this study has required the use of methodological, theoretical and conceptual frameworks that transcend the constraints and reductionism of one analytical approach that favours some elements and exclude others.

Chapter Three discusses land and agrarian issues from a historical perspective in Mozambique, South Africa and Zimbabwe, delineating how colonial penetration in these countries altered pre-colonial agrarian systems and patterns. As the chapter demonstrates, a close reading of African land and agrarian historiographies proves the still persistent representations of Africans in relation to knowledge and agricultural innovations in their relationship with land and their agrarian systems. This chapter is also crucial in understanding the roots of rural resistance and agency in the three countries. Chapter Four discusses the current dynamics of capital penetration in the countryside with neoliberal characteristics, combined with the process of financialization of the agricultural sector, and co-optation or instrumentalization of state institutions to foster legal frameworks that benefit capital at the expense of the peasantry. I call this *agrarian neoliberalism*. This is the new phase of agrarian capitalism, manifesting itself with varying degrees of populism (mostly applied by those who fight it) and authoritarianism (applied by those who propose and defend it). However, as the chapter discusses, the current conjuncture in southern Africa is showing opportunities for emancipatory movements to gather ground, but also the existence of threats both from the state in defence of propertied interests, and landowners and farmers' lobbies, sometimes with connections to the extreme far-right and neo-fascist groups.

Chapter Five - the longest chapter of the thesis - is informed by empirical evidence acquired from extensive and long-term field research. It discusses and analyses the significance of the struggles, practices and emancipatory actions, as well as the knowledges produced through the struggles carried out by the agrarian movements this study focuses on. In order to get a more comprehensive picture of

the dynamics, potentials and contradictions of the movements in their ideological practices, actions and narratives, I chose to engage critically with agrarian movements of this study by looking at four main "categories", following Petras (1997), who is seconded by Yero and Moyo (2005c): namely, social organisation; political behaviour; relations; and identity processes and culture. The conclusion ties together the major themes raised in the thesis and suggests fresh conceptual insights and contributions.

CHAPTER ONE: Methodology, motivation and scope of the research

This chapter gives a detailed outline of the research strategy, methodology, process of data collection and analysis, ethical issues and research limitations. The study was conducted from the positionality of a scholar-activist; that is, from the perspective of someone with a background and experience with social movements and activism, who has joined academia in order to acquire academic tools and produce academic knowledge which is useful in circuits beyond academia. The question (and dilemma) of how to combine scholarly work with political activism is also discussed in this chapter.

1. Background

This study is, to a great extent, a culmination of a long process that shaped my formation and transformation from a mere militant-activist into a scholar-activist. A scholar-activist is someone "who explicitly aim[s] not only to interpret the world in a scholarly way but to change it, and who [is] connected to a political project or social justice oriented movement" (Borras, 2019, p. 24). In the main, this research is a result of a long-term process of accumulated experiences, so long that even my childhood experience enters its scope (Santos, 2018). That is why I start with a brief account of how my past experience as an activist, born in a semi-rural environment and having a peasant mother and unionist father, has been influential in shaping my intellectual curiosity and later this research project. The topic of this thesis – agrarian movements and rural politics in southern Africa – is therefore not isolated from the work and processes in which I was involved prior to my academic life.

1.1. The road to social awareness

My awareness (and later consciousness) regarding social issues blossomed very early in my childhood. By listening to my parents' conversations at the dinner table, sharing with each other their work day – my mother as a peasant farmer and my father a staff member of a trade union – I gradually became aware of what it was like to be a peasant and a worker in the context of a country (in my case, Mozambique)

in conflict. When I was born, in October of 1983, Mozambique was in the midst of a war that showed no signs of ceasing. The war had been going on for seven years, and continued for almost a decade. The year of my birth was probably the peak of the civil war, which compromised both food production and food imports. It became known in history as the year of famine, and was recorded as the year with the greatest food shortages in the history of independent Mozambique.

Although agricultural production as a whole was highly compromised, it was undoubtedly peasant agriculture, conducted with sacrifice and high risk (as the guerrilla war was being fought in the countryside), that enabled the Mozambican population to avoid absolute crisis with regards to child mortality.

My memories are still intact. My mother would leave home very early in the morning to the farm (‘*machamba’)*, in Mulotane*,* Matola (today highly urbanized). In Mozambique, *machamba* is a farm land cultivated by peasant farmers, usually small in size. Most women in my neighbourhood would walk 5 to 10 kilometres from our then semi-rural neighbourhood of Liberdade to their respective *machambas*. Like all other women, my mother would leave home with uncertainties about whether she would be able to return home safely. Very frequently, women and children were captured while working the land and taken away by members of the guerrilla movement, RENAMO (Resistencia Nacional de Moçambique – National Resistance of Mozambique). Most of them were never seen again. Matola is a few dozen kilometres from the capital city of Maputo, and RENAMO was already attacking Matola in the late 80s.

I have no doubt that if it had not been for my mother’s persistent efforts to go to the *machamba*, despite all the risks, my siblings and I would have suffered from chronic malnutrition, if not starvation, as did many children of that generation. Due to the rapid urbanization that began with the end of the civil war, which led to land speculation, my mother, like most of the peasantry cultivating in *Mulotane*, later lost her land to the building of residential houses. I do not have many details about this, but my mother was not compensated for the loss of the land.

My late father, although more exposed to urban-based activities, in part because he had received a basic education, was also from a peasant background. He was born and raised in the rural village of Malehice (Xibuto district, Gaza province).

In his young adulthood, he was sentenced to forced labour on the cocoa plantations on the islands of São Tomé and Principe as punishment for committing an act then considered immoral and forbidden by the colonial regime.[10] This was my father's most significant experience in agrarian labour. The historical forced exile of Mozambican (and Angolan) labourers to cocoa plantations in São Tome had a later incarnation during the late 1940s and early 1950s. This phenomena is well covered by various scholarly research (Ishemo, 1995; Nascimento, 2008; Kagan-Guthrie, 2011).

Just as it was the case before being sent to Sao Tome, my father worked for many years as a domestic worker (*criado*) for Portuguese families. This exposure to class (and race) exploitation was indeed determinant in his later engagement in labour politics. From the late 1980s to the mid-1990s, my father served as a staff member at the Organização dos Trabalhadores de Moçambique (Organisation of Mozambican Workers, OTM). While his tasks were more inclined to administrative functions than leadership positions, he was exposed to matters and processes of significant political dimension in the union – which in turn influenced his stories shared at the dinner table.

With the end of the civil war in 1992, when Mozambique adopted 'democracy', I was slowly beginning to make sense of my family's history and its interaction with that of our country. The post-war reconstruction process, multiparty elections, the arrival of NGOs, changes in legislation and opening of markets for foreign investment all developed in tandem with my growing up and interpreting the society around me. All of these dynamics influenced my involvement as an activist in youth and school associations.

1.2. Personal experience with agrarian and rural politics and the road to my research participants

As a young person, I participated in various social and cultural movements. The experience that most contributed to my political formation was my involvement

[10] This story has never been properly clarified, since my father would rather not go into detail about this part of his past, it seems however that he had written a love letter to a white woman he had fallen in love with. The letter went to the authorities and as punishment he was deported to the plantations in Sao Tome.

with agrarian movements. This was especially crucial because it facilitated my contact with the outside world beyond Mozambique's borders, given the ubiquitous nature of agrarian struggles globally. Surprisingly, I started to understand more about Mozambique from the moment I got to know other realities. José Saramago was right: "You have to leave the island in order to see the island, that we can't see ourselves unless we become free of ourselves." (Saramago, 2000, p. 26).

In 2008 I became part of the International Secretariat of La Via Campesina[11] (LVC), the International Peasant's Movement. I was based in Maputo, working from the offices of UNAC. LVC is a transnational agrarian movement that brings together more than 180 agrarian movements and organisations from 81 countries, including peasants, small and medium size farmers, landless people, rural women and youth, indigenous people, migrants and agricultural workers (LVC, 2017).

UNAC hosted the LVC regional secretariat for Southern and Eastern Africa from 2007 until 2016. The secretariat then moved to Morogoro, Tanzania, in 2017 and is hosted by the National Network of Farmers' Groups in Tanzania, MVIWATA. My main tasks were connected to the international work of LVC regarding communications, media, publications and organizing. I collaborated extensively with most of La Via Campesina's members in southern Africa, notably in Mozambique, Zimbabwe and South Africa. Throughout the years, I worked closely with many people who are part of agrarian movements in those countries, especially those recognized as leaders in their countries and villages as well as in global events, such as demonstrations, internal meetings, training workshops, and so forth.

As part of documentation and knowledge creation for internal training processes and external publications, I also did activist research, focusing on the work of the agrarian movement members of LVC in Africa. I visited many farms and farming households across the continent. This allowed me to create personal bonds with many members and leaders of the movements, especially in Southern Africa. These experiences gave me a unique perspective on the struggles, resistance, potential, limitations and contradictions of agrarian movements on the continent.

[11] See webpage at https://viacampesina.org/en/

My family background, life experience and early activism had a major influence on my ongoing participation in agrarian movements. This study is an outflow from my active participation in agrarian politics, to my adoption and prioritization of participatory action research (Santos, 2014, p. 10).

Why and how, then, did I decide to join academia? I have a first degree in communication, specializing in journalism. I used the skills learned at the university in the service of the movements. As it is common in social movements, I was involved in many other activities in UNAC and La Via Campesina, but drafting press releases, writing informative reports, organizing and moderating press conferences, organizing press clippings and analysing media coverage were perhaps the tasks I enjoyed most. I was thus comfortable with my work, but it is true that it did not require much analysis and reflection from my side.

Over time, I met people who challenged me to deepen my understanding and develop my analytical skills. Some of these people are among the most respected scholar-activists I know. They convinced me that there was no incompatibility with being an activist and scholar at the same time, and that a good combination of both could be powerful. Although the idea of doing a PhD had never crossed my mind, these people inspired me enormously: Professor Patrick Bond, with whom I began a master's degree at the Kwa-Zulu Natal University in Durban, South Africa; Professor Peter Rosset, a colleague at La Via Campesina and a researcher at El Colegio de la Frontera Sur, San Cristóbal de las Casas ECOSUR in Chiapas, Mexico; Professor Jun Borras of the International Institute of Social Studies (ISS) in The Hague, among others. The decision to finally apply for a doctoral program was highly influenced by Professors Maria Paula Meneses and Boaventura de Sousa Santos, with whom, as an activist, I worked in the ambit of the Popular University of Social Movements, UPMS. The UPMS proposal and its methodologies were the practical demonstrations that social movements and academia can co-exist in synergy (Santos, 2006).

2. Choosing the scope of the study

The initial research proposal with which I applied for the doctoral program at the Centre for Social Studies was on popular resistance to land grabbing due to

agribusiness and extractivism (coal mining). My research did not include the impacts of urban sprawl on peasant land loss – a growing phenomenon in Mozambique – but certainly my motivation to research land struggles was triggered by the memories I carry of my mother's personal experience losing her farm land.

I was later challenged to look at the issue of land struggles from a regional perspective, extending the scope beyond Mozambique, to take advantage of my consolidated knowledge of rural and land politics, and experience with agrarian movements. This inducement came from colleagues and peasant leaders, and it was later endorsed by my supervisor. My updated research proposal then added Zimbabwe, and my final proposal included South Africa. In particular, I was greatly interested in deepening my understanding of Zimbabwe, especially after the Fast Track Land Reform Programme (FTLRP) of the early 2000s. The policy generated intense debate both in academia and among social movements in Zimbabwe, in the region and the world. My interest in South Africa was less keen, honestly. My understanding of South Africa was that the agrarian question had been almost resolved, and I believed that urban-based struggles, such those of trade unions, had more relevance and were stronger than rural and agrarian struggles. The more I studied developments in South Africa, however, including doing field research, the more I realized I had been mistaken. The South African case turned out to be indispensable for me in understanding not only the complexity but also the relevance of the present-day agrarian question in the region, and perhaps more broadly on the continent.

Furthermore, there were important conjunctural changes happening in southern Africa. Neoliberalism was scaling up, notably penetrating the land and agrarian sectors (see Chapter Four). In the course of those events, what caught my attention was the agency (the actions and reactions) of agrarian movements and rural constituencies in the three different countries, with different trajectories and political landscapes, still intimately interrelated.

While social inequalities were becoming increasingly abyssal, including uneven land distribution, the issues in South Africa seemed to be far from being resolved: debates on radical agrarian reform, now termed 'expropriation without compensation', were gaining momentum in many circles as social movements were

becoming more militant. Mozambique was hit by a heavy and complex economic and political crisis in the mid-2000s, while social inequalities and land-based conflicts were escalating. Mozambican civil society was getting mobilized, in both urban and rural areas, and a powerful agrarian policy, ProSAVANA, was being defeated by a grassroots peasant movement and its allies.

In Zimbabwe, while the political situation was turning out to be tempestuous and unsustainable, inequality seemed to prevail, especially in urban cities. Civil society and political groups were engaging in various uprisings as well as proposing alternatives. Land was one of the most mobilizing issues in these three countries and in their respective agrarian movements. Notably, the movements selected for this research played a crucial role in exercising the agency of the people, in some cases leading national resistance processes.

3. Scholar activism and positionality

As indicated earlier, this study takes a scholar-activist approach. Scholar-activism refers to a "rigorous academic work that aims to change the world, or committed activist work that is informed by rigorous academic research, which is explicitly and unapologetically connected to political projects or movements" (Saturnino M. Borras Jr., 2016, p. 1). While it aims to understand and explain agrarian movements in the context of agrarian neoliberalism, their organisational capacities and contradictions, it also explores their political potential for rural emancipation by looking at the possibilities of progressive change.

Scholar-activist research need not be irresponsible or biased research. Its power lies in finding the balance between "work that is well rewarded within the academy [but] may be largely irrelevant to the real-world concerns of movement activists, while work that is grounded so as to contribute to the strategic advancement of movement efforts is not recognized as significant within the academy" (Croteau, 2005, p. 20). While I observe the power of scholar-activist methods, I do not neglect its potential dangers and dilemmas (Edelman, 2009; Borras Jr., 2016). Indeed, "engagement within struggles raises its own challenges, not least that of writing in a

way that is attentive to its betrayal of the problems, ontologies, and experiences giving form to resistance" (Coleman, 2015, p. 265) .

My previous 'militant' writings as an activist give cause for this concern, as I would often seek data to prove a foregone conclusion rather than more vigorously interrogating questions with an open mind and methodological rigor. Academic methodologies and conceptual tools are powerful in helping raise and address difficult questions that inevitably arise in the research process. My transition from militant-activist to scholar-activist through the execution of this dissertation allowed me to look at things in a more nuanced, and less biased way.

In all phases of this research, I made an effort, as much as I could, to find a balance between my activist past (and present), and my current position as an academic researcher. For instance, one of the dilemmas encountered in certain interviews was when some participants and members of agrarian movements with whom I had previously worked either simplified the answers, or simply gave half-answers, as I would supposedly know the answers. To overcome these situations, I either rephrased the point or clarified that at that time (of the interview) I was playing a different role as a researcher and needed to come to each conversation as fully new.

While this research followed requirements to merit academic validity and reliability, it was equally developed to be somehow useful to the movements it focused on. As I defined my main lines of inquiry, I made sure to check in with both academic advisors and social movement leaders, to ensure the utility and interest to both parties.

3.1. Positionality

One of the key elements in social science (and ethnographic) research is the positionality of the researcher. In order to undertake ethical research, paying attention to positionality, reflexivity, the production of knowledge and the power relations that are inherent in research processes is critical (Sultana, 2007, p. 380). Positionality has to do with the theoretical and political location from where one (the researcher) observes and interprets reality. Enrique Dussel (2007) describes the presuppositions of what a positionality (*localización*) implies. It indicates:

> …the hermeneutic action by which the observer "places himself" (compromised) in some socio-historical 'place', as the subject of enunciation of a discourse, and therefore it is the place 'from which' the problematic questions are asked (of which there is critical self-awareness or not) that constitute the assumptions of an epochal episteme (Dussel, 2007, p. 15).

Positionality reflects the position that the researcher has chosen to adopt within a given research study and is normally identified by locating the researcher in relation to three areas: the subject, the participants and the research context and process (Savin-Baden & Major, 2013). Some aspects of positionality are culturally ascribed or fixed - for example, gender, race, nationality; whilst others such as personal life history and experiences are subjective and contextual (Chiseri-Strater, 1996).

As previously mentioned, my past experience (life, work and activism) has determined to a great extent my positionality in this research, which is also part of my own reflection and contribution to the agrarian movements. Having stepped back from the daily dynamics of these movements, by conducting this research I am now observing their work, structuring claims from a relatively distant, balanced and 'less subjective' position. It is no less true, however, that interpretive research begins and ends with the biography and self of the researcher (Denzin & Lincoln, 2017) such that I cannot portray myself as a fully neutral party. Any valid knowledge is always contextual, and social experiences are constituted by various forms of knowledges, each one of them with its criteria of validity (Santos & Meneses, 2009, p. 9). The value of my closeness to the study of agrarian movements is the possibility of allowing me to achieve an "emic validity" (Whitehead, 2005), which means to understand "the study host(s) from their own system of meanings"(2005, p. 5). Closeness can thus easily allow an understanding of the sociocultural context. This leads to processes and outcomes that are significant not only to the researcher, but ultimately, and more importantly, to the study participants.

4. Study sites and movements

Mozambique, South Africa and Zimbabwe are all large countries. To make this study feasible, three specific cases of land struggles were therefore chosen.

In Mozambique, the field research was conducted along the Nacala Corridor in Ribaué and Malema districts in Nampula province, specifically in Lioma and Mutuali villages (*posto administrativo*) and Gurué district in Zambézia province, specifically in Ruace village. In Zimbabwe, the study focused on Shashe village, Masvingo province in south-eastern Zimbabwe. In South Africa the research focused on Wuppertal village, in the Cederberg municipality, Western Cape province, while some interviews were also conducted in Citrusdal, a town in the same municipality. These regions are discussed further in relation to interviews later in this chapter.

Since the nature and purpose of this work is on the agency of agrarian movements, and not about aspects of household productivity, I do not see the relevance of bringing in detailed statistical and administrative data about these places. However, details about the movements and the agrarian structure that characterizes the countries where they are located is given in subsequent sections and chapters. The research focuses on three case studies involving three agrarian movements, namely the National Peasants' Union (UNAC) in Mozambique, the Zimbabwe Small-Holder Organic Farmers (ZIMSOFF), and the Right to Agrarian Reform for Food Sovereignty Campaign (FSC) in South Africa. There were two strong theoretical arguments behind choosing these movements. First was their relation to the land question in general, and the land/agrarian reform issue in particular. UNAC was founded in 1987 when the post-independence agrarian reform by the FRELIMO government was under threat of being reversed as the country moved down a more neoliberal path; ZIMSOFF was created in 2010 as a result of - and hence traces its roots to - the popular land occupation movement that resulted in the adoption of the Zimbabwe Fast Track Land Reform Programme (FTLRP).

Picture 3: UNAC, FSC and LVC flags displayed in an activity by the movements in Harare, 2017 | Photo by the author.

FSC emerged in response to the refusal of the post-apartheid South African government to implement agrarian reform and redistribution. Land and agrarian reform is the axis that unites these three countries in a unique way. Second, all three movements are members of La Via Campesina, and additionally engage on their own in other international processes. Their transnational organizing strategy is unique compared to other social movements in the region.

5. Qualitative study

This research embraced qualitative methods, aiming to explore the "what, how, when, and where of something - its essence and ambience," that is, exploring the "meanings, concepts, definitions, characteristics, metaphors, symbols, and descriptions of things" (Berg, 2007, pp. 2–3). Just as no research method can claim total perfection, qualitative research presents certain dilemmas. However, some

open-ended, flexible principles are suggested as a guide to elevate the quality and validity of a qualitative study, such as sensitivity to context, commitment and rigor, transparency and coherence (Yardley, 2000).

Some scholars have hotly contested qualitative research. They claim that qualitative research is not 'good' science because it does not test hypotheses, and, overall, is too subjective. Critics also argue that it is difficult to generalize qualitative findings to settings not studied. To be more precise, it's been suggested that analytic generalization can be very helpful for qualitative researchers, but that sample-to-population extrapolation is not likely to be (Firestone, 1993).

Ravenek and Rudman (2013) take issue with these critiques, explaining that "these misconceptions may often be grounded in inadequate knowledge, on the part of groups or individuals, about qualitative research and how to assess it". They suggest that "it is essential that one has an adequate understanding of qualitative research in order to ensure that appropriate quality criteria are chosen and applied correctly" (2013, p. 452). Appropriate methodology construction is critical to both quantitative and qualitative research, and thus requires relevant expertise in either case.

A qualitative approach was chosen for this research due to the nexus of analysis desired, which is the 'political interaction' between agrarian neoliberalism and agrarian movements. Qualitatively, the research explores various aspects of relations between agrarian movements and other actors, such as the state, capital and other social movements, as well as within the agrarian movements examined in this study. For the latter, it extends the analysis to organicity, internal environment, gender and generational relations. Although numerical (quantitative) matters will be taken into account in some aspects - for example, numbers concerning membership, productive capacity, etc. - the primary focus here is on qualitative research of an exploratory and explanatory nature. Therefore, the intention is to explore the "how and why" rather than "how many" (Milena, Dainora & Alin, 2008, p. 1279).

5.1. Academic exposure affecting conceptual framework

The elaboration of this study, specifically regarding the literature review and its theoretical and methodological aspects, involved three research institutions other

than the Centre for Social Studies, CES. I spent a considerable time as a PhD-visiting-researcher in key academic institutes known for their vigorous work on the agrarian question. I spent three months at the International Institute of Social Studies (ISS), Erasmus University, Rotterdam in The Hague, from May to July 2017; five months at the Institute for Poverty, Land and Agrarian Studies (PAAS), University of the Western Cape, in Cape Town, from August to December 2017; and intermittently at the Sam Moyo African Institute for Agrarian Studies, in Harare, from 2017 to 2018. These academic exchanges were crucial in reshaping my frameworks, as they provided me with a more intimate look into current debates and the vast classical and contemporary literature on the agrarian question, rural and land politics, and agrarian movements.

5.2. Concepts

In terms of the conceptual framework, this thesis engages a number of concepts that are germane to issues under discussion. Although they are discussed in greater detail in Chapter Two, I reflect on them here briefly. Perhaps the most poignant concept here is agency. This refers to overt and covert forms of resistance by subaltern groups as they seek to relate with dominant and hegemonic classes. James Scott (1985 and 1990) and Benedict Kerkvliet (2005 and 2009) have developed this concept using different but related contexts to describe how peasants engage in everyday resistance against capital. These works offer a conceptual framework for analysing peasant agency and rural politics in Southern Africa.

Organicity is also a central concept in this thesis. This refers to the internal configuration of organisations ideologically and extends to the contradictions that may exist within them, and how these organisations function, in spite of the underlying contradictions. As discussed in more detail in Chapter Three, the rural organisations under discussion in this thesis were not homogeneous: they were often pervaded by internal ideological and functional contradictions, and these had a bearing on their operations. Closely related to organicity is the concept of identity. This concept deals with how people view themselves as a group. This invokes ideas about class consciousness, differentiation and shared aspirations, all of which are discussed closely in the third chapter as they relate to the three cases studies.

For the purpose of clarity, the terms "peasant farmers", "small-scale food producers", "small-scale farmers" and "peasants" are used interchangeably in this work. By all I refer to both men and women who work the land as farm workers or subsistence producers. They may be urban or rural landless people who are direct or indirectly involved in farming or in farming-related activities. This interchangeability does not ignore the fierce conceptual debates that are currently taking place in agrarian studies around the concept of the peasantry, concerned with its supposed disappearance or transformation into full proletarians (Bernstein, 2000; Bryceson, 2000; van der Ploeg, 2010; Bernstein et al., 2018). I develop on this in the next chapter. Similarly, peasant movements, agrarian movements and rural movements are used interchangeably in this thesis. I refer specifically to small and medium-scale producers' organisations or landless peasants, in the countryside and in the peripheries of urban centres, who are organised into associations, cooperatives, collectives or unions and articulated at provincial, regional or national scale, as in the case of the three movements in this study.

6. Field research: methods and data collection

6.1. Methods

Research methods must be elastic, with sufficiently flexible conceptual frameworks to take into account the particularities of each context, while at the same time allowing for meaningful comparisons between them (MacDonald & Ruiters, 2012, p. 12). This study employed a mixed methods research approach to reduce errors in data collection and analysis. A combination of *semi-structured interviews* (more than 70), *informal conversations*, and *group discussions* were employed. Participants of the study included peasant farmers (small-scale food producers), farmworkers, activists, non-governmental organisations, academics, researchers and government officials in Nampula, Zambézia and Maputo city (Mozambique), Masvingo province and Harare city (Zimbabwe), and the Cederberg region and Cape Town city (in South Africa). Additionally, *participative observation* and *document analysis* were included. The idea behind using the mixed methods approach is to compare, complement and, wherever necessary, contrast the data gathered by each

process in order to "counteract the threats to validity identified in each" (Bruce Berg, 2001, p. 5; Mckay, 2017a).

Usually, as an interviewer, I listened more and asked less. Even in the case of semi-structured interviews, the conversations were guided more by follow-up questions but always respecting the flow the participants found to be most natural. Only in cases of obvious deviation did I redirect the interview. In most cases, this method allowed participants to have more confidence and feel more involved in the conversation, while avoiding dragging them into a rigid and inflexible questionnaire. In this way, *extractive methods* were avoided, and *collaborative methods* applied (Santos, 2017; Fasanello, Nunes, & Porto, 2018;).

6.2. Interviews and informal conversations

This research was conducted over quite a long period. However, the most intensive data collection period was from January 2017 to February 2019.

The selection of participants was determined by their familiarity with the topics and issues related to the research, or direct involvement with or membership in the agrarian movements this study focuses on. In addition to peasant farmers and members of the agrarian movements, government officials and agribusiness representatives were interviewed, depending on the case and specificities.

A *snowball* sampling method was applied, in which participants nominated or suggested other informants from their networks, groups, movement or community. By and large, the participants are members of the agrarian movements that served as the subject of this research.

Other sources, such as documentation, newspaper articles, speeches and videos, discussed below, supplemented the understanding gained from interviews, or to fill in gaps when an interview subject was not available.

Individual interviews and informal conversations lasted between 15 and 120 minutes, depending on the degree of knowledge, involvement and willingness of the participants.

Interviews with government officials in Mozambique helped address the role of the state in the balance of forces between (financial) capital, the peasantry and the state itself. Notably, interviews with a local government officer in Gurué district, the provincial director of the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security (MASA) and the vice-Minister of MASA, as well as observing public meetings mediated by government officials, such as those held in Mecuburi district (Nampula) and Maputo city, provided me with a better understanding of the oscillating and uneven positions within the same government and state. Overall, it helped me get a sense of the contradictions – not altogether innocent – of a government that seeks to publicly avoid conflicts while at the same time fully intending to accommodate the needs of financial capital. Interviews with government actors in Zimbabwe and South Africa did not take place due to challenging political events that happened during my field research; however, ample primary source materials helped to fill in the lack of direct qualitative data collection.

Table 1: Distribution of research participants by categories.

	Number of interviews		
Participants	**Mozambique**	**South Africa**	**Zimbabwe**
Peasant farmers	18	11	18
Group conversations	3	1	1
Government officials	4	0	0
Companies'	2	0	0
NGOs	3	1	3
Activists	1	2	0
Researchers	2	1	3

Source: the author

Note: In individual interviews, female informants were 9 in Mozambique, 4 in South Africa and 8 in Zimbabwe. The group conversations had between 6 and 25 members, male, female and youth. More detailed information such as names of interviewees, places and dates are provided in the annexes.

Most of the interviews were conducted in Mozambique. This was determined and facilitated by the degree of closeness and familiarity I had with the agrarian movement UNAC, and the nature of the case study, which required listening to not only members of UNAC (peasant farmers), but also government officials,

representatives of agribusiness companies and members of civil society organisations that were doing work on ProSAVANA and other cases of land grabbing. To ensure such diversity of subjects, interviews were also conducted in Maputo, the capital city. The focus, however, was on the Nacala Corridor, the region for implementing ProSAVANA, the large-scale agrarian program that has faced strong resistance from UNAC.

Although the Nacala Corridor runs through several districts of five provinces (Tete, Zambézia, Niassa, Nampula and Cabo Delgado), my focus was on Nampula and Zambézia, where more cases of land conflict are found, and where capital penetration is already a conflict-inducing reality. In Nampula, I conducted interviews with leaders of the Provincial Peasant Union (*União Provincial de Camponeses de Nampula*, UPCN) at the office from where its secretariat operates in Nampula city, as well as with peasant farmers in Ribaué, Mecuburi and Malema districts. In Zambézia my focus was the Gurué district. These districts were chosen, on the one hand, because large-scale agricultural investments are already happening there which, although not directly linked to ProSAVANA, apply the same model proposed by ProSAVANA; and on the other, because there are interesting nexuses of resistance to the implementation of ProSAVANA, and to other agribusiness investments already underway.

In South Africa, the focus of the research was the Cederberg region of the Western Cape province, specifically Wupperthal, but interviews included activists and farm workers from the citrus industry in Citrusdal town. The struggles waged by the Citrusdal farm workers and farm dwellers provide useful context to understanding the struggles of the Wupperthal peasant farmer residents throughout the region, whose aim is to pressure the Moravian church leadership, a faith-based, landed elite, to redistribute land among the peasantry. During colonialism, European churches concentrated considerable amounts of land and established stations. This was a particular type of a colonist settlement.

My focus was the Wupperthal central station where the church and other church-controlled social infrastructure are located, but Wupperthal has other stations scattered across the Cederberg mountains. To further understand the struggles for land that are waged in Wupperthal, a former church station, Moiplaas now a village independent for decades, was included in my research scope. In order

to broaden this understanding, activists and researchers working in the area, as well as NGOs working on land issues in South Africa, especially in the Western Cape province and Cape Town city, were interviewed. All attempts to interview the leadership of the Monrovia church failed. However, I consulted available documentation in which the church presents its arguments about its ownership of the land and other infrastructures in Wupperthal. The Moravian church[12], as per the previous description and in that context, functions as an agent of a neo-colonial (neo-apartheid) state in South Africa.

Picture 4: Interview with Concerned Moravians leader in Wupperthal, September 2018 | Credit: Adam Ronan Hughes

[12] This thesis does not engage with the historical aspect of the Moravian church and other churches in South Africa as a whole. It recognizes and takes into account the existing literature on the topic which describes missionaries as "torch-bearers of capitalist social customs and the market economy" (Bundy, 1988, p. 37).

In Zimbabwe, data was collected in Masvingo province and Harare city. The focus was predominately on Shashe village in Masvingo, a vast area formerly used as a cattle range by a white Rhodesian farmer, before the FTLRP led to land redistribution in the area. Thanks to the strength of local agro-ecology leaders, today Shashe has become an agro-ecological village that has attracted the attention of researchers and multilateral organisations worldwide such as the United Nation's Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO).[13] Shashe peasant farmers, especially those linked to the Zimbabwe Smallholder Organic Farmers' Forum (ZIMSOFF), incorporated indigenous and ancestral knowledge into local food production, which in turn served as a method of resistance against the reversal of the land reform programme, and challenged the capitalist logic of food production that prioritizes profits over community and people's needs.

6.3. Group conversations (vs. Focus groups)

Focus groups had initially been planned as one of the methods for this research, since there is evidence that participants in focus groups might find the experience more stimulating than participants in either self-administered, open-ended surveys, or structured group interviews with less spontaneous interaction (Bristol & Fern, 1996; Kidd & Parshall, 2000). What happened, however, were group conversations. Focus groups typically have specific requirements in terms of how the groups are formed and how the discussion is conducted to ensure uniformity of data collection. This includes the number of participants, the duration, the nomination of a moderator, and so on. Our collective conversations did not respect such conventions and requirements, and, therefore, I am reluctant to call them focus groups. However, they did lead to several useful observations and hence the information from these conversations were included in the overall data set.

None of the four group conversations were planned as such. They were self-organized or organized in a manner that I did not influence or set rules around regarding their structure. Nonetheless, from my perspective, all group conversations were very rich in participation and served to "…triangulat[e] qualitative and

[13] See http://www.fao.org/family-farming/detail/en/c/426040/

quantitative data from the same participants"(Kidd & Parshall, 2000, p. 305). In the case of Wupperthal, for instance, the focus group allowed resolution of some long-standing conflicts among members of the local farmers group which I will explore in Chapters Three and Five.

In Mozambique, in Rubaué district, I went to a village to talk to peasant farmers who were in conflict with a ProSAVANA related company, named Mataria Empreendimentos. When I arrived, the peasant leader who welcomed me gave me a briefing of what was happening and took me to a group of fellow peasants (both men and women), who at that time were clearing a forest to start a collective vegetable production project. Instead of introducing myself to the peasants one by one, we decided to have a collective conversation. The conversation involved more than 11 people and lasted for roughly 90 minutes. One of the participants who spoke Emakuwa, the local language, as well as Portuguese, offered himself as an interpreter. The quality of his interpretation was constantly evaluated and assessed by the other participants, who had some working knowledge of Portuguese.

Picture 5: Group Conversation in Matharia, Ribaué, Nampula. | Photo by a participant

In Nakarari, on the border with Zambézia, my interview with the peasant leader of the village was interrupted when members of the community arrived for a community meeting. The community wanted to discuss what action to take in response to a letter from the local government in Malema. The letter had been addressed to the leader, my informant, instructing the community to demarcate farm areas in use. Although I did not interview anyone during that meeting, which lasted about two hours, I was invited to attend as an observer. During the meeting, one of the participants whispered translations to me, summarizing the content of the discussion, since the language used was, again, Emakuwa. In the meeting, consensus was reached that the government instruction should be resisted, as it indicated that the government would grab the non-demarcated community land.

In South Africa, an unplanned group conversation also occurred at Wupperthal central station. It arose at the initiative of Mr. Dennis Brunton, the leader of the Wupperthal farmers' cooperative – a component of the Concerned Moravians, member of the Agrarian Reform for Food Sovereignty Campaign (FSC). He mentioned that having a 'collective discussion', as he named it, would also be "an opportunity for the members to be together and have their meeting as a cooperative" before having me joining them (Dennis Brunton, interview, Wupperthal, March 2018). When issues arose related to attendance at meetings or implementation of collective decisions, the accusation tendency was overcome when members realized that many of the difficulties and limitations around full engagement in activities and group dynamics were shared by several members.

In Shashe, Zimbabwe, I went to the homestead of the widow of a former cattle range worker when Shashe was still managed as a large-scale, single-owner farm. My intention was to interview the late worker's wife, an elderly woman of about 70 years. When I arrived at the homestead, the woman decided to call to the conversation her three children, their wives and some grandchildren as well. Although this had not been planned, it was extremely helpful because there were details about Shashe and about the late former worker that the elderly woman no longer remembered, and her children and daughters-in-law were able to complement her knowledge.

6.4. Documentation analysis

I also analysed political documents, including published statements, manifestos and open letters published by the three agrarian movements in the last five years. This time frame was chosen because I felt it was sufficient to understand the framing of the political positions and narratives of these movements. Analysing their political documents complemented the interviews and conversations, which in turn helped clarify the institutional positions taken by the movements.

6.5. Participation in events

The three agrarian movements considered in this thesis also engage in global movements, networks and campaigns. Since the objectives of this thesis include analysing the transnationalisation strategy of social movements, I conducted some interviews as well as observing in three international spaces. I attended the 7th International Conference of La Via Campesina in June 2017, in Dério, Basque Country (Spain), where I interviewed six delegates from UNAC (Mozambique), FSC (South Africa) and ZIMSOFF (Zimbabwe). I attended the People's Triangular Conference on ProSAVANA in November 2018 in Tokyo, and the Tokyo International Conference on Africa Development (TICAD), both in Japan, where UNAC had a delegation of peasant leaders from Nampula and Zambézia provinces. Finally, I attended two SADC People's Summits in Manzini, Eswatini (formerly Swaziland), and Johannesburg, South Africa, in 2016 and 2017, respectively. The SADC People's Summits are parallel to the annual meetings of the heads of state and governments of the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC). They are organised by social movements and other civil society organisations in the region. In 2012, UNAC hosted and organised an edition of the People's Summit in Maputo. I examine these events in more detail in Chapter Six, when discussing cosmopolitanism.

Attending these international events allowed me to ask contextualized questions about the engagement of these movements in global spaces: for instance, whether that adds strength to movements locally, and how much these experiences influence global debates in transnational land and food movements.

7. Data analysis

The process of data analysis begins with the data collection itself. I sought to follow the advice of Mendes (2003) , who noted that it is not enough to ask and observe; one must also analyse, at the same time as data is being collected.

Due to the high number of interviews, the transcription process took months (nearly eight in total) after the data was collected in the field. Although time-consuming, the process of listening and transcribing was particularly special as it allowed the exercise of dynamic reflection as I listened and transcribed. As I explain below, it was during this process that I identified most of the categories of analysis and thus organised and codified the data. Sometimes I had to call some interviewees to ask for clarification or just to greet them – as listening to the audio over and again brought back several memories of sharing and compassion in the field. This means that I did not leave 'informants' in the field, but friends and comrades who fight for what they consider being part of themselves, the land.

The transcribed interviews are all stored in a digital repository to which I and the supervisor have access. Since some of the interviewees requested confidentiality, I do not attach the interviews to this thesis.

As a rule, after a day of interviews, I would organize my field notebook by systematizing the content into topics and issues, while also highlighting what caught my attention most strongly. This facilitated the coding and categorization process later, and made the writing of preliminary field report much easier. The practice of daily reflection on the collected data proved to be valuable, especially for the preparation of subsequent interviews and conversations, and in addressing topics and issues that emerged in previous interviews.

Almost 95% of the interviews were transcribed. Later phases of data analysis involved the use of a professional software program, MAXQDA[14], which is designed for computer-assisted qualitative and mixed-methods data, text and multimedia analysis. The preliminary manual coding and systematisation during field research was very convenient as transferring the data and categorising it in the programme produced a clear visualization of the content collected.

[14] See https://www.maxqda.com/

The key categories created were in line with the predefined topics of the chapters, as well as broader issues discuss in the thesis. Those included, but not exhaustively:

(1) *Agency, subjectivity and autonomy* – to explore individual and collective, direct and indirect, overt and covert actions that are related to movement struggles, autonomy from state and institutions, and engaging individual participants in interaction with their surroundings independently from the movement, association and others;

(2) *Organizing and ideology* – to explore and analyse the nature of their organisations, their social base, forms and levels of participation, their systems of ideas, their policies, and so on;

(3) *Tactics and strategies* – to analyse how their actions and the overall political project is decided, prepared, articulated and employed;

(4) *Livelihoods and migration* – to understand their livelihood strategies as peasant farmers and as semi-proletarians more generally, in their villages and beyond, including looking at rural-urban mobility;

(5) *Internationalism* (cosmopolitanism) – to understand the objectives and effectiveness of transcending national boundaries, and to what extent that strengthens or weakens local struggles;

(6) *State-capital-society nexus* – to look at the balance of forces among the organized peasantry (which I refer to as society), state actors and the penetration of capital in the countryside;

(7) *Gender and generation* – to examine internal dynamics of the movements in terms of power relations determined by gender and generation;

(8) *Means and processes of production* – to understand current and aspired-to systems of ownership and organisation of the social means and processes of production such as land, water, land and markets, and so on.

(9) *Innovation and emancipation* – to learn, conceptually and practically, about the innovations and emancipatory experiences aspired to and carried out by the movements in their villages, communities and countries.

This thesis is not a comparative study in the classic sense of being a holistic analysis that treats the cases as global entities, studying the relations between the

parts and the whole in the global context where they are inserted and taking causality as conjuncture (Ragin, 1994; Mendes, 2003). The purpose here is not to compare how each of these categories differs or aligns amongst the agrarian movements in my study. Instead, I apply the concept of Philip McMichael's (2000) "incorporate comparison". For McMichael, there are three particular features of incorporated comparison:

> First, comparison is not a formal, 'external' procedure in which cases are juxtaposed as separate vehicles of common or contrasting patterns of variation. Rather comparison is 'internal' to historical inquiry, where process-instances are comparable because they are historically connected and mutually conditioning. Second, incorporated comparison does not proceed with an a priori conception of the composition and context of the units compared, rather they form in relation to one another and in relation to the whole formed through their inter-relationship. In other words, the whole is not a given, it is self-forming. This is what I understand we mean by historical 'specificity.' Third, comparison can be conducted across space and time, separately or together. (2000, p. 671)

The aim of this research is to attempt a comprehensive perception of the nature and potential of agrarian movements from a regional perspective in southern Africa.

8. Limitations

This study does not provide a complete picture of agrarian movements in southern Africa, nor does it exhaust all possible questions to assess the multiple and complex dynamics of rural politics and organizing in the region and in the countries in question. Whether due to methodological choice or due to unexpected events, this study has a number of limitations – it is hard to imagine otherwise. First, studying three countries turned out to be more challenging than I expected. My research is on concrete and localized cases which to some degree limited the geographical scope, but it proved onerous, especially with regards to travel and time management. Similarly, it has limitations regarding revision of all relevant literature. And despite my best efforts to be exhaustive, I am sure that there was critical literature I did not identify – it is impossible to know your blind spots and how that may impact a study.

To avoid potential confusion, I have attempted to keep the text, sections, chapters and discussions as concrete and direct as possible. For that reason, this thesis contains (only) five chapters with an average of 10 000 words each. This is part of an ongoing research project. I will continue to deepen the topic in future research projects.

My field research was plagued by misfortune. I suffered a robbery in the city of Johannesburg, South Africa (in November 2017), in which I lost back-ups, computer, camera, money and almost all data collected until then. This affected the course of the research as it took me a few months to regain my working equipment and try to recapture data which had already been collected, and in some cases, such as certain interviews, could not be recovered. Then, just a month after the robbery, I lost my father in December 2017, who, as noted, had been a major inspiration to me in my life and work. At the beginning of the doctoral programme in 2015, I lost my brother, who had health problems. The emotional damage caused by my father's and brother's deaths was beyond retrieval.

Moreover, on the political side, I faced challenges in both Zimbabwe and South Africa. In November of 2017, there was an abrupt change of government in Zimbabwe after the forced resignation of then-president, now late, Robert Mugabe. This happened while I was in Harare, the capital. The country was completely shut down for almost a week, and there was concern about maintaining the country's peaceful climate. Some activities had to be cancelled, and for safety reasons I felt I had to leave the country as soon as I could. Then, in February 2018, while I was conducting field activities in South Africa, the then-president, Jacob Zuma, was also forced to resign his post, although this did not generate much social turmoil. Both unexpected political events affected the data collection process. For instance, I could no longer have the few planned interviews with government and state actors in Masvingo and Harare in Zimbabwe, nor in Cederberg municipality in South Africa.

9. Ethical issues

Doing social science research requires permanent observance of ethical issues, including the promotion of truth, that is, to avoid falsification, fabrication, and errors,

as well as to strive for responsibility, respect, honesty, and fairness to those on whom we conduct research (Resnik, 2011; Gregory, 2003). Ethical also means "by practice that the rule of engagement with comrades should be emotionally sensitive, socially comradely and politically committed to the working people" (Shivji, 2019, p. 15).

As I struggled to apply the most appropriate methodologies in my fieldwork as well as in the process of data analysis, I sought to respect the wishes of the research participants, some of whom agreed to grant interviews on the condition of anonymity. One participant preferred it because he spoke of gender and sexuality issues within the movement; others preferred to conceal their identity for fear of possible reprisals.

Repression of social movements across southern Africa, targeted at land activists and leaders of agrarian movements, has become a major area of concern. In almost every country in the region, the ability of individuals or groups to exercise fundamental democratic rights to protect themselves from land alienations spearheaded by dominant capital working with African states, as well as to occupy land, has been limited and, in some cases, denied by the state.

In my field research in Mozambique, the issue of the safety of peasant leaders and land activists was repeatedly mentioned. A couple of peasant leaders in Nampula told me that they had been threatened with arrest by state authorities for allegedly 'sabotaging government work', by mobilizing the peasantry to oppose the implementation of ProSAVANA. In South Africa, land activists face frequent police brutality, especially when they engage in direct actions and occupations. During my field research, a criminal case was underway against an FSC-member activist.

In this context, for ethical reasons, and at the request of these activists, their names are not revealed in this thesis.

10. A note regarding the theoretical framework

This research is inserted within critical perspectives in peasant and agrarian studies, which "require complex and rigorous research methodologies" (Borras, 2009, p. 22). The research is guided largely by the methodological traditions applied to the understanding of the agrarian question and rural politics in agrarian studies. Agrarian studies, and rural sociology more specifically, crosscuts a wide range of

areas and debates. Therefore, studying movements and politics requires a combination, if not triangulation, of theories and concepts to grasp the dynamics and complexities that exist within movements. This might be in relation to external actors (state, institutions, capital), and in particular, in relation to its constituents, internally, and within a long process of rural struggles and organizing, historically.

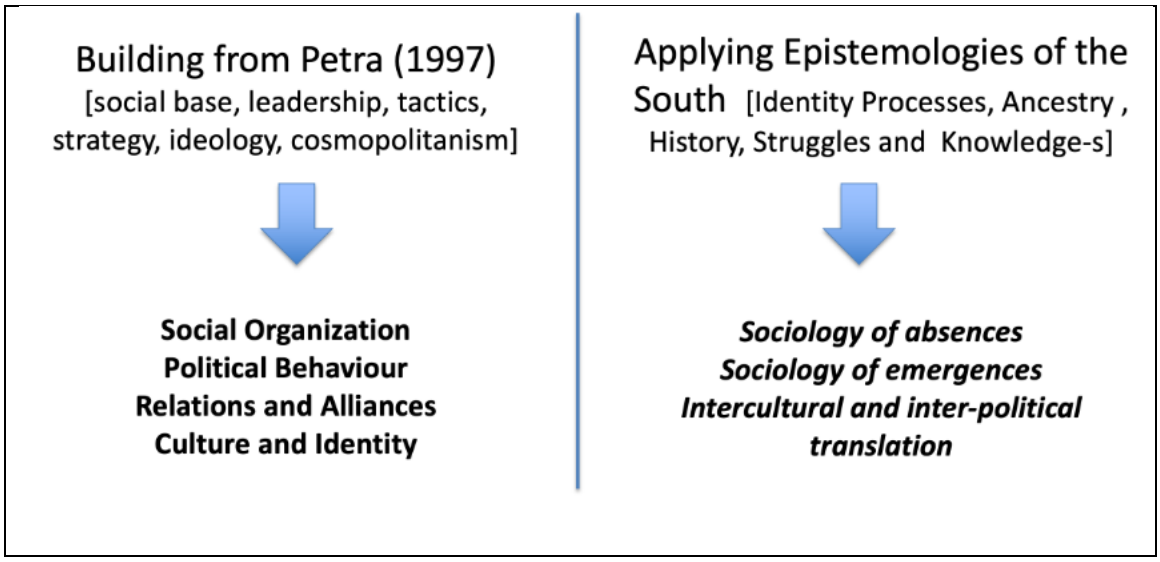


Figure 1: Methodology and framework to understand agrarian movements and rural agency. Adapted and developed by the author (2020)

The innovation of this research is the expansion of methodological scope by incorporating some proposals from the epistemologies of the South (Santos, 2007a, 2016b). The cornerstone of epistemologies of the South is to put at the center of any further theoretical elaboration the knowledge produced in active struggles by a wide variety of actors working against the oppressive nature of the indivisible combination of capitalism, colonialism and patriarchy.

CHAPTER TWO: Agrarian movements, rural politics and the political agency of the peasantry in southern Africa: theoretical framework

> Some people ask me why I fight to remain a peasant if I do not have wealth. I say that our wealth is the land itself. If I am left without land I will not be a person. My children will become poor. I have nowhere to go. I cannot abandon this, I am 100% a peasant, attached to my hoe. My neighbour is also a peasant. It is not just my feeling alone. My neighbour is also a peasant; I have to feel sorry for him. If he is crying, I have to cry too.[15] (Justina, interview, Nampula, February 2017).
>
> Day after day, peasants make economists sigh, politicians sweat and strategists swear, defeating their plans and prophecies, all over the world (Shanin, 1966).

Of the assumptions in critical agrarian studies, and as far as rural politics is concerned, the following have particularly preoccupied me: (a) that there are no real agrarian movements in Africa; (b) that the peasantry in general is naturally conservative and that class consciousness and revolutionary potential reside solely in the proletariat and, (c) that agrarian and rural struggles are motivated "not by virtue of being exploited by capital, but by being expelled from it" (Moyo & Yeros, 2005b, p. 55).

The above quotes put forward two important but insufficiently recognised aspects of the political agency of the countryside (the peasantry). Teodor Shanin brings a historical perspective in which "the peasantry has acted politically many times as a class-like social entity" (Shanin, 1966, p. 16), while Justina associates the struggle for land with her identity as a person - and as a peasant - with an enormous sense of community and a deep concern with what is passed on to future generations. Justina's words allude to complex representations of land that transcend materiality. Both interventions are useful in kickstarting the debate on framework(s) for the study of the peasantry – analytical and conceptual – to be used to study rural politics and the (organised) peasantry as a historical subject, as well as an agrarian social

[15] This and all the interviews done in Portuguese were translated by the author.

category that struggles for land to achieve autonomy beyond agricultural production. These dimensions are indispensable in understanding agrarian movements' agency today. I understand *agency* as the combination of collective actions (organising, struggles, resistance, seeking alternatives), practices and strategies of production and reproduction, development of narratives, concepts and imageries from and of agrarian movements in relation to external actors and factors as well as in its *organicity*. The term '*organicity*' (*organicidade*, in Portuguese) is used by Latin American social movements to refer to the degree of internal organisation of the movements. It indicates the relationship that one part of the organisation should have with the rest. "Yet it should not be a theoretical relationship, but rather physical, practical, and possess a certain ethos" (MST, 2001, pp. 30–31; Barbosa, 2017).

Let me pause here to say a few words about Justina. She is a peasant leader from Malema District, Nampula Province. For decades, she has actively organised peasants into associations and cooperatives in her village Mutuali. In 2014, she was a key figure in setting up the Provincial Peasant Union of Nampula. She was the vice president of the union until the time of my field research. According to her,

> …the activities developed by the Provincial Union are to expand the associative movement at the grassroots level, politically strengthen the peasants by creating unions at the district level, and also to strengthen the security of the peasants so that they do not lose their land and manage to defend themselves. [Finally] in [the case of] any conflicts, [the Union] helps establish a dialogue with the people [involved] or with the government.

Justina spends on average three days a week on union business. She travels 200 kilometres from her village to the city of Nampula where the Union's office is located. Her duties as vice president include meeting with the Union's board of directors, travelling within the districts to work with district unions and peasant associations, and meeting with community leaders. The rest of the day, Justina works her land alongside her husband and children in Mutuali. This leader peasant woman acts as a community organiser, leader of the union and peasant, and at the same time engages her village's peers and family in the struggle against ever-increasing pressure

from agrarian capital in Malema, where the land concentration and use is increasingly concentrated to grow cash crops. How do we interpret Justina's whole engagement understand and explain rural politics in Nampula?

1. Marxisims and the Epistemologies of the South

Agrarian transformation, rural politics and development are explained in several competing approaches in agrarian studies.[16] Among them, the following stand out: the neoclassical/new institutional economics; the sustainable rural livelihoods approach; Marxist class-based perspectives; and radical agrarian political economy, which converges in most respects with moral economy of the peasantry approach. These competing approaches differ fundamentally in the unit and level of analysis, their key assumptions, their understanding of agrarian structures and their role in rural politics, the key explanatory factors for change in political behaviour of agrarian working classes, and in explaining the triggers of politically explosive actions by agrarian classes.

Methodological and analytically, this study applies the Epistemologies of the South (Santos, 2016b, 2018; Santos & Meneses, 2014), while borrowing elements of two traditions, namely the Marxist class-based (Lenin, written in 1899 (1960); Moyo, 2008; Bernstein, 2010; Moyo, Jha, & Yeros, 2013; Shivji, 2019) and the radical agrarian political economy/moral economy (Shanin, 1966; Scott, 1977; Scott, 1985; LVC, 2009; Rosset and Martínez-Torres, 2012) – which coincide on a number of issues, to the extent that some of the latter largely identify with Marxism.

In what follows, I first summarise the central elements, foundational positions and assumptions of the class-based and radical political economy/moral economy of the peasantry approaches to then posit the contribution of the Epistemologies of the South in critical agrarian studies.

In the second part, I discuss concepts and extend the debate around key themes and topics key to this dissertation, including, among others, the peasantry,

[16] These approaches and perspectives are systematised by Professor Saturnino ('Jun') M. Borras and were used as part of a course on "The Politics of Agrarian Transformation", held in May and June 2017, at the International Institute of Social Studies (ISS) of Erasmus University, Rotterdam in The Hague. I attended the course during my stay at ISS as PhD visiting student, supervised by Borras.

agrarian social movements, and agency. The combination of these inform my theoretical and conceptual framework for this study and analysis.

1.1. The Marxist agrarian political economy

In agrarian studies, Marxist analyses focus on a perspective grounded in agrarian political economy, that is, an inquiry into how, and the extent to which, the agrarian transformations occurring as a result of the penetration of capital in the countryside (which I coined 'agrarian neoliberalism') is transforming social relations of production, reproduction, property and power in the countryside (Bernstein, 2000; Mckay, 2017b).

Class is seen as the primary unit and method of analysis. This approach looks at the macro level as a starting point to understand the micro, and assumes that societies are made up of social classes based on the relationship of groups with the means of production. This is based on the understanding that there are competing class interests, conflict and antagonism between the socially differentiated classes. Orthodox Marxists focus on commodification of agriculture and observe an inevitable differentiation of the peasantry, which ultimately disappears through the process of full proletarisation and consequently, despeasantisation. Here, it is assumed that the peasantry will become doubly liberated: free of property as well as free to sell their labour (Bernstein, 2000, 2006). According to this approach, agrarian structures are key to understanding (and are also key determinants of) rural politics. A positive change can be achieved only by pushing for a radical change in the agrarian structure.

Methodologically, a (Marxist) agrarian political economy analysis necessarily finds answers to the following key questions: who owns what – to understand property relations; who does what – to understand labour relations; who gets what – to understand social division of income; and what do they do with the created wealth and surplus – to understand class formation and differentiation. Here, institutions are necessary products of existing agrarian structure: if the dominant structure is dominated by landowning classes, state laws would not be expected to be antithetical to the interests of the landed elite. Informal village-based institutions such as customary arrangements and laws are generally seen as feudal vestiges and therefore 'backward' or 'primitive'.

In this perspective, (rural) agency – and its role in broader rural politics – is understood from class consciousness and class agency. A class must exist *for itself* to avoid 'false consciousness' (*class in itself*).[17] This perspective believes in class-based militant actions and advocacy politics that are structured - well organized in overt ways. For orthodox agrarian Marxists, the state functions as a class instrument of political domination, and it has to be influenced to cause political change in society. Some of the founding and influential thinkers of this approach include Karl Marx, written in 1867 (1978) Lenin, written in 1899 (1960) , Bernstein (2000, 2009, 2010) and Byres (1991, 1996), among others.

There are, however, crucial disagreements among scholars of this tradition, particularly in the way the agrarian question is understood. While the western Marxists of agrarian studies defend that capitalism has fully absorbed agriculture into circuits of capital, which resolves the agrarian question of capital, scholars from the South, especially those associated with the Agrarian South (an academic network that brings together scholars from Africa, Latin America and Asia), accuse the former of treating the class dynamics of agrarian change with an "ambition to draw macro-historical and interregional comparisons and elaborate concepts with universal appeal. Nevertheless, this approach reveals an economistic and indeed, Eurocentric vocation, manifest in the 'pure' notions of capitalism" that does not recognise "the specificity of peripheral capitalism" (Yeros, 2012, p. 341). Another key element for the Agrarian South is that in most of the global South, the agrarian question "remains a question of national sovereignty, under conditions of a new scramble" (Editorial, 2012, p. 9).

Some scholars in the Marxian tradition have played down the political potential of the countryside and argued for the absence of rural-based revolutionary movements, thereby discounting progressive rural agency. By putting the focus on commodification as a fundamental dynamic that provokes class formation and the process of differentiation of peasants, Bernstein (2000, 2009) and others have differed significantly in arguing that "despite the immense economic and political

[17] It should be noted that some argue that Karl Marx did not make a distinction between a "class in itself" and a "class for itself" but rather distinguished a class against capital, which exhibits a political dimension lacking in a "class in itself"(Andrew, 1983).

forces arrayed against them, the rural poor have been striking back in a progressive way in a significant number of cases" (Moyo & Yeros, 2005c, p. 35). This study subscribes to the latter position.

1.2. Radical political agrarian economy and the moral economy of the peasantry

The radical political agrarian economists and the moral economists, whom orthodox agrarian Marxists refer to as agrarian (neo)populists (Bernstein, 2004) for supposedly failing to properly understand the nature of modern capitalism (Monjane, 2019b), have different explanations for rural politics and agency.

For scholars of this tradition, the unit of analysis ranges from the household to the community. Contrary to class-based Marxism, the starting point here is the micro level to understand the macro. A key assumption is that the peasant is more interested in a stable and secure subsistence than in higher returns for his or her work – what James Scott termed "the ethic subsistence", which assumes an inherent existence of reciprocity and "social insurance" among peasants (1977).

The key explanatory factors for agrarian change in this tradition include social differentiation of the peasantry that is demographic and cyclical, involving 'self-exploitation' (Chayanov, 1996). In this case, peasants do not employ labour, and so do not exploit labour. The concept of repeasantisation is key.

Agrarian structures are viewed from a binary perspective: the subaltern and lower-classes versus the hegemonic elite. Consciousness of social classes is viewed in similar ways to the Marxists, and play a key role as in orthodoxy Marxism; institutions are viewed as necessary products of existing agrarian structures, which could potentially, but not necessarily, be elite institutions. The subsistence ethic and social insurance are seen as forms of informal agrarian institutions, which are central. Here, agency is observed first at the level of the individual household and extended to community levels. Hence, subordinate classes are not passive; they have active agency and they exercise it all the time depending on their own circumstances and assessment.

Factors for change in political behaviour of agrarian classes are discussed within the context of their ability to undermine or promote existing subsistence interests of agrarian working classes, and not much is discussed about how much was

taken, as it is about how much was left. When the subsistence ethic is violated, there will be a change in the patterns of social relations within the broad moral economy.

Regarding the role of the state vis-à-vis rural politics, official or state institutions are generally seen as instruments of elites from a 'them versus us' perspective. In this case, much of the agrarian poor's history is about running away, evading the [colonial] state. Preferred forms of political actions include radical, usually anti-capitalist strategies, everyday forms of resistance and politics (Scott, 1985; Kerkvliet, 2009) (I develop this later in this chapter). They could, however, include a variant of rightful resistance, namely a form of partially institutionalised contention against the state, whereby agrarian subaltern classes seek to legitimise their causes by making use of the state's own laws, policies or rhetoric in framing their protests (O´Brien, 1996). The triggers of politically direct actions are therefore explained in terms of actual threat to subsistence/moral economy or the violation of subsistence ethic.

1.3. Epistemologies of the South

> Marxism is a body of theory that developed from and was crafted for social movements … [however], while Marxists have produced ground-breaking studies of specific movements, they have apparently not produced an explicit theory of movements - that is, a theory which specifically explains the emergence, character and development of social movements (Barker, Cox, Krinsky, & Nilsen, 2013, p. 1).

The Epistemologies of the South make a significant contribution in the study of processes of popular struggles and social movements broadly. The Epistemologies of the South are epistemological reflections that allow theories to come to fruition, and thus, not a theory as such. One of the key contributions of the ES in critical agrarian studies lies in the ways revolutionary subjectivity is perceived. Marxism, which is a social theory, considers social movements – or workers – historical subjects only after they become 'class for itself', this is, when they possess class consciousness and class solidarity. Therefore, for Marx, the attainment of knowledge (science, consciousness, the general law of capitalist accumulation, etc.) precedes the

realization of historical subjectivity. In turn, for the ES the cognitive and epistemological richness of societies (or of the processes of struggles) is captured as the struggles - against domination and oppression – occur. Therefore, the ES posit that there does not be historical subjects a priori.

Furthermore, analysing rural politics requires going beyond the dimension of who owns what… to inquire into aspects of the ecology, ideology, forms of knowledge, practices and so on. Therefore, this study deployed methodological, theoretical and conceptual frameworks that transcend the constraints and reductionisms associated with using one exclusive analytical approach. This is, in fact, valid in studying the land and agrarian questions generally. This study certainly required a careful analysis of the dynamics and mechanisms of power, institutions of property and social relations of production and reproduction (Bernstein, 2010; Mannathukkaren, 2011; Mckay, 2017a) to assess class and material concerns, as much as it required the understanding of history, culture and identity, which allows the understanding of organicity and collective imaginaries and helps overcome the limitations of modern scientific knowledge (Santos, 2007b, 2016c, 2018; Martínez-Torres & Rosset, 2010; Rosset & Martínez-Torres, 2012;). This is an exercise that few intellectuals in the Marxist tradition allow themselves to do. I subscribe to Boaventura de Sousa Santos' explanation of the need not to abandon Marxism but to integrate and combine it with other theoretical contributions. According to him,

> It was not, however, the novelties or theoretical fashions that guided me along this path. It was rather the struggles and social causes in which I was involved and the different regions of the world to which my work led me. In the version from which I started, Marxism (the so-called Western Marxism), served well the anti-capitalist struggle that had marked my first identity as a sociologist; but it became insufficient when I became involved in struggles and causes that rose up against the continuities of colonialism after the independencies of European historical colonialism, whether they were racism, xenophobia, the silences of officialised history, the Eurocentrism of dominant theories and cultures, or neo-colonialism. It became even more insufficient when the social movements I accompanied fought against forms of oppression not inscribed as important in the Marxist canon … whether they were the struggles of women against patriarchy and sexism, the struggles of indigenous peoples in defence of their cultural, social, political and economic self-determination, the struggles for solidarity economies in capitalist societies, or even the struggles of environmentalist, ecological movements against the logic of

> infinite growth. It was this experience, successively richer and more committed, that was translated into the greater presence of postcolonial theories, feminists, identities and ecologists in my scientific work (Santos, 2014).

The conceptual and theoretical framework of the Epistemologies of the South, proposed by Boaventura de Sousa Santos (Santos, 2016b; Santos & Meneses, 2009b, 2014), recognises other different manners to understand the world. According to Arturo Escobar,

> Epistemologies of the South is in all likelihood the most compelling and practicable framework for social transformation to emerge at the intersection of the Global North and the Global South, theory and practice, and the academy and social life in many decades. Its reflexivity about its own location, limits and potentialities is a strength of the framework (Escobar, 2016, p. 13).

The basic idea behind the epistemologies of the South is that the theoretical thinking in the Global North has been based on the idea of an abyssal line dividing reality into two worlds, that is, the metropolitan zone, in which regulation and emancipation are the main characteristics; and the colonial zone, where human beings have precarious subjectivities and enjoy no rights as humans. The historical chapter of this thesis (Chapter Three) demonstrates this division clearly in the representations attributed by western historiographies to Africans of their (agrarian) relations to land – settler farmers versus African peasants. But this is also the case in the current juncture of agrarian neoliberalism (see Chapter Four).

In Mozambique, for example, evidence shows that currently, the largest agricultural investments come from the European Union (Rodrigues & Monjane, 2018), although there is a growing presence of investments from emerging economies, such as Brazil and India, both grabbing local peasants' land and exploiting their labour in a way that would have never been imagined anywhere in the European Union, where the reality is of a metropolitan type where citizens enjoy equal rights and property rights.

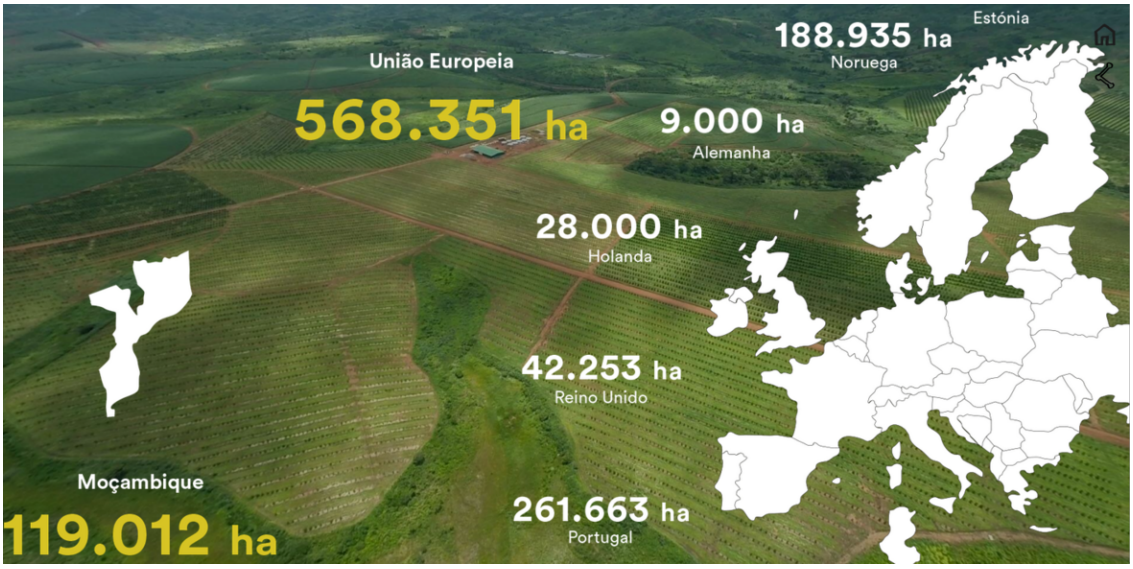


Figure 2: Investments in land in Nacala Corridor, Mozambique. Source: Divergente , 2018.

As Marx (1978)[18] pointed out, property over things would eventually become property over people, when capitalist relations of production are in place. From the point of view of the Epistemologies of the South, the abyssal line, and regardless of the stage of development of the productive forces, peasants and indigenous people from the periphery of the world system have always been taken as property themselves, together with their lands: forced labour and super-exploitation, as we see with farmworkers today in capitalist farms in South Africa.

> Access to land in the South may mean several productive and reproductive dimensions other than agricultural production itself, such as water, natural resources or retirement space, as well as non-productive ones, such as spirituality, belonging or political liberation, freedom and sovereignty. At the same time, and in relation to all the former, land control is a main axis of geopolitical control, the territoriality of power. However artificial this separation between productive and non-productive dimensions is, a radical broadening of the concept of land points to the re-thinking of an amalgamating concept: the concept of sovereignty. Its subject as well as its object, its

[18] Karl Marx' Capital (Das Kapital) was first published in 1867. This thesis uses the 1978 edition for lack of better options.

> scale as well as its rightful agents, its ends as well as its means. (Boaventura de Sousa Santos, 2018[19])

So, historically, there are two statutes of land: land treated according to the logic of political and legal instruments developed as universal values that apply to the metropolitan zone – the western world – and land that is in the colonial zone, where people are could be treated as 'non-humans', as just part of the landscape.

For the epistemologies of the South, rural politics and rural struggles continue to be centered on the land question and therefore on the struggles against three main forms of domination, namely capitalism, colonialism and patriarchy. Land was central to the development of capitalism as it became a key commodity through land rent and primitive accumulation (Marx, 1974). Colonialism was materialised through the occupation of land and territories, a tendency that continues today with agrarian neoliberal features in Africa. Patriarchy continues to play a determinant role in land access and control in various contexts in the region, including areas where, prior to colonialism, matriarchal social relations were predominant, such as northern Mozambique.

The land question is, therefore, at the confluence of the three forms of domination as well as the resistance to them. The perspectives of the Epistemologies of the South compel us to look at the struggles of social movements in order to understand today's land question in its material and immaterial dimensions. Some of the key concepts debated today in rural and agrarian literature, such as land reform, food sovereignty, agro-ecology and territory, were generated from the struggles of agrarian and peasant movements against capitalism, colonialism and patriarchy in the Global South. The cornerstone of the Epistemologies of the South (Santos, 2009) is not only to put the forms of knowledge produced in active struggles at the center of any further theoretical elaboration, but to go well beyond an understanding of praxis

[19] This excerpt was taken from a conversation between me (Boaventura Monjane), Pablo Gilolmo and Professor Boaventura de Sousa Santos. Boaventura de Sousa Santos reflected on the concept of "land", viewed through the lens of Epistemologies of the South. Some of the ideas contained in this excerpt are found in several published works by the author. The conversation took place at the Faculty of Economics of the University of Coimbra, on May 20, 2018, as part of a discussion to prepare a special issue on "The land question and the Epistemologies of the South" for an academic journal.

often subordinated to the dictates of theoretical canon or reduced to the action of the proletariat and its organisational forms based at the factory.

What agrarian social movements and their emancipatory struggles have in common is that they, and the forms of knowledge they produce, appear anachronistic to the eyes of both liberal and classical revolutionary theory, and are thus rendered residual. In this regard, the epistemologies of the South have important points in common with the practical and theoretical maturation of the agrarian question 'as it travelled South'. This echoes Fanon's assertion that under colonial circumstances the peasantry is the true revolutionary agent (Fanon, 1961; Moyo et al., 2013). However, Epistemologies of the South do not only elaborate on the agents of social transformation. At the same time, they have brought together a deep questioning of both the means and objectives of the transformations to come. In sum, it is not only about redefining the transformative agent, as Fanon implied, but also about recognising that this agent is the one able to redefine both the means and the ends of the transformation itself.

For the Epistemologies of the South, if we focus on the land question, we shall first observe that it has been typically regarded as a sub-dimension of the agrarian question, while the latter has been mostly understood as the set of conditions necessary for the transformation from an agrarian-based economy into an industrial one. In the Epistemologies of the South, the argument is that there is a need to revert to this conceptual schema in order to understand the agrarian question as just a dimension – as relevant as it is – of the land question. The variety of struggles gravitating around land cannot be fully understood by just looking at its productive dimension.

In addition, the fact that these struggles do not just occur in those contexts where capitalist penetration is less complete must mean something for transformative theory, and also that these struggles are, precisely, *against* the advance of such penetration. That these struggles gravitate around land as the main locus for liberation against colonialism, capitalism and patriarchy, and that they take the form of land occupations, agro-ecology, food sovereignty and indigenous territoriality (and often a combination of all of them) is not to be dismissed on the grounds of any grand historical theory.

Thus, it is essential to practice a "sociology of absences" (Santos, 2009; 2011) in order to bring to the fore not only the combativeness, but also the contributions, in terms of transformative knowledge, of these struggles. The most active movements in the world nowadays cannot simply be considered a residue, nor their transformative agents viewed in a paternalistic way as combative but ironically unconscious of their tragic destiny in the inexorable advancement of proletarianisation and capitalist development.

Viewing colonialism, capitalism and patriarchy in an isolated manner is another mistake. Capitalist exploitation is a problem even in the absence of colonial domination; colonial domination would be a problem even in the absence of capitalist exploitation; and gender inequalities are a problem even in the absence of either of the two. But this is just a way to emphasise the interrelated character of these forms of oppression, since, in reality, they are never found in isolation from each other. There is a need to continue to understand the effects of capital penetration, including social differentiation and the kind of conflicts it produces.

This analytical clarity is not necessarily in conflict with a genuine commitment to the struggles, which of course have plenty sharp edges. The fact that Epistemologies of the South focus on the anti-capitalist, anti-colonial and anti-patriarchal character of their struggles is to claim that these are necessary conditions for any emancipatory alternative to exist. Indeed, there is a tendency to be trapped in the dichotomy between the traditional and the modern, which Epistemologies of the South consider to be both an analytical and a political trap. This trap is to assume that the only alternatives are either to fall into the pitfall of ignoring class, caste, gender, history and racial cleavages, or to come to terms with the inevitable process of proletarianisation and the advance of modernity. To be clear, the fact that a social struggle is anti-capitalist, anti-patriarchal and anti-colonial rules out the possibility for it to be 'traditionalist' in a reactionary sense, if only because these struggles are, by necessity, fully contemporary and transformative. At the same time, the contemporary character of these struggles does not necessarily conflict with their anti-modern stance, if by modernity we imply the referred inevitability of capitalist development and all the undesirable processes related to whichever extent by which these can supposedly be mitigated.

From this angle, the resistance against capitalist advancement is not contradictory to a fully contemporary and transformative notion of the struggles. This is where the interest of the Epistemologies of the South rests. The variety of active possibilities to formulate alternatives to this dichotomous trap is precisely what is being dismissed by both the traditionalists and the realistic modernists. A sociology of emergences (Santos, 2009; 2011) is necessary, and these active alternatives should be revalorised if our theories are to be able to significantly contribute to the struggles currently taking place around the world.

Further, that the existing rural struggles often take an anti-statist stance shall be read as a resistance against the inexorable destiny imputed to them by the inevitable advance of capitalism (either private, either state-controlled), rather than as a renouncement of power in a sort of 'anti-politics' option, as it has been suggested. In fact, the following fundamental political question remains in full force for these movements: power for whom and, most of all, for what? In that sense, it is not only the revolutionary force of the peasantries, indigenous people, rural women, and so on that has to be acknowledged, but also that the forms of knowledge produced in their anti-capitalist, anticolonial and anti-patriarchal struggles has to be the main source informing and performing any revolutionary theory. The varied geographies and characters of the knowledge produced beg for an ecological approach to put this valuable diversity at the forefront: an ecology of knowledges (Santos, 2007).

The sociology of absences, the sociology of emergences and the ecology of knowledges proposed under the framework of the epistemologies of the South requires a radical broadening of the concept of land itself, going well beyond its productive dimension (that is, seeing the agrarian question as just a dimension of the land question). Access to land in the South may mean several productive and reproductive dimensions other than agricultural production itself. These may include water, natural resources or retirement space, as well as non-productive ones such as spirituality, identity processes, belonging, political liberation, freedom and sovereignty. At the same time, and in relation to all the former, the control of land is a main axis of geopolitical control, the territoriality of power. However artificial this separation between the productive and non-productive dimensions is, a radical broadening of the concept of land points to rethinking an amalgamating concept,

namely the concept of sovereignty: its subject as well as its object, its scale as well as its rightful agents, its ends as well as its means.

2. The peasantry and the political potential of the countryside

In critical agrarian studies, 'the peasantry'[20] is indeed a highly contested concept. An influential current of thought in agrarian studies has defended the theory that, nowadays, there is no longer any peasantry in the world, but an agrarian proletariat of petty commodity producers, since (rural) producers are unable to guarantee their social reproduction outside of capitalist logic (Bernstein, 2000).

Theorising on the peasantry in the modern world, Van der Ploeg rightly demonstrates that in agrarian neoliberalism the peasantry is seen as an obstacle to change and transformation in rural areas, and therefore as a social figure that should disappear or be removed from the equation (Ploeg, 2008; Ploeg, 2010). He argues, however, that due to a process of *repeasantisation* in various countries, the peasantry is far from shrinking throughout the world. On the contrary, Van der Ploeg insists that repeasantisation increases the number of peasants owing to the process of peasant reconstruction, which is multidimensional and occurs at different levels. In other words, several agricultural producers are reconstituting themselves as peasants in the sense that they produce for self-consumption on small plots, and this phenomenon occurs in both developed and developing countries. Not long ago, in the 1960s, Teodor Shanin had also argued that peasants are the majority of mankind (Shanin, 1966). It seems that while Bernstein announces the disappearance of the "peasant" in conceptual and definitional terms, the former scholars speak more in terms of quantity.

Considerable urban subsistence farming exists in Zimbabwe; it could thus be argued that the average urban Zimbabwean is a (small-scale/subsistence) farmer. This includes gainfully employed people from and in urban areas. As one interviewee puts it,

[20] According to Teodor Shanin (1966. p. 6), "the peasantry consists of small producers on land who, with the help of simple equipment and the labour of their families, produce mainly for their own consumption, and for the fulfilment of their duties to the holders of political and economic power".

> People practice farming – you have got a piece of land where you plant your own maize, your own vegetables at subsistence level. The average person farms. People's quest for land when they push for land reform is to farm and to live on [the land]" (Interviewee, Harare, January 2018).

Calling them petty commodity producers, as Bernstein calls the world peasantry, is in line with reducing the rural and agrarian lower classes to simply workers. A counter current of thought, grounded in the intellectual initiative Agrarian South, argues that "instead of the classical dichotomy between 'peasants' and 'workers', in transition from the former to the latter, the phenomenon that has prevailed is that of permanent semi-proletarianisation, whereby the expelled, super-exploited workforce competes with the exploited in relatively secure employment to drive down wages all around" (Editorial, 2012, p. 7). This description resonates with the account of one interviewee:

> Working the land is not the only thing we do. Sometimes I deal with the electricity at the church and sometimes I have some jobs in town [Clanwilliam and Cape Town]. But I am a permanent farmer here in Wupperthal. Since this land is not ours, but the church's, we do not have secured income from farming, so some of us diversify (*Interviewee, Wupperthal, January 2018*).

More generally, people in both urban and rural areas have multiple livelihood strategies in South Africa. As Ricardo Jacobs (2018a) demonstrates, urban proletarians in modern cities such as the city of Cape Town also engage in peasant activities. Rural peasants tend to find supplementary jobs in their villages and towns. Does this imply that, conceptually, the peasantry has disappeared? In contexts such as Africa, the reality is that, although the undertaking of capital penetration in the countryside does not seem to cease, it would be incorrect to declare the disappearance of the peasantry. The historical capitalist agrarian transition in northern countries which led to the 'disappearance' of peasants in developed countries, has not occurred in most of the Global South and less so in Africa, due in large part to the interruption of an industrialization process impinged upon by structural adjustment programmes and neo-colonialism (Moyo & Yeros, 2005b).

Moreover, the (re)emergence of agrarian movements around the world at the end of the last century – and mostly on the African continent – is an indication of the incompleteness of a total transition to capitalism in agriculture (Edelman & Borras, 2016, p. 3).

Picture 6: a peasant farmer in Nakarari village, Nampula Province, Mozambique. Credits: Diogo Cardoso

As I already explained in the previous chapter, for the purposes of clarity, and unless otherwise specified in this thesis, peasant, peasant farmers, family farmers, small-scale holders and small-scale food producers are used interchangeably, to mean those men and women who work the land as producers on small or medium-sized plots and the landless poor, as opposed to large-scale commercial farmers. This is due to the fact that, on the one hand, the *terminology* does not affect my analysis of the collective agency of organised peasantry (into agrarian movements). On the other hand, it is due to the fact that members and leaders of the movements I interviewed identified themselves as one or more of these different denominations (*camponês*, meaning peasant in Mozambique; small-scale/small-holder farmer in Zimbabwe; landless or farmer in South Africa). I understand that it is part of the practice of the epistemologies of the South to allow the narratives and knowledge of social

movements to challenge the canon of modern science in our scientific and academic work, and this includes the adoption of their *concepts*.

3. Crisis of urban workers´ organisations

With structural adjustment programmes and the economic deterioration in almost the entire southern African region, trade unions have progressively lost membership, their chronically weak financial bases have weakened further and their dependence on employers has intensified (Moyo & Yeros, 2005a). This led trade unions to fail, both in their own cohesion as a proletariat class and in their desire to construct alliances between the proletariat and the peasantry (trade union and agrarian movements).

In Mozambique, for instance, the failure of the previously envisaged alliance between workers and peasants was partly due to the Frelimo government's decision to abandon this vision, but above all to the fact that Mozambique has always had "few workers and no class consciousness in itself and for itself" (Mosca, 2004). Therefore, trade unions have been facing various challenges, ranging from ruptures, co-optation of their leaderships, corruption and the inability to extend their social bases and to mobilise their own militants. There is a considerable body of literature on the state of trade unionism, their dynamics, weaknesses, contradictions and potential in Mozambique (see, among others Artur, 2004; Marshall, 2015b, 2015a, 2017).

In southern Africa, the idea of an urban proletariat with class consciousness and ideological clarity leading the peasantry towards social transformation has been challenged by realities on the ground. First, it does not always make much sense to evoke the rural-city/worker-farmer dichotomy, since, conceptually, both categories can be included in what Issa Shivji considers to be the working people (2017b), that is, the masses, peasants and workers, employed and unemployed, precarious and self-exploited, who end up subsidising capital. Second, our central premise is based on the argument that, in southern Africa, not only do peasants constitute the most extensive social category, but they should also be seen as a *political factor* (Shanin, 1966).

Another crucial issue that has prompted debates is on the political (revolutionary) potential of the peasantry. Classical African thinkers of Marxist orientation such as Nkwame Nkrumah believed in the peasant-worker alliance, attributing to the (urbanised) proletariat the competence to conquer the peasant masses for the cause of social and political transformation - that is, to bring the revolution to the rural world. This belief was based on the assumption that, by and large, the peasant masses were still disorganised, not sufficiently revolutionary and largely illiterate (Nkrumah, 1975, pp. 60, 78).

This is an old debate. Karl Marx himself once expressed much scepticism about the revolutionary potential of the peasantry, whom he initially characterized as a "bag of potatoes". He stated that,

> Of all the classes that stand face to face with the bourgeoisie today, the proletariat alone is a really revolutionary class. The other classes decay and finally disappear in the face of Modern Industry; the proletariat is its special and essential product. The lower middle class, the small manufacturer, the shopkeeper, the artisan, the peasant, all these fight against the bourgeoisie, to save from extinction their existence as fractions of the middle class. They are therefore not revolutionary, but conservative…, they are reactionary, for they try to roll back the wheel of history (Marx , written in 1848 (1969).

Marx later made some concessions, however. In his letters to Vera Zasulich[21], he recognized that peasants had, after all, revolutionary elements. The more orthodox Marxists, on the other hand, continued to insist that the hope and responsibility of shaping history lies in the proletariat.

The dream of an organised proletariat, with the capacity to lead the peasantry politically, did not come true. Important thinkers such as Kwame Nkrumah admitted to the fragility of the African proletariat, asserting that it had not yet assumed leadership as a class (as early as the 1970s), but also considered the peasantry to be dispersed, disorganised and, as mentioned above, generally not revolutionary. Nkrumah stated that "[It is] essential that [peasants] become aware of and are framed by their natural allies: the proletariat and the revolutionary intelligentsia (Nkrumah,

[21] Vera Ivanovna Zasulich (1849-1919) was a Russian revolutionary intellectual. She spent years in prison, in hiding, and in exile, and during this period she exchanged correspondence with Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels.

1975, p. 90). In theorising about an eminently peasant Russian society with a residual proletariat, Vladimir Lenin argued that the working class alone would not be able to assume a union consciousness. In his view, socialist consciousness would have to be brought from outside its ranks by bourgeois intellectuals, exposed to a broader view of the world [(Lenin, written in 1899 (1960); Shivji, (2017a, p. 2)].

However, history has shown that in some parts of the Global South such as Vietnam and China, as well as a number of African countries, especially in the countries colonised by Portugal, the vast majority of the members of African nationalist movements came directly from populations that were predominantly peasant. Basil Davidson asserts that many of the most prominent leaders came from the peasant farmers. According to the author, the struggles of the former Portuguese colonies have to be considered peasants' struggles of a type that could be considered especially pure (Davidson, 1975, p. 6).

Although the political and transformative potential of the peasantry in southern Africa continues to be minimised in the literature, in part because the lenses through which rural agency is read are generally limited, I argue in this thesis that the social struggles that have stood out the most in recent years had a rural base or had a direct relationship with the agrarian question. The 2010 'hunger revolts' (Brito et al., 2015) in Maputo and Matola cities in Mozambique provide ample evidence of this. This echoes major peasants' revolts in world history. Revolts that happened as early as 209–206 BC (the anti-Qin revolts in China) and 205-186 BC (the great revolt of the Egyptians) and as late as 2000 (popular land occupations movement in Zimbabwe) significantly influenced dramatic change in political orders, collapse of dynasties or radical land redistribution.

4. The peasantry in the social and agrarian structure

Although the 'urban' poor – many of whom are migrants from the countryside – experience high levels of precariousness, with poorly paid (if paid at all) 'urban' jobs, unemployment, a poor transport system, fragile sanitary services and inhumane housing conditions, rural inhabitants are among the most exploited by capital and socially excluded across southern Africa. Despite producing much of the food

consumed, they are the most affected by hunger and malnutrition. Illiteracy and child mortality rates are higher in the countryside. There are no basic conditions for transport (for people and goods) in the countryside and there is little support for production (extension services, seeds and so on). In South Africa, municipalities cut off water supply for small-scale farmers, as in the case of Citrusdal. As one peasant farmer put it,

> When there is a water cut in Cape Town that makes the news, here the municipality refuses to give us [small-scale farmers] water for consumptions and to use for irrigation. They are actively fighting us so that we give up as autonomous farmers to go work for the white commercial farmers (Informant, Citrusdal, February 2018).

In Mozambique, many rural areas have no piped water systems and consequently drinking water is neither fresh nor safe. The agrarian structure in Mozambique, as evidence reveals, is that 75% of the farms are considered to be small-scale, which, in the context of Mozambique, means that they are smaller than 2 hectares, and mostly held by women (Franco et al., 2010). Out of the total of the harvested area of the country (5.633.850 hectares), 96% of food comes from small-scale farms, a bit more than 2% are medium scale and 1% large scale (Franco et al. 2010). This reality might now have, almost a decade later, changed considerably. However, small-scale farming remains by far the dominant sector in the agrarian sector. The rural population in Mozambique was estimated to represent approximately 67% of the total population in 2017 against 70% in 2007, whilst 67% of the total population was 'employed' in the agricultural sector in 2017 (INE, 2019).

In 2017, capitalist farming companies acquired from the Mozambican state the DUAT[22] to exploit 1.4 million hectares in the Nacala corridor, in the northern region of the country. It is estimated that the 14 districts which are crossed by the Nacala corridor, the area in which ProSAVANA was meant to be implemented, total about 14 million hectares (Rodrigues & Monjane, 2018). Ironically, DUAT is a mechanism which was introduced into land legislation as the path to land expropriation and privatisation.

[22] Lit. Direto de Uso e Aproveitamento de Terra in Portuguese; Right to use and exploitation of land in English.

The land and agrarian structure in contemporary Zimbabwe fundamentally derives from the patterns which originated from the colonial era, notwithstanding the Fast Track Land Reform Programme (FTLRP) of the 2000s that ostensibly sought to redress colonial land and agricultural imbalances. As Roth (1994) notes, "despite the substantial land redistribution that has already taken place, Zimbabwe's agrarian structure still remains highly skewed" (1994, p. 17). Holdings within the large-farm sector lie in the best rainfall zones, while the majority of the rural population in communal areas farm the most arid lands. These large farms are dominated, as Philani Zamchiya (2011) argues, by the elite who have client-patron relations with the ruling elite. Some gained them through purchase while others acquired them through the A2 model[23] of the land reform programme, which, as Zamchiya stresses, emphasised one's connections to capital or the ruling party rather than agricultural potential (2011, p. 1094).

The communal areas in Zimbabwe still account for nearly 6.4 million hectares or 41.9 % of the land area in Zimbabwe. Of the latter, 74.2% of the land is located in the poorest rainfall zones of the country. The communal areas farming system is predominantly dependent on rain-fed and ox-ploughed cultivation which leads to modest levels of productivity. Differences in size of landholdings are modest within the communal areas: they reflect for the most part the different households' capacity to cultivate the land due to constraints related to ownership of a plough oxen and household labour. An estimated 50% of the households have 1 to 5 hectares, and landlessness is still persistent. This compares poorly to the large scale farmers (comprising mainly those connected to capital and the political elites), where the average farm size is at least 2 406 hectares nationwide (Zamchiya, 2011). It is true, however, as Sam Moyo (2011) asserts, that the land reform successfully redressed [to a great extent, but not completely] land imbalances in Zimbabwe. The Zimbabwean case that this thesis presents relates, precisely, an experience of rural emancipation in Shashe village resulting first from popular land occupation followed by the implementation of FTLRP.

[23] The trimodal agrarian structure that resulted from the Fast Track Land Reform in Zimbabwe has three categories, namely A1 (small-scale farms), A2 (semi-commercial farms) and large scale commercial farms (Marongwe, 2011; Scoones, Mavedzenge, & Murimbarimba, 2019).

The land and agrarian structure in South Africa is, to all intents and purposes, much more skewed than in Mozambique and Zimbabwe, as captured by Figure 3 below.

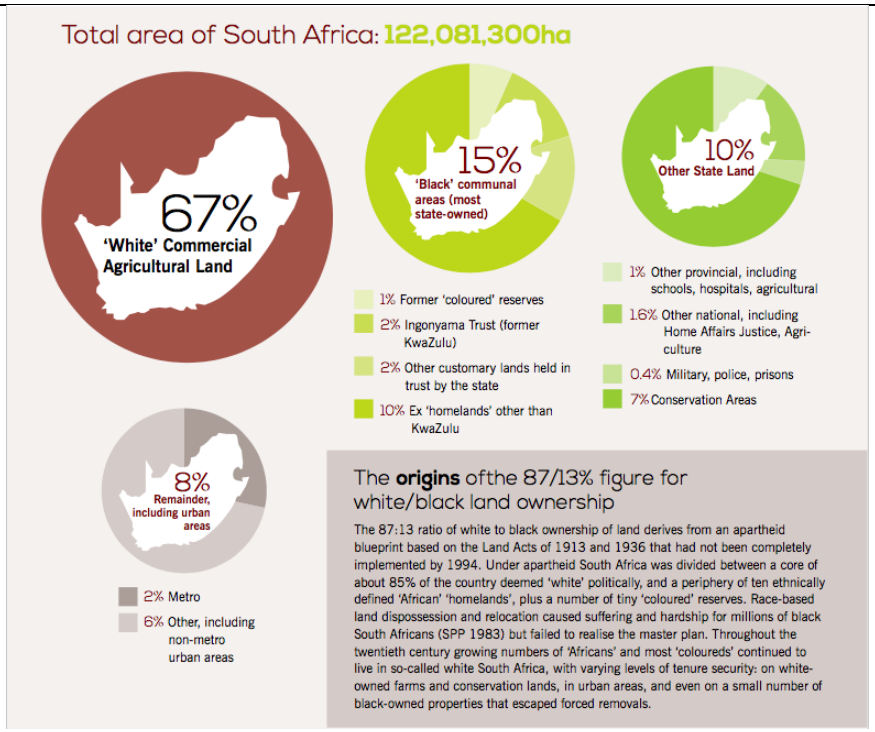


Figure 3: The distribution of land in South Africa: an overview. Source: *Fact Check No. 1, Land Reform* (PLAAS, 2013)

Edward Lahiff (2007) has demonstrated that the "willing buyer willing seller" policy that was adopted at the end of the apartheid was not nearly as successful in redressing the underprivileged position of the peasantry in South Africa. He posits that the country's market-led agrarian reform was influenced by the World Bank and enjoyed the support of landowners and elements within the ruling ANC committed to maintaining the structure of large-scale, capital-intensive farming. This, he adds, contributed to the discrimination against peasants, most of whom live in poverty which prevents them from producing much to cover their own needs, or forces them to depeasantise and proletarinanise on white-owned farms, mines and industries in urban centres. Perhaps more importantly, he adds that, besides the rate of land

transfer being so low, where land was transferred, "it has made little positive impact on livelihoods or on the wider rural economy" (Lahiff, 2007, p. 1577).

Many authors have also postulated that successive South African post-apartheid administrations have taken populist postures in their statements about the elimination of rural poverty without ever taking any requisite steps to empower peasants by way of land allocation and agrarian capitalisation (Adams et al., 2000). They argue that the ruling ANC's links with capital have meant that their statements are a form of 'rhetorical gesture' that is devoid of any substance (Adams et al., 2000, p. 6). Therefore, in this regard, the peasantry in South Africa has been relegated to the fringes of the agrarian economy in South Africa, despite an end to the apartheid system a quarter of a century ago. This has led to louder calls for a more radical approach, but one that has not "been backed up by mobilisation of the landless and has yet to deflect the state from its chosen path" (Lahiff, 2007, p. 1578).

There is a growing concern that rural exodus in Africa is causing what is referred to as a process of de-agrarianisation, that is, the abandonment of the countryside or agricultural practice by rural inhabitants, owing to the inability of governments to implement policies that allow peasants to survive from productive activity (D. F. Bryceson, 2000), among other factors. For Bryceson, "as the process of de-agrarianisation and de-peasantisation combine, the vulnerability of peasantries deepens [and peasants] are disappearing, more rapidly than before" (2000, p. 323). However, although the processes of de-agarianisation are taking place in Mozambique, Zimbabwe and South Africa, other processes of re-agarianisation are also taking place in parallel, mainly in resettlement sites, both in rural and urbanised areas. In these countries, there are also forced displacements of peasants to non-agriculturalised areas. These removals are usually to give way to capitalist farms, as is the case of Gurué, in the Nacala corridor in the Zambézia province (both cases in Mozambique), as well as mining activities, or mere concentration of land by local elites for speculation.

This gives an interesting configuration in the agrarian structure of these countries, to the extent that the migrant peasants do not only become completely urbanised and proletarianised, but their subsistence strategy includes the opening of "new" farming plots for food production (and in some cases ceremonial rituals),

which means repeasantisation. Teodor Shanin reminds us that peasantries exist as a process, that is, always in constant flux and flows through time. They depeasantise and repeasantise (Bernstein et al., 2018, p. 695). The authors describe those flows as "contradictory, but often combined". It is also true that, as shown in Chapter Five, neoliberal agrarian policies have not been able create meaningful rural employment, at the same time as peasants are not absorbed within the so-called urban proletariat landscape, and therefore they have no other choice but to continue practicing what they know best: farming.

Scholars from the Agrarian South network insist that the notion of de-agrarianisation must be seen in a more nuanced fashion. According to them:

> The demand for land has expanded in rural areas, where land continues to be seen as fundamental to the social reproduction of the household, while the same demand has also expanded to urban areas for the purpose of housing as well as urban agriculture. Indeed, the most politically significant trend over the last three decades, against the wishes of both big capital and the 'progressives', is the upsurge in land occupations in both town and country. This—and this alone—has placed, once again, the agrarian question on the agenda, alongside new land questions as distinct from the agrarian. Access to land for the expelled semi-proletariat is now also a question of regaining access to basic citizenship and social rights, in both rural and urban areas—a political motive which is, as before, distinct from the productionist (Editorial, 2012, p. 8).

5. Current manifestations of rural politics in Southern Africa

Where there's power,
there's resistance
(Michel Foucault)

The increasing penetration of capital into the region's countryside has intensified land conflicts, which, in turn, have triggered rural political reactions from below. Agrarian movements and the overall resistance to agrarian neoliberalism in southern Africa have emerged in part because uneven development and the manipulation of 'northern' markets and structural adjustments (SAPs) have

depressed agricultural production and prices in the South which has intensified land struggles (Moyo, 2004, p. 1). I will argue that most militant and vibrant forms of mass mobilisation and protest against capitalism in southern Africa today are, indeed, to be found in the countryside.

The dominant perspective among many scholars and activists is the perception that there are no real agrarian movements in Africa or that rural struggles – and consequently rural politics – are not significantly expressive on the continent. For instance, Claude Welch (1977) deployed the theory of relative deprivation to argue that African peasants' differential experiences inhibit them from developing a consciousness strong enough to lead to a popular revolution. The author depicts this reality as the one that poses the main obstacles to 'peasant war' in Africa. Similarly, Sandbrock (1972) asserts that to the extent that peasants are patronised by the elite in different ways, there is a tendency for factions to develop among their lot, thus minimising the chances of an uprising against capital and the state. These perceptions are in part induced by the idea that Africa peasants are isolated and divided, imbued with ethnic as opposed to class or broad political consciousness, while they are usually at the mercy of those in power (Lado, 1996). However, there are various empirical examples in southern Africa that contradict this. Everywhere in the countryside on the continent, rural inhabitants engage in risky political behaviour, challenging capital, the state power and other agrarian elites with a significant degree of impact.

This thesis is specific to three concrete case studies. However the following other cases are worth mentioning: the Zimbabwe struggles around the diamond mining field of Chiadzwa in Manicaland; the (nationwide) popular protests that halted a Korean company, Daewoo, from grabbing 1.3 million hectares of arable land to plant maize and palm oil for export, in 2009 in Madagascar; the resistance to an Australian mining company, Transworld Energy and Mineral Resources, mining titanium and other heavy minerals in Xolobeni in the Eastern Cape in South Africa; and so on. These and multiple other cases present us with a puzzle, and for that very reason they cannot be undermined.

As discussed above, the peasantry and rural residents carry the greatest social, economic and political burden in Southern Africa. I build on Fanon, who writes that peasants in Africa "have nothing to lose, but all to gain" (Fanon, 1961, p. 45), to explain

the courage and bravery found in organised peasantry Southern Africa countryside.

As I will discuss widely in Chapter Three (the historical chapter), in the past but also currently, rural mobilisation and protest have taken various forms in the region. They have ranged from everyday forms of resistance to overt forms of reaction (spontaneous and unstructured uprisings) and organised and structured resistance. The case of Mozambique shows that covert forms of protest and mobilisation have also been present in the countryside (for instance, boiling cotton seeds before planting to prevent them germinating).

By and large, rural protest and organising essentially take different forms compared to those in urban areas, although similarities occur in some cases. Urban-based actions have generally been more visible (surely also because urban protests attract media attention more than rural protests), taking forms such as demonstrations, petitions, picketing, blockading of roads and public buildings, and so on. In Mozambique, however, in the current context of high urban unemployment, corruption and widespread opportunism, urban workers have taken mostly covert actions, such as gossiping, slander, sabotage, sloppiness, production slowdown or even opportunistic collaboration (Feijó, 2011). This is because of the workers' reticence in confronting powerful employers who are generally protected by a state known for harshly rebuking militant demonstrations of workers against their employers.

Rural protest is diversified in the three countries. There are more direct and overt protests in urban areas than in rural communities in terms of number of occurrences, especially in Zimbabwe and South Africa. However, as I argue in this thesis, rural protest and organisation has been able to confront power (state and capital) more effectively and has achieved more long-term gains (that is, hibernation of ProSAVANA in Mozambique, forcing land reform in Zimbabwe and increasing the minimum wage of farm workers in South Africa). Another relevant aspect is that rural overt protest, when it occurs, is more explosive and long lasting.

The works of James Scott and Benedict Kerkvliet (Scott, 1985; 1990; Kerkvliet, 2005; 2009) are indispensable in understanding contemporary rural agency - that is, how the "weapons of the weak" are used in everyday forms of peasant resistance or everyday (rural) politics. Scott (1985) theorises on rebellions, riots and other hidden

transcripts that are found in rural resistance and politics. By referring to the constant struggle between the peasantry and those who seek to extract labour, food, taxes, rents and interest, Scott particularly underlines the ordinary weapons of seemingly powerless groups such as foot-dragging, dissimulation, false-compliance, pilfering, feigned ignorance, slander, arson, sabotage and others, which he named everyday forms of resistance. Those are the set of forms of resistance that "make no headlines" and there is "rarely any dramatic confrontation" (Scott, 1985, p. 8). Scott puts the emphasis on 'individual acts of resistance'. According to him,

> The inclination to dismiss 'individual' acts of resistance as insignificant and to reserve the term of 'resistance' for collective or organized action is as misguided as the emphasis on 'principled' action… The individual and often anonymous quality of much peasant resistance is, of course, eminently suited to the sociology of the class from which it arises. Being scattered in small communities and generally lacking the institutional means to act collectively, it is likely to employ those means of resistance which are local and require little co-ordination (1985, pp. 27–28).

What is true, however, as my empirical research shows, is that many 'invisible' resistance actions also occur collectively. In the past and in the current period of agrarian neoliberalism, peasant resistance has included non-confrontational strategies (discussed in chapter six). In countries with strict authoritarian regimes, the majority of the people do not place themselves in a position to speak up and confront power, which does not necessarily translate to conformity. For Scott,

> the forms of peasant resistance are not just a product of the social ecology of the peasantry. The parameters of resistance are also set, in part, by the institutions of repression. To the extent that such institutions do their 'work' effectively, they may all but preclude any forms of resistance other than the individual, the informal, and the clandestine (Scott, 1985, 28).

The historical path also sets the space and determines the parameters of resistance. In most colonial southern African countries coercion, violence and the use of force have been applied to silence dissenters and opposition. This explains the existing individual and anonymous forms of resistance. Benedict Kerkvliet (2009) expands and complements Scott's postulations by elaborating on the notion of 'everyday (rural) politics' in peasant societies by underlining the importance of going beyond the analysis of conventional politics, which "usually limit investigation into

the questions and processes implied in this view of politics to governments, states, and the organized efforts to influence what those two institutions do or to change them altogether" (2009, p. 13). The author emphasizes the need to go beyond the understanding of conventional politics, especially in rural areas, because by not doing so there is a risk of missing out on politically significant processes and what represents the agency of the people since "people need not to be organised to be political". According to him,

> Everyday politics involves people embracing, complying with, adjusting [to], and contesting norms and rules regarding authority over, production of, or allocation of resources and doing so in quiet, mundane, and subtle expressions and acts that are rarely organized or direct … And like everyday resistance, they involve the production, distribution, and use of resources – they are political. But they are not resistance. They are the opposite; they reinforce class and status differences and help to perpetuate a political system in which inequalities, personal relationships and dependencies are endemic. (Kerkvliet 2009, 13)

Kerkvliet attempts an explanation of the forms of everyday politics that affect formal politics and help the oppressed (the peasantry) get into a better position within the exploitative system or even to contribute to the adjustment of policies by authorities. For that matter, some individuals within a peasant community might seem to be supporting the system by deliberately endorsing it and others might comply with it without really thinking about it. Additionally, everyday modification and evasions may occur such as indifference to the rules, cutting corners, and other forms that do not directly oppose superiors or advance claims contrasting with superiors' interests. This may even include forms of everyday politics at the expense of people in similar conditions (such as badmouthing fellow peasants or poor people stealing from other impoverished individuals).

This type of everyday form of politics is clearly very common in the rural sphere and highly verified in the relationship between peasants or rural workers and the local government's institutions, as discussed in Chapter Six. Indeed, in Mozambique some UNAC members support the government, or do not openly oppose capital and rural elite. This might be done intentionally in order to get something back. Offering support and help during political campaigns might be a way to get employed in the public administration or transversal institutions.

Customary institutions (viewed as inherently backward by orthodox Marxists) also follow the same patterns. Being a local leader means much more than being the representative of the community, it means that all of the decision-making responsibilities lie in their hands. Distribution of internal and external resources are the leader's responsibility and privilege. These are the same leaders that may comply with or even support agribusiness companies. In Zimbabwe, there were reported case in which some who were members of ZANU-PF and had their application approved during the FTLRP. This does not imply, however, that those individuals are always content with the system they are embedded in or that they do not aspire for change. Understanding everyday politics is crucial in explaining rural agency, according to Kerkvliet.

6. Conclusion

In southern Africa, the contradictions inherent to the process of capitalist agrarian transformations not only failed to prevent, but gave impetus to, formations of different types of organisations in the countryside. While (agrarian) authoritarianism has generally been a key characteristic in the promotion of authoritarian agrarian neoliberalism (I develop this in chapter five), it is in the reactions to it (mostly but not only from below) that elements of (agrarian) populism are found.

Authoritarianism and populism are generally associated with conservative and reactionary right-wing forces in the rural world (Scoones et al., 2018). In an interesting analytical exercise, Borras (2019) showed, however, that progressive agrarian populisms (he suggests a definition of populism which is not necessarily pejorative) could be strategic in defeating right-wing populism and authoritarianism.

There are strong elements of populism in the narratives and discourses coming from agrarian/land struggles across the region, as I will discuss in the last chapter (conclusion). This form of populism, combined with at-times nationalist and racially divisive narratives, might endanger and risk subverting the existing, genuinely progressive rural movements, which also embrace land expropriation without compensation, but with a class-based politics that privileges the vesting of

rights in already existing occupiers. This may include farm workers, and other groups such as small-scale farmers and landless semi-urban populations, all of whom are represented by and in FSC and others. As a matter of fact, Borras (2019) presents a nuanced view of rural politics and while alerting us that there is nothing inherently conservative in agrarian and rural movements, nor anything inherently progressive in them, he sees possibilities for a progressive populism from grassroots movements - what others would prefer to term as popular (Shivji, 2019).

CHAPTER THREE: Agrarian dynamics in historical perspective: land, labour and colonialism in Mozambique, South Africa and Zimbabwe

> We were a necessary 'evil' as a source of labour. In the villages we had our cattle, we stayed well in our land, but the colonial government came with laws that disturbed this status quo for the sole reason of extorting cheap labour from us so they [could] build their factories, dispossessing us of our land in the process. These cities were like labour concentration camps (Sizwe, interview, Cape Town, 2017).

Southern Africa was affected by settler colonialism quite profoundly. The colonies of settlement have two important characteristics: the occupation of the territory for its exploitation with the presence of settlers, and that the land is expropriated away from indigenes to become the property of the colonising metropolis. Thus, to the extent that Mozambique, Zimbabwe and South Africa were earmarked as settler colonies by their respective colonizers, land was at the centre of the colonial project. The system of settler colonialism was then a legal structure that backed the exploitative system. While Mozambican independence was attained as a result of a revolutionary process of rupture, in South Africa and to a lesser extent Zimbabwe, there was a negotiated settlement between the former colonizers and the liberation movements and political formations in order to preserve the semi-stability that existed, and the force of law was put forward. The law, as we know, is always on the side of the powerful; in this case, agrarian capital and landed churches.

Land and agrarian discourses have dominated African historiographies – the methods by which history is captured and analysed – for a considerable period of time. This is perhaps influenced by an intrinsic relationship between people and the land. Alexander points out that,

> Land is about identity as well as production and class formation; it is about aesthetic values and spiritual meaning, as well as being central to the construction of the institutions of state; it fires political struggles and

> violence alongside the literary imagination; and it is the basis for both building and breaking a host of social relationships. (Alexander 2007, 183)

Alexander's statement helps shed light on the fact that the whole ethos of humankind is embodied in the access to, ownership of and tenure of land. In acknowledging the complexity of the land question in Africa, it is generally agreed that although the incorporation of African land within the global capitalist system predates colonial occupation, colonialism itself marked new and more intensive forms of capitalist exploitation. Indeed, the Berlin Conference, hosted by Otto von Bismarck in 1884, marked the process by which European powers arrogated African territories to themselves in the absence of Africans themselves. By expropriating lands that belonged to rural communities and subjecting African peasants to forced labour on plantations and colonial farms, colonialism thus paved the way for the process of commodification of land resources and the gradual semi-proletarianisation of the peasantry (Arrighi, 1970; 1978; Moyo, 2008).

There is no evidence attesting to any interest on the part of colonial regimes in understanding or considering other possible values, such as cultural values, that the land might have had for Africans in addition to its use as a means of production, except in cases when it was convenient to create or shape customary or community land tenure laws to promote private European interests in the colonies (Peters, 2010), thus introducing a capitalist notion of property; or, when colonial authorities found it convenient to "invent tradition" (Hobsbawm & Ranger, 1983) and thus segregate or exclude Africans from wider political involvement by applying an indirect administration model. Klug has noted that:

> After the colonial authorities constructed a vision of African land tenure under "customary law" in which the most important rights — allocation, alienation, and reversion — were vested exclusively in the political authority embodied by the chief, it was a short step to the assertion that the loss of sovereign powers to the colonial authority made African land rights subject to administrative authority (Klug, 2003, p. 139).

Indirect rule would therefore cast the allocation of plots of land within a community as an 'official administrative act' of the traditional leadership.

> It would hence be difficult to understand or discuss the land and agrarian questions in Africa today without looking at the legacies of the past.

> Moreover, uncovering the roots of land conflicts in present-day Africa requires a full understanding of the complex social and political contradictions resulting from colonial and post-independence land policies (Moyo, 2008, p. 1).

Land was the very source of existence for indigenous African peasants. It was the foundation of their cultural, social, economic and political wellbeing. Mazarire (2009) reveals how these societies forged critical elements for their existence by, for instance, deriving their totems and identities from their surrounding flora and fauna. He therefore sets an important background for a discussion of the intertwined nature of the relationship between indigenous societies and their land. Indeed, Mazarire's work clearly emphasizes that land was not only a source of livelihood, but also an important link in the social, cultural and political chains of precolonial societies.

Overall, the historiography of the land and agrarian questions in Africa is primarily based on two contestations; Eurocentric and Afrocentric approaches. The former was influenced by a racial dichotomy which viewed Africans as devoid of any economic rationale and hence producing only for subsistence on communal based land tenure systems which, they argued, culminated in unsustainable land use. In this view, Barber (1970), claimed that precapitalist Africa consisted of idle lands which were inherently underdeveloped prior to the colonial occupation of Zimbabwe. Drawing heavily from Arthur Lewis's model of development theory where he posits that labour moved from a low productivity indigenous sector to a highly productive capitalist economy, Barber argued that African agriculture in Southern Rhodesia was generally underdeveloped prior to colonial occupation. Thus, according to this tradition, colonial capitalism benefitted Africans because it enabled them to enter the money economy. (Barber, 1970, p. 12) Similarly, McPhee (1971, p. 14) stressed that, as late as 1926, "there is an almost total lack as yet of native capitalists" in agriculture in British West Africa.

This chapter, based on a historical review of literature, looks at land and agrarian issues in Mozambique, South Africa and Zimbabwe to understand the ways in which colonial penetration in these countries altered pre-colonial agrarian systems and patterns. As the chapter demonstrates, a close reading of African land and agrarian historiographies proves the still-persistent representations of Africans as averse to agricultural modernization – or an obstacle to it – in their relationship with

land and their agrarian systems. This chapter is also crucial in understanding the roots of rural resistance and agency in Mozambique, South Africa and Zimbabwe.

1. Pre-colonial and colonial land and agriculture systems: between discourse and practices

Martin Hall (1987) traces the development of agriculture in southern Africa from a historical perspective. In his generalized analysis of southern African pre-colonial societies, he places the development of agriculture within the concept of the primitive communist mode of production, which, he argues, began millennia ago (1987, p. 17). The dominant form of production was based on domestic crops and animals, and was finally replaced late in the first millennium with cattle accumulation. The main argument proposed in his work is that early southern African communities were dynamic and diversified.

1.1. Zimbabwe

Pre-colonial African communities of Zimbabwe have been portrayed as technologically and technically too handicapped to deal with diseases and modern (and improved) agriculture. According to Duignan (1978, p. 197), it was only European conquest which ushered in an agricultural revolution. This deeply Eurocentric perspective was further demonstrated by Gann (1965) who viewed Africans as requiring a remedial contact for their 'backwardness'. The author underscored the importance of white patronage in influencing the trajectory of African economic regimes up to colonization. One of his most critiqued perspectives was his defense of the Land Apportionment Act of 1930[24], arguing that as 'an essay in trusteeship', the Act was fair because it ensured that some land was set aside for African occupation and offered paternal protection to vulnerable African communities. Such interpretations of African agrarian systems were understandably

[24] The Land Apportionment Act of 1930 was "a segregationist measure that governed land allocation and acquisition prior to independence. The act made no provision for blacks who chose an urban life because towns were designated as white areas. This Act partitioned land into European and African reserves and forcibly evicted Africans from fertile land, which they had held for generations and to which they were spiritually attached, to barren land".
Source: https://www.pindula.co.zw/Land_Apportionment_Act. Accessed on 05/11/2019

challenged by Africanist scholars for their colonial and triumphalist undertones. Chanaiwa (1980), for instance, posits that those narratives sought to rationalize and legitimize the burdens and atrocities of colonization. For him, colonial histories were "primarily written to rationalize invasions, massacres and predatoriness" (1980, p. 14). He goes on to affirm that in their quest to settle, colonialists "not only needed historians, but also a distinct historical folklore of their own" (1989,14).

The import of colonial historiography was to emphasize that African agrarian systems were static, primitive and unresponsive to market opportunities, and that it was the advent of colonialism that infused thrift and enterprise among Africans through the production of cash crops. However, there is archaeological evidence that precolonial societies, especially on the Zimbabwean plateau, were engaged in production of small grains such as sorghum, millet and maize, and the penetration of Portuguese traders from the East Coast is perhaps evidence of a thriving and dynamic commercially oriented agriculture, albeit set in a cashless economy. Animal husbandry was also a common feature of these societies. Murombedzi (2003), writing from a black nationalist perspective, severs ties with an epistemological dependency that views African societies as backward before the advent of colonialism. He offers an appraisal of indigenous knowledge systems from the perspective of conservation. He concludes that African societies were dynamic and even adapted to changing environmental needs.

More Afrocentric literature taking a curative stance towards redressing the gross misrepresentation of African history by Eurocentric ethnographers and anthropologists emerged in the late 1970s. For instance, drawing from archival sources, Beach (1974) views precolonial Zimbabwean communities as characterized by dynamic agrarian economies based on the cultivation of various crops and livestock production. Other scholars (Arrighi, 1967; Phimister, 1983; Machingaidze, 1991; Mazarire, 2009) contributed tremendously to this view, demonstrating the complexities of agriculture and land tenure on the Zimbabwean plateau. Based on new quantitative and qualitative perspectives, these scholars proffered new interpretations on the development of African economic thought during precolonial and colonial periods. These works were magnanimous in pioneering literature which demonstrated precolonial African economic pre-eminence. They collectively

represent the epitome of literature which challenged and confronted the 'civilization myth' and the overrated colonial policies which, in most instances, were wrongly portrayed as prescriptive and able to transform African 'backwardness' into European 'modernity'.

Mwatwara and Swart wrote on the medical history of the development of veterinary services (2015), demonstrating that pre-colonial ethnic groups had domesticated indigenous fowl, pigs, dogs, goats, sheep and cattle, and oral tradition suggests these had "become well adapted to the local environment, with disease outbreaks being infrequent" (2015, p. 106). Livestock regimes thrived with varying degrees of success prior to colonial encroachment. In his doctoral thesis, Mwatwara (2014) reflects, in part, on livestock regimes focusing on the history of precolonial livestock healing practices and the introduction of veterinary medicine in Southern Rhodesia. He lays bare arguments that livestock disease management prior to colonization thrived under indigenous knowledge systems, and during colonization, colonial livestock management regimes provided an opportunity for social control and performing the supposed superiority of the settler state. In his view, colonialist veterinary policies were well-aligned with destabilising African peasant agriculture by deliberately side-lining traditional African livestock regimes. These attitudes were premised on a skewed but established discernment of Africa as a dark continent. Here we can draw a parallel to the supposed superiority of European modern medicine versus African witch doctors which is still common today. Mwatwara finds congruence with Palmer (1977) in that racial attitudes, and not scientific evidence were responsible for undermining African healing methods, labelling them as inferior and their livestock diseased. Mwatwara (1977) also demonstrates how critical livestock production was to Africans as he points out the animosity and anti-colonial sentiment that came with the confiscation of cattle to meet tax obligations.

Mwatwara and Swart (2015, p. 132) also note that "… so pervasive was the abuse of power by tax collectors-cum-veterinary officials that within a decade (1897–1907) most had become prolific livestock owners – large enough to threaten European cattle traders." Despite incessant hardships, the authors believe that livestock production continued to show persistent signs of success, especially for African livestock owners who remained on white-owned land and Crown lands. The

initial impact of the creation of reserves thus need not be overemphasized as labour tenancy played a significant role in keeping a considerable proportion of dispossessed Africans on white land, especially in the period before the passage of the Private Locations Ordinance (1907).

Historiography on cattle regimes was dominated by a Eurocentric perspective most commonly known as the "cattle complex," coined by Melville Herskovit (1926) while working on eastern and southern African societies' relationships with cattle. Herskovits concluded that Africans had a strong attachment to cattle which influenced a general reluctance to slaughter animals, except for ritual purposes. His conclusions were to emphasize that that African [or indigenous] animal husbandry regimes both before and during colonialism were irrational and lacked economic enterprise. With reference to Zimbabwe, this school of thought was epitomized by Holleman (1952) who argued that cattle among both the Ndebele and the Mashona were venerated more for their social and cultural value than for their economic significance. He added that livestock were considered to be of almost equal importance to humans, as they could be used in exchange for wives or for the payment of restitution in cases of murder and other social crimes (1952, p.68). A more elaborate attack on African livestock husbandry would come from Bullock (1950), who criticized Africans for accumulating livestock to the point of what he perceived to be economic irrationality. Himself a former colonial official, he stated that "the religious and social significance" attached to cattle was not "in accord with our view that cattle are kept simply to supply us with milk and meat, and to these ends, purchase and sale should be untrammelled by any clogs on trade" (Bullock, 1950, p. 99).

This colonial interpretation of African livestock regimes unsurprisingly came under increasing attack from Africanist and revisionist scholars from the 1970s onwards. In Zimbabwe, the first such response to Herskovits and others was offered by Mtetwa (1978). He diffused the 'backwardness' paradigm in animal husbandry and unambiguously stated that "there has been nothing mystical about cattle [among Africans]: they have been first and foremost an economic asset and all the socio-religious attitudes held by Africans are based on their economic value" (1978, p. 23). Instead, he attributes African reluctance to sell cattle to the exploitation that they

experienced at the hands of colonial authorities through unrealistically low prices paid for their cattle. The value of these Afrocentric perspectives is that their discussions demonstrate successes of African livestock regimes premised on indigenous knowledge systems and their understanding of the economic value of their cattle. As is argued in this thesis, the issue is not one of establishing hierarchies or even conflict between economic and non-economic values. The critique is that precisely the reductionism that has been attributed in literature to precolonial African societies as economically backward implies that just because Westerners prioritized economy, others elsewhere also had to do. Even today, one of the justifications behind the refusal to implement land reform in Africa, for instance, is that African producers cannot farm profitably, which would supposedly bring negative effects to the economy of the country.

Elizabeth Schmidt (1992) also writes from a similar nationalist perspective and gives a more in-depth analysis on the dynamism of precolonial Zimbabwean society through a gendered prism. She discusses the centrality of women to the economic survival of precolonial and colonial Zimbabwe. She opens new dynamics on a rather thinly captured historical record and points to a dearth of gendered histories that leaves out the importance of women in the social and economic fabric of indigenous societies. In Schmidt's view, exogenous and endogenous factors worked in tandem to subordinate the role of women in the development of precolonial and economic thought.

Notwithstanding, women were able carve a niche and Schmidt demonstrates how a peasant group of women was able to thrive by experimenting with new crops at the advent of colonialism (1992, p. 180). Through these various epochs, Schmidt reveals and stresses the fact that female participation was not only present when women were appendages to male superiority in precolonial Zimbabwe, but they also operated as an important and independent facet of production systems.

Indeed, the immediate impact of white presence on the Zimbabwean plateau in the later part of the 20th century was the enforcement of white supremacy and patronage. This was confined within an aggrandizement of western economic thought which pushed Africans to the fringes where they would serve the needs of the settler community and ultimately industrial Europe while whites remained paternalistically

in charge of African welfare. Thus, land alienation for white settlement and mineral prospecting was the chief motive for settler encroachment, and this inevitably led to the development of an agrarian policy based on racial or ethnic discrimination. Barry Floyd's (1962) interpretation of the segregationist land policies was that they were premised on the separation of the population along racial lines in order to give the colonists an economic advantage. According to him, the immediate reaction from Africans was animosity as land was taken away from them through conquest and transformed to private ownership through purchase, while they were pushed to unhospitable reserves. Perhaps what is most salient in the detail provided by Floyd is that colonial officials were well aware of the diminishing and unsuitable conditions of Africans in the reserves arising from poor allocation of land - a clear indication of the rather brutal nature of colonial land policy which further fermented acrimony from the Africans. This notwithstanding, the European objective of separating races continued to dominate politics, and it was in 1925 with the Morris Cater Commission that a policy of "possessory segregation" was endorsed to limit contact between European and African land holders, culminating in the Land Apportionment Act of 1930, later amended in 1950 (Floyd, 1962).

While focusing on the civilization discourse to explain land segregation, Floyd (1962) and Huggins and Jennings (1935) pay little attention to the economic argument of primitive accumulation as being a contributing factor to land segregation. Indeed, for Huggins and Jennings, as with Floyd, land segregation was an inevitable process and was an issue isolated from other issues. Hence for these scholars, the basis of land segregation was primarily racial superiority, and the major outcomes were to be the separation of two different races and patronage of African agriculture through state supervision. While noting the important issues raised by Floyd, Robin Palmer (1977) links the political and racial imperatives to the economic motives of the policy framework. He delineates the discriminatory land policies of the colonial government and their impact on African access to land and their agricultural enterprises more generally. His work on settler land alienation, eviction and racial discrimination is important to the extent that it documents the political, social and economic processes that culminated in the domination of white farmers in agricultural production, demonstrating that the underdevelopment of African

agriculture was a two-edged sword aimed at eliminating African competition on the agricultural market and creating a readily available pool of cheap labour for white farmers.

A number of scholars have followed on this political economy paradigm, noting the complex matrix of economic, political and social imperatives that influenced colonial land and agrarian policies. To Bratton (1979, p. 56), land segregation was inspired largely by economic motives. He notes that colonial experts were used to oversee and legalize the appropriation of land for white farmers and mining corporations, to demarcate African 'reserves', to administer guidelines concerning 'correct' methods of land and livestock husbandry, and often to perform paramilitary duties when the state felt its power was under threat. This literature is important in emphasizing the role of the imperial state, chartered companies and individuals in executing and advancing the colonial agenda and policy, which inevitably covered aspects of the land and agrarian question.

Giovanni Arrighi (1967), writing from a typically Marxist perspective, similarly noted that race and class were in many ways linked through the socio-economic set-up of colonial structures. He stressed that the British South Africa Company, and the Responsible Government after 1923, embarked on a ruthless and punishing process of primitive accumulation whose aim was to empower settler agriculture and weaken African economic independence (Arrighi, 1967, p. 13). His ideas were adopted by scholars like Phimister (1974) and Duncan Clarke (1975) whose pieces on peasant production and underdevelopment and African contract and domestic labour respectively popularised the political economy approach during the 1970s.

Scholars such as Rennie (n.d.), Murray (1970) and Machingaidze (1980) have portrayed the early development of settler agriculture as being of a 'crippled nature'. This, they argue, obliged the British South Africa Company and successive white settler governments to intervene in order to strengthen white agriculture. Writing on labour tenancy, Rennie (n.d) revealed a diametrically opposed and asymmetrical development of settler agriculture as two fronts emerged: on the one hand poor white farmers, and, on the other, better capitalized white farmers. He demonstrates how a class of poor white farmers advocated labour tenancy and sharecropping as the only

means through which this class of farmers could afford to employ African labour. According to Rennie (n.d), labour tenancy created a middle road for Africans, and although the system was manipulative it was very much preferred compared to eviction to Native Reserves. He interprets this desirability as emanating from the fact that the African peasants would at least respond to market opportunities to produce and meet their tax obligations "without having to work directly for the colonizers" (Rennie (n.d)). He further demonstrates the thriving nature of peasant agriculture by pointing out that tenant farming was later opposed by the highly capitalized white farmers as "they [tenant farmers] were a danger and a nuisance, and a damage to the economy" (Rennie (n.d)). The rhetoric was an attack directed at African access to land as a means of production, and at the African peasantry. The colonial regime, therefore, intervened to rescue white settler agriculture from the imminent danger of 'unsustainability'.

1.2. Mozambique

> The permanence of the centrality of the struggle for rights, for its history beyond colonial representation ... points to the importance of imagining an ethical and just world where the promise of humanism, the return of dignity, is fulfilled. This change of imaginary, beyond an idea of a 'generalizing linear universal', with various implications, such as the question of national identity, requires a direct confrontation with the uncomfortable realities and heritages produced by the colonial encounter, including the continuous prejudiced representations about otherness. That is, a claim to cognitive justice as a core issue of knowledge politics, the way that colonial matrix knowledge has produced and continues to produce excluding otherness (Meneses & Martins, 2016, p. 10)

Scholars working on the colonial history of Mozambique have depicted it as one of the most brutal and racially segregated systems of the 19th century. Portugal exercised cruel colonial violence in the name of a supposedly 'civilizing mission' (Meneses, 2018a) and invariably established a set of harsh colonial land policies in Africa which were characterized by the deep entrenchment of a dualized agricultural system. Isaacman (1985, 1995, 1996), perhaps the most influential historian of

colonial and post-colonial Mozambique, documents the origins of Portugal's economic interests in Mozambique. He uses the case of cotton to demonstrate the manifestation of Portuguese agrarian policy in the plantation system. Issacman makes significant contributions to discussions on the impoverished nature of the peasant sector, especially in the production of cotton, which he famously described as the mother of poverty (Isaacman, 1995). He traces the genesis of Portuguese interest in African countries back to the 16th century, which was initially based on trade before physical occupation. With the inception of colonial rule, land and agrarian policies became more intrinsically linked to the desires of the metropolis and the trajectory indirectly and directly influenced by the nature of capitalism. These works on Mozambique contribute to the earliest understandings of white encroachment and the revamping of African land tenure systems.

Initially, Allen and Barbara Issacman (1975) traced the evolution of one of the most complex land tenure systems in the form of the *prazero* system which came with initial European contact during the precolonial period of the mid-16th century. The *prazo* was a land grant or lease given in exchange for a fixed annual fee to African peasants. The system operated like a semi-feudal system and was most commonly found in the Zambezi River valley. According to Isaacman, the *prazeros* in Mozambique did not remove the existing African authority but imposed a new political institution on top of the indigenous order (Isaacman, 1972).

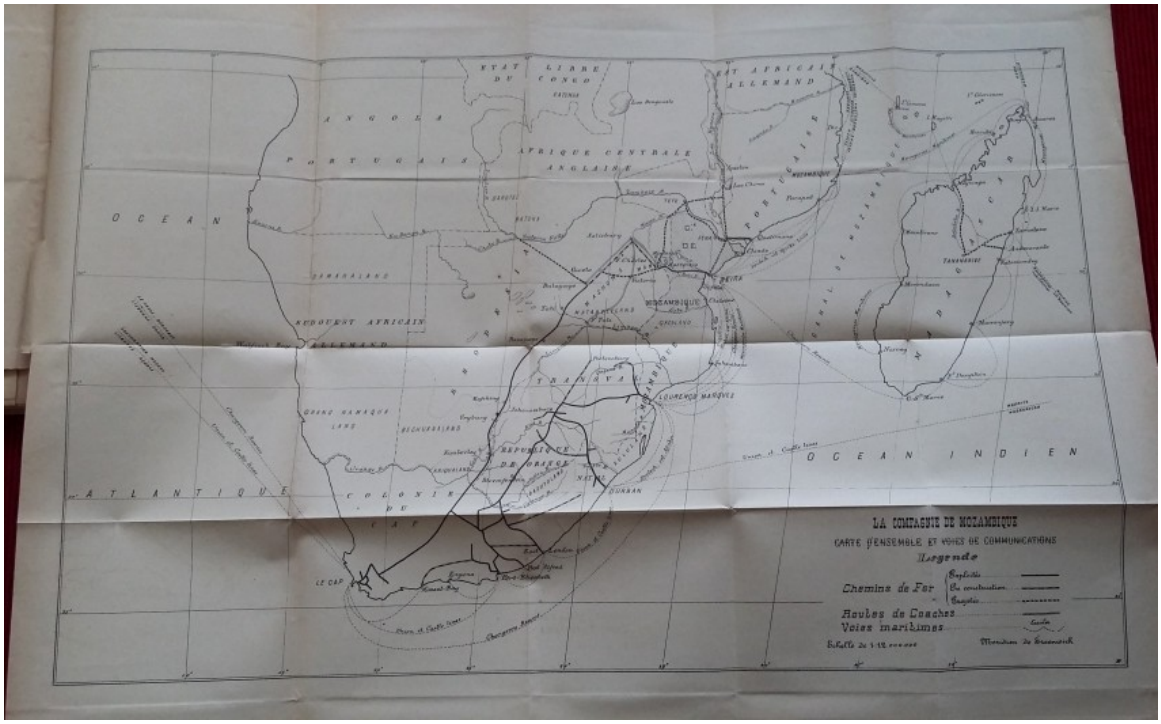
Issacman (1972; 1985) argues that the *prazeros* became zones of social change, interconnectedness and ideological diffusion. He stresses that the creation of *prazeros* marked the initial stage of land tenure transformation, land alienation and the emergence of a dual agrarian economy in Mozambique as the Portuguese moved in to avail themselves of vast tracts of land. Thus, according to him, a new punitive and impoverishing system was established in Mozambique and this inevitably disturbed presumably functional precolonial land and agrarian systems to the benefit of settler plantation holders and ultimately metropolitan Portugal. Numerous scholars have articulated the frail nature of Portuguese capital compared to other European states and how it influenced an economic policy which was tantamount to neo-slavery even prior to formal colonization.

Certainly, Hammond (1966), in a book titled *Portugal and Africa 1815-1910: A study in uneconomic imperialism,* portrays an imminent implosion of the Portuguese economy. Notwithstanding, and perhaps as a consequence of these internal weaknesses, Portugal pursued an aggressive and uniquely punitive and exploitative form of imperialism in Mozambique. Vail (1976) agrees with Hammond that Portugal's economic background was weak. He demonstrates the undercapitalised and incapable nature of the Portuguese crown and the chartered companies mandated to colonise African colonies. In Mozambique, Portugal granted large parcels of land to private companies to exploit them, the so-called majestic companies, the main ones being Companhia do Niassa and Companhia de Moçambique. In addition to expropriating land, these companies had extensive administrative powers, among them exclusivity in the exploitation of peasant labour and raw materials (Cabaço, 2009; Almeida-Santos, 2010; Sampaio, 2014, 2018).

> The company was based on the *chibalo* labour system, which obliged Mozambicans to work in cotton fields, plantations and public works. This work system prevented the population from growing economically and developing its own production for commercialization (Sampaio, 2014, p. 8).

As Maria Paula Meneses puts it,

> Portuguese colonial propaganda sought to hide the true meaning of its presence in the colony. In other words, that colonialism meant the occupation of land from which the means of subsistence of the people who already inhabited the territory known as Mozambique came (2018a, p. 127).



Picture 7: Companhia de Moçambique - General map and communication routes. Source: Varinay, P. de Bonnefont (1899)

This literature is important in so far as it explains external factors behind the repressive land and agricultural policy that existed in Mozambique and other Portuguese African colonies. Indeed, scholars such as Hammond, Vail and Isaacman have persuasively presented these policies as akin to neo-slavery; this is de facto slavery even without legal title over bodies. Fitzpatrick (1981) traces the development of this dual agricultural development of peasant small-scale farming and commercial white-dominated agriculture. The former was practised by the vast majority of the population, who mainly focussed on staple crops such as maize and manioc (cassava) that served as the people's staple diet, with smaller quantities of pulses, sweet potatoes, cashew and ground nuts cultivated together with cattle-rearing.

This sector produced food for the urban markets and was also used by the state to produce most of its exportable products, such as sugar, cotton, rice, sisal, tea, tobacco and wheat. Fitzpatrick's work further exposes the deeply entrenched nature of foreign capital in colonial Mozambique and how it contributed to the development

of a dual economy which was firmly tailored to favour settler agriculture. This literature adds to the body that describes the bifurcated colonial agricultural and land regimes which led to the exploitation and relegation of peasants to a subservient sector whose existence was merely to serve the interests of the minority settler community, the colonial government and imperial Portugal.

Some scholars have adopted an apologist, colonialist position in their analysis of colonial Mozambican land and agricultural policies and their impact on different groups. Duffy (1962) traces the development of plantation agriculture as a viable means for developing extractive agriculture. Duffy downplays the exploitative nature of the plantation system but focuses on the steady increase in agricultural output during the colonial period. He thus appears to legitimize the abuses of the colonial state by validating the mission of 'civilization', arguing that in certain instances, force was the only way to compel Africans to be productive (1962, p. 68). Therefore, for him, these mechanisms along with legal frameworks were used as a conduit to channel labour discipline suitable for the desires of plantation agriculture. The author captures the official mindset by quoting Ennes, one of the early colonial administrators, who argued that, "Africans respond only to brute force…they feared nothing except corporal punishment and the whip…it is only by force and fear that we can maintain our positions over these Africans" (Duffy, 1962, p. 62). Duffy also writes on labour codes which he presents, quite bizarrely, as having protected African labourers from abuses.

In the same vein, Jelle van den Berg (1987) offers critical evidence of early developments in colonial agriculture as the chief pillar of Mozambique's colonial economy. He focuses on what he considers to have been progressive agricultural policies which contributed to increased productivity, albeit in a dualistic manner (1987, p. 42). Pitcher (1995) deviates from the moralist and nationalist paradigms adopted by Hammond, Vail and Isaacman: he contends that labour conditions were neither static nor were they always characterized by repressive systems throughout the colonial period. In a work titled "From coercion to incentives: the Portuguese Colonial Cotton Regime in Angola and Mozambique, 1946–1974", Pitcher argues – contra Issacman – that the colonial state was constantly making efforts to improve

labour conditions in the colony through a series of legal frameworks towards the end of colonial rule (Pitcher, 1995).

However, these works do little to address issues concerning the naked brutality and exploitation that characterized the land, agrarian and labour policies that were espoused by successive colonial administration in Mozambique. As Maria Paula Meneses (2018a) asserts, "[T]he effect of the brutality of the colonial encounter, codified in laws and recorded in analyses produced in European colonial metropolises, lingers beyond the end of the colonial empires" (2018a, p. 116).

That Duffy and Jelle van den Berg focus on productivity does not refute the exploitation and brute force used by the state and settler *prazo* owners. They merely point to production figures without providing evidence that the said figures were beneficial to African people. Nor does Pitcher's argument that labour laws were not static deny the coercion used by colonial masters in enforcing their exploitative policies.

Isaacman's vivid descriptions of life on the plantations are quite compelling. He describes them thus: "The tea plantations are variable gardens, so beautiful, so profitable and so much work to do with the blood of slaves, whose humanity is denied… all are forced to work under conditions that do not represent liberty, justice or social conveniences" (Isaacman, 1996, p. 86). In certain instances, Isaacman notes, women were forced to work until they gave birth. Newitt (1981) also writes on the exploitation of women and child labour in the forced cotton production regime in Mozambique. These works stand in firm opposition to existing apologist paradigms and go beyond merely describing the development of agrarian systems from a bird's eye view, but rather produce intimate details of the African experience in the colonial period, which is a generally neglected aspect of African and colonial historiographies that has prioritized economic development and analysis over human experience.

1.3. South Africa

> In South Africa, the people had their own farm land in the rural areas but there were laws designed to make them move from their rural areas to come and live close to the big cities like Johannesburg and Cape Town. People were forced to move to townships. It was destined. It was

> created for them. It was a contradiction. People were forced to move away from their own land to come live close to the big cities as a source of cheap labour. They were disposessed of their land (Siviwe Mdoda, interview, Cape Town, March 2017).

The historiography on colonial land and agrarian policies in South Africa, much like Mozambique and especially Zimbabwe, focuses on the impact of a dual system that was created by successive racist governments of the time. A significant number of rural people became semi-proletarianized, while others opted to find employment as migrant labours on white owned mines and farms. The history of colonial encroachment into what is today South Africa dates back to 1651, to the arrival of a group of Dutch settlers, led by Jan van Riebeck, in the Cape. Since then, indigenous African people were forced towards the north-eastern parts of the country after their agrarian lifestyles were disturbed. The arrival of the British further complicated matters for African agrarian livelihoods. As they took over the Cape Colony, they pushed Afrikaner groups to the north where they increasingly came into contact with the Xhosa, Sotho and Tswana speaking people. Etherington (2014) contends that competition between settlers and the Xhosa for pastures in the region west of the Zuurveld grew by the early 19th century, and although localised conflicts continued to be sporadic, the ensuing conflict between indigenous groups and the settlers had been decisively won by the latter (Etherington, 2014, p. 32).

The above notwithstanding, most African groups retained their political independence for a few decades subsequently, with some scholars suggesting that they lived in relative peace alongside settler groups (Etherington, 2014, p. 78). It was not until after the discovery of diamonds and gold between the 1860s and 1880s and the achievement of Union status that both British and Afrikaner groups became wary of African economic independence, leading to the passage of the Native Land Act in 1913. To the extent that it was viewed as the centrepiece of pre-1994 South African land and agricultural policy, a great deal of scholarly attention has been focussed on the Native Land Act and its impact in creating a deeply dualized society in South Africa. Rugege has described it as representing 'the most systematic means of land dispossession by the state' (Rugege, 2004, p. 1). Through these frameworks, Africans were assigned a complementary role of supplying cheap labour for white commercial

agriculture. In this framework, Africanist scholars have described the act as the most far reaching insofar as disenfranchising Africans was concerned. The words of Sol Plaatjie, a writer-cum-political-activist of the time, help to put into context the impact of the act on Africans. He famously described their plight thus: "On awakening on Friday morning, June 1913, the South African native found himself not actually a slave, but a pariah in the land of his birth" (Plaatje, 1921, p. 32).

Saunders (2003) also highlights the importance of the 1913 Land Act and points out that it forms the crux of the current land distribution issue in South Africa. In the same manner, for Bundy (1988), the legal frameworks represented the chief cornerstone of white superiority working deliberately to undermine black economic freedom. Greenberg (2003) traces the development of land policies from the inception of colonial rule, which he argues were premised on the 1913 and 1936 Land Acts and affected the structure of South African agriculture. He agrees with the perception that these pieces of legislation promoted the development of white commercial agriculture at the expense of black labour and agrarian property, the main point being that the legislation had a two-pronged ambition: first, to eliminate African competition in agriculture by removing Africans from the land, and second, to eliminate labour shortages on white-owned agricultural enterprises by ejecting Africans from their only source of livelihood – land – forcing them to seek wage labour.

Yawitch argues that with capital intensification in industry and 'white' agriculture, the role of the labour reserves became dumping grounds for the black population surplus to the needs of capital accumulation (1982, p. 44). Greenberg bases his argument on the state's role in subjugating black access to land and notes that, "in order to retain political control over these processes, there was a top-down restructuring of the traditional 'tribal' governance system, initially through the Native Administration Act of 1927 that imposed white control over the 'tribal' system" (Greenberg, 2003, p. 44). Further, he argues on the basis of a systematic removal and segregation of black agricultural interests and maintains that land reform would require greatly revamping the colonial heritage that existed up to apartheid. Miller and Pope (2000) trace these imbalances, from a legal and constitutional point of view, since the 17th century with the importation of the Roman Dutch Law, under which

property was distributed initially on a discriminatory basis. The racialised nature of land and agrarian policy therefore shapes our broader understanding on the extent to which colonial development was based on the support of one race above the other. In this way, Miller and Pope support the works of earlier scholars such as Lacey (1981) , Keegan (1986) and Wolpe (1972), who emphasize that the act was a robust and all-encompassing response to the needs of "various sectors of capital" (Lacey, 1981, p. 14).

This view of the Native Land Act was adopted, improvised and popularised by perhaps the most famous critic of the act and its impact on the South African peasantry: Colin Bundy (1988). In his seminal study of the fortunes of the South African peasantry, he argues that, while the minerals revolution that began with the discovery of diamonds and gold at Kimberly during the 1860s and the Witwatersrand in the 1880s respectively, brought with it a boon for the generality of indigenous South Africans, the enactment of the Native Land Act marked the fall of the previously prosperous peasants. To the extent that it restricted African land ownership to no more than 14% of the entire Union, the Native Land Act ushered in a ban on tenancy and sharecropping. Bundy described the act as a death knell for African economic independence. Africans who had made a fortune by taking advantage of the market opportunities presented by sprouting mining towns suddenly found themselves landless, and faced with a choice between living in the poverty of the reserves, or finding employment on the mines where they previously had marketed their produce. According to Bundy (1988), the long-term impact of the act was quite enormous. It removed the means by which many African producers had resisted both incorporation into the migrant labour system of the mines and wage labour on the farms (Bundy, 1988, p. 144).

Bundy's thesis inspired many Africanist scholars. A number of historians went on to use localised case studies to demonstrate the extent of African prosperity prior to 1913, and also the disastrous impact of the act on African peasants. For instance, Morrell (1988) has described the act as a product of the alliance of 'gold and maize,' which the Act of Union, also referred to as the South Africa Act 1909,[25] brought to

[25] This act was passed by the parliament of the UK creating the Union of South Africa.

political power. This is because of the fact that the act was a double-edged sword that aimed to weaken African agricultural enterprise, while simultaneously ensuring a ready supply of cheap labour for the gold mines on the Witwatersrand. In this light, he emphasizes that the piece of legislation was "one of the most important segregation laws of the century" (Morrell, 1988, p. 621). In the same manner, Beavon, writing on the power of mining in influencing urbanisation, is of the view that the profits from companies like De Beers and Barton-Barton were used to construct modern facilities in housing and roads as well as making space for more development in agriculture and other economic sectors (Beavon, 1997, p. 145). Thus for these two, mining initially provided a direct stimulus to the development of commercial agriculture. This enabled Africans, most of whom still had access to land, to produce agricultural products on a commercial scale for colonialist masters to accumulate capital until 1913, when the state responded to increasingly loud calls from mining capital for labour.

It is important to note that Bundy's thesis on the rise and fall of the South African peasantry and the role of the Native Land Act in the processes has recently been challenged by revisionist scholars. They have questioned Bundy's assertions about the extent and uniformity of both the rise and the fall of African agriculturalists prior to and in the aftermath of the act. Some have argued that emphasis on market production fails to highlight the actual organisation of production and the extent to which producers were independent of other forces. For example, William Beinart (1982) has proven that in Pondoland (part of what became the Transkei and now part of the Eastern Cape province), both peasant production and migrant labour expanded simultaneously for South Africans. Thus the rise of migrant labour did not necessarily mean the end of agricultural prosperity. He adds that cattle advances made by labour recruiters to household heads enabled local production to expand and it was only after the 1930s that the decline of market production resulted in total dependence on migrant wages (Beinart, 1982, p. 38).

Moreover, Bundy's postulation that the act decimated African agricultural prosperity has been criticized on the basis that the legislation was not immediately enforceable throughout the Union. As Keegan (1986) has demonstrated, the legislative ideal was proving unattainable especially in the Cape, where peasants

continued to enjoy some land rights. He adds that very few white landowners – particularly in the Transvaal – could afford to convert to wage labour, and many continued to rent land to African tenants and sharecroppers well into the 1940s. Many Africans in the Free State, where the anti-sharecropping provision was enforced with vigour, left, but settled on farms elsewhere, particularly in southern Transvaal. The act thus had a differential impact depending on local circumstances (Keegan, 1986, p. 42).

Although some of these issues raised by revisionist scholars are legitimate and nuance Bundy's thesis, it is important to note that the act clearly signalled the intentions of the Union government to create a dual economy in which Africans were simultaneously depeasantized and proletarianized. No doubt the act removed the means by which many African producers had resisted both incorporation into the migrant labour system of the mines and wage labour on the farms. Moreover, it laid down the principle of land segregation and defined the boundaries of the Native Reserves which, while home to the majority of the population of the Union, covered merely 14% of total land area in 1936. These areas became the basis of the infamous 'homelands' of the apartheid era.

2. Cash crop production and the roots of peasant resistance in colonial Africa

Cash crop production was one of the core pillars of the colonial economies across the African continent. For contemporary Zimbabwe, it helped define the core-periphery relationship that existed between Southern Rhodesia and Britain as the imperial power. Cash crop production was, however, primarily a tool of segregation devised by the settler government to influence the development of profitable colonial agriculture. Authors such as Taringana (2019), demonstrated how cash crops like coffee were reserved for the white settler community while Africans were kept on the fringes as labour reserves. He uses coffee to elaborate the position of cash crop production in 'state craft'.

Scholars such as Arrighi (1967), Phimister (1983) and Rubert (1998) have focused their analysis on tobacco. Rubert's book, *A Most Promising Weed,* offers a more detailed account on the tobacco industry and gives a micro-analysis of

individual farms and worker experiences in the colonial period. His study focuses on the organisation of workers' compounds, gender dynamics and the involvement of juvenile labour on farms. Apart from discussing the internal structures of those industries, these scholars unpack the dynamics that shaped the living conditions and social relations of African peasants/workers (men, women and children) on the farms. Rubert (1998), for instance, highlights that Africans were not passive in their responses to the penetration of European capitalism into Zimbabwe but, on the contrary, helped to shape both the working and living conditions they encountered as they entered wage employment.

Although some sectors of the peasantry were given incentives to produce crops such as maize, rice and wheat for themselves to some extent, mainly from the 1950s onwards, to reduce colonial dependence on imported basic foodstuffs in Mozambique — or were given properties so that they could specialise, as cooperatives, in producing cotton (Pitcher, 1996) — the colonial regime was always hostile to the great majority of peasants. The development of the cotton industry was dominated by white settlers. Indeed, various incentives were put forward which included the establishment of various statutory bodies involved in marketing of what was commonly referred to as 'the white gold'. Pius Nyambara's work opens new perspectives on the settler government's attitude towards cash crop production (Nyambara, 2005). He analyses state policy which aimed at increasing African production of cotton in order to satisfy British industrial needs. He pays particular attention to African farmers' reluctance to enter into cotton production due to the low profitability of the exercise, and domestic food insecurity which often accompanied over-indulgence in cash-crop production. Thus, Nyambara suggests that the needs of the imperial power superseded those of the settler government and when clashes over interests rose, the settler government was forced to concede. Nyambara's study therefore resonates with Isaacman's work on the impact of peasant cotton production, with both stressing that cotton did not only usher nominal benefits to Africans, but also that Africans resisted the coercive hand of the state.

Although not primarily an export crop, the development of the wheat industry followed a similar trajectory. Wheat was considered by the colonial state to be of strategic importance in its plans to establish Southern Rhodesia as a 'white man's

country'. Mafukidze (1973, p. 34) notes that "the state's campaign for wheat self-sufficiency fitted very well into the euphoria of the time, occurring as it did just after the attainment of responsible government status in 1923". Mwatwara (2013; 2015) has also done considerable work on the development of the wheat sector. His view is that the major motivation for wheat production was to meet local demand. In the interest of the state, reliance on outside sources for wheat and wheaten products was regarded as "a stain on the conceptualization of modernity and greatness" espoused by the state (Mwatwara, 2013, p. 18). The colonial state therefore played an important role in promoting wheat as a main crop for the white settler farmer community.

The decision to promote wheat coincided with changes in land ownership and control dynamics because of the passage of the Land Apportionment Act (1930). This act resulted in the shift of prime lands into settler hands, and in the process fundamentally changed, albeit temporarily, wheat prospects (Palmer, 1977). Mwatwara (2013) also discusses the challenges that the wheat industry faced, such as the fact that farmers were scattered throughout the country and producing wheat under different agro-ecological conditions in the major wheat growing areas which were Charter, Chilimanzi, Melsetter, Hartley, Umtali and Mazoe districts. This meant that the development of a wheat variety suitable for the entire country was difficult. Also, relatively high prices for tobacco, beef and maize pushed the state to deprioritize wheat development, not being an export crop, such that, as noted by Machingaidze (1980, p. 16), research was financed solely by growers.

In their separate studies, Mwatwara (2013) and Lorris (1988) demonstrate how the colonial government promoted wheat production after the Unilateral Declaration of Independence of Rhodesia (UDI), in 1965. In 1966, the government, in response to the threat of sanctions after UDI, initiated the Farm Irrigation Fund to help farmers enter into irrigated wheat production. Rhodesian farmers took advantage of the similarity in production technologies between wheat and other crops to shift to wheat. Much of the machinery needed for land preparation, fertilizer and pesticide application, and irrigation of wheat was already available, thereby reducing the time required to switch to wheat production. This did not benefit African peasants in any way. Lorris (undated) reveals how the government also

created strong incentives for (white) commercial farmers to take up wheat production: producer prices for wheat were maintained above import parity prices, and subsidized credit programs were introduced. Response to these incentives was immediate, and between 1965 and 1975, rapid growth in wheat production transformed the nation from a net wheat importer to a net exporter. Although the sector faced myriad challenges, the state continued to intervene.

Serlut (n.d.) writes on the transformation that occurred in agriculture as a major stimulus to economic development. Like Bundy (1972, 1988), he notes a decline in peasant agriculture and the development of a "rural gentry"[26] emerging simultaneously. These middle-class settler farmers, midway between the large commercial farms and smallholdings, were able to significantly increase their earnings by producing cash crops such as coffee, tobacco, sugar, and grapes, which were not labour-intensive and which fetched high prices in urban markets. Animal husbandry also increased, with increasingly large swathes of land being turned over to sheep and cattle farming. Commercial agriculture turned the growth points in rural areas into peri-urban areas as they acted as centres for agricultural produce markets. Road networks were vital links between these farms, imported machinery and their ultimate consumers. Thus, scholars argue that rapid urbanisation, itself a result of the minerals revolution and industrialisation, provided a huge stimulant to agriculturalists' success before contributing to the near total annihilation of the same after the passage of the Native Land Act. Although premised on major imbalances in land tenure and distribution, scholarship widely agreed that South Africa's agrarian sector grew to be one of the best mechanised and capitalised agricultural sectors of sub-Saharan Africa. Karshenas (2001), in an article titled "Agriculture and economic development in Sub-Saharan Africa and Asia", discusses the development of South Africa's agrarian sector in comparison with the performance of agriculture in sub-Saharan Africa and Asia. He argues that South Africa is peculiar in that it had highly mechanised and capitalised agriculture promoted by the collusion of the state and private capital at the expense of the peasantry. According to him, the colonial government created several comfort zones for private investment which included

[26] The rural or landed gentry was a largely historical British social class consisting of landowners who could live entirely from rental income, or at least had a country estate.

security of tenure for land holdings and favourable tax regimes which led to investments in sugar and cereal industries. Karshenas takes a liberal approach, and argues that whatever success that has been made is largely linked to this approach to agriculture. Very little is said about the impact of colonial policy on Africans, the majority of whom were consigned to reserves, later dubbed 'homelands', after the advent of apartheid.

3. Rural protest and peasant resistance during the colonial period: a brief discussion

As indicated earlier in this chapter, the colonial system disenfranchised Africans from their lands and forced the African peasantry into cash crops, among other exploitative measures. Inevitably, Africans responded to the dual land and agrarian policies in different ways. In the case of Mozambique, scholarship indicates that peasants engaged James Scott's 'weapons of the weak' and 'hidden transcripts' to resist and ultimately defy the force of the state through overt and covert means. Scott (1987, 1990) uses the concept 'weapons of the weak', mentioned earlier, to discuss marginalization and agency. Allen and Barbara Isaacman (1983), in their book titled *Mozambique: from colonialism to revolution,* trace the socio-economic circumstances that led to the rise of anti-imperialist sentiments, opposed to forced cotton production and an unforgiving labour policy on the plantations in Mozambique. They indicate that the resistance initially took the form of covert tendencies such as small acts of sabotage, before morphing into a bigger struggle against the colonial system. In another work, Allen Isaacman (1996) writes about peasant resistance to forced labour in the cotton sector. The range of actions taken by peasants included cooking of cotton seeds before sowing to prevent them from germinating, thus demonstrating a refusal to cooperate with the 'masters' of the plantations. In another study, *The Tradition of Resistance in Mozambique: Anti-colonial Activity in the Zambesi Valley 1850-1921*, Allen and Barbara Isaacman (1976) describe other kinds of responses by the peasantry in protest against oppression and the dictates of the colonial regime in rural areas, some of which were armed responses:

> The early colonial period was also marked by a number of armed uprisings by alienated members of the rural population who were unwilling to abandon their traditional lands. These revolts tended to be localised and of extremely short duration. Peasants attacked the immediate symbols of their exploitation, apparently without thought of overthrowing the repressive system. Peasant revolts in the Zambesi, as elsewhere, were amorphous, kaleidoscopic and parochial in character […]. Aside from the specific variations already noted, the localised forms of opposition differed in terms of their goals, strategies and the degree of particularism. Peasant revolts and social banditry were also much more historically and geographically circumscribed than withdrawal and the acts of day-to-day resistance (A. F. Isaacman & Isaacman, 1976, p. 99).

Also in Mozambique, an 1894 revolt by several Ronga chieftaincies protesting increased Portuguese taxation and the interference of Portuguese colonial officials in a succession of disputes set the stage for widespread conflict (A. Isaacman & Isaacman, 1983, p. 24) between locals and the Portuguese.

The Mueda massacre of the Maconde people on June 16, 1960, was also in response to a peasant uprising: an estimated 600 people were shot dead by the Portuguese colonial regime for protesting the arrest of leaders of the Mozambique African National Union (MANU) who were arrested after they came from Dar es Salaam to ask for independence (Cahen, 1998). Independence was the language of the political Manu leaders, but ultimately the mobilisation of the peasantry was for land and autonomy (Adam, 1993; Adam & Dyuti, 1993; Coelho, 1993; Cahen, 1998). These actions helped pave the way for future forms of resistance that would eventually lead the country's liberation struggle and pathway to independence.

The consciousness of the need to fight for autonomy and self-determination was very present within the peasantry. It is, therefore, reasonable to reassert that this awareness made possible the engagement of the peasantry in the nationalist movement of struggle for liberation and national independence. The Mozambican peasantry – as well as workers and students – joined the struggle for independence and liberation, guided by a common ideal of 'freedom of man and lad'. In the new People's Republic of Mozambique, FRELIMO implemented determinant (popular) measures such as the nationalization of land and socialization of the countryside, which allowed for the transformation of rural social relations.

There is a considerable body of academic literature on the collective actions of South African peasants and rural communities in the colonial and apartheid periods, resisting inimical state agrarian policies and oppression as well as fighting the segregationist regime (Bundy, 1972; Beinart & Bundy, 1987; Zondi, 2004; Kepe & Ntsebeza, 2011). Colin Bundy's book, *The Rise and Fall of the South African Peasantry,* is arguably "by far the best known work that tells the story of the rise and decline of black African peasants" (Kepe & Ntsebeza, 2011, p. 6). There is a common ground in literature in the recognition of the political potential among rural and peasant populations in colonial and apartheid South Africa.

Current land struggles and rural agency in South Africa have to be linked to historical processes. Many scholars argue that the Mpondo revolts in rural South Africa represented the strongest statement by rural people against social, economic and political forces that came together to deny them their right to democracy and equality (Kepe & Ntsebeza, 2011, p. 2). On reported occasions, the centre of underground political activity in segregated South Africa shifted from the towns to the countryside (Drew, 2014).

When the apartheid state started to consolidate its policies on the administration of rural Africans in the 1950, resentment that had built up over decades exploded into bellicose uprisings against chiefs who had collaborated with the state between 1954 and 1959 in places like Mpondoland, Zeerust, Skhukhuniland and Ga-Matlala in South Africa (Zondi, 2004, p. 147). Not surprisingly, there is an ongoing fierce rural resistance against an industrial mining project in Xolobeni, northern Mpondoland, today. These contemporary acts of resistance should therefore be located within their proper historical context: historically, peasants have not been passive victims of an adverse policy framework by successive governments (colonial and post-colonial), but have always sought to carve a niche of their own and have sometimes openly sought to overthrow the entire economic and political system.

Similar circumstances occurred in Zimbabwe. In *Peasant consciousness and guerrilla war in Zimbabwe: a comparative study*, Terence Ranger (1985) makes an eloquent explanation on the role of the Zimbabwean peasantry in the liberation struggle, making comparisons between resistance in the country and the experience of armed liberation struggle in Mozambique and the Mau Mau uprising in Kenya.

Peasant consciousness is one of the key concepts raised by Ranger´s work. He argues that the engagement of the peasantry in the process was a struggle to resist working for whites which created a peasant consciousness, which at a later stage took a peasant radical nationalist consciousness.

According to Kriger, "Ranger´s treatment of peasant consciousness is skilful and makes prominent the neglected issue of invisible, informal everyday peasant resistance through Zimbabwe history" (Kriger, 1988, p. 320). Chung affirms that "one of the major tenets of such warfare was to win the support of the people, in this case the Zimbabwean peasantry, so that the guerrilla would merge into the people like 'fish in water'" (2006, p. 78). It was also in the rural areas where, during the liberation war, young guerrilla soldiers consolidated their legitimate status through the violent punishment of 'sell-outs' among the civilian population, in a complex dualism of punishment and protection (Christiansen, 2010).

In Zimbabwe, and given the demographic reality of the liberation struggle, with the peasants constituting an overwhelming majority of the population, the armed struggle required the fullest cooperation of the peasantry if it was to be successful (Chung, 2006, p. 172). The liberation wars, also referred to as Chimurenga - Ndebele and Shona insurrections against colonial administration - were therefore essentially peasant wars induced by the need to reclaim expropriated land from the colonial power.

4. Conclusion

This chapter – whose complexity and importance deserves a doctoral thesis in and of itself – shows the origins of the negativist and precarious representations that still persist in contemporary Africa about the peasantry specifically, and rural populations more broadly. As demonstrated, the colonial regimes in the three countries forcibly transformed the African peasantry into rural labourers for cash crops, thus destroying or denying the rationale traditionally underlying relations with the land and their knowledge systems for food production, hence committing *epistemicide* (Santos & Meneses, 2009). Epistemicide is "the destruction of certain forms of local knowledges and the undermining of others, thus squandering, in the

name of colonialism, the wealth of perspectives within the cultural diversity and multifaceted visions of the world which they produce" (Tavares, 2009, p. 24). As the chapter has also demonstrated, contrary to what is portrayed in Eurocentric literature on precolonial rural African populations, their agricultural knowledge systems exhibited elements of innovation and responsiveness to their socio-economic and environmental realities that belied the backwardness thesis of pre-colonial African agrarian systems. It was the advent of colonial capitalism that disturbed African economic independence by undercutting its productivity as colonial authorities in the three colonies embarked on a systematic process of depeasantisation and proletarianisation. Those that remained on the land were exploited at both production and marketing levels.

The nationalist perspective in the literature recognizes the active agency of the African pre-colonial societies, portraying them as dynamic and diversified. Mazarire (2009), for instance, demonstrates how African peasants were able to acclimatise and conquer their environment through space and time. This literature is critical insofar as it acts as a counter to Afro-pessimism by highlighting the successes of African livestock regimes, such as through ethno-veterinary practices effective in combating livestock diseases in precolonial Africa.

The expropriation of the African peasantry fuelled a system based on the primitive accumulation of capital by incorporating African peasant labour into the world economy, by forced labour schemes such as *chibalo*[27] and setting conditions that created a class of migrant workers. For instance, In Mozambique, the colonial regime appropriated fertile land and subjected the peasantry to forced labour on colonial farms and plantations, turning it into a kind of semi-proletariat, or proletariat in the case of those who were forced to serve as an industrial reserve army for the South African mining industry (Bowen, 2000). As the literature on cash crop production shows, the sector developed on a skewed basis that was decidedly tailored to favour the white sector of colonial societies, fuelling extractive tendencies and white accumulation. Mozambique and Zimbabwe reformed the colonial state in the 1970s and 1980s through a revolutionary process which also dealt with the land

[27] A system of forced labour whereby the colonial administration made peasants work for settlers who owned large estates.

question. What remains evident, as my field research and finds corroborate, is that *land* was, and continues to be, the source of existence in the rural setting: it is a foundation of their cultural, social, economic and political wellbeing. Thus it represented much more than just the mere object of labour and economic production presented by a simplistic, monocultural reading which reduces it to a single-value commodity.

This is not to say that agrarian relations in precolonial Africa were immune from conflict, oppression, exploitation and other problematic aspects among rural Africans. The colonial penetration brought a particular kind of violence and massive expropriation, which caused ruptures in processes which would probably have developed of accumulation from below and class differentiation of a type that would have been distinct. Thus it should be borne in mind that the land tenure systems that characterized post-colonial southern Africa when private capital was encroaching under neoliberal agrarian policies were birthed during the colonial period when the capitalist system was brought in.

CHAPTER FOUR: The land and agrarian questions in contemporary Southern Africa: nationalism, neoliberalism and agrarian capitalism

> Spurred by rapid deregulation and liberalization, the overall trajectory of agrarian change in South Africa over the past two decades has seen a consolidation of the hegemony of large-scale commercial farming and corporate agribusiness within agricultural value chains. Ownership and control have become highly concentrated; high-tech and high-input production systems are focused on lucrative new crops and markets, and employment continues to decline. In a context of constrained domestic demand due to high levels of unemployment and poverty and stagnating growth, (…) both farming and agribusiness capitals are now expanding into African countries (R. Hall & Cousins, 2018, p. 1).

The remnants of the colonial legacy continued, to varying degrees, in the agrarian and land policy of many of post-colonial southern African countries, especially in South Africa, Zimbabwe and Mozambique. This happened even in cases where new post-colonial governments swept to power on the back of promises to reverse colonial policies and their vestiges. In Mozambique, the government nationalized land immediately after independence, but certain vestiges of colonial land and agrarian policy remained unchanged. An example of this was the (re)introduction of the communal villages' (*adeias comunais*) policy – similar to colonial villages (*aldeamentos coloniais*) – by the socialist regime of FRELIMO in the countryside. The colonial villages were established in 1968 by the Portuguese colonial regime and were believed to have been created as a mechanism to monitor and control rural populations, mainly to avoid contact with FRELIMO, then a nationalist revolutionary movement. The majority of communal villages were simply conversions of the old colonial village settlements (Coelho, 1998; Lourenço, 2010; Monjane, 2016; Monjane & Bruna, 2019).

From the production point of view, despite popular (or *populist?*) discourses and the aforementioned measures of the socialist government in Mozambique, the "cooperative and family sector was underestimated, even undermined by the attention paid to the estate sector, as a source of revenues for export and

guaranteeing the supply of cities" (Pacheco & Pereira, 1982, p. 1). There was little regard for the wider transformation of peasants' production, whose importance was secondary (Wuyts, 1985).

The deeply entrenched nature of agrarian capital in South Africa has its roots in the colonial period and, more than a century since the passage of the Native Land Act, successive post-apartheid governments have seemingly failed to dismantle its effects on the black peasantry. Some argue that the apparent collusion between the state and capital has contributed to the situation. Hull and Whittal (2018) trace the tepid response by the South African government in initiating sustainable land reform away from white and private interests. The crux of their argument is that effective land redistribution in South Africa is made difficult by the government's neoliberal approach to business, which is buttressed by a legal framework that ensures the security of tenure for white farmers. Lipton and Simkins (1993) observe that the South African agricultural sector is still modelled along the same dualistic system which is comprised of a predominantly white capitalist sector alongside an indigenous smallholder and largely subsistence sector. In the main, they argue that this dual nature has its foundation in apartheid policies (particularly the Native Land Act of 1913), which advocated the removal of indigenous people from productive agricultural lands and their subsequent coercion onto the white-controlled job market.

In southern Africa, most land reform programs have been sponsored by international financial institutions such as the Agency for International Development of the United States (USAID), the World Bank (WB) and the Department for International Development of the United Kingdom (DFID) with the objective of pushing forward neoliberal ideas for expanding the market economy (Adalima, 2016).

Over the past decade or so, the convergence of global crises in food, energy, finance, and the environment has triggered a quest for land by powerful transnational and national economic actors. These range from large corporations and national governments to private equity funds for fuel and food production. While occurring globally, this has a clear North–South dynamic that echoes the land grabs that underwrote both colonialism and imperialism et al., 2011). Currently, agrarian

neoliberalism is advancing with unprecedented alacrity throughout the African continent, fuelled by representations of land in Africa as, above all else, having an economic value that should be unlocked in financial terms. In other words, this neoliberal view sees land as an investment commodity that should be liberalised and absorbed into the capitalist market, ostensibly to reduce the high levels of malnutrition and rural poverty in Africa. The rise in the prices of maize, soya beans, wheat and rice in recent years has created competition worldwide for land amongst businesses who have been seeking to acquire vast areas in countries where land is considered cheap.

Governments on the continent open to international capital facilitate acquisition and offer legal and tax concessions to prospective and existing investors (GRAIN, 2008, 2016; Brown, 2013). As it had happened in Europe – specifically in England – between the 16th and 18th centuries, when "land had to be liberated from any such obstruction to their productive and profitable use", there has also been "growing pressure to extinguish customary rights that interfered with capitalist accumulation" (Wood, 1998, p. 21). The argument made in various studies is that predominantly subsistence farming, practised by peasant communities in most of rural Africa, does not necessarily offer a way out of poverty (Tenaw, Zahidul, & Parviainen, 2009). Hence, the proponents of the argument contend, in order to respond to current challenges of poverty and food insecurity, agriculture in the 21st century should aim to produce more food and fibre to sustain the growing population (FAO, 2009). Thus, according to them, 'traditional' systems of land tenure that survived colonialism had to be dismantled and replaced by capitalist systems of land ownership and utilisation. Mozambique, for instance, has been one of the countries targeted in the race for land, due to its geographical location[28], fertile land and the efforts of the Mozambican government to attract foreign investment in the agricultural and mining sectors. In recent years, various investment projects for agriculture have been proposed and/or implemented in the country, leading to conflicts over land and the displacement of peasant communities (Wise, 2016).

[28] It is situated on the South-East coast of the African continent and has strategic port infrastructure and flow corridors.

The sectors for which African lands are acquired range from agriculture (food crop production, livestock and animal feed) and forestry to other non-agricultural but nevertheless commercial purposes such as mining, tourism, city building, land speculation, as "in many cases buyers and investors are simply preparing for the next global crisis" (Borras et al., 2011, p. 209). Figure 4 below shows the proportion in each of these sectors on the African continent.

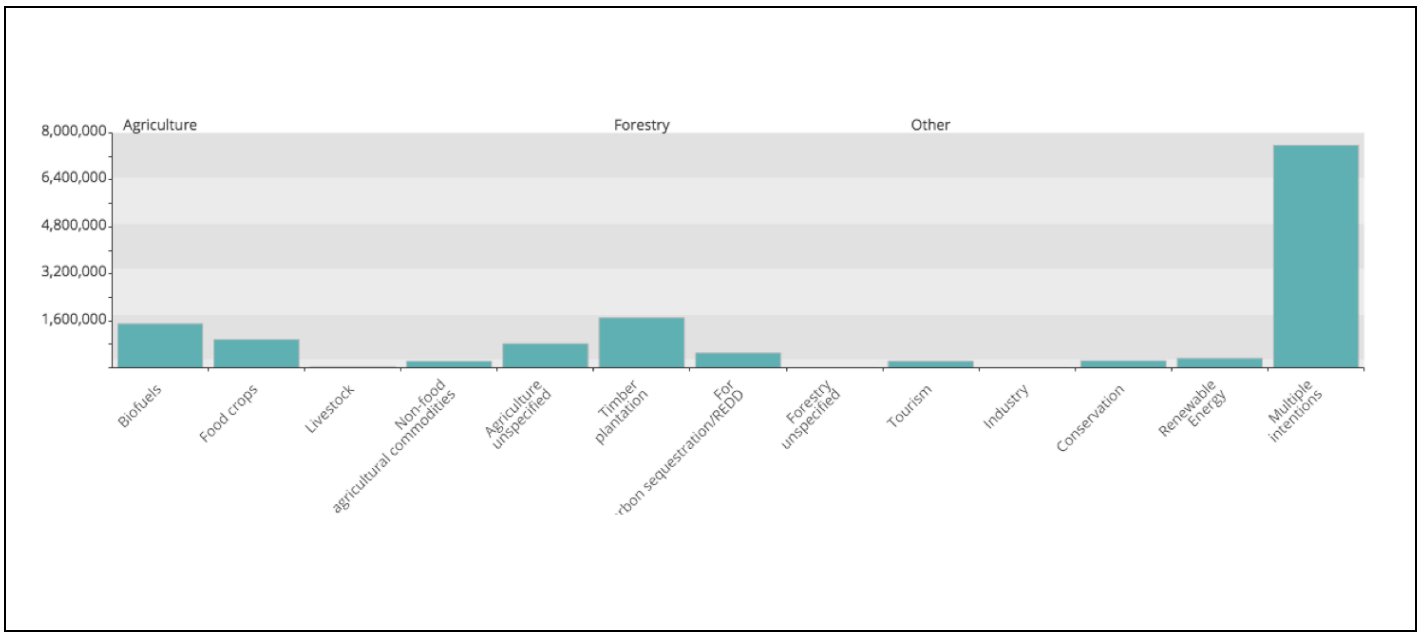


Figure 4: Africa: dynamic overview of land deals. Source: The Land Matrix (website).

1. Land and agrarian policy and the transition to nationalism

Although some actions were taken to redress some social inequalities in the region, the land issue has remained a huge unresolved conundrum in post-independence southern Africa. According to Gregory W. Myers (1994), rural poverty and imbalances in redistributing land were primarily owing to the lack of assertiveness of the post-colonial state in dealing with the land question. The author maintains that the post-colonial state was, due to fears of upsetting international capital, more interested in allocating land to private sector players, leading to the retention of colonial structures and policies, notwithstanding political rhetoric to the

contrary. He further argues that the post-civil war strife over land issues in independent Mozambique undermined efforts at peace and reconstruction, and urges the government to take a bold and transparent trajectory in resolving colonial land imbalances. In essence, this literature emphasizes the fact that the post-colonial state assumed the position of the colonial state in perpetuating and entrenching the hold of private sector minority needs rather than pursuing equitable distribution to the majority.

Goldblatt (2004) chronicles the development of agriculture in the 1990s, arguing that the liberalisation of the economy had a deleterious impact on the farming community. The dismantling of various forms of state support, and reduction of international tariffs on trade left the farming sector exposed to intensive competition. This led to a decline in the number of farmers which, in turn, led to fewer but large commercial farmers, who now engage in intensive farming methods.

Many scholars agree that the legal framework that led to land apportionment along racial lines in apartheid South Africa has remained virtually unaltered, despite the end of apartheid in 1994 and the rhetoric of the state since then. Thus, the limited ownership of land by black South Africans signals the continuity of the colonial and apartheid land deprivation legacy. On a comparative regional note, the work of Ben Cousins and Ian Scoones (2010) interrogates the sustainability of land reform in southern Africa, using Zimbabwe, Namibia and South Africa as case studies. They expand on the theoretical and methodological approaches to studying the viability of agriculture. Key to their study is the centrality of the question of whose interest land reform serves. The terms on which independence was attained or granted, especially for Zimbabwe and South Africa, meant that land redistribution could only be done under the willing buyer willing seller model. For Zimbabwe, this lasted for the first 10 years. Thus, the lack of land reform is not an enigma.

They go further to suggest a holistic approach which includes an analysis of the sustainability of small holder farmers' economic position. They further proffer non-elitist approaches which help shift policy debates away from a narrow, technocratic perspective, often backed by powerful interests, towards a more plural view, one that is more compatible with small-scale, farming-based livelihoods. The crux of such an interpretation suggests that the reality of small-scale farmers and

peasant agriculture has not been served by land reform and class interests of the bourgeoisie class are still quite prevalent.

The work of Ricardo Jacobs (2018a), through the lens of urban history, shapes perspectives on the invasion of agricultural systems into the urban space. His work is unique in that, while it shows the lack of proper redistribution of land, it also captures the dynamism of the urban proletariat as it has diversified into peasant activities in post-colonial, post-apartheid South Africa. Through livestock production, a typical, quintessential peasant activity, he demonstrates that people engage in land occupations for farming activities in urbanized spaces of the city of Cape Town in response to land hunger.

This shift from orthodox land uses has also altered perceptions on urbanisation and the extent to which urban land uses can also include agriculture apart from conventional uses such as housing and basic services. This study also offers perspectives on the extent to which the post-colonial state has allowed Africans to develop dynamic agrarian systems. This helps shape our understanding of multiple livelihoods approaches to land use in post-colonial Africa, which includes the development of an 'urban proletariat with peasant characteristics' and a strong latent demand for urban land for agricultural pursuits (2018a, p. 886). These works resemble a radical Marxist approach towards offsetting an elitist hold on land policies through a class struggle.

Overall, the concept of land restoration appears to be a founding myth of South African democracy, playing a crucial role in the narrative of the new South Africa. The success rates of land reform programmes remains highly alarming as "more than 70% of all South African land reform projects were considered unsuccessful" (Anseeuw & Mathebula, 2008, p. 3). For these scholars, prompt state initiative is needed for the benefit of the historically deprived Africans. Indeed, the given statistics effectively suggest that successive post-apartheid governments have avoided a state-led reform policy, leaving land redistribution at the mercy of market forces.

Andries du Toit (2017) interrogates the reasons for the persistence of rural poverty in post-apartheid South Africa. He exposes the commonality of institutionalised racism and brutal exploitation in the global south as the root cause of such regression. He argues that the post-colonial, post-apartheid state runs the

risk of replicating colonial imbalances by offering a tepid response to the ongoing commercialisation of rural agriculture. He advises delinking from a preoccupation on global value chains and advocates formulating a sound regulatory environment to facilitate land reform backed by solid government support systems. The current alienation of the informal sector from the mainstream economy and planning, he predicts, will perpetuate the current economic imbalances.

2. Nationalist/socialist and pro-neoliberal approaches

Academic debates about state options regarding agrarian policy in the period immediately after independence in southern Africa, particularly Mozambique, are dominated by a polemic between neoliberal scholarship and nationalist scholarship. The former interrogates the rationale of the post-colonial socialist phase and how it has supposedly failed to yield meaningful results as far as addressing inequitable resource distribution. They argue that the socialist framework constricted the Mozambican economy and, instead of redistributing resources, only transferred them from whites into the hands of a small black elite class that was inefficient and largely corrupt. This anti-socialist school emphasizes the presence of a misguided state which failed from the outset to have an appreciation of the complexities of land and productive capacity imbalances created by the colonial period. The nationalist approach, on the other hand, supports state policy and gives agency to the plight of rural folk.

What is incontrovertible, however, is that the post-colonial states were immediately confronted by the land and agricultural questions, which needed immediate redress at the attainment of independence. In Mozambique, South Africa and Zimbabwe, to varying degrees, the state became entangled with foreign capital and neglected the land and agrarian questions which had been the rallying point for independence. For Zimbabwe, however, state inaction during the first decade was largely attributable to the terms of the Lancaster House Agreement which stipulated that no compulsory land redistribution could be undertaken within the first 10 years of independence.

Some scholars, writing on the Mozambican situation, argue that the state was either oblivious to the needs of its people or simply chose to ignore them. Bowen (2000) and Tanner (2012) state that the Mozambican government embarked on a state-led land policy which was aligned to Marxist ideology. The socialist ideology was appealing in terms of rhetoric that promised to reverse the colonial legacy as far as promising equitable access to resources, which was the major concern for the indigenous majority at independence. Influenced by developments in the Soviet Union but also by Julius Nyerere in Tanzania, the government set aside fertile land for collectivised farms. These scholars' work provides a platform through which state policies could be critiqued from an ideological point of view. Critics of this approach lay the 'blame' on the socialist slant as having led to failures to resolve the land and agrarian question.

Filipe and Norfolk (2007) discuss the disadvantaged nature of the peasant population in the Mozambican post-colonial state. Drawing on interviews with peasants, they conclude that whatever policies the government has espoused in contemporary Mozambican agriculture, they have come at the expense of peasants' livelihoods. This sector's access to fertile land is constantly dwindling as national and foreign investors are granted priority on land. Land pressure is becoming an evident reality in both urban and rural areas and there is a need for government to redress distribution patterns which stem back from the liberal period. Writing from a nationalist viewpoint, these two emphasise the failure of the government to shelter its people, particularly peasants, from a new force of foreign expansion and influence.

The work of O' Laughlin (2002) provides insights into the ripple effects of the impacts of colonial legacies on livelihoods in the post-colonial state of Mozambique. It traces the implications of present spatial differentiation and variations in livelihoods as embodied in "the historical process of proletarianisation grounded in violent and repressive regimes of forced labour during the colonial period". More precisely, "forced labour – and resistance to it – shaped the ways in which labour and agricultural commodity markets worked and developed". According to her, the roots of rural poverty are found in the proletarisation of the peasantry and the commodification of labour during the colonial period, and as long as that process has not been reversed, the plight of the peasant shall remain unchanged. Overall,

O' Laughlin's work demonstrates the continued marginalisation of the rural folks, and the unfulfilled promise of economic emancipation that came with independence. In the absence of solid interventions, rural poverty will remain at the core of the problems bedevilling Mozambique even in the wake of attempts by peasants themselves to alleviate poverty through multiple livelihoods. State interventions are thus central to addressing land imbalances and to the impending desire to alleviate rural poverty.

The post-colonial states' failure to address imbalances is also highlighted by Marc Wuyts (1996), who traces the development of the peasant sector from the socialist period to the adoption of structural adjustment programs (SAPs) in 1983. Here, the SAPs are used as an analytical prism through which budgetary and fiscal failures in assisting the peasant agricultural sector are perpetuating rural poverty. This marginalization of peasants in resource allocation is highlighted also in an earlier work and cited as the main cause of the collapse of central planning for the economy and agriculture (Wuyts, 1985, p. 180). He argues that the dual parallel economy which the post-colonial state unfortunately perpetuated led to the state depending on the estate sector for the purchase of food crops during the war while the peasant sector was left to fend for itself (Wuyts, 1996, p. 728). Generally, these works argue that failure to address the agrarian question hinges solely on the inability of the post-colonial state to establish itself as a formidable and dynamic force through which flawless policies could be etched to support the agricultural sector. Wuyts insists that the Mozambican government has failed to initiate peasant inclusive policies, thus peasants have been pushed to the periphery of the country's economy, notwithstanding the shift away from socialism towards neoliberalism.

Nel and Rogerson (2005) offer a detailed account of the socialist phase, and like fellow neoliberal scholars, attack the very fundamentals of the phase of attempted socialism. They focus on the villagization process and make an exposition of the political context within which these villages were created. They argue that the villagization programme was more politically oriented than it was an economic emancipation programme, hence the continuation of rural poverty after their establishment. Nel and Rogerson's views resonate with Fitzpatrick (1981), who argues that low productivity in the rural sector during the early years of

independence was a reflection of the state's inability to attract enough investors to maintain an efficient capitalist system.

However, Fitzpatrick (1981) traces the source of the problem to the dual nature of agriculture in the colonial period. Despite its diversified nature, the colonial agriculture sector was rigged against indigenous groups who were pushed to the fringes of export-oriented agriculture and reduced merely to cheap labourers. Thus, the dual economy that was inherited by the post-colonial government left peasants in a tenuous situation in which their livelihoods could only be safeguarded through a transformation of the system that would effectively empower peasants. In his view, the current problems facing the sector are a direct result of the impact of colonialism. A combination of factors, such as the flight of foreign capital due to government socialist rhetoric immediately after independence and natural disasters, did not make the situation any better for the country. He argues that the productive 'success' of agriculture in the colonial period was as a result of the thrift of capitalism which became elusive in the post-colonial period because of the move towards socialism. Thus his work goes beyond both the nationalist and neoliberal vantage points. He criticises colonial capitalism for laying the foundation of peasant poverty (even when production figures were increasing), but also criticises the post-colonial government for embarking on a socialist programme that not only reversed agricultural productivity, but also left the peasants' poverty unaddressed.

Chirsty Lorgen (2000) examines the villagization processes in the post-colonial states of Ethiopia, Mozambique and Tanzania, implemented (except Ethiopia) under various shades of socialist policies which were ostensibly aimed at reversing the imbalances created by colonialism. She takes a multifaceted approach to explaining the rationale behind these policies, away from the simplistic and oft-hyped political and economic factors, to include a mix of military and administrative factors. While also noting the peculiarities and nuances in individual cases, she makes generalised and universal conclusions that villagisation failed to improve agricultural efficiency and output in agriculture. This, she contends, was a result of the state's paternalistic, prescriptive and overbearing policy framework that did not take into cognisance sensitivities and preferences of rural dwellers. Vines (1991, p. 114) makes a similar argument, asserting that "(t)he issue that really lies at the heart of the

villagisation policies is that they needed to be implemented with sensitivity, especially in respect of geographical, regional and traditional structures and variations". These scholars therefore reveal a serious flaw in the manner in which the land and agrarian questions were handled. Their implicit argument is that the trends of land policies in the post-colonial state have not yielded enough to allow adequate peasant participation. In the same vein, Otto Roesch (1992) critiques nationalist historiography on collectivisation and peasant responses by interrogating the so-called empowerment policies that came with socialist policies in Mozambique. He argues that, far from emancipating peasants from the yoke of colonial capitalism, collectivisation was merely a different form of peasant economic emancipation at the hands of the new post-colonial government.

With the 'failure' of the socialist phase, literature has thus become inclined to suggest that perhaps neoliberal approaches to land and agricultural questions were the key to solving the shortfalls of post-colonial agriculture and land redistribution. More precisely, Tanner and Norfolk (2007; 2012) are inclined to pro-neoliberal approaches to land ownership, putting emphasis on private land tenure and the participation of the private sector as the panacea to the problems in agriculture. Tanner's works are influenced by his ties with the Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO); hence the heavy inclination towards promoting a neo-liberal approach to agricultural policy which itself is the hallmark of Western linked multilateral organisations. Along with Norfolk, Tanner prescribes rapid formalisation of privatisation for rural land and argues that this is the key to alleviating rural poverty through the provision of security of tenure through private ownership (Norfolk & Tanner, 2007). The two thus advocate that government should increase private sector participation in advancing the formalisation and privatisation of land through the involvement of non-state actors, such as NGOs and private investors. Similarly, Quadros (n.d.), uses the legal framework as an analytical lens to delineate the problems associated with 'traditional' methods of land tenure and ownership. No doubt influenced by the neoliberal school, he advocates the collaborative efforts of the government and the private sector as the panacea to land imbalances, alleviation of rural poverty and attainment of food security. Thus, he views the private sector as a key player in complementing government through technical service provision in

areas such as surveying and research into sustainable land uses. Simon Hull and Jennifer Whittal (2018) also advance the adoption of liberal land policies. These perspectives view socialist-inclined policies and welfarist agrarian policies as having been monumental failures in addressing the colonial legacy of land and agrarian imbalances.

Bridget O'Laughlin (1996) first focuses on the deep-seated structural problems bedevilling Mozambican agriculture at independence, particularly the progressive proletarianisation of peasants during the colonial period, but then joins neoliberal scholarship by challenging the ideological underpinnings of the collectivization policy. Noting the policy's failure to increase productivity on the land and the continued poverty that pervades rural Mozambique after 1975, she argues that the state appeared oblivious of the extent to which wage labour had coexisted with subsistence agriculture. She maintains that the dislocation of dual production processes, particularly the destruction of individual or even collective enterprise, by the FRELIMO government in favour of a homogeneous subsistence-oriented peasantry, marked the beginning of problems in the agricultural sector. She maintains that "both FRELIMO and its traditionalist critics have looked at agrarian class structure through a divided glass which allowed neither to understand the complex interdependence between off-farm employment, smallholder production and large-scale agricultural enterprises (1996, p. 34). Subsistence farming was guided through collectivised farms as a means through which food self-sufficiency could be achieved, in a process which Lunstrum (2008, p. 340) calls, "socializing the countryside."

Some scholars (Bowen, 2000; Pitcher, 2002) link agricultural failure in the immediate post-colonial period to the inherent ideological problems associated with socialism. They point to the economic retardation that was experienced in Mozambique as a consequence of the failures of socialism. These failures, Bowen and Pitcher argue, filliped the government of Mozambique to later embrace structural adjustment policies within years of the attainment of independence. The government adopted neoliberal policies known as the Economic Rehabilitation Program, which informed the liberalisation of trade, currency devaluation, and elimination of subsidies and price controls in agriculture, to promote the private sector (Bowen, 2000; Pitcher, 2002).

Further contributing to the neoliberal thinking, Locke (2014) offers a critical examination of the problems associated with 'traditional' customary laws in land ownership and tenure-constricted productivity. He further argues that the advent of structural adjustment, which removed restrictions on land occupation by small holder farmers through customary laws, should have marked a new beginning in increasing productivity and profitability. Like Tanner (2012) and others, he advocates the involvement of the private sector through donors in accelerating the formalisation process of land registration by small scale farmers. The private sector is viewed as the answer to restraints on innovation and through its engagement, agriculture would be boosted significantly. Locke links land titles closely to productivity and recommends security of tenure as a galvanising force for accelerated peasant participation in agriculture, which would boost production and contribute to poverty alleviation (Locke, 2014).

Although they raise important points about the failures of socialist policies in Mozambique and in Africa more generally, the neoliberal strand does not, however, give a complete picture about the impact of private capital on redressing colonial imbalances in terms of land ownership, tenure and utilisation. In fact, while these scholars correctly point to the failure of socialist policies, the majority of them conveniently ignore the fact that the colonial system, as exploitative towards the African peasantry as it was, was based on private (capitalist) agricultural enterprise. More importantly, they also do not mention the effect of capital flight – and other acts of sabotage by vanquished white capital – during the first few years of independence as having contributed to peasant poverty. This explains why, even after the adoption of structural adjustment, itself a neoliberal turn after the end of socialist experiments, conflicts over land persisted and rural poverty continued. Oliveira (2018) has stated that land conflicts around mega-investments have been a result of a continuous process of socio-cultural displacement of the rural communities of Mozambique, who are forcibly incorporated into state logics of modernization incongruent with their own dynamics of occupation and land use. The neo-liberal approach in the post-civil war period and the subsequent collusion between state and capital may thus be viewed as the main cause for land pressure disputes in post-colonial Mozambique.

The above arguments against neoliberal scholarship have been supported by Hofmann (2013). She argues that, after the adoption of structural adjustment, peasants have not been able to contribute to their own community development. She further contends that post-colonial Mozambique has potential for conflict between peasants and the private sector over land as the former remain marginalised in the development of agriculture. Hofmann also exposes collusion between state and private sector in dictating land use and land rights; peasants were generally land insecure and this contributed to enhanced poverty.

The deeply entrenched nature of foreign capital still haunts the development of sustainable agriculture, especially among peasants. Darlene Miller, Richard Saunders and Olajide Oloyede (2008) explore the contribution of the private sector to the development of the entire south African economy, emphasizing the role of the private sector. They further juxtapose developments in South Africa against indigenisation policies of Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe. In this light, they argue that the progress in the agricultural sector is closely tied to the promotion of private sector participation, especially the white-led commercial agricultural sector. They note that while the white commercial sector has made significant contributions to agricultural output and hence increased revenue for these countries, the plight of the peasantry has remained unresolved. This matter is taken up by Jha, Moyo and Yeros (2012), who make the point that government failure to grant land rights to peasants during both the socialist period and the ensuing structural adjustment left peasants in a tenuous economic position.

3. Political instrumentalization of the land question

Perhaps the most far reaching and poignant aspect of the land question in post-colonial Africa has been the manner in which it has been hijacked by politicians for political expediency. Quite often, land has been viewed first and foremost as a political tool rather than an economic asset. Political parties have made land issue their rallying point. In South Africa, for instance, the land redistribution process has consistently and repeatedly been raised by the ruling party rhetorically and as a tool to gain political mileage in a populist move by the ANC. In practical terms, South Africa

has still not yet redistributed land to colonially marginalised African groups, despite promising to do so on the eve of every national election. Scholars and observers argue that the tepid nature of land reform initiated by the ANC has led to the rise of radical elements moving towards land reform in South Africa. For instance, Anseeuw and Mathebula (2008) trace the formation of the Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF) in 2013, and its adoption of left wing ideas concerning the appropriation of land without compensation - the unfinished business of the anti-apartheid movement. The EFF has been riding on the absence of a genuinely nationalist approach to the land and agrarian reform agenda. The party, led by Julius Malema, has challenged the ANC government's neoliberal approach to land, and called for "effective illegal occupation of white land", arguing that the whites "cannot claim legit land ownership" in the context of historical African land loss (Anseeuw and Mathebula 2008, p.10). The party has presented a new model of radicalised of land reform ideology with great potential for affecting South African land reform through its seemingly pro-poor inclination. Aliber and Mokoena (2003) view the state of affairs as a dilemma for the ANC government in trying to fulfil a dual mandate of food security and redistribution. Destabilizing the commercial (and largely white-dominated) sector has been viewed as politically correct yet economically suicidal (Aliber and Mokoena 2003, p.34). In this regard, the Zimbabwean example has often been cited by scholars and politicians as an example of a situation in which the historical imbalance was addressed. The fact that South Africa has the most unbalanced land ownership between whites and blacks in the region and yet, paradoxically, is also the only country in the SADC region with a self-sustaining agricultural system has posed a conundrum for many. For Botha (2013) and O'Laughlin *et al*. (2013), the root cause for this success goes beyond the entrenched nature of foreign capital; it is a result of many historical linkages between South Africa and the rest of the region, in particular in policies that encourage economic interdependency and a demand for migrant labourers, especially for mining.

In Mozambique, the issue of politicization of the land and the agrarian issue is broader and older. During the civil war, the countryside was one of the most important spaces of political polarization and the peasantry was thus viewed as valuable political capital. After the signing of the 1994 ceasefire between the ruling

FRELIMO party and the opposition RENAMO, land became an important political asset, and officials from either side sought to accumulate as much land as they could, often at the expense of peasants. As Eléusio Filipe and Simon Norfolk (2017, p. 2) have stated "(a)n early feature of the transition was the rapid acquisition of large land concessions by the Mozambican political elite, including FRELIMO party officials, former FRELIMO and RENAMO army commanders and government officials". This point was also buttressed by Tanner (2012, p. 2), who argued that land acquisition by the ruling elites and their minions had become a subject of much concern in the country by the mid-1990s, as was also happening throughout Africa. In order to serve these narrow political interests, local communities would be evicted from their ancestral homelands to pave way for new 'settlers'. Newspapers such as Notícias, Media Fax, Savana and Domingo reported that large land areas in Maputo, Gaza, Nampula and Zambézia provinces "were being granted to politicians, their family members and partners, and to foreign investors", precipitating conflicts with locals who had always viewed the land as their God-given heritage (Tanner 2012, p. 3.)

As early as the mid to late 1970s, the ruling FRELIMO party used the villagization policy not only to achieve the socialist ideals it purported to follow, but also to ensure it could control peasants. Sérgio Chichava (2013) has demonstrated that villages were established to ensure that the party could develop a firm grip on rural lives socially, politically and economically. The party would then be the paternal figure with peasants merely beneficiaries (and victims) of state patronage. This way, the opposition RENAMO would not be able to penetrate the rural dwellers, who constitute an important political constituency in the body politic of Mozambique.

Regarding Zimbabwe, there can be no doubt that the land issue was used more as a political tool than an economic one. Indeed, the Fast Track Land Reform Programme (FTLRP) that the ZANU (PF) government embarked on at the turn of the century bears testimony to the extent to which the economy was somehow sacrificed at the altar of political expediency. Epistemologies and discourses over the land and agrarian questions in Zimbabwe have become hinged on politics as a salient typology that covers a broad spectrum of issues surrounding the important nature of land and agriculture. As such, any discussion (academic or otherwise) of this topic has invariably become highly politicised and emotive. For Alexander (2007), the land and

agrarian discourse has evolved into an acrimonious issue involving race and class, with one group seeking to perpetuate its privileged position while the other seeks to underline its political sovereignty. These struggles stretch from the First Chimurenga during the late 1800s to the formation of nationalist movements in the period after the second liberation war and the waging of the successful Second Chimurenga in the 1970s and, finally, the FTLRP which was code named the Third Chimurenga, or more casually *'Hondo yeminda'* (the War for Land).

There have also been debates about the role of the state and peasants in the land occupations and the subsequent FTLRP. Sachikonye (2003) and Bond (2003) view the land invasions of the late 1990s as "spontaneous, and thus not orchestrated or directed by state institutions", but views the FTLRP as a state-led self-preservation act. In this regard, he describes it as a revolution from above. For Moore (2003, p. 8) the land reform alongside election slogans from the year 2000 were attempts to "rebuild a fading hegemonic project." Echoing a similar observation, Helliker et al (2008, p. 18) described the land reform as an attempt by ZANU PF "to solidify its external and internal sovereignty". These authors, however, do not take away agency from ordinary Zimbabweans. They note that there were also some "clear signs of voluntarism and spontaneity in the patterns of the physical movements between the communal lands and occupied farms" (Kirk et al., 2008, p. 18) which involved a wide spectrum of individuals from different walks of life.

4. Peasant participation in Zimbabwe Land Reform

Mlambo (2005) validates the centrality of the peasant constituency in the post-independence period by tracing their grievances over the land question from the colonial period. In this manner they became a critical factor in fomenting a revolutionary environment in the 1990s. Sam Moyo's work, without doubt, also places emphasis on peasant developments in the post-colonial period and tentatively links them to class struggle. Moyo's works thus seeks to portray the land reform programme as a people's agenda to which the state responded positively. Moyo and Yeros (2005b) demonstrate that demand for land by the peasantry always existed in the post-colonial period as shown by their sporadic land occupations in the 1990s.

Earlier land reform in the first two decades of independence since 1980 "was exceedingly limited and largely insignificant as a strategy not only for historical redress but also for poverty alleviation. The main problem associated with this analysis is that it ignores the fact that the FTLRP had a huge political dimension to it, to the extent that the state used it for self-preservation and also as a form of politics of patronage to reward its supporters and the elite while simultaneously punishing its opponents. As already noted, these factors were raised more poignantly by neoliberal and revisionist scholarship.

Moreover, Pilossof (2016, p.18), provides quantitative evidence to demonstrate that, given the numbers of commercial transfers that took place between 1980 and 2000, the Zimbabwean government had not been as committed to land reform. He suggests that this could be explained in part by the relationship between white capital and the black elite (Pilossof 2016). Moyo and Yeros (2005b) and Moyo and Tsikata (2015) demonstrate the failure of the government to initiate satisfactory reform. They address the agrarian question in a new form of land grab which manifests in the form of neo-colonialism which they call the new scramble. In this manner, they contend that African governments have failed to grant land rights to peasants and continue to play second fiddle to foreign capital. Peasant participation became radicalised to reverse the reinvasion of imperialist forces which manifested in the radical land reform (Moyo & Yeros, 2007). Hence, the peasantry is portrayed as the heart and soul of a successful revolution. Although the authors argue that the revolution was incomplete, they amply demonstrate the powerful force of the peasants as the major stimulant which prompted mass land invasions which, in turn, forced the government to mutate into a radicalised state which would reject neoliberal orthodoxy.

5. Gender dynamics in agrarian neoliberalism

In analysing the land question, Locke (2014) includes women who are considered among the most marginalised to the extent that they were not given land rights during the reform programme. Heidi Gengenbach (1998) extensively discusses the plight of women in their pursuit of access to land in a study based on a gendered

cultural and historical perspective in his study of conflicts over land in the Magude district in Mozambique. The study explores intensified conflicts over land among women and proffers a dynamic appreciation of the cause and effect of conflicts among women who, in this case, struggle to retain their traditional role of sentinels over communal agriculture. He notes that although customary rights offer equal opportunity for occupation, patriarchal traits have continually undermined women's access to land and women who have acquired land are constantly under threat. In this way, formalisation of land rights as advanced by Tanner (2012) is critical in ensuring women's participation through security of tenure. This is particularly important when considering that women constitute the majority of the peasantry in Africa generally. Thus, any reform and/or empowerment process that is not gender sensitive is sure to leave the majority of peasants out.

In a specific case study based project, Patience Mutopo (2011) uses the displacement of newly settled farmers at Nuanetsi Ranch in Mwenezi in Zimbabwe as an analytical prism to make broader arguments about the impact of patriarchy on land and agriculture in the current neoliberal era. Mutopo's study neatly dovetails with Bridget O'Laughlin's study on southern African gender dynamics as they affect land and agrarian development. O'Laughlin (2017) uses a similar case study to explore the nexus amongst HIV/AIDS, Mwenezi and agricultural development, to expose the extent to which women have been affected adversely by marginalisation and a weak legal framework which does little to protect them. Again, it is quite clear from her study that if rural women are not emancipated, then any empowerment programmes for peasants will not be successful.

For the three countries, Mozambique, South Africa and Zimbabwe, some advancement has been witnessed on the legal aspects of protecting women, but the cultural and social framework tends to override the legal insofar as women's access to land is concerned.

6. Manifestations of neoliberalism in Southern Africa

The relationship between the processes of contemporary land grabbing and the classical agrarian question is increasingly becoming a subject of great scholarly

interest, and of burning political importance (Levien, 2013). Issa Shivji (2019) argues that, in order to understand the current wave of land concentration, privatization and the penetration of capital into the countryside in Africa, there is a need to trace the process or trajectory of capitalist accumulation on the continent. First, when the African continent came under control of the centers of capitalism from the 15th century with the slave trade, the continent was progressively depopulated. This was followed by a phase of the so-called legitimate trade, which itself aggravated the extent of European domination and primitive accumulation in Africa (Shivji, 2019).

The process of primitive accumulation continued, for example, by evicting the peasantry from the land for white settlers, creating labour reserves, and introducing peasant production into commercial circuits with intense exploitation of peasant labour (see Chapter Three). The current dynamics of capital accumulation through land concentration and land privatization is a continuation of a longer process of the development of global capitalism by grabbing African resources and labour (Monjane, 2017a; Shivji, 2019). We are therefore witnessing a new scramble for Africa (Moyo, Jha, & Yeros, 2019), translated into a grab of land, water and mineral resources though one, some or all of the following processes combined: accumulation by dispossession (Harvey, 2003), accumulation by displacement (Araghi, 2009) or accumulation through encroachment (Patnaik & Moyo, 2011). Thus, land grabbing is not a new phenomenon in Africa. In fact, this process experienced a "brief" interregnum with respect to usurpations carried out by foreign actors, but internally it continued, and local elites became involved in these dynamics.

Neoliberalism is the dominant political and economic arrangement and structure that favours markets and grants them more freedom. It is identified as a political and economic ideology associated with globalization and the rise of financial capitalism. It is systematically attached to developments across contemporary capitalism that have been underpinned by, although not to be reduced to, what has been termed financialization (Fine & Hall, 2012; Flew, 2014). Embodied in structural adjustment programmes, neoliberalism "has reinforced and deepened the post-war trend of incorporation of the peasantry into the sphere of commodity production at the same time as it has marginalized it", (Moyo & Yeros, 2005b, p. 18).

Agrarian neoliberalism is the current dynamics of penetration of capital into the countryside, with neoliberal characteristics, combined with the process of financialization of the agricultural sector, co-optation, and instrumentalization of state institutions to foster legal frameworks that benefit capital and exclude the peasantry. This is the new phase of agrarian capitalism, manifesting itself with varying degrees of populism (mostly applied by those who fight it) and authoritarianism (applied by those who propose and defend it).

All across southern Africa, governance and management of key sectors such as mining, agriculture, energy, finance, water, electricity and health are driven by a neoliberal compass. The dominant policy framework in Southern Africa can, therefore, be described as neoliberal. Despite differences, the common elements contain all the hallmarks of neoliberalism such as privatization, fiscal austerity, weakening of labour and environmental protection, financialization of the economy and a general opening of the economy to global corporations (Wesso, 2018). In South Africa, for instance, the combination of the structure of the economy inherited at the end of apartheid with neoliberal economic policies adopted by the post-apartheid state after 1994 has limited the possibility of a more progressive transformation of the economy and society (Bennie & Satgoor, 2018; R. Hall & Cousins, 2018). It is in the context of neoliberal policies – willing buyer, willing seller – that radical land and agrarian reform is being obstructed in South Africa, which exacerbates social and economic inequalities in the country, and it is in this context that almost all productive lands in Zimbabwe were in the hands of a few white farmers for two decades before the FTLRP of the early 2000s. Developments in Zimbabwe since 2017 have, however, seen a return to neoliberalism under the "Zimbabwe is open to business" mantra in which former white farmers have been promised compensation, and urban and per-urban land placed into the hands of private land barons.

Thus, some scholars argue that neoliberalism today perseveres by default despite what appeared to have been its ideological defeat earlier (Moyo, 2008). In recent times, the agrarian sector has been undergoing crucial neoliberal transformations in southern Africa. Capital penetration is reportedly continuously expanding in the countryside, suffocating the peasantry, with the intention of commodifying the entire agricultural sector in Africa.

Neoliberal agrarian transformation has been characterized primarily by policy formulations at both regional and national levels that are primarily pushing for large-scale commercial agriculture, fragmented and excessive individual property rights and foreign direct investments (Nyambura, 2015). This might lead to – as it is already happening in some countries – the criminalization of peasant agriculture, prohibiting saving and exchange seeds among peasants (Monjane, 2019a, p. 3).

Laura German et al (2016) attack the fundamental basis of neoliberal policies of private investment as a means through which the post-colonial state can address challenges in agriculture. They argue that asymmetries that develop from power matrices adversely affect the redistributive power of intended poverty alleviation goals. As such, the accumulation of private capital has failed to act as an engine towards the development of the rural agrarian sector. Rural communities were in a situation where they failed to negotiate and leverage their position using land rights, leaving them vulnerable to exploitation by private players. This is further evidence of failure by the government to create a prohibitive environment against exploitation of rural folk. The government, instead, has created a favourable investment climate for private capital at the expense of the rural majority who often do not have much bargaining power to benefit from such circumstances. In essence, as German et al (2016) have put it,

> For Mozambique, these findings highlight how the government's actions to allocate land to industrial-scale business models directly undermine the objectives of the National Land Policy, "the creation of the conditions for family farming to develop and grow without lacking land', and "the promotion of private investment in ways that do not harm local interests (German et al., 2016, p. 13)

According to Carlos Nuno Castel-Branco, the dominant political economy of neoliberal Mozambique is focused on three fundamental and interlinked processes, namely: (1) the maximisation of inflows of foreign capital without political conditionality; (2) the development of linkages between these capital inflows and the domestic process of accumulation and the formation of national capitalist classes; and (3) the reproduction of a labour system in which the workforce and the peasantry are remunerated at below their social cost of subsistence (Castel-Branco, 2014, p. 27).

Advancing at unprecedented speed throughout the region, agrarian neoliberalism is in part fuelled by representations of land in Africa generally as having exclusively economic value. In other words, the representations are underlined by the notion that land is an investment commodity that should be liberalised and absorbed into the capitalist market, ostensibly in order to reduce the high levels of malnutrition and rural poverty in the African continent.

Africa is a sleeping giant with millions of small-scale food producers, the majority of whom produce with few external inputs or none at all. As I assert in another work (Monjane, 2019a, p. 3), "Pushing them [African peasants] into a commodified food production system translates into billions of dollars for seeds and other inputs accruing to industries at the expense of losing peasant knowledge, genetic diversity and the exclusion of many producers."

7. Agrarian authoritarianism and populism

As alluded to earlier in this chapter, what seems to be a common ground among political and state elites in southern Africa is the push for neoliberal agendas in various sectors and applying populist strategies in authoritarian ways. There has been an increase in reactionary politics in some societal sectors in the region, especially within political parties and certain pro-status-quo NGOs. Although those reactionary politics are yet to be scrutinized to reveal their specificities in relation to those unfolding from elsewhere in the world, they clearly resort to populism and authoritarianism to impose or influence perspectives to promote the neoliberal agenda.

The most recent situations of authoritarian populism in southern Africa – outside the electoral forum – occur most expressively when it comes to precisely promoting neoliberal values: "Neoliberalism has become so widespread and influential, and so deeply intermingled with critical aspects of life, that it can be difficult to assess its nature and historical importance" (Saad-Filho & Johnston, 2005, p. 1). Yet, the shift to neoliberalism in southern Africa has often driven an increasingly hostile attitude towards popular movements, including mobilising public opinion against civil society. Agrarian movements – and rural constituencies more generally

– have been, in some instances, the major victims of that hostility, while they were also the same group that objected to authoritarian agrarian capitalism the most, while at times using "progressive" (agrarian) populism.

Generally, authoritarian populism "frequently circumvents, eviscerates or captures democratic institutions, even as it uses them to legitimate its dominance, centralise power and crush or severely limit dissent" (Scoones et al., 2018, p. 3). Populism in southern Africa is generally associated with liberation movements that secured political power as governments. They are said to conveniently use a populist stand as a means to legitimise their power by appealing to the continued struggle against foreign domination and thereby market themselves as the only true alternative for a brighter future. When contested politically, they use populist discourses and accuse opponents of being remote-controlled agents of imperialism seeking regime change as instruments of foreign agendas (Melber, 2018). Yet, paradoxically, the same liberation movements are at the forefront of forging alliances with international capital, often also using populist rhetoric to convince the public of the need for lofty foreign investment in the name of 'development'.

Populism is largely a reaction to social dislocation tied to processes of neoliberal globalisation (Hadiz & Chryssogelos, 2017) and it raises awkward questions about modern forms of democracy (Panizza, 2005). In relation to the rural world - the agrarian and peasant question - authoritarian populism takes nuanced and specific forms and modes, depending on the political, historical and contextual imperatives of and from the regions where it unfolds. There are, however, common grounds, as already demonstrated (Scoones et al., 2018). In a study on Mozambique, Monjane and Bruna (2019) show that varying degrees of authoritarianism and populism, although not always coinciding, have been intrinsic to the imposition of agrarian policies. Generally, this applies to South Africa. This is associated with the current rising of right-wing authoritarian and reactionary populism in southern Africa, "which has mostly been manifesting itself through reactionary nationalist, religious, racist, and antifeminist movements, as well as rapid processes of the undermining of political systems, accompanied by 'shrinking spaces' for civil society actors" (RLS, 2019, p. 2). Criminalisation of grassroots leaders, especially defenders of land rights, is also rising in the region.

Domestic elites and governments have been playing a role as partners, intermediaries and beneficiaries in land grabbing developments in southern Africa. Large-scale land acquisition in southern Africa is generally facilitated by state institutions and state-connected elites, together and individually. (Hall, 2011; Manda, Tallontire, & Dougill, 2019). It is no coincidence that in Mozambique the state positioned itself in favour of capital when it undemocratically and unilaterally imposed the implementation of a mega-agricultural development program, ProSAVANA, one of the case studies of this work. (Monjane & Bruna, 2019).

Recently, the Zimbabwean government has been pushing for the return of massive agricultural investments which will likely lead to land concentration by capital and the alienation of smallholder farmers from the land. Taking a neoliberal and populist stand, the new administration in Zimbabwe is eager to raise capital via rents and in the process boost agricultural productivity. This has prompted the new administration to push for smallholder farmers to embark on joint ventures with foreign capital, while simultaneously crafting a new narrative that land should be given to those who are financially and materially resourced and can fully utilise it, thus promoting the line that the country is now "open for business" (Monjane & Tramel, 2018; SMAIAS, 2018).

This has been common in other SADC countries. From Zambia and Madagascar to Malawi, governments reproduce neoclassic visions, promoting investment language and undermining contentions from grassroots and civil society. Over the last decade, the southern Africa region has, in fact, seen civic spaces shrink. In particular, there has been a growing trend for the state to use the criminal justice system to vilify, criminalise and suppress local communities denouncing land grabs, exposing corruption and advocating inclusive socio-economic development.

8. Seed laws and policies

Southern Africa has been pursuing the regional harmonization of its seed laws and regulations. As it has been argued by the supporters of this harmonization, common regulatory frameworks are expected to reduce the costs of trading seed and encourage scale economies in seed production. As a result, commercial seed

production is expected to expand, providing farmers with 'improved' access to new varieties and stimulating productivity growth (Rohrbach, Minde & Howard, 2003). This is clearly a move towards commodification of seeds and the whole agrarian sector in the region, which will greatly benefit the corporate sector, which already has a strong presence in the southern African market.

The expansion of the empire of seed corporations already installed in South Africa to the rest of the region depends on the relaxation of the laws and regulations in force in the rest of the SADC countries, most of which hitherto prohibited the cultivation of GM seeds. Policy is being oriented towards integrating (black) small-scale farmers into the commercial sector; however, this is within the context of the dominance of large-scale commercial production which makes it extremely difficult for new, small-scale entrants to compete effectively (ACB, 2016). In fact, producing and saving seeds might become prohibited to small scale food producers.

According to the African Centre for Biodiversity, "existing policies and laws will require substantial revision to enable small-scale farmers who want to produce and maintain seed[s] to do so – without fear of criminalisation and without having to meet stringent certification and other requirements that are not appropriate for their needs or conditions" (2016, p. 24). The seeds legislation that has been put into place in South Africa –now intended to be harmonized throughout the SADC region with strong lobbying by capital – has deleterious consequences for the small food producers, who generally save and exchange seeds among themselves.

9. Conclusion

The most dominant theme of the post-colonial period in the land and agrarian discourse is the theme of black participation and land reform to address the perpetual land imbalances of the colonial period, at least in South Africa and Zimbabwe. Obtrusively, in the case of South Africa, the self-sustaining and prosperous state of commercial agriculture has not pacified the need for black participation in the sector. The agrarian sector still remains the stronghold of white commercial farmers and the dual economy established during the colonial and apartheid era has been perpetuated in the post-colonial period. Land imbalances remain topical in the post-colonial

period and the contribution of scholars in demonstrating the colonial heritages aids in understanding the current call for radical land reform in the post-colonial state. However, the Zimbabwean case presents itself as a peculiar case marked with one of the most revolutionary land tenure reforms. Nevertheless, rural poverty and marginalisation continue to be a post-colonial phenomenon. However, there have been emancipatory rural initiatives pushed by the Zimbabwe Smallholder Organic Farmer's Forum that emerged as a result of land reform.

The current conjuncture in southern Africa is, therefore, showing opportunities for emancipatory movements to gather ground, but also threats both from the state in defence of propertied interests, and landowners' and farmers' lobbies, sometimes with connections to the extreme far-right and neo-fascist groups. The latter are well networked globally, and have mounted effective campaigns to frame efforts to revive rural emancipatory strategies in southern Africa as an attack on white rights, linking it to a narrative of 'white genocide'. Such groups - for instance Afriforum and the 'Suiderlanders', a millennial armed grouping preparing for a final race war, and with links to the Ku Klux Klan and others globally - are attempts to regionalise and globalise their backlash, and include networking with apparently centrist political groupings too, in attempts to legitimate their claims. The recent successful motion in the Dutch parliament in July 2019 to censure the South African government for moves towards land expropriation without compensation, again linking this to white genocide, is evidence of the effectiveness and internationalisation of these groups, and their links to the European far-right.

The context in the region offers various nuances, precisely because peasants live in different conditions across the region: in South Africa the levels of landlessness are stark; in Zimbabwe there has been a process of land redistribution in the context of the FTLRP over two decades, which reduced landless; and in Mozambique, although land conflicts are escalating, most Mozambican peasants have access to land for family farming. The specific conditions under which peasants live determine their responses to agrarian neoliberalism and authoritarianism. As I will demonstrate in the ensuing chapter, at a discursive level, some of the tactics applied by agrarian movements have elements of populism. The following chapter (Chapter five), based on empirical field research, gives an account of the current land struggles of organized peasantry - the agrarian movements - in the current neoliberal context. The chapter

articulates the ‘political reactions [as well as political actions] from below’ (Borras & Franco, 2013).

CHAPTER FIVE: Agrarian movements in southern Africa: debating emergence, social organisation, political behaviour, relations and identity processes

Agrarian movements and rural politics are not substantially studied in southern Africa. The little work available on collective action as a necessary adjunct to external intervention in food production among small-scale farmers still treats agency from a narrow perspective of farmer groups improving access to household assets and agricultural services for their members (Bratton, 1986). These studies focus on credit mechanisms to small-scale farmers, mostly promoting a neoclassical and new institutional economics approach (Huppi & Feder, 1990).

The literature on agricultural cooperatives largely focuses on market reform mechanisms and how the activities of cooperatives have been able or not to increase their efficiency in a changing economic environment – say, agrarian neoliberalism – characterized by technological change and industrialization of agriculture (Bratton, 1987; Akwabi-Ameyaw, 1990; Piesse et al., 2005; Ortmann & King, 2007a, 2007b; Guilengue, 2013). This study therefore makes a relevant contribution to existing knowledge by exploring the dynamics, potential and contradictions of organized agrarian movements in (three countries of the) southern Africa region. I do not dismiss other valuable works that have attempted to look at 'peasant organisations and rural civil society', as was the case of a good collection published in 2002 by CODERSIA (Romdhane & Moyo, 2002), or to analyse the resurgence of rural movements in Africa, Asia and Latin America (Moyo & Yeros, 2005b). These works put the focus on and explained the birth of agrarian movements (rural movements or peasant organisations, as they are commonly referred to) as a result of economic and political crisis arising from the reforms that have occurred on the continent since the mid-1980s (Moyo, 2002). Moyo adds that,

> Political and economic reforms on the continent since the mid-1980s have been accompanied by massive rural social dislocations, further poverty, growing insecurity over land and natural resource property rights, and numerous violent conflicts over the control of resources and the state. Neo-liberal economic policy reforms imposed from above … have added to the erosion of the basic social and political rights of Africans. Peasant organisations are re-emerging on the continent as one of the rural

> responses to protect people from economic and political crises (Moyo, 2002, p. 1).

While drawing from and subscribing to these accounts, this study also goes further and beyond this focus on economic and political crisis and seeks more the historical, cultural and internal functioning and relations (organicity) of the movements. It further seeks to understand their social base and political behaviour.

Agrarian movements are a specific type of social movement and for that very reason some refer to them as agrarian *social* movements in the literature. This is generally why, in order to analyse any social movement, some resort to sociological theories of social movements. The most widely employed approach to the study of social movements today is resource mobilisation theory (Rootes, 1990). According to this theory, collective (political) action is socially structured and it is highly influenced by the resources available to the movement's activists (material, human, cultural, moral, and so forth). This theory assumes that movements are calculative and rational in strategizing their actions since they make a rational use of the resources they have (Jenkins, 1981; Tilly, 1997; 2012;). One of the criticisms this theory receives is that: "It is resolutely focused upon *how* it is that movements are organised and succeed or fail rather than *why* they exist at all." (Rootes, 1990, p. 8). Another observation is that resource mobilisation theorists downplay the factor of ideology in the study of social movements.

The second most dominant theory is the 'new social movements theory' (Tarrow, 1994b, 1994a; Buechler, 1995), that attempts to make sense of social struggles and movements that are categorically different from the ones in the past, such as labour movements triggered by or based on class inequalities, such as youth, peace, feminist and ecological movements. This includes the rise of group conflicts based on ethnicity and race.

However, these theories lack rural and agrarian specificity, since they were built on the basis of urban protests and (urban) social movements that emerged and manifested specifically in the United States and Western Europe. Moreover, "contemporary global theory has not engaged squarely with the challenges that rural movements face under imperialism, namely the concentration of agrarian capital and

political power at national levels, its alliance with financial and industrial capital" (Moyo & Yeros, 2005b, p. 2).

In this study, I follow and build on the work of Petras (1997), which proposes engaging agrarian movements by looking critically into the following aspects: (a) social base; leadership; (b) tactics; (c) strategy; (d) ideology; and (e) cosmopolitanism. Yero and Moyo (2005c) also build on this to assess the resurgence of contemporary rural movements in Africa, Latin America and Asia in a more abstract and generalized way.

Based largely on my extensive field research, this chapter analyses the National Peasant's Union of Mozambique (UNAC), the Zimbabwe Small-Holder farmers' Forum (ZIMSOFF) and the Right for Agrarian Reform for Food Sovereignty Campaign (FSC) under four new analytical categories, to access the dynamics of their organizing, their potential and their real contradictions in the current context of intensive penetration of capital with neoliberal policies in the agrarian sector: political behaviour, social organisation, relations, and identity and culture. I argue that in order to fully access the agency of agrarian movements in southern Africa, it is indispensable to take into serious consideration aspects of culture, history and identity as they are relevant to understand the political, organisational and relational facets. Under *political behaviour* of the movements, I explore their ideologies, tactics and strategies. Under *social organisation* I look at their social base, the leadership, and organicist and internal environment, as well as their practices. Under *relations* I assess the relationship that the movements have with external actors and agents such as the state, NGOs, donors and allies. *Identity processes* is a category that will allow us to see how 'immaterial' aspects such as ancestry, ceremony and beliefs, but also history, shape the way agrarian movements organize production, reproduction and collective action. I include cosmopolitanism, that is, the development of international interaction between agrarian movements, in both political behaviour as ideology and in relations as alliances.

1. What triggers the formation of agrarian movements and shapes rural politics in southern Africa?

Contemporary rural movements worldwide are becoming an organising centre for the masses of rural poor discarded by neoliberalism (Moyo & Yeros, 2005b, p. 45). As seen in previous chapters, the contradictions inherent to the penetration and development of capital in the countryside triggered a variety of political reactions from below; in most cases, agrarian movements emerged as a result of these developments in southern Africa. The political and social events of the 1980s, with particular attention to the introduction of economic adjustment programmes, sowed the seeds for agrarian movements across southern Africa. The circumstances surrounding the emergence of these movements in Southern Africa are found in the rise and penetration of private agrarian capital in the countryside, with the tacit support of governments. This has led to the progressive and systematic rural and urban based land struggles by peasants who confront, at times expel and even 'transcend' agrarian capital. This situation may be captured by the following statement by Elizabeth Mpofu, one of the founders and leaders of ZIMSOFF:

> Land is now viewed as a commodity by business minded people without looking at the reality of the land use. We are aware that the land has been used by our ancestors for ages and ages to produce their own quality food. But I don't know what is now happening with our African governments which are now selling land, dispersing people, grabbing the land away from people and giving it to investors just because of money. Not looking at the people. In most African countries, members States are not people-centered, it is for their own benefits (Elizabeth Mpofu in 'Conversations of the World, with Boaventura de Sousa Santos[29]).

If UNAC was founded in April 1987, ZIMSOFF was formed in 2002 on the basis of an organisational experience through an association that was founded in 1985, the Association of Zimbabwe Traditional Environmental Conservationists (AZTREC). The FSC is also the fruit of an organisational process that was also founded in the 1980s,

[29] https://www.youtube.com/watch?app=desktop&v=G4GUeTN9rJQ

the Surplus People Project (SPP). As I demonstrate below, there are strong signs of the legacy of historical rural resistance in today's agrarian movements.

Desktop research, reinforced by my first-hand foundational knowledge as an agrarian acholar-activist[30], confirms that there exist many agrarian social movements in all southern African countries, ranging from the most to the least organized. I summarise Moyo and Yeros' (2005c, pp. 45–52) very general reading of contemporary rural movements in Africa (but also in Latin America and Asia), following Petra's proposed features, in the following terms:

> Social base: it comprises semi-proletarians and unemployed rural and urban proletarians, both men and women, straddling the rural–urban divide; Leadership: We observe the phenomenon of 'peasant intellectuals' mainly among movements that have proclaimed autonomy from political parties and their associated intellectuals. Such rural movements have proceeded to cultivate durable local and wider national structures on their own, setting in motion an independent process of conscientization; Tactics: the predominance of direct action on the land is a very significant and widespread development. It is partly associated with the rift with political parties, but not entirely, and indeed in the longer history of land occupations around the world, including both the unstructured and low-profile and the more organized and high-profile; Strategy: the 'anti-political' phenomenon is also a very significant development, and has an impact on the two preceding features. Autonomy from political parties and the state is observed. However, the issue of 'autonomy' in its more holistic sense, which would include the 'non-state' sites of imperial power, namely 'oppositional politics', is not conceptualized adequately. Ideology: this remains a weak dimension of rural movements. This is partly due to the rightward drift of political parties and their associated intellectuals, and the resulting rift between rural movements and parties. Yet a positive development has been the emergence precisely of the 'peasant intellectual', which has resulted in the fusion of Marxian language with ethnic/racial language – in effect, the incipient indigenization of Marxism; Cosmopolitanism: the question of internationalism is central to the question of ideology. The development of international interaction between rural movements on their own behalf is the latest of the several rural political developments. This takes regional forms. It has also taken global forms, as in La Via Campesina and the World Social Forum, in which

[30] During the last ten years I have visited agrarian movements which are members of LVC and I have conducted research, although not all of it academic, in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Tanzania, Zimbabwe, Mozambique, Malawi, Madagascar, Angola and South Africa. I have also had the opportunity to learn about rural struggle experiences in Mauritius, Zambia and Swaziland, although LVC has no member movements in these countries.

> [most of the agrarian movements in the region] participate actively. (Moyo and Yeros, 2005c, 45–52)

The empirical research of this study coincides with part of this explanation; however, there are some nuanced accounts, as for ideology, leadership and cosmopolitanism. One important aspect not at all taken into account is the importance of identity, history and culture in understanding agrarian movements.

What follows is the context in which the National Peasant' Union of Mozambique (UNAC), The Right to Agrarian Reform for Food Sovereignty Campaign (FSC) and the Zimbabwe Smallholder Organic Farmers' Forum (ZIMSOFF) were formed, their foundational principals, membership and visions. The bulk of the information about them was obtained from interviews with their leaders and founding members, and from their respective published documents.

2. UNAC and the Mozambican case

UNAC emerged in the late 1980s, when Mozambique adopted the Bretton Woods structural adjustment programs (SAPs), where peasants found it necessary to initiate a national movement to defend the interest of the peasantry, as changes in economic strategy threatened the cooperative movement.

> When Mozambique was moving into a market economy through the adoption of IMF and the World Bank programs, peasants in various parts of Mozambique feared a possible disappearance of already established farmers' cooperatives. This initiated the national movement to defend the interest of the peasantry (Ismael Oussemane, interview, Maputo, March 2017, also cited in Monjane and Bruna 2019, 14).

It may be useful, however, to give an ideological background to the circumstances in which Mozambique initially embraced populist agrarian and land policies without actually empowering peasants, and eventually ended up openly supporting agrarian capital through Structural Adjustment Programs. This helps to contextualize the origins of peasants struggles and organisation against state policy and the encroachment of capital.

Agrarian policies in Mozambique fall in line with authoritarianism and undemocratic forms of governance inclined to the centralized, socialist rhetoric

adopted by Mozambique's ruling political party, Frente de Libertação de Moçambique – Mozambique Liberation Front (FRELIMO) at independence in 1975. Through this socialist agenda, the party organized the society and power based in an authoritarian one-party system.

In southern Africa, populism is generally associated with liberation movements that secured political power as governments, using populist stand as a means to legitimize their power by appealing to the continued struggle against foreign domination and thereby marketing themselves as the only true political alternative (Melber, 2018). It has been the nature of the Mozambican government and many other such former revolutionary movements now in government power in Southern Africa that; "When contested politically, they accuse opponents of being remote-controlled agents of imperialism seeking regime change as instruments of foreign agendas" (Melber, 2018). It is in this context that the policies implemented by the FRELIMO government exhibited signs of being undemocratic. This for instance was the case when the government implemented the *aldeias comunais* (villagization) or the communal village policy. This took similar measures as aldeamentos coloniais, a strategy used by the colonial regime to control rural population to avoid their contact with the liberation movement. FRELIMO's agenda with the communal villages aimed to organize a dispersed peasantry in the form of villages. This, however, was also understood as a measure taken to control the peasantry, preventing the population from gaining access to and receiving influence from the Resistência Nacional de Moçambique (Mozambican National Resistance, RENAMO), the anti-FRELIMO's government guerrilla group. Assuring FRELIMO to maintain hegemony over the peasantry (Pitcher, 2012, 19).

FRELIMO was criticized as being "interventionist, authoritarian, and coercive for engaging in projects that belittled customary African practices, forcibly relocating people, or threatening the livelihoods of the peasantry" (Pitcher 2012, 19). This history of coercion is what has alienated the government from its rural peasantry. The wedge between the government and the peasants was further reinforced during the neo-liberal phase with the implementation of neo-liberal policies.

The neoliberal phase was characterized by massive privatization, as part of measures to rehabilitate the economy through the support of the Bretton Woods

Institutions. This was represented by the emergence of a market economy in Mozambique, in what was now called a 'democratic' society. However, land conflicts arose as a result of the penetration of capital in the countryside. The imposition of land-based agricultural investments in specific regions of the country resulted in the expropriation of people's land, especially throughout the Nacala Corridor region, in central-northern Mozambique. A number of companies expropriated hundreds of thousands of hectares from local peasants and consequently, a lot of people were displaced (Monjane & Bruna 2019).

In the late 1980s there were several vibrant agricultural cooperatives in Mozambique, most (if not all) of them dynamized by FRELIMO Central Committee (Comité Central)[31]. One of the strongest cooperatives at the time was the União Geral das Cooperativas Agro-pecuárias de Maputo (UGC, the General Union of Farming Cooperatives of Maputo). UGC contributed immensely to logistical support in the formation process of UNAC, but the political leadership of the process was largely left with the preparation committee, consisting mostly of peasant leaders from the provinces.

According to one of the co-founders, currently honorary president of the movement:

> UNAC is a fruit of the existence of these cooperatives. Then the cooperatives dwindled and the peasant movement expanded, but it is the cooperative movement already organised, with all its faults, with socialism and Marxism, that provided the coming together of UNAC - that is why it is a peasant movement and not a group of people, like some NGOs (Ismael Oussemane, interview, Maputo, February 2017).

UNAC was, however, one of the few organisations that had been founded and was functioning outside the strict control of the single party (José Negrão, 2003). The movement wanted to represent the voice of peasants, speaking out in defence of their social, economic and political interests, upholding a vision of attaining sustainable development, promoting both qualitative and quantitative approaches to self-organisation[32]. At the beginning of their establishment in 1987, one of UNAC's top priorities was the political organisation and establishment of leaders within the

[32] Article 4, UNAC Constitution.

member associations. This was based on the conviction that, in order for a national peasant movement to be politically strong, it should be politically trained.

The relevance of UNAC is recognised starting with its considerable number of members (more than 100 000, according to the accounts announced in its last Electoral Assembly, in 2016), placing it as the largest organized social movement in Mozambique (and most probably in southern Africa). Most UNAC members, in numbers, are scattered throughout the Nacala corridor, also the most populated area in the country. It is one of this study's sites.

There are other experiences of rural organisation in Mozambique, such as unions of agricultural workers and other types of rural associations. UNAC is, however, the only peasant movement on a national scale and one of the most respected actors on the civil society spectrum in Mozambique. It is no coincidence that UNAC is officially recognized as the organisation that speaks on behalf of peasants in Mozambique. This is regardless of whether those represented by it are actually affiliated to UNAC as members (Monjane & Bruna, 2019, p. 14 based in interviews by the author). Hence, the Mozambican Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development necessarily considers UNAC to be their strategic partner.[33] I will come back to this point later, when I analyse movement's relationship with the state.

Over the years, UNAC has gone through a process of consolidation, expansion of its membership base and establishment of various alliances and partnerships with national and international organisations. One of those was La Via Campesina, whose UNAC participation revolutionised the functioning and the political thinking of UNAC, especially with regard to internationalist values.

UNAC's organisational structure begins at grassroots level, with associations of at least ten members. There is no direct individual membership in UNAC, and thus all members are first and foremost members of a local farmer's association at the grassroots level. These associations form the zone's nucleus, and the unions at district level. The district unions form the provincial unions. The national leadership of UNAC is constituted of the provincial unions' leaders, and they work with a board (Conselho de Direcção) that is elected in an electoral assembly, every four years. The agrarian

[33] Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, website 2018

movements under study act and have members at the national level. UNAC seems to be the most organised if compared with the FSC and ZIMSOFF, perhaps due to past experience with the cooperative movement, and the fact that it was the first to be founded. As mentioned, it is also the movement with the largest social base, judged by the number of its members. UNAC is involved in various activities and initiatives, from the establishment of agroecology schools, training of peasants in agricultural techniques, and training of members in advocacy techniques, among others. The movement has been mobilising its members to resist agrarian capital, exposing cases of land conflict with investors, local elites and, in certain cases, with the government. The case of ProSAVANA is part of that strategy. The analysis of UNAC in this work is to a large extent based on the dynamics of the resistance to ProSAVANA, mainly in the Nacala Corridor, itself the epicentre of the programme. The analysis was, however, complemented by other aspects and elements of UNAC more broadly.

The expropriation of land by capital represented an unpopular alliance between capital and government against the rural peasantry. A pro-capital government emerged in Mozambique stamped out the revolutionary essence of a liberation struggle against colonial oppression. The government in this sense became an extension of the interests of capital at the expense of the peasant constituency. To provide an example, in Zambézia province, Central Mozambique, Agribusiness Moçambique SA (Agromoz), forced the displacement of approximately 1,000 families to implant its cash crop project in the 2010s (Mandamule and Bruna, 2017); in Malema district (Nampula province, northern Mozambique) the Mozambique Agricultural Corporation (Mozaco) also forced the displacement of about 1,000 families in the same period (UNAC and GRAIN 2015). The authoritarian nature of the state also allowed strict control of the peasants and did not allow objections to such projects and the use of force was in the eyes of the government as a necessary tool.

This thesis looked at the ProSAVANA agribusiness project as one of the case studies. ProSAVANA was being proposed during the same period Agromoz and Mosaco projects were being run.

2.1. Expelling Agrarian Capital: The rise and fall of ProSAVANA

ProSAVANA was first introduced in the beginning of the 2010s, as a developmental project in line with the main agrarian policy of Mozambique, the Plano Estratégico para o Desenvolvimento do Sector Agrário (PEDSA – Strategic Plan for the Development of the Agrarian Sector), which aimed to transform the agricultural sector to be more investment and business-friendly (Monjane & Bruna, 2019). To this end, the main objective of ProSAVANA has been to increase agricultural productivity, targeting millions of hectares in the Nacala Corridor in north-central Mozambique. ProSAVANA was earmarked to have access to 14million hectares in the Nacala Corridor, and this constituted just half of the total 36 million hectares of arable land in Mozambique (Arndt *et al.*, 2010; Clements and Fernandes, 2013). The imposition of ProSAVANA in the 2010s sparked debates on whose interest this mega project was serving. Details revealed that the governments of Japan, Brazil and Mozambique were secretly paving the way for a massive land grab in Northern Mozambique' (Justiça Ambiental et al 2013, p. 1). Indeed, a "leaked documents confirmed that the main goal of ProSAVANA was to prioritize agribusinesses, promote monocrop production and exports of cash crops (such soy) (GRAIN, 2013)[34]. These events led to increased agitation and a sense of class solidarity among peasant organisations and other civil society groups. These formed a front against the government agenda to prioritize agribusiness at the expense of peasant production. UNAC was at the fore front in opposing the move of ProSAVANA.

ProSAVANA was initiated and some of its components implemented by the then Mozambican Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security (MASA, now Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development), the Brazilian Cooperation Agency (ABC) and the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA). Public disclosure of the Master Plan quickly sparked resistance. This was largely due to the apparent lack of transparency and inclusivity in the planning process, and the apprehension coming from knowledge of the negative impacts of PRODECER, a large scale agricultural development project in Brazil, in the late 1970s .

[34] https://grain.org/article/entries/4703-leaked-prosavana-master-plan-confirms-worst-fears

The emergence of a campaign, called *Campanha não ao ProSAVANA* – No to ProSAVANA Campaign (NPC) - came to be central to the resistance process. NPC presented an organised and explicit contestation to not only the ProSAVANA project itself, but to the fundamental paradigm of rural development promoted by the project. The NPC, while demanding the discontinuation of ProSAVANA, also proposed alternatives to rural and agricultural development. Such concerns resulted in the formation NPC. It is worth mentioning that the initial idea to forge such alliance came from the discussions at a workshop of the Popular University of Social Movements (UPMS)[35], held in Maputo, in which UNAC and various other civil society organisations were debating the issue of growing land grabbing in Mozambique (Monjane, 2018).

Resistance to ProSAVANA should also be viewed within the context of the condescending attitudes of the Brazilian partners towards Mozambicans that accompanied the agribusiness project.

Picture 8: Direct actions in protest against ProSAVANA. Left: a demonstration by UNAC members in Nampula| Credits: unknown. Top and bottom right: rally during SADC People's Summit in Lilongwe, Malawi, August 2013. Credit: the author

[35] http://www.universidadepopular.org/site/pages/pt/oficinas/oficina-de-mumemo---2013.php

Brazilian colonial approaches towards Africa are clearly identifiable. In 2011, almost the same period ProSAVANA was being proposed, the then Brazilian minister of foreign affairs, Celso Amorim, stated that "Africa is thirsty for Brazil".

> From Mozambique to Namibia, from Ghana to São Tomé and Principe, they all see Brazil as a model to be followed, in their own way and in accordance with their characteristics and dimensions (Amorim, 2011).

According to Homi Bhabha, colonial discourse such as this produces the colonised as a social reality which is at once an 'other' yet entirely knowable and visible. It resembles a form of narrative whereby productivity and the circulation of subjects and signs are bound in a reformed but recognisable totality (1998, p. 111).

The conception and operationalisation of the project involved neither Mozambican intellectuals nor local peasant organisations. The NPC effort not only led to a long 'hibernation' and finally termination of the project but created space to enable expanded participation of peasants and civil society throughout the decision-making process.

As we will see later, the No to ProSAVANA campaign did not limit itself to mobilising among peasants but kept on incorporated more members from diversified sectors within Mozambique and abroad to include Brazil Agrarian Movements and NGOs, as well as Japanese activists and academics and the campaign soon became a transnational movement. It is worth noting, however, that people who strongly questioned ProSAVANA at public hearings and consultations were not limited to peasants who are aligned with UNAC and NPC. This demonstrates that opposition to agrarian policies is taking a new dimension to cover wider and beyond the scope of the known actors.

A peasant who was not a UNAC member protested against the implementation of ProSAVANA in the following words:

> We, in Mutuale, do not want ProSAVANA because this program does not represent the interests of the peasants. We know that with this program, we will lose our land. We know that the peasants will be forced to go ask for land in other places as it is happening now with the people who were expelled from their land when the AGROMOZ company entered, in the Gurué District, Administrative Post of Lioma. Today, those people left there are coming to ask for places to live here in Mutuale. We do not want to go

> asking for land in other communities because this will later bring conflict between us (cited in ADECRU 2015).

This demonstrates that the land issue is a highly sensitive and emotive issue within the peasant community and brother civil society. Beyond this, the land issue offers interesting insights into a range of wider issues on the policy environment in Mozambique. This has resonated on the political front with a clear sign of the FRELIMO party losing popularity among its peasant constituency by forcing ProSAVANA. In fact, FRELIMO had been losing votes since 2008. In 2018, RENAMO got more votes in many of the districts in these three provinces, including Malema District, which was one of the regions where peasants were contesting the most, due to ongoing activities related to ProSAVANA. It is also important to take into consideration that, for the first time, RENAMO was able to get 49% of the total votes on the national level. This means that for the last decades – something that was reversed in the last general election, in 2019 - FRELIMO's political dominance has been decreasing as RENAMO's has been increasing. The failure of grasping the nature of the agrarian question in Mozambique rests in the fact that Mozambique has been governed by a persistent authoritarian regime with oscillating levels of populism, which tended to impose agrarian policies that prioritize large scale investments to the detriment of peasants.

The land issue therefore overlaps into issues pertaining to political legitimacy and the Mozambican case, much like the land issue in Zimbabwe, demonstrates the complexities of land reform where capital interests are vested and the potential implications in terms of economic performance and political legitimacy. The Mozambican case also emphasizes the negative implications of policy making from above in the context of a land reform. The top-down approach seemingly leaves out matters that lie at the heart of peasant struggles for land. This, in many ways, can lead to the reversal of revolution in Mozambique.

It had also become incontrovertibly clear to peasant leaders from the neighbouring countries that ProSAVANA was not in their interests of the Mozambican people. As Elizabeth Mpofu puts it:

> You go to Mozambique, people are so much distressed, they are being removed away from their land, from the land of their origins in the name of projects, but who benefits from those projects like ProSAVANA? What do you tell a farmer who is on the ground? Do they care about that project? What they want is to produce food for their families and for their country. We have a dangerous system where we have these transnational corporations who are trying by every means to penetrate with the ideas of investing with contract farming systems, saying they will give us a bit of the produce after harvesting but the rest is theirs. They say they will lend us money if we give them a piece of our land (Elizabeth Mpofu in 'Conversations of the World' with Boaventura de Sousa Santos).

2.2. Tacticts and Strategies of the NPC

The stagnation – and later termination - of ProSAVANA can be explained from a combination of tactics intrinsic to the NPC. I developed these into five elements: (1) active agency from below, (2) inter- sector civil society alliance, (3) communication, publicity and media strategy, (4) transnationalisation of the struggle and (5) proposal of alternatives confronting dominant narratives. These elements are considered against a backdrop of external factors which include the political and economic environment within Mozambique and in the external investor countries. We do not claim this set of strategies, some of them mere activities, to be a formula to guarantee 'success' in resisting agrarian authoritarianism. The goal is to show in detail what ProSAVANA opponents have done, in terms of actions and activities, to hibernate it, which is relevant enough to the understanding of the outcome of the resist- ance process, particularly in the case of Mozambique.

2.2.1 Active agency from below

The debate about the various political reactions from below towards land grabbing, initiated by Borras and Franco (2013), directly relates to the resistance processes regarding the ProSAVANA case. This was the unique factor that quickly brought strength and legitimacy to the opposition of ProSAVANA and it framed the determination of UNAC to lead the process of resistance. Peasant protests, however,

were not limited to UNAC members, as already mentioned. This was largely because peasants from the Nacala corridor area were previously exposed and had access to information translated into their local language in the form of videos and leaflets, which helped them to clearly understand the risks, which shaped their opinions about ProSAVANA.

When asked why he is saying no to ProSAVANA, a peasant member of UNAC, from Muecate district in Nampula province, responded with the following:

> ... from the information that we had access to, regarding Prodecer in Brazil and its impacts, they tried to take away Brazilian peasant's land, and now those projects are being transferred to Mozambique ... Being a less developed country compared to Brazil, we think that we cannot accept that project, one day it will harm us. They occupy extensive areas, so we don't have enough space to do our machambas [family farm land], this was one reason to say no to ProSAVANA. We have the capacity to work, but they cannot come and harm us in our life, that lead us to say no to ProSAVANA and we will continue to say so (Interview, peasant Member of UNAC Nampula, District of Muecate, February 2017).

Such statements are reflective of UNAC having taken the lead and released a statement of concern at an early stage, allowed political reactions from below to take emerge. Very quickly, local associations, district and provincial unions of UNAC were mobilized. This crippled the e"orts for the proponents of ProSAVANA, including local government, to con- vince the peasantry of its 'bene!ts'. This strong position of UNAC and peasants on the ground, however, did not quite overcome the authoritarian position of the Mozambican Government. The government remained unphased by protests. This, however, contributed to the extend e"orts to cooperate between di"erent sectors of society.

2.2.2 Inter-sector civil society alliance and segregated processes of resistance

The segregation of struggles and movements has been very common among Mozambique civil society groups and has long contributed to the segregated processes of resist- ance and focus of social change among social movements and activists. Historically, urban-based struggles have had little dialogue with rural-based

struggles. Trade unions have had little dialogue with peasant/agrarian organisations. Similarly, advocates of women and gender issues have had very little dialogue with those working on housing, transportation, and environmental issues.

The first notable exception was the Land Campaign (Campanha Terra), which was one of the few active inter-sectoral groups to build an advocacy and debate platform to include popular views and defend the interest of the peasantry in the 1997 Land Law. At the beginning, the Land Campaign was not coordinated. According to Negrão (2002, p. 18) 'there were fundamental concerns covering a wide spectrum of layers and groups of social interests,' bringing together 'churches, associations and cooperatives, non-governmental organisations, academics, politicians and even elements in the private sector, in addition to dozens of incognito honest citizens'. Once the 1997 Land Law was passed, the Land Campaign declined. Nevertheless, the issue of land, particularly losing land for capital grab in Mozambique remained a compelling issue for mobilisation.

Following the Land Campaign, different sectors of the Mozambican civil society created synergies that fed the growth and legitimacy of the fight for environmental, land, agrarian and gender issues as one big and cohesive cause. Following this trend, NPC has arguably been one of the most innovative and effective alliance among different constituencies, which paved the way for ProSAVANA to be perceived as an important national issue, garnering public interest.

This demonstrates that land is a highly sensitive and potent issue in Mozambique. Defending it is associated with people's sovereignty, and losing it triggers memories of colonialism and vulnerability. This makes the agrarian question in Mozambique transversal to many other national concerns. It is important to note that many academics and civil society organisations, including members of parliament, not associated with NPC, also publicly presented critical assessments of ProSAVANA's Master Plan, its discourse and how the program itself was problematically being introduced.

2.2.3. Communication, publicity and media strategy

One of the main strengths of NPC can be attributed to the designing of an effective communication and media strategy. The use of online communication channels, from websites and blogs to social media, as well as local newspapers, has

been a dominant tactic. The campaign would publish on a regular basis, and openly disclosed statements, testimonies, articles, videos and images (photos and infographic material) highlighting resistance to ProSAVANA, exposing its negative social and environmental issues. This can be attributed to the extensive communication and media experience held by NPC members, providing effective access to tools and existing networks to disseminate information.

The NPC publications were shared amongst the websites managed by the various participating members not only in Mozambique, but in Brazil and Japan. Social media was also actively utilized, where links to the publications and key messages were shared on the campaign's Facebook page, which had more than one thousand followers as of January 2018. Additionally, campaign media organisations. NPS media strategy included getting the issue into local and international mainstream media. As a result, leading international newspapers, such as The Guardian (in 2014), Neues Deutschland (in 2018) and Deutsche Welle (in 2017), published stories mentioning the resistance to ProSAVANA.

2.2.4. Transnationalization of the struggle and solidarity mobilisation

The involvement of Brazil and Japan's social movements/civil society in ProSAVANA resistance inspired international solidarity. Almost all of the main Brazilian agrarian movements associate with La Via Campesina Brazil, and a number of progressive NGOs, such as GRAIN, and progressive intellectuals in Japan were supporting the Campaign. Since 2014, a number of activities – such as 'lobbying' meetings in Brazil – have been carried out in their respective countries, as a strategy to put pressure on EMBRAPA in Brazil and JICA in Japan and, wherever possible, to identify allies inside those institutions. This was par- ticularly e"ective in Japan, where their lobbying and advocacy actions at the parliament level resulted in a strong alliance between Japanese organisations and a left-wing parliamentarian who pushed for fierce debates on ProSAVANA. It was through this alliance that ProSAVANA was strongly debated at Japanese parliament.

Institutional impacts in Brazil have been harder to monitor. What is noteworthy, however, is the progressive decline of Brazil's institutional involvement in the current developments of the program. Contributing factors may be the political and economic events that have taken place during the last three years, namely the

deepening economic crisis, the impeachment of President Dilma Rousse", and the election of a right-wing government that openly announced shifting its foreign policy to focus on the Global North.

Regardless, a defining factor is how some Mozambican organisations in NPC have been active members of some of the largest and most radical transnational social movements in the world. In particular, UNAC is a member of La Via Campesina, Fórum Mulher is a member of, and hosting, the World March of Women, and Justiça Ambiental is a member of Friends of the Earth International. With its established global network, these movements are known for their capacity to mobilize global solidarity, attract media atten- tion, and give global visibility to local struggles.

2.2.5 Alternative proposals confronting dominant narratives

UNAC has been credited for establishing a constructive form of resistance led by the people, contesting the model of development proposed in ProSAVANA with a clear proposition of an alternative on the table. To this end, agroecology, as a strategy, has guided UNAC's agenda since the design of its 2011–2015 Strategic Plan.

> We remain frmly committed to peasant farming and agroecology – the foundations of Food Sovereignty – as alternatives to the development of the agricultural sector in Mozambique, which consider all aspects of sustainability and are, in practice, friends to nature. (UNAC, 2012).

In its current 2015–2020 Strategic Plan, agroecology is mentioned under the 'Advocating Peasant's Rights' pillar of the plan in which UNAC assumes agroecology as the main mechanism through which food sovereignty is going to be achieved in Mozambique. In almost all statements of NPC, it is made clear that rejecting ProSAVANA was not just an end in itself. Proposals such as Agroecology and Food Sovereignty were given as practical alternatives to what ProSAVANA proposed, which were based on agribusiness, monoculture, land reserves, global markets, and intensified production. In recent years, UNAC has actively been engaging its members in specific educational and training programs on agroecology. Furthermore, the movement has been successful in building an Agroecology School in the Manhiça District (South of Mozambique) and training rural extensionists in agroecology throughout the country (three promoters per province who conduct trainings at the

village level). For example, in the Marracuene District, 285 peasants were trained on agroecology as a pilot project. Lastly, exchanging visits and experiences between peasant associations have also been influential in the promotion of alternative narratives of development (Interview, Renaldo João, peasant member of UNAC, September 2018).

Another experience worth highlighting is the Alfredo Nhamitete Agricultural Association, in the district of Marracuene, Maputo province. Their 280 members produce various food crops, some of which they sell at the local market. Income is shared equally among members (LVC Africa News 2014). Several peasants began an exchange with a peasant organisation in Brazil, the Small Farmers Movement (MPA), to rescue seeds that are at risk of extinction, which are deemed to be of greater importance for food sovereignty. This exchange led to increased local seed sovereignty, drastically reducing the cost of seed procurement.

The growing number of peasants at the national level who are practicing agroecology and challenging the large-scale capitalist farming model, like ProSAVANA, should be seen as emancipatory. This combination of words followed by action has given strength to NPC.

The set of strategies and tactics that gave strength and cohesion to the NPC, discussed above, was built into a unified agenda against the proposed model of development. The strong ideological bond among all of the transnational members of the campaign allowed them to constitute a narrative of 'us against them', othering, in this case, the proponents of ProSAVANA. Moreover, NPC discourses were highly anti-capitalistic and with a strong position toward an alternative paradigm of development, referred to as the 'peasant way' and 'agroecology'.

3. FSC and the South African case

The precedents for the constitution of the Right to Agrarian Reform for Food Sovereignty (FSC) were in the work of the Surplus People Project (SPP), a South African organisation established in the 1980s to support communities in the struggles against apartheid state forced removals.

In 2008, when the world food crisis reached its peak as agrarian capital was intensifying its actions in the countryside, and social and agrarian inequalities were being exacerbated in South Africa, FSC was launched. The words of a member of the SPP staff, Harry May, help to shed light on the situation. He stated that:

> We saw that the agrarian issues were actually the same kinds of issues in the different areas where we are working. Land struggles were similar and we wanted to bring those struggles together and try to consolidate what the people in different organisations and different regions were doing. (Harry May, SPP staff, interview, Cape Town, February 2018).

According to the interviewee, many of the groups that make up the FSC today existed already. The role of SPP has been to "facilitate discussions between people who are already struggling with these issues. We provide them the space to discuss and assist around submission and providing them with information and facilitating strategic discussions around key issues which were identified by the groups in the first place" (Harry May, SPP staff, interview, Cape Town, February 2018).

The aforementioned agenda became more prominent in the post-1994 period after the realization that successive administrations in South Africa appeared to collude with private capital at the expense of the marginalized peasantry. Thus, the position of private capital since the mid-1990s appears to have remained unchallenged: they have been allowed to cling onto the vestiges of colonial power. The church and private capital in South Africa dictate terms and make requests to the government which are in some cases counterproductive to the goals of land reform. For instance, in Wupperthal the church has claimed autonomy in terms of the management of land and other resources.

Across the board, black South Africans remain skeptical about the prospects of any land democratization program, notwithstanding the government having made amendments on the Constitution to expropriate land without compensation. The landless communities feel that the government will continue to play second fiddle to white capital despite making many proclamations to reverse the land imbalances through a radical land reform process. One Wupperthal resident, leader of the Concerned Monrovians has a skeptical view:

> I do not think that they [the government] will expropriate land without compensation. I think that they are going to compensate them for land. I know that there has already been a budget set aside for land expropriation and land reform. There is a budget, why would they do it differently if they have already budgeted for land reform. I mean one of the problems is, the government is very reluctant implement land reform because they think that radical land reform would destroy the economy. They are not really interested in radical land reform, despite rhetoric to the contrary. They still want to keep the existing situation. I do not think political leaders like Malema, and even the President (Ramaphosa) are very honest about land reform, that is not what they want to do. President Cyril Ramaphosa wants to keep things as they are, he wants to maintain it as business as usual, he wants to have stable markets, stable investment, and they still believe that the agricultural model of farming, this current model of farming and the export model of farming is the way forward. They do not see small-scale production as a model of farming that can sustain national needs and as a model that can attract investors. They do not believe in this. And it also means that there will not be radical changes, radical reform (Dennis Bantom, interview, Cape Town, February 2018)

While the statement above refers to contemporary South Africa, the post-apartheid governments have, historically, been associated with a failure to offset white supremacy.

The crisis of leadership in South African land issues is perhaps one of the most prominent themes in discoursing land reform in that country. The tepid and undecisive nature of the land reform programme demonstrates the fact that the democratisation of land is still far from being resolved in South Africa. What is most apparent is that this crisis of leadership is echoed from among advocates of radical land reform and it is captured in an epistemological as well as ideological deficiency;

> People in South Africa don't understand the agrarian question. So that is the other political dynamic, because they never paid attention to the agrarian question as you can see, the ANC and other people. And for them, this debate revolve around whether the peasantry exists or not, but that is not entirely what the agrarian question is all about. So, a lot of people still don't pay attention to the question. If you carefully look, you will see who pays attention to the agrarian question. Land reform, that is where they stop. And so, you ask yourself, who are the intellectuals who are going to provide movement that are intellectual resources that rejects this question. Who is

> going to provide them that support, because these revolutionary marches and others wants to organize them as a proletariat. So that is the basis for when they think about the land question in South Africa, that these are proletariats that we have to organize. So, there's a much deeper, so that is the historical context which you have to locate rural struggles and the agrarian struggles in South Africa today. It's never really rooted in the understanding of the agrarian question. Even at SPP, it will drive you nuts you know, the expectation that people have to be full-time farmers. And the question is how then can you be a full-time farmer in the current environment? But there is no other understanding of the rural change that is happening there. Can you expect Dennis [Bontom] to be a full-time farmer and not expect him to do something else for the livelihoods, and then you would get upset if you come there at 10 o'clock in the morning and he is not working on his plot. So, this is a very interesting question, so in the South African context, you have to, I would even suggest regionally, you have to locate it in history, and why do we have this mess today and when did NGOs become the dominant form. Now if you look at historical revolts of rural people, it was through political, Thabo Mbeki's father, Governor Mbeki, who wrote this book Mpondo Revolt, and then Tabata, who went into the country side and organized with political objectives which created the conditions of people and you had the Mpondo revolt, the height of the struggle, but that preceded from other revolts throughout the country. But the peasant revolt is not in the history, but everyone knows about Sharpeville and it shows to you the place of this question in the political imagination of the political movement. So, this is what we need to grapple with to come to understand Wupperthal and its struggles (interview, Ricado Jacobs, Cape Town, March 2018)

In a context where leaders of popular movements and the majority of peasants themselves are apathetic towards the struggle, it invites a question regarding who, between the peasants and the middle class, should lead the struggle. As indicated later in this chapter, the struggle could somewhat be compromised when peasants outsource from outsiders (particularly the NGO sector). As the Wupperthal case discussed below shows, peasants seem to achieve more when they confront capital directly.

In that vein, the landless black masses see an unmatched precedence with the case of land reform in Zimbabwe. What appears apparent to black landless South Africans is the fear of an economic meltdown if the government embarked on radical land reform as was the case in Zimbabwe. Indeed, this is the apparent dilemma for successive South African presidents; how to balance land reform while not upsetting white capital which is a pillar of the South African economy. Despite all these

complexities and the quite apparent tedious task which the government faces, members of FSC view the government as a sellout.

> When Jacob Zuma became President, they claimed to have an idea to transfer land to disadvantaged peasants. But it also failed: The South African government promised to at least have 7% land removed to poor black farmers in the year 2014, but this was never achieved. There has been farms that has been allocated to black people, some of them have been successful, but most of them have not been successful because of lack of support from government. The other thing is that most of them have not been successful because they have not been monitored and supported by government. In terms of funding, the government gave R20 million without proper administrative structures and it disappeared (Petrus brink, interview, Citrusdal, February 2018)

A land activist and former staff member of the Surplus People's Project described state proclaimed attempts to introduce legislation that provides for land redistribution without compensation thus;

> The talk about land reform is just to entice people to think that the ANC is finally doing something. But I do not think that it is a genuine move and I do not think that it is going to pass. My main concern is that we have not answered the question of who should get which land under what terms and for what purposes. Now let us imagine that the bill passes, which land is going to be expropriated? Are we talking about large commercial farms? Are we talking about private communal land that is owned by the state and with minerals underneath and companies wants it desperately? If we are talking about commercial farms, there are people who live there and those are their homes, is it going to be for them? So, I think that the focus is more on how we are going to acquire land, and which is why I am very skeptical to whether this is a genuine move. So, which is why I am thinking is this another trick to say that everyone we are talking about land, we want to win the elections next year. Let us just say that we are going to go with Malema on this one, even though we are in 2018, but this one, we are going to go with it. So, in my view, this is an opportunity for NGOs working on this issue to put in processes to answer these kinds of questions. Especially because the very same NGOs have been talking about agroecology, food sovereignty, so what does all that mean now? Since the Constitution is amended now, we can make an argument and say now that we want food sovereignty and for us it means A, B, and C and so Western Cape is only growing

> grapes and citrus, we want farmers to get a portion of that land to grow something else, food, we want the state to provided resources for market, whatever it is for you think the system should (Sthandiwe Yeni, interview, Cape Town, February 2018).

Overall, what is quite apparent is that the landless class in South Africa is skeptical about the possibility of land reform, let alone a radical one, and the main source of this skepticism is an apparent lack of political will.

This state of affairs has left both South African farm workers and landless peasants in dire straits. For farm workers, the issue is not purely a matter of landlessness or failure to find a place to live. Most of these workers have settled on farms all their lives. Although most of the farmworker's conditions are deplorable, some are better off than Wuppethal residents. Their main issue relates to security of tenure;

> My wife that I have here strengthen my tenure right here on the farm because she works on the farm, she permanently works here. So as long as she permanently works here, my right to be on the farm is stronger. Because there is basically in terms of the law, there is one way in which you can have the right to be here, that is when you are employed here. In terms of the law, you have a right. If a farmer gives you a house to live in, and you work for him and then you have the right. But if you are not employed on the farm then basically the farmer has the right to forfeit your right to be on the farm. If someone of the family is working on the farm and then you are protected by the law in terms of your right to your family (Petrus Brink, interview, Cape Town, February 2018).

Although there have not been any significant national agrarian movements established to counter the status quo outlined above, these are the circumstances under which the FSC (which is based in the Western and Northern Cape Provinces) was formed. The FSC's interests are broader than to just get access to land for people. Harry May would add:

> The broad focus of the movement is to challenge neoliberal capitalism and its manifestations at local level, at regional level, at national level. That would include getting access to agricultural land that has been very unequally distributed in South Africa, but it is beyond that (Harry May, SPP staff, interview, Cape Town, February 2018).

The FSC has presence only in the Western and Northern Cape, with active contacts with groups in the Eastern Cape. Its constituency consists of landless people, small-scale farmers, women and youth in rural areas, farm-workers, farm dwellers, people with insecure tenure (mostly on municipality and church-owned land), people on forestry land and landless people in urban areas, such as Khayelitsha. One informant put it thus:

> All those struggles were brought together to form the Food Sovereignty Campaign, so that they can collectively fight the struggle because everyone was fighting in its own corner. The idea was to have a movement that could collectively address all these issues (Leswin Koopman, FSC convener, interview, Wupperthal, February 2018).

The FSC struggles for access to means of production, including water and other development resources. Through its strategies and processes, the movement promotes the emancipation of its members from oppression, catalyses social action and exposes them to alternatives and critical ways of thinking about issues affecting society. "We stand for equal rights, dignity and liberation of small-scale farmers, farm workers and farm dwellers."[36]

3.1. Confronting Agrarian Capital: Wupperthal and the Moravian Church

The case of Wupperthal on the west coast in the Western Cape Province is no different from other cases of landless peasants fighting for agrarian reform and for democratisation of the countryside. However, what makes this case unique is that this is an organised resistance to a church structure in a context where:

[36] FSC, Facebook page. At https://www.facebook.com/pg/AgrarianReformforFoodSovereigntyCampaign/about/?ref=page_internal

> Generally, the gospel of the church has been a very effective tranquilizer to radical ideas. Partly because they feel that they are a part of it [of the church]. The first character of their belonging of the church tranquilizes them and they do not see the church as an oppressor. The whole church setup is based on accepting inequality. How the hierarchy applies in church is much stronger than anywhere else. The issue of resistance can easily be framed as blasphemy (Siviwe Mdoda, land activist, interview, Cape Town City, March 2017).

The interviewee added:

> people are not going to fight the church because the church is a medium through which they are supposed to reach a better life after death, so they say let's be grateful for what we have. That is why to all of us the Wupperthal case is an extraordinary singularity (Siviwe Mdoda, land activist, interview, Cape Town, March 2017).

The tricky part of dealing with the church, as my field research confirms, is that most people tend to accept the church as an organising force because normally churches have all sorts of projects that support people to obtain some form of income. This was the case of the Moravian Church in South Africa (MCSA) in Wupperthal. This equally explains why the 'Concerned Moravians' – the FSC group that is challenging the church's leadership in Wupperthal – are few in number (around 20) in a community with around two hundred members. According to Dennis Bronton, the leader of the 'Concerned Moravians', "The church must deal with the souls and leave the land to the people. We want material improvement of our lives. The church cannot control everything" (Dennis Bronton, interview, Wupperthal, February 2017).

Picture 9: Sign pointing to the Moravian church and other places in Wupperthal | Credit: the author

In the repertoires of their demands, the Concerned Moravians always clarified that the fight is not against the church but the business sector of the church, the MCiSA Holdings. "The business side of the church is not allowing us to have full control of the land to do our own thing" (Dennis Bronton, interview, Wupperthal, February 2017). This has had a number of consequences for the members. One of these happen to be the refusal of the Cederberg Municipality to support the cooperative that the Concerned Moravians set up in Wupperthal because the government cannot implement projects on 'private' land without the church's consent. MCiSA has registered a holding in 2011 as an Agriculture and Tourism Company.

In October 2009 the 'Concerned Moravians' mobilized other station members in Wupperthal and elsewhere to join a march which Dennis Bronton led to the head office of MCiSA in Lansdale, near Cape Town. What makes it harder to mobilize more Moravian church members to join the 'protesting group' is that in the Dutch Reformed church,

> … there is a lie that God gave the Afrikaners this land. This lie is preached day in, day out, so many times to the victims of dispossession that this lie became a truth. So, there are these underlying myths around the issue of church land. Residents of these areas are for generations fed with this nonsense -that basically it is God that decides who get the land. It does not have to be seen as an accident that whites have land and we don't (Interviewee, Cape Town, February 2017).

These statements are instructive, if we are to fully comprehend how peasants interpreted the exploitative and capitalist activities of the church without necessarily questioning the spiritual aspect of the same institution. While they accepted the importance of the church's spiritual mission, they were also cognisant of the role of the church in the undemocratic ownership of land in society.

In South Africa, the issue of church land has striking similarities with traditional lands. In most of the areas where land is managed under traditional custodianship of the chiefs, people generally relegate their agency to existing authority. There have been a number of campaigns by NGOs to forge rural democratisation. There have never, however, been similar campaigns when it comes to the church land, although the issue of church land in South Africa cannot be undermined as a small issue.

> We must admit that this is the most under-researched issue on the land to date. Since there has been a lot of compromise, people do not see the church as part of that equation. So, the interest at how much the church is holding is looked at by very few organisations. The issue of church land is one crucial issue that people really need to scrutinise. In the Northern Cape [province] there was a case of a mining company that was paying rent to the church. Land with minerals, owned by the church, and the mining company was paying them (Siviwe Mdoda, interview, Cape Town, March 2017).

The issue of church land holding is not similar to that of government because churches have a longer history of holding land in South Africa than the current states. In many cases, churches provided land to the government after 1994. That might be the reason the Cederberg Municipality (to which Wupperthal belongs) has not shown

any significant interest in intervening to support the Concerned Moravians with agricultural inputs, irrigation systems, funding or credit, among others.

In South Africa, churches have mutated into very lucrative commercial ventures that acquire assets. In the urban area, churches own a great deal of property. Just as churches might grant land to the state, community centres that can no longer be sustained by the municipality are sold to the church. There is also another reality, that churches are becoming stronger in the class of land owners. But, by and large, they are not a target of resistance or of campaigns to repossess land in both urban and rural areas. Yet, historically, and world over, the church has always been one of the wealthiest and largest land owners. The main reason, perhaps, why it has not been targeted by agrarian movements in southern Africa is its dual and inherently contradictory role as private capital and as a spiritual refuge where ordinary people seek refuge from the cares of everyday life. This explains why only a small minority of peasants were able to rise against the church's tendency to accumulate land at a time when communities in surrounding areas were facing land shortages.

Nevertheless, the Wupperthal case amply demonstrates the accumulation tendencies of private capital - in this case, landed faith-based elite - at the expense of local communities, and how communities have been able to confront such encroachment, even in the absence of key actors such as the church (and the state). Moreover, the case is also unique to the extent to which it explains the nexus between the spiritual and the material. It brings to the fore the extent to which peasants can be perceptive enough to appreciate and value the spiritual role of the church while at the same time challenging it when it acts against the material interests of the communities that it is supposed to serve.

Picture 10: Whuppethal main mission station. Credits: za.pinterest.com

Picture 11: Wupperthal main mission station after fire[37] in 2018.

Finally, the Wupperthal case discussed in this chapter serves as a useful window of analysis for the broader issues at play in the political economy of land in South Africa. As discussed earlier in this chapter, peasant struggles against the church are indicative of the problem of landlessness in South Africa at a time when the capital (in this case the church) have continued to accumulate property, with the covert support of the state. In fact, some elements of the state also double as capital, thus putting them in an invidious position to positively tackle the problem of landlessness among South Africa's toiling masses.

This state of affairs in South Africa has thus generated debate among scholars, analysts and politicians about the future of South Africa amid such glaring imbalances. Scholars argue that the non-committal posture taken by the state in South Africa has led to the rise of radical elements moving towards land reform in South Africa. For instance, Anseeuw and Mathebula (2008) attribute the formation and relative popularity of the Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF, a new political party, third biggest in SA parliament) and the intensification of the ideas of Appropriation of Land

[37] On Sunday December 30 2018 a fire fire broke out and destroyed the town hall, the school and an estimated 45 homes in Wupperthal. An estimated 200 people are left homeless. Some of those people were participants of this research. Photo: AJ Van Brandt

without compensation to unresolved issues in South African society. Indeed, the EFF has been riding on the absence of a genuinely nationalist approach to the land and agrarian reform agenda. The party has presented a new model of radicalised of land reform ideology with great potential in affecting South African land reform through its seemingly pro poor inclination. Aliber and Mokoena (2003) view the state of affairs as a dilemma for the ANC government in trying to fulfill a dual mandate of food security and redistribution. Destabilizing the commercial (and largely white dominated) sector has been viewed as politically correct yet economically suicidal (Aliber and Mokoena 2003, p.34).

Given increased levels of peasant agitation as demonstrated in Wupperthal and the inroads made by the EFF on the country's political economy, one may be tempted to contemplate on the future of the country's land systems – as greater pressure is brought to bear on both capital and the government, some concessions may have to be made, sooner or later.

4. ZIMSOFF and the Zimbabwean case

ZIMSOFF was formally founded in 2002, but its origins predate this period. Two crucial ZIMSOFF leaders and founders, Nelson Mudzingwa and Elizabeth Mpofu, worked and played important roles in the Association of Zimbabwe Traditional Environmental Conservationists (AZTREC), formed in 1985 around an alliance amongst spirit mediums, chiefs and veterans of the liberation struggle. The then leader of the association, comrade Cosmas Gonese (as he was referred to by the interviewees), served as the secretary general of the Zimbabwe National Liberation War Veterans Association (ZNLWVA) and was, as is widely recognized, the architect of the land occupation movement that would force land reform in early 2000 in Zimbabwe.

The story is long, but for the interest of this section it is worth mentioning that while Nelson Mudzingwa was a technical staff member at the Association of Zimbabwe Traditional Environmental Conservationists (AZTREC), Elizabeth held the position of a chairperson. It was in these roles that both participated in forums and platforms with other associations and NGOs, as was the case with the PELUM

(Participatory Ecological Land Use Management) Association, which enabled Elizabeth Mpofu's participation in the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) held in Johannesburg, South Africa, in 2002, after which ZIMSOFF was founded as a country chapter for the Eastern and Southern Africa Small-scale Farmers' Forum (ESAFF) (Interview, Elizabeth Mpofu, Shashe, January 2018).

ZIMSOFF seeks to improve livelihoods of organized and empowered smallholder farmers in Zimbabwe who are practicing sustainable and viable ecological agriculture. It also seeks to strengthen and expand a dynamic alliance of smallholder farmer organisations promoting a movement towards agro-ecological and organic farming, processing and exchange of produce to improve the lives of smallholder farmers in Zimbabwe. Its mandate is to take up farmer issues and articulate them to further farmer interests, to represent them at various forums, and to link them to one another and to opportunities across the nation, the region and beyond. ZIMSOFF is also mandated to oversee and ensure the development of the farmers' movement at all levels in Zimbabwe.

The ZIMSOFF membership is drawn from among farmers who are practicing sustainable agriculture, such as agro-ecology and organic farming. The farmers are empowered with leadership and technical skills at local, regional and continental levels. ZIMSOFF has a membership of 19 000 individuals all over the country. Members are engaged mainly in agricultural activities which are scattered in four regional clusters with each cluster having an average of 20 smallholder farmer organisations with varying numbers of members[38].

The structure of ZIMSOFF has all positions occupied by farmers (men and women). In each cluster, households are organized into a group or club. A number of these form a smallholder. The highest decision-making in ZIMSOFF's structure takes place at the Annual General Meeting, which is open for all farmers who are members pf ZIMSOFF. The movement has a national council (11 women and 10 men), elected from the four clusters that elect the executive committee and the board of trustees (a trust serves as a legal structure for the organisation).

38 ZIMSOFF website: http://zimsoff.org/membership/

4.1. Transcending Agrarian Capital: Shashe and agroecology

Before ZIMSOFF was founded, a number of the current ZIMSOFF leaders settled in Shashe as part of the AZTREC group that occupied what used to be a cattle range farm in the early 2000s. This group was composed of more than 100 people, and was led by Cosmas Gonese, the founder and director of AZTREC and then the secretary general of ZNLWVA. He was "an influential man of few words but full of practical strategies" (Mudzingwa, 2018, p. 1). Another informant described him thus:

> He came here to Masvingo to lead war veterans and members of AZTREC to occupy Shashe. He wanted the whole community in Shashe to practice indigenous knowledge systems (Tendai Gonese, widow of the late Cosmas Gonese, interview, Masvingo city, January 2017).

The land occupation at Shashe - which happened almost at the same time in many other parts of Zimbabwe - was preceded by a ceremony with a spirit medium, Nehanda. The spirit Nehanda is said to be an ancestral spirit that uses women as her mediums. The mediums are given the title Nehanda or Mbuya Nehanda. One of the daughters of Nyatsimba Mutota, the first leader of the Munhumutapa state, was considered to possess this spirit.[39] Both Nelson Mudzingwa and Elizabeth Mpofu attended the ceremony. According to their personal accounts,

> …[t]owards the end of 1999, AZTREC hosted a ceremony that I participated in, presided over by the national spirit medium of Mbuya Nehanda who was the patron of the organisation … During the ritual the spirit medium of Mbuya Nehanda narrated how land was taken and why there were the first and second Chimurenga wars. The most important issues were the colonization of the indigenous cultures and the dispossession of the land. It was high time for land to be taken over from the white commercial farmers because it was not going to come on a silver plate. She urged all war veterans who were present at this ceremony to revive the spirit of the liberation struggle, by mobilizing the masses to move onto the farms and occupy land. If there was going to be resistance from the white commercial farmers, the spirit of Mbuya Nehanda said that she was ready to be shot by a gun. I was shocked to hear this, but I felt deep

[39] http://www.bulawayo1872.com/history/nehandambuya.htm

> down that I really needed to own a plot of land where I would demonstrate my experiences of sustainable agriculture (Mudzingwa, 2018, p. 1).
>
> We had to ask our ancestors' permission. That's probably what allowed the occupations to occur without violence. Everyone knows that the white farmers were all armed. In Shashe no shot was fired and no blood was spilled (Elizabeth Mpofu, interview, Shashe, January 2017).

Shashe consists of two distinct groups. The first group to arrive was the AZTREC. The second is made up of hundreds of families resettled in Shashe after being displaced from their areas of origin by a mining company. According to Nelson Mudzingwa, following the occupations, government officials, private sector representatives, NGOs and the leaders of the communities in the Shashe block of farms held a series of meetings with a view to laying out a comprehensive and sustainable development agenda for the block of farms.

Picture 12: Display of variety of seeds and products processed by a peasant farmer in Shashe, January 2017 | Credit: the author.

The government's Rural Land Occupiers (Protection from Eviction) Act of 2001 protected people who had occupied land between March 2000 and March 2002. The meetings culminated in a list of beneficiaries who were to be allocated self-contained plots of 8 hectares. Shashe is constituted by 215 families from Masvingo province who had occupied the land, 150 families displaced by Rio Tinto's Murowa diamond mine in neighbouring Midlands province, and 12 families led by AZTREC (Mudzingwa, 2018). Today, 380 families live in Shashe. Thus, the first mandate of ZIMSOFF was to protect the gains of the land reform program by ensuring that everyone got access to land, and that it would be used for the benefit of society;

> We are very much proud of the land reform programme in Zimbabwe, but now there is need to defend this land reform so that every Zimbabwe gets a piece of land. Land is for Zimbabwe; it was never for the colonialists who came into our country. It is us who worked on their land when they were here anywhere. It was very necessary for us to take the land and utilize us. What we need to do as Zimbabweans, as social movements, is to unite so that we defend the land reform program in Zimbabwe so that it successful (Elizabeth Mpofu, in 'Conversations of the World' with Boaventura de Sousa Santos)

ZIMSOFF farmers in Shashe, however, began to think beyond merely accessing land to focus on fully utilizing the land to achieve food security through good husbandry and conservation. They realized that the true essence of land reform is found in increasing the productivity of land rather than merely in its ownership. The Shashe Millennium Producers, the ZIMSOFF farmers' organisation in Shashe, is implementing an agro-ecology project that has been inspiring the Shashe community as well as other farmers' organisations across the country.

As one research participant put it, "We don't use fertilizer because of the type of soils which are here, there are rich in nutrients and the application of fertilisers would kill the decomposers and for example of the maize in field it is greener as if it had applied fertilizer." (interview, Grace Taruvinga, Shahe, January 2018). The land occupants are sensitive to issues of soil conservation particularly because they had been relocated from an area in Gutu where soil erosion had been quite prevalent.

> When we initiated it we were part of the first people to come into the farms, we had a single agenda of making sure we do our own system of farming. We were organic, we had no land, pastures for cattle, no good fields so we went to a place with big fields and many cattle so that we could use cattle manure. That how we settled here. Someone would be in charge of herbs and another of the water. This idea is derived from our cultural background, as indigenous people we never used chemicals, we went back into our culture and found out that contours had always been there to prevent soil erosion. If one goes into the bush, you will be sure to find old contours in places where people used to live. This shows that people knew how to conserve land. Contours also helped them to retain water which was scarce. The water would be stopped from flowing then it would sink into the ground, thus bringing the water table closer to the surface. When ploughing, we now use cow dung as manure, because fertilizer is only good for the seed and crop but not the soil. These chemicals will destroy everything in the soil but make sure you get a good crop but the soil is destroyed. But manure becomes a part of the soil, so the soil does not react [reject it]. Why can't we go back to our roots that we use manure or dead grass or leaves to fertilise our fields **(**Interview, Isaac Mpofu, Shashe January 2018).

The Association of Zimbabwe Traditional Environmental and Conservationist (AZTREC) had been working with chiefs, traditional leaders, war veterans, ex-combatants, village heads and government departments. The organisation focused on introducing ecologically sensitive measures to their agriculture. This radical shift towards agriculture demonstrated that land reform transcended the bounds of a mere revolution but transformed mindsets on the part of the farming community. This represents a major shift in peasant consciousness beyond encouraging land occupation and reveals the multiple layers of land reform in Zimbabwe. Therefore, after the land allocations, AZTREC began demonstrating on reforestation, on land use design, soil and water management, small grain seed and open variety pollination (OPV) seeds.

These organisations have been central in permeating ideas of land reform existing beyond mere occupation of land. Peasants point to particular advantages of being part of such organisations as ZIMSOFF*;* As one of them put it: *"*We acquire knowledge about our indigenous [practices] and resources, and we do not need much capital for farming because we use organic fertilisers and seeds and also, we use

natural medicines for our animals which is costless" (Interview, Nyawake Glades and Mrs Virginia Masengwa of Togovaka Group of Shashe, January 2018).

These projects and activities have led to a considerable transformation in the agroecological outlook of Shashe, and livelihoods have been enhanced. An official of ZIMSOFF succinctly put it thus:

> The achievements have been remarkable. Farmers have turned a farm ranch into a successful agricultural settlement that it is today. It is now a center of excellence, an agricultural college without walls. There are a quite a number of things that one can learn from Shashe's experience; it has become a successful pilot project that we want other clusters to emulate. It is a good example of what farmers can do if they organize and work together independently to improve their lot (interview, Ngoni Chikowe, ZIMSOFF member, Harare, January 2018).

Table 2: Transformation Shashe over 20 year

	BEFORE 2000	**YEAR 2010**	**YEAR 2020**
LAND SIZE	100ha arable,	3104ha arable	3104 arable
	14020ha for grazing.	11916ha for grazing	11916 for grazing
	TOTAL-15020ha	TOTAL-15020ha	TOTAL-15020ha
LIVESTOCK	cattle-3000	cattle-6000, goats-10000	cattle-7000, goats-10000
	goats-200	sheep-500, pigs-500	sheep-1000, pigs-1000
	sheep-150	donkeys, dogs and paultry	donkeys, dogs, paultry,rabbits and
	chickens-layers and broilers		fish
FOOD CROPS	creals	cereals (maize, sorgham, millet)	cereals (maize, sorgham and millet)
	pulses	pulses (nuts,cowpea, beans)	pulses (nuts, cowpea, beans)
		oils (sunflower, soya,sesame)	oils (sunflower,soya,sesame)
		vegetables and fruits	vegetables and fruits

NUMBER OF FAMILIES	50	400	550
EMPLOYMENT/JOBS CREATED	Farm workers- 50	Plot holders-400	Plot holders-500
		casual workers-100	casual workers-200
		civil servants-50	civil servants-100
		TOTAL-550	TOTAL-800
OTHER BISINESS/ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES	Beef production	Beef production	Beef production
	Paultry production (chicken and	Paultry production (chicken and	Paultry production (chicken and eggs)
	eggs)	eggs)	Piggery
	Dairy	Piggery	Shoats
	shoats	Shoats	Fish production
		Crop production	Crop production
		Enterprenuership	Enterprenuerhip
Source: compiled by Brain Muvindi and the author, based on survey and official data			

In many ways, livelihoods have been transformed and pre-existing poverty has been considerably reversed. One farmer explained the extent of his newly acquired wealth thus, "I had nothing, but I now have 5 cows, 10 goats and 8 chickens. We a lot, from sweet cabbage, tomatoes, onions, carrots, okra and king onion, maize, pearl millet, soybeans, rice, among others" (interview, Grace Taruvinga, Shashe, January 2018). This transformation is to be viewed as part of a revolution that paid overall attention to indigenous knowledge systems in improving productivity and using conservation strategies to support peasant agriculture. In this way, ZIMSOFF may be viewed as an agent for challenging the neo liberal way of approaching agricultural development and transformation. Furthermore, is an agent for pushing the agenda of ensuring global food security as well as ensuring food sovereignty using local communities and resources. One official of ZIMSOFF explained the grand idea thus:

> To Africa this should be a very big lesson that small scale farmers across the world can come together and attain food sovereignty with little external intervention. If you look into the Southern African region there are nations that have signed protocols that allow the production of Genetic Modified Organisms (GMO). In Zimbabwe currently now they have not yet done that and ZIMSOFF is working towards convincing the government not to allow GMOs because we do not know their impact on people's health. National governments talk of food security, but this is not enough, we need food sovereignty which means the ability to control own food systems. One can choose what he/she wants to eat and there is also diversity of different crops one can grow (interview, Ngoni Chikowe, January 2018).

Many peasant farmers in Zimbabwe are, however, still consider themselves to be poor peasants. This is mainly due to limited state assistance after the land reform programme. Most peasant farmers remain deprived of the use of mechanical power and therefore rely on the use of draught power and manual labor for cultivation. This is the case across the country. Government assistance programs are few and peasant households have resorted to surviving through their own means without much assistance from the government.

As demonstrated in the ensuing sections, the limited role played by the government opened the way for NGOs to build connections with farmer organisations in Shashe. Nevertheless, the case of Shashe allows us to look at the capacity for transformation and the resilience of peasant farmers who have come to have access to land (as a result of agrarian reform) and without interference from agrarian capital. This research looked at the capacity for and efficiency of income generation and livelihood security while assessing the political potential of landed peasantry in Shashe.

5. An 'incorporate comparison': social organisation of the movements

These agrarian movements have significant differences, as do the contexts and agrarian trajectories of their respective countries. In the previous chapters some of those differences were presented, as is the case with the historical chapter. In the following section, I deal with aspects that allow general explanations of how agrarian

movements operate in terms of their social organisation, political behaviour, relations, and history and identity.

The social basis of the agrarian movements in Southern Africa, as this study shows, is diverse. It is not homogeneous. These movements are composed of landless peasants, agricultural workers highly exploited by agrarian capital, middle scale farmers and urban proletarians with small plots of land, especially in the townships. The later are mostly with the FSC in South Africa. The social base of the National Union of Peasants of Mozambique is largely small-scale peasants, with access to land, cultivating areas ranging from 0.5 to 5 hectares. There are, however, members who access larger areas, usually in areas with reduced land conflict, where agrarian capital has not penetrated with greater force. The membership of the movements is characterized by differentiated classes. It ranges from landless peasants to small-scale and medium-scale landed peasant farmers. In some cases, in Mozambique and Zimbabwe, certain members of the movements employ some of their colleagues for casual work in land preparation, sowing or harvesting. This work is not always paid for in cash, but sometimes in the form products. This, however, is not necessarily viewed by the movements as exploitation of labour, in capitalist terms. Some of the historical and symbolic leaderships of the movements have an older connection with processes of struggles in the region. One of the founders of UNAC, today an honorary president, was an active member and in the leadership of FRELIMO. A former UNAC president participated in the liberation struggle and several members have close relatives who were in the ranks of the national liberation movement. In Zimbabwe, as I mentioned earlier, one of the leaders who inspired the formation of ZIMSOFF was a Chimurenga guerrilla. One of the founders of FSC in South Africa actively participated in the struggles led by the African National Congress. This suggests that there is a direct legacy of the past, especially the liberation struggles, in the current leaderships of the agrarian movements.

The leaders of the movements are elected democratically and the responsibilities are rotated. The agrarian movements of this study are grassroots democratic movements in which local associations are linked together. “The process of electing national leaders for our movement begins with the local association, at grassroots level” (Ismael Oussemane, interview, Maputo, May 2015).

In accordance with the movement's statutes, general meetings are held every year to discuss the routine business of the movements and assess activities that have been implemented as part of its strategic plan, which is approved every four years during the election period. The FSC changes its board and elects its convenor every year. There are contradictions too. For instance, there has been debate in ZIMSOFF regarding the issue of autonomy among the members. One official put it thus;

> in terms of internal democracy, it is difficult to give a clear picture of what is going on, because of the way we are structured, it gives us a lot of headaches, because from the cluster you are a chairperson then to the national you are a vice-chairperson, executive, council board. So that is where the problem is. Of course, there is democracy, but we are not meeting regularly. It is just once a year and sometimes we do not meet at all. Decisions are then made without the participation of all members and leaders. This needs to be revisited (interview, Oliat Mavuramba, cluster coordinator ZIMSOFF, Harare, 2018)

Moreover, issues of lack of transparency in members duties, tasks and responsibilities, which exposes fragile governance efficiency, exist

> They [the leadership] are sidelining some members thinking that others are just support staff. They are running everything, there are no clear roles and responsibilities given to members in the leadership structure. Even the reporting structure is not clear. For instance, we sometimes end up doing the role of people in the finance department and this includes auditing. That is why I said we are lacking in clear delegation of roles and responsibilities (interview, ZIMSOFF member, Harare, January 2018).

Gender issues have occupied a central place in the leadership of these organisations. UNAC approved a new strategic plan and elected a female president for the first time. One of its specific objectives is "to consider aspects of gender [...] in all the movement's activities".[40] In a context in which patriarchy is deeply embedded in the rural world, the signals which the UNAC has gradually been sending out, both in

[40] See UNAC website at https://www.unac.org.mz.

its agendas for debate and in concrete measures to appoint women to positions of leadership, suggest that in the near future the movement may have a strongly feminist approach.

It is also reported that the movements constantly seek to build a culture of tolerance. Whenever difficult situations arise, they find ways of resolving conflicts that do not allow tensions to escalate. One informant stated that:

> We have been able to hold the movement together because women manage conflicts more than men. If you look at the trade unions, for example, they disagree more and divide more. I think it's because at UNAC we have women in the leadership and trade unions are only led by men (Interview, Nampula, September 2017).

While the determination of the leadership to allow women to occupy spaces to the same extent as men is noteworthy, gender analysis and awareness goes beyond these measures. As one UNAC staff member acknowledged, the movement has the challenge of promoting and deepening debates on gender inequality and oppression as well as feminist practices and theories. Evoking gender language and implementing the policy of gender parity in spaces does not, however, imply the absence of problematic gender relations in the movements.

The leadership capacity and charisma of these movements has allowed some of them to be entrusted with leadership positions on international platforms. This is the case of Elizabeth Mpofu, who is the general coordinator of La Via Campesina International. Elizabeth is sometimes replaced by another female African leader, Davine Witbooi, who replaced her during the VIIth LVC International Conference in Dério, Spain, in 2016, when Elizabeth had to return to Zimbabwe urgently following the death of a sister.

Picture 13: UNAC peasant women in Ruace, Zambezia province in their garden. Credit: Diogo Cardoso.

UNAC, for instance, was able to innovate by embodying emerging issues in its agenda. Gender, for instance, began to be addressed openly from 2007 onwards. Over time, gender issues therefore gradually gained ground. Today, the executive secretariat has a gender officer, to respond to the demand undertaken by UNAC to deal with these issues. One of the officers described the situation thus:

> We are a macho movement, operating in a macho country, with a patriarchal system. In the countryside gender issues are not sufficiently understood. If the situation is lamentable among intellectuals, imagine yourself in a grassroots movement, in the countryside. But the fact that we have decided to work seriously on this issue is an important step, so that, in the future, the relations between the members of the movement are as good as possible (Flaida Macheze, UNAC gender officer, interview, Maputo, June 2018).

This statement is quite revealing of how gender is viewed as a serious and urgent issue within the organisation. To this end, UNAC has adopted a gender policy for representation in the spaces it occupies. UNAC women's assemblies are held every year, alongside the movement's annual assembly, with the aim of preparing women to debate issues which concern them, in their own associations and in the district unions.

Women and youths have also played a considerable role in articulating peasant issues in the three movements

> FSC understand that women are the most exploited, are the most people that capitalism is oppressing. As I said, mobilizing and organizing is not easy, it takes time, and we also going to fail but we are going to have to pick up the pieces and go again. As the FSC, we have youth articulation, we have women articulation, but it is not very strong. Women are at the center of the debate of the FSC, because even at our last meeting, there were women, mostly women in the meeting, but do they exercise power? Are they allowed to do so? (interview, Sizwe Nyuka, Cape Town February 2018).

In the case of Zimbabwe, the increasingly influential role of women in the movement, and particularly the rise of Elizabeth is more impressive when considering the fact that women's rights were hardly considered during the land reform programme. While the land reform may have granted more women access to land, women received considerably less land compared to their male counterparts, notwithstanding their demographic dominance over men.[41] Access to land title for women has continued to be problematic, and the bon mot is that land reform did not reverse patriarchy[42]. The selection process was male biased because chiefs in communal areas, government officials, etc. are mostly men. For A2 farms (small to middle size farms), gender discrimination is a result of the financial requirements, which few women could meet. This social dynamic of land reform has brought dialogue on how to integrate women and provide them with more independent access to land.

In this light, therefore, the work done by women attaining positions of prominence in these movements becomes more impressive. Further, as shown in this chapter, women have played an increasingly eminent role good land husbandry based on agroecology and ensuring food sovereignty.

The agrarian movements in southern Africa, although not currently, have great potential and possibility to weave alliances with urban movements, especially trade

[41] 'Land, Seeds, Food, Water, people and the Climate. 15 Years after the agrarian reform in Zimbabwe', a report of the Popular University of Social Movements (UPMS) workshop. Harare, 12-13 July 2016.
[42] idem

unions. Although the scope of both sectors is distinct, their social base has many similarities (semi-proletariat, urban proletariat with peasant characteristics).

Regarding their structure, perhaps what should be taken into consideration is reinforcement of a non-NGOised model movement (specifically in their secreatriats), but one that is based on membership power and exercises internal democracy. Trate unions, specifically in South Africa, are usually better on this.

6. Political behaviour: ideology, tactics, strategies and mobilisation methods

The ideological orientations of the agrarian movements in this study are not revealed implicitly. In general, their discourses point to the defence of peasant interests against agrarian capital or against (neoliberal) state policies. Even so, a strong inclination towards left-wing politics is evident. The FSC statement, according to which their fight is for an "agrarian reform that takes the farm land away from the current racist, sexist, greedy owners and shares it **among the people on an equitable basis**" (FSC Facebook page, emphasis added), is an example of that. According to a UNAC statement,

> Peasants are the guardians of life, nature and the planet. As a peasants' movement in the family sector, UNAC pursues production models based on the foundations of peasant farming, respect and conservation of the soil, use of adapted and appropriate technologies, and a rural extension that is participative and interactive (UNAC, 2012).

This also shows a strong inclination towards environmentalism, an ideology that in recent years has been an important part of left-wing movements worldwide. One of the characteristics of the agrarian movements in this study is their theoretical contribution to articulating ideas that challenge the current food regime and propose alternatives to it. One such contribution includes the creation of concepts that arise from struggles (Santos & Meneses, 2009), such as agroecology, family agriculture and food sovereignty. I will return to this point later.

Land occupations for crop cultivation, livestock and housing are more visible in South Africa, where accessing land for small-scale farmers is more arduous. According to a member of the FSC from Khayelitsha,

> That is why there is this kind of resistance. Because it's eating up on people's dignity. That level of indignity for me, its radicalising reality. You can't expect somebody to be moderate if they live in these conditions. (Sizwe Nyuka, interview, Cape Town, March 2017).

Among young people, the motivation for the occupations is most often unemployment. The use of a school backyard is common in urban areas where they claim to use it as a "way to connect social problems with food politics. We do events with kids and the youth from the community. The official educational system does not necessarily teach our children to understand beyond technicalities" (Sizwe Nyuka, interview, Cape Town, March 2017). Land occupations are seen as a temporary solution; thus, the struggle is for radical land reform. The municipality and commonage lands are among the most occupied lands in South Africa. Although land occupation is not common in Mozambique, owing to the current agrarian structure (and a land law that protects, to a certain degree, the peasantry), the Zimbabwean land occupation movement that forced the government to embark on the land reform programme and the current cases in South Africa show that this has been used as an effective tactic. Some direct actions such as holding marches and protesting at land grabber companies have also been applied in Mozambique. In the range of strategies of the agrarian movements are actions, overt or covert, which aim to guarantee the security of the activists and the leaderships, as well as to guarantee livelihoods and avoid displacement and evictions. In South Africa, for instance, some 'alliances' with the commercial sector have been established. One farmer pointed out that in order to get his produce (beans, baby corn, maize, green pepper, lettuce) sold in the local and regional food retailers he had to align with a white commercial middleman who had connections and influence in the industry. One interviewee explained, "We had to align with him. You cannot access the market on your own, if you are a black farmer" (Interviewee, Cape Town, January 2019). Even if this could be seen as contradictory – the alliance with a sector that is perceived as the enemy of poor small-scale and landless farmers - this is at times the only way small-scale and peasant farmers can get access to markets.

One of the common strategies in the agrarian movements is to hold membership in more than one movement. A leader of FSC revealed that "white farmers in my area and the police are scared to attack me because they know about

all the organisations, I am part of. They know I have a lot of support base in many movements" (Davine Witbooi, interview, Cape Town, April 2017).

Attempts to access government support have been among the resorts for members of FSC in South Africa. Two interviewees revealed that they had benefited from government support. Generally, the departments of agriculture and rural development, in South Africa, grant farmers a package which includes irrigation systems, farming tunnels, (hybrid or GMO) seeds and (chemical) fertilisers. Since there is poor – or inexistent – monitoring from the government, those farmers would choose what to use and what to discard. As both farmers reported, in most cases they (and other counterparts) would keep the irrigation system (pumps, pile lines) and the tunnels (for a seed nursery). "They give us those seeds and fertilisers without teaching us how to use. If you use it wrongly you do not see the results. So, we would just use seeds that we know how to manoeuvre" (FSC farmer, interview, Cape Town, in April 2019).

The membership numbers do not seem to be considered an important element by leaderships of the movements. Their mobilisation strategies, despite including the incorporation of more members, seem to focus more on achieving recognition by government structures and other sectors of civil society. This, to them, enables them to gain legitimacy as representatives of peasant farmers. In the past five years, the movements' social bases have not seen a considerable increase, although there was an intention from UNAC to expand the movement throughout the country and continue to "reorganise the peasantry at grass-roots level"[43]. The weak mobilisation capacity of the movements opens spaces for actors such as NGOs to form separate peasant and farmers' associations in the countryside.

Despite the above, I do not subscribe to the idea that agrarian movements will always be in a position of vulnerability when relating to other actors, be they states, NGOs or other movements. It seems to me that their relations with other actors can be used in favour of the movements, either to mobilise resources to pursue their agendas and interests, or to influence immediate changes or structures in terms of public policy. What is problematic is the often-contradictory relationship with

[43] Augusto Mafigo, former president of the UNAC, in a public interview given in September 2013. Available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cWnGXV02Imw>. Accessed on 08/01/2016.

agrarian capital that some members of the movements may consider establishing in order to supposedly achieve a win-win situation.

7. Relations

7.1. State, NGOs and donors

Although the government is not always seen as an ally of small-scale farmers, (since usually the state sees peasant farmers as an obstacle to economic and rural development), the movements in the three countries do not rule out engaging the government in specific situations, whenever it seems strategic for them. Rightful resistance (O'Brien, 1996) is used as a strategy when the movements send official letters, petitions and other communications to government institutions to request government intervention in, for instance, impeding land evictions. These are contentious acts that open channels of participation while also making use of existing channels. In 2017, the No to ProSAVANA Campaign, of which UNAC is a member, sent an open letter to the president of the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), demanding immediate suspension of JICAS's actions in ProSAVANA (Monjane, 2017b; Monjane & Bruna, 2019). UNAC is the body which officially speaks and acts on behalf of the peasantry in Mozambique, regardless of whether the individuals concerned are affiliated to it or not, and, as mentioned previously, the Mozambican Ministry of Agriculture considers it to be a strategic partner.[44] As demonstrated by Monjane and Bruna (2019), UNAC membership was always strongly influenced by the political undercurrents of rural Mozambique. When UNAC was first established, RENAMO supporters dominated rural areas in central and northern regions of Mozambique. On the other hand, those in the southern regions strongly supported FRELIMO.

It is still the case that, today, it is mostly in the countryside where we observe significant fluidity in electoral support between the FRELIMO and RENAMO political parties. Differences in political views within UNAC are therefore so evident that it was decided that debates of a politically partisan nature have to be avoided within the movement in order to avoid fragmentation (Ismael Oussemane, interview, Maputo,

[44] This has been confirmed on various occasions by the current minister in speeches and meetings with the UNAC itself.

2017, also cited in Monjane and Bruna 2019, 15). In Ruace, Zambézia, UNAC peasants had asked the local government many times to legalise the land where the associations had been working for almost 30 years before Hoyo-Hoyo, an agribusiness company, grabbed their lands. "Why did our father betray us?" The 'father' they talk about is the ruling party, FRELIMO.

It is quite common in South Africa to see ANC flags among protesters demonstrating against agrarian policies or land grabs, as it is also the case in Zimbabwe: ZIMSOFF has never presented any contention with the state and always makes celebratory references to the government's bodies, especially the Ministry of Agriculture. ZIMSOFF is currently working with the Ministry of Agriculture on a program to promote peasant seeds and indigenous agricultural systems. For many critics of social movements, however, this raises concerns, particularly with regard to the autonomy of the movements to act with complete independence from the state. Engagement with the state, however, does not necessarily mean compliance. It is mostly a strategic move for immediate gains.

Although ZIMSOFF celebrates government policies, particularly in redistributing land to landless peasants, the latter has played a less prominent role in alleviating the pressures of food insecurity in the post land reform programme period. Peasant households have thus resorted to surviving through their own means without much assistance from the government.

This unusual posture taken by government has opened the door for NGOs to take a more prominent role with ZIMSOFF. NGOs began to approach ZIMSOFF with offers to offer services such as conservation training;

> …we have got a really good number of NGOs who used to have their own way of doings things but because ZIMSOFF is an emerging force within the civil society here in Zimbabwe they seem to be now coming forth and are now speaking our own language. Most of them have now realized that agroecology is the alternative way to go so they have begun to sing to our tune (interview, Ngoni Chikowe, Harare January 2017).

However, this raises questions over the patronage of NGOs. Despite the aid and assistance given by pro peasant NGOs, peasants remain skeptical about the motives of NGOs. Peasants raised concerns over the dangers of peasant movements becoming

instruments of Non-Governmental Organisations' agendas particularly in the issue of training.

> I think the dangers of farmer movements getting into the mandates of NGO's is that we will end up our core business that we must be practicing farmers and pushing our own agendas and then we end up taking the responsibilities which are not for us for example in ZIMSOFF we are a lobby and advocacy organisation whereby we need to amplifying the farmers voice on our concerns that factors then the NGO's role should be that should support the farmers technically were there think we have got a gap in terms maybe of training maybe material support that their need also to empower us as farmers that there are working with and then we need to separate roles that ours as a voice and also advocacy work we need to bring out our own issue rather than being represented by NGO's and not ending up taking responsibilities that are maybe for the technical NGO's so there is a danger for us if we want to do trainings we end up wasting much of our time instead concentrating on our major concerns (interview, Ngoni Chikowe, Harare, January 2017) .

While mobilisation for land reform was in the absence of any form of organized leadership through the participation of NGOs, it is therefore questionable as to if the NGOs are the right medium to pursue the peasant agenda. There are blurred lines over whether or not NGOs can build a movement which that is purely pro-farmer by-farmer for-farmers. Contradictory roles and agendas between peasant farmers and many NGOs are at the heart of the mystique.

For many critics of social movements, this raises concerns, particularly with regard to the autonomy of the movements to act with complete independence from the state. Engagement with the state, however, does not necessarily mean compliance. It is mostly a strategic move for immediate gains.

The relationship between NGOs and agrarian movements – or other social movements – has always been the subject of strong debate in social movement theories. There have been fierce tensions in the relationship between social movements and NGOs in most parts of the world. These debates highlight criticisms against NGOs made by social movements of what seems to be the "structural role" of NGOs under contemporary capitalism and governmentality (Lopes de Souza, 2013). In Africa, NGOs have also been criticized for playing a role in consolidating the

neoliberal hegemony in the continent (Shivji, 2007). This is not isolated from the norm, as historically NGOs have served to depoliticize and co-opt rural protest movements and transform their focus into welfare projects, promoting external funding and, in fact, serving as new vehicles for indirect government (Moyo & Yeros, 2005c). Negrão (1997) raised a number of negative points about the intervention of (foreign) NGOs in the articulation with local partners in Mozambique (Negrão, 1997). Today, this behaviour is identifiable in the relationship between more established and financially robust national civil society organisations and so-called grassroots community organisations, including peasant associations.

According to an SPP former staff member who played a vocal role in the formation of the FSC,

> NGOs do not create people's problems. NGOs are simply filling a political space, which probably they shouldn't in the first-place attempt to fill. Because in these beginning stages it goes well with the resources, but because the nature of the relationship is not political, because the NGO does not have a political objective, the nature of engagement has its own peculiar form (Ricado Jacobs, interview, Cape Town, March 2018).

Apart from providing financial – and technical support - NGOs were earmarked to provide intellectual assistance to the peasants. This has also created a crisis of expectation. As Ricardo put it;

> Here the weakness is, you don't have that petty bourgeois element. If Ricado is with the same level of education and level of political understanding within the FSC, the dynamics would immediately change. Because there is that internal mechanism that people think at SPP would become irrelevant to them in the sense that they start to rely on their own resources. Because Wupperthal people by necessity, they can get to Clanwilliam or to Cape Town if they want to. Now you ask yourself, why they are not doing it, it is their struggle. But the nature of the NGO creates that dynamic and so when SPP collapse, it creates a crisis internally. So, the question that we have to ask ourselves in South Africa is what is the role of the intelligentsia is the movements in South Africa (interview, Ricado Jacobs, Cape Town, March 2018).

The fact that the rural constituency cannot stand on its own both financially, technically and politically has thus made land reform a protracted process and there

are growing tensions and suspicions between NGOs and the peasantry. This is not unique to South Africa.

In the Zimbabwean case, it may be argued that, if anything the NGO – and academic – intelligentsia was rather somewhat sceptical about land reform citing the obvious reasons of a potential economic decline. The academic domain in Zimbabwe has continually pointed at the land reform as a catastrophic move. The hesitancy of the middle class to disrupt the status quo therefore jeopardises the change for a swift and radical reform. By their very nature, NGOs are agents of negotiation rather than radicals.

> …the nature of the organisation of NGO is that you are destroying more than what you build. So, there is that glorious 4–5-year period that it can sustain itself, but because of that nature the NGO has to decide whether they have to block the road or not and so if you look at the struggles that have erupted in the rural area, if you look at the farmworker's strike, it's quite ironic that the role of the NGOs is quite minimal, even though they were there, but their role was very minimum and we have to learn from that. What makes people erupt on their own. The same at Ithemba, they did not have much NGO involvement, and they had a very much radical orientation, without SPP they struggle and did the [land] occupation. In fact all these land occupation and struggle had no NGO involvement (interview, Ricado Jacobs, Cape Town, March 2018).

The presence of NGOs in the drive for land reform in South Africa has created a buffer to radical approach to land reform issues. While the peasants have complained about the slow reaction of NGOs as organs for change, it remains relevant whether there is any other alternative to fund and mobilise for land reform in South Africa. The middle and upper classes of South African social and political strata have for long been hesitant to imitate change based on the assumption that the Zimbabwe-style land reform was a failure, despite the fact that empirical research shows otherwise.

All three movements have strong relationships with NGOs. The relationships of the movements with NGOs begins in their own foundation. All three movements have had financial, logistical and technical support from NGOs or donors. The constituent assembly of UNAC and the whole process previous to that were supported by União

Geral das Cooperativas and financed by the Friedrich Ebert Foundation (Ismael Oussemane, interview, Maputo, February 2017). ZIMSOFF was supported by PELUM Association, and the FSC works closely with the SPP for technical support and policy education. SPP has also been a crucial partner when it comes to contact with the government or elaborating technical content for negotiations with the government. This can also be seen as a strategic stand since most of the FSC members and leadership are located in remote areas without easy access to communications, such as Wupperthal.

The vacuum left by the lack of alliance between peasant movements and trade unions - the failure of the peasant-worker alliance – allowed professional civil society organisations, mostly based in urban areas, to occupy the space, articulating specific agendas and struggles with peasant associations. These urban based NGOs – sometimes claiming to be 'organizing the peasantry' - often speak and mobilize resources in the name of the peasantry. The relationship between the peasant movements and national and international NGOs does not always promote progressive agendas.

Equally, there is an assumption among some that NGOs create social movements. The Surplus Peoples' Project, in South Africa, assumes that position in relation to the FSC. Statements such as "the FSC is our child" are commonly heard from SPP staff. In the case of the FSC, however, which is currently unable to create its own structures to facilitate financing and logistics, it is difficult to imagine its sustainability without the support of SPP. The movement would have to devote a significant amount of time to writing reports and fundraising.

UNAC in Mozambique has its national office in Maputo, with a strong executive secretariat, composed of non-peasant technical staff, many of them highly trained in project management, accounting, advocacy, pedagogy and communications. This causes some to take UNAC for an NGO type, since it has an office, raises funds and is accountable to donors. However, despite this administrative structure, the secretariat has no political attributions, and the responsibility for taking political decisions lies with its board, elected every five years in a democratic process.

One of the concerns is that UNAC, for example, receives considerable funding from various donors and partners, mostly from outside Mozambique, to implement

various assistance projects, rural development, technical training and advocacy activities. Although the implementation of these projects has a direct and immediate impact that cannot be denied, it is also true that the movement invests a lot of energy in working on these projects so that there is little time and few resources left to do the political work of mobilizing and expanding the movement at grassroots level.

7.2. Local Alliances

Agrarian justice movements are increasingly overlapping with other social movements of indigenous peoples, environmental justice, labour justice, food justice and food sovereignty, as well as consumers' movements globally.

The agrarian movements have a weakness in building alliances at local and national level. The movements have established contact with very few actors and have not had collective campaigns with other sectors of society. UNAC, in the particular case of the resistance to ProSAVANA, was wise to quickly establish relations with multiple sectors of civil society, such as environmental movements, women's movements, human rights movements and academic groups, among others. This was an exception to the rule. The common ground is that provincialisation persists among the struggles, especially among sectors that focus on different themes.

Although its focus is on peasants and agrarian issues, there is a growing awareness among UNAC leaders that the peasantry and the rural world are not an island, but are part of a broader society:

> A social movement like UNAC, inserted in civil society as a whole, has to participate in struggles that are not specifically of peasants, but of society and are also reflected in the peasant. In these struggles, we are allies. You cannot focus only on the peasant; you have to look at society, because you are not an island. You cannot fight only for matters that directly concern the peasantry. If, for example, there are workers who don't get paid, it can't just be a trade union fight. We fight within civil society, but with our focus on the peasantry. You don't change the life of the peasantry if you can't change the situation within your own country (Ismael Oussemane, interview, Maputo, January 2018).

To the extent that it was also strongly resisted by a large range of civil society sectors, the No to ProSAVANA Campaign is probably the most remarkable example of solidarity amongst sectors of civil society in Mozambique.

The agrarian movements in this study, with the exception of UNAC, have very weak relationships with other civil society actors, especially the non-rural and agrarian sectors. This is in part reinforced by the belief that urban struggles are different or alien to rural struggles, although as mentioned above, the separation between rural and urban, rural city is very tenuous in the context of Southern Africa (and Africa in general). This is a posture that will need to be seriously reviewed by both agrarian and urban movements.

8. Cosmopolitanism and international solidarity

Globally, the most vibrant forms of cosmopolitanism involve agrarian struggles and food justice movements, which have been consolidating transnational agrarian movements (Edelman & Borras, 2016). La Via Campesina brings together 182 member organisations in 81 countries. It claims to represent 200 million peasants worldwide[45]. It is considered to be the largest social movement in the world (Provost, 2013).

The agrarian movements of this study are all members of La Via Campesina. UNAC was the first to join the global movement. International solidarity and internationalism are part of UNAC's founding principles (F. G. L. Guilengue, 2017). UNAC's first contact with an agrarian social movement outside Mozambique was with the Landless People's Movement (MST) of Brazil. It was through the MST that UNAC started establishing contacts with La Via Campesina, of which it became a member at the fourth international conference in 2004. Four years later, UNAC itself hosted the LVC fifth international conference[46] in Matola, Mozambique. UNAC also hosted the regional secretariat for East and Southern Africa of La Via Campesina from 2008 to 2016, facilitating the integration into a global movement of other agrarian movements in the region, as was the case of ZIMSOFF and the FSC. The

[45] https://viacampesina.org/en/international-peasants-voice/

[46] This conference, inaugurated by the then president of the republic, was held at the Frelimo Party School. "It was the most appropriate place for this type of meeting, due to the nature of the work and the logistical conditions it offers. Its location [close to the airport and the border with South Africa] was also decisive. But the choice of location was not directly related to the fact that a space was owned by the Frelimo party" (Diamantino Nhampossa, former UNAC executive director, interview, Maputo 2010).

internationalist vision of the UNAC shows that the movement understands that agrarian capital and hostile agrarian policies are not confined to Mozambique alone. One interviewee said,

> Often our members from various parts of Mozambique travel abroad to meet with other similar movements and become involved in mobilising, protesting and meeting to plan strategies for the struggle, amongst other activities (Ismael Oussemane, interview, Maputo, May 2015).

This internationalist dimension is probably based on the belief that the ties that unite them with peasants from other territories are stronger than the forces which separate them. In addition to La Via Campesina UNAC is also a member of the following international groups: the Plataforma de Camponeses da CPLP (CPLP Farmers' Platform), Diálogo dos Povos (PD, People's Dialogue, SADC and Latin America), Assembleia das Mulheres Rurais (RWA, Rural Women's Assembly, SADC) and Confederação de Uniões Agrícolas da África Austral (SACAU, Southern African Confederation of Agricultural Unions). The FSC is only known to be part of La Via Campesina, while ZIMSOFF is also a member of RWA, PD and the Eastern and Southern Africa Small-scale Farmers' Forum. The agrarian movements of this study have been playing a major role in shaping La Via Campesina's ideas and agendas for southern Africa.

9. History, knowledge systems, culture and practices

Current agrarian movements' repertoires of contention are not disconnected from historical experience. My research offers clues to the prevalence of historical legacies in contemporary rural agency. As mentioned above, it was common, for instance, that leaders of current agrarian movements – or close relatives – were actively involved liberation struggles. The case of ZIMSOFF offers more evidence:

> The leading lights of AZTREC are all former guerrilla fighters and spirit mediums with distinguished Chimurenga (liberation struggle) records. These key figures of the political liberation struggle have regrouped once again to do combat, this time in the ecological field. The spirit mediums had played a decisive role alongside the guerrilla fighters in reclaiming the lost lands, and it was felt that they should continue to do so in this second Chimurenga - the liberation of Zimbabwe from ecological destruction through earthkeeping (Daneel, 1991, p. 101).

This aspect deserves further investigation. However, in the case of ZIMSOFF, evoking ancestry in its struggles and in the production process, such as holding ceremonies before sowing and harvesting, is common practice. Members of ZIMSOFF believe that the success of its struggle and its success as farmers depend on contact with ancestors. In South Africa, although to a lesser degree, from time to time the Concerned Moravians in Wupperthal made mention of belonging to the land, evoking their ancestors. It seems to me that it is a methodological flaw to ignore this aspect in the study of agrarian movements on the continent.

A very particular feature of Shashe peasant farmers, for instance, is the importance of the incorporation of spiritual and traditional understandings of development and well-being. This has meant resistance to exogenous ways of development, with the current strategies adopted by the community being established through spiritual guidance and traditional learnings, which, as they appraise, should not be considered as backwardness (Monjane et al., 2019).

The farming practices and practical knowledges of organised peasantry are a crucial element of their political agency. This includes, as mentioned earlier, paying respects to the ancestors, but also the use of medicinal plants for healing diseases. This was the case in Mozambique, Zimbabwe and South Africa. A farmer in Wupperthal explained that "what facilitates our organisation as a group is that we have the same practices and each of us understands without difficulty what the other does in the farm, in the mountain and in the bush" (Leswin Koopman, interview, Wuppethal, March 2018).

The great diversity in terms of culture, knowledges, history and political preferences that characterises the movements has been used as an authentic ecology of knowledges (Leff, 2004; Santos, 2007a) instead of being elements of divergence. This may explain why UNAC, for instance, has not dismembered itself, even though its social base has members with quite antagonistic political affiliations and preferences. The ecology of knowledges is a process in which different visions and world views are shared on an equal, horizontal basis, and it can be observed in, for example, the *místicas* which takes place at the beginning of the movements' gatherings. This is a rich cultural and cognitive practice involving songs, poetry, dance, and so on.

Most farmers in the movements practice a*gro-ecological farming* (sometimes referred to as organic farming). They maximize the use of local resources, for instance using manure, leaves, ash, and so on to produce fertiliser; they harvest rainwater and do intercropping, including incorporating 'new' resistant crops, which helps them earn some extra income when other crops are languishing in excess heat. They also engage in *seed savings and exchange*.

However, in South Africa, most peasant farmers in Wupperthal and Citrusdal use commercial seeds to grow their crops. This is because, over time, the corporate seed sector gained excessive power in South Africa, supported by neoliberal seed laws and policies, which undermined peasant seeds. There is an ongoing process of conscientising FSC members about the value of collecting, saving and reusing their own seeds, although in an embryonic phase. ZIMSOFF has been showing impressive work in restoring indigenous seeds, especially of grains.

UNAC, FSC and ZIMSOFF promote permanent training processes - the *farmer-to-farmer training* - in which they improve their farming knowledge by exchanging their experience. This includes exchanging seeds among farmers. A member of ZIMSOFF explained that they have been trying "not change what you know to follow a system that you don't know" by working with indigenous seeds (Delma Mudlovu, Interview, Harare, February 2018). Another ZIMSOFF member said that the movement has been mobilising the membership to resist the influence of industrial inputs.

As this section shows, culture, history, identity processes and knowledges count as important as class and material aspects. I thus propose a collective agency reading of agrarian movements that includes as these elements as central.

10. Conclusion: agrarian movements' alternatives versus agrarian capital

This empirical chapter has examined agrarian movements in southern Africa, drawing on the experience of UNAC, ZIMSOFF and FSC. This exercise allows us to identify characteristic aspects of the agrarian movements in the region without attempting to create general theory, but rather showing specificities and trends that would allow us to explain rural agency systematically. In this concluding section, I propose to examine two aspects. First, what has been the relationship between the

organised peasantry (agrarian movements) and agrarian capital in the countryside? Second, are there alternatives to (agrarian) capital in the production systems and practices of agrarian movements in southern Africa?

If UNAC claims to reject a capitalist agrarian project (ProSAVANA), and ZIMSOFF claims to build an agro-ecology village, to what extent are their alternatives outside the logic of agrarian capital?

The debate on alternative production is closely linked to the question of alternative economies, a theme which brings us, *a priori*, to the idea of production processes, ownership, labour, exchange, and consumption, which differ from those of the mainstream economy (Healy, 2008). In an excellent study on the subject, Stephen Healy explains how the alternative economy remains a marginal concern because of the underlying and frequently unspoken spatial ontology that governs its academic and popular representation. In his view, in many representations, the concept of alternative is synonymous with self-consciously intentional efforts developed on a local scale, which makes it peripheral and relatively powerless, vulnerable to co-optation or even state repression (2008, p. 2–3).

> From the outset, the alternative economy is seen as socially insignificant and thus unworthy of scholarly attention. What is required to combat this double marginality is a theoretical framework that diverges from the conception of the alternative economy as local and intentional. The first step in developing such a framework is to recognize that the marginality of the alternative economy comes from defining something as alternative in the first place. The second step is to produce an ontology of economic difference that highlights the ubiquity (in place) of non-market and non-capitalist practices alongside the variety of capitalist forms. (Healy 2008, p. 3)

Although it is evident how easily various alternative forms of production and exchange can be supressed and curbed, it is also true that the fragility which generally characterises them is related to the competition and competitiveness characteristic of the dominant economic order. Healy goes further:

> Market competition, cultural co-optation and state repression are seen as forces arrayed against the alternative economy that will, almost inevitably, reduce alternativeness to sameness. The continued existence of alternative economic institutions — community-based credit unions, for example — is seen as threatened by the dominant ideology that governs

> finance, the laws of local, state and national government, and the market forces that favour large capitalist firms. (Healy, 2008, p. 5)

As previously noted, the aggressive promotion of the neoliberalisation of the production system and the agricultural markets pursued by agrarian capital and other entities have proved hostile to local forms of production and trading by peasant communities – the competition and competitiveness of the dominant economic order to which Healy refers. In fact, throughout the continent there are various forms of resistance and counter-hegemonic (productive and political) practices opposed to this trend – led by rural and urban groups, especially women.

Generally speaking, the experiences of ZIMSOFF in Shashe and some UNAC practices in the Nacala Corridor (as well as in other parts of the country) suggest that those practices may be considered within the perspective of anti-systemic proposals: they oppose the hegemony of (agrarian) capitalism as they put forward alternative economies based on principles that may be considered non-capitalist in terms of the way in which they relate to the land (Santos & Rodríguez, 2003, p. 23). In Shashe, hundreds of peasant families share farming and grazing plots in Shashe producing a variety of food crops (grains, cereals, legumes, vegetables, fruit trees), medicinal plants, roots and livestock (cows, sheep, goats, pigs, chickens, turkeys). A significant number of them save, reproduce and reuse their own seeds (mostly for grains and cereals). Farming is the most important source of income among their livelihood strategies. Some of the surplus produced by the peasants is exchanged locally or sold in the nearest town (Mashava). When maize and millet yields are high, a number of Shashe peasant families supply Masvingo city markets, through the state parastatal body known as the Grain Marketing Board. Shashe peasant farmers have more control of the production process, as they depend very minimally on external inputs.

Many UNAC members in the Nacala Corridor and elsewhere are reviving agro-ecological models in areas that are increasingly being controlled by big businesses. A relevant experiment is that of the Associação Agrícola Alfredo Nhamitete in the Marracuene district in the province of Maputo, whose 280 members cultivate various crops, including sweet potato, carrot, cabbage, onion, beans, lettuce and aubergine. Part of the produce is sold on the local market and the proceeds are shared equally between the members (LVC Africa News, 2014). Also in Marracuene, various peasant

farmers have set up an exchange with a peasant organisation in Brazil to preserve native seeds which are important for local food sovereignty but at risk of extinction, and to develop simplified, easy-to-understand techniques for maintaining the purity of the different varieties and improving their potential yield.

According to the Rural Development team[47] of UNAC, the main form of production for the UNAC members is the agro-ecological model based on the use of organic fertilisers (compost and manure) and local organic pesticides, such as ash, onion, cabbage and chilli peppers. In the case of cereal (maize, sorghum) and legume (bean) seeds, the peasants do not buy supplies but use seeds collected from previous harvests, which are stored in traditional barns. However, most vegetable seeds are bought in shops, because they are difficult for peasant families to produce, although the seeds of certain varieties which the peasants grow locally are preserved for future years.

Goods are sold at farmers' markets where the producers and buyers meet on set dates to trade. However, there are cases in which some peasants have drawn up small contracts with small and medium-sized enterprises to supply their produce.

Nevertheless, it should be recognised that the peasantry in Mozambique can also be involved in other forms of trading. There have been various cases of contract farming in different regions of Mozambique, mainly associated with the production of cash crops such as tobacco, cotton, sugar cane, cashew and *jatropha*. In recent years, several peasants from the central region of Mozambique, in particular Zambézia province, have been involved in producing soybeans for sale to agents (who are often intermediaries), a practice associated with capitalist (for-profit) aspirations. This indicates that there may be contradictions between political discourse and practical reality, even within the organised peasantry.

However, it is important to note that in the majority of cases the peasants are not involved in the process of fixing the sale prices for their goods, and the produce is not always sold to retailers, nor is everything they manage to produce bought. In addition, the prices set by intermediaries and agribusinesses for resale are often

[47] The Rural Development sector of UNAC is responsible for assisting associations in the process of monitoring, training and organising the movement's production methods on a national level. Some of the information on UNAC production options was provided for me by an officer working in this sector, in an interview conducted by email.

many times higher than those charged by the peasants, resulting in a process of exploiting the peasantry. In almost all situations in which peasants are involved in this system (the production of cash crops solely for sale on non-local markets) they tend to be the victims rather than the ones controlling the process.

Although UNAC claims that the production and exchange practices adopted by its members are still far from capitalist[48], what is clear is that most of the practices described above, considered to be outside capitalism by the movements, are more accurately on its margins. This conclusion is apparently similar to Pedro Hespanha's (1981), when describing and theorizing small-scale agriculture in Portugal in the 1980s.

This study and analysis shows that, on the one hand, the emergence of an agrarian movement can be a reaction to contradictions of (already penetrating) agrarian capital. Those contradictions include the exploitation of the peasantry, land grabs from them and encroachment on them, or their exclusion (for instance, the FSC in South Africa). On the other hand, agrarian movements may be formed before the penetration of capital, foreseeing its arrival and preparing to fight it (UNAC in Mozambique). Agrarian movements can also be formed to pursue an agenda of rural transformation and emancipation (agro-ecology, food sovereignty) regardless of the presence or absence of agrarian capital. More correctly, it can be said that ZIMSOFF arises from the defeat of agrarian capital, with the implementation of agrarian reform for its defence.

In the conclusion of this thesis, I will discuss the alternatives to agrarian capital defended by agrarian movements in this study, particularly ZIMSOFF, which has already taken visible steps to that end, although with limitations and contradictions. The creation of a vibrant agro-ecological village from land that was previously only for industrial cattle raising is a clear sign of this.

[48] According to Moises Txocolo, a rural development officer for UNAC, "The peasants distance themselves from the capitalist production and commercialisation process, since their production is based on intercropping with a view to achieving food sovereignty, not the monocultures basically used by capitalists, and produce is traded without exploiting the consumer".

CONCLUSIONS

Access to and control over land has always been an emotive matter in virtually all parts of the Global South. This is more so for Africa where indigenous people's struggle against colonialism on the continent mainly centred around grievances about loss of land and the economic, socio-cultural and political consequences of expropriation and displacement. Moreover, with the emergence of neoliberal policies in parts of post-colonial Africa, peasants and small-scale food producers in Africa have been continually alienated from their land to make way for capital and its exploitative interests. The adoption of neoliberal agrarian policies in post-colonial Africa and the subsequent encroachment of capital into the countryside has progressively alienated peasants from their land. While, initially, some peasants whose land had been expropriated migrated to urban cities in search of employment, this option has, in recent times, proven quite untenable. This is because the burgeoning population in African urban centres has not been accompanied by a proportional increase in job opportunities, leading to urban squalor and acute poverty. Exacerbating the situation for urban life is the fact that African cities were not designed to accommodate urban agriculture and this has led to the failure of 'green belts' that have been attempted by urban authorities in the past. Consequently, due to land expropriation in the countryside and urban poverty (itself a fast-ticking socio-economic time bomb), food insecurity has left the urban poor in a tenuous position.

Thus, this situation has led peasants to resist neoliberalism and the constant expropriation of their land. Yet, much of the available literature has tended to depict African historical struggles against land expropriation and exploitation at the hands of capital throughout history as having been led by liberation movements, and the gains of these struggles later safeguarded by African governments. While this may be somewhat true in some (few) parts of Africa, this narrative tends to deny African peasants agency in the struggle for their emancipation from agrarian authoritarianism, both against colonial powers and, later, neoliberal agrarian capital and its exploitative interests. In some cases, as this thesis has demonstrated, the struggle is against post-colonial (and post-apartheid) administrations that claim to champion peasant interests.

This thesis has challenged narratives that depict peasants merely as victims of injustices – or as incapable of changing the conditions that produce those injustices –

whose battles are being fought on their behalf by the state. Using specific case studies in Mozambique, Zimbabwe and South Africa, this thesis offers alternative lenses through which to view how peasants' struggles to liberate themselves from the tentacles of capital have panned out, and have subsequently carved their own niche in their fight against or to transcend capital. The thesis has drawn from the experiences of peasant men and women in UNAC in rural Mozambique, Shashe in rural Zimbabwe and Wupperthal on the west coast of the Western Cape province of South Africa to trace the origins of organised peasant struggles, carefully examining their socio-political anatomy and assessing the impact of their agency in improving their access to what they consider to be their main ancestral heritage: land.

1. Conceptual and analytical framework

By exploring rural agency, this thesis engaged and drew from a combination of theoretical and conceptual frameworks (without being fettered by any of them) to illuminate the form, nature and texture of peasant struggles in the three countries. Of course, the different larger national political and socio-economic contexts within which these struggles evolved had a profound impact on the trajectories of these peasant struggles, and these make each case study somewhat unique.

Indeed, in exploring and explaining peasant struggles for socio-economic, cultural and political emancipation through resisting the encroachment of capital onto their lands and territories, this thesis has drawn from various and often competing scholarly approaches to agrarian transformation, rural politics and development.

In analysing the peasants' agency as they respond to capital under neoliberal encroachment, this study has, however, triangulated these approaches - that is, the Marxist agrarian political economy, radical political agrarian economy and the moral economy of the peasantry, and the epistemologies of the South.

The Marxist agrarian political economy paradigm provides an important lens through which an analysis may be made of the emergence of peasant movements to challenge and ultimately rebel against capitalist tendencies that have sought to progressively undermine their access to land and to reconfigure the agrarian structure along capitalist models. In this regard, the works of Colin Barker et al. (2013) who, while eschewing the debates surrounding the role of Marxism in explaining the "emergence, character and development of social movements", argue

that the Marxist theory of class struggle neatly fits into "mainstream social movement theory" (2013, p. 3). This theory has been especially useful in explaining peasant responses to an agrarian political economy that is characterized by the penetration of capital into the countryside and the alteration of the social relations of production, reproduction, property and power in the rural world, as Bernstein (2000) and Mckay (2017a) have put it.

These scholars view class as the primary unit and method of analysis, using the analysis of the macrocosm to understand dynamics at the micro level. They focus on commodification of agriculture in a market driven economy which first differentiates the peasantry before ultimately annihilating the peasant class to replace it with a landless proletarian class. Without land, this class will have nothing to offer except their labour to the overly powerful capitalist class (Bernstein, 2000, 2006). Thus, for these agrarian Marxists, rural politics revolve around struggles emanating from this status quo. To the extent that the Marxist agrarian political economy focuses on class relations as they manifest in the form of models of ownership of the means of production (land in this case), labour relations and the distribution of surplus, it is apt for the findings of this research.

Agrarian Marxists view the state as an instrument of political domination which has to be filliped to cause political change for the benefit of the subordinated peasants. This research has demonstrated that the emergence of the UNAC in Mozambique owed to the advent of Bretton Woods-inspired structural adjustment programmes which threatened to put the interests of capital ahead of those of the peasants, particularly their sovereignty over land. Itself an offshoot of agricultural cooperatives in Mozambique, the UNAC formed a national peasant's movement, which developed to become a powerful independent peasant movement that resists neoliberal agrarian policies that sacrificed peasant interests. With a membership of over 100 000, the UNAC has grown to become the only national voice of the peasantry, defending its class interests against inimical government policy and capitalist exploitation.

Similar developments have taken place in South Africa. The formation of the Surplus People Project (SPP) in the 1980s was premised on communities' need to resist dislocation by the apartheid state. While this could easily have been viewed as political activism, the class dimension in its struggles manifest when the movement became the springboard for the establishment in 2008 of the Right to Agrarian

Reform for Food Sovereignty (FSC). The FSC's main aim was to contest the widening social and agrarian inequalities in the country under successive post-apartheid governments.

Regarding South Africa, this thesis has used the Marxist paradigm to interpret developments in Wupperthal on the west coast of the Western Cape province. Chapter Five has demonstrated that, while it is not quite similar to other cases of landless peasants, it resonates with other cases of landless peasants fighting for agrarian reform that would lead to the democratisation of the land ownership system. It has a somewhat unique nuance in that the organised resistance is against a church structure that they also identify with in a religious sense. Although they accept the positive role of the Monrovia church in their socio-religious and economic life, the 'Concerned Moravians' group – the FSC group that is challenging church leadership in Wupperthal – contends that the church should leave the land for the people and focus on its primary mandate: salvation of souls.

That the oppressor in this case is the church (where challenging the leadership is equated to challenging God) and the resistance is coming from within its membership, has meant that the movement consists of a relatively smaller proportion of the entire church membership. Nonetheless, this case illuminates the class dimension and perhaps provides evidence that Marxian class struggles emerge even in institutions where people are bound by similar ideological and religious beliefs.

Although it offers a different dimensional nuance, the Shashe case in Zimbabwe (also discussed in Chapter Six) may also be interpreted in Marxist terms. As this thesis has demonstrated, also unique about the broader Zimbabwean case is that the struggle for land has largely been depicted by scholars as a state-led struggle for the emancipation of peasants from a minority group of white capitalist farmers who owned huge tracts of land. Indeed, as Moyo and Yeros have depicted it, the government of Robert Mugabe championed the revolution, which it dubbed the Third Chimurenga, as it sought to redress colonial land imbalances. However, this thesis has also demonstrated that this broad narrative masks and obscures important factors about the agency of peasants in liberating themselves from capital without the state, which came into play in a later stage.

The ideological and operational objectives of ZIMSOFF – to improve livelihoods of organized and empowered smallholder farmers in Zimbabwe practicing sustainable and viable ecological agriculture – is a clear indication of class

consciousness and the need for class unity to improve their socio-economic interests in a region that was hitherto owned by a large-scale capitalist farmer who viewed them as a source of cheap labour. In fact, as the third chapter of this thesis has shown, the historical underpinning of the formation of the organisation, which includes spirit mediums and the ethos of the liberation war, is a clear indication not only of class consciousness among them, but of their ability to mobilise and organise. The oral interviews conducted with their leaders and the general membership bear testimony to their deep relationship with the land beyond the commercial and the clarity of their ideological thinking.

Of course, the agrarian Marxist approach does not fully explain the struggles for emancipation among peasants in the three countries. In fact, as the third chapter has demonstrated, the chief pitfall with this approach is that some of the scholars interpreting phenomena in this way do not adequately explain the link between the economic aspects, that is, the commodification of land as a form of capital, and rural politics, that is, how peasants identify with their land beyond the commercial or economic. In fact, there are disagreements among Marxist scholars. Western Marxists of agrarian studies posit that the capitalist system has fully absorbed agriculture into its circuit, thus rendering the agrarian issue a non-question. On the other hand, scholars associated with the Global South accuse the former of viewing the class dynamics in agrarian studies as homogeneous across the world. By emphasizing commodification as an important dynamic in the process of class formation and differentiation, scholars from the Agrarian South network, such as Sam Moyo, Issa Shivji, Dzodzi Tsikata, Paris Yeros and Praveen Jha, among others, note that peasants fight back and carve a niche for themselves despite the huge economic and political odds stacked against them. As this thesis has evinced, while the agrarian Marxist approach offers a useful analytic prism for peasant struggles and agency, it falls short of adequately capturing the bigger picture, and other frameworks serve to complement it.

Rural politics and peasant struggles for land and socio-economic emancipation may also be interpreted within the frameworks of radical political agrarian economy and the moral economy of the peasantry. Chapter Three of this thesis has delineated this paradigm. Scholars from this paradigm argue – contra class-based Marxist views – that the starting point of analysis should be the micro level and its local nuances, and that this will be useful in explaining the macro level. Fronted by scholars such as

Scott (1985), Chayanov (1996), O´Brien (1996), and Kerkvliet (2009), albeit in different ways, this approach assumes that peasants are more interested in stability and predictability than in accumulating wealth for themselves, a phenomenon Scott refers to as 'the ethic subsistence'. Some of the key factors for agrarian change identified in this approach include social differentiation of the peasantry leading to what Chayanov (1996) described as "self-exploitation". Thus, they view the peasant class as unable to proletarianize, but always reproduce their peasant class. This approach, as demonstrated in Chapter Six, helps explain labour organisation in the three cases studies in Mozambique, Zimbabwe and South Africa. Indeed, this study has shown that while the peasants themselves were by no means a homogeneous class, there exists an innate and unifying knowledge of their identity as a class. This would become the rallying point in their mobilisation processes in the three case studies. The reference to Gayatri Spivak's strategic essentialism is useful here (1999, 2012).

The postulations of James Scott (1985) and Kerkvliet (2009) within this tradition are quite essential to the interpretations of peasant struggles. Scott (1985) views agrarian structure from a binary perspective which includes two competing classes: the subaltern and lower classes versus the hegemonic and powerful elite. While this has elements of Marxian class struggles, Scott radically shifts from the Marxist approach by viewing the resistance of the subordinated groups as neither always coordinated nor a result of organised effort. His work posits that agency begins at individual household level and extends to community levels. In this case, while subordinate classes are not passive, their agency is multifaceted and varied depending on their quotidian experiences and individual perceptions of circumstances. A closer look at the findings of this research, as presented in the sixth chapter, both corroborates and negates Scott's work.

The findings of this thesis, especially regarding Wupperthal in South Africa, have demonstrated that individual responses differed according to perceptions of the role of the church both within and beyond the spiritual, with the result that organised resistance constituted a miniscule proportion of the total population of the community. However, the work and impact of the UNAC, ZIMSOFF and the Concerned Moravians as organised movements in Mozambique, Zimbabwe and South Africa respectively, demonstrate that, in the larger picture, mobilisation along class consciousness, rather than individualised and circumstance-based household

responses, remains a central aspect of peasant struggles for emancipation. Moreover, these peasant movements' abilities to coalesce around issues of common interest such as demands for land, sustainable agriculture and food sovereignty amid pressure from capitalist interests is testament to the fact that although individual household or even personal circumstances play a role, peasants may be influenced by larger communal interests to work towards improving their socio-economic lot.

Nevertheless, radical agrarian political economy and moral economy of the peasantry offer interesting perspectives on the political economy of agrarian change, particularly on the manner in which peasants perceive themselves versus authority, especially when the 'subsistence ethic' is violated. In all three case studies, this study has revealed that although peasants formed strategic alliances with different institutions, including the state, these only exist to the extent that these alliances coincided with their larger interests. Otherwise, they view state institutions with suspicion, as 'them versus us'. Thus, the history of the agrarian poor is a history of domination, control and contravention, and this theme originates from the colonial period, but extends to the post-colonial period. Thus, the subaltern classes legitimize their causes and struggles by making use of state's own laws, policies or rhetoric in framing their protests (O'Brien, 1996; O'Brien & Li, 2006). This frame, therefore, forms the basis of their resistance to authority, leading to contravention, through both covert and overt means, of the state and its often pro-capital and anti-peasant tendencies.

Thus, despite the pitfalls discussed above, this approach is a useful conceptual framework for explaining peasant consciousness. It helps explain that rural inhabitants and peasants are deeply aware of their vulnerability to capital and a complicit political elite (which at times is part of the capitalist class). However, the three case studies do show some localised nuances where, in Mozambique, capitalist encroachment has been quite rampant since the 1980s, with the advent of structural adjustment programmes (after a brief flirtation with socialist policies); and despite impressive economic growth indicators and agrarian production figures in South Africa, poverty has become increasingly pervasive among black rural dwellers. Zimbabwe, however, evinces a slightly different path in the way the state has positively responded to peasant struggles and joined peasant struggles for emancipation through the Fast Track Land Reform Programme. This thesis has, nonetheless, shown that despite such gestures from Robert Mugabe's government, it

must be said that this was equally a self-preservation exercise on the part of the political elites in the country. In this way, using rural politics and peasant agency in Shashe, this thesis joins larger historiographical conversations on the land reform programme in Zimbabwe, arguing that although peasants benefitted from the government programme, it did not escape peasants that their struggle against capital had not ended, and that their relationship with the 'benevolent' state remained cast in the 'them and us' binary.

This thesis employed the Epistemologies of the South paradigm in explaining rural politics and peasant agency. As useful as it is, the major limitation of the agrarian Marxist approach and radical political economy/moral economy of the peasantry is that it views land almost exclusively as an economic asset whose main purpose is for agricultural production. They remain somewhat trapped within the capitalist conception of land as a form of capital that should be used to extract surplus, and thus peasant struggles are merely attempts to preserve their economic interests so that they do not exist below the 'ethic of subsistence'.

This thesis has deconstructed prevailing narratives and notions that depict land as only useful for productive purposes and not the general all-round wellness of the people. Using epistemologies of the South, this thesis has proven that land and several other natural resources such as water may be viewed by rural people in the Global South with social, cultural and even spiritual lenses. Indeed, the conception of land in the South transcends beyond the productive towards the intangible, that is, identity, belonging and sovereignty. If, for example, Maria Paula Meneses[49] draws our attention to the need to differentiate between ownership of land and tenure (*posse e propridade*), Boaventura de Sousa Santos summarises the nexus between the productive and non-productive elements of access and land use thus:

> Access to land in the South may mean several productive and reproductive dimensions other than agricultural production itself, such as water, natural resources or retirement space, as well as non-productive ones, such as spirituality, belonging or political liberation, freedom and sovereignty. At the same time, and in relation to all the former, land control is a main axis of geopolitical control, the territoriality of power (Santo, 2018, Unpublished).

[49] Meneses made these remarks during a seminar named "The complex task of feeding the world: between the dominant proposals and the popular alternatives", held at CES on April 12, 2017, and available here: https://saladeimprensa.ces.uc.pt/index.php?col=canalces&id=16881#.XnOB1ENS-qC

This research has thus gone beyond an analysis of ownership and the relations of production to inquire into aspects not only of ecology, ideology, knowledges and practices, but also in the realm of identity, culture and history. Oral interviews with community members in the three case studies, as demonstrated in Chapter Six, often alluded to land as their heritage - their ancestral land with which they have a relationship that goes beyond agricultural independence and food security. As Elizabeth Mpofu from Shashe in Zimbabwe put it, control over land is "central" because it ensures that everyone has "dignity" and ensures "national sovereignty". This reflection, which is captured in the introductory chapter of this thesis, helps us to understand the ideological framework within which rural communities conceive the land and their struggle for control over land. Thus, using the epistemologies of the South, this thesis has used history, culture and identity to understand organicity and collective imaginaries in peasant struggles. These help to overcome the limitations of modern scientific knowledge which conceive of almost everything in their productive capacities.

2. Land at the centre of rural politics

Chapter Four of this thesis traced the historical imperatives that shaped the land question in Mozambique, Zimbabwe and South Africa, demonstrating that the land question is emotive and has been at the centre of struggles against imperial domination. This domination has manifested itself through colonialism and the attendant capitalist mode of production it espoused throughout the Global South. In the three case studies, as the fourth chapter argues, colonialism was followed by massive land expropriation as the colonialists sought to facilitate the development of white settler agriculture that would be subsidised by cheap African labour. The establishment of large plantation farms in Mozambique, Zimbabwe and South Africa not only entrenched these colonies in the orbit of the global capitalist system but led to the twin process of depeasantisation and proletarianisation of the rural masses. Interviews held with leaders of UNAC and ZISOFF in Mozambique and Zimbabwe bring to the fore their understanding of historical disenfranchisement at the hands of colonialists as a rallying point of their struggles.

Thus, cognisant of this history and that this disenfranchisement was at the heart of armed struggles for liberation in these countries, the historical agency among peasants in resisting colonial capitalism (demonstrated in Chapter Three) has

become an inspiration for the continuation of their struggle, albeit in a different political and economic context in post-colonial southern Africa. The link between the colonial experience and post-colonial resistance may be explained by the fact that the trauma of colonial violence is quite fresh among peasants in the three countries under discussion. The thesis has shown that peasants in Mozambique resisted ProSAVANA quite tenaciously, and this could have been a result of the inspiration they derived from the struggle against colonial capitalism. The empirical data presented in Chapter Five shows that peasants are aware that capitalism may have outlived colonialism, and that the struggle is unfinished as big multinational companies, sometimes fronted by local capital and the church (as in the South African case), continue to pose a veritable threat to their livelihoods. For Shashe in Zimbabwe, communities have united not only against capital, but also against environmental hazards which adversely affect agricultural productivity and food sovereignty.

Beyond the theoretical frameworks used in discussing agrarian movements and peasant struggles, there are a number of important issues regarding the character and political potential of peasants in the countryside. While most of the scholarship has focused on urban movements (such as trade unions), rural struggles seem to be more influential in shaping national policy frameworks and politics more generally. This thesis has also argued that rural movements are more resilient, have more revolutionary potential are more likely to succeed in their push for desired change. For Zimbabwe and Mozambique, this is most likely because of the demographic structures of these countries, where the vast majority of the country's citizens reside in rural areas, with a much smaller percentage living in urban settlements. Consequently, these movements tend to attract bigger numbers than urban areas. Also, rural dwellers predominantly depend on agriculture and this helps to foster a sense of shared interests and 'class' unity, unlike in urban areas where residents are neither all employed nor bound by class interests.

Thus, this thesis has challenged the idea put forward by some scholars that the urban proletariat, because of its stronger class consciousness and ideological clarity, will lead the peasantry towards class consciousness. This belief, based on the notion that rural dwellers are disorganized, illiterate and less conscious about their subordinated condition, was augmented by scholars of trade unionism in Africa who mostly presented the labour movement as more coordinated and thus more likely to cause socio-economic and political transformation (Artur, 2004; Marshall, 2015b,

2015a, 2017). Findings of this study point to an entirely different reality. As shown in Chapter Six, UNAC in Mozambique has grown to become an important vector for civic organisation and shaping national politics. While ZIMSOFF in Shashe is smaller, it has enjoyed a comparatively huge membership within its localized context. Wupperthal in South Africa presents a slightly different case where the Concerned Moravians constitute a proportionally smaller membership, and this is largely owing to the assumed position of the church as an unquestionable spiritual entity despite its propensity to operate as a form of capital where land ownership is concerned. Thus, rural movements are more likely to attract bigger memberships and greater unity than urban organisations. As in most of sub-Saharan Africa, unemployment levels in the urban areas are quite high – and the Zimbabwean case is more profound as a result of the peculiar economic problems facing the country – with the result that labour movements in urban areas are weak and generally less influential.

Quite unsurprisingly, and as a consequence of factors raised above, peasant movements have much greater political potential than previous scholarship has conceded. While the stated mandate is to defend peasant interests against the penetration of agrarian capital and its exploitative tendencies, this thesis has suggested that these movements have had a strong political/ideological inclination towards the left wing. The nature of their aspirations in defending peasant interests has meant that these movements cannot be ideologically and politically aloof: they have had to face policies and politicians who stand for and against their aspirations. As shown in chapters Three and Six, the movements' ideological posturing inevitably means that they play an influential role in national politics. For Mozambique, the ruling Frelimo party has progressively lost support in areas where the penetration of agrarian capital has been sharp, especially in the Nacala Corridor. Although the struggle in the South African case study has been against a religious institution, the ruling African National Congress has progressively lost support in the countryside as a result of its neoliberal approach to land and agrarian issues. In fact, the failure of the party to democratize access to and ownership of land has left a political void, which the EFF party is trying to fill. Campaigning on a radical left wing approach to the land issue, the opposition party has become increasingly prominent, apparently gaining ground with each passing election since its formation.

The situation in Zimbabwe has taken a different trajectory. While Mozambique has significantly tampered with colonial land ownership and tenure models, the

Zimbabwean government acceded to demands for land by peasants and veterans of the liberation war by embarking on the Fast Track Land Reform Programme, which led to the compulsory redistribution of land from a minority of white large-scale farmers to the predominantly landless masses. This radical left wing move ensured that the ruling ZANU-PF party retained the support of peasants at a time when urban dwellers had begun to reject them in support of the labour-backed political movement, the MDC. Thus, peasants have played a significant role in keeping ZANU-PF in power partly as a result of the land reform programme.[50] Moreover, ZANU-PF has retained political power on the back of support from the peasant movement at a time when it was under attack from a labour-backed opposition, which further buttresses the argument made above that rural movements have more political potential than urban movements.

3. Contradictions and ambiguities

Agrarian movements should not be analysed uncritically, however. While this study chose to focus more on the active agency of the organised peasantry, it eschews a triumphalist approach. There are a number of issues and contradictions to be raised. One of those is the 'populist' nature of some of the agrarian movements' claims and narratives. For instance, the South African pro-land-reform movement has by and large been presented uncritically as an ideologically homogeneous movement. The leadership of the Economic Freedom Fighters in South Africa has been calling for expropriation of all property without compensation (that is, nationalization) but has not presented any clear agenda for redistribution and deep societal transformation in its articulations.

The involvement of peasant movements in politics brings with it ambiguities and contradictions, some of which limit the efficacy of their struggles. This thesis has shown that, in all three countries, peasant organisations have forged convenient alliances with political parties that identify with their ideological orientation. As already alluded to earlier, ZIMSOFF and UNAC have active alliances and positive relationships with political parties in their respective countries. While these

[50] As stated in Chapter Three, the land reform programme itself has been a subject of intense scholarly debate, mainly due to the manner in which it was carried out. I am also aware that besides the land reform, the ruling ZANU-PF has been accused by its local and international opponents of using coercion and intimidation to secure the rural vote.

sometimes help them to advance their agendas, they might also compromise these organisation's independence and sovereignty over their affairs. That some of their officials also hold positions in some political parties presents a contradiction: it invites question on the movements' ability to maintain ideological clarity untainted by external pressure.

The same may be said about these organisations' alliances with international organisations and dependency on funding from external sources, both locally and nationally. The fact that, as shown in Chapter Five, all three movements have fostered financial, logistical and technical support from non-governmental organisations raises questions about their independence. All of the agrarian movements in this study are members of La Via Campesina. UNAC formed a partnership with the Landless Peoples Movement, MST, of Brazil, received support from the União Geral das Cooperativas, and also benefitted from the Friedrich Ebert Foundation. Similarly, ZIMSOFF had a relationship with the PELUM Association while the FSC works closely with the Surplus People's Project (SPP) for technical support and policy education. Such an internationalist approach could be rationalised on the basis that such ties unite them with peasants from other territories. But their involvement with some NGOs whose focus is not on peasants or their struggles against agrarian capital may not be rationalised in the same way. While these NGOs could claim to be assisting the peasantry organisationally, logistically and financially, there is a danger that the movements may lose their ideological identity and end up getting involved in agendas that are not in tandem with the original struggles of the peasantry.

Hence, a study of the three movements has enabled me to engage in debates on the relationship between social and agrarian movements and NGOs in social movement theories. In this regard, findings of this research lend support to scholars such as Shivji (2007), who have criticized NGOs for playing a role in consolidating the neoliberal hegemony in Africa by hijacking home-grown social movements. Similarly, this thesis has offered grounds for the postulations of Moyo and Yeros, (2005c) and Negrão (1997) that NGOs may potentially derail movements from their original focus in favour of welfare projects in exchange for funding. Such alliances, it may be argued, have played an important role in the internal ideological contradictions within some of the movements. While it may not be entirely accurate to conclude that, in the main, the movements have digressed from peasant struggles because of these alliances, it may be safely stated that such alliances with local and international partners (NGOs

and political parties) present some contradictions, ambiguities and unanswered questions on the operations of peasant movements.

The issues discussed above inevitably raise further questions on possible alternatives to agrarian capital. This thesis has demonstrated that resisting the penetration of agrarian capital has been at the heart of their struggles as they have sought to ensure the democratisation of land and agrarian systems, and that, in doing so, they have shaken the nature and texture of rural (and, indeed, national) politics. However, a part of the membership of these rural movements does not seem to pose a clear alternative to agrarian capital besides the rhetoric of democratisation of agrarian systems. That the same peasants, after attaining sovereignty over land and agrarian systems, still seek to buy and market their produce on the same markets suggests that theirs is a struggle for inclusion in the agrarian capitalist system on a stronger footing rather than the total annihilation of the system. For instance, as shown in the research findings, some members expressed their desire to grow into large scale farmers who have access to capital and capacity to become big employers. This raises doubts about whether such aspirations do not contradict the very foundations of peasant struggles, that is, to fight and transcend agrarian capitalism.

4. Gender, patriarchy and migration

Besides colonialism and capitalism, another historical phenomenon that is at the centre of rural politics is patriarchy. Etched in the history of southern African social power relations, dating back to precolonial times, this thesis argues, patriarchy continues to play a vitally important role in access to and control of land in various contexts in the region. As such, this thesis has explored the gender dynamic as it shaped the nature, form and texture of peasant struggles for land in southern Africa. Chapter Six has shown that some of these struggles (agrarian movements) are led by women. The case of Elizabeth Mpofu is quite striking in that her leadership capacity and charisma have led to her receiving international recognition to the point of assuming the position of general coordinator of Via Campesina International. Similarly, UNAC in Mozambique became increasingly sensitive to gender issues as they affected the organisation's mandate. From about 2007, gender became an increasingly central agenda, with the result that a gender officer was appointed within UNAC, the main issue being to address women's concerns as far as ownership

and access to land were concerned. The UNAC acknowledged that they were operating in a "macho country, with a patriarchal system" and it was thus important to ensure that the organisation works "seriously on this issue…so that, in the future, the relations between the members of the movement are as good as possible", as Flaida Macheze, UNAC gender officer, explained[51]. Perhaps the gender sensitivity among rural peasants stems from the fact that the majority of agricultural producers in the countryside are female, although land rights are by and large reserved for men. This sensitivity pervaded the recruitment strategies and mobilisation of rural movements in Mozambique and Zimbabwe, and this proves that rural movements were multifaceted and much more complex than the Marxist interpretation that views the struggle using only the class category.

Migration is not a central theme of this study, but it is important to note that phenomena such as land grabbing, climate change and the crisis of livelihoods in the countryside are among the main reasons why rural inhabitants migrate to other regions of the African continent. A report by the UN International Organisation for Migration shows that there has been an increase in intraregional migration within the continent since 1990 (McAuliffe & Khadri, 2020, p. 55,56) and that the bulk of those who migrate remain in the continent, rather than moving to Europe, as is generally assumed.

Historically, South Africa has always absorbed labour from the region, especially from Mozambique, Zimbabwe and Malawi, into the mining and agricultural sectors. This has always led to clashes between migrant and 'local' workers. The existence of xenophobic elements and aversion to the rural poor from other regions, even among 'progressive' agrarian movements, is undeniable. In Wupperthal, one interviewee said: "We are fighting the church, but it will be more difficult to fight the state. If the land is nationalised, the Xhosa[52] will come here [and] grab it all from us" (Interviewee, Wupperthal, February 2018).

[51] Interview, Flaida Macheze, Maputo, June 2018.
[52] Xhosa is a Bantu ethnic group from South Africa mainly found in the Eastern and Western Cape.

5. Rural alternatives and emancipation

The above issues notwithstanding, this thesis has argued that peasant movements have proven to be capable to resisting the encroachment of capital in the countryside and the introduction of neoliberal agrarian policies that lead to continued land losses and exploitation. Their struggle has not been focussed on a particular group, but against any force that stands in the way of their aspiration. In the case of Mozambique, the struggle has manifested itself as direct resistance to capital, errant traditional leadership and sometimes state policy. In South Africa, it was directed against the church, while in Zimbabwe, peasants seemed to pull together with the state (after the land reform programme) in confronting capital. For all of them, this struggle has mutated into a larger struggle for food sovereignty and the achievement of environmentally sustainable agricultural methods. In this respect, the thesis has explored discourses, concepts and narratives on agro-ecology, ecology of knowledge and food sovereignty, in addition to other theoretical frameworks it engaged in exploring peasant agrarian movements and rural politics. For all the contradictions and ambiguities associated with their operations, this thesis has argued that peasant agrarian movements, both historically and in contemporary times, have carved a niche for themselves as they sought to liberate themselves from exploitation at the hands of agrarian capital. In the process, they have had more influence in rural and national politics. Provided that state pro-poor agrarian policies are put in place, agrarian movements are capable of achieving rural emancipation, as already shown in some, albeit isolated, cases of concrete emancipatory initiatives, Shashe being the most vibrant example.

This research does not claim to have exhausted all aspects of rural movements and their activities in Southern Africa. Admittedly, many forms and aspects of these movements have not been discussed. No doubt this owes to the quest to maintain the focus and scope of the thesis, space limitations and also due to the 'unconscious blindness' that every researcher has. Indeed, the thesis avoided other kinds of movements in the field, such as fisherfolk's movements, or communities engaged in other economic activities. Similarly, although gender and generational aspects were discussed, this was done only tangentially, with limited detail. Thus, besides discussing rural struggles and peasant agency against agrarian capital, this thesis suggests the above-mentioned themes that have been raised but not sufficiently discussed as meriting further, separate studies.

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ANNEX

Annex 1: List of interviews

No.	Name	Place	Date	Type
ZIMBABWE				
1	Tendai Gonese	Masvingo	Jan-17	Individual/Peasant farmer
2	Elizabeth Mpofu	Shashe and Harare	Jan 2017 and Jan 2018	Individual/Peasant farmer
3	Nelson Mudzingwa	Shashe and Harare	Jan 2017 and Jan 2018	Individual/Peasant farmer
4	Brain	Shashe	Feb-17	Individual/Peasant farmer
5	Virginia	Harare	Jan-18	Individual/Peasant farmer
6	Abumeleck	Shashe	Jan-18	Individual/Peasant farmer
7	Mr. Mavedzengue	Shashe	Jan-18	Individual/Peasant farmer
8	Mr. Vongai Mudzingwa	Shashe	Feb-18	Individual/Peasant farmer
9	Family [Focus Group]	Shashe	Feb-18	Group Conversation/Peasant family
10	Grace	Shashe	Feb-18	Individual/Peasant farmer
11	Raisa Chikiwa	Shashe	Feb-18	Individual/Peasant farmer
12	Edson Zimwara	Shashe	Jan-18	Individual/Peasant farmer
13	Isaac Mpofu	Shashe and Mashava	Jan 2017 and Jan 2018	Individual/Peasant farmer
14	Oliat Mavuramba	Harare	Feb-18	Individual/Peasant farmer
15	Ngoni Chikowe	Harare	Feb-18	Individual/Peasant farmer
16	Unonimous Land reform beneficiary	Harare	Feb-18	Individual/Peasant farmer
17	Anonymous	Shashe	Feb-18	Individual/Peasant farmer
18	Anonymous	Shashe	Feb-18	Individual/Peasant farmer
19	Anonymous	Harare	19-Jan	Commercial Farmer

20	Wilbert Sadomba	Harare	Jan-18	Researcher (Centre for Applied Social Sciences at the University of Zimbabwe)
21	Walter Chambati	Harare	Feb-18	Researcher (Sam Moyo African Institute for Agrarian Studies)
22	Marie-France Baron	Harare	Jan-29	Researcher
23	Emilia Hatendi	Harare	Feb-28	NGO (Food Matters)
24	Andrew Mushita	Harare	Jan-19	NGO (Community Technology Development Organisation)
25	Anonymous	Harare	Jan-19	NGO
SOUTH AFRICA				
1	Dennis Bronton	Wupperthal	Nov and Dec 2017	Individual/Peasant Farmer
2	Adrien	Wupperthal	Dec-17	Individual/Peasant Farmer
3	Jurie van Rooy	Wupperthal	Dec-17	Local lmerchant
4	Maria	Wupperthal	Dec-17	Individual/Peasant Farmer
5	Petrus Brink	Citrusdaal	Dec 2017 and Mar 2018	Individual/Peasant Farmer
6	Sarah	Cape Town	Mar-18	Individual/Peasant Farmer
7	Darlin	Wupperthal	Mar-28	Individual/Peasant Farmer
8	Jacqueline	Malmesbury	Mar-18	Individual/Peasant Farmer
9	Jonson	Malmesbury	Mar-18	Individual/Peasant Farmer
10	Nicolette	Moorreesburg	Apr-18	Individual/Peasant Farmer
11	Sizwe Nyuka	Cape Town	Mar-18	Individual/Peasant Farmer
12	Focus Group	Wuppethal	Dec-17	Group Conversation/Concerned Monrovians
13	Siviwe Mdoda	Cape Town	Mar-17	Activist
14	Mercia Andriews	Cape Town	Mar-18	NGO (Trust for Community Outreach and Education)
15	Ricado Jacobs	Cape Town	Mar-18	Researcher
16	Harry May	Cape Town	Nov 2017 and Feb 2018	NGO (Surplus People's Project)
MOZAMBIQUE				

1	Ismael Ossemane	Maputo	Nov 2017 and Jan 2018	Individual/Founder and honorary UNAC president
2	Renaldo Chingore	Maputo	Jan-28	Individual/Former UNAC president
3	Mr Panila	Nampula	Feb-18	Individual/Peasant Farmer
4	Costa Estevão	Nampula	Feb 2016 and Feb 2018	Individual/Peasant Farmer
5	Justina	Nampula	Feb-17	Individual/Peasant Farmer
6	Mousinho	Nampula	Feb-18	Individual/Peasant Farmer
7	Focus Group Mathara	Matharia (Nampula)	Feb-18	Individual/Peasant Farmer
8	Mr Vitor	Matharia (Nampula)	Feb-18	Individual/Peasant Farmer
9	Mr Benjamin	Matharia (Nampula)	Feb-18	Individual/Peasant Farmer
10	Teresa Augusto	Ruace (Zambézia)	Jan-17	Individual/Peasant Farmer
11	Berta Assane	Ruace (Zambézia)	Jan-17	Individual/Peasant Farmer
12	Arminda Ambrósio	Ruace (Zambézia)	Jan-17	Individual/Peasant Farmer
13	Agostinho Mcerneia	Nakarare (Nampula)	Jan-17	Individual/Peasant Farmer
14	Ana Paula Tuacale	Nampula	Mar-18	Individual/UNAC Present
15	Baptista Frisado	Ruace (Zambézia)	Jan-17	Individual/Peasant Farmer
16	Anonynous	Ruace (Zambézia)	Jan-17	Individual/Peasant Farmer
17	Manuel Massana	Nampula	Mar-18	Individual/Peasant Farmer
18	Henena Victor	Nakarare (Nampula)	Jan-17	Individual/Peasant Farmer
19	Focus Group Nakarari	Malema (Nampula)	Jan-17	Group Conversations/Peasant Famers
20	Focus Group Ruace	Ruace (Zambézia)	Jan-17	Group Conversations/Peasant Famers
21	Focus Group Mataria	Ribáue (Nampula)	Mar-18	Group Conversations/Peasant Famers
22	Americo Uacequete	Nampula	Feb-18	Government/ProSAVANA Docal Point

23	Pedro Zucula	Nampula	Feb 2017 and Mar 2018	Government/Provincial Director of Agriculture
24	João José Nwole	Lioma, Gurué	Feb-17	Local Government/Head of the Post
25	Luisa Celma Meque	Maputo	Feb-17	Government/Vice Minister of Agriculture and Food Security
26	Carlos Nuno Castel-Branco	Lisboa	Apr-17	Researcher
27	João Mosca	Maputo	Mar-16	Researcher/Observatório do Meio Rural
28	Luís Muchanga	Maputo	Mar-17	Activist/UNAC Executive Director
29	Charles Moniz	Nampula	Mar-18	NGO/Justiça e Paz
30	Anabela Lemos	Maputo	Feb-17	NGO/Justiça Ambiental (Friends of the Earth Mozambique)
31	Vicente Adriano	Maputo	Feb-28	NGO/ADECRU
32	Gordon Cameron	Ruace and Email interview	Jan-17	Company/Hoyo-Hoyo
33	Mana Luft and Justiniano Gomes	Zambézia and Maputo	Jan and Feb 2017	Company/AgroMoz


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