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**“THE LAND BELONGS TO THOSE WHO WORK IT”: A CRITICAL  
EVALUATION OF LAND REDISTRIBUTION POLICY IN SOUTH  
AFRICA, 1994-2012**

A thesis  
submitted in fulfilment  
of the requirements for the degree  
of  
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In  
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**GRAEME MACKENZIE**



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## Abstract

Land ownership in post-apartheid South Africa carries a powerful symbolic charge for both black and white citizens. Under apartheid, state legislation denied black South Africans access to landownership rights, and confined them to 13 per cent of the available agricultural land. The election of the ANC government in 1994 marked the formal end of this process. Policies to provide access to land ownership to black South Africans were developed, raising widespread expectations for radical agrarian reform. The land reform policies of successive post-apartheid governments have, however, been unsuccessful in achieving any significant change to the overall proportions of land owned by black and white farmers, and the small amounts of land that have been transferred have failed to improve the lives of beneficiaries. In fact, the land ownership regime created under apartheid continues unchallenged in the post-apartheid era. This thesis seeks to investigate why successive democratically-elected governments with a mandate for reform have done so little to redress the entrenched inequality in land ownership.

Informed by an anti-foundationalist ontology and an interpretive epistemology, this study focuses on processes of institutionalisation as they relate to both patterns of land ownership and the wider institutions of government inherited from the apartheid era that have continued to frame the policy process in South Africa. More specifically, the study adopts a

‘constructivist institutionalist’ approach to capture the way these institutions have been driven by a dominant discourse informed by apartheid-era values. It undertakes a multi-level institutional analysis, seeking to clarify the ideas underpinning the institutions and the discourses influencing the actors at the constitutional, national policy and provincial levels.

The research involved examining key constitutional and policy documents and analysing interviews with key policy actors in the Eastern Cape and KwaZulu-Natal provinces. The analysis identifies the international discourses on development and land reform that constructed what South African policymakers understood as ‘possible’ and ‘impossible’ after 1994, and it traces how these discourses went on to inform the development of the property clause in the post-apartheid Constitution. The analysis also reveals how the shifting assumptions, silences and focuses of policymakers implicitly constructed the beneficiaries of such policies – the black landless – as incapable and undeserving. Finally, this study reveals a tacit agreement among the majority of the most powerful stakeholders that land redistribution policy cannot be allowed to fundamentally disturb the agrarian system created by apartheid policies.

The research extends understanding of the South African land reform programme by identifying the discourses that inform contemporary policy and practice, with specific focus on the Settlement/Land Acquisition Grant

(SLAG) policy, the Land Redistribution for Agricultural Development (LRAD) policy, and the recently adopted Proactive Land Acquisition Strategy (PLAS). There has been little scholarly analysis of PLAS, which seeks to provide leasehold access to approved beneficiaries who have the potential to purchase land at some point in the future. This research deepens scholarly understanding of PLAS, and the way the dominant land reform discourses continue to support the position of white large-scale commercial farmers and the emerging black bourgeoisie, at the expense of the interests and aspirations of the rural landless. It demonstrates why land reform has thus far failed to make meaningful changes to the agrarian system created by apartheid policies, and therefore failed to improve the lives of the rural landless.

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## Acronyms

ADA:	Agribusiness Development Agency
AFASA:	African Farmers' Association of South Africa
ANC:	African National Congress
BRC:	Border Rural Committee
Codesa:	Convention for a Democratic South Africa
CRDP:	Comprehensive Rural Development Programme
DA:	Democratic Alliance
DAEA&RD:	Department of Agriculture, Environmental Affairs & Rural Development
DAFF:	Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries
DLA:	Department of Land Affairs
DRDAR:	Department of Rural Development and Agricultural Agrarian Reform
DRDLR:	Department of Rural Development and Land Reform
ECARP:	Eastern Cape Agricultural Research Project
FF:	Freedom Front / <i>Vryheidsfront</i>
IFP:	Inkatha Freedom Party
LRAD:	Land Redistribution for Agricultural Development

MALA:	Ministry of Agricultural and Land Affairs
NAFU:	National African Farmers' Union
NGO:	Non-Governmental Organisation
NP:	National Party
PAC:	Pan-Africanist Congress
PLAS:	Proactive Land Acquisition Strategy
RADP:	Recapitalisation and Development Programme
SACP:	South African Communist Party
SASA:	South African Sugar Association
SLAG:	Settlement and Lands Acquisition Grant
TAU:	Transvaal Agricultural Union / <i>Transvaalse Landbou Unie</i>
UDF:	United Democratic Front
USA:	United States of America
VOC:	Dutch East India Company



## Chapter One

### Land in Post-Apartheid South Africa

South Africa today is one of the most unequal societies in the world, with a Gini coefficient<sup>1</sup> of 57.8% (Ross, 1999; Vegter, 2011). This is largely as a result of the policies of the colonial, segregation and apartheid governments, in power from 1652-1994<sup>2</sup>. In addition to the political subjugation of black South Africans through physical force, these governments also systematically denied access to economic resources. Importantly, black South Africans were barred from owning land in legally designated 'white' areas (van Zyl & Kirsten, 1997), and were confined to 13 per cent of South Africa's agricultural land, creating a reservoir of cheap African migrant labour (Adams, Cousins, & Manona, 1999) for the mining and industrial sectors.

In 1990, various factors combined to convince the apartheid authorities that the time for change had arrived. Nelson Mandela, leader of the African National Congress (ANC), was released from prison to begin negotiations towards a new political order. The ANC took power four years later after winning the country's first multiracial elections (Hague & Harrop, 2007). After years in exiled opposition (Herbst, 2005), the ANC faced the gargantuan task of reshaping the apartheid economy, so that for the first

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<sup>1</sup> The Gini coefficient is a measure of economic inequality in a country, with 0% indicating perfect economic equality, and 100% indicating perfect economic inequality (Statistics New Zealand, 2014).

<sup>2</sup> All dates used are in the Common Era (C.E.)

time in its history South Africa might provide more equally for all its citizens, regardless of skin colour.

The way in which the ANC hoped to achieve this soon became clear. Marais (2011) comments that the new governing party sought to reach a mutually beneficial accommodation with established economic interests domestically and internationally, and engineer the rise of a new black 'patriotic bourgeoisie'. Much as apartheid had been a project of the aspirant Afrikaner bourgeoisie, post-apartheid South Africa would be a project of the aspirant black bourgeoisie. To pre-empt social and political rebellion from the majority of black South Africans who would be excluded from this new class, a system of social grants and gradual improvements to health and educational facilities was introduced. As was made clear at Marikana on 16 August 2014, where 34 striking mineworkers were killed and 78 injured by the South African police (IOL, 2012), those outside the black bourgeoisie who did not accept this arrangement would be dealt with harshly.

Within this broader strategy of accommodation with established capital, one of the many negative economic legacies of apartheid which the new government needed to address on taking power was the critical imbalance in access to land between white and black South Africans created by apartheid policies. When the ANC took power, about 16 million (black) people were concentrated in the limited areas allocated to them by apartheid and colonial policies, having no legal ownership of land, and

engaged in low-input, labour-intensive subsistence production, mostly to supplement other forms of income (Hall, 2004a). The rest of the agricultural land in South Africa was owned by around 45, 000 capital-intensive, large-scale, mostly white commercial farmers (DAFF, 2012) who employed about 3 million black South Africans (Hall, 2004a). Given promises made by the ANC as early as 1955 that “... the land shall be shared among those who work it ...” (Congress of the People, 1955), it was clear that the injustice of this agrarian system needed immediate attention from the new post-apartheid government.

In 1996, the approach to this problem became clear when a new Constitution was adopted, part of which enshrined the basic principles of the South African land reform policy. The policy consisted of three ‘pillars’. The first, *land tenure reform*, aimed at giving secure access to land through legislation to black workers on white large-scale commercial farms, and occupants of the areas allocated for black occupation by apartheid policies. The second pillar, *land restitution*, aimed at restitution (financial or otherwise) for black title-holders who were forced off their land by the apartheid state (Hall, 2004a). The third pillar, *land redistribution*, was aimed at providing access to land to black people who had never previously had secure claims to landed property (James, 2007).

The objectives of the land tenure reform and land restitution programmes are not to change the agrarian structure created by colonial and apartheid

policies. Rather, they were created to ease the plight of those forced into landlessness and poverty by colonial and apartheid policies. In contrast, the land redistribution policy has the objective of changing the landownership regime forced on black citizens. Rather than providing relief to the rural landless, it seeks to change the agrarian structure causing their poverty and distress, to permanently improve their socio-economic situation. For this reason, this thesis concentrates on the third pillar of the South African land reform programme, which began in 1994 with a focus on assisting the rural landless poor gain access to property rights through the market. In 2000 the emphasis of the redistribution programme shifted to creating an African commercial farmer class (Cousins, 2009) alongside the existing white commercial farming class, still through the market. In 2009 the emphasis of land redistribution changed once again, still aimed at the creation of an African commercial farmer class, but through intensive government support rather than the market (DRDLR, 2011a). Progress in the implementation of this policy through all three of these policy iterations has been poor. By 2009 only 6.9 per cent of the agricultural land in South Africa had been transferred from white to black ownership through this policy (Greenberg, 2010), and no updated figures are available. In addition, the small amounts of land that have been transferred have failed to improve the socio-economic conditions of the beneficiaries (Valente, 2011).

The results of an opinion survey carried out in South Africa after the 'fast-track' land reforms of 2000 in Zimbabwe emphasise the importance of land

redistribution to many South Africans. Sixty-eight percent of black respondents to the survey approved of events in Zimbabwe in 2000, and agreed with the statement, 'Land must be returned to blacks in South Africa, no matter what the consequences are for the current owners and for political stability in the country' (James, 2007). Dr Piet Meiring, a member of the Reparations and Rehabilitation Committee of the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission, agreed that "... there's no way by which you can have ... reconciliation without justice seen to be done and experienced to be done" (Meiring, 2012).

Land reform is in this light one of the most important tasks in post-apartheid South Africa. 'Land' is discursively significant and carries a powerful symbolic charge for many black South Africans, both because of memories of the racialised dispossession of their land under colonialism and apartheid, and because inequalities in land ownership evoke the broader economic inequalities which post-apartheid policies have yet to undo. "Land, in this sense, is an idiom for the citizenship once denied to South Africa's black majority" (James, 2007, p. 10).

Simultaneously, land ownership symbolises wealth and security to many white South Africans in an era when they no longer wield political power (Kepe, Hall, & Cousins, 2008). The large-scale commercial agricultural sector also contributes about 4.5 per cent of the country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP). Restructuring the large-scale commercial agricultural

sector, while obviously necessary, will clearly have large consequences for the economy and for many people, black and white (Mather & Greenberg, 2003). It is therefore vitally important to fully understand the various discourses informing the debate around land redistribution in South Africa.

The South African land redistribution programme, therefore, has great potential as a topic for study — the poor performance of the programme in transferring land and in improving the socio-economic conditions of its beneficiaries prompts enquiry of the factors contributing to these failures. This is particularly important given that much of the existing scholarship on land redistribution has failed to address the causes from a critical discursive perspective that would allow an exploration and understanding of the values and worldviews of those making and implementing land redistribution policy.

## **Background**

While the extent of the dispossession suffered by black South Africans is perhaps unprecedented, the agrarian structure created in South Africa by colonial, segregation and apartheid policies is not uncommon in the developing world. Although land is the main productive asset of many poor people living in developing countries, many do not have access to productive farmland (Lipton, 2009). A ‘dual agricultural’ system of large-scale commercial farms juxtaposed against small-scale subsistence units is often present in these countries. The consequences of maintaining such

agrarian systems have been noted, in most cases, as leading to wasted economic potential (El-Ghonemy, 2010) and long-term, often violent rural unrest (Binswanger & Deininger, 1993). Efforts to avoid or reverse these situations have been made in many countries through land reform programmes. These programmes are typically aimed at “... substantially increasing the proportion of farmland controlled by the poor, and thereby their income, power or status” (Lipton, 2009, p. 1). For example, successful land reform programmes were carried out in South Korea, Taiwan and Japan after the Second World War, leading to greater access to land and economic opportunities for the landless poor (El-Ghonemy, 2010), and so were a part of the policy mix which set the stage for the subsequent spectacular economic development trajectories of these countries. The success or failure of land reform programmes in developing countries can, therefore, have significant development implications.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, there is no consensus on the best approach to land reform in the scholarship. One of the major divisions is between those advocating large-scale government intervention and those advocating a reliance on the market to achieve a more just distribution of land (El-Ghonemy, 2010). Those preferring the market as an institution for achieving land reform argue that asset distribution and the agricultural sector are secondary development factors. From this perspective, it is important to allow the formal market to operate freely over time to achieve an economically optimum redistribution of farmland (Bandeira & Sumpsi,

2009). While land reform policies that ignore markets usually fail, so too do policies that assume markets automatically resolve conflicts and eliminate costs. If they did, markets alone would remove land inequality, without the need for land reforms, which has never happened. Markets can only go part of the way towards fair land distribution (Lipton, 2009). Case studies from Brazil, Egypt, India and the Philippines, where market-led land reform policies have been implemented, have found them to be less than successful in creating new farmers (Bandeira & Sumpsi, 2009). The main problem outlined in these studies was a high rate of default among beneficiaries, who were unable to repay the large amounts of borrowed money required to buy the land on the market. Many scholars therefore argue in favour of state-led institutional responses to redistribute resources, advocating extensive (sometimes coercive) land reforms (Bandeira & Sumpsi, 2009).

Irrespective of whether a state-led or a market-led approach to land reform is taken, such a programme constitutes a public policy — public policy being actions or inactions by the state on an issue of public importance (Hill, 2009). The institutions of government inherited from the apartheid era, although modified through the process of constitutional review between 1990 and 1996, continue to frame the policy process in South Africa. This is apparent in the area of land reform, with strong implications for the potential success of this programme. A theoretical perspective that provides opportunity to take account of this is ‘new institutionalism,’ which makes the point that the institutional context that frames the policy process is

important (Polski & Ostrom, 1998b). From this perspective, then, land redistribution policy will be strongly influenced by the broader institutional context within which the policy is formulated and implemented. In addition, 'constructivist institutionalism' adds the insight that institutions themselves are underpinned and maintained by discourses, as are the actors working around and within these institutions (Hay, 2006). This means that an in-depth understanding of the institutional context of land reform will provide insight into factors leading to the success or failure of land reform initiatives. However, despite the vital importance of this aspect of land reform, there is a significant gap in the scholarly literature in this regard.

A large and varied body of literature focuses on land redistribution in South Africa, in which the debate is generally framed as a "... tension between the objectives of 'equity' and 'efficiency'" (Hall, 2010b, p. 175). This split generally mirrors that found in the international literature around land reform and development. Those emphasising 'equity' see land redistribution as best used to create changes in social, economic and political relations a greater equality in access to resources, especially land. As a result they favour government intervention in land reform to improve access to land for black South Africans (Binswanger & Deininger, 1993; Bradstock, 2005; Eastwood, Kirsten, & Lipton, 2006; Hall, 1998; Hargreaves, 1996; Lahiff & Cousins, 2005; Lipton, 1993a; McEwan, 2001; Mokgope, 2000; Valente, 2011; van Zyl & Kirsten, 1997; Walker, 2005b, 2009; Zimmerman, 2000). Those emphasising 'efficiency' advocate using land redistribution as one of many

ways to improve overall output and productivity in South African agriculture, and generally support the market-led land redistribution policy adopted by the South African government (Du Toit, 2004; Lyne & Darroch, 2003; Lyne, Knight, & Roth, 2006; Mbatha, Antrobus, & van Rooyen, 2010; Neto, 2004).

The studies on both sides of this divide take the equity/efficiency division for granted, and do not question where this division comes from, or how it arises. Attempts have been made to step outside of this debate. Bernstein (2003) for example, situates the South African land redistribution policy in a global world-historical perspective, as part of what he describes as the development of capitalism and the fragmentation of the labouring class, and Hall (2004b) sees the changes in the land redistribution policy over time as indicative of shifting class alliances in the country. These studies assume the existence of 'classes' with fixed and unchanging interests and motivations, and no attempt is made to ascertain what 'class' actually means in the contemporary South African agrarian sector.

Despite an extensive scholarship on the South African land redistribution policy, comparatively few studies approach it from a perspective which does not assume fixed interests and motivations. There has been, with a few exceptions, little to no examination of the deeper assumptions, the ideas, or the discourses that inform policy actors in the South African land reform arena (Cousins & Scoones, 2010; Du Toit, 2013; MacDonald, 2003;

Weideman, 2004). If we base our actions on the ideas we have about the world around us, it is crucially important to understand the ideas post-apartheid policy makers have about land, agriculture and land reform in order to understand the course that land redistribution policy has taken since 1994. To this point, there has been no serious and sustained effort to do this in the research into land reform in South Africa. This study applies a hitherto ignored theoretical approach to the South African land redistribution arena, namely constructivist institutionalism, to offer new insights and a deeper understanding of developments in land redistribution policy.

### **Key Research Focus**

This study seeks to analyse the deeper assumptions underlying post-apartheid land reform policy in South Africa. The central focus of this thesis is, therefore, on worldviews, ideas and discourses around land reform in South Africa. This comes from the assumption that language shapes our view of the world — not only the language we use in daily situations, but the worldviews and ideas inherent in the language we use which shape social relationships and institutions (Fairclough, 1992; Gee, 2011; Hajer, 1995; Phillips & Jorgensen, 2002).

### **Theoretical Framework**

The ‘new institutionalism’ approach points to the importance of institutions in policy analysis — by presenting policy actors with a limited set of policy choices, they make certain policy outcomes more likely than others

(Lawrence, Suddaby, & Leca, 2009). Within this broad approach, constructivist institutionalism puts ideas or social constructions at the centre of the 'new institutionalism' analysis, assuming that ideas simultaneously form the basis of institutions and guide the actions and strategies of policy actors (Hay, 2006). Crucially, the ideas manifested in institutions and the ideas motivating actors do not always match each other. Different groups of actors who subscribe to different sets of ideas may therefore work to reshape institutions to more closely embody the ideas or discourses to which they subscribe (Hay, 2006).

Constructivist institutionalism focuses attention on the ideas underlying institutions and the actors working within them. Policy arenas are characterised by a variety of institutions and actors, leading to questions about where to begin an analysis of the ideas underlying them. Polski and Ostrom (1998a) suggest a multi-level system of analysis, where institutional arenas are divided into the constitutional, the collective choice and the operating levels. Where the constitutional level sets the general boundaries for land reform in South Africa, the collective choice level creates national policies around land reform, which are implemented at the operating or the provincial level. This study concentrates on the discursive construction of land reform policy at each level. It focuses on the discourses drawn on by actors contributing to the debate around the property clause in the 1996 Constitution at the constitutional level, the implicit discourses apparent in policy documents around land redistribution policies at the national policy

level, and on the discourses drawn on by land policy participants at the local level in two of South Africa's provinces — the Eastern Cape and KwaZulu-Natal. To understand better the success or failure of post-apartheid land redistribution policy in South Africa, therefore, this study seeks to clarify the ideas underpinning the institutions and the discourses driving the actors at each of these three levels.

### **Note on Method**

In focusing on the analysis of ideas and discourses in the South African land redistribution policy arena, this study is informed by an anti-foundationalist ontology, and an interpretive epistemology. Following from that position, it adopts a qualitative methodology, assuming that the meanings we attach to the physical world are socially constructed, and cumulatively embedded in formal institutions as preferences, techniques and policies (Lindlof & Taylor, 2011).

At the constitutional and policy levels the study focuses on the section of the South African Constitution addressing land reform, and key policy documents detailing the various iterations of land redistribution policy between 1994 and 2012. Research data at the provincial level was generated in this study through semi-structured qualitative interviews with a number of groups involved in land redistribution policy in both the Eastern Cape and KwaZulu-Natal.

## **Limitations and Delimitations**

The social constructionist approach adopted in this study recognises that the researcher and the researched exert influence over each other. This means that as the researcher in this study, I cannot claim privilege of knowledge or interpretation. The research I produce here will have been affected by my socially dominant position in South Africa society as a white, English-speaking male. Given the continued concentration of economic, social and cultural power in the white population in the post-apartheid context (De Kock, 2011), this will most especially have affected my interactions with the black respondents in my study. This study is not aimed at outlining an external reality as neutrally and rigorously as possible — I acknowledge that the research and the knowledge produced here is historically and culturally contingent. However, it is presented in the hope that it adds new insights to the debate around land redistribution in South Africa, and ultimately contributes to the creation of a land redistribution programme that provides greater access to land for black South Africans.

Financial, geographical and temporal constraints during the research phase of this study mean that research at the provincial level for this study has been focused on the Eastern Cape and KwaZulu-Natal provinces of South Africa. These two provinces were selected as being reasonably representative of the rest of the country climatically, politically, demographically and in terms of agrarian structure.

## Chapter Organization

This study begins by tracing the history of land in South Africa. The institutions created to further the value of white supremacy during the colonial, segregation and apartheid eras are introduced, as are the resulting policies around land allocation and land use (Chapter 2). Having set out the broad historical events resulting in the mass dispossession of black South Africans, this study turns to the development of a theoretical approach appropriate to a discourse- and institution-sensitive analysis of the efforts of post-apartheid governments to reverse this mass dispossession. I developed an adapted form of ‘constructivist institutionalism’, focused on the discourses underpinning institutions and motivating actors at the constitutional, national policy and the provincial levels (Chapter 3). From this theoretical foundation, I then developed an anti-foundationalist, interpretivist and qualitative approach, to allow the creation of the discourse analysis method used in this study (Chapter 4).

Before concentrating on the discourses found in the South African land reform policy arena, the thesis examines broader global narratives around development and land reform (chapter five). The development of the South African land reform policy from 1994 onwards did not occur in a vacuum — at least five broad narratives about what ‘development’ is, and where land reforms fit into this process, are present in the literature on land reform and have exerted some influence on at least the initial stages of land reform in

South Africa through the World Bank (Williams, 1996). These international discourses around land reform form the focus of this chapter (Chapter 5).

At the constitutional level, this study draws on the punctuated equilibrium theory developed by Baumgartner and Jones (2009) (positing that settled states of 'policy equilibrium' are periodically punctuated by periods of 'policy crisis') to frame an analysis of the creation of the property clause in the South African constitution. Two discourses are identified among participants in the process of creating this section of the constitution. The interactions of the actors drawing on these two discourses are analysed to understand the clash of ideas that resulted in the property clause of the final Constitution, setting the broad boundaries of land redistribution in South Africa thereafter (Chapter 6).

In terms of national policy this thesis analyses policy documents pertaining to the three main iterations of land redistribution policy developed by the Department of Land Affairs (DLA), which was renamed the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform (DRDLR) in 2009 (Jacobs, 2012). The problem representation, the deeper assumptions, the history and the silences in each of these three policies are analysed in order to create a clear picture of what each policy aimed or aims to achieve, and for whom (Chapter 7). This same set of policy documents is used in the next chapter to understand the implicit views held by post-apartheid policymakers of the beneficiaries of land redistribution (Chapter 8).

The final section analyses the ideas and beliefs about land reform held by those policy actors involved in the implementation of the policies developed at the national level. Thirty-five interviews were carried out in the Eastern Cape and KwaZulu-Natal provinces of South Africa in the course of this study. Three primary discourses arise from these interviews. Analysis of these discourses provides another part of the answer to the question of why land redistribution policy has achieved so little since 1994 (Chapter 9), before the final concluding chapter (Chapter 10). Having set out the structure of this thesis, I turn to the history of land policy in South Africa.

## Chapter Two

### History of Land Ownership in South Africa

The issue of land reform in post-apartheid South Africa arises out of the country's long history of dispossession and oppression. This chapter sets out the broader currents in the history of the country, along with their effects on the distribution of land between whites and blacks. Beginning with precolonial arrangements around the distribution of land, this chapter moves on to outline the land tenure regime introduced with the settlement of Europeans in the region, which focused on giving formal ownership of land with full rights of disposal to whites only. As European settlers extended control over what would become South Africa in 1910 (Thompson, 1990), and the economy became focused on mining, the black population was gradually confined to small areas and denied ownership of land, forcing them to seek work on white farms and industries at artificially low wages (Marais, 2011).

Through the apartheid era this system was maintained and intensified, and focused on aiding white farmers to become large-scale, mechanized and 'modern', as seen in the agricultural sectors of the US and the UK (Cousins & Scoones, 2010). By the late 1980s a combination of external and internal pressures made it clear to the authorities that the apartheid economic and political system would need to be changed to ensure the continued prosperity of white South Africans. This put the extant system of land

ownership into question. Through this history of land ownership in South Africa, the chapter provides greater depth and understanding to the discourses examined in later chapters.

### **The precolonial period**

Humans have lived in the southern African region since almost the very beginnings of the species (Bandeira & Sumpshi, 2009). There is, therefore, a long history of human occupation. This section focuses on human occupation in the region just prior to the first permanent European settlement. In the eastern areas, Bantu-speaking agro-pastoralists both herded livestock and grew crops. In the southern and western areas the Khoikhoi tended herds of livestock, while San hunter-gatherers lived in the mountains and semi-deserts where agriculture and pastoralism were risky (Ross, 1999). A rough egalitarianism was maintained in these societies, especially in relation to land. In all three social groupings individual rights in property were not recognised — to the San, Khoikhoi and Bantu-speakers, the idea of the exclusive possession of a piece of land was literally inconceivable (Le May, 1995). Among the agro-pastoralists a system of communal land ownership was practised (Bundy, 1979). Families could use land in the villages as building sites and kitchen gardens. Women controlled the fields in the growing seasons, and the rest of the land was the property of the community as a whole throughout the year. Anyone could use it to pasture livestock, hunt game or gather plants (Thompson, 1990). The only form of accumulable wealth in this system was cattle, which could be loaned out, allowing individuals to build networks of power and

dependence (Bundy, 1979; Ross, 1999; Thompson, 1990). However no individual could become overly powerful in this system, as there was always vacant land available for settlement — emigration to new areas was an ever-present option to groups who felt themselves oppressed (Thompson, 1990).

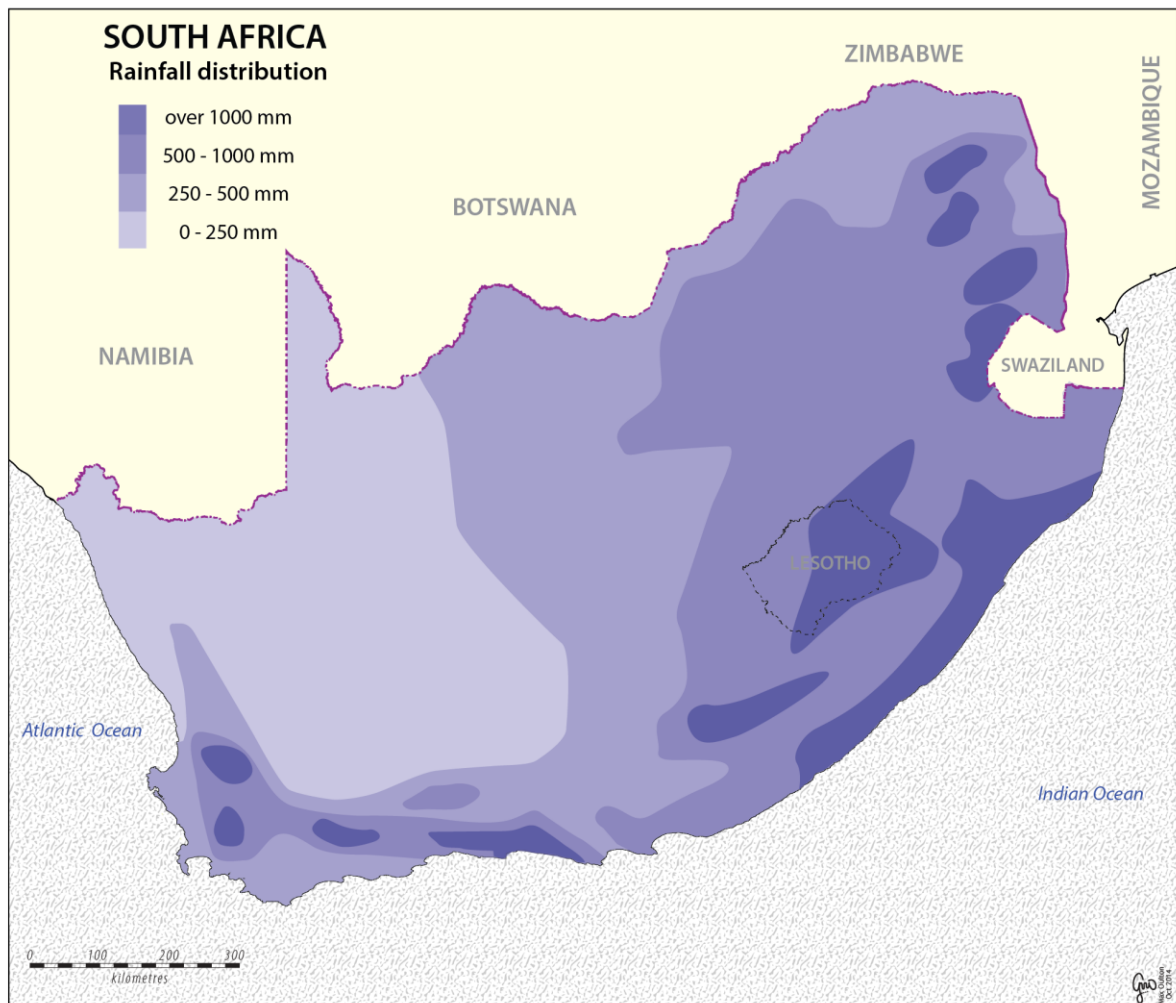
Crucially important for all groups living in the region<sup>3</sup> are the climatic conditions. Figure 2-1 shows that in the west of the region, the average annual rainfall is less than 100mm, resulting in desert conditions along the western coastline. In the east the average rainfall reaches 1000mm a year, producing subtropical vegetation along the eastern coastline. A transitional zone receives about 500mm per year. To the east of that zone, the rainfall is generally sufficient for intensive arable agriculture. To the west, the rainfall is scarce and variable, and so generally suitable for extensive grazing.

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<sup>3</sup> The Union of South Africa was first created in 1910 (Thompson, 1990) with the borders that exist today. In this chapter then, discussions of the area prior to 1910 will refer to the southern African region.

Figure 2-1: Rainfall distribution in South Africa

(Source: M. Oulton)



This division of the country into dry and wet areas is a result of an extensive plateau in the centre of the country, averaging around 1 500m to 2 000m above sea level. The escarpment is highest in the east, in the form of the Drakensberg range. These break rain-bearing weather systems from the Indian Ocean in the summer, causing the high rainfall along the east coast where the Bantu-speaking agro-pastoralists lived. These groups also settled the plateau behind the Drakensberg, where average rainfall reduces and the

thick savannah of the north gives way to grasslands on what is known as the Highveld. West of this transitional zone average rainfall dwindles drastically, and the grasslands give way to the semi-desert of the Karoo and the Kalahari (Ross, 1999), where the San hunted and the Khoikhoi herded their livestock.

Most importantly, these rainfall figures are long-term annual averages. In these regions rain is only possible in the summer — winters are uniformly dry. In addition, from summer to summer, total rainfall can in fact vary greatly from season to season. Summer droughts are relatively frequent, varying in range and intensity — some are recorded as having lasted for a decade (Thompson, 1990). There are rivers in the country, making some irrigation possible. However, most regularly shrink to trickles in the rainless winter months, and to nothing during the periodic summer droughts (Le May, 1995). As a rational response to these unpredictable conditions, the San, Khoikhoi and the agro-pastoralists shifted their activities from season to season in response to climatic conditions. In relatively wet years cropping was successful, while in comparatively dry years the emphasis shifted to herding and hunting (Bundy, 1979).

### **Colonial period 1652-1910**

The first recorded European contact was in 1487, when a Portuguese expedition rounded the Cape of Good Hope in search of new routes to Asia (Thompson, 1990). They were soon followed by other European nations,

and while the Portuguese avoided landing in southern Africa, the Dutch East India Company<sup>4</sup> (*Verenigde Oostindische Compagnie*, or the VOC) realised the potential advantages of establishing a permanent settlement at the Cape of Good Hope (Parthesius, 2010; Ross, 1999). In 1652 a small party of VOC employees arrived in Table Bay, intending to establish a trading post (Le May, 1995). The settlement was never meant to be more than a small fortified base, where annual fleets to and from Batavia could take in fresh water, fruit, vegetables and grain, and land their sick for recuperation (Thompson, 1990). It was soon apparent, however, that the local Khoikhoi would not be able to supply all that was needed, and the VOC considered it had no option but to transform the trading post at the Cape into a genuine colony (Ross, 1999).

The Cape peninsula, where the Dutch<sup>5</sup> settled, experiences different climatic patterns to the summer rainfall areas which cover the majority of the country. In the south-west of the country around the Cape peninsula, the summers are dry and the winters dominated by heavy rainfall, which is regular and sufficient enough to allow intensive arable agriculture (Thompson, 1990). This regional micro-climate had specific implications when additional settlers from Europe arrived. When the VOC began distributing parcels of land amongst its employees, they did so in the

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<sup>4</sup> The VOC was a private company granted extensive powers by the Dutch government of the time, including a monopoly on Dutch trade east of the Cape of Good Hope, the right to make treaties with rulers and states in Asia, to build fortifications, and to undertake military operations (Parthesius, 2010).

<sup>5</sup> Similar to most commentaries, in this study the Dutch settlers in the region and their descendants are referred to as the *Trekboers*, the *Voortrekkers*, the Boers and the Afrikaners.

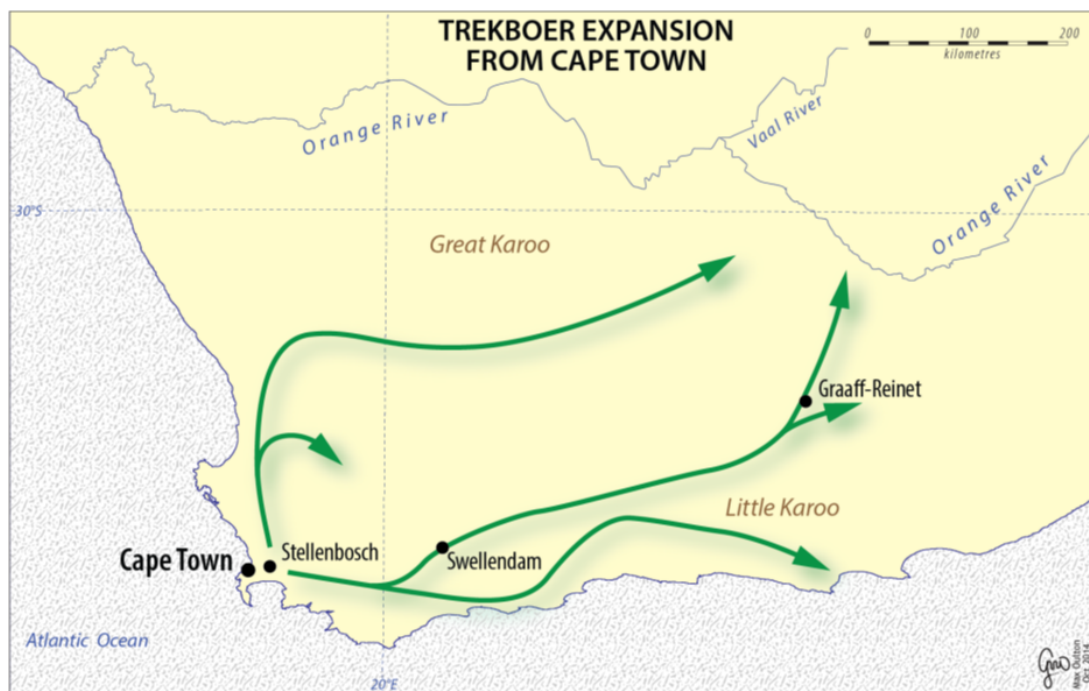
winter-rainfall areas of the Cape peninsula. Regular rainfall meant the new formal and defined freehold farming units were able to be farmed using agricultural methods and systems developed in the Mediterranean. These farmers began to produce wheat and wine regularly and successfully, and over time became a prosperous landed gentry (Miller & Pope, 2000a; Ross, 1999). The type of land tenure practised today in South Africa's large-scale commercial farming sector has its origins in the bureaucracy of the VOC (Miller & Pope, 2000a). These prosperous farms were developed on the back of slave labour, and by 1659 non-European slaves outnumbered white settlers. Thus, from the very beginnings of European settlement in the region, colour and inferiority were conflated in the minds of whites (Le May, 1995), and racism (rationalised by reference to both the Bible and to science) was used to rationalise the exploitation of non-whites by Europeans (Rodney, 1972).

As the Dutch colony expanded beyond the confines of the winter-rainfall areas, a distinct group of European settler-farmers, or *trekboers*, came into being (Le May, 1995). As settled plots of land cultivated under European agricultural systems were not viable in the summer-rainfall semi-deserts of the interior, these farmers raised and sold livestock, following the grazing from season to season like the Khoikhoi (Ross, 1999). In keeping with the ideal of white supremacy, the VOC assumed the lands in the interior of the country were its own. Thus legally the *trekboers* loaned the land they used from the VOC for the payment of a nominal rent, and later a tithe on

agricultural production (Miller & Pope, 2000a). The *trekboers* extended the idea of white supremacy to the Khoikhoi they encountered (Ross, 1999), dispossessing them and the San of their land and stock, and slaughtering the survivors or forcing them into bonded servitude (Le May, 1995; Ross, 1999). The effects of these actions on the San and Khoikhoi were of no concern to the authorities, and the nomadic *trekboers* were not censured for their actions. Territorial expansion had never been part of the Company's purpose, but in a land without natural frontiers it was impossible to prevent the eastward movement of the *trekboers* (Le May, 1995). By the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century they had reached the lands of the agro-pastoralist Xhosa, and begun a long-term war over land access that would last over a century (Ross, 1999).

Figure 2-2: Trekboer expansion from the Cape

(Source: M. Oulton)



For almost 154 years the Cape Colony was a Dutch possession, but on the conclusion of the Napoleonic Wars in Europe in 1806, the British took control (Le May, 1995; Thompson, 1990). The new rulers opted to create an alliance with the major Dutch landowners of the colony (Ross, 1999), only bringing in gradual changes over time. In 1808 the slave trade to all British colonies was forbidden, in 1828 legal disabilities previously applying to free people of colour were removed, and on the 1 December 1834 all slaves in the Cape were freed (Le May, 1995; Ross, 1999). Superficially these were major changes, seriously challenging white supremacy in the Cape, and causing anger among many of the Dutch. However, most slaves remained on farms as paid labourers, and their conditions of labour after 1841 were determined by the Masters and Servants Ordinance, which was heavily weighted in

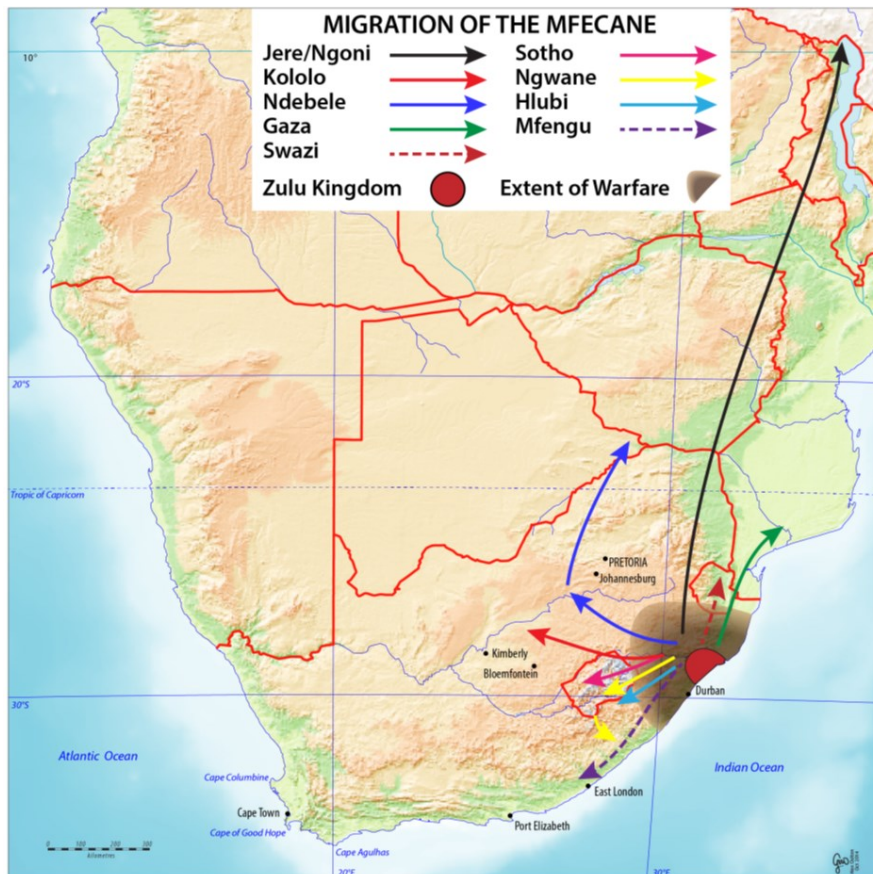
favour of employers (Ross, 1999). The net effects of these changes did not radically change the social position of non-Europeans in the Colony, and the idea of white supremacy remained dominant.

Alongside these measures, in 1813 the British began the process of surveying and registering the loan-farms of the *trekboers*. Slowly, loan-based tenure was eliminated in favour of more formal forms of tenure (Miller & Pope, 2000a), and in 1820 new British colonists were brought into the Cape Colony, and settled on land recently taken from the Xhosa (Thompson, 1990). Thus in the earliest days of what would come to be South Africa, the principle of the private ownership of land with full rights of disposal was set — but only for people of European origin (Miller & Pope, 2000a; Thompson, 1990). As British and Afrikaner settlers expanded their control over the interior, the process of unequal apportionment of land between blacks and whites began on a major scale (Miller & Pope, 2000a).

Outside the limits of the Cape colony, by the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the agro-pastoralist societies underwent a period of violent change. A series of political consolidations culminated in the creation of the Zulu kingdom. A number of reasons have been suggested for these consolidations, including the introduction of maize, the limits of the prevailing systems of production, and the increased possibilities of trade that arose with the Portuguese settlement at Delagoa Bay in what would become Mozambique. Whatever the causes, from the 1820s the new Zulu kingdom embarked on annual

campaigns against neighbouring chiefdoms, prompting endemic warfare in the region in a period which has become known as the *uMfecane* (Ross, 1999; Thompson, 1990).

Figure 2-3: *Migrations of the uMfecane* (Source: M. Oulton)



Within the Cape Colony, by the 1830s a combination of the changes made by the British to the social position of non-Europeans, the demand for more land, and the effects of war with the Xhosa agro-pastoralists prompted several thousand of the Dutch-speaking inhabitants of the Cape Colony to emigrate to the interior of the region. Between 5 000–10 000 ‘Voortrekkers’

(later known as the Boers or the Afrikaners) left the colony, taking their livestock into the interior in what came to be known as the 'Great Trek'. Due to the effects of the *uMfecane*, the *Voortrekkers* moved into mostly unpopulated areas which led them to conclude that the land was uninhabited and unclaimed. Where the Boers encountered resistance from survivors of the *uMfecane*, their firearms proved far more effective than African spears and shields. When this advantage was negated through the use of guerrilla tactics, the *Voortrekkers* forced these survivor groups into submission by destroying their food supplies. The success of the Afrikaners in this conflict reinforced their belief in white superiority. Eventually, the *Voortrekkers* split into three groups to form the new republics of the Orange Free State and the Transvaal on the Highveld, and Natal on the well-watered eastern coastline, which was controlled by the Zulu (Le May, 1995; Ross, 1999; Thompson, 1990).

Figure 2-4: *The southern African region on the eve of the South African War*

(Source: M. Oulton)



The Afrikaners of the Highveld were able to create their new farms and force those survivors of the *uMfecane* they encountered into subservience in the pattern established by the *trekboers* with the Khoikhoi and the San. In contrast, those Afrikaners who crossed the Drakensberg faced the might of the Zulu kingdom. After an initial setback, the Natal Boers defeated the Zulu at Blood River in 1838 (Thompson, 1990), replaced the Zulu king Dingane with his more pliable brother Mpande, and took all the land between the *uThukela* and the *uMzimkhulu* Rivers for themselves to form the Natal Republic (Thompson, 1990). The new Republic would not retain its independence from Britain for long, however, as the Boers of Natal found themselves unable to impose full control in the area they occupied. Many

agro-pastoralist communities remained, and each day more arrived as those displaced from the area by the Zulu returned after hearing of their defeat (Thompson, 1990). In one of the first attempts to limit African numbers on designated 'white' land, in 1841 the government of the Natal Republic decreed that no more than five African families could live on one 'white' farm, and that all 'surplus' Africans should be removed to the south (Thompson, 1990). Setting a pattern for the future, this white government gave preference to white settlers in the allocation of land, and ordered the removal of those Africans 'surplus' to white needs.

In this instance, the British feared that displacing so many people would further disrupt the eastern frontier of the Cape Colony (where the 'surplus' people were being sent), and more broadly sought to secure the coastline of southern Africa for British shipping routes to India. In response, the British authorities annexed the Natal Republic in 1842 (Marais, 2011; Thompson, 1990), and after an abortive attempt to control the Boers of the interior<sup>6</sup>, later officially recognised the Transvaal and the Orange Free State in the interior as independent Boer republics (Ross, 1999; Thompson, 1990). The British then assumed the task of subjugating and asserting white supremacy over the independent African tribes within and on the borders of the colonies of the Cape and Natal. In Natal, the *Voortrekkers* were replaced by British settlers (Ross, 1999), who like their Boer predecessors were vastly outnumbered by Africans. To make the Boer policy of only five African

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<sup>6</sup> Which has been called the First Freedom War (Le May, 1995).

families per 'white' farm feasible, the Natal colonial government decided that rather than displacing the 'surplus' Africans to the south, they would be placed in designated 'reserves', leaving the rest of the colony open for white settlement. Showing the priority placed on white supremacy, the majority African population was allocated just 16 per cent of the total land in Natal<sup>7</sup> (Thompson, 1990). This pattern was repeated in 1866 in the Cape colony, when some of the Xhosa tribes were confined to the Ciskei 'reserve' on small landholdings. Once again the land allocated to the Africans was disproportionately small in relation to their numbers (Thompson, 1990). These patterns of land allocation, later enshrined in the Cape Colony's Glen Grey Act of 1894 (Miller & Pope, 2000a), set the pattern for the division of land between whites and Africans in what would become South Africa.

On the eastern boundary of the Cape colony itself, the British confronted one of the largest and most cohesive groups of agro-pastoralists, the Xhosa. This tribal grouping had successfully resisted settler incursions from as early as 1779, despite repeated military defeats, epidemics and famines (Le May, 1995; Ross, 1999; Thompson, 1990). The Xhosa were only finally defeated in 1881, when their lands were incorporated into the Cape Colony as the Transkei (Thompson, 1990). The British also considered the Zulu on the northern border of Natal to be a significant threat, and engineered a war with the kingdom in 1879. Despite a disastrous defeat at Isandlwana, the British forces prevailed to later burn the Zulu capital at Ulundi and

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<sup>7</sup> 2 million acres out of 12.5 million acres (Thompson, 1990).

incorporate Zululand into Natal (Ross, 1999). Noting the subjugation of the two most powerful tribes in the region, the remaining independent African groups faced difficult choices. Thus while the Venda and the Pedi unsuccessfully resisted the Boers, the Tswana, Basotho and Swazi requested that the British take control of their affairs, resulting in the creation of what are today the independent countries of Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland (Ross, 1999; Thompson, 1990). The final result of these conflicts was to put the British and Afrikaner in a dominant position over the African peoples (Miller & Pope, 2000a) — white supremacy was assured by the subjugation of all the Bantu-speaking agro-pastoralist groups in the region.

Despite the hugely unequal apportionment of land between blacks and whites, between 1840 and 1890 there was a positive response by Africans to the new market opportunities (Bundy, 1979). On the small amounts of land allocated to them (Miller & Pope, 2000a), adapted forms of traditional agricultural methods still gave hundreds of thousands of Africans a viable alternative to wage labour for white colonists. The adoption of new crops, implements and methods increased productivity so that Africans could respond to the imposition of taxes and the desirability of trade goods by producing and selling an agricultural surplus (Bundy, 1979). Refugees from the *uMfecane* in particular settled in the eastern areas of the Cape colony. After working on white farms or for missionaries, they produced from their own lands, given to them in reward for fighting for the British (Bundy, 1979). By the 1860s many had become prosperous peasants, producing maize and

wool for local markets (Bundy, 1979; Thompson, 1990). Differentiated classes soon appeared in the African population — a minority formed an upper strata which collaborated with the colonial authorities or engaged in enterprise, while a majority with access to inadequate amounts of land depended on the sale of labour to whites (Bundy, 1979).

The upper strata, some with access to capital and larger landholdings, comprised a class of small commercial farmers who responded to the new market opportunities more effectively than did the white farmers (Bundy, 1979). The white farmers, who complained to the white authorities of being unable to obtain an adequate supply of cheap labour (Thompson, 1990), largely relied on African tenants and sharecroppers to provide an income from their land. The colonial authorities determined that allowing the development of this class of independent Africans was in their own interest. Colonial administrators saw increased production by Africans as a means of making the colonies pay their own way, and white traders benefitted from a class of prosperous African producers with sophisticated wants and needs (Bundy, 1979).

In the Cape Colony at least, a majority of the African people thus retained a measure of economic independence (Bundy, 1979), with the tacit acceptance of the authorities. However developments in the Kimberley and Transvaal areas completely overturned this apparent equilibrium. In 1867, massive deposits of diamonds were found near the confluence of the

Orange and the Vaal rivers (Thompson, 1990). Soon after in 1880, vast amounts of gold were found in the hills of the southern Transvaal. Due to inherent difficulties in extracting the minerals, a single company soon controlled the extraction of diamonds, and no more than eight conglomerates controlled all the gold mining (Ross, 1999). In both the diamond and the gold-mining industries, the racial structure of preindustrial colonial southern Africa was applied. The labour force was soon split: white workers occupied skilled or supervisory roles, with opportunities for advancement, high wages and relatively good living conditions; in contrast, black workers were restricted to poorly-paid temporary labour positions, and subjected to harsh living conditions in all-male compounds (Thompson, 1990). “Thus developed two characteristic features of South African society, namely the racial bifurcation of the industrial labour force and the housing of ... black migrant workers in compounds” (Ross, 1999, p. 56). The idea of white supremacy was transferred in this way to the mining sector.

The development of the diamond and gold mining sectors completely transformed the political and economic structure of southern Africa. By any index — population, immigration, trade, banking, construction or transport — the economy of the area expanded rapidly (Bundy, 1979). While most of the capital invested into the mines originated from Europe and North America, the mineral discoveries also stimulated major developments inside southern Africa — small industries sprang up around serving the mines, and

African and white farmers supplied grain and meat to the new markets (Thompson, 1990). In addition, the rise of the mining industry created an urgent need for labour. Mine-owners knew that sufficient labour at the rates they offered would not be forthcoming while Africans enjoyed access to land and the ability to produce an agricultural surplus (Bundy, 1979). Along with white farmers, mine-owners began urging the governments of the region to do everything possible to encourage Africans to become wage earners, including the application of extra-economic pressures (Bundy, 1979). Effective lobbying was difficult however while the region was split into two Boer Republics and five separate British colonies (see Figure 2-4). Many of the new mining capitalists in the Witwatersrand found that they had no influence over the Transvaal government (Ross, 1999), and concluded that it was an obstruction to further economic development (Thompson, 1990).

The vast quantities of gold being produced from its mines transformed the strategic importance of the area to the British, who had previously been only interested in protecting their sea routes to India. The area was suddenly the greatest known source of gold in the world, and was for the first time a significant contributor of a vital commodity to the global economy (Marais, 2011; Thompson, 1990). The British had a major interest in ensuring that conditions for gold production were optimal and that the gold went to London rather than Berlin (Ross, 1999), prompting the British colonial administration to take direct responsibility for preventing the

Transvaal from slipping out of the imperial network (Thompson, 1990). The British thus increased pressure on the Transvaal republic until the South African War (also known as the Anglo-Boer War or the Second War of Freedom) commenced on the 11 October 1899 (Le May, 1995; Ross, 1999).

The war fell into three phases: from October to December 1899, the initiative lay with the Boers who invaded Natal and the Cape Colony. While British prestige was tarnished, none of these victories was decisive. In the second phase of the war, from January to September 1900, two Boer armies were forced into surrender, and the Orange Free State and the Transvaal were soon annexed as British colonies. Rather than surrender, during the third phase of the war the remaining Boer commandos adopted guerrilla tactics against the British (Le May, 1995). The British responded with the same methods the Afrikaners had used to overcome African resistance, burning Afrikaner farms across the Highveld to deny access to food. In addition, non-combatant Afrikaners were confined to concentration camps, where thousands died of infectious diseases (Ross, 1999). The Afrikaner guerrillas finally gave up the struggle after 20 months, and a peace agreement was signed in Vereeniging on 31 May 1902 (Le May, 1995).

### **Segregation 1910–1948**

The war between the British and the Afrikaners, and most especially the actions of the British during the final phase of the war, caused deep bitterness and permanently damaged the relationship between the two

dominant white groups (Le May, 1995). Both groups united, however, in their dedication to the idea of white supremacy (Thompson, 1990). The Union of South Africa was inaugurated on the 31 May 1910, made up of the Cape Colony, Natal, The Transvaal and the Orange Free State (Thompson, 1990). The world's newest British dominion contained 4 million Africans, 500, 000 mixed-race 'coloureds', 150, 000 Indians and 1.28 million whites (Thompson, 1990). Of these groups, only white men had the vote in the Transvaal, the Orange Free State and Natal. In the Cape, economic qualifications for the vote meant that most white men, 13% of coloureds, and 2% of blacks had the vote. In the Union, however, only white men could become Members of Parliament, and provision was made for a number of senators to represent the opinions of black Africans. While this caused protests from the upper strata of black South Africans in the Cape, the British government was only concerned with reconciling the Afrikaners within the Union to being part of the British Empire (Ross, 1999). Thus in the new Union of South Africa during the era of segregation (from Union to the election of the first apartheid government in 1948) the idea of white political supremacy remained as powerful as ever.

The ideal of white supremacy was also clearly established in the arrangements around the distribution of land in the new Union. White-owned farms not affected by the South African War were farmed more intensively using scientific methods, and white farmers began to discover they could earn more from the land themselves than through African

tenants (Bundy, 1979). White farmers joined mine-owners in efforts to convince the new Union government of the necessity of breaking down the independence of the Africans, inducing them to part more willingly with their labour at no increased cost to their employers (Bundy, 1979). The coinciding needs and perceived solutions provided the basic terms of settlement between the largely Afrikaans farmers and the British mine-owners of South Africa (Rodney, 1972), or between 'Maize' and 'Gold' (Marais, 2011).

The political consummation of this partnership was effectively celebrated in the first three years of Union government (Bundy, 1979), with the passing of the 1913 Natives Land Act. Following the pattern set by the Natal colonial authorities in the 1840s, this Act and the later 1936 Native Trust and Land Act eventually allocated just 13 per cent of South Africa's land surface to the black majority of the population. During the Union period, these areas were called the 'native reserves'. Later they were renamed the 'homelands' by apartheid apologists, or 'bantustans' by those opposed to the system. In post-apartheid South Africa, they are euphemistically referred to as the 'communal areas'. The 87 per cent of South Africa's land that fell outside of these areas was reserved for the white minority only (James, 2007; Marais, 2011; Van der Walt & Helmbold, 1995). Africans in the agricultural areas outside the reserves were transformed from renters and sharecroppers into wage labourers (Thompson, 1990), vulnerable to expulsion at the whim of the white landowner (Chigara, 2004).

The 1913 Land Act culminated in a raft of legislative pressure on black South Africans which made access to land more difficult, which raised taxes, rents and other fees, and which controlled the various forms of tenancy allowed on 'white' farms (Bundy, 1979; Chigara, 2004; Marais, 2011; Ross, 1999). The Act cemented the dominant policy settings concerning land in South Africa from that point on, forcing black South Africans to seek work on white-owned farms and in white-owned industry at whatever wages were offered (Chigara, 2004; Lahiff, 2009; Marais, 2011; Miller & Pope, 2000a). The 1913 Land Act effectively assured the unequal distribution of land, based only on the distinction of race (Chigara, 2004). The Act had two main aims: first to eliminate the competition African landownership and sharecropping offered to white farmers; and second to facilitate the recruitment of labour for the mines (Miller & Pope, 2000a).

In the urban economic sector, the ideal of white supremacy was enshrined in the minerals-energy complex. Incorporating a core set of industries associated with large-scale mineral extraction, energy provision and associated downstream sectors, this complex sat at the core of the South African economy by virtue of its weight in economic activity (Marais, 2011; Rodney, 1972). This sector was built on the foundations of cheap black labour supervised by whites who had come to a compromise agreement with their employers and the state after a socialist-inspired revolt in 1922 (Ross, 1999; Thompson, 1990). United under the slogan of 'Workers of the

World Fight and Unite for a White South Africa', the leaders of the 'Rand Revolt' seized parts of the Johannesburg area, and aimed for the overthrow of the state. After crushing the revolt with overwhelming military force, the government reached an agreement with white mine-workers, under which the categories of race and class coincided closely. With few exceptions, black workers were subordinate to white workers, irrespective of their productivity (Beck, 2000; Thompson, 1990).

Cheap black labour was thus obtained through the migrant labour system based in the reserves. The majority of black South Africans working in the 'white' economy retained households in the native 'reserves', and migrated to the mines. This obviated the need for employers to pay individual workers the wages necessary to support a family (Bundy, 1979). Capital accumulation in the economy of the Union was thus "... based on the exploitation of a low-wage, highly controlled, expendable African workforce that was to be reproduced in a system of 'native reserves' at minimal cost to capital" (Marais, 2011, p. 9). Barricaded by the 1913 Land Act into the reserves, the Africans of the Union of South Africa were denied access to health, education, welfare and recreational networks. In addition, the state did not need to house or police a large urban black population, or be threatened by the unrestricted growth of an organised urban proletariat (Bundy, 1979). Later, the 1923 Natives (Urban Areas) Act regulated the flow of Africans into the cities, based on the idea that South Africa's towns were for the whites, and that blacks were only there to minister to the needs of

the white man (Marais, 2011; Ross, 1999). From a Marxist perspective, Bundy (1979) argues that social relations in the native 'reserve' areas were frozen into an 'incomplete form of proletarianisation' to the great advantage of white employers. The reserves were described by government officials as "... the sponge that absorbs, and returns when required, the reserve army of African labour" (Bundy, 1979, p. 242). Bundy therefore argues that "... the structural underdevelopment of the peasantry was the other side of the coin of capitalist development in South Africa" (1979, p. 243). Essentially, the reserves subsidised capitalist growth in South Africa (Marais, 2011) by providing white capitalists with cheap black labour when required. The communal areas ensured white economic supremacy in the Union of South Africa.

From this Marxist perspective, the underdevelopment of black farming was a necessary component of the process of white capitalist development in South Africa. Within the reserves individual tenure was prohibited, and Miller and Pope (2000a) suggest that trust tenure and community ownership of land was instituted for Africans to prevent the emergence of black leadership in the South African farming sector. The Native Administration Act 38 of 1927 vested ultimate powers for these areas in the Governor-General, who was accorded the title of 'Supreme Chief', and given complete authority to create tribes and move them or individual blacks as he (it was always a 'he') saw fit (Miller & Pope, 2000a). Within the reserves, the quantity of land was entirely inadequate to support the number of

Africans driven to these areas (Rodney, 1972), which were also denied the physical infrastructure necessary to transport the excess produce of black farmers. Thus between 1929 and 1939, the production of maize and sorghum in the Transkei reserve declined by 25 per cent, while that of white farmers in the province rose by over 40 per cent (Bundy, 1979). Soon most in the reserves could only survive by sending the men out to work on the mines or farms for months at a time. The women who remained in these areas assumed the full burden of maintaining the domestic economy and raising the children. Thus, despite a massive drop over time in the real value of wages paid to African mine workers, after 1900 more and more Africans had to accept wage labour (Thompson, 1990).

Ignoring the structural drivers which ensured the failure of farming in the reserve areas, the government and white farmers upheld stereotypes of Africans as inherently unable to farm, derived from the idea of white supremacy (Miller & Pope, 2000a). It was widely believed that the poor performance of African farmers in South Africa was due to their 'irrational' tribal practices and customs, and because of their lack of inherent ambition. These assertions ignored the government interest in maintaining tribal customs such as the chieftain system, legal mechanisms like the 1913 Land Act restricting black access to land, and the lack of government investment in African agriculture (Lipton, 1985). Thus the 1936 Native Trust and Land Act gave the government powers to intervene directly in agricultural production in the reserves, to instil what were seen as correct agricultural

procedures (Marais, 2011; Ross, 1999). Surveys of land use, official and independent, pointed in the direction of a failure by blacks to make maximum use of the potential of holdings. This was not seen as an indictment of the white government's manipulation of black South Africans. Rather, an aggressive policy of direction and control of land use in the reserve areas under the label of 'betterment planning' was instigated. This involved the creation of 'villages', destroying the dispersed rural settlement patterns common in many of the agro-pastoralist societies of pre-colonial southern Africa. It also led to a bureaucratic system of control over every aspect of black land use in the reserves, including a programme of livestock culling to deal with livestock overstocking, which caused considerable resentment (Miller & Pope, 2000a).

### **Apartheid 1948–1990**

The victory of the Afrikaner-nationalist National Party (NP) in the 1948 elections in South Africa ushered in the apartheid era (Marais, 2011; Ross, 1999; Thompson, 1990). Since 1652, the policy direction in the region had maintained and strengthened white supremacy. To this the NP now added the idea of Afrikaner nationalism. The NP was elected to power under the slogan of '*apartheid*' — which literally translates as 'separateness' (own translation). In strict theory, NP ideologues emphasised the importance of ethnicity, seeing the various nations of South Africa as divinely created entities. Along with the two white 'nations' (English and Afrikaans-speakers), black South Africans were divided into 10 different ethnic tribes

(Ross, 1999). The official aim of apartheid was to give each of these 'nations' the space necessary for them to develop to their fullest potential, in a process which apartheid apologists likened to the contemporary decolonisation of the rest of Africa (Thompson, 1990). In reality, apartheid policies intensified and secured white political supremacy from internal and external threats and moved Afrikaners into social and economic parity with the English-speaking community, which had dominated the modern economy since the development of the mines in Kimberley and the Witwatersrand (Oden & Ohlson, 1994).

The NP maintained at its core the idea of Afrikaner nationalism, which translated into furthering the ambitions of aspirant bourgeois Afrikaners and Afrikaner capital. In practice this was achieved without affecting established white English-speaking South African economic interests through a concerted affirmative action programme (Marais, 2011). Every state institution soon appointed Afrikaners to senior and junior positions in the civil service, army, police and state corporations. By 1976, Afrikaner entrepreneurs had gained a firm foothold in mining, manufacturing, commerce and finance — all previously exclusive preserves of white English-speakers. In time the average Afrikaner income rose to 71 per cent of that of white English-speakers (Thompson, 1990).

Alongside these efforts to improve the socio-economic position of white Afrikaners, numerous controls were put in place to further ensure white

supremacy in the political and economic arenas. The Population Registration Act of 1950 created legal racial categories, which were frozen through further Acts banning sexual contact and marriage between the races (Ross, 1999). In addition, the NP removed the limited forms of political participation still remaining for coloureds and blacks in the Cape province (Thompson, 1990). In the economic sphere, controls on black participation were similarly tightened. Urban labour policy ensured that no Africans would be allowed to work in the towns until all those already there had been absorbed by the white labour market. Further legislation required all Africans to carry a 'reference book', noting their employment history and residence rights in the cities. To be granted residence rights in the cities, Africans had to be born in the town, or have worked continuously for the same employer for 10 years, or for different employers for 15 years. The education of black South Africans was also controlled, based on the idea that African education should be limited to those skills valuable to the maintenance of the white-run economy. The emphasis was thus on basic skills learnt in the first four years of school (Ross, 1999).

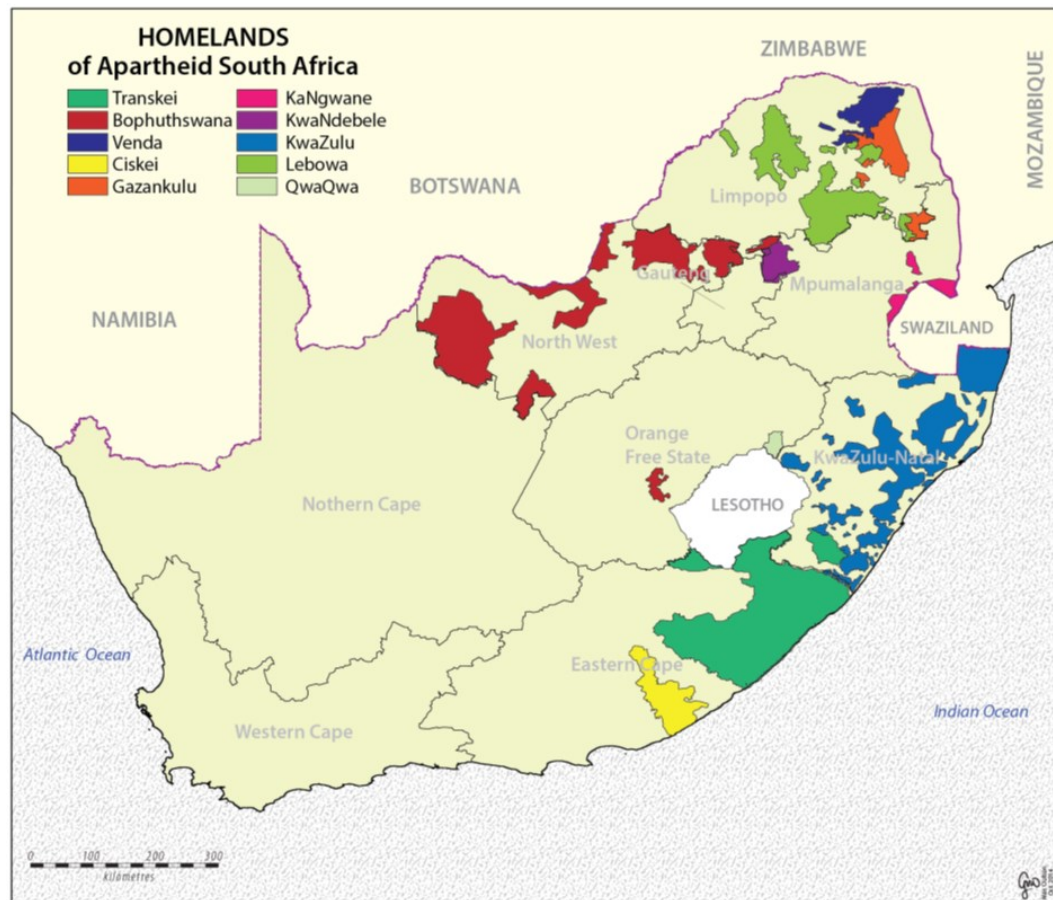
Land policies continued to focus on increasing the advantages enjoyed by white farmers, particularly Afrikaans-speaking white commercial farmers (Marais, 2011; Thompson, 1990). The prevailing ideas of white supremacy, combined with the new ideas of the need for 'separated development' prompted the apartheid government to focus on preventing '*die beswarming van die platteland*' (Hall, 2011), or 'the blackening of the rural areas' (own

translation) which had been deemed 'white'. After the passage of the 1913 Land Act, some farms remained under black ownership in 'white' rural areas. Members of the black upper strata had purchased some individually or as groups, while others had been 'mission farms' — land that had been owned by missionary societies, and subdivided amongst black tenants. The apartheid government named these areas 'black spots', and concentrated on relocating the owners of these pieces of land (by force when necessary) to the bantustan areas (Bundy, 1979; Ross, 1999). In a continuation of the principles established by the VOC, the private ownership and right of disposal of land applied only to white South Africans — these rights were not respected when claimed by black South Africans. In many cases, farms owned by black title-holders were seized by the state. The black owners were loaded into government trucks and unceremoniously dumped in designated villages in the overcrowded homelands. Along with these title holders, labour tenants and farm workers deemed 'surplus' to the needs of white employers were also transferred to the bantustans. It is estimated that a total of some 3.5 million 'surplus' black people, almost 10 per cent of the total population, were forcibly relocated from 'white' South Africa to the 'homelands' between 1960 and 1980 in this process (James, 2007; Miller & Pope, 2000a; Ross, 1999). In addition, to prevent such areas from arising again, the Subdivision of Agricultural Land Act (Act 70 of 1970) was enacted, preventing the subdivision of existing large-scale farms into smaller production units (Lahiff, 2009; Miller & Pope, 2000a).

The overcrowding and environmental degradation of the Bantustan areas thus continued unabated. In response, in pursuit of 'grand apartheid' principles, apartheid ideologues planned a system that made Africans the loyal subjects of tribal chiefs in the bantustans, rather than citizens in South Africa able to engage with civil society. Thus the Black Authorities Act (Act 68 of 1951), the Representation between the Republic of South Africa and Self-governing Territories Act (Act 46 of 1959) and the National States Constitution Act (Act 21 of 1971) laid the foundation for the creation of forms of self-government in the ten bantustans, and the later granting of 'independence' to four of these territories between 1976 and 1981. As can be seen in Figure 2-5 (page 48), these 'homelands' were enormously fragmented in general — KwaZulu alone was composed of 11 separate pieces of territory. These laws and policies combined to deprive some 8 million black South Africans of their South African citizenship — they were given political rights only in their respective (impoverished, overcrowded and dependent) 'homelands' (Chigara, 2004; James, 2007; Ross, 1999; Thompson, 1990; Van der Walt & Helmbold, 1995). In the imaginations of the planners of apartheid, these were the territories of independent states. Administrations were created, and elections held. Eventually, four of the bantustans acquired a form of independence — Transkei, Ciskei, Bophuthatswana and Venda. None was recognised by any country apart from apartheid South Africa, and all were heavily dependent on apartheid authorities for their budget and internal security (Ross, 1999).

Figure 2-5: *The 'homelands' of South Africa*

(Source: M. Oulton)



The 'visionaries' of apartheid realised that 'grand apartheid' required putatively viable economies in the bantustans. As part of this, continued efforts were made to stimulate agriculture in the 'homelands.' The Tomlinson Report of 1955 advocated allowing a class of African landowning entrepreneurs in these areas, and removing the trust-based landownership system. This was rejected by the government. Despite all the rhetoric of decolonisation, the 'homelands' continued to serve as pools of cheap reserve labour for white industry. White thinking continued to be dominated by questions of black social and economic viability within a context in which

overall white control was axiomatic. “Questions of black rights — let alone entitlement — simply did not feature” (Miller & Pope, 2000a, p. 30).

In contrast to the dire situation in the ‘homelands’, to provide security against the region’s variable climate, the white farmers of South Africa enjoyed intensive support from the government. Along with the provision of cheap disposable labour from the homelands, the productivity of the white farmers was intensified by favourable legislation and government subsidies. The state surplus from gold and diamond mining was diverted to white commercial farmers, in the form of extension advice, veterinary facilities, subsidies for fencing, dams and housing, transport subsidies for agricultural produce, special credit facilities and bountiful tax relief (Bundy, 1979; Marais, 2011; Ross, 1999; Thompson, 1990). All these subsidies were racially discriminatory and denied to black farmers, giving a huge competitive advantage to white commercial farmers over and above the legislation curtailing the amount of land open for production to black South Africans (Bundy, 1979).

The subsidies focused on the creation of a ‘modern’ white agricultural sector. The vision of ‘modernity’ assumed by policymakers in this case were the individually-owned large-scale mechanised farms seen in the mid-west of the United States of America or East Anglia in Britain (Cousins & Scoones, 2010; Hebinck, Fay, & Kondlo, 2011). Thus white farmers were assisted to mechanise their production methods. As the mechanisation of white

agriculture became more general, many Africans became redundant to the labour needs of farmers (Thompson, 1990). To ease the process of creating a 'modern' form of agriculture in South Africa, a series of laws gave white landowners almost complete impunity in evicting those black South Africans living on their land (Chigara, 2004). Many hundreds of thousands of Africans were forced to leave the farms where they had worked, and move to the overcrowded bantustans (Ross, 1999).

Apartheid policies thus resulted in an oppressive and deeply divided economy and society. By the end of the 1970s, South Africa had the highest Gini coefficient among 57 surveyed states. Unsurprisingly, income was closely related to racial categorisation. In 1983, the disposable income per capita of Indians was 37 per cent of that of whites. Coloureds enjoyed a disposable income 26 per cent of that of whites, while Africans in the towns had 22 per cent of the disposable income of whites and rural Africans six per cent (Ross, 1999). In a triumph for the ideal of white supremacy, South Africa had become an affluent welfare state for whites. White workers were guaranteed access to jobs, enjoyed rising wages, and were cushioned by a wide-ranging social-security system, along with easy access to credit and loans. Vast resources were invested in their education, health, cultural, recreational and sports infrastructure. In African communities, access to skilled jobs was severely restricted, and until the early 1970s the education system was designed explicitly to equip them only with the rudiments required to enter into the lowest ranks of the labour market. The

development of an African middle class had been thwarted (Marais, 2011) to ensure white economic success. 'Coloured' and Indian communities faced similar (if slightly less stringent) restrictions. These laws and policies all combined to freeze into place privileged access to material and political privilege for white South Africans, and to exclude all other people living in the country.

Excluded economically and politically, black South Africans had no effective channels to challenge the ideal of white supremacy driving South African policies. The South African Native National Congress (later renamed the ANC) had been founded in 1912 to protect the few rights of the small black middle class which arose during the colonial period (Thompson, 1990).

During the Union era the ANC concentrated on working (largely ineffectually) within the few legal avenues available to black South Africans to address the needs and concerns of the fledgling black middle class. After the election of the NP in 1948, the ANC made efforts to widen its support base, and initiated a period of legal non-violent mass resistance to apartheid (Marais, 2011). As part of this campaign, 3, 000 people attended the Congress of the People in Kliptown near Johannesburg in April 1955. The Freedom Charter was adopted, which was to serve as the basis of the ANC programme from then on (Ross, 1999). A rejection of the existing political, economic and social structure in South Africa, the Charter called for the nationalisation of banks, mines and industry, universal suffrage, and the abolition of apartheid in all its forms (Le May, 1995). In addition, the

Freedom Charter mandated the end of restrictions to land ownership on a racial basis, and for a redivision of the land “... amongst those who work it to banish famine and land hunger ...” (Congress of the People, 1955), along with government support for those who use the land. For the first time, South Africans were presented with the outline of a democratic alternative to apartheid, where liberal democratic rights could be combined with a welfarist socio-economic order and be extended to the entire population of the country. In the decades to follow, the Freedom Charter became “... the touchstone of ANC policy and assumed sacrosanct status as the product of the ‘will of the people’” (Marais, 2011, p. 22).

By 1960 it was clear that non-violent mass resistance to the ideals of white supremacy and Afrikaner nationalism would not be successful, and so the ANC began a period of armed struggle (Marais, 2011). After the Sharpeville Massacre on 21 March 1960<sup>8</sup>, and the banning of the ANC and the Pan Africanist Congress on 6 April of that year, both organisations formed underground military wings and carried out a number of acts of sabotage. Both were quickly infiltrated by the government and crippled. Among others, Nelson Mandela was captured and sentenced to prison for life in 1964 (Ross, 1999; Thompson, 1990). The armed struggle against white supremacy and Afrikaner nationalism by the ANC was soon neutered by the apartheid authorities.

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<sup>8</sup> In the Sharpeville Massacre, 67 demonstrators against apartheid pass laws were killed by police fire (Thompson, 1990).

Despite the efforts of the ANC, during the 1960s and early 1970s, the ideals of white supremacy and Afrikaner nationalism seemed safely enshrined for the foreseeable future. While the apartheid economy prospered, growing at an average of six per cent per annum, Marais (2011) argues that the design of the apartheid economy contained the seeds of its own destruction. Marais' analysis is based on 'modernist' narratives that as a middle-income country, to progress further along the trajectory of development South Africa would have needed to create a labour-intensive manufacturing and industrial sector (Rostow, 1990). Marais argues that the potential for this to happen existed, as by the mid-1960s, the manufacturing sector contributed twice as much to the GDP of the South African economy as mining and agriculture. In order to continue growing the sector needed more semi-skilled, skilled and technical labour. However, based on the ideal of white supremacy, apartheid policies focused only on the creation of cheap unskilled migrant black labour. The numbers of skilled white workers produced were inadequate for the expansion of the manufacturing sector. Apartheid restrictions on labour thus meant that the manufacturing sector in South Africa could never become export-oriented, and could only serve the existing white middle class. This meant that due to restrictions imposed by the implementation of the ideal of white supremacy in the economic sector, despite its industrialising pretences, apartheid-era South Africa was never anything more than an unusually well-developed exporter of mineral products. It was effectively stalled on the trajectory of development, and could not progress further towards 'modernity' (Marais, 2011).

This meant that the fortunes of the South African economy (and the economic prosperity of white South Africans) came to hinge on two external factors — the international price of gold, and access to foreign exchange. Thus as long as the gold price remained high and foreign capital could be attracted, the structural vulnerabilities caused by white-supremacist policies could be supported (Marais, 2011).

These vulnerabilities were soon exposed by a crisis in 1976, when the apartheid government announced that black South Africans would henceforth receive their schooling in Afrikaans (rather than in English or their home languages as before). On 16 June 1976 a group of about 15, 000 protesting youths was fired on. This sparked off protests and riots around the country, which came to be called the Soweto uprisings or the Soweto protests. These protests were put down with great force, with estimates that up to 700 people were killed in the police response. Most famously, Steve Biko, who had been at the heart of the protests, was captured and died in custody (Ross, 1999). These events gave a graphic indication of the inherent fragility of the apartheid system, and the atrocities the apartheid government was willing to commit in order to maintain it. This caused foreign capital inflows into the country to dry up overnight (Marais, 2011), and stimulated off-shore campaigns and boycotts against apartheid South Africa. The international pressure had slowly built up on South Africa since the campaign led by newly-independent African countries to force South

Africa to leave the Commonwealth in 1961 (Abegunrin & Akomolafe, 2006). South Africa could no longer count on a reliable inflow of foreign capital to cover the structural vulnerabilities caused by white supremacist and Afrikaner nationalist ideals. Inflation was soon running at 10 per cent, and GDP increases were scarcely keeping up with the population, making many whites poorer (Thompson, 1990). In 1982, the other external factor propping up the white supremacist economy also proved temporary — the gold price fell steeply, leading to a balance-of-payments crisis. Marais (2011) argues that by the early 1980s, it was clear to many in South Africa that apartheid economic policy was no longer creating economic growth. If the South African economy was to survive and develop further, profound restructuring was necessary.

### **The end of the apartheid equilibrium**

As has been the case in most areas of the world colonised by Europeans, white settlers in southern Africa brought with them the idea of white supremacy. In land policy, this meant the implementation of the idea of private property rights, but only for white settlers. Thus, as the Dutch and the British extended control over what would become South Africa in 1910, in the pattern first set in the colony of Natal, the majority of the land was allocated to white settlers, and the African populations were relegated to the remnants. The creation of the Union of South Africa enabled the enactment of the 1913 Land Act, which implemented this system uniformly over the entire country. The 13 per cent of the land left for black South

Africans became a reservoir of cheap labour for white industry, agriculture and mining, freeing the government of the burden of policing and providing services to an urban black population. This system was intensified under apartheid, with more black South Africans being dispossessed of the land they owned in 'white' rural areas, and 'surplus' labour being forced into the bantustans. In contrast, white farmers were extended every type of aid necessary to become large-scale mechanised 'modern' farmers, as seen in the US and the UK.

While providing a comfortable and safe life for white South Africans, this political and economic system based on white supremacy began to run into its self-imposed limits in the 1970s. From a purely economic perspective then, it became clear that further growth and development in the economy would become increasingly difficult due to the nature of the labour supply provided by apartheid policy and the limited domestic market available for manufactured goods. The continued prosperity of South Africa's whites came to depend on the international price of gold and international willingness to invest in the country — two factors over which South Africans had no control. In the meantime, apartheid policies continued to churn out cheap unskilled black labourers - by 1980 20.9 per cent of black job seekers (Bell, 1984) could not find employment in the formal economy. As the scale of the economic changes necessary in the apartheid economy to overcome this dependence on external factors became clear, the ideas of white supremacy and Afrikaner solidarity which had guided policy in the

country for so long began to be called into question by white South Africans themselves. Among Afrikaners, divisions around the viability of Afrikaner nationalism as a guiding principle soon cohered around class. Prosperous Afrikaner professionals, business-people and absentee landowners proposed carefully crafted changes to appease foreign and domestic critics, while at the same time strengthening white supremacy by creating further divisions among Africans. In contrast, Afrikaner urban workers, marginal farmers and bureaucrats whose livelihoods relied on apartheid's defences against black competition feared the consequences of extending effective political rights to blacks (Thompson, 1990) and so flocked to the Conservative Party, which from its formation in 1982 (Giliomee, 1993) called for an intensified implementation of apartheid policies, and the neo-Nazi *Afrikaner Weerstandsbeweging* (Afrikaner Resistance Movement – own translation) (Spitz & Chaskalson, 2000).

To help achieve some domestic legitimacy and to enable the economy to continue growing, from 1979 steps were taken to dilute strict white-supremacist policies. Black trade unions were recognised, statutes barring black South Africans from certain jobs were dropped, and apprenticeships were opened to Africans (Ross, 1999). In addition, influx controls for Africans into the cities were removed in 1986, allowing free movement into and out of the cities. The state channelled more resources into black education and improved black urban infrastructure in a bid to remove some of the material sources of discontent (Marais, 2011). In the domestic political

sector, limited steps were taken to mitigate measures taken earlier to secure white supremacy. Non-white South Africans were given a limited voice in the political system — in 1984 a new Constitution gave coloureds and Indians a formal say in the ruling of the country through a tricameral parliament. Africans were excluded as it was reasoned that they already had full political rights in the bantustans (Ross, 1999; Thompson, 1990). Apartheid symbols and practices not essential to the maintenance of white supremacy, such as regulations creating separate public facilities for blacks and whites and laws prohibiting interracial sex and marriage, were likewise removed (Marais, 2011; Thompson, 1990).

These limited measures were not sufficient to dampen black resistance to apartheid. Protests against the government converged on the United Democratic Front (UDF) (Marais, 2011), which consisted of several hundred affiliated organisations, and saw itself as representing the banned ANC (Ross, 1999). The UDF endorsed the Freedom Charter, and included prominent former ANC members as participants (Thompson, 1990). In November 1984, UDF protests erupted into open revolt, quickly spreading through the main cities (Ross, 1999). By early 1988 the government had successfully crushed this revolt through the deployment of lethal force (Ross, 1999), but apartheid's economic problems remained. At the macro-economic scale the country's balance-of-payments problems had worsened (Marais, 2011). Despite the limited concessions by Botha's government, the South African economy was still fundamentally unsound — it was clear that

the apartheid state was an expensive extravagance retarding the further development of the country, and that sanctions and a spate of divestments from the country were having a negative effect. International sanctions and boycotts against apartheid South Africa had mixed results. While international sporting boycotts of the apartheid state were effective in alerting the white South African public to foreign opposition to white supremacist policies, exports from South Africa increased after 1987. However, international sanctions impeded foreign investment flows — one of the two crucial pillars propping up the apartheid economy — and prevented the apartheid government from accessing international capital to offset balance of payments difficulties. As a cumulative effect of these domestic and international factors, by 1987 South Africa had one of the lowest growth rates in the world (Marais, 2011; Thompson, 1990).

All these factors combined to bring about a breakdown in white acceptance of the idea of white supremacy. One of the first signs of this was the formation of the Democratic Party in 1989, out of the remnants of the small white parties that had formed the opposition in the apartheid Parliament. The Democratic Party had little electoral success, as it only drew support from the minority of English-speaking whites. However, the party openly espoused libertarian and non-racial principles in Parliament (De Klerk, 1994; Spitz & Chaskalson, 2000). Growing numbers of white farmers (both Afrikaans- and English-speaking) came to appreciate the costs of creating mass unemployment among black South Africans as those living near the

bantustans suffered the effects of growing political unrest and crime (Lipton, 1985). Besides this, the rising levels of violence in the country led many influential and powerful white South Africans within Afrikanerdom to abandon support for the idea of white supremacy (De Klerk, 1994). Many came to see it as necessary to allow black South Africans to "... acquire at least a substantial share of political power in South Africa in the foreseeable future" (Thompson, 1990, p. 241) in order to prevent the country from sliding into anarchy and bloodshed (Van der Walt & Helmbold, 1995). To facilitate this, white business leaders, intellectuals, and clergy made clandestine visits to the ANC in its places of exile in the rest of Africa, to begin dialogue on potential future political settlements in South Africa. These people made the trip "... because they sensed that white minority rule was unsustainable, and that if this were so, a negotiated settlement would be the best way forward" (Spitz & Chaskalson, 2000, p. 12). For the first time since the arrival of Dutch colonists at the Cape of Good Hope in 1652, white South Africans were not united in their support for the idea of white supremacy. The ideals of white supremacy and Afrikaner nationalism, which had since 1652 directed the mass dispossession of black South Africans of their land, and the distribution of massive aid to white farmers had finished their course, and were now seen as detrimental to the future of the country. If things were allowed to continue as they were, it was highly likely that the apartheid state and its opposition would become entangled in a death embrace that would destroy South Africa as a nation-state and a viable zone for doing profitable business, dragging down with it white

privilege. “A point had been reached where all sides could, indeed had to, raise their heads above the parapets, scan the terrain and weigh their options” (Marais, 2011, p. 58).

Having provided a sense of the progress of policies around land in South Africa from the permanent arrival of Europeans in the region to the fall of apartheid 1990, this study can now turn to an analysis of the policies adopted to reverse the negative effects of these policies. The first step in such an analysis is the development of a theoretical framework, to which I turn in the next chapter.

## Chapter Three

### **Theoretical Approach: Constructivist Institutionalism Framework**

The legacy of colonialism, segregation and apartheid policies in South Africa created deep racial and economic divisions (Ntsebeza, 2004), which were reflected most visibly in the racial distribution of farmland. For many black South Africans, the loss of their land through colonialism and apartheid policies is a deeply emotive issue, to the extent that Ntsebeza (2004, p. 205) warns: “No political stability, democracy or peace are imaginable as long as the bulk of the land is in the hands of whites”. To address the unique extent of the inequalities in access to land in South Africa, one would be justified in assuming that a far-reaching programme of land redistribution would be necessary. However, the land reform policies adopted by the post-apartheid government so far have resulted in the preservation of the landownership status quo inherited from the apartheid system — little land has been transferred since 1994, doing almost nothing to change the socio-economic conditions of the rural landless poor (Greenberg, 2010; Hall, 2010c).

The patterns of land ownership and the organisation of agriculture in post-apartheid South Africa closely resemble the systems existing under the apartheid regime. This suggests a degree of ‘path dependency’, or long-term institutionalisation of practice in the agricultural sector, which has persisted into the post-apartheid era. This thesis is driven by the question of why land

redistribution policies have done so little to change the agricultural system created by apartheid, segregationist and colonial policies, given the overwhelming mandate for change given to the post-apartheid government by voters in 1994.

If every policy contains within it an explicit or implicit diagnosis of the 'problem' being addressed (Bacchi, 1999), it is apparent that redistributing farmland to black farmers is not an important task to post-apartheid policy-makers in South Africa. A robust literature has developed within South Africa detailing and criticising this lack of action on the part of the South African government (Barry, 2011; Cliffe, 2000; Cousins, 1997, 2007, 2012; Cousins & Lahiff, 2004; Du Toit, 1994; Fraser, 2007; Hall, 2003, 2010c; Hebinck et al., 2011; Jacobs, 2012; Kepe, 2009; Lahiff, 2007; Miller & Pope, 2000b; Mngxitama, 2006; Ntsebeza, 2007; Walker, 2005b, 2009; Zimmerman, 2000). However, there has been little to no examination of the worldviews, discourses or institutional contexts that underpin the implicit diagnosis of the problem of land reform presented in the key institutions and actors involved in the policy in South Africa, other than scattered discussions of discourses in the land reform policy arena of South Africa (Cousins & Scoones, 2010; Du Toit, 2013; MacDonald, 2003; Weideman, 2004). This chapter therefore develops a theoretical framework that will enable an analysis of the deep assumptions and institutionalised practices underlying post-apartheid land reform policy in South Africa.

## **Institutions and policy**

This study approaches land reform through a policy lens, as the process of land reform is ultimately developed and implemented as government policy in South Africa. The policy studies literature has a rich body of potentially applicable ideas to guide the research. The ‘new institutionalism’ approach analyses how policy processes function and how outcomes are produced within a larger institutional framework. This type of policy analysis assesses the ‘political architecture’, and posits a role for political institutions in policy-making and fundamental policy change (Considine, 2005). From an institutional perspective, then, there is more to a policy decision than meets the eye. Although a policy decision may be made by officials, it also reflects the factors guiding these officials, such as “... cultural preferences (values), symbols and procedures, formal and informal rules (norms, decisions-rules), the mandate of decision-makers or agencies, the distribution of power and responsibilities, and the role the State is allowed or expected to play” (Buhrs & Bartlett, 1993, p. 8). ‘New institutionalism’ therefore offers an approach allowing an examination of the wider factors which could potentially explain why so little has been done to change the land ownership patterns established during the apartheid era.

According to Ostrom (2005), institutions can be broadly defined as “... the prescriptions that humans use to organise all forms of repetitive and structured interactions ...” (p. 3). Institutions give templates for the actions of individuals, and in their actions, individuals in turn affect these templates (Lawrence et al., 2009). From this basic starting point, ‘new institutionalism’

has developed into three main traditions, each offering unique insights into institutions and the effects they exert on policy. Along with the historical institutionalism tradition, these include rational choice institutionalism and sociological institutionalism (Hall & Taylor, 1996). Immergut (1998) argues that for all their differences, these three traditions within 'new institutionalism' address a common set of problems from a unified perspective — all are concerned with ascertaining what actors actually want, when the preferences they express in politics are so radically affected by the institutional contexts within which they voice these preferences. However the way each tradition addresses this question is different.

Within 'new institutionalism', the rational choice institutionalism tradition begins with a universal assumption of rationality (Thelen, 1999) — actors are seen as having a fixed set of preferences, and as behaving entirely instrumentally and strategically to maximise the attainment of these preferences. Their strategies will be deeply affected by expectations about how other institutional participants are likely to behave. This tradition sees institutions as structuring these interactions, leading actors to particular calculations and potentially better social outcomes (Hall & Taylor, 1996). It emphasises the coordinating functions of institutions, generating or maintaining equilibria (Thelen, 1999). This tradition, therefore, defines an institution as a situation where no persons would unilaterally choose to alter their current behaviour given the available alternatives and given their expectations about how others might respond if they began to behave differently (Campbell, 2004).

The sociological institutionalism tradition arose primarily in the subfield of organisational theory, and argues that many of the institutional forms and procedures used by modern organisations are not merely the most efficient form for the task at hand. Rather, many of these forms and procedures should be seen as culturally-specific practices. Their use is a result of the transmission of cultural practices more generally (Hall & Taylor, 1996). Institutions are therefore not just the rules themselves, but regularised patterns of behaviour that emerge from underlying structures, or sets of 'rules in use'. "Rather than existing as a fixed framework, 'rules' are constantly made and remade through people's practices" (Leach, Mearns, & Scoones, 1999, p. 237). While institutions are conceptualised as constraining structures, they simultaneously enable the construction of meanings that are internal to thinking and speaking agents. Using their 'background ideational abilities', organisational actors create and maintain institutions while simultaneously using their 'foreground discursive abilities' to communicate critically about those institutions, and to change or maintain them (Schmidt, 2010).

Both the rational choice institutionalism and the sociological institutionalism traditions bring unique insights to 'new institutionalism'. However, both share a common characteristic limiting their appropriateness for this study. The rational choice institutionalism tradition views institutions as voluntary agreements among relatively equal and independent actors, understating the degree to which asymmetries of power give some actors more influence than others over the process of

institutional creation (Hall & Taylor, 1996). Similarly, much of the sociological institutionalism analysis of institutions ignores the extent to which processes of institutional creation and reform entail a clash of power among competing actors (Schmidt, 2010). Such asymmetrical influences tend to create unfair institutional arrangements, favouring some organisational participants over others. For much of the recorded history of South Africa, a white minority government controlled the country, and created multiple institutions which deliberately excluded black majority participation. Apartheid institutions systematically ordered South African society along racial lines that disempowered, demeaned and denigrated black people (Von Holdt, 2010). This means that any analysis of the institutions governing the South African land redistribution policy would need to take account of the role of power in their creation and maintenance, and the possibility that the institutions created under these conditions would not allow fair access to decision-making by all participants. While the rational choice institutionalism and sociological institutionalism traditions do not focus on this, the third tradition included in 'new institutionalism', the historical institutionalism tradition, makes such an analysis possible.

Focused squarely on the themes of power (Immergut, 1998), the historical institutionalism tradition explains policy outcomes principally through the arrangement of institutions in particular societies. In addition to channelling policy and structuring political conflict, institutions are also seen as defining interests and objectives (Scott, 2008; Thelen, 1999).

Political institutions are not neutral arenas, but complex forums that

generate independent interests and advantages (Scott, 2008). “Various institutional factors influence the political processes that adjudicate among conflicting interests and may hence privilege some interests at the expense of others” (Immergut, 1998, p. 18). Institutional factors therefore affect both the degree of pressure an actor can bring to bear on policy, and the likely direction of that pressure (Thelen & Steinmo, 1998). Scholars from this tradition are therefore more likely to assume a world in which institutions allow some actors to exert more influence on policy than others (Hall & Taylor, 1996). Given the history in South Africa of disproportionate access to decision-making and power by a small minority, this tradition is therefore likely to generate insights into the course taken by the South African land redistribution policy.

‘New institutionalism’ posits an independent role for political institutions, emphasising how they define the framework within which politics takes place (Bartlett, 1991). While a statement like this makes intuitive sense, the exact definition of the term ‘institution’ is not clear. A first step to clarifying the term is to distinguish institutions from organisations. Leach *et al* (1999) put forward what they see as the basic distinction between the two. If institutions are the ‘rules of the game’ in society, then organisations can be thought of as the players in the game. “Organisations, such as schools, NGOs [non-governmental organisations] and banks, exist only because there is a set of ‘working rules’ or underlying institutions that define and give those organisations meaning” (Leach et al., 1999, p. 237). Where institutions encapsulate general values (Taylor, 1984), organisations

represent specific interests (Leftwich & Sen, 2011), and are instrumental mechanisms created to achieve specified goals (Scott, 2008). Institutions define what those goals are and how they are to be achieved.

Polski and Ostrom (1998a) give the example of business organisations. The goal of the business organisation is to make a profit. This goal is given to it by the institution of the market. The way this goal is pursued is governed by the market, along with the institutions of corporate and tax law (amongst others). These institutions themselves are developed subject to the constraints of constitutional law. Figure 3-1 gives a schematic representation of the relationship described here between institutions and the organisations working within them. The limits of the market and the rules governing the actions of the players within these limits are defined by institutions such as constitutional, corporate and tax laws. In this example then, by pursuing the goal of profit and in following the rules of the market, business organisations will be preserving the values the market was created to preserve, one of which perhaps would be the pursuit of economic efficiency. In the realm of policy, then, institutions shape social, economic and political behaviour (Leftwich & Sen, 2011), by presenting a restricted set of policy alternatives to organisational actors (Hira & Hira, 2000).

Figure 3-1: *Institutions and organisations*

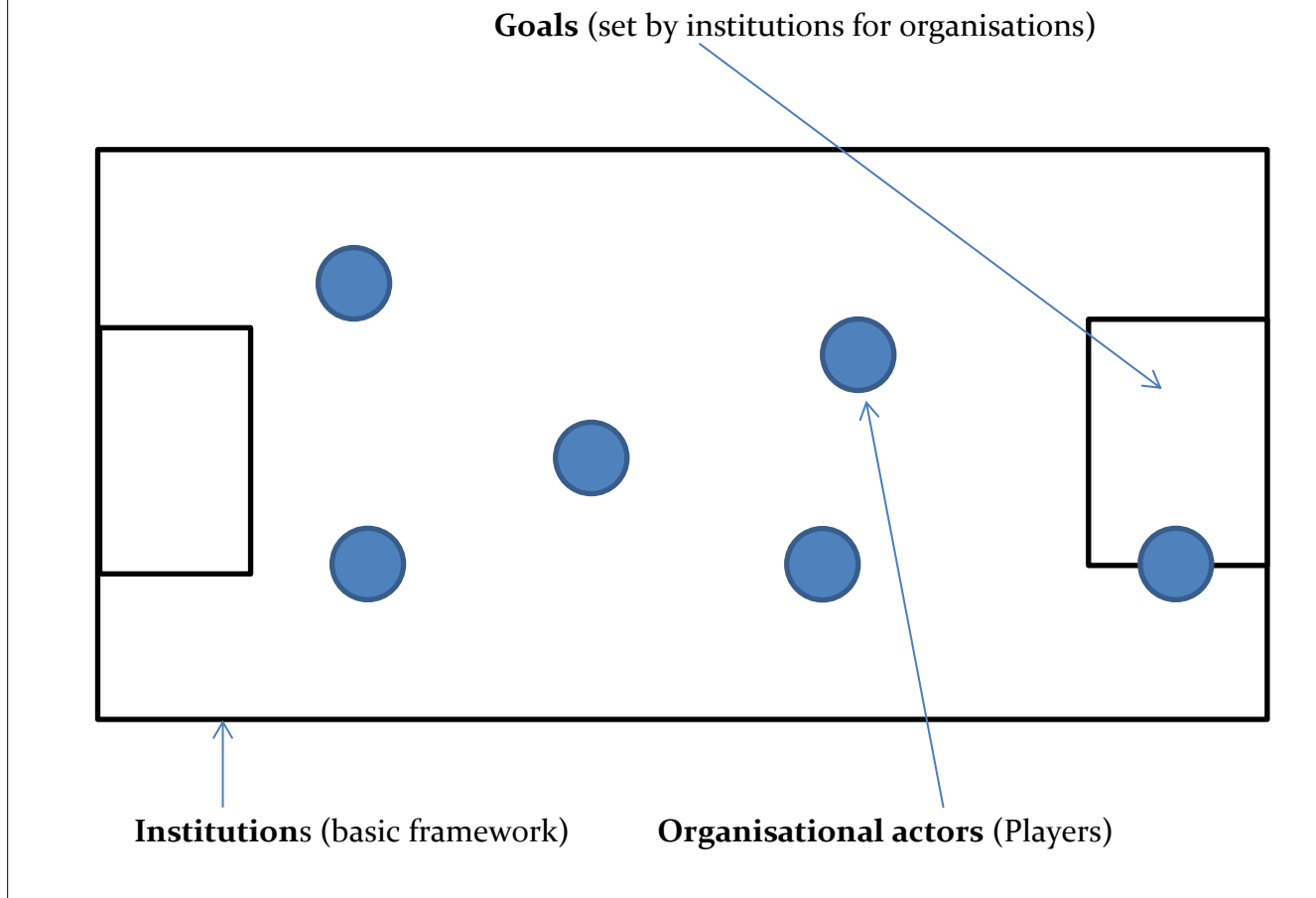


Figure 3-1 depicts a level playing field with goal areas of equal size. This is by no means necessarily always the case. Aimed as they are at the preservation of certain values, some institutions could make it more likely that certain policy outcomes will occur. One of the goal areas could be larger than the other for example, or there could only be one possible goal. Alternatively, only two players could be allowed to participate, rather than the six depicted in Figure 3-1. The shape of the playing field depends only on the

power of those creating the institutions, and the values they seek to preserve.

From this perspective, whatever the shape of the arena of action created by a set of institutions, as overarching frameworks, institutions do not directly determine behaviour but present participants with a set of choices — they “... provide a context for action that helps us to understand why actors make the choices that they do” (Immergut, 1998, p. 31). Political institutions only constrain and enable outcomes without being the immediate and direct cause of public policy (March & Olsen, 2006). Representing socially sanctioned and collectively enforced expectations, institutions only distinguish between appropriate and inappropriate courses of action (Streeck & Thelen, 2005). Specific policy outcomes are the result of organisational interactions within these general bounds. The overarching systems which institutions create for organisations, aimed at the protection and furtherance of specific values, therefore do not directly determine organisational behaviour. Rather, they set boundaries between what is appropriate and what is not — they set the choices that participants will make in the course of determining policy.

Institutions set these boundaries for organisations by prescribing rules, norms and strategies for the different organisational actors (Polski & Ostrom, 1998a; Scott, 2008). Formal or informal procedures, rules, norms, conventions or routines within institutions are a vital part of how institutions regulate the organisational environment (Biermann &

Siebenhuner, 2009; Buhrs & Bartlett, 1993; Campbell, 2004; Greif & Laitin, 2004; Hall & Taylor, 1996; Leftwich & Sen, 2011; March & Olsen, 2006; Ostrom, 1986). In terms of Figure 3-1, the rules might stipulate that the primary aim of all organisations within this particular institution might be to make their way into the 'goal' area, and prevent the other organisations from doing this. The rules might also stipulate specifically how the other organisations may or may not be prevented from entering this area. March and Olsen (1984) suggest that historical experience accumulates over generations of individual experience, and the information about that experience becomes encoded in institutional rules. Rules, therefore, function as a kind of organised memory through which past insights and short-cuts are reused. Without rules, the most basic of decisions about how to proceed on every issue would have to be considered afresh (Considine, 2005). Organisational actors within an institution are expected to obey these rules and be their guardians. Rather than asking what the most rational act in a particular situation is, participants seek the most appropriate rule in a particular situation (March & Olsen, 2006). Organisations choose which action to take by matching the characteristics of a particular situation with the most appropriate rules. Far from ensuring perfect conformity and inhibiting change, the large number of formal and informal rules potentially applying to any situation gives actors a choice of actions to take. Organisational actors choose which particular rules to apply to a particular situation (Bartlett, 1991). However, the choice of rules to apply is relatively limited — while the relevant rules encourage some

alternatives, others are not allowed. The alternatives allowed by the potentially applicable rules will always preserve the overall values that the game was created to further and maintain.

Institutions also encourage certain policy outcomes by constructing and elaborating meanings for organisations. Looking at Figure 3-1, the institutions define where the game is played, how goals are scored, and the identities of the different organisations or players. Institutionalism therefore suggests that how we see the world, how we think and how we relate to others through our actions are influenced by our institutional identifications and memberships (Gran, 2009). Expectations, preferences, experience and interpretations of the actions of others are all constructed within and in response to institutions (Bartlett, 1991). Organisations within an institutional framework tend to become imbued with their identities as belonging to the institution, but also with the various identities associated with different roles in the institution (March & Olsen, 2006).

While the historical institutionalism tradition provides a promising point of departure for this analysis, it does contain some inherent limitations.

Specifically, Hay (2006) argues that historical institutionalism is generally characterised by an emphasis on institutional genesis at the expense of an adequate account of subsequent institutional change. In the historical institutionalism analysis, changes that occur in institutions after they have been created are generally taken to be the consequence of path-dependent effects, or simply the product of exogenous unpredictable shocks such as

wars or revolutions. Little or no agency is assigned to those working within set institutions. This analysis focuses on land reform policy in South Africa between 1994 and the present — a period in which the rules governing the game of land redistribution have been changed repeatedly, without the prompting of wars or revolutions. A theoretical lens is therefore necessary in this study which is able to give a better account of these changes and what might have caused them.

### **Discourse analysis**

Although historical institutionalism provides a useful framework for understanding the interplay between institutions and the actors working within them, it does not offer a satisfactory account of endogenous institutional change. A potential way to work past this lies in the observation that changes in policy paradigms, social constructions or ideas regularly precede changes in institutions (Hay, 2006). What is needed, therefore, is an account of institutions that focuses on their interplay with ideas, social constructions or policy paradigms.

Discourse-focused approaches are primarily concerned with ideas and social constructions, and start from the assumption that our ways of talking do not neutrally reflect our world, identities and social relations. Rather, they play an active role in creating and changing them (Phillips & Jorgensen, 2002). According to Gee (2011, p. ix):

People use language to communicate, co-operate, help others, and build things like marriages, reputations, and institutions. They also

use it to lie, advantage themselves, harm people, and destroy things like marriages, reputations, and institutions.

The overall argument of discourse analysis is that social meanings for phenomena can never be ultimately fixed. This opens up the way for constant social struggles about definitions of society and identity. The role of the discourse analyst is thus to plot the course of these struggles to fix meaning at all levels of society (Phillips & Jorgensen, 2002).

Traditionally, discourse analysis focused on the investigation of language in use and talk and text in context (Howarth, 2000). The linguistic traditions of discourse analysis see the process as a very narrow enterprise concentrating on a single utterance, or at most a conversation between two people (Howarth, 2000). Here, the emphasis is solely on the study of the units of written and spoken communication, and focused on the content of texts and conversations (Hewitt, 2009). The focus is primarily on the rules governing connected sets of sentences in speech or writing. Similarly, conversation analysts endeavour from observation to ascertain what speakers are doing and how they are doing it (Howarth, 2000). Theories of discourse have undergone significant transformations from this starting point.

During the decades of the 1960s and 1970s, the concept of discourse was extended to a wider set of social practices and phenomena. In particular, in a series of publications Foucault studied the way discourses shape social relationships and institutions (Foucault, 1989). In his works on the history

of sexuality and of madness (Foucault, 1990, 1995), Foucault sought to dismantle the concepts of 'sexuality' and of 'madness' as taken-for-granted fixed essences, and show how they came to be understood in the way they are today. To Foucault, the terms 'madness' and 'sexuality' are simply the names that one attributes to particular situations in particular societies at particular points in time. They are not fixed and autonomous states which humans always have and always will experience. Rather, they 'become', or 'emerge' as objects for thought in practices (Bacchi, 2012). As an illustration, the large-scale mechanised farms dominating South African agriculture today could be constructed as the inevitable outcome of anonymous global economic processes, or as artificial creations of the apartheid era.

Studying how these 'objects' emerge in the historical process of problematisation puts their presumed natural status in question, and allows us to trace the relations that result in their emergence as objects that are commonly accepted. The crucial point here is that, in Foucauldian analysis, the discourses of sexuality or madness at any one point in time are not inevitable — they are the result of ideas and conflicts around their implementation.

Because of these discourses, in any given historical period, we can write, speak or think about a given social object or practice like madness or sexuality only in certain specific ways and not others. Much like institutions, 'discourses' constrain and enable writing, speaking and thinking within specific historical limits (McHoul & Grace, 1993),

demanding from its adherents performances which act as though its ways of being, thinking, acting, talking, writing, reading and valuing are 'right', 'natural', 'obvious', and the way 'good' and 'intelligent' and 'normal' people behave (Gee, 2008). A discourse therefore represents the way a particular individual, in particular circumstances and at a particular time, relates and conceives of certain aspects of the world (Addams, 2000), and the values and viewpoints he or she has about the relationships between people and the distribution of social goods. The practices of a discourse contain in their public interactional structures the 'mentalities' of individual participants. Immersion in such practices ensures that the individual takes on perspectives, adopts a world-view, accepts a set of core values, and masters an identity (Gee, 2008).

According to Foucault and those building on his work, most of our individual interactions with discourses are unconscious, unreflective and uncritical (Gee, 2008). This is because there are subtle processes where some definitions of issues are organised into politics, while other definitions are organised out. "The political conflict is hidden in the question of what definition is given to the problem, which aspects of social reality are included, and which are left undiscussed" (Hajer, 1995, pp. 42-43).

Discourses are therefore intrinsically political — their formation is an act of radical institution, involving the construction of antagonisms, and the drawing of political frontiers. They always involve the exercise of power (Howarth & Stavrakakis, 2000), by making it impossible to raise certain questions or argue certain cases, and only authorise certain people to

participate in a discourse (Hajer, 1995). The discourse itself defines what counts as acceptable criticism. Uttering viewpoints that seriously undermine them defines one as being outside of them (Gee, 2008). In this light, it "... becomes imperative to examine the specific idea of reality or the status quo as something that is upheld by key actors through discourse" (Hajer, 1995, p. 55). The main focus of enquiry for Foucault is which of these ideas of reality comes to predominate, and how (McHoul & Grace, 1993).

The basic assumption driving most analyses of discourse is that instead of being merely a neutral medium mirroring the world and reality, language profoundly shapes our view of it. Discourse analysis is therefore the examination of how the definition or the problematisation of a political problem relates to the particular narrative in which it is discussed (Dryzek, 2005). In most analyses of discourse, emphasis is placed on understanding and explaining the emergence and logic of discourses, and the socially constructed identities that they confer. The basic idea is to investigate the way social practices systematically form the identities of subjects and objects (Howarth & Stavrakakis, 2000). The researcher works to get a view of the problem from the 'outside', to recognise the hidden assumptions and practices behind the discourse being studied (Hewitt, 2009). Over time, discourse theorists have drawn on a number of techniques and methods in linguistic and literary theory to achieve this (Howarth & Stavrakakis, 2000).

Discourse<sup>9</sup> is thus concerned with the way people understand and comprehend their social worlds, and sets the direction for the ways in which people think and act (Simon-Kumar, 2006). 'Discourse' refers to the idea that human individuals participate in forms of understanding, comprehension or consciousness of the relations and activities in which they are involved. This consciousness is seen as being transmitted through language and other systems of signs, between people and institutions. The way people comprehend and make sense of the social world is seen as having consequences for the direction and character of their action (Purvis & Hunt, 1993).

### **Ideas and institutions**

We can now return to institutions and the ideas underpinning them. As shown in Figure 3-1, institutions set out where the game will be played, towards which goals, and by whom. They are therefore tremendously powerful. One potential key to linking discourses and institutions is thus power. Indeed, according to Foucault, the key to unravelling the power embedded in society is to analyse society's discourses (Purvis & Hunt, 1993; Simon-Kumar, 2006). Thus, for example, the key to understanding power in South African society is to analyse which groups see large-scale mechanised farms as the result of inevitable economic processes, and which groups argue that they are artificial creations of apartheid policy. It is necessary to

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<sup>9</sup> In this study, discourses are seen as involving ideologies, which also view existing social relations as both natural and inevitable, allowing particular interests come to be disassociated from their public location and appear as universal and neutral (Purvis & Hunt, 1993).

understand how Foucault envisaged the operation of power in liberal democracies. In addition to exerting negative effects such as excluding some types of reality, Foucault also saw power in liberal democratic systems as producing concepts, ideas or discourses (McHoul & Grace, 1993; Simon-Kumar, 2006). In a process called ‘governmentality’, the deployment of these ideas encourages members of a society to be self-regulating and minimises the need for direct government action in society (Bacchi, 1999).

These ideas have a two-fold function in the process of ‘governmentality.’ Firstly, Foucault argued that the power expressed through discourses is not repressive, but instead creates and produces new social categories, new types of relationships, and new identities (Foucault, 1991; Wagenaar, 2011). All human beings are constituted in discourses — their knowledge of the world is set by the system of language statements that particular discourses offer them (Simon-Kumar, 2006). They adopt certain modes of appearance, ways of using language, attitudes and beliefs, allegiances to certain lifestyles, and ways of interacting with each other (Gee, 2008). However, they are not wholly free to choose or invent their discourse, because they move about in larger preset discursive formations that influence their actions, beliefs and aspirations. We govern ourselves by establishing truths about ourselves that are in accordance with the truth of the dominant narratives in our society (Wagenaar, 2011). Therefore individual motivations, strategies and actions are all derived from the ideas or discourses found in a social setting.

Secondly, discourses or ideas are also given a crucial role in the creation and maintenance of institutions in the 'governmentality' analysis. As part of the process of constructing the dominant narratives available to members of a society, therefore, those discourses preferred by the state are translated into institutional and organisational arrangements that endure for long periods (Hajer, 1995), like schools, prisons, welfare agencies, corporations and disability programmes. These arrangements sustain, modify and even generate what we perceive and experience (Wagenaar, 2011). Foucault gives an outline of the process through which the medical discourse was translated into an institutional and organisational arrangement by the state. He argues that specific political actions taken to do this included: the creation of criteria designating who could receive by law the right to practice medicine; a new delineation of the medical object through statistical observation at the population level; a new law of assistance making the hospital into a space for observation and medical intervention; a new mode of recording, preserving, accumulating, diffusing and teaching medical discourse; and the integration of the medical discourse into a system of administrative and political control of the population. These political actions did not change the methods of analysis in the medical discourse, but the system of their formation — administrative recordings of illnesses, deaths, their causes, admissions and discharges from hospital; the establishment of medical archives; and relations between medical personnel and patients in the hospital (Foucault, 1991). Through these political actions, the medical discourse was translated into institutional and

organisational arrangements that include medical laws, hospitals, training for doctors, and public health programmes.

There is therefore an intimate connection between discourses (or ideas) and institutions. Institutions are created through political practice to protect and further the values of specific discourses (Foucault, 1991; Hajer, 1995; Phillips, Lawrence, & Hardy, 2004). These same institutions are then maintained through the deployment of discourse. Zilber (2009) shows how a specific institution in Israel deploys meta-discourses that legitimate existing institutional structures, practices and beliefs. The organisations working within this particular institution translate aspects of these meta-discourses into their own discourses. In turn, the individuals within these organisations draw on these organisational discourses in the course of making sense of the world around them. Through this process of discourse translation and adoption, both the organisations and the individuals within them maintain the institutional order. “In a cyclic process of storytelling, the institutional order is maintained, as stories at each level reflect higher-level stories, and further strengthen them” (Zilber, 2009, p. 224). This example shows that discourse analysis approaches can provide a useful theoretical framework for exploring institutions and the values that they protect and further (Munir & Phillips, 2005; Phillips et al., 2004).

### **Constructivist institutionalism**

Foucauldian analysis thus places ideas or discourses at the centre of the analysis of institutions and the actors within them. Building on this, ideas or

social constructions play a pivotal role in the constructivist institutionalism approach, a recent addition to the 'new institutionalism.' In the constructivist institutionalism approach, ideas or social constructions perform two functions: they form the basis of institutions (the rules of the game), and they inform the actions of the organisations and actors (the players in the game). Firstly, in the constructivist institutionalism approach, as in the Foucauldian analysis described above, institutions are predicated on ideas, and ideas inform their design and development. In addition there is no real difference here to the historical institutionalism assertion that institutions are created to further certain values, ideas, or principles. The real point of difference of the constructivist institutionalism from the historical institutionalism approach is in the assertion that institutions are not fixed. Their functionality or otherwise is an open question, and institutions are the subject and focus of political struggle (Hay, 2006).

The second point of difference in the constructivist institutionalism analysis (as opposed to the historical institutionalism approach) is in the conception of actors, or the players in the game. Within both the historical institutionalism and the Foucauldian approaches, actors automatically take on the identities given to them by institutions or discourses. In contrast, in the constructivist institutionalism approach, actors are given a limited form of agency. As in Fairclough's (1992) approach, actors are seen as strategic, seeking to realise certain complex goals. However according to the constructivist institutionalism approach, they do this in constantly-changing contexts, which they can only incompletely understand, and in

which access to strategic resources is unevenly distributed. Ideas or social constructions therefore provide actors with a 'script', telling them what their desires, preferences and motivations are. The interests of agents are thus social constructions. Alternatively, ideas serve as cognitive filters through which actors interpret environmental signals. In this approach, the conduct of actors is therefore not a direct reflection of their individual rational material interests, but rather a reflection of their particular perception of their interests (Hay, 2006).

As in Foucauldian analysis, then, ideas motivate individuals and underpin institutions. It should be noted that Foucault asserts that individual actors have no agency, even in his later works. They only assume the identities offered to them by discourses. Any resistance that occurs is only that allowed for by the dominant discourse (Gee, 2008). Despite Foucault's assertion, however, institutions and discourse do still undergo changes. In an effort to explain this, the constructivist institutionalism approach assumes that the ideas underpinning institutions and the ideas motivating actors are not always the same. This means that there is a dynamic relationship between institutions and the actors working within them. Institutions as the embodiment of specific ideas provide a context in which actors function. Actors work strategically within these given institutional contexts according to the ideas to which they subscribe (which may differ completely from the ideas a particular institution may embody). When possible and if prompted by the ideas they subscribe to, actors will attempt to change the institutions within which they work to better embody the

ideas to which they subscribe. During this process a range of intended and unintended consequences unfold.

The task of the analyst using the constructivist institutionalism approach is, therefore, to identify, detail and interrogate the ideas underpinning institutions, and the ideas prompting the strategic behaviour of actors within these institutions (Hay, 2006). This can be pursued using specific theoretical approaches such as the punctuated equilibrium approach (Baumgartner & Jones, 2009), Bacchi's (2009) problem representation approach, and Schneider and Ingram's focus on social categorisations in policy (Schneider & Ingram, 1993). According to the constructivist institutionalism approach, then, to understand why so little has been done in post-apartheid South Africa to change the landownership patterns established during apartheid, it is necessary to examine the institutions governing land reform policy, the ideas underpinning these institutions, and where possible, the ideas governing the conduct of the actors working within these institutions.

### **Levels of analysis**

Institutions are thus the 'rules of the game', and organisations and actors are the players in these games. The constructivist institutionalism approach focuses attention on the ideas underlying the 'rules of the game,' the ideas providing actors with motivations, preferences and desires and the interactions between the two. However, when looking at a specific policy arena, there can be a bewildering variety of rules and players, making it

hard to know where to begin an analysis of the social constructions underlying them. Polski and Ostrom (1998a) suggest a multi-level system of analysis. Here, institutions and the organisations working within them are analysed at three different levels: the constitutional, the collective choice, and the operating levels. Each level has its own discrete institutions and organisations, affecting and affected by the other levels.

The formal and informal rules at the constitutional level set the general boundaries for policy and action in a selected policy arena. They make clear who is eligible to participate in policymaking, and about the rules that will be used to undertake it (Ostrom, 2011). At this level, collective choice procedures are defined, and all the relevant entities involved in collective or operational choice processes are legitimised and constituted (McGinnis, 2011). Rules at this level prescribe, invoke, monitor, apply and enforce (Ostrom, 2005). In Figure 3-1, this level would be where decisions are made around the basic outlines of where the game is played, and where 'goals' are scored. It would also set out who can be part of decisions around changing these and other aspects of the game.

Operating within the boundaries set in the constitutional level, the rules set in the collective choice, or the policy level, determine what specific actions are to be taken in the operating level, and by whom (Polski & Ostrom, 1998a). They also influence operational activities and outcomes by determining how operational rules can be changed, and who can participate in these decisions. At this level, activities like policy-making, management,

and the adjudication of decisions occur (Imperial, 1999). These rules are about prescribing, invoking, monitoring, applying and enforcement, and can be changed slightly faster than can rules in the constitutional level (Ostrom, 2005). The focus here is on the types of rules chosen. They can differ according to whether they are input- or output-orientated, or whether they are production- or conservation-oriented, and whether they are regulatory- or market-oriented (Rudd, 2004). In Figure 3-1, these would be the rules setting out who the various organisational 'players' are, what constitutes scoring a 'goal', how they are to be scored, and how long a 'game' lasts. The rules at this level would also set out who has the power to change the rules at the operating level.

At the operating level, formal and informal rules govern participants' day-to-day decision-making in specific policy arenas, which derive primarily from the regulations emanating from the laws produced at the collective choice level (Polski & Ostrom, 1998a). At this level, the practical decisions of those individuals who have been authorised or allowed to take these decisions by collective choice processes are important (McGinnis, 2011). The focus here is on the day-to-day impacts of existing rules and norms on the incentives of actors (Rudd, 2004). Operational rules include decisions about when, where, and how to do something; who should monitor the actions of others; how actions should be monitored; what information should be exchanged or withheld; and what rewards and sanctions will be assigned to combinations of actions and outcomes. The processes of appropriation, provision, monitoring, and enforcement occur at this level (Imperial, 1999).

Operational situations will involve rules about provision, production, distribution, appropriation, assignment and consumption. These rules can also be changed quickly when necessary (Ostrom, 2005). In Figure 3-1, this would include the formal rules spelling out how other organisational 'players' may be prevented from scoring goals, as well as the informal strategies adopted by the players in the pursuit of their goals. This may also include the various teams the players may or may not form with each other in the pursuit of their goals.

The rules at these three different levels are not separated from each other, but are nested — each level is affected by decisions taken at the other levels (Imperial, 1999). The rules pass down from one level to another, but they are translated through the specific circumstances at each level (Bushouse, 2011). The expectation is that those choice situations of broader scope, such as constitution-making, will elicit a more inclusive or cooperative mode of behaviour than at the lower levels, where immediate practical implications for an actor's self-interest may loom larger (McGinnis, 2011). In addition, it is usually more difficult and more costly to bring about changes in the constitutional and the collective-choice levels than it is to do so at the operational level. In the example of Figure 3-1, it would be much easier for organisational players to change their informal strategies or the teams they form part of, than it would be for them to gain the agreement of all the other players to change the size of the field in which the game is played. This increases the stability of mutual expectations among individuals interacting at these upper levels (Ostrom, 2005).

In addition, different levels of action and rule-making do not necessarily mean different sets of actors, or different levels of government. People can and do shift levels of action — sometimes frequently (Blomquist & deLeon, 2011). In field settings, it is often hard to tell where one level begins and another ends. Choices of actions within a set of rules as contrasted to choices among future rules are frequently made without recognising that the level of action has shifted. For example, in Figure 3-1, in the course of a ‘game’, the organisational players might agree that while previously it was acceptable to switch teams at will, from that point on players can only switch teams three times in a ‘game’. When coming to that agreement, the organisational players shifted from playing within the previously established rules to making decisions about the rules themselves. They shifted from the operational to the collective-choice level (Ostrom, 2005). Governmental arrangements, inherent in the operations of courts, executive agencies, and legislative bodies, enable people to sustain efforts to determine, enforce, and alter legal relationships. Each particular decision-making structure or decision-making arrangement then, involves a complex set of rules regarding the variety of participants who may wish to pursue their strategic opportunities in order to realise some outcomes that may be made through those decision structures (Ostrom, 2005).

Table 3-1

*Questions to be asked*

<i>Level of Analysis</i>	<i>Unit of Analysis</i>	<i>Research question</i>
<b>International</b>	Discourses	What were the international discourses about land reform in the process of development?
<b>Constitutional</b>	Constitution	What discourses defining the role of the state in land reform became enshrined in the Constitution?
<b>Collective choice</b>	Policy documents (SLAG, LRAD and PLAS)	What were the hidden assumptions underpinning the actual land reform policies implemented?
<b>Operational</b>	Personal interviews	What discourses inform practice at the operational level?

### **Key questions**

The theoretical insights brought together in this chapter draw attention to the influence of the institutional context within which land reform policy is developed and implemented. In terms of Figure 3-1 (see page 70), this study focuses on the boundaries set for the ‘game’ of land reform to be played in, and the rules established for the game itself. Constructivist institutionalism offers the insight that over time, discourses are sedimented into institutions through political action, establishing the overall boundaries within which policies may or may not proceed. This means that the boundaries and rules

of the game of land reform originate in the ideas and discourses subscribed to by the players in that game. At times, various players have successfully incorporated aspects of 'their' discourses into the game in the form of individual rules, accepted strategies or specific boundaries for the game. The motivations, strategies and actions of the policy actors involved in the creation of land reform policy thus derive from this institutional context and from the discourses each actor subscribes to. In other words, the interactions of these policy actors — the interactions of the various players in the 'game' of land reform policy — result in the creation of the institutional context of land reform, and to land reform policy itself. To increase understanding of the institutional context surrounding land reform policy it is necessary to understand the discourses and ideas involved in the creation and maintenance of this context. To understand the motivations of the various policy actors involved in the creation of land reform policy, it is necessary to understand the various discourses they subscribe to.

To achieve this understanding, this study seeks an answer to a primary question: how we can explain, in the post-apartheid context, the preservation of the agrarian structure of land ownership inherited from the apartheid era? Why have the results of successive iterations of land reform policy resembled so strongly the results of apartheid-era land policies? Why has so little been achieved by successive post-apartheid policy initiatives to address the inequitable land ownership patterns created prior to 1990?

To answer this question, this study will ask a set of sub-questions. The first question focuses on the international context at the time of the transition to a post-apartheid policy context. Land reform policies have been formulated and implemented around the post-colonial world, in widely different forms. In addition, a variety of policy participants from around the world have expressed their versions of the 'ideal' land reform policy. Therefore, in answering the primary question, this study will begin at the international level. Firstly, at the time of the transition from apartheid to democracy, what were the predominant discourses within the international context about the ideal approach to land reform as a means of promoting development? As the various policy participants prepared to negotiate post-apartheid land reform policy, what was put forward as the 'ideal' set of rules and boundaries around land reform? In addition, what were the implications of these discourses for shaping the policy response to the recognised need for land reform within South Africa?

Within South Africa, the final Constitution of 1996 set out the basic defining boundaries within which post-apartheid land reform policy would be formulated and implemented. Therefore, the second sub-question asks: what ideas and discourses around the role of the state in land reform became enshrined in the new constitution? What were the sets of ideas subscribed to by the players who negotiated the basic boundaries within which land reform policy would be created? What were the implications of these discourses for how land reform could proceed? In addition, what did these ideas construct as 'possible' and 'impossible' policy solutions?

At the collective choice level, national policy-makers worked within these primary constitutional boundaries to create policies aimed at transferring limited amounts of land to black South Africans. While governed by the constitution, these powerful policy participants subscribe to their own discourses and ideas of how what form land reform policy should take.

These ideas and assumptions will be evident in the various policy iterations that they have created. The third sub-question, therefore, asks: what were the hidden assumptions and practices underpinning the actual land reform policies that have been developed, and how have they contributed to the 'governing' of the agrarian system in South Africa?

The final sub-question in this study focuses on those policy players tasked with implementing land reform policies at the operating, or provincial, level. The ideas and discourses these players subscribe to will have great influence on how they implement the rules developed at the higher levels of the game. The fourth question therefore asks: how is all of this experienced by the actual participants in the implementation of the land reform process? What different ideas and discourses inform practice at the operational level?

Where are the key conflicts between these discourses? What are the implications for change that will benefit the rural landless poor? How do policy participants at the operating level view the rules created for them at the higher levels, and how does this affect how they implement these rules?

Finding answers to each of these sub-questions will thus provide an answer to the primary question driving this thesis. A number of specific research

methods will be needed to answer these questions, which are set out in the next chapter.

## Chapter four

### Methodology

The overarching objective of this study is to come to an understanding of why so little land has been redistributed from white to black farmers in post-apartheid South Africa, despite the overwhelming political and moral mandate for the government to do so. The previous chapter outlined the theoretical framework, derived largely from ‘constructivist institutionalism,’ that was developed to answer this question, and outlined the questions raised about the South African land redistribution policy that this research addresses. Taken together, these questions require an exploration of the discourses evident in the various institutions in the South African land redistribution policy arena, and drawn on by the actors working within them. This chapter begins with a discussion of the ontological and epistemological basis of this research. It then turns to a discussion of discourse analysis, the primary methodological approach used in the research, before elaborating on the particular location of the fieldwork and research methods deployed to gather and analyse data.

#### Ontology

The theoretical framework derived from ‘constructivist institutionalism’ (Chapter 3) raised a number of specific questions about the South African land redistribution policy, summarised in Table 3-1 (page 90). Having synthesised a theoretical approach, the next task is to choose appropriate research methods to answer the key questions. Denzin and Lincoln (2003)

suggest a hierarchy of ideas that the researcher can use, starting with an ontology, or framework, that specifies an epistemology, or set of questions, that is examined in specific ways, using a methodology. The choices made at each level of the hierarchy (starting from ontology) affect the choices that can be made at the next level.

Ontology addresses the basic elements of reality (Silverman, 2010), asking what we believe about the nature of reality and what is worth knowing (Koro-Ljungberg, 2008). It is the starting point of all research. Ontological assumptions are concerned with what we believe constitutes social reality, and are often divided between those based on foundationalism and those based on anti-foundationalism (Grix, 2004). Philosophical foundationalism asserts that reality exists independently of our knowledge of it. The task of the researcher is therefore to find firm, unquestionable and indisputable truths (existing independently of culture and history) about this external reality, from which our beliefs may be logically deduced (Grix, 2004). The origins of this approach lie in early efforts by thinkers such as Descartes and Locke to challenge the power of the Church and feudalism. Any reasoning which entails unobservables like God, the mind or even hypothetical physical entities is rejected — if something is neither directly observable nor logically deducible from direct observation, then it can never be rigorously analysed (Weinberg, 2008).

This ontological approach has come under critique from scholars such as Wittgenstein (Weinberg, 2008), who argued that social meanings are

established in practice through grammatical rules. Later scholars added the insight that all linguistic propositions acquire meaning only in relation to other propositions to which they are meaningfully related. This means that rather than being ahistorical or acultural, social meanings are instead nested in particular socio-cultural contexts. Science is therefore not constructed on a foundation of enduring logical truths or sense data, but on common-sense cultural assumptions, all of which are potentially subject to revision. Anti-foundationalism therefore asserts that the world does not exist independently of our knowledge of it. Rather, the 'reality' that we as humans experience is socially and discursively constructed. There are no central values that can be rationally and universally grounded (Grix, 2004).

### **Epistemology**

An 'epistemology' examines the nature and status of knowledge (Silverman, 2010), answering questions about who can be a 'knower,' what tests beliefs must pass in order to be legitimated as knowledge, and what things can be known (Harding, 1987). It is concerned with the origin, nature and limits of human knowledge, and the knowledge-gathering process itself (Grix, 2004).

"The term epistemology simply refers to the study of who can be a knowledge producer and how knowledge is produced" (Mann, 2012, p. 18).

Grix (2004) suggests two contrasting epistemological positions. Following on from foundationalism, positivism advocates the application of the methods of the natural sciences to the study of social reality. Similarly, working from anti-foundationalist premises, interpretivism asserts that a strategy is required that respects the differences between people and the

objects of the natural sciences. In this approach, the social scientist must grasp the subjective meaning of social action. The methodology used depends on which of these two epistemological positions is chosen.

### **Methodology**

'Methodology' can be seen as a set of theoretically-informed principles and ideas that informs the design of a research study. The methodological framework with its underpinning philosophy mainly influences how the research works with the participants, and the position they take in the study. Researchers can take either a position of distance, or they can acknowledge their inclusion in both the field and the final product of the study (Birks & Mills, 2011). It essentially refers to the choices made about which cases to study, and what methods of data gathering and data analysis will be used in planning and executing a research study. The choice of methodology, most broadly either quantitative or qualitative research methods or a combination of the two, defines how one will go about studying any phenomenon. It is important to emphasise that both types of methodology are not in themselves true or false — they can only be more or less useful to the specific topic being studied (Silverman, 2010).

### **Anti-foundationalism, interpretivism and qualitative approaches**

So what are the implications of the choices made at the ontological, epistemological and the methodological level? If a foundationalist ontological approach is adopted, the researcher must accept the assumption that 'reality' exists independently of our knowledge of it (Grix, 2004).

Leading on from this choice, at the epistemological level, the researcher would be drawn to positivist claims that this 'reality' is singular and objective, existing independently of its knower (Lindlof & Taylor, 2011). The researcher would assume that there are patterns and regularities, and causes and consequences in the human social world, much as there are in the natural world. It would therefore be possible to make causal statements about the social world, based on methods derived from the natural sciences (Grix, 2004), which have enjoyed unquestioned success in predicting the physical world (Howarth, 2000). The overall objective would therefore be to produce universal laws or theories that can be confirmed or refuted by independent testing and the production of relevant empirical counterfactuals. In turn, these universal laws and theories would serve as the basis for predicting comparable or future events and processes (Howarth, 2000).

The choice of such a positivist approach would lead to the assumption that true knowledge arises from the observation of empirical phenomena, and that the logic of measurement and quantification is best for depicting empirical observations (Lindlof & Taylor, 2011). In this approach, numeric forms of data are seen as the optimum way to access external reality, and so are vital in the research process (Field, 2009). The researcher would be searching for the mechanisms of cause and effect that affect human behaviour, and aggregating subjects based on their possession of specific traits or performances in order to examine the relationships between these variables (Lindlof & Taylor, 2011). The goal would be a series of statistical

equations explaining and predicting human behaviour (Rubin & Rubin, 2005).

However, Table 3-1 (see page 90) shows that this study is not aimed at such a goal. This study aims to explore the ideas and discourses underpinning the institutions involved in land reform in South Africa, and motivating the actors involved in the process. To address this, this study settles on a theoretical framework focused on the meanings assigned to land, agriculture and land reform in the land redistribution policy arena. The quantitative methods favoured by positivists are less suited to providing a depth of understanding of the attitudes or beliefs of people, organisations or institutions. Positivist quantitative approaches are well-suited to studying the natural laws governing the physical matter making up the climate, land, flora and fauna of South Africa. However they are relatively ill-equipped to uncover the meanings humans place on this land, and the consequences of these meanings in South African society. This study therefore does not adopt foundationalist, positivist or quantitative approaches.

Anti-foundationalism asserts that our human 'reality' is socially and discursively constructed. This means that there are no central values that can be rationally and universally grounded. Flowing on from this, interpretivism posits a difference between people and the objects of the natural sciences. Social scientists following this approach therefore strive to grasp the subjective meaning of social action. In order to achieve this, then, qualitative research is broadly about learning what is important to those

being studied (Rubin & Rubin, 2005). It seeks to achieve deep understanding of human actions, motives and feelings, illuminating how humans use cultural symbol systems to create shared meanings for their existences and activity (Lindlof & Taylor, 2011). The basic subject matter is therefore no longer objective data to be quantified, but meaningful relations that are to be interpreted (Kvale, 1996). Qualitative methods explore the perspective and meaning of experiences, seeking to identify the social structures or processes that explain people's behavioural meaning (Wong, 2008).

### **Social constructionism — creating meanings**

Within the qualitative tradition, there are a wide variety of possible approaches. Social constructionism highlights the processes by which social reality is put together and assigned meaning. Here, the leading idea has always been "... that the world we live in and our place in it are not simply and evidently 'there' for participants. Rather, participants actively construct the world of everyday life and its constituent elements" (Gubrium & Holstein, 2008, p. 3). While there is a physical world within which people live, the meanings they attach to it are constructed. Our knowledge and representations of the world are not reflections of the world 'out there', but are rather products of our ways of categorising the world (Phillips & Jorgensen, 2002). Humans do not find or discover knowledge so much as construct or make it. We invent concepts, models, and schemes to make sense of experience, and we continually test and modify these constructions in the light of new experience. Furthermore, we do not construct our

interpretations in isolation, but against a backdrop of shared understandings, practices, and language (Schwandt, 2003). Such an approach, centrally concerned with the meanings humans construct for the world around them, lends itself well to a study of the different meanings attached to land and land redistribution in South Africa.

Additionally, the meanings social participants construct for themselves are not singular, stable or passively absorbed. Rather, they are dependent on human actors using their cultural stocks of knowledge to engage with an ambiguous and reactive world, and to suit their situated, evolving purposes. Some of these constructions are reciprocated and sustained in group interactions, and cumulatively embedded in formal institutions as preferences, techniques and policies (Lindlof & Taylor, 2011). Within these constructions, some forms of action become natural and others unthinkable (Phillips & Jorgensen, 2002). Over time, the historical, contingent and malleable qualities of these creations fade as succeeding generations accept them as given and provide them with a sense of inevitability (Lindlof & Taylor, 2011).

The concept of social construction allows scholars to emphasise the contingent nature of social activity. People constantly make choices based on how they understand their alternatives. They must account for the choices they have made, and those choices and accounts then constrain what they will do next. Many of these choices are soon lost from sight, and an edifice of taken-for-granted assumptions about the world emerges and

evolves. Adopting a constructionist stance makes it easier for analysts to penetrate those assumptions and to recognise and study these processes (Best, 2008). As Phillips and Jorgensen (2002) note, the unmasking of taken-for-granted, naturalised knowledge is often an explicitly formulated aim of social constructionist research. Social constructionist researchers generally seek to demonstrate how certain states of affairs that others have taken to be eternal and beyond the reach of social influence are actually the products of specific socio-historical or social interactional processes (Weinberg, 2008).

The ways in which we understand and represent the world are historically and culturally specific and contingent — our worldviews and our identities could have been different, and they change over time (Phillips & Jorgensen, 2002). There is no inevitability to existing conditions, as they are only the result of past choices, which could have been different. The social constructionist approach therefore fits well with the theoretical approach of this study, and promises new insights into the taken-for-granted assumptions about land and the use of land in South Africa. This would be an integral part of addressing the basic question driving this study, of why so little has been done to change the landownership patterns established prior to 1994. Apart from these general approaches to the creation of meaning, social constructionism requires certain approaches and attitudes from the researcher when carrying out research.

### **Strong objectivity — my place in this study**

Positivism promotes a value-free, impartial, dispassionate objectivity to guide scientific research. It is suggested that without this objectivity, one cannot separate justified belief from mere opinion, or real knowledge from mere claims to knowledge (Harding, 1991). From this perspective, relativism (inherent in the social constructionist premise of the contingent nature of social activity) is often treated as the opposite of objectivity. Harding (1991) has problematized this opposition, criticising modern science for presenting itself as if its knowledge has no context. As it does not take into account its own cultural and historical conditions of possibility, Harding terms this ‘objectivism’, and argues for a ‘strong objectivity’, where the cultural and social location of the researcher is evident upfront. “By accounting in this way for where our own knowledge ‘comes from’, we can produce more objective and less distorted representations of the world” (Phillips & Jorgensen, 2002, p. 202). Applying the social constructionist view of knowledge creation to my research, this study accepts the assumption that the knower and the known are inseparable and conditioned by each other (Koro-Ljungberg, 2008). Knowledge of social reality therefore emerges from the fundamental interdependence existing between researchers and those they study. In this approach, I as a researcher did not just use research instruments. I was the primary instrument (Lindlof & Taylor, 2011). I as a researcher could not act as a neutral and external spectator in knowledge construction, and my research participants could not claim privilege of knowledge or interpretation. Instead, I accepted that all representations,

both mine and those of my research participants, were partial perceptions of constructed social realities (Koro-Ljungberg, 2008). Accepting this meant that I must apply the standards of 'strong objectivity' described by Harding to help me produce a less distorted representation of the different meanings attributed to land and land reform in South Africa (or one taking note of how it was distorted). I need to therefore to take note of how and why my perceptions of reality are partial. I need to explore my social position in South African society, and what some of the resulting effects on my research may be.

### **Being a 'white' researcher**

The most immediate factor likely to affect my research is my identity in South Africa as a white, English-speaking male. Economic, social and cultural power is still overwhelmingly concentrated in the white population in South Africa at present (De Kock, 2011), and being white in post-apartheid South African society (as in much of the rest of the Western world) continues to be advantageous (McKaiser, 2011). 'Critical whiteness studies' (Allen, 1994; Haney López, 2006; Lipsitz, 1998), a critical research approach, from the US, works to expose 'whiteness' as something that masquerades as the norm, pretending to be the transparent mode of the 'normal' or common-sense social centre rather than 'others' who stand out or deviate from this conveniently invisible powerful norm (De Kock, 2011). A white South African academic, applying this insight to the place of whites in South Africa today, comments:

We [white South Africans] move easily about in a world made in our own image, validating our own values and beliefs and sustaining our own comfort, unimpeded by the kinds of structural and systemic challenges black people face daily (Vice, 2011).

Ntombenhle Khathwane, a black South African businesswoman, comments that as a result of this unconscious identification of whiteness as the norm, the history on which black South Africans base their identity

... is that of enslavement, oppression and dispossession; it is a history of losers. By contrast, white South Africans base their identity on a history of being winners (Khathwane, 2011).

This invisible norm of whiteness placed me in a position of strength relative to many of my black respondents, especially those with little formal education. This meant that rather than answering my questions in ways indicating their own thoughts and feelings, they could have answered my questions in ways they felt would please me. When analysing the data I gathered from such respondents, I had to take note of this possibility.

Diesing (1999) describes researchers as identifying with or relating to a certain location in society and as viewing society as spread out around that location. In South Africa and in much of the rest of the Western world, we see this with researchers steeped in Eurocentric norms who identify themselves as being Western and/or white. In addition, these self-identified Western/white researchers often unconsciously claim as their exclusive

cultural heritage norms like rationality, purity, productivity, disembodiment, refinement and self-discipline (Lindlof & Taylor, 2011).

The rest of the world — Africa, Asia, etc. — is spread out around the West, and becomes Diesing's 'object,' which takes on its characteristics according to its degree of sameness or difference from the researcher. Accordingly, Eurocentric concepts of families, deviance, social movements, psychological development, organisational behaviour, stratification, and even spirituality are applied by the white researcher to the experiences of people of colour (Stanfield & Dennis, 1993). The degree of freedom accorded to the object by the researcher also depends on the distance between the two. Objects similar to the researcher are accorded more freedom than those that are very different (Ross, 1999). In the South African context, if the researcher is white, this often means that the black person becomes represented or spoken for by others, and cannot participate in world discourse of action on his/her own behalf (Ogundipe-Leslie, 2001). Black respondents are also portrayed as having little autonomy of response. From the vantage point of the colonised/black/other, the term 'research' has therefore been inextricably linked to European imperialism and colonialism. Unconsciously locating themselves beyond race, whites cannot participate effectively in mutually accountable dialogue with other racial groups (Lindlof & Taylor, 2011). Linda Tuhiwai Smith, situating herself as an indigenous researcher in New Zealand states: "It galls us that Western researchers and intellectuals can assume to know all that it is possible to know of us, on the basis of their brief encounters with some of us" (Smith, 1999, p. 1). It is therefore deeply

important that white researchers acknowledge the material basis of their power in relation to black people (Bhavnani & Coulson, 2001). As a white South African male, I recognise that I am put in a socially dominant role compared to those of my respondents who are black, most especially those that are not in the middle class, and that this affects my interactions with them. Commenting on the place of white South Africans in post-apartheid South Africa, Eusebius McKaiser, a coloured (or mixed race) South African academic, writes:

You [white South Africans] have an unqualified political and ethical right to engage in the political and public spheres of (y)our country, but be mindful of how your whiteness still benefits you and gives you unearned privileges. Engage black South Africans with humility, and be mindful of not reinforcing whiteness as normative ... (McKaiser, 2011).

As the research instrument, I am aware that the knowledge I created is shaped by my position in South Africa society. I endeavour to bring reflexivity to my work and especially to the values and norms that I bring to my study.

### **Being an 'outsider' researcher**

I also need to take note of the fact that my research is affected by my having left South Africa in 2004 and having gained New Zealand citizenship since then. While my formative years and much of my adult life to this point has been lived in South Africa, my time in New Zealand society has also had an

effect on my personal perspectives. This means that while I have a good understanding of how South African society works, I do not see the world exactly as someone in South Africa does today. I am not fully an 'insider' anymore in South Africa, but not fully an 'outsider' either. This is perhaps not such an unusual situation. Scholars have noted that pure outsiders, who base their views on a study of the situation from afar, are rare. More common are involved outsiders — people personally connected to a situation by belonging to one of the national, religious or ethnic groups involved, or because of an identification with a general political stance relevant to the analysis of a specific situation (Hermann, 2001). Researchers who are members of the culture or subculture about which they write will bring a special quality to their material. Their understanding and interpretation is likely to be different from that of an outsider. On the other hand, scholars from outside a culture have frequently had a more challenging vision than those bound by their own culture. Both angles of vision are complementary in arriving at a largely valid interpretation of the data gathered (Lerner, 2001). My position as an involved outsider largely allows for both these advantages. While I have an in-depth understanding and experience of South African society, the eleven years I have spent outside the country so far have given me a different perspective on the possibilities in the South African land redistribution programme.

### **Purpose of this study**

Having thus established the broad effects that my identity as a white English-speaking male who now lives outside of South Africa would have on

my research, I still need to make clear how I believe the knowledge that I am creating is relevant and valid. Social constructionism takes a specific approach to knowledge. Rather than seeing it as an attempt to outline an external reality as neutrally and as rigorously as possible, this approach sees knowledge as ideological, political and permeated with values (Schwandt, 2003). Knowing and the reality of everyday life are founded in an intersubjective world in which individuals cannot exist without interacting and communicating with others (Koro-Ljungberg, 2008). In addition, knowledge is shaped by social processes in which we construct common truths and compete about what is true or false (Phillips & Jorgensen, 2002).

Conversations and social interactions are the ultimate contexts in which knowledge is produced and understood. This makes knowledge historical, situational and changing, and so difficult to replicate (Koro-Ljungberg, 2008). I accept that the knowledge that I am producing is a contingent construction of reality, just as all other representations are. How then can I guarantee that the understanding of reality that I produced is valid? To put the question more generally, does the relativism inherent in the social constructionist premise that I adopt make it impossible to distinguish between good and bad descriptions of reality (Phillips & Jorgensen, 2002)?

Critical research should explicitly position itself and distance itself from alternative representations of reality on the grounds that it strives to do something for specific reasons. At the same time, critical research should make clear that the particular representation of reality it provides is just one among other possible representations, thus inviting further discussion

(Phillips & Jorgensen, 2002). Adopting this approach for my research then, at the concrete level I aim to contribute to the effort to reflect on a land redistribution policy that provides more equitable access to farmland for black South Africans. De Kock<sup>10</sup> (2011) comments that the overwhelming grip on economic power held by whites in South Africa is detrimental to the long-term survival of South African society. A more equitable land redistribution policy in the country would be part of this process of destabilising the overwhelming economic power of whites present in South Africa today. At the level of principle, however, I accept that the research I produce is contingent and offers partial insights into a complex reality. I put it forward, however, in the hope that it adds to the debate around land redistribution in South Africa, allowing for the creation of a better land redistribution policy.

### **Discourse analysis**

This study aims to find the ideas and discourses underpinning and motivating the institutions and the actors at the three levels of land redistribution policy in South Africa. A primary task in answering this question is, therefore, to clarify what meanings are attached to land by participants in the South African land redistribution policy arena. As noted in chapter three, one of the primary qualitative research methods for studying social meanings is discourse analysis. However, specifying discourse analysis as a method in any traditional way is very difficult. In

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<sup>10</sup> Surnames with prefixes are capitalized according to *Afrikaans* spelling rules in this study, where the prefix is only capitalized at the beginning of a sentence.

fact, discourse analysis is often described as a theoretical perspective rather than a method, and as a general epistemological perspective on social life containing both methodological and conceptual elements (Cramm, Exel, Moller, & Finkenflugel, 2010). Phillips and Jorgensen (2002) make the point that in discourse analysis, theory and method are intertwined and researchers must accept the basic philosophical premises in order to use discourse analysis as their method of empirical study. What, then, are these basic philosophical premises?

Much like social constructionism, discourse theory sees language constructing the meanings we assign to physical reality (Fairclough, 1992). On any particular topic, different people will almost always hold a wide variety of views and attitudes. The views and attitudes of specific people, taken together in a single bundle, are what are referred to as a 'discourse'. Put another way, discourses represent the way a particular individual, in particular circumstances and at a particular time, relates and conceives of certain aspects of the world. In addition, between individuals with shared experiences and personal attributes, there may be some degree of commonality or sharing of discourses (Addams, 2000). A discourse is therefore simply an ensemble of ideas, concepts and categories through which meaning is given to social and physical realities. In this light, discourses consist of structures embedded in language (Dryzek, 2005), which enable those who subscribe to them to interpret bits of information and put them together into coherent stories or accounts. Constructing meanings and relationships and helping to define common sense and

legitimate knowledge, individual discourses rest on assumptions, judgments, and contentions that provide the basic terms of analysis, debates, agreements, and disagreements. In addition, the way a discourse constructs the world is not always easily comprehended by those who subscribe to other discourses (Dryzek, 2005). Perhaps Gee (2011) gives the most colourful description of what it means to be part of a discourse, saying that it means being able to engage in a particular sort of 'dance' with words, deeds, values, feelings, other people, objects, tools, technologies, places and times, so as to be recognised as a distinctive sort of 'who' doing a distinctive sort of 'what'. So how do we make sense of these dances, and the identities and roles they give their participants?

### **Techniques of discourse analysis**

There is no one accepted method on how to carry out discourse analysis. While different perspectives offer their own suggestions, all start from the assumption that our ways of talking do not neutrally reflect our world, identities and social relations. Rather, they play an active role in creating and changing them (Phillips & Jorgensen, 2002). The overall idea of discourse analysis is that social meanings for phenomena can never be ultimately fixed. This opens up the way for constant social struggles about definitions of society and identity. The role of the discourse analyst is thus to plot the course of these struggles to fix meaning at all levels of society (Phillips & Jorgensen, 2002).

Table 3-1 (page 90) shows the questions arising from the theoretical approach developed for this study. To exhume, clarify and analyse the ideas and discourses found at these three levels of analysis in South African land redistribution policy, this study draws on the forms of discourse analysis developed and deployed by Dryzek (1997), Bacchi (2012) and Schneider and Ingram (2005; 1993). In his study of discourses around the environment, Dryzek offers an overview of a much larger terrain of discourse, deploying analytical devices which give him “... some confidence in painting such large and complex discursive terrain in broad strokes” (2013, p. 11). This study aims to provide a similarly wide-ranging overview of the large terrain of discourse on land reform. Like environmental discourses, land reform can also be seen as being doubly or perhaps even triply complex. Issues of land reform and redistribution involve not only the overall economic development of a country, but also sustainable agricultural production and human rights issues. As in the constructivist institutionalism approach, Dryzek distinguishes between discourses and the exercise of power by agents, and creates a checklist of four elements designed to capture the essence of the various discourses he studies. Firstly, the analyst should clarify the basic entities recognised or constructed in a discourse. Secondly, the assumptions about natural relationships between these different entities made in the discourse under study need to be mapped out. Thirdly, the analyst should examine how the discourse portrays agents and their motives. Finally, Dryzek recommends examination of the key metaphors and rhetorical devices found in the discourse being studied (Dryzek, 2013).

Illustrating the variety of approaches that can be taken under a discourse analysis approach, Bacchi develops an approach to policy analysis that focuses on the problematisations found in government policy (2012). ‘Policy’ is generally associated with a programme, or a course of action. ‘Public policy,’ used to describe government programmes, is generally assumed to solve social problems. Bacchi (2009, pp. ix-1) argues “... that it is important to make the ‘problems’ implicit in public policies *explicit*, and to scrutinise them closely”. Every policy or policy proposal is a prescriptive text here, setting out a practice that relies on a particular problematisation. How problems are represented in policy carries all sorts of implications for how the issue is thought about, how the people involved are treated, and how they are encouraged to think about themselves (Bacchi, 2009, 2012).

Bacchi’s analysis is not concerned with intentionality, but rather seeks to identify the deep conceptual premises operating within problem representations. The point is to draw attention to the assumptions and presuppositions that make it possible to develop these policies (Bacchi, 2009). To achieve this, Bacchi deploys the ‘What’s the problem represented to be?’ (WPR) approach. Bacchi’s method thus fits into the constructivist institutionalism approach as a way to develop a deep understanding of the discourses policymakers subscribe to through an analysis of the policy documents they create.

Bacchi’s WPR approach starts from the presumption that some problem representations create difficulties for members of some social groups — more so than for members of other groups. One of the ways Bacchi (2009)

suggests that this happens is through the effects of subjectification — “... we become subjects of a particular kind partly through the ways in which policies set up social relationships and our place (position) within them” (p. 16). Ingram and Schneider (2005) develop this theme further, arguing that public policies are

... the primary means of legitimating, extending, and even creating distinctive populations — some of whom are extolled as deserving and entitled and others who are demonized as undeserving and ineligible. These groups have been treated very differently in the governance process (p. 2).

The agenda, tools and rationales of policies impart messages to target populations, informing them of their status as citizens, what they deserve from government, and what is expected of them. Policy messages indicate whether the problems of target populations are legitimate objects of government attention, what kind of game politics is, and who usually wins (Schneider & Ingram, 1993). Schneider and Ingram argue that positive and negative social constructions combine with political power to produce four different types of target populations: the *advantaged* enjoy positive social constructions as deserving people, and have significant political power resources; *contenders* are not seen as deserving, but have ample political power resources equalling those of the advantaged; *dependents* are socially constructed as deserving in a moral sense, but helpless and usually in need of discipline, and have few political power resources; finally *deviants* are

constructed as undeserving, dangerous and of no value to society, and have few legitimate political power resources (Ingram & Schneider, 2005).

Schneider and Ingram's framework of analysis has been deployed in the analysis of a wide range of policy issues, from the construction of Mexican and Cuban immigrants by US politicians (Magaña & Short, 2005), to prison-based AIDS policy (Hogan, 1997) to political constructions of old age (Hudson & Gonyea, 2012). The application of the approaches developed by Dryzek, Bacchi and Schneider and Ingram will enable a deeper understanding of the ideas and discourse underlying the institutions and actors involved in land redistribution policy in South Africa.

### **Research location**

The theoretical approach taken in this study is derived from 'constructivist institutionalism,' which focuses attention on the ideas and discourses maintaining and motivating the institutions and actors involved in land redistribution policy. At the constitutional level, this directs attention to the South Africa Constitution, and the provisions it makes for land reform and land redistribution. In addition, it focuses on the different discourses evident among those involved in the creation of this Constitution. At the national policy level, the approach developed in this study focuses attention on the three major iterations of land redistribution policy developed by the national bureaucracy for land redistribution. At the local level the approach developed in this study directs attention to the discourses of the various organisations involved in land redistribution policy at the provincial level. These include organisations representing black large-scale commercial

farmers (preferably beneficiaries of land reform); small-scale communal farmers; white large-scale commercial farmers; commodity organisations; agricultural corporations; NGOs involved in land reform; rank-and-file members of the DRDLR and the two provincial departments of Agriculture; consultants involved in land reform projects; and members of political parties in the two provinces. Given the time and resource constraints of doctoral research this study concentrates on two provinces within South Africa: the Eastern Cape and KwaZulu-Natal provinces (see Figure 4-1, page 119).

Figure 4-1: *The provinces of post-apartheid South Africa* (Source: M. Oulton)



These two provinces differ in size — while KwaZulu-Natal province takes up 7.7 per cent of the South African landmass, the Eastern Cape province occupies 13.8 per cent (Lehohla, 2010). Together, these two provinces make up 21.5 per cent of the total South African landmass. In addition, while the Eastern Cape province contains 13.5 per cent of the South African population, KwaZulu-Natal province is home to 21.3 per cent (Lehohla, 2010). This means that the two provinces contain 34.8 per cent of the total South African population. However, the relative populations of whites and

blacks in the two provinces are very similar to each other, and correspond roughly to the overall proportions found in South Africa nationally. In KwaZulu-Natal province black South Africans<sup>11</sup> make up 95 per cent of the population, and whites 5 per cent (Brooks, 2004). In the Eastern Cape province, the proportion of black South Africans is similar at 95.3 per cent, while the proportion of whites is similar at 4.7 per cent (Lehohla, 2011). Overall, black South Africans make up 90.8 per cent of the national population, while white South Africans come to 9.2 per cent (Lehohla, 2010). The two provinces are very similar in the tribal makeup of their respective African populations, in that in both provinces the vast majority of the African population belongs to a single ethnic grouping. Where 83.4 per cent of the Eastern Cape population belong to the various parts of the *isiXhosa* language group, 80.9 per cent of the KwaZulu-Natal population speak *isiZulu* (Anonymous, 2011a). In both provinces political allegiances lean strongly to the ruling ANC. In the 2014 national and provincial elections, the ANC received 70.09 per cent of the vote in the Eastern Cape province, and 64.52 per cent in KwaZulu-Natal (IEC, 2014a, 2014b). The voting record in these two provinces is similar to national voting patterns in the country, where the ANC gained 62.2 per cent of the vote in 2014 (IEC, 2014b).

While both provinces are situated on the wetter eastern seaboard of the country, KwaZulu-Natal enjoys a higher rainfall than the Eastern Cape.

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<sup>11</sup> In this study, following conventional racial classifications in South Africa, the term 'black South African' refers to the African, 'coloured' (mixed race) and Indian populations of South Africa. 'White South African' refers to all South Africans of European origin.

Where the Eastern Cape province enjoys an average rainfall of 527 mm, KwaZulu-Natal province averages over 1000 mm annually (Limpopo, 2011; SAinfo, 2012). It must be borne in mind though that the low average rainfall of the Eastern Cape is due mainly to the semi-desert Karoo areas in its western interior. In the eastern coastal areas of the province, the rainfall and climate are similar to those prevailing in KwaZulu-Natal. The two provinces thus present a microcosm of the broader rainfall patterns prevailing in South Africa, as seen in Figure 2-1 (see page 20).

In terms of agriculture, given its favourable resource base, it is perhaps not surprising that KwaZulu-Natal contributes one third of food production and 37 per cent of the country's agricultural exports (Mather, 1998). The comparatively good rainfall of the province make agriculture central to the economy of the province — the sugar-cane plantations along the Indian Ocean coastal belt are the mainstay of KwaZulu-Natal's agriculture. The coastal belt is also a large producer of subtropical fruit, while the farmers in the hinterland concentrate on vegetable, dairy and stock-farming. Another major source of income is forestry (SouthAfrica.info, 2014b). The drier climate in the Eastern Cape mean that in the former 'white' rural areas, there are irrigated citrus and deciduous fruit orchards, and a large sheep-farming sector (SouthAfrica.info, 2014a). The two provinces thus present a representative sample of most of the types of agriculture practiced in South Africa.

While almost half the size of the Eastern Cape, KwaZulu-Natal has similar

proportions of former 'white' farmland (under private ownership) and former bantustan land — land under communal tenure makes up 34.05 per cent<sup>12</sup> of KwaZulu-Natal province, while the former bantustans of the Ciskei and the Transkei make up 27.8 per cent of the Eastern Cape<sup>13</sup>. These patterns do not correspond to the broader patterns of landownership over the whole country, where at the end of apartheid roughly 13 per cent of the country was under communal tenure, and the rest under private white ownership (Adams et al., 1999). However the overall patterns correspond, with the majority of the land allocated to large-scale mechanised farms individually owned mostly by whites, and a lesser part allocated to communal tenure by black Africans. Therefore, taken together, it could be argued that these two provinces provide a broadly representative sample of the climatic, political, demographic and agrarian conditions prevailing in the rest of South Africa. Taken together, the two provinces have almost all the bio-climatic regions found in the rest of South Africa. As in the rest of South Africa, political allegiances are broadly to the ANC. As in the rest of the country, the vast majority of the agricultural areas was reserved for individual white ownership. In the light of these factors, and the fact that most of my personal contacts in South Africa are in these two provinces, I decided concentrate my research activities in the country within these two

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<sup>12</sup> Calculation based on the former KwaZulu 'homeland' being 32, 130 km<sup>2</sup> in extent (Frankental & Sichone, 2005), and KwaZulu-Natal province being 94, 361 km<sup>2</sup> in size (Lehohla, 2010). The calculation being  $(32, 130 \text{ km}^2 / 94, 361 \text{ km}^2) * 100 = 34.05\%$ .

<sup>13</sup> Calculation based on the Transkei being 44 030 km<sup>2</sup> in extent (Anonymous, 2010), the Ciskei being 2, 970 km<sup>2</sup> in size (Anonymous, 2011b), and the Eastern Cape province being 168, 966 km<sup>2</sup> in size (Lehohla, 2010). The calculation being  $[(44, 030 \text{ km}^2 + 2, 970 \text{ km}^2) / 168, 966 \text{ km}^2] * 100 = 27.8\%$ .

provinces.

### **Document collection and analysis**

The different sources of data for historical analysis consulted in this study primarily included primary and secondary sources (Danto, 2008). Primary sources included original documents which were generally available on the internet or from library collections. These comprise original pieces of legislation, Parliamentary debates, minutes of meetings, and policy documents. Primary documents giving quantitative data were also used when appropriate, e.g. statistics on the amount of land transferred from white to black farmers, or statistics on blacks removed from 'white' land during the apartheid era. There were a number of primary documents originating from the executive government shedding light on its intentions towards the South African land redistribution policy, published between 1992 and 2012. Examples of these policy documents included the 1997 *White Paper on South African Land Policy*, or the ANC's *Ready to Govern* policy statement of 1992.

To gain background information, I also examined sources from the South African media. I consulted newspapers and magazines representing white perspectives on the land redistribution policy, concentrating on articles published between 1994 and 2012. This included newspapers like the *Mail & Guardian*, the *Natal Witness* and the *Sunday Times* (for an English-speaking perspective). For an Afrikaans perspective, I consulted newspapers like *Die Beeld* and *Die Burger*. Newspapers like the *Sowetan* gave a black perspective,

and for a big business perspective I looked at newspapers like the *Business Day* and the *Financial Mail*. Magazines like the *Farmers Weekly*, *Landbou Weekblad* and *Pro-Agri* also shed some light on how large-scale commercial farmers view the land redistribution policy.

Secondary sources normally include the writings of other scholars on the piece of history in question. In my case this included the works covered in the above historical review, and other studies of the participants in the land redistribution policy in South Africa. An advantage of using secondary sources for data is that the conditions under which the data were generated will be more controlled and explicit. The differences in these conditions can therefore be at the very least consciously acknowledged, and at best corrected for (Chase, 1995).

A range of documents was collected and consulted, including the South African Constitution and policy documents. The policy documents ranged in date of publication from 1994 to 2010, and included the documents created by the government for the three iterations of land reform policy, annual reports and strategic plans by relevant government departments, speeches by relevant ministers and Acts of parliament. A total of 26 documents were used. Analysing the information in these types of documents required a specific set of analytical tools, derived from other studies of similar historical materials. Beringer (1978) states that historical analysts often struggle to describe the method they have used, and argues that historical analysis simply involves reading source material and deriving

evidence from that material to be used in supporting a point of view or thesis. Danto (2008) adds that the purpose of a historical study is generally to give an overview of specific problems, programmes or policies within predetermined dates; and to trace major ideological themes in history.

In carrying out this study, I deployed a variety of research methods to gather data from the field including analysis of primary and secondary documents and interviews with key stakeholders. A large part of the research carried out for this study involved historical analysis of documents produced by the different institutions and organisations involved in the South African land redistribution policy arena today. Therefore, as a part of the discourse analysis method adapted for this study, *firstly*, I read and compared secondary sources, like monographs and journal articles. *Secondly*, I clarified the points of view that emerged from the content, including contradictions between texts. *Thirdly*, I located relevant primary sources, reviewing them critically, and searching out explanations in the texts. *Fourthly*, I referred back to the secondary sources for outside interpretations that support or contradict the primary sources (Danto, 2008). In addition, I took careful note of the timespan and the chronology of events around the phenomenon I was investigating (Chase, 1995).

Danto (2008) also emphasises that in historical research, social beliefs and personal values abound on both sides — those carried by the researcher and those contained within the evidence. Invariably, the biases of the information, the narrators, and other researchers must be weighed against

each other. It is therefore necessary to identify the conditions under which the material was generated. These conditions need to be specified and selected, so as to provide theoretically relevant data (Chase, 1995). “The researcher must patiently filter documents through an understanding of the original authors, where they come from, and how their stories changed over time” (Danto, 2008, p. 9). As part of this effort, it is important to detect and determine bias both in the source of information and in ourselves as researchers; to clearly identify unstated assumptions; to find ambiguous or equivocal claims or arguments; to recognise logical inconsistencies or fallacies in a line of reasoning; and to determine the strength of the argument (Danto, 2008).

### **Qualitative interviews carried out for this study**

The interviews carried out in this study were focused at the provincial level of land reform policy. Just as there are many types of discourse analysis, there are many types of interviews — structured, semi-structured, or unstructured (Fontana & Frey, 2003). Positivist quantitative researchers will often favour strongly structured interviews. The essence of unstructured and semi-structured interviews is in their qualitative nature, in the desire to understand rather than to explain (Fontana & Frey, 2003). The goal of the qualitative interview is to examine how knowing subjects (researchers and study participants) experience or have experienced particular aspects of life as they are co-constructed through dialogue (Koro-Ljungberg, 2008). The aim is to understand the world from the subjects’ point of view, to unfold the meaning of their experiences, and to uncover their lived world prior to

scientific explanations (Kvale, 1996). The point of this study is to understand the meanings attached to land in the various institutions, organisations and individuals involved in the land redistribution policy in South Africa. This study uncovers the values and outcomes espoused by the various participants, and sheds light on their interactions with the policy environment around them. Quantitative methods would not be helpful in gaining these understandings. However, qualitative interviews are “... particularly well suited to understanding the social actor’s experience, knowledge and worldviews” (Lindlof & Taylor, 2011, p. 173). In addition, they fit in well with the anti-foundationalist view of the human world as a conversational reality, and the interpretive view of the conversation as a basic mode of constituting knowledge. Semi-structured qualitative interviews are therefore used to gain these understandings and insights.

In the semi-structured interview, I prepared a number of questions beforehand to put to the interviewees. In the interviews however, these questions were not presented in any specific, predetermined order. This allowed for a certain degree of flexibility, and the pursuit of unexpected lines of enquiry or unforeseen contingencies during the interview (Grix, 2004; Lindlof & Taylor, 2011). My goal in using this research method was to generate depth of understanding, rather than breadth. Research design and questioning therefore remained flexible to accommodate new information, adapt to the actual experiences that people had had, and to adjust to unexpected situations. As the researcher, I created future questions based on what had been already heard. Many of the questions asked emerged only

during the course of the research, and were then pursued to find detail or evidence that underlay the answers (Rubin & Rubin, 2005). My qualitative interviews were thus an interchange of views between two people conversing about a theme of mutual interest, or conversations with a structure and purpose (Kvale, 1996). However, there was an imbalance of power in these conversations — as the interviewer in many instances I had greater control over the respondents than the respondents had over me.

To guide my conduct in this situation, I obtained approval for conducting the interviews from the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences' Human Research Ethics Committee. The interviews were conducted under the guidelines of the University of Waikato's human research ethics guidelines. These guidelines directed that I work respectfully with the participants and fairly represent them in the final thesis. In addition, during the interviews respondents often took measures to equalise the balance of power in the situation. In these instances, I often yielded back some of my control as the interviewer, to encourage a full articulation of the respondent's beliefs, interests and experiences (Lindlof & Taylor, 2011).

Most qualitative interviews are the site of tension between two demands. The interviewer needs to get the right kind of data that will help address the project's research questions, while at the same time listening attentively and allowing the conversation to lead to new discoveries (Lindlof & Taylor, 2011). My qualitative interviews were thus based on reflexivity, equal

opportunities for communication, and negotiation. It was important to negotiate and discuss with the interviewee how questions could be asked during the interview, how decisions were made about the acceptable topics, when it was time to end the dialogue, how data could be shared, and what would happen to the recorded data (Koro-Ljungberg, 2008). Informed consent was obtained for all interviews. The consent forms outlined the rights of the participants, and made clear that the research had ethical clearance from the University of Waikato. These forms were signed by the interviewees and me at the beginning of the interviews. In addition, the participants were guaranteed anonymity in the research. I also explicitly requested the permission of each interviewee to record the interviews on a digital voice recorder. Where this permission was not granted, notes were taken during the interview and transcribed more fully afterwards.

Permission was also sought from interviewees that the data from the interviews could be used in the research. The interviews typically took between 1 and 2 hours; they were subsequently fully transcribed. The transcripts and the original recordings are held by me in a personal archive.

Appendix I collates all the documents used during the interview process.

These measures were taken to establish a fair degree of equality in each interview, and allow each participant to truly say what they want without challenge. While I established a broad agenda for the interview, participants could still exercise agency by reframing a question, answering a question with a question, by setting limits on what they are willing to say, or even by

quitting the interview (Lindlof & Taylor, 2011). None of the respondents in this study chose to quit an interview.

Each interview conversation was unique, as I matched my questions to what each interviewee knew and was willing to share (Rubin & Rubin, 2005). As the interviewer, I listened to what the subject was trying to say, always on the lookout for subtle, fleeting meanings as they emerged. At times I also sometimes stepped back or aside, to dwell on a topic, to explore the ramifications of a remark, or to mentally revise the ideas guiding the interview before taking the next step forward (Lindlof & Taylor, 2011). Contextual and emotional shifts occurring during the interviews required continuous reflexivity and self-disclosure, but also openness and a willingness to negotiate (Koro-Ljungberg, 2008). Aimed as they were at building understanding of the social actor's experience, knowledge and worldviews, the qualitative interviews conducted for this study were deeply interactional events during which I and the interviewee constructed knowledge together. The 'data' that was produced was socially constructed. The role of the interview itself was to allow a continuous and dynamic unfolding of participant perspectives during its course (Lindlof & Taylor, 2011). In order to develop this reflexive capacity and make the best use of my resources and time, a focused plan of who would be interviewed at the provincial level was developed.

### **Interviewees for this study**

To get as full a picture as possible of the values espoused by the various land redistribution policy participants in the Eastern Cape and KwaZulu-Natal provinces, it was necessary to talk to members of the most powerful organisations involved in the land redistribution policy process in these provinces. Within the various organisations, I spoke to between three and five members at different hierarchical levels with varying responsibilities in both provinces, to get as wide a range of views as possible. When new interviewees repeated stories I had heard before, I judged that a sufficiently wide range of views had been obtained. In total 17 people were interviewed in the Eastern Cape, 17 in KwaZulu-Natal province and one in New Zealand, for about an hour each. Given the ostensible aim of land redistribution – to change the balance of land ownership between whites and blacks, and men and women, it is necessary to demarcate the racial, gender and ethnic markers of those interviewed for this study. Of these interviews, seven were with women involved in the NGO sector, the two land reform bureaucracies, as consultants and as large-scale commercial farmers.

Overall among all the respondents, 19 were black — of these 14 were African (three women and 11 men), two were coloured (mixed race)(both male) and three were Indian (one woman and two men). The 16 remaining respondents were white (three women and 13 men). While an effort was made to interview the full range of those involved in land redistribution policy at the provincial level, this distribution of interviewees is the result of the contacts I was able to mobilise in the field. While most of the interviews

were recorded on a digital device and later transcribed, two respondents preferred that I only took notes during the interview. Some respondents requested anonymity, and so are not referred to by name in this study. Other respondents were happy to be identified. In addition I attended and took notes at the 2012 Annual Congress of Kwanalu, the organisation representing the large-scale farmers of KwaZulu-Natal.

The analysis also makes use of additional materials provided to me by some respondents. For example Mr Pringle, President of Agri-EC (representing the white large-scale commercial farmers of the Eastern Cape), provided me with a book he and his colleagues had put together discussing land reform in South Africa (Agri Eastern Cape, 2010). In addition, to flesh out some details that were only hinted at in other interviews, I accessed further publicly available materials from their respective organisations. The interview with the respondent from the Agricultural Development Agency (ADA), for example, had not been scheduled very far in advance, and so was constantly interrupted. Therefore to gain clarity on some ideas that this respondent only briefly alluded to, I analysed published materials from his organisation to gain a better idea of the Agricultural Development Agency approach towards land reform. These additional materials can be found in the bibliography of this chapter.

In order to gain insight into the various discourses around land redistribution at this level, it was crucial to speak to the actual beneficiaries of the land redistribution process, or established black large-scale

commercial farmers. Mr Xolile Ngqameni from the African Farmers' Association of South Africa (AFASA), and Mr Mandla Buthelezi from the National African Farmers' Union (NAFU) granted me interviews to discuss their views of the land reform process in the Eastern Cape and KwaZulu-Natal respectively. In addition, I secured interviews with two beneficiaries from small family-based groups that gained land through the Land Redistribution for Agricultural Development (LRAD) programme in the Eastern Cape. While one of these interviewees requested anonymity, Mr P.V. Njoli was happy to be identified in my study. Two individual black large-scale commercial farmers in KwaZulu-Natal were good enough to speak to me, while requesting anonymity. Finally, I was able to talk with two communal farmers in the Transkei communal farming region about how they viewed the process of land redistribution, both of whom preferred to remain anonymous.

The land-based NGOs have played an integral part in the land reform process from the very beginning, and so it was vital that I gained a sense of their perspectives on the process. I was able to secure interviews with representatives of the Border Rural Committee (BRC), the Eastern Cape Agricultural Research Project (ECARP) and Umncunube in the Eastern Cape. In addition, I was able to interview an ex-employee of Volunteer Service Abroad<sup>14</sup> in Hamilton, New Zealand, who had participated in a specific land reform project near East London in the early 2000s. In KwaZulu-Natal, I was able to interview Duncan Stewart and Lisa Del Grande

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<sup>14</sup> A New Zealand-based NGO working in local-scale international development projects.

from Lima in Pietermaritzburg, and Stephen Hulbert from the Association for Rural Advancement (AFRA). All these organisations have long participated in land and land reform issues in South Africa.

To gain a sense of the narratives and discourses around land reform among the white large-scale commercial farmers, I concentrated on interviewing representatives of the organisations representing these farmers in the two provinces. In the Eastern Cape, I spoke with Mr Ernest Pringle, President of Agri-EC. This is the largest organisation representing the white commercial farmers of the Eastern Cape, and is an affiliate of the national-level Agri-SA. I also carried out an interview with Mrs Louise Rossouw, who represented the *Transvaalse Landbou Unie* (also known as the Transvaal Agricultural Union or TAU). In KwaZulu-Natal, I was able to interview a representative of the TAU for that province, who requested anonymity. While I was unable to secure an individual interview with a representative of Kwanalu, the organisations representing the large-scale commercial farmers of KwaZulu-Natal, I was given permission to attend their Annual Congress for 2012, held in Pietermaritzburg on the 13<sup>th</sup> August 2012. At this Congress the subject of land reform was repeatedly discussed, and allowed me insight into how members of this organisation approach the topic.

The large-scale commercial sector is also represented by commodity organisations which focus on promoting and furthering the interests of their producers. In KwaZulu-Natal, the South African Sugar Association

(SASA) co-ordinates the activities of the growers and the millers of sugar-cane. This organisation has a department devoted to land reform issues, headed by Mr Anwhar Madhanpall at the time of the interviews, who talked to me about SASA's approach to the issue. In the Eastern Cape, a group of large-scale dairy farmers have contributed funding to create Amadlelo, an organisation focused on selecting and training young black graduates in the commercial production of milk on a large scale. It also facilitates the creation of and manages large-scale milking businesses on communal land (Amadlelo Agri, n.d.). Mr Jeff Every, the leader of this organisation, was kind enough to grant me an interview. KwaZulu-Natal is the base of operations for MONDI and SAPPI, two corporations focused on the production, processing and export of timber and timber products. Both corporations own large amounts of land in the province, and are powerful figures in the national agricultural sector. Representatives from both corporations were able to grant me interviews to convey their views on the land reform process.

Besides the various farmers involved in land reform, it was important to understand provincial bureaucrats think about the process. I carried out interviews with five rank-and-file bureaucrats in the DRDLR in the Eastern Cape and KwaZulu-Natal. While three of the interviewees requested anonymity, Mr Sigqibo Mfuywa and Mr Vivian Loest were happy to be identified in my thesis. It was equally important that I spoke to members of the provincial departments of Agriculture in the two provinces. In the

Eastern Cape, my interviewee respondent in the Department of Rural Development and Agrarian Reform (DRDAR) requested anonymity. In KwaZulu-Natal, Mr Daya Chetty and Mr Roland Gevers from the Department of Agriculture, Environmental Affairs and Rural Development (DAEA&RD) provided supplementary materials that would aid in my research. In addition, a further interview respondent from this Department requested anonymity. Respondents in KwaZulu-Natal repeatedly referred to the important role played by the Agribusiness Development Agency, a government body created to bridge the gap in the services provided by the DRDLR and the DAEA&RD in the province. The interview respondent from this government organisation with whom I secured an interview requested anonymity. Researchers into land reform in South Africa have referred to the important role played by consultants who are hired by the government in the process of land redistribution (Hebinck et al., 2011). I was able to carry out interviews with three such consultants with extensive experience in this process. In the Eastern Cape, Mr Charlie Josephs and Mr Lane Webber were interviewed, while in KwaZulu-Natal, Mrs Susan Pletts provided insight into her views of land reform in that province.

Finally, on the basis that it was vitally important to get some idea of how members of the major political parties in each province think about land reform, interviews were carried out with representatives of the two largest political parties in the two provinces. While South Africa currently has a range of political parties in its Parliament, in 2012 when I was carrying out

the interviews, the ANC dominated popular support in both the Eastern Cape and KwaZulu-Natal. Therefore, I concentrated my efforts on gaining an interview with a member of this party in either province. Personal contacts are the most efficacious way to secure interviews with members of the ANC. My network of contacts in the Eastern Cape and KwaZulu-Natal only enabled me to secure an interview with a member of that party in the Eastern Cape. Similarly, at a national level the Democratic Alliance was the second-largest party in the South African Parliament at the time of the interviews (EISA, 2009), and so I concentrated my efforts on gaining an interview from a representative of this party, and was able to spend an hour with Mr Athol Trollip, at the time the shadow minister for rural development and land reform. I was unable to secure interviews with members of other parties in either province.

### **Interview analysis**

In total, I interviewed 36 people. Table 4-1 below shows the categories, location and number of people interviewed. Once the interviews were completed, each interview was transcribed. The transcript of each interview was read through a number of times. Through the readings, I searched for participant answers on a number of themes. Specifically, I examined interview responses indicating opinions on what constitutes 'development' in South Africa, what the best form of agriculture is, what the place of land reform is in the process of development, and what the best form of land reform is. In addition, I sought participant opinions on what is to be done with the 'communal areas' of South Africa, and the place of women in land

reform. Within each of these themes, a number of categories of responses were constructed. Responses on the theme of 'development', for example, fell into two main categories — those advocating the integration of black South Africans into the economy created during colonial and apartheid times, and those advocating the alleviation of the plight of the rural poor.

Table 4-1:

*Categories of interview respondents in this study*

	<b>Eastern Cape</b>	<b>KwaZulu-Natal</b>
<b>Beneficiaries</b> (Individual large-scale commercial farmers)	AFASA — Mr. X. Ngqameni	NAFU — Dr M. Buthelezi Anonymous Anonymous
<b>Beneficiaries</b> (Group-farmers)	Mr. P.V. Njoli Anonymous	
<b>Potential beneficiaries</b> (Communal Farmers)	Anonymous Anonymous	
<b>NGOs</b>	BRC ECARP Umncunube VSA	Lima — Mr D. Stewart; Ms. L. Del Grande AFRA — Mr S. Hulbert
<b>Existing white farmers</b>	Agri-EC — Mr E. Pringle TLU — Ms L. Rossouw	TLU Kwanalu Annual Congress 2012
<b>Commodity organisations</b>	Amadlelo — Mr J. Every	SASA — Mr A. Madhanpall MONDI SAPPI
<b>Bureaucracy</b> (DRDRL)	Mr S. Mfuywa Mr V. Loest Anonymous	Anonymous Anonymous
<b>Bureaucracy</b> (Provincial Departments of Agriculture)	Anonymous	Mr D. Chetty Anonymous ADA
<b>Consultants</b>	Mr C. Josephs Mr L. Webber	Mrs S. Pletts
<b>Political parties</b>	ANC - Anonymous DA — Mr A. Trollip	

## Data analysis

To aid my analysis of all the data raised with the research methods described above, I used the NVivo software package. NVivo is a qualitative data analysis software package that provides facilities for data management, for coding and retrieving text, and for theory testing (Crowley, Harre, & Tagg, 2002). Articles discussing the use of computer-assisted qualitative data analysis software in their studies are few and isolated (Kikooma, 2010), but such software is mainly appreciated by qualitative scholars for providing facilities for data processing that are faster, more precise, and requiring less floor space (Bourdon, 2002)<sup>15</sup>. Concerns have been raised that as qualitative data analysis software is based on grounded theory approaches, it cannot be used for other studies not based on grounded theory, such as this one. It is not necessary, however, to follow grounded theory guidelines when using this software (Welsh, 2002)<sup>16</sup>. Crowley (2002) asserts that in the same way that a word-processing package does not dictate whether you write a novel or a sermon, NVivo software does not determine nor constitute a method. In fact, studies have found that data analysis software is used mainly as an organising tool (Welsh, 2002). “Therefore, the use of computers in qualitative analysis merely made organisation, reduction and storage of data more efficient and manageable” (Wong, 2008, p. 15). Ultimately however, the researcher still has to synthesise the data, and interpret the meanings extracted from it (Wong, 2008). The main feature of NVivo used in this study was the ‘node’ feature, which enabled the manual gathering of

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<sup>15</sup> No page numbers were given in the original text.

<sup>16</sup> No page numbers were given in the original text.

material into themes. For example, I took all the quotes from my respondents about subsistence farming, and put them together in one node on NVivo. A total of six main nodes were created during this study, subdivided into 56 subnodes. This made it easier to discern the approaches of the various participants in the South African land redistribution policy process, and so discern the meanings attached to land and land redistribution in South Africa.

## **Conclusion**

This study offers an analysis of why so little has been done in post-apartheid South Africa to change the landownership patterns established prior to 1994. An antifoundationalist, interpretivist and qualitative approach has been adopted for this study, focused on the social constructionism approach. The research produced here will have been affected by my social position in South Africa society as a white English-speaking male, which puts me in a socially dominant role compared to the black respondents in my study. At all three levels of analysis, this study uses various methods of discourse analysis developed by Dryzek, Bacchi and Schneider and Ingram to analyse the ideas and discourses underpinning the institutions of land redistribution policy, and motivating the actors working within them. This study focuses on the Constitution of South Africa, various policy documents and range of semi-structured interviews were carried out with actors and organisations involved in land redistribution policy in the Eastern Cape and KwaZulu-Natal provinces. Finally, to ensure the systematic processing and analysis of all the data I generated, I used NVivo qualitative analysis

software. What follows is an analysis of international discourses around land reform, which provides an overall context for land redistribution in South Africa.

## Chapter Five

### **The International Context of Land Reform: Discursive Drivers of Debate**

No policy is created in a vacuum — a multitude of both domestic and external factors affect the formulation and implementation of any public policy (Lindblom, 1959). This is as true of land reform policies as of any other. Governments considering the creation and implementation of such policies must create one suited to the unique circumstances each country faces. Visions of the ideal land reform policy, therefore, are nested within broader narratives about what ‘development’ looks like, the best course for it to take, and who should benefit. Governments contemplating land reform policies must make policy within a broader context, which constructs the ‘possible’ and the ‘impossible’ in land reform policy proposals. South African policymakers were not immune to this broader context when the broad boundaries of land reform policy were negotiated during the transition to democracy. They were not immune to this broader context during the creation of the first, second and third iterations of land reform policy, either. This broader ideational context has so far not been clearly defined in the literature on land reform and development in South Africa, despite its potential to significantly influence the nature of state policy. Therefore, in order to answer the question of why so little has been done to change the agrarian order created in colonial, segregationist and apartheid South Africa, as a first step it is necessary to map out this broader ideational context.

The impact of internationally derived discourses of land reform is clear in South Africa. Between 1990 and 1994, during the negotiations to set the political framework of the post-apartheid regime, various actors were also contributing to the development of a land redistribution policy for the new democratic government. One of the most active participants in this process was the World Bank (Bradstock, 2005). Simultaneously giving policy advice and soliciting a new client, it oversaw a major programme of policy research (Hall, 2010c) that culminated in the publication of *Options for Land Reform and Rural Restructuring in South Africa* (World Bank, 1993). The aims, methods and original timeline of the State Lands and Acquisition Grant (SLAG) policy developed by the South African government were almost directly derived from the options put forward in this publication (Williams, 1996), demonstrating the decisive influence of the World Bank in shaping the early stages of land redistribution policy in South Africa.

The domestic pressures on the South African land redistribution policy, such as the chronic poverty of much of the rural population and the need to redress the country's history of unjust dispossession, have been comprehensively analysed (Aliber, 2003; Binswanger & Deininger, 1993; Budlender & Latsky, 1990; Carter & May, 1999; Cousins, 2007; Hall, 1998, 2004b; Lahiff, 2005; MacDonald, 2003; Ntzebeza, 2004). In contrast, the broader ideational context through which the problem of racially-based inequity in land ownership has been conceptualized has received little or no attention (one exception being Cousins and Scoones (2010)). No other

scholars of land reform in South Africa pay attention to these broader assumptions, making clear the need for an analysis of the major discourses of land reform, at least in the South African context.

This chapter clarifies the specific form of land reform policy arising from the various narratives of development. Through a discourse analysis of the scholarly literature on land reform and distribution, it explores the underlying assumptions, norms, and policy recommendations implicit in various land reform discourses. The analysis identifies five discourses of land reform — a Large Farms discourse, a Small Farms discourse, a Socialist discourse, a Dependency discourse and a Critical discourse. Each is underpinned by a distinct set of norms, each implies a distinctive set of agents involved in land reform, each has a unique narrative around land reform, and each leads to distinctive policy proposals for land reform. The analysis that follows clarifies these aspects of the five broad discourses identified, allowing greater understanding of the international influences on specific land reform policies in the South African context. It is important to note that these discourses are not mutually exclusive, nor are they exhaustive. The discussion begins with setting the key aspects of the neo-liberal context.

### **South African scholarship on wider trends in land reform**

A wide array of scholars agree that at the macro-economic level, neoliberal approaches have dominated the post-apartheid government approach to development in South Africa (Bond, 2000; Marais, 2011; Peet, 2002). In the

sphere of land reform, a strong neoliberal emphasis has been noted (Moseley & McCusker, 2008). The history and the background assumptions driving the prescriptions given by agricultural ‘experts’ involved in land reform in the Eastern Cape of South Africa, which lead them to assume that large-scale capital-intensive commercial farms are the best form of agriculture have been analysed (Hebinck et al., 2011). Similarly, deference to the ‘Large Scale Commercial Farm’ model has been shown to account for the generally unworkable project designs of SLAG-based redistribution projects in Limpopo province (Aliber & Cousins, 2013). The imperative for economic development in the form of individually-owned commercial farms has been identified as the dominant discourse in the KwaZulu-Natal Land Reform Pilot Project, which “... finds powerful resonance in the global dominance of neo-liberal ideology ...” (MacDonald, 2003, p. 157). These studies illustrate that there is a consensus in the scholarship on land reform in South Africa that this particular policy arena has been dominated by a neoliberal notion of the place of agriculture and land reform in the process of development.

Stepping back, however, there is very little examination of what this neoliberal notion of agriculture and land reform actually consists of. Similarly, there is scarcely any exploration of other approaches, frameworks or discourses which might exist around land reform and its place in development, and what influence these alternative discourses might have exerted on land reform policy in South Africa. The sole exception is Cousins and Scoones (2010), who outline the “... competing analytical frameworks

commonly used in assessments of land and agrarian reform” (p. 36) in the international literature. They too describe the neo-classical economics framework, which corresponds largely to the neo-liberal approach outlined above. Along with this approach, however, Cousins and Scoones suggest the presence of five other discourses of land reform in South Africa, including the new institutional economics framework, livelihoods approaches, a welfarist variant of the livelihoods approach, Marxism and radical political economy.

Briefly, where the ‘neo-classical economics’ discourse focuses on the transfer of farms to efficient farmers (often seeing larger farms as economically efficient) through the market, ‘new institutional economics’ gives rise to efforts to create efficient small farmers through government and market action. ‘Developmentalist livelihoods’ approaches see land redistribution as part of government efforts to provide the rural poor with multiple and diverse livelihoods, while ‘welfarist livelihoods’ approaches see land redistribution as part of efforts to provide the rural poor with food security. ‘Radical political economy’ sees land reform as a process of securing the land and resources held by peasant farmers against a global corporate food regime. Finally, what the authors name the ‘Marxist’ discourse, focuses on the transition to capitalism in agriculture, and ultimately seeks to create the most efficient form of agriculture possible, in order to facilitate national economic growth (2010). Their study is not presented as a comprehensive review, but rather concentrates on the

definition of what a 'viable' size is for land transfer arising from each of these frameworks of analysis in the context of land reform.

Cousins and Scoones' study is an important contribution to clarifying the broader assumptions held by policy participants in the South African land reform programme around 'viability'. However, there is room for a more detailed examination of the normative perspectives on development, the narratives around land reform, assumptions around the agents involved in land reform, and the policy proposals regarding land reform found in each of these discourses. In addition, Cousins and Scoones do not mention all the discourses or analytical frameworks for development and land reform that potentially have had an effect on land reform in South Africa. This chapter, therefore, undertakes a deeper analysis of the various approaches to land reform and the implicit vision of what constitutes 'development'; where land reform is seen to fit into the process of development within each approach; who the agents are in land reform; and a more precise clarification of the policy recommendations towards land reform arising from each of these approaches. The discourses outlined in this chapter align broadly with those suggested by Cousins and Scoones. An extra discourse, the Dependency discourse, is added to those suggested by Cousins and Scoones, and the Critical discourse described here combines the two livelihoods and the radical political economy approaches suggested by Cousins and Scoones.

## **Discourse analysis approach**

While based loosely on the analytical framework presented by Cousins and Scoones, this chapter approaches each 'framework of analysis' as a discourse. To make sense of the multiple overlapping perspectives in the land reform policy arena, I developed a checklist of four elements derived from Dryzek's (2013) method. Firstly, the *normative perspective* of each discourse on development and land reform was identified. This meant uncovering the processes invoked in discussions of development, the entities that are involved in these processes, and the place of land reform in development. Secondly, who the discourse portrays as the *primary agents* in land reform was examined, along with their assumed motives (Dryzek, 2005). Thirdly, the *implicit narratives* around development and land reform within each discourse were identified with specific attention to the depiction of problematic land ownership arrangements. How policy problems are defined is important, as problem definition shapes the nature of the policy solutions offered (Stone, 2012). Finally, the *policy proposals* for land reform implicit in each discourse were investigated. Table 5-1 shows the steps undertaken to carry out a discourse analysis, described here in tabular form.

Table 5-1

*Steps to undertake discourse analysis (Source: Adapted from Dryzek's 2013)*

<b>Step One.</b>	<b>Normative perspectives</b> on development  - Entities  - Processes  - Place of land reform in this process
<b>Step Two.</b>	<b>Agents</b> involved in land reform and their <b>motives</b>
<b>Step Three.</b>	Key <b>narratives</b> of the discourse
<b>Step Four.</b>	<b>Policy proposals</b> for land reform — what should land reform look like?

Out of this analysis five discrete approaches or discourses around land reform were developed: the Large Farms, the Small Farms, the Socialist, the Dependency, and the Critical discourses. Table 5-2 (page 179) provides a summary of each discourse, detailing the specific policy recommendations for land reform deriving from each approach. I discuss each of these below.

### **Large Farms discourse**

Due to its support for large-scale mechanized farming systems, the first discourse described here is named the 'Large Farms' discourse.

Corresponding closely with Cousins and Scoones' 'neo-classical economics' discourse (2010, p. 39), it is accepted today in many national contexts as the 'common sense' approach. This discourse has its origins in modernization theory, which arose after the Second World War (Kuznets, 1955; Mergel, 2012; Rostow, 1960). This approach was expressed in a slightly different form

with the rise of neoliberalism, or the 'Washington Consensus' during the 1980s (Akram-Lodhi, 2007; Marangos, 2009). Policy recommendations for land reform arising from this discourse were until very recently common from institutions such as the Inter-American Development Bank, the International Monetary Fund, and the World Bank (Marangos, 2009).

The Large Farms discourse sees the process of development as a continuum spanning 'traditional societies' at one end, and 'modern societies' at the other. According to this discourse, traditional society is characterized by a largely poor population engaged in small-scale subsistence farming (Rostow, 1990). Food production is organized through kinship units (Keelan & Moon, 1998), and agricultural production is limited, as the technology used is based on "... pre-Newtonian science and technology, and on pre-Newtonian attitudes towards the physical world" (Rostow, 1990, p. 4). This means that a high proportion of the resources in this type of society must be devoted to agriculture, and most political power lies with those who own the land (Rostow, 1990). These societies are called 'developing', 'Third World', or 'subsistence economies'.

'Modern' society, in contrast, is marked by a largely urban population (Larrain, 1989), and most of the workforce is in the industrial and service sectors. In these societies, real income per capita has risen to the point where a large number of people earn more than they need for basic food, shelter and clothing. The leading sectors in these economies produce consumer goods and services, and constant growth in the economy is taken

as normal (Rostow, 1990). The agricultural sectors of these societies form only a small part of the national economy, and are highly mechanized (Akram-Lodhi, 2007). These societies are called 'developed', 'First World' or 'industrial economies'. In the Large Farms discourse, 'development' is the movement of societies along a 'trajectory of development' from the traditional to the modern society (Cardoso & Faletto, 1979).

The market is considered to be the primary mechanism for moving countries along this trajectory, and is seen as an arena where buyers and sellers can interact. Through the market, agricultural land, capital and technology are transferred to those able to use them the most efficiently (Akram-Lodhi, 2007). According to Timmer (2006, p. 5), there is a "... structural transformation where agriculture, through higher productivity, provides food, labour and even savings to the process of urbanization and industrialization". Agricultural production is believed to rise mainly through farm mechanization, which leads to economies of scale becoming increasingly important. Continued efficiency in the use of resources then makes the consolidation of farms necessary, leading to an increase in average farm size (Griffin, Khan, & Ickowitz, 2002). Over time, the agricultural sector becomes less important relative to the industrial and service sectors, which grow rapidly partly because of the stimulus provided by the 'modernizing' agricultural sector (Timmer, 2006). This structural transformation enables progress along the trajectory from 'tradition' to 'modernity'. It is therefore important that agricultural markets work as perfectly as possible, with no distortions.

Market distortions here are portrayed as skewing the distribution of resources, allowing less efficient farmers to retain ownership of the land. Relying on distorted markets to distribute resources like land, capital and technology drastically slows the movement of a society along the trajectory towards 'modernity' (Akram-Lodhi, 2007). The scope of government must therefore be very limited. Its major functions must only be "... to preserve law and order, to enforce private contracts, [and] to foster competitive markets" (Friedman, 2009, p. 2).

With this normative perspective on development, the Large Farms discourse is ambivalent about the place of land reform programmes involving market regulation and explicit government-led initiatives to redistribute land. If large mechanized farms are the inevitable result of development (Timmer, 2006), why should a developing country already with an agricultural sector dominated by large mechanized farms (for whatever reasons) subdivide and redistribute them? In addition, in this discourse, the agricultural sector constitutes a secondary development factor (Bandeira & Maria Sumpsi, 2009). A shift away from agriculture is an invariable accompaniment to economic and industrial growth (Kuznets, 1955; Rigg, 2006). Governments in developing countries should therefore not expend precious resources creating small farms that will only reconsolidate into larger ones again over time.

This discourse assumes the existence of two main agents or actors: the government, and economically rational citizens who act only to maximize

their own material self-interest (Stone, 2012). Thus landowners increase production to increase their own material well-being. Those who are successful prosper and expand the amount of land they own. Less successful landowners sell or hire their land out to the more successful. In this way, large pieces of land end up in the hands of those most able to produce from them. This is seen as being best for overall economic progress.

The government is assumed to be motivated to move along the trajectory of development as rapidly as possible. Therefore, it takes every measure possible to create the open undistorted markets necessary to channel assets to the most efficient users (Jacobs, 2010), and otherwise keeps its activities and powers minimal (Friedman, 2009). This is assumed to allow rapid economic growth, and as a consequence improve the lives of all.

The narrative here is that agriculture in developing countries is hampered primarily by a lack of secure property rights. If these can be created, then the owners of these properties will be able to access credit, progress economically and pull their societies along into modernity. Where there are property rights, in some cases agriculture and development is held back by small, unproductive, backward farmers, who refuse to use new technologies to produce more. The driving assumption here is that large mechanized farms are the most technologically advanced and productive form of agriculture — they constitute ‘real’ agriculture. Anything else endangers the national food supply. Developing countries should therefore do all they can to achieve this form of agriculture.

### ***Policy proposals for land reform***

The Large Farms discourse is not normally in favour of land reform programmes that involve explicit attempts at redistribution. The inevitable result of the development process is believed to be large mechanized farms, owned by a few successful large-scale farmers, as seen in the ‘modern’ world. Rural poverty is eliminated, according to this discourse, through migration from rural to urban areas, and rising wages for the remaining rural workers (Timmer, 2006). In this light, if a country already has an agricultural sector dominated by large farms, the value of subdividing and redistributing them is not clear. It is in the general interest to proceed on the presumption that “... the past success of some people in picking winners makes it probable that they will also do so in the future, and that it is therefore worthwhile to induce them to continue their attempts” (Hayek, 1984, p. 73).

However, in cases where overwhelming social or political pressures mandate land reform, this discourse advocates market-led land reform policies. In these ‘willing buyer willing seller’ policies (Zimmerman, 2000), large landowners are paid the full market value for land that they are willing to sell voluntarily. Beneficiaries usually bear the full costs of the land transfer (Akram-Lodhi, 2007). Repaying these debts can be extremely difficult, as land market values are often higher than productive values. Government subsidies on the interest rates paid by beneficiaries are sometimes recommended to remedy this (Bandeira & Maria Sumpsi, 2009).

A market-led land reform programme depends on individual, permanent, inalienable, and freely trade-able forms of land ownership. In countries where they do not exist, proponents of this discourse propose they be created. Specific transformations in property rights must take place in the developing world, resulting in the 'enclosure' of land, which is seen as an important condition of the development of capitalism (Akram-Lodhi, 2007), as they are assumed to increase the investment incentives of land users. Where there is no precise system of individual land rights, this discourse gives rise to recommendations for policy interventions to provide these rights, arguing that this will increase the incentives of land users to invest in their land. This means that 'traditional' communal land ownership structures must inevitably be replaced with individual land ownership systems (Deininger, 2003). Over time, it is assumed that the most efficient of these new individual landowners will come to own more and more land, freeing the less efficient landowners to apply their talents elsewhere. This underlying assumption that the concentration of land in a few hands is inevitable and good is explicitly challenged in the next discourse to be discussed, the Small Farms discourse.

### **Small Farms discourse**

During the 1960s, development approaches were dominated by this approach, which recommended government-led redistributions of small parcels of farmland in order to spur economic growth and development (El-Ghonemy, 2010). There was strong institutional support for this approach from international bodies such as the United Nations and the World Bank.

In the 1980s, however, it was abandoned in favour of Large Farms approaches, although some scholars continue to advocate for the creation of small-scale agricultural sectors in developing countries (Griffin et al., 2002; Lipton, 2009). This discourse corresponds with the 'new institutional economics' discourse suggested by Cousins and Scoones (2010).

This discourse recognizes much the same basic entities found in the Large Farms discourse, namely, 'traditional' and 'modern' societies, and the market. The 'Small Farms' discourse also sees societies moving along a trajectory of development through the transfer of assets like land, capital and technology from inefficient to efficient users. The efficient users develop their assets to their full potential, increasing agricultural production, and as a consequence the entire national economy (Lipton, 2009). Distortions to these markets will obviously have a negative effect on the progression of a society along the trajectory of development (El-Ghonemy, 2010). So far, this is the same as the narrative in the Large Farms discourse. However, these two discourses differ drastically as to who is deemed the most efficient users of agricultural assets, and what changes need to be made to the market for agricultural land to ensure that these users can get access to land.

Those drawing on this discourse argue that in developed countries capital is cheap while labour is expensive, making it logical to employ fewer people and use more machinery. As it takes a certain minimum amount of land to make full use, for example, of a combine harvester, smaller farms are

gradually consolidated into larger units. In the developed world, then, there are economies of scale — farm productivity increases with farm size (Bandeira & Maria Sumpsi, 2009; Banerjee, 1999; Koo, 1968; Lipton, 2009). In contrast, the Small Farms discourse gives rise to assertions that there are no economies of scale in the developing world at the individual farm level. Rather than capital being cheap and labour expensive, in the developing world capital is in fact expensive while labour is cheap (Lipton, 2009). This means that in the developing world capital-intensive mechanized farms are inefficient - the most efficient farms in the developing world are labour-intensive. Furthermore, scholars in the Small Farms discourse argue that supervising agricultural labour is extremely expensive and not especially effective. This means that small farms using mostly family labour are the most economically efficient mode of agricultural production in the developing world (Binswanger-Mkhize, Bourguignon, & van den Brink, 2009; Lipton, 2009). At the farm level, there are no economies of scale in the developing world — rather, there is an inverse relationship between farm size and production efficiency (Banerjee, 1999). The productivity of farms is seen as increasing as their size decreases (El-Ghonemy, 2010; Koo, 1968). “Aggregating from farm level, smaller farm size and higher land equality are linked to higher annual farmland productivity, and probably also to faster growth of non-farm and total GDP” (Lipton, 2009, p. 69). Large farms are seen as inherently inefficient, and so must be broken up into smaller units and redistributed to rural farming families. Land reform

programmes are therefore a vital part of the movement of a society along the trajectory of development.

In this discourse, the primary agents in land reform are the rural poor, large farmers and the government. The rural poor are seen as wanting to make productive investments and start new enterprises in order to better their lot. When they are able to get access to land, they are strongly motivated to produce as much as possible from it. They live on their farms, manage the farms themselves, use labour-intensive farming techniques, and have strong incentives to invest all their savings back into their land (Binswanger-Mkhize et al., 2009; Lipton, 1993a). They leave a lower proportion of their land fallow or uncultivated, and have intensive cropping rotations which use the most valuable crops possible in their environments (Griffin et al., 2002). Motivated as they are to increase the production on their land as much as possible, they make the best possible use of the land.

Because of the inverse relationship in the developing world, the large farms that do exist have normally been created by government intervention. Being artificial creations, these large farmers do not need to use these assets in the most efficient way possible, and some value their farmland for reasons other than agricultural production like insurance, inflation hedging, and tax shelters (Binswanger-Mkhize et al., 2009). The Small Farms discourse describes two types of large farm in the developing world. Those that are non-mechanized face major problems in mobilizing and organizing labour to work their land. To overcome this, the large landowners create systems of

political and social control over the available labour in rural areas, ensuring that they have no choice but to work at low rates of pay for the large landowners. This creates an unskilled workforce and exacerbates rural poverty (Griffin et al., 2002). In contrast, those large farms in the developing world which are highly mechanized use minimal labour, meaning that few people can work on these farms, and most have to migrate to rural or urban slums. In countries where there are chronically high rates of unemployment, this form of agriculture has a very high social cost (Binswanger-Mkhize et al., 2009). Large farms are, therefore, seen as slowing the movement of developing countries along the trajectory of development.

### ***Policy proposals for land reform***

The land reform policy proposals of this discourse revolve around aiding and encouraging the development of a small-scale farming sector. As a first step, proponents of the Small Farms discourse recommend that all measures favouring urban areas over rural areas must be disbanded, and rural infrastructure must be upgraded and maintained. At the same time, all legislative and financial support for large farms must be removed (Griffin et al., 2002). Developing states are advised to break up large farms into smaller units, similar to the process implemented in Taiwan in the years immediately after the Second World War. In this programme, the farms of large landowners were expropriated at lower-than-market values, and beneficiaries paid prices for their land linked to its productive value (Koo, 1968). Once these small farms have been created, the state must provide a

wide span of support mechanisms for land reform beneficiaries, like extension, agricultural credit and processing and marketing facilities (Bandeira & Maria Sumpsi, 2009; Deininger, 2003). “One cannot, as has often happened, simply give land to the peasants and then abandon them, and expect that all will be well” (Griffin et al., 2002, p. 9). While the Small Farms discourse strongly supports small-scale peasant agriculture, as will emerge in the next section, the Socialist discourse displays some ambivalence about their economic worth.

### **Socialist discourse**

The Socialist discourse, encompassing communism and its variants, first arose from the ideas of Marx, Engels and Lenin, and corresponds with the ‘Marxist’ approach suggested by Cousins and Scoones. The creation of institutions embodying the ideas of this discourse began with the ascent to power of the Bolsheviks in Russia in 1917 (Davis & Scase, 1985), and land reforms adhering to the specifications of the Socialist discourse began in Soviet Russia in the 1920s (Schlesinger & Blustain, 1964). During the Cold War these land reforms were instituted in many of the countries of Eastern Europe (Davis & Scase, 1985) and those parts of the developing world under communist rule (Lipton, 2009; Pipes, 2003; Tauger, 2010). After the end of the Cold War in the 1990s, most countries formerly under communist governments moved away from the recommendations arising from this discourse (Tauger, 2010). Some began even earlier. While retaining much of the rhetoric of the Socialist discourse, countries like China, Algeria and Vietnam largely abandoned the recommendations arising from this

discourse in the 1980s in favour of land reform programmes similar to those recommended by the Small Farms discourse (Pipes, 2003; Tauger, 2010; Wädekin, 1990).

Much as in the Large Farms and Small Farms discourses, the Socialist discourse sees the process of development as a linear progression from a 'traditional' to a 'modern' society. However, contrary to the assertions arising from the Large Farms and Small Farms discourses, it does not see the market as the mechanism for moving along this trajectory. In addition, another type of society is envisaged, after the 'modern' state has been reached. Firstly, scholars within the communist discourse suggest five basic stages in the development of human society. Much as in the Large Farms discourse, it is assumed that every country without exception must pass through each of these stages in turn. From the tribal society (Schlesinger & Blustain, 1964), societies progress to the slave-owning and then the feudal stages. At each stage different social classes own the dominant modes of production, or ways of producing goods (Schlesinger & Blustain, 1964). The second-last stage of human development is capitalism (Marx & Engels, 1848), which corresponds to the 'modern' state described in the Large Farms discourse. Here the capitalists own the means of production, and the workers sell their labour in order to survive (Mandel, 1983). The workers combine raw materials and tools to produce something with greater value than what existed before. This additional value goes to the capitalists who employ the workers (Mandel, 1983). Capitalist employers pay workers only a fraction of the value they create — just enough to keep them alive. The rest

of the surplus value is kept by the capitalists (Pipes, 2003). Capitalism is thus seen here as exploitative and unjust, and not as the ultimate destination of every society on earth.

Like the Large Farms discourse, the Communist discourse gives rise to arguments that through the mechanism of the market, the long-term tendency in capitalism is for industrial wealth to become concentrated into fewer and fewer hands (Pipes, 2003). Unlike the Large Farms discourse, this is seen as a negative development. As the capitalist system goes through repeated cycles of boom and bust, the living conditions of workers deteriorate until their situation becomes unbearable (Mandel, 1983). Finally, the workers unite to overthrow the 'modern' capitalist state and take control of the means of production (Schlesinger & Blustain, 1964). This ushers in the fifth and final phase of social and economic development after 'modernity' — socialism.

In the Large Farms and Small Farms discourses, the market is an important part of a society's movement along the trajectory of development. Various adjustments to the market are suggested in order to facilitate this movement. In contrast, the communist discourse sees the market as serving only to increase the wealth of a few capitalists. Therefore, in the socialist stage it must be replaced with something more rational. Market relations must disappear, along with the classes dependent on private ownership of property (Conquest, 1988; El-Ghonemy, 2010). The production of commodities through the market is replaced by conscious organization on a

planned basis (Davies, 1980a). Rather than the individual capitalist search for profit, investment is driven by a centralized planning process (Davis & Scase, 1985). As part of this process, private property in land is replaced with common ownership on a higher level (Bergmann, 1998).

Marx argued that this type of socialist revolution is not likely in undeveloped countries. Rather, it is part of the natural evolution of societies that have already reached the 'modern' stage (Davies, 1980a). However, Lenin asserted that it was possible to bypass the capitalist stage, and proceed directly from feudalism to socialism (Pipes, 2003). The key to progress in these situations is rapid industrialization led by the state (Conquest, 1988). To do this, it is necessary to nationalize all of the country's human and material resources, and subject the economy to a central plan (Pipes, 2003). The focus of this central plan must be on developing heavy industries (energy extraction, steel and chemical production) rather than the manufacture of consumer goods. The first priority in these situations is to generate funding for investment and capital accumulation (Davis & Scase, 1985).

The primary agents in this discourse are social classes. The state is the representative of the urban and rural workers, while the peasants are the remnants of the old capitalist class (Conquest, 1988). The primary motivation of the state is to accelerate the process of industrialization in order to move their countries to the socialist stage. A socialist society must rest on an industrial base (Pipes, 2003), and the funds for this development

of industry must be obtained from the agricultural sector. In order to maximize the amount that could be gained from agriculture to finance industrialization, the efficiency and productivity of agriculture must be increased (Conquest, 1988). Agriculture must be modernized on the basis of large-scale co-operative farms working to a central plan developed by the state (Conquest, 1988).

The peasant class is ultimately seen as being enemies of the working class (Pipes, 2003) — it is depicted as deeply conservative, and trying in vain to roll back the wheel of history in order to preserve its own historical place in society (Marx & Engels, 1848). The replacement of the small-scale farming methods of the peasants is seen as essential if the socialist state is to be successfully established (Davies, 1980b). This is somewhat complicated by the fact that communist governments sometimes must facilitate the emergence and growth of the peasant sector when initially taking power, to gain their support and to break the power of the old capitalist and feudal elites. Thus in countries such as Poland, Hungary, Czechoslovakia and Cuba, when communist regimes took power, the existing large land estates were broken up and redistributed in smaller sections to peasant farmers (Davis & Scase, 1985; Tauger, 2010). Despite this, it is not envisaged that small-scale agriculture can survive long in the socialist state, let alone flourish (Conquest, 1988). Ultimately the peasants must be induced by the state to abandon their small-scale production methods and join large-scale co-operative industrialized farming operations.

The main problem envisaged in this discourse is that of facilitating the industrial development of society, in order to create a socialist state. In order to achieve this, the agricultural sector must be made as efficient and productive as possible. Like the Large Farms discourse, the communist discourse sees large-scale capital-intensive farms as being the most efficient and productive form of farming. However, it recommends that the ownership of these farms be vested in the state (Pipes, 2003). This means that the peasants must be persuaded to leave their inefficient small plots and join the large-scale collectives created by the state. These farms can then produce food and raw materials for industry according to centralized plans. In this way, the capitalist phase of development can be leap-frogged and the socialist state can be created. This will help usher in a form of society where it can be truly said: “From each according to his ability, to each according to his needs” (Schlesinger & Blustain, 1964, p. 51).

### ***Policy proposals for land reform***

The key policy proposal for land reform in this discourse is, therefore, a transition from small-scale peasant farming to ‘industrialized’ production on large-scale collective farms (Davis & Scase, 1985). In a ‘top-down’ process directed by a strong state (Fforde, 1990), rural farming collectives are to become enterprises controlled and organized along factory lines (Davies, 1980b). Collective farms are envisaged as being large agricultural units in which basic farming methods are modernized and mechanized (Fitzpatrick, 1994). These collectives should also be supplied with the machinery and training required to run large-scale farms. It is expected that mechanization

will bring about a rapid technical revolution in agriculture (Davies, 1980b). These collectives can either be state farms, where the residents are wage-workers, or collective and cooperative farms, where the group shares incomes and costs and makes the day-to-day decisions on the farm (Lipton, 2009).

There is no single set process for facilitating the change from small-scale to large-scale collectivized agricultural production. While the entire process aims at creating a collectivized large-scale agricultural sector, it is accepted that each country will implement "... policies of land reform, agricultural reorganization and industrial development in the light of its own particular circumstances" (Davis & Scase, 1985, p. 110). Like Engels, many scholars in this discourse have argued that it would be possible to persuade the peasants of the advantages of cooperative large-scale farming over time (Bergmann, 1998). In other cases, however, the urgency of the need to industrialize (such as that faced by the USSR in 1928) may mean that the peasantry must be forced onto larger collective farms (Davis & Scase, 1985). The Communist discourse focuses on using land reform to create the conditions for industrialization within national economies.

The next discourse to be analysed takes a step back and situates land reform policy as part of the struggle of 'traditional' countries to move along the trajectory of development, despite efforts from 'modern' countries to block their progress.

## **Dependency discourse**

The Dependency discourse emerged after the Second World War in reaction to some of the development approaches contributing to the Large Farms discourse, and was strongly associated with the United Nation's Economic Commission for Latin America (ECLA) (Cardoso & Faletto, 1979). The ideas of this discourse were highly influential for much of the twentieth century in Latin America. However, the debt crisis in the Latin American region of 1982 was taken by many to show that these ideas had not delivered the results promised (Vernengo, 2006), leading to this discourse losing much of its influence. Cousins and Scoones do not mention it in the South African context. However, as demonstrated later (see chapter nine), at the provincial level an adapted form of this discourse is drawn on by an important group of those involved in the creation and implementation of land reform policy in South Africa.

The Dependency discourse approaches development from the point of view of the developing world. It begins by accepting the two basic entities put forward in the Large Farms discourse — 'traditional' society and 'modern' society. The Dependency discourse similarly accepts that all countries are on a fixed trajectory from the 'traditional' to the 'modern'. Some have already arrived at 'modern' status, and some have not. Here, the 'modern' nations are those that make up the developed world, while the developing world consists of societies at various points along the trajectory from a 'traditional' to a 'modern' status (Keelan & Moon, 1998).

The Large Farms and the Small Farms discourses see this movement along the trajectory as being driven by the 'market'. The Dependency discourse accepts this, but sees the operation of the market in different societies as being distorted by the international capitalist system (Cardoso & Faletto, 1979). By being incorporated into the world-capitalist system, different countries are set along the trajectory of development. However, the Dependency discourse sees the capitalist system as having inherent characteristics which have an enormous impact on the operations of markets in different societies, and so on the speed with which the different countries will travel along the trajectory (Frank, 1970).

The Large Farms discourse asserts that the only reason a particular country has not attained 'modern' status is that it still bears relics of its 'traditional' past. The only valid reasons for underdevelopment are thus internal to the country itself. In contrast, the Dependency discourse argues that this cannot be true. Rather, "... the capitalist system on a world scale as a whole ..." (Frank, 1970, p. 5) bears the brunt of the blame for under-development. Under-development in particular countries is generated by the same historical process which also generated economic development in the 'modern' countries (Frank, 1970). The difference between 'modern' and 'traditional' societies is due to the position of a particular society in the international economic structure of production and distribution. As a rule, 'modern' societies will produce industrial goods, while 'traditional' societies will produce raw materials. "This requires a definite structure of relations of domination to assure an international trade based on merchandise

produced at unequal levels of technology and cost of labour force” (Cardoso & Faletto, 1979, p. 17). International and domestic markets are distorted, forcing developing countries into producing only raw materials for developed countries, at prices dictated by the developed countries. A ‘modern’ status is therefore the monopoly of the developed countries only, and these countries achieve this status at the expense of the undeveloped countries, through the expansion of the world capitalist system (Raman, 2007). The causes of under-development are therefore not to be found in national systems, but must be sought in the pattern of economic relations between developed and developing societies (Black, 1991).

The Dependency discourse envisions two main agents operating at the international level. The developed ‘metropolis’ countries, situated mostly in Europe and North America, have economic colonies, or ‘satellites’, in other parts of the world. The metropolis countries have already attained the state of ‘modern’ development. They are already industrialized. These countries thus have more power than the other nations, and an almost exclusive possession of the sectors crucial to production and capital accumulation (Cardoso & Faletto, 1979). The Dependency discourse argues that these countries keep the benefits of technical progress to themselves, and deny them to the satellite nations, thus impeding their development (Larrain, 1989). Capital is generated in these metropolises, and invested in the satellite countries in ways that benefit the metropole alone, or the satellite only minimally (Keelan & Moon, 1998).

However, satellite countries are dependent on the metropolises for this capital — their capital-goods production sectors are not strong enough financially, technologically or organizationally to ensure the continuous development of their own national economies (Cardoso & Faletto, 1979). Being dependent on the metropolises for capital, the economic, social and political structures of these countries are driven to orient themselves to meet the external demands placed on them by developed countries. This usually results in underdeveloped countries exporting only primary commodities, and importing almost all their manufactured items. Their industrialization is almost totally dependent on external forces (Keelan & Moon, 1998). Further economic development in these satellite countries is profoundly inimical to the dominant interests of the metropolises, who need the cheap raw materials provided by the satellites, in order to keep accumulating capital (Keelan & Moon, 1998). The Dependency discourse thus gives rise to assertions that the metropolitan powers co-opt the elites of the satellite states — in return for the support of the metropolis powers, the satellite elites funnel economic surpluses and capital out of their own countries, and into the metropolis states (Frank, 1970). ‘National underdevelopment’, or the failure of a country to move along the trajectory of development, is thus a situation of objective economic subordination to outside nations and enterprises (Cardoso & Faletto, 1979).

The overall narrative of this discourse is that developing countries are in unequal economic relationships of dependence with the developed nations. The developing world cannot expect to achieve ‘modern’ status by

continuing in such economic relationships, and must break these unequal relationships to pursue regional or inwardly-directed paths of development.

### ***Policy proposals for land reform***

Most of the recommendations derived from this discourse are concerned with macro-economic and social factors. Overall, rather than developing industries aimed at the export of goods to the metropolises, or 'towards the outside', satellites should adopt a model of development 'towards the inside'. This means that the government of a 'satellite' country should take action to protect local industries. Protectionist tariffs should be instituted to stimulate 'import-substituting industrialization'. The entire economy of a satellite country needs such protection for as long as its productivity remains lower than that of the metropolises (Larrain, 1989). For this to happen, instead of serving as a proxy for the metropolitan powers in a particular country, the governments of satellite states must take the initiative of organizing, promoting and supervising all the industrializing efforts of their countries to guarantee the continuity of the process, especially in energy, transport and other essential industries (Larrain, 1989).

This particular discourse does not directly address the issue of land reform. However, the agricultural sectors of the satellites tend to reflect the original reason for making them colonies — the production of primary commodities for export, not the promotion of an integrated national economy offering viable internal markets for more than basic goods (Saul & Leys, 2006). In extreme cases, this discourse calls for the outright expropriation of privately

owned assets to help eradicate absolute poverty, provide expanded employment opportunities, lessen income inequalities, and raise the living standards of the masses (Todaro & Smith, 2009). Therefore, where a small elite owns most of the land in a satellite country, and this elite is seen to be working only in the interests of the metropolises and not the satellite in question, it is highly likely that this discourse would recommend large-scale expropriation of this land for redistribution to the poor and the landless, and the creation of some form of small-scale agricultural sector (Saul & Leys, 2006; Todaro & Smith, 2009). It is anticipated that these beneficiaries would then focus on the production of agricultural commodities needed in the domestic economies of the countries they are situated in (Pieterse, 2001; Todaro & Smith, 2009). All the discourses described to this point accept the trajectory of societies from a 'traditional' to some form of a 'modern' state. The following discourse to be analyzed challenges this idea.

### **Critical discourse**

Cousins and Scoones (2010) suggest the presence of two versions of a 'livelihoods' discourse, along with a 'radical political economy' discourse in South Africa. The Critical discourse described here combines these three approaches, along with others such as the post-development approach. All these approaches and discourses derive mainly from the long tradition of critical analyses of dominant conceptions of 'development' (Gibson-Graham, 2007), especially those contributing to the Large Farms discourse. A wide variety of criticisms have been levelled at this dominant approach, from a variety of starting points. All, however, focus on a critique of

hegemonic ideas of 'development', and so are treated together in this study. The ideas of the Critical discourse have received varying degrees of acceptance in the institutions dominating the development arena. The publication of the Brundtland Commission Report (World Commission on Environment and Development, 1987) showed acceptance of some of the ideas within this larger discourse<sup>17</sup>, and stimulated renewed discussion of alternatives to 'mainstream' development initiatives (Friedman, 1992). The publication of the Human Development Index by the United Nations Development Programme (Qizilbash, 2006) also showed some institutionalization of the ideas of Sen and Ul Haq (1995). Over time, it became widely accepted in development institutions that development efforts are more successful if the community participates and nongovernmental organizations are given key roles in development cooperation (Pieterse, 2001). In addition, international bodies like the World Bank created offices focused on the environment and women (Friedman, 1992), implying some acceptance of the ideas included in this discourse.

This discourse begins with a harsh critique of the forms of development that have been implemented around the world since the Second World War. 'Development', or the idea of a society moving from a 'traditional' to a 'modern' state on a set trajectory, is seen here as a particular discourse that closes off alternative ways of thinking (Kiely, 1999). It falsely constructs

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<sup>17</sup> It must be noted, however, that the Brundtland Commission Report was critiqued for not being radical enough in its recommendations (Dryzek, 2013).

those societies that are not 'modern' as ignorant, in the thrall of backward and oppressive traditions, stuck in the past, local, inferior and non-productive, and needing the help of the scientific, advanced, superior, global and productive 'modern' countries (Gibson-Graham, 2007).

A strand within this discourse goes so far as to completely reject the need for any form of 'development' to occur. Scholars within the post-development strand of the Critical discourse assert that for various reasons, the ultimate aim of the 'development' discourse — attaining a middle-class lifestyle for the majority of the world population — is impossible (Pieterse, 2000). 'Development' as it is implemented around the world is external to many of the societies it changes so profoundly, and based purely on the model of the industrialized world. It has little relevance to the actual needs of societies in the 'Third World', and only suits the needs of the First World (Escobar, 1995; Rahnema & Bawtree, 1997). Interventionist and managerialist, and steeped in social engineering and the ambition to shape economies and societies, 'mainstream development' tells 'Third World' people what to do in the name of modernization, nation building, progress, mobilization, sustainable development, human rights, poverty alleviation and even empowerment and participation (Pieterse, 2000). The gaps between the 'haves' and the 'have-nots' resulting from the implementation of the dictates of 'development' are then dismissed by it as the inevitable price of a better life for all (Rahnema & Bawtree, 1997). According to this strand within the Critical discourse, the hegemonic discourse of 'development' therefore needs to be changed. This requires a movement

away from the development sciences in particular, and a partial strategic move away from conventional top-down Western modes of knowing and experience. Something like this is said to be already happening in the informal economies of the Third World (Escobar, 1995).

Despite the strong critique from this strand, the basic idea of a transition from one type of a society to another is accepted by many within the broader Critical discourse. The precise nature of this transition is not made clear, other than an assertion that the final destination is not necessarily the 'modern' status seen in the developed world (Pieterse, 2001). Development, therefore, should consist of four main components: firstly, the basic needs of the poor must be met. This includes food security, education, health services, clean water supplies, health services and adequate shelter (Cathie, 2006; Stewart, 2006). Secondly, the capabilities of individuals need to be increased — they need the tools to make the best use of these basic necessities, and of potential future opportunities (Pieterse, 2001). Thirdly, the economic opportunities available to the poor need to be expanded (Anand & Sen, 2000). Finally, poor women should be a primary focus of development and land reform initiatives, and development should not be confined to economic notions, but broader ideas inclusive of culture and agency (Agarwal, 1994; Bhavnani, Foran, Kurian, & Munshi, 2009; Bhavnani, Foran, & Kurian, 2003; Kurian & Munshi, 2003).

It is also extremely important that the implementation of these four components is not done in a 'top-down' manner. The goals and values of

development must be generated from within the society concerned (Agarwal, 1994; Pieterse, 2001). The state should empower households, communities and their representative organizations, through involving them socially and politically in the development process (Friedman, 1992; Pieterse, 2010). Successful development here is 'bottom-up', and ideally all problems that are best handled locally would be decided on by local units of government and the organizations representing households and communities (Fay, 2009; Friedman, 1992). Communities and households must be consulted on what changes they want in their ways of life. If they want a land reform programme, then it must be implemented in the shape and form that they specify.

The main agents of this discourse are the poor and the state. The subsistence-based communities of 'traditional' societies are portrayed as being in a fragile balance that is easily destroyed by the processes of development (Pieterse, 2000; Rahnema & Bawtree, 1997). While they are seen as wanting to improve their quality of life, they do not have a 'capability to function' (Todaro & Smith, 2009), and are deprived of basic necessities. They are trapped in their inability to make full use of the little that they have. They need the intervention and aid of the other major agent in this discourse, the state.

The state here should be motivated to aid and encourage the human development of excluded households and communities, to ensure that society changes in the best way possible. To do this, it must take action to

provide the poor with their basic necessities, increase the economic opportunities available to them, and develop their capabilities to use these opportunities (Mehrotra, 2000; Sen, 1999). However, 'top-down' interventions by the state are portrayed here as an inevitable failure or disaster for the majority of the targeted populations (Rahnema & Bawtree, 1997), as they are almost always excluded from their old means of sustenance, and given little or nothing to replace them with (Kiely, 1999). Therefore the state should work in partnership with poor rural communities, extensively consulting them at all stages of this process (Friedman, 1992).

The basic narrative here is that development that concentrates only on growth in the overall economy tends to marginalize and impoverish the majority of the poor in developing countries — they become the castaways of development (Latouche, 1993). The solution is that economic development needs to be adjusted so that it improves the lives of the poor. Governments need to devolve as much power as possible to households, communities and NGOs, allowing them to decide what they want from the development process, and empowering them to achieve this. Through consultation, governments of developing countries must take steps to meet the basic needs of the poor, open up the economic opportunities available to them, and increase their capabilities to use these opportunities to the fullest extent. Women especially need to be given the chance to access economic resources, and improve their own lives.

### ***Policy proposals for land reform***

This discourse makes a general case for the nexus between equity and growth, arguing that the greater the degree of equality in a society, the faster the likely rate of growth. Therefore, measures to increase the opportunities available to the poor (like creating many small farms out of a few large ones) can contribute to improving people's lives (Pieterse, 2010). In addition, in many agrarian economies arable land is the most valued form of property, with great economic, political and symbolic significance. It is a productive, wealth-creating and livelihood-sustaining asset, and is often the basis of political power and social status (Agarwal, 1995). Successful land reform programmes in this discourse therefore form part of a suite of measures aimed at spreading economic opportunities to the worst-off in society (Anand & Sen, 2000). Sen (1999) points to the examples set in East Asia and in the Indian state of Kerala, where efforts to distribute land equally have reduced the poverty levels of the poor. There is also a strong argument made for giving poor rural women independent rights to land, rather than relying on old assumptions of unitary male-headed households and giving title only to men (Agarwal, 1994). Alongside the expansion of basic education and health care for the beneficiaries as seen in Kerala (Sen, 1999), policy proposals here also mandate a heavy focus on educating land reform beneficiaries on how to make the best use of their land.

Table 5-2:

## Summary of international discourses

DISCOURSES	NORMATIVE PERSPECTIVE ON DEVELOPMENT	AGENTS AND THEIR MOTIVATIONS	NARRATIVES	POLICY PROPOSALS FOR LAND REFORM
LARGE FARMS	'Traditional' to 'modern' via market; Land reform <b>unnecessary</b>	<b>Large Farmers</b> — Economic rationalists; <b>State</b> — create free market	Small farmers as <b>backward</b> ; Large farms: - <b>Most efficient</b> and <b>advanced</b> ; - Must be facilitated	' <b>Willing buyer willing seller</b> '; Undistorted market; Create <b>property rights</b> for land market if necessary
SMALL FARMS	'Traditional' to 'modern' via market; Land reform <b>vital</b>	<b>Small farmers</b> — use their land fully; <b>Large farmers</b> — keep non-market advantages; <b>State</b> — move along development trajectory	Small farms are <b>most efficient</b> in developing world; Large farms: - <b>Retard</b> economic progress; - Must be <b>broken up, redistributed</b>	Remove <b>urban bias</b> ; Remove <b>large farm bias</b> ; <b>State</b> must: - Buy large farms at productive value; - Redistribute smaller units at productive value; - Provide post-settlement support
SOCIALIST	'Traditional' to 'modern' to 'socialist'; Market <b>unnecessary</b> after 'modern'; Land reform <b>necessary</b> for industrialization	<b>State</b> — stimulate industrialization; <b>Large farmers</b> — use science to increase productivity <b>Peasants</b> — protect redundant historic position	<b>Socialist</b> state requires <b>industrial</b> base; Agriculture must be as <b>efficient</b> as possible <b>State</b> must persuade <b>peasants</b> to join larger more efficient units	<b>State</b> must: - Create <b>rural farm collectives</b> ; - Enable their <b>mechanization</b>
DEPENDENCY	'Traditional' to 'modern' via market; 'Modern' prevent movement of 'traditional' to create dependency; Land reform <b>necessary</b> to break this	'Modern' <b>metropolises</b> — monopolise capital; 'Traditional' <b>satellites</b> — dependent on metropolises; Satellite <b>governments</b> — co-opted by metropolises	Satellite countries cannot achieve 'modernity' while <b>dependent</b> on metropolitan powers; Satellite countries must break dependence via economic <b>autarchy</b>	Large-scale farms focused on export to metropolises must be <b>broken up</b> and redistributed; New small farms must produce for <b>local markets</b>
CRITICAL	'Development' a <b>harmful hegemonic discourse</b> ; Change must focus on: - <b>Meeting basic needs</b> , - <b>Developing capabilities</b> , - <b>Expanding economic opportunities</b> , and - <b>Rural poor women</b> ; Must be 'bottom-up'	'Traditional' societies — want improved quality of life; <b>State</b> — aid human development of the excluded	'Development' <b>marginalizes</b> the majority; Development must be <b>bottom-up</b> ;	Redistribute land to <b>spread economic opportunity</b> ; Give <b>women</b> independent rights to land; <b>Educate</b> beneficiaries to make best use of their land

## **Conclusion**

Governments contemplating a land reform programme will find strong opinions on how such a policy should be designed and implemented. The preceding review, based on a comprehensive review of the development and land reform literature, leads to the conclusion that these opinions will derive from the discourses outlined above. Each discourse constructs generalised assumptions and storylines around what development is, how it should occur, and the place of land reform policies in this process. These discourses are significant to the extent that they advance the interests of those deemed to be 'insiders', and suppress those of 'outsiders'. By setting out the problem of land reform in a certain way, each discourse outlined above positions the actors involved in specific ways. The optimum distribution of power, and what justice, equity and 'good development' look like all differ fundamentally depending on the 'discourse lens' used to look at the problem of land reform. The policy recommendations arising from each of the five discourses, therefore, have significant consequences for the societies where they are implemented. In order to understand why so little has been achieved in land reform in South Africa, it is necessary to understand this broader discursive context. The policymakers creating the constitutional policy settings for land reform, and subsequently creating land reform policy, will have been influenced by what is constructed as 'possible' and 'impossible' internationally.

In societies where the policy recommendations arising from the Large Farms discourse are implemented, those who own large farms are advantaged, while the rural poor are not. Economic development is constructed as best achieved through the open market, and 'good development' means creating a large-scale mechanized farming sector, where landownership is concentrated in a few hands. In contrast, where the recommendations arising from the Small Farms discourse are implemented, existing large-scale farmers are disadvantaged, while government resources are aimed at the creation and maintenance of a small-scale commercial farming sector. Here, economic development is seen as the product of government intervention in the market to distribute the ownership of land more widely among the population. Where the recommendations derived from the Socialist discourse are implemented, power is concentrated in the state. The state alone is seen as capable of ensuring economic progress, by taking the place of the market. Through this lens, the agricultural sector exists only to provide a base from which a strong industrial sector can be created, to the overall benefit of all society. Those preventing the creation of large-scale, mechanized and collectively-owned units must not be allowed to impede the advance of 'progress.' The recommendations arising from the Dependency approach situate large land-owning elites who produce raw materials for export as the 'outsiders'. In order to create economic opportunity and progress, their power is to be stripped away, to allow the creation of small-scale farms which produce materials for domestic consumption. Finally, the policy recommendations of the Critical discourse

concentrate power at the local level. The rural poor in 'Third World' situations are depicted as the 'insiders'. They are to be advantaged with the resources and decision-making power to decide their own fates. The state and all 'development experts' are required to step aside, in order to allow economic progress to be created by those who know best what is needed at the local level.

This chapter has, therefore, provided an answer to the first sub-question asked in this study. During the period of the creation of the basic boundaries around land reform, six main discourses defined what was 'possible' and 'impossible' in land reform, arising from the experiences and results of land reform policy games played in other contexts. These were the main options considered by the policy players who created the boundaries and rules around the game of land reform policy. The following chapters show the resonances of certain of these discourses at the constitutional, national policy and operational levels.

## Chapter Six

### **Land Ownership, Discursive Struggles and the New Constitution**

This study addresses the question of why so little has been achieved by successive policy initiatives to address the inequitable land ownership patterns created prior to 1990. A crucial aspect of answering this question must be an examination of the basic boundaries laid down for land reform at the highest policy levels. Therefore, this chapter focuses on the ideas, values and discourses that inform the institutions and key actors in the South African land reform policy arena at the constitutional level of analysis. It is informed by the assumption that ideas and discourses underpin institutions, that actors are motivated by particular discourses, and that actors endeavour to ensure that institutions reflect the ideas within their discourses (Hay, 2006). When the discourses and ideas of a smaller group of actors are generally accepted, a 'policy monopoly' is formed, allowing that group to shape relevant institutions (Baumgartner & Jones, 2009). Groups holding policy monopolies will structure institutions according to the interests mandated by their discourses. Other groups motivated by other discourses will seek to break the policy monopoly and have their own ideas inform institutions.

A change in the generally-accepted ideas and discourses almost invariably heralds a change in the institutions governing a policy area (Hay, 2006). These periods of change, called 'crises' in the punctuated equilibrium

approach (Baumgartner & Jones, 2009), are a time of contestation between the old ideas underpinning a policy monopoly and new ideas with potential to establish a new policy equilibrium. Skilful or lucky actors may be able to recognise these periods of change and take advantage to promote their preferred courses of action.

While the punctuated equilibrium pattern is evident in a wide range of policy arenas in the US (Baumgartner & Jones, 2009), it is used in this chapter to frame the analysis of changes occurring in land policy at the constitutional level in South Africa between 1990 and 1996. Prior to 1990, the dominant policy equilibrium in South Africa provided access to political and economic resources only to white South Africans. In land policy, this translated into providing private ownership of land to white South Africans only. Black South Africans were confined to 13 per cent of South Africa's land area, and denied private ownership of the land they occupied, forcing them to serve as cheap unskilled labour for white employers. In the meantime, white farmers were given extensive government assistance in running their businesses.

By the 1980s it was clear that changes to the dominant policy equilibrium were inevitable. White acceptance of the previous policy based on white supremacy and Afrikaner nationalism had become fractured, and in 1990 when the new NP leader F.W. de Klerk assumed power, he seized the opportunity presented by the fall of international Communism to begin negotiations with the ANC around the creation of a new policy direction for

South Africa. The ANC and the NP agreed on a two-stage process of negotiation. First, an Interim Constitution would be negotiated, which would lay the basis for the creation of the final Constitution by an elected Constitutional Assembly later. Negotiations around the creation of the Interim Constitution, called the Convention for a Democratic South Africa (Codesa) began at the end of 1991, and involved a wide range of participants.

Du Plessis (1994), commenting on the negotiations around the drafting of the Bill of Rights in the Interim Constitution, describes two basic approaches to human rights among the various parties in the negotiations — the ‘libertarians’ and the ‘liberationists’. While both approaches shared a basic commitment to liberal-democratic values, du Plessis argues that the *libertarians* drew heavily from classical (enlightenment) liberalism, and argued for a bill of rights premised on individual liberty as a core value, rather than equality. Including both white liberals (who had expressed their opposition to apartheid in the past in human rights terms) and former members of the apartheid government (who now saw the entrenchment of their basic rights as the best way to serve their vested power), the libertarians argued for minimal state authority in post-apartheid South Africa, and attempted energetically to preserve as much as possible of their existing economic and political power relationships by controlling the negotiation process around the Bill of Rights (Du Plessis, 1994; Szeftel, 1994; Yanou, 2009). Put another way, those who had ignored the property rights of black South Africans during the ‘black spot’ removals of apartheid came to see the entrenchment of property rights within the Bill of Rights as the

key to maintaining their status in post-apartheid South Africa (Spitz & Chaskalson, 2000). As will become clear, many of the themes in this discourse show strong similarities with themes found in the large farms discourse described in chapter five.

In contrast, the *liberationists* argued for a more interventionist state to ensure the equal distribution of means and opportunity in South Africa, and an Interim Constitution containing only minimal rights. The main advocate of this approach was the ANC, along with other black liberation organisations and the land-based NGOs. Drawing from themes found in the dependency and the critical discourses described in chapter five, these parties argued against the inclusion of a property clause in the Interim Bill of Rights, as such a clause would entrench existing racial disparities arising from colonial and apartheid land policies. Rather, the Bill of Rights should entrench the ability of the government to intervene in the property market, to create a different economic equilibrium to that established during the colonial, Union and apartheid eras (Du Plessis, 1994; Spitz & Chaskalson, 2000; Szeftel, 1994; Yanou, 2009).

The property clause negotiated in the Interim Constitution was a compromise between the liberationist and the libertarian discourses, mandating government efforts to transfer land to black South Africans, but with the payment of market-based compensation to white land owners. South Africa's period of crisis ended in 1996 with the signing into law of the final Constitution, which allowed for land restitution, and a market-based

land redistribution programme. The material gains of white South Africans under the previous policy equilibrium were thus guaranteed under the new regime, while simultaneously incorporating some liberationist ideas into the final Constitution. The new post-apartheid equilibrium in South Africa thus carried strong elements from pre-crisis policy settings.

### **Punctuated equilibrium**

In line with the overall social constructionist stance taken in this study, the theoretical approach adopted for this chapter focuses on the ideas underpinning institutions, and the discourses from which actors draw their motivations. From this perspective, political actors are seen as having a primary interest in establishing a monopoly on understandings on policies and on the institutional arrangements that reinforce that understanding. Political actors, therefore, have a primary interest in ensuring that the discourses they subscribe to inform key political institutions and gain general public acquiescence. 'Policy monopolies', as stated earlier, describe situations where a group of actors has successfully ensured that ideas from the discourse they subscribe to underpin the institutions most important to them, and where there is a general public acceptance of this (Baumgartner & Jones, 2009; Hay, 2006; Schmidt, 2010).

Policy monopolies are thus intimately tied to generally accepted ideas, which create and sustain institutions. Baumgartner and Jones (2009) suggest that the idea underpinning a policy monopoly and its attendant institutions can generally be connected to a core political value which can

be communicated directly and simply. If a group can convince others that its activities serve such lofty goals, then a policy monopoly can be created. The 'punctuated equilibrium' approach, in common with constructivist institutionalism, argues that "... it is the ideas that actors hold about the context in which they find themselves rather than the context itself which informs the way in which actors behave" (Hay & Rosamund, 2002, p. 148). If those actors holding a policy monopoly can convince the broader public to accept the ideas underpinning the policy monopoly, they are able to proceed unchecked. Thus, during the periods when generally accepted ideas coincide with the existing policy monopoly governing a given policy, the prevailing conceptions of a policy issue dominate both press coverage and official behaviour. During these times, those benefitting from the policy monopoly will create institutional structures designed to protect them from later encroachments (Baumgartner & Jones, 2009).

The institutions created during these times tend to favour some interests strongly over others, and define relevant policy issues in a way that supports the existing distribution of political advantage. In particular, issues may be defined to include only a single dimension of conflict (Baumgartner & Jones, 2009). Institutions help ensure that policy problems are defined in one particular manner and not in another by freezing a set of political participants and a particular dimension of a policy issue into the policy process, and excluding others (John, 2012). As long as there are high levels of public apathy, supportive beliefs among members of the political elite, and favourable reports in the media, a particular policy can remain in place

for extended periods of time, changing only slowly (Baumgartner & Jones, 2009; John, 2012).

However, as is made clear in the constructivist institutionalism approach, institutions are neither omnipotent nor eternal — they can create partial equilibria, but only for defined periods of time. This is because they are the subject and focus of political struggle (Hay, 2006; John, 2012). While the holders of a policy monopoly will fight to ensure the ideas they subscribe to continue to underpin the institutions most important to them, other actors subscribing to other discourses will struggle to bring about a change in this situation, so that the ideas they subscribe to come to underpin important institutions. Thus both constructivist institutionalism and the ‘punctuated equilibrium’ framework see shifts in the commonly accepted ideas underpinning institutions as heralding significant subsequent institutional change. The destruction of a policy monopoly and its attendant institutions is almost always associated with a redefinition of the prevailing policy image, or a change in the generally accepted ideas around a policy or a political system (Baumgartner & Jones, 2009; Blyth, 2003; Hay, 2006). Dramatic and rapid change in these institutions and their resulting policies is possible, especially if the way relevant issues are defined are changed to bring in new participants (Baumgartner & Jones, 2009).

New ideas bring about new interpretations of events, and new potential participants. This means that through new ideas, new participants will be attracted into a policy area — political leaders, government agencies and

private institutions may become interested in a policy area in which they had previously shown no interest whatsoever (Baumgartner & Jones, 2009). If the pressures generated by those subscribing to the new ideas about the policy in question are strong enough, "... they may lead not only to a change in policy, but also to institutional changes designed to reinforce and stabilise the policy around some new point of equilibrium" (Baumgartner & Jones, 2009, p. 83). Waves of popular enthusiasm around a given issue, stimulated by new ideas, provide the circumstances for new policy-makers to change existing institutions, or create new ones to support their new policies.

Within the 'punctuated equilibrium' framework, these periods of contestation are called 'crises'. During such a crisis, there is "... intense ideational contestation in which agents struggle to provide compelling and convincing diagnoses of the pathologies afflicting the old ... policy paradigm and the reforms appropriate to the resolution of the crisis" (Hay, 2006, p. 67). The old idea sustaining a given policy monopoly competes with other ideas which could potentially replace it, and bring in new policy participants (Baumgartner & Jones, 2009). During these periods of crisis the conflicting ideas can be mapped out using discourse analysis (Schmidt, 2010).

If the pressures for redefinition and change are sufficient, "... they may lead not only to a change in policy, but also to institutional changes designed to reinforce and stabilise the policy around some new point of equilibrium"

(Baumgartner & Jones, 2009, p. 83). There can be great friction in the reactions of political systems to forces pushing for change, stemming from the unwillingness of major power-holders to change the ideas they hold, or from the resistance of the institutions created to sustain these ideas.

However when this friction is overcome, a political system can leap ahead to a new point of policy equilibrium (Baumgartner, Green-Pederson, & Jones, 2006).

Individual actors and their differing constructions of their own interests can be crucial here — those actors who see themselves as benefitting from the existing policy equilibrium will strive to protect it. Others who believe they would benefit if their own policy solution were adopted seek to overturn the existing policy equilibrium (John, 2012). However, the dynamics during these periods of rapid change are particularly difficult to control. The most skilful political actors in a policy system may be able to recognise these trends early enough to take advantage of them (Baumgartner & Jones, 2009). Thus during these periods of rapid change, the previous constraints on change (embodied in the existing institutions) no longer apply. Almost any type of new policy is possible, depending on the political skills of the various policy entrepreneurs involved in a policy subsystem. The type of new policy which emerges is contingent on the ideational contestation unleashed in the moment of crisis (Hay, 2006).

Baumgartner and Jones thus describe a pattern of “... long periods of stability in public policy understandings and behaviour punctuated by short

periods when dramatic changes take place” (2009, p. 57). After these dramatic changes, the policy settles into another period of stability (Baumgartner & Jones, 2009). After long periods of little change in a given policy area, waves of popular enthusiasm around a given issue create the possibility of new ideas being accepted, allowing new policymakers to create new institutions to support new policy approaches. These new institutions structure participation and policymaking, often ensuring privileged access to the policy process for those who helped create them. After public interest and enthusiasm in the new ideas fade, the institutions remain, pushing their preferred policies forward independent of popular control. During this time, there may be stability or incrementalism in policy settings. Some years later, however, the issue may reach the public agenda again, triggering off a new period of ideational contestation. This could result in the dismantling of those very institutions owing their existence to the first period of enthusiastic popular acceptance, and the creation of a new set of institutions around a new point of equilibrium (Baumgartner & Jones, 2009). Baumgartner and Jones therefore argue that in a wide range of policy areas, long periods of stability in public policy understandings and behaviour are punctuated by short periods when dramatic changes take place (2009).

The primary focus of Baumgartner and Jones is on specific policy subsystems within the US. Despite their domestic focus (on policy areas such as nuclear energy, tobacco or pesticides), the authors do allow for the possibility that “... a political system as a whole, not only particular issue

areas, may go through periods of stability and rapid change” (Baumgartner & Jones, 2009, p. 243). There is some evidence for a punctuated equilibrium pattern of politics at the national level in the US, a political system built “... on a conservative constitutional base designed to limit radical action ...” (Baumgartner & Jones, 2009, p. 236). The political system as a whole still alternates between long quiet periods of little to no change, and shorter periods of more rapid and dramatic changes. In the US, disruptions to established ways of making public policy may come at all levels of scale — in fact some may affect the entire political system (Baumgartner & Jones, 2009), leading to a cascade of changes in all the policy subsystems within that political system (Baumgartner et al., 2006).

It was initially assumed that this pattern was a result of the complex and pluralistic political system of the US, with its extensive separation of powers, bicameralism and federal dynamics (Baumgartner et al., 2006). However, scholars in Europe and elsewhere have found the approach applicable to other political systems, including unified parliamentary political systems (Baumgartner et al., 2006). This suggests that the ‘punctuated equilibrium’ approach has potential to inform the analysis of changes occurring at the constitutional level in South Africa between 1990 and 1996, the period where the country’s policy settings based on colonial, segregationist and apartheid ideas, policies and institutions, underwent dramatic change. Specifically in terms of land policy, from the establishment of the first European colony in what was to become South Africa in 1652 (Thompson, 1990) to the freeing of Nelson Mandela in 1990

(Ross, 1999), the governments of South Africa could be seen as having maintained a particular policy focus, or a particular policy equilibrium, based on a specific set of ideas. The period 1990–1996 in this approach was a period of crisis, when the ideas underpinning the old policy equilibrium around land entered a period of contestation. Because the period of crisis for apartheid took the form of a negotiated transfer of power, it becomes particularly important to understand the viewpoints around land policy suggested by the various participants in the negotiations, and those advising them. The final Constitution of South Africa, signed into existence in 1996, could be seen as providing the broad policy settings for post-apartheid South Africa, and framing what would and would not be possible in terms of land reform. The first task in this chapter, therefore, is to outline the policy equilibrium around land between 1652 and 1990 in South Africa.

### **Land policy prior to 1990**

The general outline of South Africa's history from the first European settlement in 1652 to the beginning of negotiations in 1990 (in chapter two), and land policies during this period, described a political system that aimed to strengthen the control exerted by the white population over the country's economy and politics. To paraphrase Baumgartner and Jones (2009), the institutions set in place in these periods strongly favoured the interests of the white population in the country over all others, and defined all policy issues in ways that gave white South Africans political and material advantage. This policy equilibrium was able to continue for such a long period of time because of strong support among both British and Dutch

settlers for the idea of white racial supremacy. The technological advantages they held over the indigenous populations allowed them to continue in this belief, like contemporary Europeans in North America and elsewhere (Thompson, 1990).

Over time, to buttress the idea of white supremacy, black South Africans were stripped of all citizenship rights in 'white' South Africa, and made into subjects of tribal chiefs in the 'independent' bantustans. A series of further laws ensured the economic and social dominance of white South Africans at the expense of the black majority. These laws and policies all combined to freeze into place privileged access to material and political wealth for white South Africans, and to exclude all other people living in the country. High levels of support among whites and their leaders meant that this policy equilibrium remained in place for an extended period of time, from the earliest periods of colonial settlement in the country in 1652 to the freeing of Nelson Mandela in 1990. White access to power and material resources had a strong determining effect on the policy settings around land and land access in South Africa during this period.

As discussed in chapter two, from the earliest days of what would come to be South Africa, the principle of the private ownership of land with full rights of disposal was set — but only for people of European origin (Miller & Pope, 2000a; Thompson, 1990). The South African state facilitated the accumulation of capital by white farmers (Gcabashe & Mabin, 1990), and removed black farmers who had purchased land in areas subsequently

declared 'white' (James, 2007; Miller & Pope, 2000a; Ross, 1999). To prevent such areas from arising again, the Subdivision of Agricultural Land Act (Act 70 of 1970) was enacted, preventing the subdivision of existing large-scale farms into smaller production units (Lahiff, 2009; Miller & Pope, 2000a).

By the 1980s, there were clear signs to many white South Africans that the existing policy could not continue — there were clear pressures for redefinition or a change of ideas in the system. However, Baumgartner, Green-Pedersen and Jones (2006) note that there can be great friction in the reactions of political systems to forces pushing for change, stemming from the unwillingness of major power-holders to recognise the need for change. This is evident in the response of the government of President P.W. Botha to early signs of crisis in the apartheid system, whose administration attempted to adapt to make cosmetic changes while clinging to the established policy settings based on the ideas of Afrikaner nationalism, white superiority and separate development (Spitz & Chaskalson, 2000; Thompson, 1990). However, growing "... internal opposition, international pressure and sanctions, and deepening economic crisis together signalled that the policy of reform and repression could not be indefinitely sustained" (Spitz & Chaskalson, 2000, p. 11).

In terms of the punctuated equilibrium framework, the ideas underpinning the existing equilibrium in South Africa were entering a period of crisis, or of contestation. one of the most telling points that a period of crisis was imminent was a breakdown in white acceptance of the idea of white

supremacy, as seen in the formation of the Democratic Party (DP) in 1989 (De Klerk, 1994; Spitz & Chaskalson, 2000). Besides this, the rising levels of violence in the country led many influential and powerful white South Africans within Afrikanerdom to abandon support for the idea of white supremacy (De Klerk, 1994) — many came to see it as necessary to allow black South Africans to “... acquire at least a substantial share of political power in South Africa in the foreseeable future” (Thompson, 1990, p. 241) in order to prevent the country from sliding into anarchy and bloodshed (Van der Walt & Helmbold, 1995). In addition, Afrikaner consensus on the necessity of Afrikaner nationalism began to break down along class lines. Many middle and upper-class Afrikaners had reached the point of mulling the possibilities of political change in South Africa. In contrast, many in the Afrikaner working class still depended on favourable apartheid policies for their economic security, and so turned to the newly-formed Conservative Party and the *Afrikaner Weerstandsbeweging* (Spitz & Chaskalson, 2000). Finally, many white South Africans came to accept the idea that the South African economy suffered from structural problems created by apartheid policies. They now believed that to secure growth in the economy, and to secure the continued prosperity of white South Africans, the idea of separate development would need to be abandoned (De Klerk, 1994). In terms of the punctuated equilibrium framework, the ideas underpinning the dominant policy equilibrium in South Africa began to lose (white) public acceptance, meaning that a period of ‘crisis’ was imminent.

In 1989, President P.W. Botha suffered a stroke, and was succeeded by F.W. de Klerk (Thompson, 1990). “Upon his inauguration as state president, de Klerk seized the opportunity to shift from Botha’s programme of reluctant window-dressing to a policy of real reform” (Spitz & Chaskalson, 2000, p. 13). Like most observers of the South African situation, de Klerk seems to have accepted that the existing political equilibrium could not last. He also indicated that the fall of international Communism created the possibility of further changes in South Africa (Slabbert, 2006). This is perhaps an example of changes to an established international equilibrium (between international Communism and capitalism) leading to subsequent equilibrium changes at the national level. “The course of world history had taken a new direction. The government grasped the opportunity to normalise South African politics” (De Klerk, 1994, p. 5).

Specific to the South African situation, the fact that there was no longer a communist menace to fight against meant that the apartheid government could not count on the (covert or overt) support of the US. In addition, the ANC could no longer credibly be accused of being a cover for a communist plot to take over South Africa (Ross, 1999; Spitz & Chaskalson, 2000). Prior to the collapse of the Soviet Union, while much of the developed world had implacably opposed the apartheid system and its apologists, due to the support given to the ANC by the USSR, the Thatcher and Reagan governments had shown no overt support for the ANC. However, after 1990, popular and state support for the ANC struggle to combat racism and oppression suddenly grew in the developed world, and was embraced

especially by the US (Slabbert, 2006). It was clear that with a liberal democratic paradigm becoming the policy equilibrium at the world scale, at least in theory, many of the policies previously espoused by the ANC, such as nationalisation of the mines and industries in South Africa, were highly unlikely to gain external support (Slabbert, 2006). White prosperity, which the apartheid system had been constructed to facilitate, appeared to be under threat from the stagnation and decline of the South African economy and the pressure of international sanctions and isolation. The long-standing white adherence to the idea of white supremacy lost majority support in that community. This was shown in a whites-only referendum held in 1992, on whether negotiations around a new constitution with the ANC should continue. The positive response from white voters showed large-scale white acceptance of the idea that power should be shared with blacks in South Africa (Oden & Ohlson, 1994; Spitz & Chaskalson, 2000). Many of the original ideas underpinning the pre-1990 policy equilibrium no longer seemed to apply to the changed circumstances.

President de Klerk therefore felt that changes to the constitution in South Africa had a good chance of being negotiated successfully, and so announced the lifting of the ban on the liberation movements within South Africa, and the release of Nelson Mandela in February 1990 (Spitz & Chaskalson, 2000). These actions “... provided a moment of uncertainty — perhaps five or six years’ duration — when, it seemed to most observers, nearly any kind of political-economic future was possible” (Bond, 2000, p. 15). South Africa entered a period of what Baumgartner and Jones would

term a period of crisis. Almost any type of new policy was now possible, depending on the outcome of the negotiations around the political institutions of post-apartheid South Africa. Among the many policies faced with the potential for massive changes was the existing apartheid policy equilibrium around land.

### **Dynamics of the period of crisis**

Some understanding of the structure and context of the period of crisis is necessary, in order to understand some of its outcomes. The NP and the ANC agreed on a two-stage process of negotiation. During the first part of the process, an Interim Constitution would be negotiated (Goldstone, 1997). This was presented expressly as a provisional instrument, which would set out the procedure for its own replacement by the final Constitution. In addition, it would exercise a degree of control over the process of creating the final Constitution through the creation of Constitutional Principles, with which the final Constitution would have to comply. The legitimacy of the Interim Constitution derived from the political pact reached between the parties in 1993. The legitimacy of the final Constitution would come from the vote of an elected Constitutional Assembly (Spitz & Chaskalson, 2000).

It is also important to understand that the negotiations around the Interim Constitution and the 1994 elections unfolded against a backdrop of intense violence and bitter conflict (Szeftel, 1994). Apartheid policy units and death squads, state-sponsored vigilante gangs and warring Inkatha Freedom Party

(IFP) and ANC activities transformed many black communities into war zones. Prior to the beginning of the period of crisis, only 5, 400 people had died in political violence between 1985 and 1989. During the period of crisis, however, between the release of Mandela in 1990 and the democratic elections of April 1994, the number rose steeply to 14, 800 (Gloppen, 1997; Marais, 2011). All the negotiators involved believed that compromises were urgently necessary in order to prevent the violence spreading and becoming a cataclysm that would engulf the country. For those involved in the negotiations, the choice seemed largely to be between a change in the political equilibrium in the country or continued violence, possibly leading to civil war (Szeftel, 1994).

Formal political negotiations on the terms of transition began at the end of 1991, with multiparty talks at Codesa (Gloppen, 1997). The NP represented both itself and the existing South African government. Included were representatives from the 'homeland' governments of KwaZulu, Transkei, Ciskei and Bophuthatswana, along with representatives of the 'traditional leaders' within the bantustans. The anti-apartheid liberation movements present included the ANC, the South African Communist Party (SACP), the Black Consciousness-based Pan-African Congress (PAC) and the Zulu-nationalist IFP. The Democratic Party mainly represented English-speaking white South Africans and a non-racial viewpoint, while the Conservative Party, the *Afrikaner Volksfront* and the *Afrikaner Volksunie* represented Afrikaans and far-right political concerns. The Labour Party, the National People's Party and the Transvaal and Natal Indian Congresses represented

coloured and Indian interests in the negotiations, but had no strong role in the proceedings (Spitz & Chaskalson, 2000).

Records of the debates at Codesa were not available for analysis<sup>18</sup>, but it is possible to gain a deeper understanding of the discourses that informed the positions of these actors through examination of the debates of the lower house (the National Assembly) between 1994 and 1996 around agricultural and land reform issues. These debates which took place after the ratification of the Interim Constitution and the election of the Constitutional Assembly and at the passage of the final Constitution show continued reference to themes, ideas and values drawn from the libertarian and liberationist discourses. The debates that are drawn on in this chapter did not contribute directly to the creation of the sections in the Interim or the final Constitutions dealing with land reform. But the debaters in the National Assembly drew from the same liberationist and libertarian discourses that informed those who negotiated the property clauses of the Interim and final Constitutions. These National Assembly debates, therefore, allow a deeper analysis of the libertarian and liberationist discourses, and their implications for land reform in post-apartheid South Africa.

### **The Libertarian position**

The following sections of this chapter analyse the libertarian and liberationist discourses. The assumed process of ‘development’ is described,

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<sup>18</sup> In compliance with South African law, records of the Codesa debates were made publically available by National Archives in January 2012, 20 years after the records were created (SAHA, 2011). However, the relevant records made available online appear fragmentary, and the location and resource constraints inherent in doctoral research meant that I was not able to return to National Archives in South Africa to access the physical records available for analysis.

along with the resulting views of land expressed. The assumed actors in land reform and agriculture are studied, along with the policy proposals given for land reform and improving the socio-economic situation of the rural landless. The libertarian discourse, which exhibits significant overlap with the Large Farms discourse discussed in chapter five, is informed by the assumption that ‘development’ is a process of movement from a ‘traditional’ to a ‘modern’ state through the mechanism of the market. In constructing development in these terms, it emphasises the value of land as an economic resource, and argues that land reform could only be about increasing the productivity of the land (Grobbelaar, 1996; Mentz, 1994).

***Land primarily an economic resource***

This discourse emphasises the crucial importance of maintaining existing levels of food production (Van Zyl, 1994). Here, land reform needs to “... contribute greatly towards feeding our people at affordable prices, towards supplying work and serving as a stabiliser of our country’s economy” (Van Zyl, 1996, p. 42). This is because “... land is a limited natural and economic resource which has to be used in a beneficial and sustainable manner” (Hanekom, 1995a, pp. 831-832).

While it is acknowledged in this discourse that land holds emotional significance to some, it is constructed as being primarily of commercial significance to the country as a whole. This means that approaches to land redistribution need to “... soften the divide between emotional claims and

commercial claims to land” (Schoeman, 1994, p. 2535). Therefore, to the libertarians, the objective of land reform should be:

... a flourishing, rural landscape, consisting of a mix of large, medium and small farms, promoting both equity and efficiency. We must make more people richer and not make rich people poorer, in order to succeed in what we are trying to do. If, one day, we only have rich people in South Africa, then we will have achieved all our goals (S. J. Schoeman, 1996, p. 2953).

This meant that the task of the government in land reform was to allow black agricultural entrepreneurs to access agricultural land (Hanekom, 1995b).

### ***The fundamental importance of individual property rights***

Libertarians argued strongly in favour of the inclusion of a property clause in the post-apartheid constitution on the basis of human rights, economics and the process of reconciliation. Firstly, perhaps mimicking the language of human rights used by anti-apartheid campaigners, libertarians expressed a strong commitment to “... the protection and advancement of the right to private ownership and the right to own land as fundamental rights of individuals” (Badenhorst, 1996, p. 2998).

It must be noted that those who have subscribed to a ‘libertarian’ position in other contexts, such as Nozick (Younkins, 2002) have argued that property acquired through confiscation (like much of the land held by whites in South Africa) is not held legitimately. In contrast, those

articulating the libertarian discourse in this particular context modified it to suit their construction of their individual interests. Therefore, the construction of land ownership put forward here was ahistorical, expedient and selective, ignoring the large-scale dispossession which occurred during most of the country's colonial and apartheid past.

Secondly, libertarians argued that the inclusion of a property clause in the constitution was necessary to guarantee the continued prosperity of the entire country. Members of the NP argued that it is

... a fundamental principle of the free-market society in which we live that land should and can be offered as collateral for loans from financial institutions. This can only be done if such land is transferable ... One cannot force financial institutions to risk their capital without being sure that they will have a claim on the collateral that is being offered (E. A. Schoeman, 1996, pp. 2979-2980).

Libertarians argued that without private property rights, South Africa would lose the confidence of international investors (Meyer, 1995), and be "... just another African state where people have all the land at their disposal, but are dying of hunger ..." (Van Zyl, 1996, p. 42).

In addition, the libertarian discourse gave rise to arguments that if the existing title deeds of white farmers were disregarded, those black South Africans who obtained land in the future would not be safe either.

Disregarding the property rights of white South Africans would be

... creating a culture whereby those that are going to be the next owners of the land, will go through the experience of having their ownership of that land questioned, because there will still be millions more who do not have land (Grobbelaar, 1994, p. 2552).

Therefore, libertarians warned against “... the destabilisation of land-ownership purely for the sake of political expediency” (Fourie, 1995, p. 846), and argued for the inclusion of a property clause in the final Constitution (S. J. Schoeman, 1996).

### ***Inevitable economic processes creating large farms***

As part of the process of using the resource of land as efficiently as possible, libertarians again repeated themes found in the Large Farms discourse, arguing that as a natural economic process, farms become larger and owned by fewer people, and that any land reform programme seeking to stop this process would be futile. Thus, brushing aside the slew of legislation preventing black South Africans from participating as independent farmers during apartheid, the libertarian discourse gave rise to arguments that for decades in South Africa, both black and white South Africans had been prevented from farming by this inevitable and anonymous economic process:

Do hon members know how many people in this country have for generations, for decades, yearned to go back to the land, but the hard facts prevent them from doing so? ... They are not only the deprived Tswana, Venda and Xhosa communities, but also Afrikaner boys and

girls, including my own brothers and children. They cannot come to the farm because they cannot make a living there. The result is urbanisation, a world-wide phenomenon which we cannot halt with any plan in the world (Van Zyl, 1994).

According to the libertarian discourse, then, it is inevitable that the vast majority of the population cannot farm or own land.

Within the libertarian discourse, as a result of this inevitable economic process, small-scale farms are inherently unproductive, and can only mean communal land ownership and subsistence farming. Ignoring the decades of economic and policy burdens placed on the black rural landless poor of South Africa, libertarians pointed to the small-scale farms of the communal areas, which they argued “... bear the ravages of overexploitation, wrong farming practices and a total disregard of sound soil conservation practices” (Schoeman, 1994, p. 2536). Therefore, the government was advised to carefully reconsider any land redistribution policy focused on the creation of small farms (Schoeman, 1994), which would result in South Africa having to import most of its food (Grobelaar, 1995). Libertarians thus emphasised the potential for extensive land reforms to negatively impact on overall production input and agricultural exports (Hall, 2010c).

In contrast, within the libertarian discourse the existing large farms in South Africa are vitally important, as they produced six per cent of the gross national profit, and 99.5 per cent of the value produced on agricultural land (Weideman, 2004). The white large-scale commercial farmers of South

Africa are depicted as the most efficient users of the land in the country, and are recognised as such in the rest of Africa and around the world — the “... achievements of South African agriculture compel respect throughout the world ... South Africa is considered the agricultural leader on the continent. What is more, the rest of Africa is seeking our expertise to help them” (Van Niekerk, 1995, pp. 2053-2054).

### ***Legitimacy of white-owned land***

The libertarian discourse also contains elements not found in the Large Farms discourse. It is suggested, for example, that land reform is unnecessary as white South Africans had obtained all their land by legitimate methods. Libertarians argued that around the world, there exist several legitimate methods of acquiring land including: “... the occupation of land which is or was mainly empty; secondly, by conquering; thirdly, by treaty; and fourthly, on a buyer-seller basis on the open market” (Schoeman, 1995, p. 868). According to the libertarian discourse, all the farms owned by white South Africans were obtained by one of these four methods, making land reform unnecessary. This shows the influence of a persistent colonial discourse, resonating today in arguments legitimising the amount of land owned by whites.

### ***Economic rationalists***

Again echoing themes in the Large Farms discourse, within the libertarian discourse those involved in agriculture and land reform are depicted as economic rationalists. Therefore, liberationists repeatedly argue that issues around land and land reform could not be approached primarily on the

basis of emotion (Jordaan, 1994), and depicted a tension between “... emotional claims and commercial claims to land” (Schoeman, 1994, p. 2535). Those depicted as approaching land reform emotionally were black South Africans who appealed to the history of dispossession and injustice in the country. In contrast, libertarians depicted white South African farmers as rational and successful farmers. White farmers were described as rightly proud of their success as commercial agricultural producers (Van Zyl, 1994).

### ***Recommendations for the rural landless***

In addition, the libertarian discourse gave rise to agreement with the conclusions of the Tomlinson Report, which had been rejected so many years before (Miller & Pope, 2000a). Libertarians suggested that land reform should aim at the creation of black commercial farmers in the former bantustan areas, which would sustain the relative allocation of land from the apartheid era:

... Let us establish a new generation of Black farmers who have ownership of their land, in the former homelands and also in the traditional tribal areas and let us provide these farmers with a tailor-made financial scheme, linked to an extensive extension service, which will ensure that a new Black farming community in South Africa is established which will compare with those of successful agricultural industries of the world ... (Odendaal, 1994, p. 2550).

This draws from the Large Farms policy proposal that where property rights are not available for sale in the market, they should be created. Thus, after

enforcing communal tenure in the former bantustans since 1913, libertarians argued that in the former bantustans, people "... should be freed from the traditional land tenure system, and allowed property rights with an accompanying sense of self-respect" (Schoeman, 1994, p. 2537). The communal land tenure system was described as unproductive (Hall, 2010a; Weideman, 2004), destructive of the natural environment (Van Zyl, 1995), and having the effect of impoverishing those trapped in such systems (Odendaal, 1995). Providing individual title to those living in the former bantustans would allow them to access borrowed capital using their land as collateral, and so progress along the trajectory of development (E. A. Schoeman, 1996).

### ***Limited redistribution in former 'white' areas***

Alongside this, the libertarian discourse gave rise to proposals that limited amounts of land be made available to black South Africans in the former 'white' rural areas. How this was to be done was made clear in the NP's *Provision of Certain Land for Settlement Act* (No. 126 of 1993), which proposed a land reform strategy allowing the establishment of a small number of black small-scale or 'beginner' farmers. They were to be smaller versions of the 'standard' model of white commercial agriculture, and would buy their land through a 'willing buyer willing seller' policy, with government grants supplementing the market prices paid for the land. Beneficiaries would also be strictly controlled in terms of the use they could make of their land (Winkler, 1994), and provided with access to the finance and advice they needed to succeed as commercial farmers by both the

government and their white neighbours (Beyers, 1996; S. J. Schoeman, 1996; Van Zyl, 1994). A “... market and demand-driven process, with a willing buyer and a willing seller, is the best possible solution to our problem” (Meyer, 1995, p. 887). This would allow the confirmation and extension of freehold land tenure in South Africa, which the libertarian discourse constructs as essential (Fourie, 1994; S. J. Schoeman, 1996; Van Zyl, 1995).

### ***Lower expectations around land reform***

The libertarians in the National Assembly were aware that such a scheme would not benefit the vast majority of the rural landless poor. Not everyone would be helped by market-assisted land reform, as “... land is scarce in South Africa. We must tell each other honestly in this Committee that not everybody will be able to own land. Nowhere in the world does everybody own land” (Grobelaar, 1996, p. 2969). In addition, to ensure the success of new black large-scale commercial farmers, potential beneficiaries would have to be subjected to strict selection criteria (Badenhorst, 1996).

Therefore libertarians argued that it was necessary to prevent the creation of undue “... expectations among too many people, because we will not be able to assist everyone who wants land” (Van Zyl, 1994, p. 2562).

### ***Maintenance of the apartheid status quo***

The libertarians, therefore, argued strongly in favour of maintaining the agrarian structure created by apartheid policies, and allowing the gradual introduction of a few black South Africans as large-scale commercial farmers alongside the existing white farmers. Drawing on narratives of development echoing those found in the Large Farms discourse, the

libertarians construct land as a purely economic resource, and individual property rights as a crucial element in guaranteeing the productivity of the land. Libertarians argued that large farms are an inevitable consequence of blind economic forces, and so should not be broken up into smaller units of production. Existing white farmers are constructed as having obtained their land legitimately, and making the best possible economic use of their land. Drawing on the Large Farms emphasis on individual property rights, libertarians recommended that the socio-economic situation of the rural landless in the former 'bantustans' be improved through granting them property rights to the land they occupied, and offering limited opportunities to purchase land to a few in the former 'white' farming areas.

### **The Liberationist position**

#### ***Prevention of the development of black South Africans***

Competing with the libertarian discourse in the National Assembly and the negotiations around the Interim and final Constitutions was the liberationist discourse, which draws from aspects of the Dependency discourse described in chapter five. In this discourse, the primary defining feature of South Africa's history and development was the retardation of the natural progress and socio-economic development of the black people of South Africa by white South Africans, in a similar way that the metropole countries are constructed as impeding the development of satellite countries in the Dependency discourse. To the liberationists, there is thus an intimate link between political power, dispossession and development (Holomisa, 1994).

### ***Land reform integral to black socio-economic development***

The liberationist discourse gives rise to arguments that the stunting of the development of black South Africans was primarily achieved by the theft of black South Africans' land (Goosen, 1995; Holomisa, 1995; Makwetu, 1996; Seperepere, 1995). Land here is constructed as a basic right, and central to the process of development (Routledge, 1996). The dispossession of black South Africans of their land was therefore central to the process of stifling their progress along the trajectory of development (Goosen, 1995; Ngubane, 1994).

The majority of people in this country have, for more than three centuries, been dispossessed of their national heritage, the land. In order to perpetuate that dispossession, they were dehumanised, harassed, oppressed and exploited. The problem was compounded by the most vicious system of forced removals. Like all apartheid measures, the objective of forced removals was to impoverish our people, to subject them to humiliation and to make them ... slaves in their own country (Seperepere, 1994, p. 2538).

Liberationists therefore argue that land reform (or restoring black South Africans the land taken from them during colonialism, segregation and apartheid) is a central mechanism to allow black South Africans to progress socio-economically. Black South Africans "... can never regard themselves free as long as the land is not returned to them, the rightful owners. Indeed, freedom without land is a pipedream" (Seperepere, 1994, p. 2538), and "...

political freedom without economic empowerment is meaningless” (Holomisa, 1994, pp. 2516-2517). This means that “... not until we address this issue properly can there be any peace in our country” (Makwetu, 1994, p. 2528). To achieve peace and development in South Africa then, an aggressive purposeful land reform policy is necessary to restore the land stolen from black South Africans (Netshimbupfe, 1994).

### ***Land reform integral to black citizenship***

Within the liberationist discourse, for the black people of South Africa the loss of their land was intimately connected with the loss of their citizenship and freedom (Holomisa, 1994). As black South Africans “... lost their citizenship, they also lost their land in the process” (De Lille, 1995, p. 72). This means that “... our people can never regard themselves free as long as the land is not returned to them ...” (Seperepere, 1994, p. 2538). In many ways then, “... land is life itself. Without land a nation is incomplete” (Modisenyane, 1995, p. 692). The liberationist discourse gives rise to arguments that the return of the land to black South Africans is necessary as a concrete sign that black South Africans are now full citizens in the country.

### ***Black victims, white perpetrators***

Three agents in land reform are constructed in this discourse: black South African commoners, white South Africans, and traditional African leaders. Within the liberationist discourse, black South African commoners and traditional African leaders are victims, in much the same position as the satellites of the Dependency discourse. Both groups have historically been

excluded from the government, the economy and the land of South Africa (Holomisa, 1994; Makwetu, 1996; Ngubane, 1996; Phohlela, 1996; Seperepere, 1994). While black farmers (traditional leaders and commoners) were highly productive in the past, colonial, segregation and apartheid policies have combined to force both groups of black South Africans into the position of impoverished servants of white masters who are not allowed to make decisions for themselves (Holomisa, 1994; Mokoena, 1994; Ngubane, 1994, 1995; Ngwenya, 1996). Suffering from poverty and malnutrition, it is not that black South African commoners and traditional leaders want land, it is that they desperately need land for housing and the production of food (Holomisa, 1995; Makwetu, 1994; Seperepere, 1994).

In contrast, white South Africans are constructed in similar ways as the metropolises of the Dependency discourse — they have gained their land and wealth unjustly through the use of military force during the colonial, segregation and apartheid eras (Holomisa, 1994, 1996b; Makwetu, 1996; Ndlovu, 1995; Netshimbupfe, 1994, 1995). White South Africans are portrayed as having derived great pleasure from the suffering of all black South Africans (Seperepere, 1994), and continuing to practice gross human rights malpractices in post-apartheid South Africa (Phohlela, 1995). The white farmers are thus the illegal occupiers of an unfair portion of South Africa's farmland, many of whom do not even live on their farms (Holomisa, 1994; Makwetu, 1994, 1996).

### ***Traditional African chiefs as guardians of the land***

There are also aspects of the liberationist discourse which do not correspond with the Dependency discourse. A strong subset within the liberationist discourse (many hereditary African chiefs themselves) focused on traditional African leaders as important agents in the land reform process. Ignoring the complicated history of collaboration and manipulation between the chiefs and white authorities, these speakers described African chiefs as custodians of the land who acted on behalf of the communities they ruled (Netshimbupfe, 1994), holding it in trust for them. These chiefs could not do as they pleased with this land, but had to act in consultation with their elders, or invite the wrath of their subjects (Holomisa, 1994). These chiefs were depicted as heroic resisters to the incursions of white settlers, many of whom were dispossessed or died in defence of their land and communities (Holomisa, 1995; Mokoena, 1994; Ndlovu, 1995). It was admitted that some chiefs are seen as obstacles to the development of the land they control (Holomisa, 1994), that some deny land access to women in their communities, and that some sell community land for their own personal gain. However, it was argued that many chiefs perform a vital welfare function in South African society, as they

... operate functional and relatively efficient systems of communal land administration which protect the rights of all members, particularly the rights of the poor, who would be vulnerable to losing their land to market forces if the land were to be individualised (Mathebe, 1996).

Traditional African leaders are thus constructed in this strand of the liberationist discourse as both the guardians of African culture and the poorest of the rural landless in South Africa.

Those within the liberationist discourse constructing traditional chiefs as an important part of the land reform process also argue that land should be returned to the chiefs rather than individuals or non-tribal groups (Makhanya, 1994; Mentz, 1994). Given pre-colonial forms of land access and ownership, the liberationist discourse gives rise to suggestions that the chiefs are in fact the rightful owners of the land:

When we talk about land, we talk about the land that was annexed by the British, who annexed it from *amakhosi* [Zulu traditional leaders]. If the land is then given back, one should go back to the *amakhosi* to find out who annexed their land, when, and the land can then be given back to them [Hansard translation from *isiZulu*](Ndlovu, 1996, p. 2976).

In addition, the chiefs should be the focus of land reform as they are the guardians of traditional African culture (Ngubane, 1995). The traditional authorities and the laws and customs under which they live “... give meaning and a sense of belonging to millions of South Africans” (Hlengwa, 1996, p. 2992).

### ***White land gained illegally***

The liberationist discourse gives rise to arguments that most of the land owned by white South Africans was gained dishonestly and by violent

means. Members of the ANC argued that historically, “... there is no trace of who purchased land from a specific [African] chief” (Netshimbupfe, 1995, p. 862). Rather whites had

... over the heads of the indigenous owners of the land, and in collaboration with the colonial land apartheid governments, arrogated to themselves ownership of the land. Their title to the land was duly registered in accordance with their imposed system of landownership, to the extent that the Whites are now, in terms of the law, in possession of documentary proof of ownership in the form of title deeds, whilst the Black residents can only point to the graves of their forebears as proof of their right of ownership of the land (Holomisa, 1996b, p. 18).

During the colonial era, land was awarded to white soldiers who had killed a certain number of indigenous Africans in battle (Dyani, 1995). When the Natives Land Bill was signed into law and implemented in 1913, for the majority of black South Africans “... this was the era when both the poles, the Arctic and the Antarctic, fell on South Africa, when winter fell upon the Black people of South Africa” (Phohlela, 1996, p. 3005). Later, during the apartheid era “...there was no willing buyer and no willing seller, but straightforward confiscation [of black people’s land]. Whatever compensation was paid was laughable and also amounted to confiscation” (De Lille, 1995, p. 71). Therefore, any market-based land reform programme

would only legalise the robbery of colonial, segregation and apartheid policies, and condone the land grabbing of the whites (Makwetu, 1994).

### ***Property rights entrench apartheid inequality***

In this light, within the liberationist discourse it was argued that there was no need for a property rights clause in the final Constitution (Hanekom, 1995c; Khasu, 1996a; Makwetu, 1996), which would only entrench the existing racial disparities arising from colonial and apartheid land policies (Du Plessis, 1994; Sizani, 1996; Spitz & Chaskalson, 2000; Szeftel, 1994; Yanou, 2009). In addition, arguments arising from the libertarian discourse about the necessity of property rights to ensure investment were also directly challenged: “This argument about investment flying out of the country because of the property clause is arrogant, racist and erroneous. At best it is balderdash” (Khasu, 1996a, p. 376).

### ***Government expropriation***

In addition, the liberationist discourse gives rise to arguments against a market-based land reform programme (Sizani, 1996), that access to land is a basic human right (Goosen, 1995), and pointing to the small amounts of land transferred under a similar policy in Zimbabwe prior to President Mugabe’s fast-track land reform of 2000. Doubt is expressed about market-based policies which would “... create a situation in which only those who have financial means, and the banks, will be able to make use of the land” (Holomisa, 1995, pp. 841-842). A market-led land redistribution programme would tie the hands of the post-apartheid government (Makwetu, 1994), making it unable to help the rural landless poor, and creating a situation in

which only a fortunate few would be able to purchase land (Holomisa, 1994). Liberationists went so far as to argue that the “... principle of willing buyer, willing seller is the language of the wealthy and the lofty” (Khasu, 1996b, p. 52), and would only serve to “... unduly enrich those who are endowed with large tracts of land, regardless of how they acquired them” (Holomisa, 1996a, p. 2960). Such a land reform programme would make the post-apartheid government pay for the sins of apartheid (Holomisa, 1994).

Rather than a market-based land reform programme, the liberationist discourse prompts arguments in favour of a land claims process where the victims of apartheid and segregation removals would regain their land without paying for it, or financial compensation for the land they lost (Mokoena, 1994; Netshimbupfe, 1994; Ngwenya, 1994). In addition, in place of a market-based land reform programme, the government should expropriate land for redistribution to black South Africans (Du Plessis, 1994; Holomisa, 1995, 1996a; Netshimbupfe, 1994; Sizani, 1996; Spitz & Chaskalson, 2000; Szeftel, 1994; Yanou, 2009).

### ***Redistribution to groups rather than individuals***

Once the government had gained possession of land for redistribution, many liberationists argued that it should be redistributed to large groups of black South Africans rather than individuals. “It is no good to help 1 000 people to become land owners. One has to use the communal system to be able to give land to the other people as well” (Mentz, 1994, p. 2535). This is because communal farming systems had helped black farmers outcompete

white farmers in the early stages of colonialism by giving free access to land and cheap family labour (Ngubane, 1994). The redistribution of land to groups could give black farmers these advantages once again, in addition to providing training to future black commercial farmers (Mentz, 1994).

### ***Government finance for beneficiaries***

Liberationists further argued that one of the primary problems restricting black South Africans in the communal areas was an inability to access capital. Therefore, it was suggested that an agreement be found between finance institutions and those controlling land access in communal areas enabling residents of these areas to borrow money to develop their land (Holomisa, 1994; Netshimbupfe, 1995). However this agreement should preclude the possibility of financial institutions seizing land in payment for unpaid debts, as those living in the communal areas “... are the poorest of our citizens, who have no other source of making a living except their land, and if they were to be exposed to the risk of losing that land, they would have nowhere else to go” (Holomisa, 1996a, p. 2959).

The liberationist discourse also gives rise to advocacy in favour of the provision of intensive assistance to the beneficiaries of land reform (Chuenyane, 1995, p. 891).

... we have to establish programmes to assist them in re-establishing themselves as viable, functioning enterprises, if we are to avoid the danger of creating more impoverished resettlement camps (Ngwenya, 1994, p. 2531).

Given the amount of assistance provided to white farmers, it would be unacceptable for the post-apartheid government to neglect the needs of the beneficiaries of land reform (Seperepere, 1994).

### ***Focus on rural landless women***

A strong strand within the liberationist discourse argues that land reform should concentrate on giving land title to rural landless women (Holomisa, 1994). This is because there “... can be no doubt that the people who bear the heaviest burden of poverty in the rural areas, are women” (Ngwenya, 1994, p. 2532). In an indication of some debate within the liberationist discourse, African chiefs in the communal areas are also urged to give more opportunities to women to access and own land (Ngwenya, 1994). In these areas, women

... are permitted to work the land, but not to own it. Some are not even permitted to participate in community meetings if they do not have their husband’s permission. Surely this practice goes against the provisions of the Constitution? ... The removal of these laws is necessary for land reform (Routledge, 1996, p. 3003).

This strand of the liberationist discourse, therefore, urges a strong focus on the needs of rural landless women.

### ***No sale of land to foreigners***

Finally, the liberationist discourse gives rise to the argument that no more land should be sold to non-South Africans while black South Africans are still landless. “I am saying that no land should be sold to foreigners while

our people do not as yet have any land. I want to repeat that no land must be sold to foreigners” (Ndlovu, 1996, pp. 2976-2977). Rather, the South African government should have first option of purchasing all land put on the market (Holomisa, 1996a).

### ***Land reform to break black dependency***

In contrast to the libertarians, then, the liberationists argued for changes to the agrarian structure created by apartheid policies in favour of black South Africans. Constructing black South Africans as having been forced into an inferior dependent relationship with white South Africans, liberationists argued that the primary way this was accomplished was through the illegitimate dispossession of their land. Land reform is therefore depicted as essential to restoring the economic independence of black South Africans. A distinct section of this discourse calls for the return of agricultural land to traditional African chiefs, who are constructed as the original guardians of the land. Another section argues that rural landless women should be the primary focus of land reform efforts. All those subscribing to the liberationist discourse challenge the libertarian emphasis on individual property rights, and recommend government expropriation of white-owned farms, for redistribution to groups of black South Africans. These groups need intensive financial and technical assistance from the government, to help them progress socio-economically.

### **Land reform within the new constitution**

In the development of both the Interim and the final Constitutions, agreement on the land and property clauses was only reached in the very

final stages of the negotiations (Hamilton, 2006). The property clause created in the Interim Constitution has been called a “... clumsily drafted compromise ...” (Walker, 2005a, p. 815) where existing property rights were protected, while provision was made for the state to expropriate property from private land owners under certain circumstances, and against the payment of proper compensation based on the history of the acquisition of the land, the market value of the land, the value of the owner’s investment in the land, and the interests of all those affected (Cousins, 1997; Du Plessis, 1994; Hall, 2010a; Marais, 2011; Miller & Pope, 2000a; Spitz & Chaskalson, 2000; Walker, 2005a). Land restitution was limited to those cases of dispossession which occurred after 1913 (Cousins, 1997), and would be implemented by a Commission to process claims and a Court of Law to make the final adjudication (Walker, 2005a). The tension between the liberationist concerns of the ANC, the SACP and the PAC and the libertarian concerns of the NP and the Democratic Party was resolved in such a way that neither set of concerns was given clear priority. The two approaches were put on a level footing, leaving the courts to weigh the two against each other. Because the Interim Bill of Rights exerted such a great influence over the final Constitution agreed to in 1996, the struggle and compromises made in 1993 over property rights and land restitution procedures in the Interim Constitution inadvertently set the future direction of land redistribution policy in South Africa (Spitz & Chaskalson, 2000). The final post-apartheid Constitution was signed into law by President Nelson Mandela on the 10<sup>th</sup> December 1996 (Gloppen, 1997).

South Africa's six-year period of crisis which had disturbed the pre-1990 equilibrium was over, and a new period of post-apartheid policy equilibrium was established.

It has been commented that in post-apartheid South Africa, the 'democratic movement' found itself assimilated into the state, rather than taking over and transforming it (Hebinck et al., 2011). This is reflected in the compromise arrived at on land — through the influence of liberationist ideas, the new post-apartheid land policy equilibrium allowed for the possibility of the restitution of land to those dispossessed between 1913 and 1990. However, under the competing influence of libertarian ideas, the new post-apartheid equilibrium still retained an emphasis on the rights of existing white large-scale farmers as being more important than those of black South Africans seeking greater access to land. Thus Section 25 (1) states that: "No-one may be deprived of property ... and no law may permit arbitrary deprivation of property" (Republic of South Africa, 1996, p. 7). The 1996 Constitution therefore entrenches the extant arrangements of land ownership in South Africa (Hall, 2010a, p. 41; Hamilton, 2006).

This study is motivated by the question of how the agrarian structure created prior to 1990 could be preserved in the post-apartheid era, despite the overwhelming mandate given to the government for change. In answering this, this chapter examines how the libertarian and liberationist discourses define land reform, and which aspects of each discourse became enshrined in the new constitution — which determined the basic

boundaries within which the game of land reform policy would be played by actors at the national policy and operational levels. The ideas from each discourse enshrined in the constitution had a number of implications: Firstly and most importantly, the libertarian ideas enshrined in the 1996 Constitution entrenched the advantages gained by white farmers under the old equilibrium. While the new policy equilibrium around land was based on a different set of ideas to those subscribed to during apartheid, the effects of the old policy equilibrium around land were preserved in the post-apartheid policy equilibrium around land. Despite questions around how this could be morally justified (Ntsebeza, 2004), the libertarian emphasis on individual property rights enshrined in the constitution meant that the outcomes of the post-apartheid game of land reform could not differ substantially from the pattern of land ownership during the colonial, segregation and apartheid eras. Therefore, while white South Africans no longer have privileged access to land in post-apartheid South Africa, the land they gained in the past, when they did have privileged access to it, is guaranteed to them in the Constitutional Bill of Rights.

The libertarian compromise with liberationist ideas meant that some access to land for black South Africans is made possible by subsequent clauses giving the government limited powers to expropriate land for land reform (Cousins, 1997). “Property may be expropriated ... for a public purpose or in the public interest ...” (Republic of South Africa, 1996, p. 7). The public interest is defined as “... the nation’s commitment to land reform, and to reforms to bring about equitable access to all South Africa’s natural

resources ...” (Republic of South Africa, 1996, p. 7). However, as the land rights of white South Africans are guaranteed, regardless of their privileged access to it in the past, the expropriation of the land is “... subject to compensation, the amount of which and the time and manner of payment of which have either been agreed to by those affected or decided or approved by a court” (Republic of South Africa, 1996, p. 7). In a minor victory for the liberationist ideational approach, the amount of the compensation paid must reflect “... an equitable balance between the public interest and the interests of those affected ...” (Republic of South Africa, 1996, p. 7). Along with the market price of the land, ‘just and equitable compensation’ is therefore defined as including the current use of the property, the history of its acquisition, the extent of direct state investment and subsidy in the property, and the purpose of the expropriation (Republic of South Africa, 1996).

Reflecting the liberationist ideas of sections of the ANC, Section 25 goes on to provide the outlines of a broad-based land reform programme in South Africa. The government is mandated to “... take reasonable legislative and other measures, within its available resources, to foster conditions which enable citizens to gain access to land on an equitable basis” (Republic of South Africa, 1996, p. 7), making some form of land redistribution programme necessary. In addition, the government was mandated to improve the tenure of those “... whose tenure of land is legally insecure as a result of past racially discriminatory laws or practices ...” (Republic of South Africa, 1996, p. 7), setting the stage for tenure reforms as part of a broader

land reform programme. Finally, the victims of 'forced removals' dating after the proclamation of the 1913 Land Act were guaranteed restitution of the land they lost, or equitable redress for it (Republic of South Africa, 1996), mandating a land restitution programme as well.

All three of these mandated programmes, however, were to proceed under the pre-eminent libertarian principle set out at the beginning of Section 25 which guaranteed existing property rights. One of the reasons, therefore, why so little has been achieved by post-apartheid land reform policies, is that at the constitutional level, while the new policy equilibrium "... contains potentially far-reaching constitutional imperatives for a more extensive land reform than that indicated in 1993" (Walker, 2005a, p. 816), the government is limited by the constitutional requirement that the property rights given to white South Africans before 1990 under a policy equilibrium based on the idea of white supremacy are respected. The following chapter examines the iterated efforts of the post-apartheid government to create land reform policy within these basic policy boundaries.

## Chapter Seven

### **Post-Apartheid Land Redistribution Policy: Assumptions and Silences**

On the 4<sup>th</sup> of September 1998, Fidel Castro, leader of Cuba and a personal hero to then-President Mandela and most of his government, gave a speech to a rapturous reception at a special sitting of the National Assembly, South Africa's lower house of Parliament, in Cape Town, South Africa. After congratulating all present for the peaceful transition from apartheid, he turned to the subject of improving the economic plight of South Africa's black people. Perhaps surprisingly, Castro suggested that there was

... absolutely nothing to be gained by disrupting the production system or squandering the vast material wealth, technical capacities, and productive efficiency created by the noble hands of workers under a cruel and unjust — virtually slave — system (Figueroa, 1998).

He went on to remark that preserving the positive aspects of such a system, while simultaneously ensuring its benefits were distributed more fairly was perhaps one of the most difficult tasks attempted by any society. Castro here penetrated to the heart of the dilemma facing those designing and implementing land redistribution, in 1998 and today. What would be the best way to preserve the benefits of the existing agricultural sector in South Africa, while simultaneously addressing the injustices committed while creating it, and distributing its benefits more widely in society?

Listening to Castro was the Minister of Land Affairs of the day, who had been given the task in 1994 by President Mandela of providing an answer to this dilemma, within the boundaries set by the Interim Constitution of 1993 and the final Constitution in 1996. His answer was the State Lands and Agricultural Grant (SLAG), which was replaced with the Land Redistribution for Agricultural Development (LRAD) policy, and later the Pro-Active Land Acquisition Strategy (PLAS). All three of these policies can be seen as sequential and iterated efforts to address the dilemma articulated by Castro, and create a viable land reform programme within the negotiated constraints of the Interim and the final Constitutions. All three policies can thus be seen as attempts to ‘square the circle’ of addressing the need for justice (past and present) for black South Africans while simultaneously fulfilling the terms established in the Interim and the final Constitution that upheld property rights.

This chapter forms part of the overall effort in this study to answer the question of why post-apartheid land reform policies have achieved so little in terms of redistributing land. The focus of this chapter is on the hidden assumptions and practices underpinning the actual land reform policies that have been developed in the post-apartheid context through an analysis of the series of documents produced by the government for each of these three policies. An interrogation of the assumptions and presuppositions which lay behind each of these policy iterations is undertaken using the ‘What’s the Problem Represented to be?’ approach developed by Bacchi (2009). A series of questions are asked of these three policies, aimed at

uncovering the problem representation, the assumptions, the history and the silences embedded in each. The aim is to make the implicit and hidden politics within each plan visible and provide a clear picture of what each policy aimed or aims to achieve, and for whom.

### **Theoretical approach**

Before embarking on this analysis, it is necessary to outline the theoretical lens used here. As is outlined in chapter three, Foucault provided the insight that we are governed by 'problematizations'. While it is generally assumed in everyday life that these problematizations are natural, they are in fact not fixed. Rather, they 'become', or 'emerge' as objects for thought in practices (Bacchi, 2012). Tracing the relations that produce these problematizations enables us to learn how we govern ourselves, and how truth is produced. Disrupting their 'taken-for-granted' status as truth, and revealing the fixed problematizations through which we are ruled as 'fragile', opens up relations of ruling for critical scrutiny.

The problematizations through which we are ruled arise out of many varied social practices, including the rules that are imposed on society, and the reasons given for them. Foucault studied the governmental rules and practices around the 'mad' to reveal how 'madness' was conceptualised or problematized. Problematization as a method therefore involves studying problematized 'objects', to consider their mutability. This detachment creates the possibility of understanding to a greater extent the system of limits and exclusions we practice without realising it (Bacchi, 2012).

One way problematisations are presented by governments is through policies. Any policy proposal put forward will reflect deep-seated cultural assumptions. This implies that the ‘problems’ policies are meant to address are not exogenous, but rather endogenous — they are created within the policy-making process. Rather than reacting to problems, governments are in fact active in the creation and production of policy problems — policies give shape to problems, they do not actually address them (Bacchi, 2009).

Critical insight can therefore be obtained by making the ‘problems’ that are implicit in public policies explicit, and scrutinising them closely. It is possible to scrutinise problematisations by identifying the implied problem from the proposed plan of action, or public policies and policy proposals.

Every policy or policy proposal is a prescriptive text here, setting out a practice that relies on a particular problematisation. This is possible because what we propose to do about something indicates what we think needs to change. How the ‘problem’ is represented matters — the way the problem is represented carries all sorts of implications for how the issue is thought about, how the people involved are treated, and how they are encouraged to think about themselves (Bacchi, 2009, 2012). During the process of problematisation, complexity is necessarily reduced — only part of a story is being told. “As a result it is critically important to interrogate the problem representations that lodge within public policies in order to see what they include and what they leave out” (Bacchi, 2009, pp. xii-xiv).

Rather than accepting the designation of some issue as a ‘problem’, the kinds of ‘problems’ that are presumed to exist and how they are thought

about must be interrogated. In this way, we gain important insights into the thinking that informs governing practices. It is necessary to think deeply about the assumptions and presuppositions lying behind and shaping selected policies, and to consider the implications flowing from these presuppositions and how particular forms of rule have come to be.

Bacchi's (2012) 'What's the problem represented to be?' (WPR) approach argues that it is possible to take any policy proposal, and to 'work backwards', to deduce how it produces a 'problem'. To do this, six questions are asked of a given policy: how a problem is represented in a specific policy; the presuppositions or assumptions underlying this representation of the 'problem'; the history of this problem representation; what is left unproblematic in this problem representation; the effects produced by this representation of the 'problem'; and how this representation of the 'problem' has been produced, disseminated and defended (Bacchi, 2009). These questions are "... designed to tease out conceptual premises, to draw attention to the 'history' (genealogy) of specific problematisations, and to consider their effects, including subjectification effects, for how people live their lives" (Bacchi, 2012, p. 5). The point of this exercise is not to stake out a position for or against a specific policy stance, nor to identify the 'real' problem. Rather, the intention is to explore the systems of limits and exclusions we practice without realising it. The goal is to stand back from taken-for-granted objects and concepts, and to determine how they have come to be through studying the politics that have gone into their making.

This approach to policy analysis is less concerned with intentionality than with identifying the deep conceptual premises operating within problem representations. The point is to draw attention to the assumptions and presuppositions that make it possible to develop these policies. The aim is to dig deeper than usual, with the goal of understanding policies better than the policy makers themselves (Bacchi, 2009).

This chapter uses an adapted form of Bacchi's set of questions, in order to examine the taken-for-granted concepts driving the SLAG, LRAD and PLAS policies. Specifically, this study interrogates the problem representations, the presuppositions, the history of these three policies, and the silences they contain. Chapter eight will examine the effects produced on land reform beneficiaries. The questions are not answered and set out in the order given here, but the answers are used as and when necessary to bring to the light and present clearly the hidden assumptions and the underlying focus of each of these three policies.

Having outlined the questions driving this chapter, I now introduce the texts they were applied to. As discussed in chapter six, the negotiated deal reached between the ANC and the NP in the negotiations in 1993 (Spitz & Chaskalson, 2000) around the property clause in the Constitution set the outer boundaries within which land reform in South Africa would occur. In the metaphor used in an earlier chapter, these negotiations set out the lines of the playing field within which the game would be played. The basic parameter within which all efforts at land reform would have to work was

that South Africa's white farmers had every right to own the property and the capital which they had accumulated during the colonial, segregation and apartheid eras. In any post-apartheid land reform programme, the Constitution mandated that white farmers would have to be compensated for any land they gave for redistribution. While the Constitution specified a range of factors which would determine the compensation white farmers would receive, a large part of the determination of the prices paid for land was determined by the market.

This chapter follows the attempts of the ANC government to enact a land reform programme within the boundaries of this negotiated playing field. It examines the three policies created by the ANC government in pursuit of land reform, under the compulsion of having to pay market-determined prices for all land transferred from white to black ownership. SLAG was implemented from 1994 to 1999, during the period that Derek Hanekom as Minister of Land Affairs presided over the DLA. LRAD was enacted from 2000 in the same Department under Minister Thoko Didiza, during the Presidency of Thabo Mbeki (Hall, 2004a). In 2009, the name of the DLA was changed to the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform (DRDLR), and Gugile Nkwinti was appointed Minister of this Department by President Jacob Zuma (Jacobs, 2012). Under Minister Nkwinti, the PLAS policy was developed and was implemented in place of LRAD. From this point on, when discussing SLAG and LRAD the DLA will be referred to as the responsible department. When discussing PLAS the DRDLR will be referred to rather than the DLA.

When discussing SLAG, this study will draw from the *White Paper on South African land policy* (DLA, 1997), as it provides a full account of relevant information to allow the analysis of the assumptions and presuppositions that made it possible for this policy to be developed. When discussing LRAD, the *Land redistribution for agricultural development: A sub-programme of the land redistribution programme* (MALA, n.d.) policy document was analysed. Finally in relation to PLAS, four documents were studied: the *Framework for the proactive land acquisition strategy (PLAS)* (DRDLR, 2011a); the *Policy for the recapitalisation and development programme of the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform* (DRDLR, 2013); the *Green Paper on land reform, 2011* (DRDLR, 2011b), and a speech given by Minister Nkwinti in Parliament in 2012 (Nkwinti, 2012). The *Green Paper on land reform* (DRDLR, 2011b) provides insights into the overarching aims and motivations of PLAS, and so was included as a source. Minister Nkwinti's speech provides insights into the deeper motivations behind the PLAS policy. Having outlined the approach to the analysis of these documents, and the sources drawn on, the chapter turns to the scrutiny of SLAG, perhaps the most hopeful of the three policies, and aimed at benefitting the widest range of the rural landless poor.

Table 7-1

*Focus and method of SLAG, LRAD and PLAS*

	<b>Beneficiaries</b>	<b>Method</b>
<b>SLAG</b>	Poorest households	Market
<b>LRAD</b>	Individual entrepreneurs with access to capital	Market
<b>PLAS</b>	Aspiring black commercial farmers	Government

### **State Lands and Acquisition Grant**

#### ***Mass poverty relief through the market***

Table 7-1 provides a summary of the focus and method of the three land reform policy iterations at the national policy level. In essence, the SLAG policy provided a small grant to households earning less than a set income threshold, to assist them to purchase land on the market. Beneficiary households were encouraged to join together in larger groups, pool their grants and buy pieces of land together (Hall, 2010c). SLAG was the first land redistribution policy produced by the first post-apartheid government. As such, it was the product of the great hope and energy of the new ANC government. This policy also held great symbolic power for many black South Africans, as it promised a way to regain the land taken under the colonial and apartheid governments. Thus, drawing on themes explored previously in the liberationist and the Dependency discourses, the SLAG policy is unequivocal about the disadvantaged status of black South Africans. Throughout the document, the majority black population of South Africa is described as historically disadvantaged and poor, ignored by the formal financial sector, and confined by colonial and apartheid legislation

to “... overcrowded black labour-reserve areas ...” (DLA, 1997, pp. 9, 24, 73). This meant that under apartheid, black South Africans were unable to own land, and so in post-apartheid South Africa they suffer under insecure forms of land tenure, and have no access to productive resources. In contrast, the minority white population is described as being served by a modern and sophisticated financial system, and as being the freehold owners of large-scale commercial farms . By implication they are also historically advantaged, wealthy, enjoying secure forms of land tenure and full access to productive resources. Land redistribution is, therefore, part of the overall process of changing this inequality, so that black South Africans can improve their economic position.

The question is how the SLAG policy aimed to achieve this. As specific problem representations are not inevitable or permanently fixed, competing problem representations exist over time and space (Bacchi, 2009). There was no inevitability, therefore, about what particular policy instruments SLAG would deploy. However, the overall approach to the task of land redistribution taken under SLAG was governed by the constraints laid on the land reform process in the Interim Constitution of 1993, and the final Constitution of 1996, where provisions to safeguard existing property rights meant white land owners were to be given market-related compensation for their land if it was transferred under the land reform programme (Republic of South Africa, 1996). This representation of the problem draws on the concept — embedded deeply in existing Western societies and economies — that land is a form of property, which can be owned outright by one

person, and exchanged on the market like any other commodity. The process of how property rights came to be the dominant form of landownership in South Africa, and how this principle came to be embedded in the Constitution has been described in some detail in previous chapters. The important point here is that it was not inevitable that the land reform programme would be market-based. A strong argument was made at a key decision-point by the liberationists that it should not be bound by the market. However, as the result of negotiations between the two most powerful parties, a property clause was included in the Constitution. This meant that all transfers of land under land reform would have to be compensated at their market value, that land redistribution would occur through market transactions under the provisions of the property clause in the constitution. Under SLAG, the government gave a subsidy to beneficiaries, assisting the purchase of land on the market. Despite centuries of discriminatory policies barring black South Africans from access to land, then, the 1997 *White Paper* deployed the ahistorical policy tool of the market, with no reference to the social, political or economic context of the problem of landlessness in South Africa.

The constraints on land reform in the Constitution meant that in SLAG, the “... challenge is to find a way of redistributing land to the needy, and at the same time maintaining public confidence in the market” (DLA, 1997, p. 17). In this statement lies the fundamental contradiction at the heart of the SLAG policy. Black South Africans were constructed in this policy as needing to be given access to land as a matter of justice, but at the same

time the existing agrarian system (called ‘the market’ in the *White Paper*) had to be preserved. In fact, this binary was to be remedied through the market for farmland. The market could not be bypassed in the matter of restorative justice (DLA, 1997). However, if black South Africans were to take matters into their own hands and take the land they want outside of the market and the law, or if the government were to bypass the market in transferring land in the name of justice, this would break public confidence in the existing agrarian system, and so constitute a threat to long-term stability, development and sustainable growth (DLA, 1997), and create social and economic dislocation (DLA, 1997).

The analysis so far has uncovered and examined the key binary within the SLAG policy — the opposition between the demands of justice and the demands of the existing agrarian system. This is similar to the analysis by the World Bank, which gave recommendations on land reform prior to 1994. According to Hall (2010c), World Bank analysts saw land reform as revolving around a tension between “... the desire to address welfare objectives through the redistribution of land and the need to promote the productive use of agricultural land” (p. 182). The binary at the heart of land reform according to this analysis was between equity and efficiency. To the World Bank, a market-led land reform could give black South Africans greater access to land through the market (increasing their welfare), while simultaneously creating a more efficient (small-scale) agricultural sector.

The binary presented in the White Paper by the DLA, however, is different. Rather than being a choice between social equity and economic efficiency, the justice/existing agrarian system binary frames land redistribution as a choice between either creating greater economic equality through non-market means, or creating economic equality through the market, and thereby allowing the market to dictate the pace of land redistribution. In the equity/efficiency binary constructed by the World Bank, social equity is seen as optional. In the binary presented in SLAG, social equity is not seen as optional. It is the end result of both options. The only real debate is on how it is to be achieved. Using non-market means to redistribute land here is portrayed as highly risky and undesirable. Leaving the redistribution of land to the market is seen as being much safer, and the guarantor of long-term prosperity for the entire country.

In contrast, in the World Bank analysis, social equity was seen as existing in opposition to market efficiency (Hall, 2010b). Under SLAG then, the market is presented as a method to achieve the social equity that South Africa so desperately needs. In fact, the market is presented as the only responsible way for the government to do this. Land redistribution under SLAG cannot, therefore, be much more than the "... removal of impediments to the efficient operation of the land market" (DLA, 1997, p. 36). While both the World Bank and the DLA come to the same conclusion here, the point is that they arrived at the market as the best way to effect land reform by different routes. The DLA, however, at least acknowledged the possibility of non-market means to transfer land.

### ***'Development' according to SLAG***

This emphasis on the market led to a specific conception of development constructed in the *White Paper* (DLA, 1997). Development here is economic development, characterised by an increase in entrepreneurial activity. The main indication of how the process of 'development' is constructed in SLAG is in the assertion that:

Property rights are critical for gaining access to capital for investment in entrepreneurial activity — either through selling the asset or through getting finance on the strength of it. In developed economies, 70% of the credit which new businesses raise is secured by using formal titles as collateral for mortgages (DLA, 1997, p. 13).

The assumptions around development here are obviously derived from the boundaries laid around land reform in the Interim and the final Constitutions, but on a broader level it links to wider narratives around economic development such as the Large Farms and libertarian discourses, which specify property rights as a key mechanism for transferring resources like agricultural land, capital and technology through the market to those able to use them most efficiently (Akram-Lodhi, 2007). As these resources are used as efficiently as possible, 'developing' societies move from a 'traditional' to a 'modern' state (Akram-Lodhi, 2007; Kuznets, 1955; Marangos, 2009; Mergel, 2012; Rostow, 1990).

The focus on property rights means that the value of land as constructed in SLAG is primarily economic:

Our land is a precious resource. We build our homes on it; it feeds us; it sustains animal and plant life and stores our water. It contains our mineral wealth and is an essential resource for investment in our country's economy (DLA, 1997, p. 7).

The primary value of land here is as a source of capital that can stimulate the rest of the economy. This means that 'land redistribution' is primarily an economic process. The White Paper (1997) asserts that the "... primary reason for the government's land reform measures is to redress the injustices of apartheid and to alleviate the impoverishment and suffering that it caused" (p. 11). In the short term, this may involve providing black South Africans "... with basic needs and more secure livelihoods" (p. 11), and land for residential purposes. This may include providing land to "... women who need to grow food to feed the family ..." (p. 27), and it may involve allowing individuals and communities to "... have a choice as to the form of tenure they prefer" (p. 104). This is because the purpose of redistributing land is "... to improve their livelihoods and quality of life" (p. 36). However, to the DLA, the most important manner of improving the livelihoods and quality of life of black South Africans was to give them property rights, and so integrate them into the existing formal economy. This meant that the primary task of SLAG was "... to extend property ownership and/or access to productive resources to the historically disadvantaged and poor ..." (p. 67).

To ease inequality between whites and blacks in South Africa then, SLAG proposed giving black South Africans access to land through the market.

Thus, all the different groups of people who were identified as the targets of the SLAG grant — the landless, the farm workers, the labour tenants, those with insecure tenure, and the land restitution claimants (DLA, 1997) — were constructed as suffering from a lack of access to capital to buy land on the open market. “The reality is that the poor and the landless are not in a position to acquire land at market prices without assistance from the state” (p. 17). As the Minister of Land Affairs at the time explained in Parliament in 1994: “We have a situation in our country in which there are many willing sellers of land and anxious buyers of land, but because of the inability to get finance for land purchase, nothing is happening” (Hanekom, 1994, p. 2514). All that was needed then was an injection of capital to poor households, to bring about the “... removal of impediments to the efficient operation of the land market” (DLA, 1997, p. 36).

The SLAG grant therefore was meant to help “... poor and disadvantaged people to buy land ...” (DLA, 1997, p. 35) through the market. This in turn was supposed to give them access to capital for investment in entrepreneurial activity. There were no restrictions on what beneficiaries could do with their land under SLAG in the *White Paper*. If they chose to undertake economic activity on the land they had bought, a wide range of possible types of agricultural production were envisaged, ranging from growing food or raising livestock for subsistence purposes to “... a minority who are able to produce a surplus and wish to produce more ...” (p. 27). This policy document constructs such beneficiaries as engaging in small-scale agricultural production of crops on irrigated or rain-fed plots, small

livestock production in feedlots or extensive grazing systems, or the cultivation of timber or fruit trees. Alternatively, the beneficiaries could enter into production contracts with other agri-business, or even use their grants to buy shares in existing large-scale commercial farms. All these activities were seen as in some way accessing or generating capital from land, which over time would enable them to move further from a 'traditional' economic state, and closer to a 'modern' state, like white South Africans were able to under colonial, segregation and apartheid policies.

***Silence: How the land came to be owned by white South Africans***

SLAG provided a small grant to help beneficiaries purchase land on the open market. The compromise made on property rights by the ANC during its negotiations with the NP meant that there was a deep silence in SLAG around how that land came to be owned by white South Africans. The land which black SLAG beneficiaries were to purchase from white farmers was on the market because it was wrested violently by extra-market means by white South Africans from black South Africans during the colonial, Union and apartheid eras. The fact that these extra-market means included the use of physical violence and force is likewise left unaddressed. There is some acknowledgement in SLAG of land dispossession and the bitterness it has caused among black South Africans, evident in statements that resentment "... over land dispossession runs deep in our society. It threatens to boil over..." (DLA, 1997, p. 11). Despite this, it was repeatedly emphasised throughout the 1997 White Paper that land redistribution must take place through the market.

In a moment of supreme unintended irony, the SLAG policy condemns black landless South Africans who themselves use extra-market means to gain access to land, on the basis that the “... the invasion and illegal occupation of land is a threat to stability and development” (DLA, 1997, p. 27). This implies that when white South Africans used exactly the same extra-market means to access land before 1994, this somehow contributed to creating ‘stability and development’. However after 1994, the use of such extra-market means by black South Africans to access land detracted from ‘stability and development’. The SLAG policy does not acknowledge or address this contradiction.

### ***Intended beneficiaries***

Having established how land redistribution worked under SLAG, what follows is an examination of the intended beneficiaries. Land reform under SLAG was problematized as a matter of providing black South Africans with the capital to access land on the open market. It has been estimated by Hall (2004a) that apartheid policies left about 16 million black South Africans living in the communal areas during the 1990s, without access to enough land to support themselves. At the same time, some 3 million black South Africans lived and worked on commercial farms owned by whites. This suggests a total of at least 19 million people were potential targets of the SLAG grant. In order to ascertain who among these 19 million people were actually targeted by the SLAG grant, it is necessary to examine how they were categorised within this policy.

The specific focus of SLAG was to provide “... the disadvantaged and the poor with access to land for residential and productive purposes” (DLA, 1997, p. 9). To do this successfully, the first task was “... the identification of particularly marginalised groups in need of land ...” (p. 12). A number of these particularly marginalised groups are mentioned throughout the document. These include evicted and existing labour tenants, landless farm workers, new entrants to agriculture, women, and people resident in the communal areas. Women especially were singled out as priority targets of the policy (p. 12) , as they were “... discriminated against under many types of tenure arrangements” (p. 33). The *White Paper* did not position all groups as needing land for the same reasons. For some, land was needed only to grow food for subsistence. Others were positioned as needing access to land to graze their livestock, as well as a minority who are able to produce a surplus and wish to produce more. So there is a “... range of clients seeking to obtain land: from the poorest ... to emergent black entrepreneurs ...” (p. 37). Having recognised different groups as the target of the policy, and having recognised a range of different needs, the White Paper argues that these differing needs will all be catered to adequately by “... a single, yet flexible, redistribution mechanism ...” (p. 37) — a financial grant of R15 000 extended to single households or families (DLA, 1997) to enable them to buy land.

### ***A focus on households***

All the groups targeted by this policy — women, labour tenants, farm workers, aspiring black entrepreneurs — were classified into the same basic

homogenous unit of the household. Targeting households as the focus of the grant would therefore be the best way to serve the interests of these groups. “Land reform aims to contribute to economic development ... by giving households the opportunity to engage in productive land use ...” (DLA, 1997, p. 7). In addition, the poorest households in these groups would be in the greatest need, and so the grant was only made available to households with an average income of less than R1, 500 per month (p. 68). Individuals who were not part of a family were not specifically barred from accessing the grant, but they would need special permission to be given the grant. Households were constructed, then, as the basic unit of society in this policy document, and not individuals. The SLAG grant was therefore aimed at the vast majority of the households among the estimated 19 million rural landless poor living in South Africa at the time.

### ***Genealogy of the focus on households***

Given the boundaries laid around land reform by the Constitutions of 1993 and 1996, and the focus of SLAG on the transfer of property ownership through the market, it is perhaps surprising that the grant is aimed at the poorest households in the rural areas, and expects them to group together to buy land. Given the market focus of SLAG, it might have been expected that the grant would be distributed on an individual basis rather than to households and groups. This discrepancy is perhaps explained by the influence of many NGOs (all of which had focused on land dispossessions during the apartheid era) on the creation of the SLAG policy.

The last two decades of the apartheid regime saw a proliferation of land-based NGOs in South Africa, these being mostly funded by foreign donors. Largely created and staffed by middle-class English-speaking whites, during the apartheid era these organisations tried to legally defend communities threatened with 'black spot' resettlement from state action. The expertise of human rights lawyers working in the legal NGO, the Legal Resources Centre, was in great demand from other land NGOs seeking to challenge the legality of the apartheid state's forcible removal of black people from 'white' areas (James, 2007; Walker, 2005a). As noted in chapter six, these NGOs had been active participants in the negotiations around the Constitution of post-apartheid South Africa, drawing on the liberationist discourse along with the ANC and the PAC (Wixley, 1994). Thus, the NGOs consistently resisted the inclusion of a property clause in the Interim and the final Constitution on the basis that obliging the payment of market-value compensation for redistributed land was a major threat to meaningful land reform (Hall, 2010c; Walker, 2005a). At the negotiations around the Interim Constitution, the NGOs had continually emphasised the need to bring the debates back to the question of justice and the restoration of land rights (Hall, 2010a; James, 2007). When it became clear that working within the negotiating process would not bring the results they desired, the NGOs organised a march of 500 people in July 1993 to the site of the negotiations, threatening land invasions if their demands were not met (Hall, 2010c). Their efforts, however, were largely in vain.

Despite this defeat, the land-based NGOs were given another opportunity to influence the land reform process. After the elections of 1994, the newly-created DLA was charged with implementing the land reform programme, and needed new staff. Given their experience around land and land issues, their solid academic qualifications, and, in some cases, their overseas experience, the members of the land-based NGOs were an obvious source for recruitment for the new DLA. Once employed in the DLA, they were able to implement some of the ideas in the liberationist discourse to which they subscribed. To them this meant turning the focus of policy within the Department as strongly as possible onto securing livelihoods for the poor (Hall, 2010a; James, 2007). The fact that the land-based NGOs not directly involved in creating policy within the DLA strongly supported the focus on 'households' in the White Paper (Hall, 2010c) suggests that they were successful in doing this, and that the concentration on households within the White Paper of 1997 (rather than on individuals) came from the influence of the former members of the land-based NGOs employed within the DLA. While they were not successful in keeping the property clause out of the Constitution, they could now at least bend the market-based land reform programme mandated by the Constitution in the direction of those they considered to be most in need of land, the poorest households among the rural landless.

### ***Justifications for the grant amount***

The *White Paper* (DLA, 1997) concedes that a single grant of R15 000 would not be enough for single households to buy land and begin growing

agricultural commodities for home consumption or the market. It explained that the grant was set at this level because, as a result of inadequate levels of funding from the central government, the DLA had to decide “... whether to provide a high level of subsidy to a small number of people, or whether to provide a modest subsidy to a higher number of beneficiaries” (p. 18). The Department made the decision in favour of a modest grant, “... so that as many eligible people benefit as possible” (p. 17). Households accessing this grant were expected to join together in larger groups, pooling their grants collectively “... to negotiate, buy and jointly hold land under a formal title deed” (p. 36). This is made possible by the *Communal Property Associations Act, 28 of 1996*, which enabled groups to “... collectively acquire, hold and manage property in terms of a written constitution” (p. 59). The groups identified as the main targets of the land reform policy — women, labour tenants, farm workers and aspiring black entrepreneurs — were broken down into basic household units. These units were then expected to recombine into groups (which may or may not have resembled the original groups identified), which pooled their grants to acquire and own land. In an echo of liberationist policy recommendations, these groups were expected to manage the land collectively, and make their own decisions as a group about how the land would be managed. “The intention is that groups should develop rules which are appropriate to their values and circumstances” (p. 59). In this way, SLAG would provide access to land ownership to the largest possible number of people, and so allow them to improve their economic standing.

### ***Group beneficiaries rather than individuals***

A number of reasons revolving around social welfare, politics and economic productivity are given for expecting that beneficiaries buy land as groups rather than as individuals or as families. It was asserted that "... many African people hold land through communal systems, because of the social and economic functions these fulfil ..." (DLA, 1997, p. 59). Drawing on aspects of the liberationist discourse, the *White Paper* argues that this is because communal systems "... provide free or very cheap access to land to the poor" (p. 31). This provides an important survival safety net for the poor. In addition, the land cannot be sold to raise cash in emergencies or foreclosed for debt — this means that the people living on communal land cannot be dispossessed. The *White Paper* also argues that there is a 'false dichotomy' drawn between the merits and productivity of individual ownership of land over communal ownership. Many communal land ownership systems incorporate a high degree of individual land rights, and similarly, much privately owned land is not owned by individuals, but by large companies. In terms of politics, individual land ownership is also depicted as potentially dangerous because the previous apartheid government introduced legislation which "... envisaged that in the long run, all land in South Africa would be held under individual ownership" (p. 59). Given the politics of post-apartheid South Africa, anything proposed by the previous government was automatically seen in a poor light. Finally, in terms of economics, it is argued that "... there is no conclusive empirical evidence from Africa that individualisation of ownership is a variable in

increasing agricultural productivity. On the contrary other factors such as access to market, credit and quality and quantity of land are more important” (p. 31).

The practical effects of SLAG were soon publicized in the prominent failures of many large group projects such as at Elandskloof. This particular project failed due to unmet beneficiary resourcing expectations, along with intense conflict arising between the beneficiaries themselves over membership eligibility and access to resources and power (Barry, 2011). It became clear that the provision of property rights alone to large collections of households was not sufficient by itself to improve the lives of the rural landless poor. This led to a search within the DLA for another more suitable policy, and finally resulted in the introduction of LRAD in 2001. As will become clear, this new policy was not nearly as optimistic, wide-ranging or innocent of practical experience as SLAG had been.

## **Land Redistribution and Agricultural Development**

### ***Rewarding the lucky few***

SLAG had focused on providing access to land ownership to the poorest households among the rural landless in South Africa, and was in place from 1994 to 1999. According to Hall (2010c), reviews of the SLAG policy were underway as early as 1998, when internal discussion documents and policy papers outlined alternative approaches. This policy review was intensified when Thabo Mbeki succeeded Nelson Mandela as President of South Africa in 1999, and Derek Hanekom was replaced as Minister of Land Affairs by

Thoko Didiza. This was widely understood to be a signal from President Mbeki of his intent to implement an overall Africanist economic agenda in the agricultural sector. On her part, Minister Didiza brought a new focus to the Department with a greater emphasis on market forces and a much narrower beneficiary focus than had been seen previously under SLAG (Hall, 2010a; James, 2007). LRAD presented a new sliding scale of grants to beneficiaries, again to aid them in the purchase of land on the market (Hall, 2010c).

The new LRAD policy began from the same point as SLAG. Black South Africans were depicted as suffering from the legacy of racial discrimination in the ownership of farmland — they were the previously-disadvantaged groups of post-apartheid South Africa. While this was never stated in the document, white South Africans were implicitly placed in exactly the opposite position — they were the previously advantaged (MALA, n.d.). While in the past the white half of this binary was privileged, the LRAD grant was aimed at lessening the disadvantage of the black side. In terms of agriculture, LRAD aimed to do this by facilitating “... the transfer of 30% of all agricultural land [from white to black South Africans] over a period of 15 years” (p. 1).

Like SLAG, LRAD took the form of a grant aimed at enabling black South Africans to access the market for land. The problem representation was thus the same under LRAD as under SLAG — a lack of market access. The next step for the designers of LRAD was to decide who among the rural landless

poor the grant would benefit, and by how much. Under SLAG, Minister Hanekom had chosen to provide a small grant to as many of the rural landless poor as possible. When faced with this same choice, Minister Didiza made the choice to provide larger grants to a smaller number of people. This led to two important differences between SLAG and LRAD. Firstly, the LRAD grant was greatly increased relative to the SLAG grant. In addition, LRAD grants began at a minimum of R20, 000. Even this minimum grant exceeded the SLAG grant of R15 000 per household. Based on the amount of capital applicants could access, the LRAD grant increased to a maximum of R100, 000. The increased amount of the grant, and the fact that multiple individuals from a single family could each receive an LRAD grant lessened the pressure on beneficiaries to buy land in large groups.

This leads on to the second major difference between SLAG and LRAD.

Where SLAG had provided a minimal benefit to poorest households, LRAD concentrated on providing larger grants to individual African entrepreneurs. Like SLAG, the LRAD grant represented the problem of landlessness in South Africa as a lack of capital. Unlike SLAG though, this lack of capital was represented as affecting individual black South African entrepreneurs, and not poor black households. It was assumed that while individual black entrepreneurs had some access to capital (through loans, savings and other forms of equity), they did not have the full amount of capital required to access land on the open market, or to make full use of the land. Therefore, all that was necessary was that the DLA gave these individuals extra capital to augment what they could access from other

sources, allowing them to compete on the open market for land that came up for sale on the market. To draw out the entrepreneurs among the rural landless poor, an 'own contribution' of at least R5000 was required, which would be matched by a government contribution of R20 000. These two amounts combined would enable individual beneficiaries to purchase around 40 hectares of land<sup>19</sup>. Larger 'own contributions' were rewarded with larger government grants, to a maximum of R100 000 (MALA, n.d.)<sup>20</sup>, giving access to a potential 830 hectares of land on the open market<sup>21</sup>. In this way, the more successful African individual entrepreneurs were selected for and given access to substantially more land, and so substantially more potential income, under LRAD.

### ***Integration with and preservation of the status quo***

With a new focus on selecting and rewarding individual African entrepreneurs, the new LRAD policy aimed to preserve the existing large-scale commercial agricultural sector. As in SLAG, there is a deep silence around the dispossessions and injustices suffered by black South Africans during the creation of this sector. The main thrust of LRAD was to deracialise the ownership of land within the existing context of large-scale commercial farms (Hall, 2010c). In practical terms, this meant that LRAD

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<sup>19</sup> Assuming an average price of R600 per hectare in 2000 (Obi, 2006). The calculation being  $(R5\ 000 + R20\ 000)/R600.00 = 41.7$  hectares.

<sup>20</sup> The document used for this analysis of LRAD, *Land redistribution for agricultural development: A sub-programme of the land redistribution programme* (MALA, n.d.) is not dated. However, in the document it does mention an earlier draft from April 2000, and funds that would be introduced in the 2002/2003 financial year. From this, it can be assumed that the document was released between April 2000 and 2002.

<sup>21</sup> Again, assuming an average price of R600 per hectare in 2000, and an own contribution from the beneficiary of R400 000. The calculation being  $(R400\ 000 + R100\ 000)/R600.00 = 833.33$  hectares.

would focus on integrating the individual African beneficiaries selected under LRAD, into the existing white large-scale commercial farming sector. No reason was provided for wanting to preserve the sector in its existing form, and LRAD thus came to be identified with new processes of class formation, and an emerging discourse of black economic empowerment (Hall, 2010a). This economic empowerment, however, would only be for a very select group.

The SLAG policy had aimed to provide access to land to as many of the 19 million rural landless poor as possible. By the time LRAD was implemented in 2001, given that only one per cent of previously 'white' farmland had been transferred by 1999 (Hall, 2010c), the number of people living in these conditions almost certainly would not have decreased substantially. This implies that around 19 million people continued to be the theoretical beneficiaries of LRAD when it was created. This figure helps to put important aspects of the LRAD policy into perspective. LRAD aimed at creating a new class of black commercial farmers. Given there were around 45 000 large-scale (white-owned) commercial farms in South Africa in the 1990s (DAFF, 2012), LRAD promised that in time a substantial proportion of these farms would be owned and operated profitably by black South Africans. At its most successful then, LRAD only aimed at benefitting some 45 000 individual African entrepreneurs. At 0.23 per cent of the estimated 19 million rural landless poor at the time<sup>22</sup>, this is a tiny minority of potential beneficiaries. If 45 000 black commercial farmers were successfully

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<sup>22</sup> (45 000/19 000 000)\*100

absorbed into the existing large-scale agricultural sector in South Africa, the LRAD policy was largely silent on how the remaining 99.77 per cent of rural landless black South Africans were to benefit.

### ***Privileged access to policy formulation***

A result of this change of focus by Minister Didiza were changes in the groups given access to the policymaking process around land redistribution.

Policy-making forums now included consultants (often former civil servants) and agricultural economists from selected universities. In addition, a Presidential Working Group on Agriculture was created, bringing together the unions representing white and black commercial farmers. Minister Didiza announced a moratorium on new SLAG projects, and a review of existing land redistribution policy. The new policy participants, along with a joint task team of officials from the DLA and the National Department of Agriculture were tasked with creating a new land redistribution policy in February 2000. Two public events were held to consult stakeholders in land redistribution on the creation of this new policy in April and December 2000, and in which were included land-based NGOs, the Land Bank, and private financial institutions. Hall (2010a) argues that this reflected the emergence of a new policy alliance between a small but growing class of black commercial farmers, and the old agricultural establishment which had focused on the creation of large-scale white farmers prior to 1994. This new policy alliance is clear in a list provided in the LRAD document of the key stakeholders who were consulted during the course of drawing it up. Included were the Department of Agriculture, the

DLA, provincial Departments of Agriculture, and other 'key stakeholders'. According to Hall (2010c), these other key stakeholders included selected NGOs, the Land Bank, private financial institutions, agricultural economists from selected universities, private consultants, and representatives of the white and black commercial farming unions.

The new focus on creating a class of large-scale black commercial farmers in the DLA led to many of the white left-wing activists, who had contributed much to the creation of the SLAG policy, returning to the NGO sector.

Many of these activists criticised Didiza and her superiors in the new government of President Mbeki for sharing a disdain for the rural landless with their apartheid predecessors, thereby turning land reform away from securing livelihoods for the poor (James, 2007). In turn, the DLA questioned the legitimacy of the land-based NGOs as spokespeople for the rural landless.

In an indication of the extent to which the rural landless poor were excluded from the consultation process for the new policy, their only contribution to the creation of LRAD was to organise a protest outside the venue of one of these consultation meetings in December 2000 (Hall, 2010c; Wegerif, 2004). The rural landless poor were, thus, largely excluded from the creation of the LRAD policy, reflecting a deep silence. There was a small provision made for beneficiaries who might want to use the grant to buy land for subsistence purposes, or for production within the communal areas, but this was seen as symbolic and rhetorical (MALA, n.d.). However,

a number of other facets of LRAD combined to exclude the vast majority of the rural landless poor from access to the new grant.

### ***Mechanisms of exclusion***

The most important aspect of the policy which led to the exclusion of the rural landless poor was the requirement of an 'own contribution' to access LRAD grants. The minimum 'own contribution' was for R5000, which could be in the form of cash, labour or assets like machinery, equipment, or livestock (MALA, n.d.). The LRAD policy was silent about those applicants who were unable to muster the minimum own contribution of R5000. Given the levels of poverty in the rural areas of South Africa, where as a result of the effects of past apartheid policies some rural landless households spend up to 90% of their incomes on food (Del Grande, 2008), many potential beneficiaries do not have access to such funds (either borrowings or savings), nor do they own equipment worth this amount, and are unable to commit themselves full-time to contributing this amount of labour. The requirement of this 'own contribution' was, therefore, an important barrier in the way of the vast majority of the rural landless poor. The LRAD policy does not address the situations of rural landless black South Africans living in such conditions.

### ***Settlement versus agriculture***

The focus on the creation of black commercial farmers and the concomitant exclusion of the majority of the rural landless poor is also clear in the distinction made between land used for agriculture and land used for settlement. "LRAD is designed to provide grants to black South African

citizens to access land specifically for agricultural purposes ... Purely residential projects would not be supported under LRAD ..." (MALA, n.d., p. 1). A settlement/agricultural binary was constructed here, between land for agricultural use and land purely for settlement. LRAD would only provide land for residential purposes if "... beneficiaries seek to establish household gardens at their new residences, and ... funds for top-structure are sourced from [sic] elsewhere, e.g. Department of Housing" (p. 1). However, LRAD is designed to provide grants to black South Africans "... specifically for agricultural purposes, or to make better use of land already accessed (e.g. in communal areas)" (p. 4). The document repeatedly emphasises that land purchased by LRAD beneficiaries "... must be intended for an agricultural use of their choosing, such as improved food production to improve household consumption, grazing, production for markets, and other agricultural activities" (p. 5). Successful beneficiaries must be "... committed to use the grant to purchase or lease land for agricultural activities" (p. 8). Beneficiaries must "... show an intention to farm or enter Agri-business ..." (p. 11), implying that any use of redistributed land for residential purposes would be a waste, and cannot be allowed. There is, therefore, a clear expectation that land transferred under LRAD would only be used for commercial agricultural production.

### ***Subsistence versus commercial agriculture***

The exclusion of the majority of the rural landless poor was further evident in the requirement that applicants submit a farm plan with their applications, which would indicate "... the intended agricultural use of the

land and estimating a rough projected cash flow” (p. 9). This is also apparent in the language used to describe the inputs beneficiaries will need, including “... infrastructure investment, capital assets and short-term agricultural inputs” (p. 4), and “... productive capital, and operational inputs” (p. 4). Even if beneficiaries had extensive farming experience, it was still envisaged that they would need advisory services to help them operate efficiently as agri-business people . Finally, the approval of LRAD grants was based on the ‘viability’ of the farm plans submitted, which was defined as “... total project costs and projected profitability” (p. 4). The focus on producing evidence of business planning and financial expertise excluded the majority of the rural landless poor. The stipulation that LRAD would only be available to those who “... want to farm on full time basis (except for food safety-net beneficiaries) ... [and] who are willing to live on or near the land and operate or work on it ...” (MALA, n.d., p. 8) is further evidence that the focus was on the creation of a class of black commercial farmers. This document is also informed by the assumption that successful farmers expand the size of their operations over time. Therefore, it suggested that smaller farmers who were successful would naturally work their way from smaller units of land to larger ones by repeatedly using the LRAD grant (MALA, n.d.). The final point of success would be where a beneficiary would be able to purchase a larger piece of land “... through a combination of normal bank loans approved under standard banking procedures, and own assets and cash” (pp. 4-5).

### ***Post-settlement support for the select few***

The minority of beneficiaries who were to gain access land through LRAD were not assured of economic success as commercial farmers. LRAD (like SLAG) did not address the need to support the development of contemporary agriculture knowledge and skills, something that white farmers had benefitted from through generous agricultural extension policies during the apartheid era. The document only notes that the transfer of land under LRAD would “... create an increased demand for advisory services on the part of beneficiaries” (MALA, n.d., p. 12). It goes on to note that to meet this need, the agricultural extension service would have to be reformed, and that the Department of Agriculture would need to create a special programme to assist LRAD beneficiaries. As the Department of Agriculture operated independently of the DLA at the time, this document is silent about how extension support would be achieved. It does suggest that beneficiaries could consult extension services in the private sector, paying for these services through cost-sharing mechanisms that “... defray part of the expense of purchased agricultural advisory services ...” (p. 12). The document is once again silent about beneficiaries who would be unable to afford the services of private extension providers, or did not have the skills and experience to negotiate cost-sharing agreements with private providers of extension advice. The focus and methods of LRAD largely echoed the Africanist and neoliberal focus of the Mbeki administration. When President Mbeki lost his position of leadership in the ANC in 2007

(BBC, 2014), and later the Presidency of South Africa, a change in focus in land reform became extremely likely.

### **Pro-active Land Acquisition Strategy**

Under the third iteration of land redistribution policy, PLAS, the government undertook the task of acquiring land on the open market.

Under this policy, the government retains ownership of land purchased for redistribution, and rents it out to selected beneficiaries, while simultaneously providing them with intensive financial and extension support (DRDLR, 2011a, 2013). The origins of PLAS lie in the ANC National Conference at Polokwane in December 2007, which is described as a watershed moment in the history of the ANC and of South Africa as a whole (Jara & Hall, 2009). At this Conference President Mbeki was removed from the leadership of the ANC and replaced with Jacob Zuma, paving the way for Zuma to be elected President of South Africa later in 2009 (BBC, 2014). By this time, LRAD had been in operation for eight years. The removal of Mbeki opened the way for changes to be made to South Africa's overarching economic policies, and as a part of this, a reassessment of land reform in post-apartheid South Africa. This new focus became clear in the new resolution on agrarian change, land reform and rural development issued from the Polokwane Conference by the ANC. This resolution began from the recognition that "... the foundational challenge is not the redistribution of land, but the structure of the rural economy" (Jara & Hall, 2009, p. 221), and mandated a much larger role for the state in supporting land redistribution.

After his election, President Zuma selected Gugile Nkwinti as the new Minister of Rural Development and Land Reform tasked with implementing this new approach to land reform. In addition, what had been the DLA under Ministers Hanekom and Didiza was renamed the DRDLR (Nkwinti, 2012). The development of policy around this new approach resulted in the Comprehensive Rural Development Programme (CRDP), PLAS and the Recapitalisation and Development Programme (RADP).

### ***Development and underdevelopment***

The new approach to land reform presented by the DRDLR was in many respects clearly distinct from SLAG and LRAD. Firstly, unlike in the previous two iterations of land redistribution policy, a clear definition of ‘development’ is given, as “... shared growth and prosperity, full employment, relative income equality and cultural progress ...” (DRDLR, 2011b, p. 3). In contrast, its opposite, ‘underdevelopment,’ is defined as “... poverty, unemployment, relative income inequality and cultural backwardness” (p. 3). Within South Africa, black South Africans are portrayed as ‘underdeveloped’, while white South Africans are ‘developed’. This difference between the two groups is not seen as a coincidence, or the result of impersonal market forces. Rather, drawing on themes found in the liberationist and Dependency discourses, it is asserted that white South Africans reached this state of development through a process of “... accumulation by dispossession” (DRDLR, 2011b, p. 4) — white South Africans accumulated enough to enter a ‘developed’ state through dispossessing black South Africans of what they had. The story of South

Africa is therefore of the “... systematic denudation and impoverishment of African people ...” (DRDLR, 2011b, p. 3). Again, in a strong echo of the liberationist discourse, it is asserted that one of the most important possessions taken from black South Africans was their land — black South Africans suffered a “... pervasive process of land alienation that dispossessed the majority of South Africans of their land over the past few centuries” (DRDLR, 2013, p. 6). The SLAG and LRAD silence around the injustices and dispossessions suffered by black South Africans is thus broken in PLAS.

### ***The loss of land and culture***

In an amplification of ideas found in the liberationist discourse at the Constitutional level, in PLAS documents the alienation of black South Africans from their land is portrayed as doubly disastrous, as land is constructed here as having both a cultural and an economic function. Firstly, a strong connection is made between land and the maintenance of African culture in South Africa. African culture is linked to the concept of ‘*ubuntu*’, which is defined in English as ‘human solidarity’ (DRDLR, 2011b). Once the African people of South Africa lost access to land, they lost the ability to give expression to *ubuntu*, as they no longer were able to provide for their fellow human beings. This led to the loss of social cohesion among their communities (DRDLR, 2011b). In addition to enabling them to ensure social cohesion, having access to land gave black South Africans economic independence. While they were able to produce their own food and some surplus for the markets, black South Africans did not have to work for white employers. In addition, they had the opportunity to grow and develop

further economically. This is precisely why “... colonialists targeted land to subdue conquered populations, in order to turn them into vassals and slaves” (DRDLR, 2011b, p. 1). In the course of this process of dispossession, an entire class of black commercial farmers was destroyed (DRDLR, 2013). It was primarily the dispossession of land suffered by black South Africans that put them in a state of ‘underdevelopment’. This was because without land, they

... could no longer produce enough food to feed themselves as families; nor could they keep livestock. They had to survive on meagre or slave wages, which could hardly meet their own family needs, let alone being generous and readily share with neighbours. Colonialism and Apartheid brutalised African people, turning them hostage to perennial hunger and want, and related diseases and social strifes and disorders (DRDLR, 2011b, p. 2).

In contrast, white South Africans were able to prosper, owning most of the country’s commercial agricultural land, and dominating the agricultural industry completely (DRDLR, 2011a, 2013).

### ***Unjust, but worth maintaining***

Despite breaking the silence on South Africa’s history of dispossession of the Africans, PLAS like LRAD sees it as important that the existing large-scale commercial agricultural sector is maintained in its existing form.

Unlike the LRAD policy, a reason is given for this — the DRDLR sees it as vitally important that current levels of food production in South Africa are

maintained. The public interest lies in ensuring “... access to food at both household and national level to bring about household food security and national food self-sufficiency” (DRDLR, 2013, p. 6). There is an inherent assumption within PLAS that although the existing large-scale commercial farms of South Africa are the result of tremendous historical injustice, they are still important because in their present form being run as commercial businesses, they guarantee the food security of South Africa. As a government employee expressed it during an interview carried out for this study, “... the commercial farming sector is subject to the discipline of the profit and loss account” (CS4, 2012). This means that when the state acquires a farm under PLAS, it is “... acquiring an operating complex, capital-intensive operation ... [I]t is not possible to disturb the production process as there is too much risk at stake regarding the assets that are being acquired ...” (DRDLR, 2011a, p. 22). This means that it is necessary to ensure that “... all land reform farms are 100% productive” (DRDLR, 2013, p. 15). The public interest in maintaining food production is more important than the interests of beneficiaries in accessing land. According to those crafting the PLAS policy, the best way to ensure that the public interest is maintained is to preserve the existing formal agricultural economy. Therefore, repeating the central contradiction that was contained in the SLAG policy, to ensure that national and household food sufficiency is maintained, it is thus deemed necessary to ensure the rapid “... transfer of agricultural land to blacks without distorting the land market or business confidence ...” (p. 9).

### ***Separate assistance for the rural landless poor***

The PLAS commitment to preserving the existing large-scale commercial agricultural sector creates the same problems for the majority of the rural landless poor as were outlined in the discussion of LRAD. If success under PLAS means the creation of a new class of black large-scale commercial farmers, what is to happen to the remaining rural landless poor? While LRAD made vague gestures in the direction of the landless poor, the DRDLR has created a separate policy approach for those in this group who live in the communal areas. Under the Comprehensive Rural Development Programme (CRDP), the DRDLR asserts that three steps are needed to create economic opportunities for these people within the communal areas, and so preserve the existing agricultural economy in South Africa. Firstly, the government needs to provide the basic infrastructural needs of the rural landless population (water, sanitation, electricity and housing) in the communal areas where they live. Secondly, the government needs to provide these rural communities the chance to develop the skills necessary to operate successful businesses in the existing formal economy. Finally, it needs to help people living in these areas to develop “... small, medium and large agro-industries sustained by rural markets and credit facilities” (DRDLR, 2013, pp. 8-9). By undertaking these actions to aid the integration of the rural landless poor into the existing formal economy, the government will help the rural poor reach a state of ‘development’, which would include “... self-reliance of rural communities, local economic development, increased agricultural production, sustainable use of natural resources,

inclusive rural participation in developed value chains and improved rural livelihoods ...” (p. 9).

The majority of the rural landless poor are thus to remain in the communal areas where they were placed during the apartheid and colonial eras, engaged in agricultural manufacturing jobs. These will be created through “... increased investment in agro-processing, trade development and access to markets and financial services ...” (p. 10). Creating such manufacturing opportunities in the communal areas will also help in “... the significant reduction of the rural-urban population and resources flow” (p. 12).

### ***Recreating the rural black bourgeoisie***

Outside of the communal areas, in another echo of the liberationist discourse, the aim of PLAS is “... rekindling the class of black commercial farmers destroyed by the 1913 and 1936 Land Acts ...” (DRDLR, 2013, p. 11).

The aim of PLAS is:

... to provide black emerging farmers with the social and economic infrastructure and basic resources required to run successful agricultural business[es]. It is the intention of the policy that black emerging farmers are deliberately ushered into the agricultural value-chain as quickly as is possible ... (DRDLR, 2013, p. 10).

‘Black Emerging Farmers’ are defined as those black South African citizens who were excluded from South Africa’s formal agricultural economy in the past, and “... who have recently begun to engage in farming on a larger scale to sell crops and livestock on the market with the support and assistance of

the State” (DRDLR, 2013, p. 4). Therefore, it is expected that PLAS will help successful beneficiaries increase the size of their agricultural businesses over time (DRDLR, 2011a), to become large-scale commercial farmers like the existing white commercial farmers. Like LRAD then, PLAS is only aimed at benefitting a minority of the rural landless poor within South Africa.

The PLAS emphasis on integrating black commercial farmers into the existing agricultural structure is also evident in the categorisation of PLAS beneficiaries into four distinct groups. The common trait in all four groups is that people are “... already engaged in agriculture at all scales ...” (DRDLR, 2011a, p. 6). They are categorised according to what type of agriculture they want to engage in, and at what scale of production. The first category is for those who seek land and tenure security for productive purposes at a subsistence level and/or for residential purposes. The second is dedicated to those already farming commercially at a small scale, while the third is for those farming at the medium scale. The final category is for black business people who wish to expand into agriculture (DRDLR, 2011a). While the categories are engaged in agriculture, the first is the only one composed of people wanting to produce food solely for subsistence purposes, while the other three focus on commercial agricultural production. This shows a greater emphasis on those wanting to (or already) farming commercially.

### ***Seeking black entrepreneurs***

However, the eagerness to attract black businessmen into farming on the assumption that they will be successful large-scale farmers does contradict

other aspects of PLAS. The PLAS programme is differentiated from SLAG and LRAD as it “... moves away from an adhoc, first come-first served programme, where those that were able to mobilise capital became the target of land reform regardless of their capabilities” (DRDLR, 2011a, p. 13). The beneficiaries of the fourth category will, therefore, be selected according to their agricultural capabilities, as well as the capital they have accumulated in urban-based businesses. These documents are silent on how it will be ensured that the beneficiaries of this category have the requisite capabilities to farm successfully.

The three policy documents examined here additionally discuss undesirable types of beneficiaries of the RADP, including “... people who run their own businesses in towns and cities, but employ managers to run their farms ...” (DRDLR, 2013, p. 11). These documents are silent on how such a stipulation affects the selection of PLAS beneficiaries under category four. These documents are also silent on how many beneficiaries under this category would find such a course of action financially advantageous, and how benefitting such a tiny proportion of South Africa’s black population (and a relatively advantaged one at that) would help relieve the plight of the rural landless poor.

### ***The state and the market***

While the CRDP is to create opportunities for the majority of the rural landless poor in the communal areas, PLAS is aimed at aiding those black South Africans wanting to or already farming commercially. Under SLAG

and LRAD, drawing from themes in the Large Farms and the libertarian discourses, the implicit assumption was that the poverty of black South Africans was the result of distorted markets, and that to help them become prosperous, it was only necessary to provide them with property rights. This would enable them to participate in the existing formal agricultural economy, and so automatically improve their economic positions (DLA, 1997; MALA, n.d.). In contrast, drawing on narratives found in the Dependency and the liberationist discourses, some suspicion of the market is expressed in the PLAS approach, which describes the willing buyer willing seller model as weak, because of distortions in the land market (DRDLR, 201b). This means that institutional arrangements are necessary, “... to monitor markets against corruption and speculation ...” (DRDLR, 2013, p. 9). In addition, market-led approaches to land reform are criticised as, under LRAD, only those able to mobilise capital were targeted in land redistribution, regardless of their farming capabilities.

In contrast to the faith placed in the market under SLAG and LRAD, drawing on ideas from the Dependency and the liberationist discourses the designers of PLAS argue that the “... two opposing socio-economic pillars, development and under-development, are a direct function of certain political choices and decisions, as well as certain administrative traditions and institutions, processes and procedures” (DRDLR, 201b, p. 3). The states of ‘development’ and ‘underdevelopment’ are thus seen in PLAS as the product of government actions, rather than purely market processes.

According to PLAS, white South Africans reached their state of

‘development’ through political choices and direct government action. This view puts government at the centre of the development process, and that allowing market-led approaches to dominate land redistribution, as did SLAG and LRAD, would only perpetuate underdevelopment. In a dramatic departure from the assumptions driving SLAG and LRAD, then, the PLAS documents borrow from policy prescriptions in the Dependency and the liberationists discourses, expressing the belief that rather than leaving the process of development to the market alone, the post-apartheid government must take action, to ensure that South Africa will gain “... the desired social cohesion and development ... [rather than] ... perpetuate the current colonial-apartheid’s social and economic fragmentation and underdevelopment” (DRDLR, 2011b, p. 3).

The government of South Africa must, thus, take action to bring black South Africans out of a state of ‘underdevelopment’ and into a state of ‘development’. In a strong echo of the liberationist discourse, according to the creators of the PLAS policy, the greatest blow struck against black South Africans was to dispossess them of their land. This means that restoring access to land is “... a fundamental element in the resolution of the race, gender and class contradictions in South Africa” (p. 1). Therefore the DRDLR argues that South Africa needs to undergo an ‘agrarian transformation’, which is defined as “... a rapid and fundamental change in the relations (systems and patterns of ownership and control) of land, livestock, cropping and community” (DRDLR, 2011b, p. 1). As has been shown, the CRDP is aimed at creating opportunities for the rural landless

within the communal areas. This implies that ‘agrarian transformation’ as envisaged in PLAS does not mean changing the existing dual agricultural system in South Africa (of large-scale commercial farms and crowded communal areas). Rather, it means integrating black large-scale commercial farmers into the existing commercial farming sector, while simultaneously empowering the inhabitants of the bantustans to take part in the formal economy as entrepreneurs and manufacturers of processed agricultural goods.

### ***Post-settlement assistance***

Up to this point, PLAS shows strong similarities with LRAD in its aim to aid in the creation of a new black commercial farming class. However, PLAS differs strongly from LRAD in the way that this is to be achieved. The SLAG and LRAD policies were based on ideas found in the Large Farms and the libertarian discourses, assuming that once provided with property rights in land the rural landless poor would be able to participate effectively in the existing formal economy. These policies were therefore focused almost completely on transferring these property rights to black South Africans. The DRDLR notes, however, that gaining property rights did not improve the lives of most beneficiaries of SLAG and LRAD, and that many of the farms redistributed under these programmes “... were not successful and, thus, in distress or lying fallow ... [or] on the verge of being auctioned or had been sold ... resulting in a reversal of the original objectives of land reform” (DRDLR, 2013, p. 11). The designers of the PLAS policy draw two conclusions from this: firstly, that black South Africans do not necessarily

need access to property ownership in order to prosper, but only access to land itself. Secondly, it is argued that SLAG and LRAD beneficiaries failed to produce on their land because of “... a lack of adequate and appropriate post-settlement support” (DRDLR, 2013, p. 11). Once again in an echo of liberationist themes, according to PLAS, the rural landless poor of South Africa need to be given access to land (and not necessarily ownership of it), and access to the skills and the capital necessary to gain benefit from it.

Where SLAG and LRAD represented the problem as a lack of access to land ownership, PLAS represents the problem as only a lack of access to land itself. According to the designers of PLAS, it does not matter who owns the land, what matters is that black South Africans are given access to it, and the resources required to profit from it. Given this reasoning, then, to provide black South Africans with access to land, under PLAS the government will proactively identify and purchase farmland, and then lease this land out to beneficiaries (DRDLR, 2011a).

### ***Mentorships***

While leasing these government-owned farms, PLAS beneficiaries are given the chance to develop the skills needed to farm commercially on land leased from the government through mentorship arrangements with farmers (generally white) from the established commercial farming sector, along with other forms of accelerated training (DRDLR, 2013). In addition, PLAS beneficiaries are given access to the capital they need to farm commercially through the RADP, where successful applicants are given government

funding for their farming operations over a period of five years (DRDLR, 2013). Alternatively, PLAS beneficiaries can access both skills training and capital through co-management arrangements with private equity partners, contract farming arrangements with food retailers, or share-equity arrangements on established commercial farms (DRDLR, 2013).

While some of the silences contained in SLAG and LRAD are addressed in this policy, it contains a number of other areas of silence within itself. As discussed above, one of these was the desire to attract independent black urban-based entrepreneurs into commercial agriculture, while simultaneously criticising LRAD for having done this. Another area of silence lies around the issue of mentorship under PLAS. Firstly, the designers of PLAS are very clear about the terrible effects of apartheid and colonial policies on black South Africans. They are also clear that these same policies benefitted white South Africans directly, including white farmers. However, an important part of PLAS is the provision of “... capacity building prior to transfer through incubators, mentorships and other accelerated forms of training ...” (DRDLR, 2013, p. 9) to PLAS beneficiaries. This training is provided to beneficiaries by “... commercial agriculture and the private farming sector ...” (DRDLR, 2013, p. 16). The established white commercial farmers, who were the direct beneficiaries of black dispossession for so long, are now expected under PLAS to partner with PLAS beneficiaries, and give them the skills necessary to be successful commercial farmers. These documents are silent on how a working relationship is to be created between individual beneficiaries and mentors.

Indeed, the comments given by white farmers and black beneficiaries in the course of interviews carried out for this study indicate that this is not likely to be easily done. White farmers acting as mentors suggested that beneficiaries do not understand “... the amount of time and effort it actually takes from them to actually make them successful farmers” (Every, 2012). In return, beneficiaries either did not feel they needed white mentors (Naidoo, 2012), or expressed deep suspicions about the true motives of white mentors. One stated that white mentors could not be trusted, as “... the mentors have their own agenda ... to take back the land, directly or indirectly” (Buthelezi, 2012). Another agreed, suggesting that some mentors purposely gave their beneficiaries bad advice, so that they could “... come back and buy those farms when they have been run down” (B2, 2012). The policy documents around PLAS and the RADP are silent as to how such difficulties could be overcome.

### ***Access to landownership***

In addition, there is a profound silence around beneficiaries who might want to gain ownership of the land they rent from the government. In an interview carried out in the course of this study, a member of the DRDLR suggested that after gaining capital and skills while leasing land from the government under PLAS, successful beneficiaries could move into the open market for agricultural land, and purchase freehold private land for themselves if that is what they want (CS2, 2012). However, the land reform beneficiaries interviewed in the course of this study repeatedly expressed anger that they would not be given ownership of the land they leased under

PLAS, arguing that land ownership “... should not eternally be in the books of government, because empowerment will never be complete without ownership of land ...” (Ngqameni, 2012). Many PLAS beneficiaries became deeply discouraged when informed that they would not eventually gain ownership of the land that they were leasing from the government (B2, 2012). Others argued that they had no incentive to invest in the land they worked if they were only granted access to it for a few years at a time, at the discretion of bureaucrats (B1, 2012). Based on these comments, it is reasonable to assume that gaining ownership of the land being leased from the government is very important to many of PLAS beneficiaries. However, there is a complete silence from the DRDLR on beneficiaries who would want to gain ownership of the land they lease under PLAS. Rather, the Department lays emphasis on instances “... when it is not in the public interest to restore or redistribute land, or where legislation prohibits such full restoration or redistribution” (DRDLR, 2013, p. 13). No examples are given, however, of such examples.

In addition, a member of the DRDLR interviewed for this study argued that at times, SLAG and LRAD transferred land ownership to people who did not want to use the land for commercial production, but only for residential purposes. While the DRDLR saw this as wasteful, it could not intervene as the beneficiaries owned the land. By retaining ownership of land purchased for redistribution, the government could ensure that the land was used as productively as possible, and that beneficiaries gained access to the skills and knowledge they needed to succeed as commercial farmers (CS2, 2012).

Such a view expresses faith in the power of a centralised state to make the right decisions, discounting the desire for individual autonomy and control.

## **Conclusion**

This study focuses on the poor record of achievement in land reform policy in post-apartheid South Africa. At the national policy level, this chapter analyses the hidden assumptions and practices of the policies that have been developed within the boundaries set at the constitutional level. A sense of these hidden policy drivers is evident in the speech given by Fidel Castro to the National Assembly in 1998, in which he advocated preserving what were seen to be the positive aspects of the agrarian structure, while simultaneously compensating those who suffered unjust dispossession during its creation and distributing its benefits more widely. Each policy iteration can be seen as an attempt to achieve these three objectives.

SLAG sought to fulfil these objectives by redistributing property rights to the rural landless through the market. A small grant was provided to poor households, which were expected to pool their grants and buy land in large groups. SLAG thus aimed to help as many of the rural landless as possible to access land, through the market. The long-term prosperity that was constructed as the benefit of the land market would thus be retained and preserved, and those who lost access to land under apartheid would gain some redress. The price of this was a total silence around the injustices committed during the creation of this market.

LRAD, likewise, sought to redistribute property rights through the market, by providing grants to black South Africans. The focus of the grant, however, was changed such that larger grants were given to a much smaller number of individual African entrepreneurs, who were expected to become a class of black large-scale commercial farmers, like their white counterparts. The benefits of the existing agrarian structure would thus be preserved, its benefits would be distributed more widely, and beneficiaries would gain recompense for the dispossessions suffered during apartheid. Once again, this came at the price of silence around the creation of that market, along with total silence around the majority of the rural landless excluded from these grants.

PLAS retains the focus of the previous two policy iterations on preserving the agrarian structure created during apartheid, and maintains the LRAD focus on creating a new black rural bourgeoisie. The way this is done, however, changes dramatically. While the injustices committed during the creation of this market are now acknowledged, it is still constructed as worth preserving, and so the government now purchases land and leases it out to beneficiaries. The land market and its assumed benefits are thus retained, and the benefits of the large-scale agricultural sector are distributed more widely to those selected to be PLAS beneficiaries. PLAS also breaks the silence around those rural landless who cannot become large-scale commercial farmers, and directs resources towards the alleviation of their dependent state.

Through the three iterations of SLAG, PLAS and LRAD, post-apartheid land redistribution policy shows a narrowing of focus, a lowering of expectations, and an increasing reliance on the government rather than the market. It is also perhaps a story of a gradual loss of optimism, faith and goodwill towards the market. It is a movement from aiming to improve the lives of as many of the rural landless poor as possible, to aiming to restore the small class of black commercial farmers described by Bundy (1979) who were destroyed by colonial and apartheid policies. It is a progression from an assumption that white farmers would sell their lands for fair prices on the market, to creating institutions to minimise corruption in the land market. It is a change from the assumption that all the rural landless poor needed to prosper were property rights, to the government retaining these rights for itself. Where the Department of Agriculture was initially trusted to give beneficiaries post-settlement support, the DRDLR now does this. Private capital was relied on at first to lend money to beneficiaries. Now government structures have been created for this purpose. There was an initial assumption that large groups of beneficiaries would be able to work successfully together. Today, preference is given to individual beneficiaries. At first it was assumed that a small-scale commercial sector would arise naturally from land redistribution. Presently, it is asserted that the large-scale commercial farming sector is necessary to maintain South Africa's food security. Where initially the post-apartheid government worked closely with NGOs speaking for the rural landless poor, today it works with NGOs representing the large-scale commercial farming sector.

The task given to Ministers Hanekom, Didiza and Nkwinti is extremely difficult, as observed by Castro in 1998. This chapter has aimed to bring out the assumptions, silences and problem representations of SLAG, LRAD and PLAS, and describe this gradual movement in focus and method. Having done so aids in the greater process of providing a better answer to the dilemma of how to create a more fair land redistribution policy that preserves the benefits of the existing large-scale commercial farming sector, while simultaneously satisfying the need for past and present justice among the rural landless poor of South Africa. The next chapter examines in greater detail the implicit constructions of land reform beneficiaries in SLAG, LRAD and PLAS.

## Chapter Eight

### **Deviancy and Dependency in Land Redistribution**

This study asks why the results of land reform efforts in the post-apartheid era resemble so strongly the pattern of land ownership in the colonial, segregation and apartheid eras. This chapter is focused on the hidden assumptions of land reform policymakers about their target populations — the rural landless and land reform beneficiaries. If the study of politics and public policy is at least partly the study of ‘who gets what, when and how’ (Lasswell, 1936), then it must take account of the social constructions policymakers draw on when deciding what to give to whom, when and how. As part of the WPR approach drawn on in the previous chapter, Bacchi suggests that the opinions policymakers hold about a problem, or how they represent that problem, have very specific consequences for the different social groups involved (Bacchi, 2009). Similarly, Ingram and Schneider (2005, p. 17) direct attention to how social groups are constructed by policies as either deserving or undeserving, and argue that the types of policies allocated to different groups can be predicted if attention is paid to the social constructions of these groups. This chapter explores the social constructions of land redistribution beneficiaries implicit in policy documents for the SLAG, LRAD and PLAS programmes. The method of analysis offered by Schneider and Ingram (1993) is adapted to analyse the types of policies provided to land redistribution beneficiaries in South Africa, after which it is applied to the three land redistribution policy

iterations that span the period from 1997 until now. This is followed by a discussion of the implications of this study. Part of the reason why so little has been done to change the land ownership patterns created during the apartheid era is because policymakers construct the rural landless poor and land reform beneficiaries as undeserving of tangible policy benefits, and unable to solve their own problems. I turn firstly to the framework of analysis developed by Schneider and Ingram.

### **Advantaged, Deviant, Contenders and Dependents**

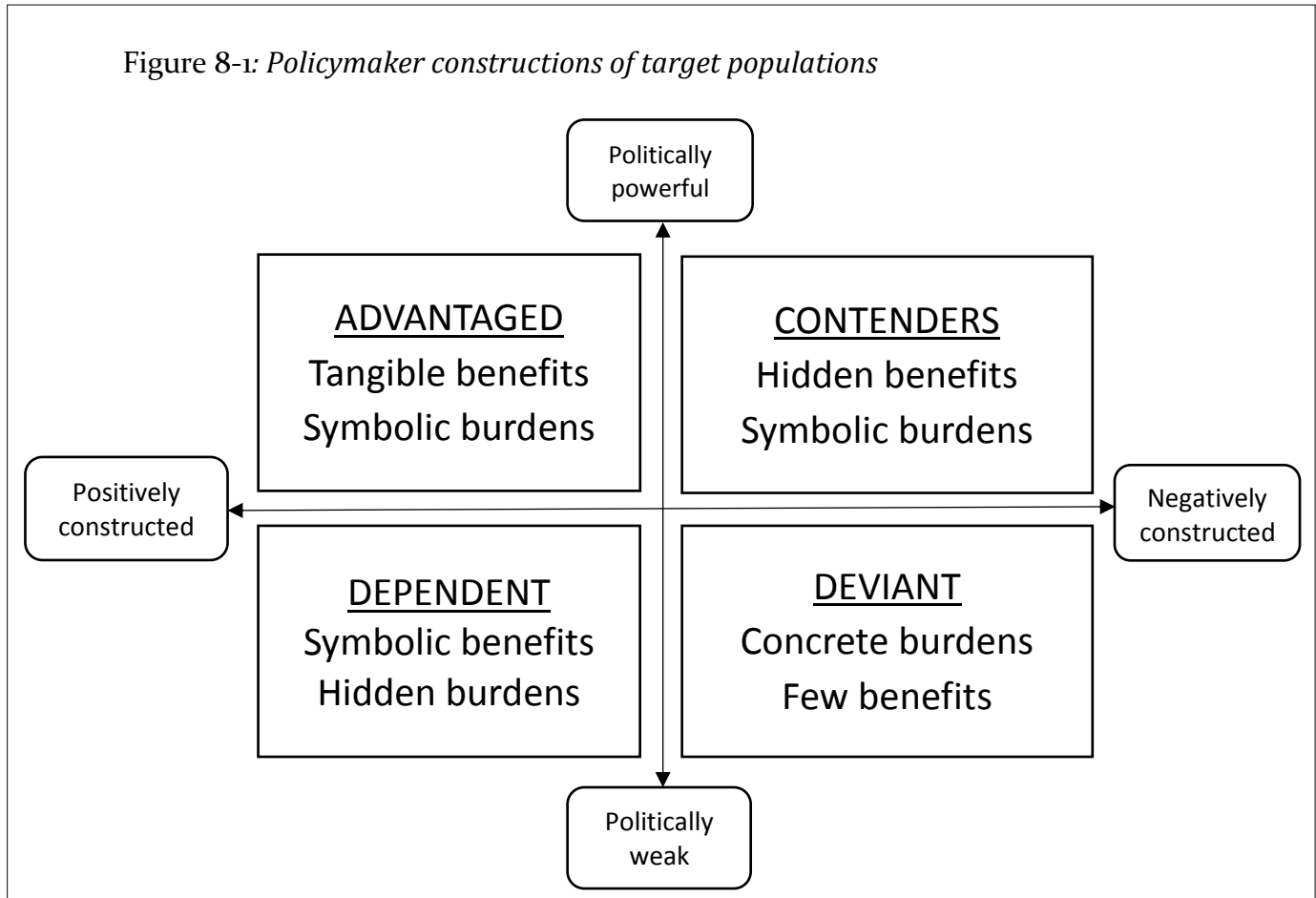
The implicit views that South African policymakers hold of the rural landless poor, as manifested within the SLAG, LRAD and PLAS policies, are important to land reform beneficiaries. These views determine if policymakers see them as deserving tangible policy benefits, or only symbolic policy benefits. Tangible policies are defined by Edelman (1964) as those policies which provide specific benefits to constituents such as profitable contracts, greater latitude in the economic activities of a business, better schools, or in the case of land reform, access to affordable agricultural land. They have a direct positive effect on the material fortunes of beneficiaries. In contrast, symbolic policies appease public concern about an issue without substantively addressing the underlying problems. Such policies fail to provide any substantial difference, benefit or reward. No long-term tangible changes that directly solve a policy problem are created (Marion & Oliver, 2010).

Edelman (1971) asserts that very large tangible policy benefits are provided to those the government constructs as serving the national interest. In contrast, those the government perceives not to be serving the national interest receive restricted benefits, or only symbolic policies. Ingram and Schneider (2005) build on this insight, analysing how policymakers categorise those for whom they make policy. Four basic constructions of social groupings are proposed: while the advantaged are constructed as serving the national interest, to various degrees contenders, dependents and deviants are not. The type of policy allocated to each of these different groups is quite predictable, if analysts pay attention to whether groups enjoy positive characterisations or negative connotations (Newton, 2005).

The interests and needs of **advantaged** groups are constructed as coinciding closely with the interests and needs of their society and economy. What is good for these groups is seen as being good for the country overall. Therefore, political parties compete with each other to provide generous tangible benefits (Edelman, 1971) and benign symbolic regulations for these groups. The tangible policy benefits provided to these groups will normally include substantial financial entitlements and non-income-tested subsidies, along with training and technical assistance. Responsible agencies will seek out all eligible persons, and encourage them to use the available policy opportunities. Tangible sanctions and force will not be used as burdens for these groups, but rather symbolic policy tools such as self-regulation, positive inducements and, at worst, standards and charges that do not

stigmatise, but only discourage certain actions (Ingram & Schneider, 2005; Schneider & Ingram, 1993, 1997).

Figure 8-1: *Policymaker constructions of target populations*



In contrast, groups constructed as **deviant** are seen as irresponsible, immoral, and a burden on the rest of society. Their needs and interests are constructed as being contrary to that of the national interest. This means that only symbolic policies are directed to these groups. Punitive policies generally fail to address the underlying problems causing deviant behaviour, but have tremendous political payoffs in their reassurance value for voters. Policy tools used towards these groups will be coercive and involve

sanctions, force and even death. At worst they will be incarcerated or executed. At best, they will be left free but denied information, discouraged from organising, and subjected to the authority of others (including experts), rather than helped to form their own self-regulatory organisations (Ingram & Schneider, 2005; Schneider & Ingram, 1993). Any policy benefits provided to these groups will likewise be symbolic, and like the punitive policies, will do nothing to change the underlying problems affecting the lives of those in these groups (Marion & Oliver, 2010).

Between these two extremes lie the groups constructed as the dependents and the contenders. **Contenders** need to be given tangible benefits because of their political power, but this must be done secretly, so that the public (who sees them as undeserving) do not know how much largesse they receive. To achieve this, statutes and policies towards these groups will be complex and vague (Ingram & Schneider, 2005; Schneider & Ingram, 1993). During times of low public attention, policies applied to these groups will tend to be tangible and beneficial. When public attention on these groups increases, policies towards these groups will shift to symbolic policy burdens.

Finally, the constructions of **dependent** groups simultaneously emphasise their deservedness and their helplessness. While policymakers would never want to be seen as acting against the interests of these groups, their fragmentation, lack of organisation, low rates of political participation and lack of material resources all combine to make them politically weak. This

makes it difficult to direct tangible benefits towards them. Symbolic policies permit elected leaders to show great concern for these groups, but relieve them of the need to actually allocate resources to them (Ingram & Schneider, 2005; Schneider & Ingram, 1993, 1997). Dependent groups will get subsidies, however, the relative small size of these subsidies (Edelman, 1971), along with strict eligibility requirements that involve labelling and stigmatising render them symbolic. Outreach programmes from responsible agencies will not be common. Rather, clients will be expected to present themselves to the agency to make their case for receiving benefits.

Dependents will not be encouraged to devise their own solutions, but will have to rely on agencies to help them. Government only responds to them when members of these groups subject themselves to government, and relinquish power over their own choices. These groups are seen as lacking the capacity, skills, character, discipline, and will to manage their own destiny (Schneider & Ingram, 1997), and so the use of authority will be more common here. Policy burdens imposed on these groups are justified either as being necessary to achieve higher purposes, or as a way to protect the individual from harm. Burdens are justified for these groups as either for their own good, or for the greater good (Ingram & Schneider, 2005; Schneider & Ingram, 1993, 1997).

Policy is one of the principal tools with which government provides cues about issues, situations and population groups (Edelman, 1971). Thus, this framework of analysis provides a hierarchical schema of how policymakers construct different groups, with advantaged groups receiving the most

tangible benefits and the other groups receiving mostly symbolic policies. The application of this framework of analysis to the SLAG, LRAD and PLAS policies would therefore uncover the implicit views held of land reform beneficiaries and the rural landless poor by policymakers in the DLA, the DRDLR and the South African government.

If the application of this framework of analysis indicates that these groups are constructed by the South African government as advantaged or as contenders, this would demonstrate that it sees their wants and needs as important, to some extent commensurate with the national interest, and so worthy of substantial tangible policy benefits. However if analysis shows that the government constructs them as deviants or dependents, this would demonstrate that the government does not see them as legitimate targets of concern, and so will only direct symbolic policies towards them. It would demonstrate that ultimately the government does not see the problems of the rural landless poor as legitimate public problems (Schneider & Ingram, 1997).

In addition, the application of this framework will contribute towards a greater understanding within the scholarship on land redistribution in South Africa of how policy-makers socially construct beneficiaries, and the (potential) material consequences of such constructions. While studies note poor outcomes for beneficiaries of land redistribution, and their lack of power in the programme (Barry, 2011; Bradstock, 2005; Hamilton, 2006; James, Ngonini, & Nkadameng, 2005; Lahiff, Borras, & Kay, 2007; Lebert &

Rohde, 2007; May, Stevens, & Stols, 2002; McCusker, 2004; McLeod, McDonald, & van Oudtshoorn, 2008; Twyman, Sporton, & Thomas, 2004; Zimmerman, 2000), few address *why* this situation might have been allowed to arise. None ask what this might say about *how* policymakers construct these beneficiaries. This chapter addresses this gap in the literature.

The previous chapter applied a modified version of Bacchi's WPR approach to the three major iterations of land redistribution policy created and implemented by the South African government between 1994 and the present day. To do this, it drew on a number of key policy documents. This analysis will draw on the same documents, as effectively this chapter is a continuation and an amplification of the analysis begun in the previous chapter. These documents are utilised because they are key explanations issued by the relevant Departments for each policy. Having laid out the theory and the sources used in this chapter, I turn now to the analysis of the three iterations of land redistribution policy.

### **Land reform and the national interest**

The primary task in determining how policymakers construct the rural landless poor and land reform beneficiaries in SLAG, LRAD and PLAS is to ascertain whether or not the interests of these groups are identified as congruent with the national interest in these policies. This section focuses on an analysis of the rationale for these policies for land reform. SLAG provided a small grant to the poorest rural landless households, encouraging them to pool their grants in larger groups and buy commercial

farms on the market. If the rural landless poor and SLAG beneficiaries were seen as an advantaged group, their interests would have been directly associated with the immediate national economic interest — for example, as being necessary to boost economic growth, reduce economic inequality, or safeguard national food security. However, this was not the case. The *White Paper* states that the challenge of land reform is “... to find a way of redistributing land to the needy, and at the same time maintaining public confidence in the land market” (DLA, 1997, p. 17). In this quote, the needs of the rural landless are constructed as being balanced by the need to preserve the land market, created during the apartheid era through mass dispossession and injustice.

Subsequently, the needs of the rural landless are constructed as being subordinate to those of the market. This is clear in assertions that land reform is necessary mainly to preserve the formal economy over the long term. “Without a significant change in the racial distribution of land ownership, there can be no long-term political stability and therefore no economic prosperity” (DLA, 1997, p. 11). Effectively, the needs of the rural landless are not seen as coinciding with the national interest, which is constructed as being embodied in the existing formal economy. Their concerns are only addressed in the process of offsetting potential challenges to those participating in the formal economy. Those participating in the formal economy, such as white large-scale farmers, are constructed as having interests coinciding closely with that of the nation. The failure to

identify the interests of SLAG beneficiaries directly with immediate national needs suggests this population group was not constructed as advantaged.

The implication was that it was not actually in the interests of the public to solve the problems of the rural landless poor. Instead, the rural landless poor would only receive attention through the generosity of the government (Schneider & Ingram, 1993). Perhaps the clearest indication of this is in the *White Paper* in the revelation that the “... money provided for land reform makes up less than half of 1% of the national budget ... Land reform has been allocated about one twentieth of the proposed spending on rural infrastructure” (1997, p. 34). The small proportion of the budget allocated to the land reform programme demonstrated that the government did not see it as a critical national priority (Edelman, 1971). The government did not see it as necessary to direct large amounts of public resources to this group. Instead, it allocated enough money for symbolic policy benefits, leaving the DLA with “... the dilemma of whether to provide a high level of subsidy to a small number of people, or whether to provide a modest subsidy to a higher number of beneficiaries” (1997, p. 17). Clearly, SLAG policymakers did not construct the rural landless poor and land reform beneficiaries as advantaged.

Analysis of the LRAD policy shows that those designing this policy, likewise, did not construct beneficiaries as advantaged. Despite providing greater resources to a smaller class of aspirant black commercial farmers, the rationales given for land reform and the LRAD grant still do not identify the

interests of these new beneficiaries as being congruent with the national interest, as they would if they were constructed as an advantaged group.

LRAD was primarily justified as being necessary to achieve social objectives:

... increase access to agricultural land by black people ... contribute to relieving the congestion in overcrowded former homeland areas ... improve nutrition and incomes of the rural poor ... overcome the legacy of past racial and gender discrimination in ownership of farmland ... [and] ... empower beneficiaries to improve their economic and social wellbeing (MALA, n.d., p. 3).

None of these reasons for land reform are presented as being vital for the immediate national good, which is usually linked to economic achievements. Similarly, the stipulation that one third of all LRAD projects be reserved for women is justified as being necessary to give them “... security against poverty and providing them independent economic status ...” (MALA, n.d., p. 4) as well as helping the South African government meet its international commitments to improve the socio-economic position of women. Potential economic benefits were only incidentally used as justifications for land redistribution, when it was suggested that redistributing land to black farmers could possibly “... stimulate growth from agriculture” (p. 3), and “... enable those presently ... in communal areas to make better productive use of their land” (p. 3).

The justifications provided for PLAS show a similar reluctance to conflate the interests of the rural landless and land reform beneficiaries with the

national interest. Land reform in PLAS is primarily rationalised as being necessary to achieve historical justice, rather than to contribute to vital and immediate national needs such as economic growth or creating national food security. Thus, the land question is presented as “... a fundamental element in the resolution of the race, gender and class contradictions in South Africa” (DRDLR, 2011b, p. 1). It is necessary for the “... repossession of land lost through force or deceit; and, restoring the centrality of indigenous culture” (p. 1). The distribution of land from white to black South Africans is necessary because “... social cohesion ... is a direct function of land access and ownership ...” (p. 2). Land reform is an essential part of the process of toning down “... the anger, bitterness and pain of those who have been subjected to this brutal treatment ...” (p. 3). Transforming land relations in South Africa is also necessary to “... instil national identity, shared citizenship and autonomy-fostering service delivery ...” (p. 4).

Such justifications of land reform all construct historical justice as the main reason driving land reform in South Africa. Only once is it suggested that there might be an economic reason for undertaking land reform. Land “... is a central mechanism in addressing the livelihood strategies, and economic and social development of individuals and communities in rural areas ...” (DRDLR, 2011a, p. 4), making it necessary to broaden access to land and to secure the land rights that people currently hold. Significantly, even this economic justification for land reform is only given for individuals and communities in rural areas, and not for the South African economy as a whole.

Taken together, it is clear that the policymakers behind SLAG, LRAD and PLAS did not construct land reform beneficiaries and the rural landless poor as advantaged. In all three policy iterations, it is clear that policymakers believed that land reform could not and cannot be allowed to occur to the extent that it threatens the existing national economy of the country. The needs of the landless rural poor, and land reform beneficiaries, are always subordinate to the perceived needs of the national economy. If these groups are not constructed as advantaged, according to Schneider and Ingram's approach they will be constructed as either deviant, contenders or dependents. Further analysis of these three policies shows more clearly which of these three constructions apply.

### **Subsidies and eligibility criteria**

One of the clearest indications of whether these groups are constructed as deviant, contenders or dependents lies in the policy tools employed in SLAG, LRAD and PLAS. Policy tools directed to groups constructed as deviants are coercive, and involve sanctions, force and even death. In contrast, those groups constructed by policymakers as contenders receive tangible benefits that are transferred in secret through complex and vague policies. Groups constructed as dependent will receive symbolic benefits (Ingram & Schneider, 2005; Schneider & Ingram, 1993, 1997). Most often, small subsidies subject to strict eligibility requirements and involving labelling and stigmatising are used by policymakers to show the requisite symbolic support for such groups (Edelman, 1971).

The policy tools utilised in SLAG show clearly that the targeted groups in this policy were not constructed as contenders or as deviant, but as dependent. The SLAG grant was a basic subsidy of R15, 000 (or NZ\$6, 299.22)<sup>23</sup> provided to the landless, subject to financial and family-based eligibility requirements. To qualify for the grant, applicants had to be part of a household earning less than R1, 500.00 or (NZ\$ 629.92)<sup>24</sup> per month (DLA, 1997). Applicants, thus, would be income tested, and labelled (and potentially stigmatised) as extremely poor (Schneider & Ingram, 1993). Single people, not belonging to a household, would not normally qualify for the grant, no matter what their monthly income. Qualifying applicants had to be married or in an established relationship, and with proven financial dependents. In addition, those applicants who had already received the National Housing Subsidy (provided to first-time home owners, and set at the same level) were not eligible to receive the SLAG grant. Furthermore, applicants were required to submit a full business plan for the land they were considering buying in order to be considered for the grant. Fulfilling these eligibility requirements in no way guaranteed that an applicant would be awarded the grant — it only meant that the application would be considered (DLA, 1997). These eligibility criteria, and the absence of any guarantee that the grant would be awarded, demonstrate that the beneficiaries were constructed as dependents by the DLA.

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<sup>23</sup> Calculation based on an exchange rate of ZAR 1.00 to NZD 0.4199480988 on 01/12/1995 (xe, 2014a). Conversion values were taken for 1995 to give an idea of the buying power of beneficiaries at the time. The Rand to NZ Dollar conversion rate has changed since then.

<sup>24</sup> Calculation based on an exchange rate of ZAR 1.00 to NZD 0.4199480988 on 01/12/1995 (xe, 2014a).

Similarly, the policy tools deployed in LRAD clearly show that beneficiaries were constructed not as contenders or deviants, but as dependents. LRAD applicants were subjected to strict eligibility requirements, and the stigmatisation and labelling which these requirements involved. In order to qualify for the LRAD grant, applicants had to provide an ‘own contribution,’ and the amount of the grant given to each beneficiary under LRAD was based on size of that contribution (MALA, n.d.). The minimum contribution required was R5, 000 (or NZ\$1, 576.73)<sup>25</sup>, which received the minimum grant of R20, 000 (or NZ\$6, 306.92)<sup>26</sup>. Those making contributions higher than R5, 000 received higher LRAD grants, up to a maximum of R100, 000 (or NZ\$31, 534.58)<sup>27</sup> for an own contribution of R400, 000 (or NZ\$126, 138.33)<sup>28</sup>.

Beneficiaries able to contribute more of their own capital were therefore favoured by this policy. This is shown in the language used to describe them in this document. Such beneficiaries were described as having “... the skills and resources to manage larger farms” (p. 4), and as being able to fund themselves through “... normal bank loans ... [and] standard banking procedures ...” (pp. 4-5). They were thus considered ‘normal’, and able to quickly fit into the ‘standard’ formal economy of South Africa created prior to 1994. They are also described as having “... greater farming experience and expertise than those accessing land for subsistence ...” (p. 9) purposes.

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<sup>25</sup> Calculation based on an exchange rate of ZAR 1.00 to NZD 0.3153458360 on 01/12/2000 (xe, 2014b).

<sup>26</sup> Calculation based on an exchange rate of ZAR 1.00 to NZD 0.3153458360 on 01/12/2000 (xe, 2014b).

<sup>27</sup> Calculation based on an exchange rate of ZAR 1.00 to NZD 0.3153458360 on 01/12/2000 (xe, 2014b).

<sup>28</sup> Calculation based on an exchange rate of ZAR 1.00 to NZD 0.3153458360 on 01/12/2000 (xe, 2014b).

This implies that, in contrast, those beneficiaries who could not contribute as much (and perhaps were in greater need of a government subsidy in order to access land) were therefore 'not the norm', 'non-standard', with less experience and less expertise, which made them less deserving of a LRAD subsidy. The eligibility requirement of an 'own contribution', along with the labelling and stigmatisation of those who could not produce it, suggests the rural landless poor, especially the vast majority who had not been able to accumulate large amounts of capital, were constructed as dependents by LRAD policymakers.

It is also apparent that the policymakers of LRAD constructed even those who were able to produce an 'own contribution' as dependent. The possibility is allowed for in the LRAD programme that successful beneficiaries would be able to access the LRAD grant repeatedly. However, restrictions are placed on those beneficiaries wanting to do so. The overall benefit a single beneficiary could access through successive LRAD grants was "... limited to an accumulated amount of R100, 000" (MALA, n.d., p. 9)(or NZ\$31, 534.58). Two further burdens were placed on such applicants. Firstly, when applying for second or third grants, the own contribution required from these beneficiaries would "... be gauged not in relation to the new grant being applied for, but rather in relation to the total amount of grants that have been accessed thus far plus the new grant" (p. 9). In other words, the own contribution required from such applicants would be greater than that required for those applying for the first time. Secondly, assets acquired by prior LRAD grants "... cannot be counted as an own

contribution when applying for an additional grant” (p. 9). These restrictions thus combined to lower the amount of funding LRAD beneficiaries could access, and discouraged beneficiaries from repeatedly accessing LRAD grants in order to access larger pieces of land. This restricted subsidy, along with the lack of rationale given, points to the dependent status of LRAD beneficiaries in the eyes of contemporary policymakers.

This aspect of the LRAD seems contradictory — as has been shown, the target group of this policy is an already-privileged group with access to resources, whom LRAD can assist to become part of the rural black bourgeoisie. On the other hand, specific barriers are put in place to stop these beneficiaries leveraging their assets to access additional grants. Beneficiaries are assisted with access to benefits, but are only allowed to access them once. It is difficult to explain these conflicting provisions without access to the debates contributing to the creation of LRAD. Given the focus of LRAD on creating black commercial farmers through the market, though, it is likely that these restrictions on accessing the grants more than once may have been imposed to prevent the development of black commercial farmers dependent on government grants for survival — they would be forced to survive on their own as independent agri-business people after accessing their initial grant, and therefore be independent. The important point here, however, is that even the beneficiaries, who were favoured over the rural landless who were unable to provide an ‘own

contribution', were constructed as dependent, and needing the guidance of the government.

The focus on strict eligibility requirements along with labelling and stigmatising, indicating dependent construction by policymakers, is likewise apparent in PLAS. Applicants to PLAS must "... have recently begun to engage in farming on a larger scale to sell crops and livestock on the market with the support and assistance of the State" (DRDLR, 2013, p. 4). In addition to this, favour will be shown to applicants who show evidence of "... experience, capabilities and access to capital ..." (DRDLR, 2011a, p. 13). The type of land allocated to applicants will also depend on whether "... they are aiming at addressing only household food security needs or whether their intention is to link into a broader market or production chain ..." (DRDLR, 2011a, p. 6). It can be argued then that through the application of eligibility criteria, PLAS beneficiaries are seen as dependents by the government.

A certain amount of stigmatisation is also evident in the language used to set out eligibility for those applying for capital to undertake commercial production under the Recapitalisation and Development Programme (RADP), which provides PLAS beneficiaries with government funding for their farming operations (DRDLR, 2013). While the resources directed to PLAS beneficiaries through the RADP are more generous than had been provided under SLAG and PLAS, the eligibility criteria, stigmatisation and labelling imposed on beneficiaries during the allocation of these resources

resonates strongly with a dependent construction. This funding is reserved for land reform beneficiaries situated on “... under-producing agricultural enterprises ...” (DRDLR, 2013, p. 5), those who “... bought land, but could not generate resources to develop it ...” (DRDLR, 2013, p. 15), or “... distressed land reform properties ...” (DRDLR, 2013, p. 17). In order to qualify for RADP funding then, applicants have to have failed very obviously as commercial farmers. Applying such eligibility criteria thus transfers some stigma on RADP and PLAS beneficiaries. On the basis of the eligibility criteria imposed on PLAS applicants, and the stigma attached to some of these criteria, PLAS beneficiaries are also constructed as dependents by the South African government.

### **Passive state support**

Where policies for contenders will reach out to their target populations in secret, and entire government departments are focused on apprehending and punishing those constructed as deviants, policies aimed at dependent groups will be characterised by requirements that potential clients present themselves to the responsible agency to make their case for receiving benefits (Ingram & Schneider, 2005; Schneider & Ingram, 1993). In this respect, SLAG, LRAD and PLAS all give strong indications that those designing them constructed the target populations as dependent. In SLAG the dependent status of the rural landless poor is confirmed in the stipulation that the “... grant can be obtained on application to the Department of Land Affairs” (DLA, 1997, p. 69). The DLA did not contact prospective beneficiaries to inform them of the grant. Rather, they were

expected to approach the Department themselves. The extent of the unwillingness of the Department to communicate with potential beneficiaries became clear during the interviews carried out for this study, when small-scale communal farmers living in a former Bantustan (and so surely potential beneficiaries of SLAG, LRAD and PLAS) requested information from me — someone who was not even a current resident of the country — on where and how they could apply for government help to access land (RL1, 2012).

Similarly, the dependent construction of LRAD beneficiaries and applicants was indicated in the way potential beneficiaries were required to present their own applications for the grant (MALA, n.d.) — government agencies did not reach out to potential beneficiaries, or automatically extend it to them as would have been the case if they were an advantaged group. Under LRAD, applicants were in fact required to submit detailed applications for the grant to two different bureaucracies for approval — firstly to local officials of the relevant provincial Department of Agriculture, and then to a provincial grant committee composed mainly of representatives of the DLA.

The current iteration of land reform policy, PLAS, similarly requires potential beneficiaries to present themselves to the DRDLR (DRDLR, 2011a). During this application process, the dependent construction of potential PLAS beneficiaries is clear in that applicants must take steps to convince the DRDLR of their worth as beneficiaries. PLAS applicants must show “... commitment, ability and passion for hands-on-farming” (DRDLR, 2013, p.

15). In addition, they must present evidence “... of their interest and skills in agriculture and other enterprises ...” (DRDLR, 2011a, p. 14) and preferably already be engaged in agricultural activities. Potential PLAS beneficiaries are interviewed by a DRDLR committee, “... and their success will depend on their scores” (DRDLR, 2011a, p. 20) awarded by the committee. In addition, the application process for PLAS is not advertised generally by the DRDLR. This became clear during the course of my interview with an employee of the DRDLR, who stated that: “... we don’t go and search for them. We wait for them to come to us. We don’t go and look for them” (CS1, 2012).

### **Assumption of incapacity**

One of the strongest indications that a target population is constructed as dependent is when these groups are not permitted to devise their own solutions, but are required to rely on government agencies (Schneider & Ingram, 1993, p. 339). Thus, the use of authority — including statements granting permission, or prohibiting or requiring action — is common in relation to dependents, as they are not constructed as self-reliant. Such a construction is clear in SLAG, where the DLA argues that the rural landless “... often experience problems gaining access to information about land development opportunities and processes. In addition, unorganised communities are not able to express a realistic demand for land” (1997, p. 23). This reflects the reasonable assumption that the DLA “... has a responsibility to ensure that state resources are wisely used and that prices negotiated are just and equitable” (p. 40). Therefore the Department argues

that it has the obligation “... to explain clearly to grant applicants the rules with regard to valuation ...” (p. 40). This includes such rules as: that purchasers do not have an inalienable right to any particular piece of land; that willing-seller willing-buyer is only effective if potential buyers are not fixated on purchasing a single particular farm at any cost; and that purchasers “... should be encouraged to negotiate the price down in order to obtain the best value for ‘their money’ ...” (p. 40). There is a clear assumption here that the beneficiaries would not be able to understand the processes of buying land at the lowest possible price, that they were likely to be irrationally focused on purchasing one particular farm at any price, and that they therefore needed the guidance of the Department. The DLA did not see land reform beneficiaries as being capable of creating their own solutions.

In a further indication that SLAG beneficiaries were seen as dependents, unable to devise their own solutions, the *White Paper* also required them to contract the services of a professional planner to draw up a business plan for the land to be purchased, as part of their application for the SLAG grant (DLA, 1997). It was assumed that the applicants would not be able to devise the best way to make use of the redistributed land — whatever they wanted to do with it would be wasteful. Therefore, these planners would “... assist poor communities to plan for the acquisition, use and development of land and for the mobilisation of resources required to do this” (p. 70). Their contribution would include “... legal and financial-planning assistance, land use planning, infrastructure planning, land valuation, and assistance with

land purchase negotiations, including the formation of a legal entity” (pp. 70-71). Planners would be paid for by a further grant made available to successful applicants for a SLAG grant. The extensive nature of the duties assigned to the planner again points to assumptions that SLAG beneficiaries were incapable of negotiating to buy land, or organising economically productive activities on that land once it had been transferred.

Similarly in the LRAD programme, applicants for the grant were required to make a detailed case for their approval, in a format decided on and arbitrated by government officials from two different Departments. Power was taken out of the hands of the applicants, and put in the hands of anonymous government officials. No scope was allowed for negotiation between the government and applicants, or for them to work in a collaborative manner. The dependent construction of LRAD applicants was clear in the requirement that they subject themselves to government and relinquish power over their own choices.

The lack of agency ascribed to beneficiaries is even greater in the PLAS programme. In policy documents related to PLAS, the failure of previous land reform programmes is blamed on a lack of ability on the part of the beneficiaries. Thus, “... the opportunities we make available through land reform have to correspond more closely to the skills possessed by the lessee ... training and mentoring are valuable interventions to build lessees’ capabilities, but too much is often expected of them” (DRDLR, 2011a, p. 14).

As the Minister of Rural Development and Land Affairs argued in a

Parliamentary speech, "... they say God helps people who help themselves. But the underlying truth is that some people have to be taught how to help themselves ..." (Nkwinti, 2012, pp. 7-8). To avoid expecting too much of beneficiaries then, and to teach them how to help themselves, under PLAS, the state decides what land to buy for land reform. Only in "... exceptional cases ..." (DRDLR, 2011a, p. 18), where "... capable potential farmers ..." (p. 18) have identified land themselves will the Department consider buying land it has not chosen itself, and only on the proviso that buying this land furthers the Department's strategic plans, there are funds available, and the 'capable potential farmers' "... fall within the ideal lessee profile ..." (p. 18). Once the land is purchased, the government still retains ownership of it, "... for use by the lessees of the programme" (p. 4), "... at a level at which they can manage such resources" (p. 14). In addition, when leasing land from the government, PLAS beneficiaries are continually monitored and audited. It is clear that the DRDLR thus constructs PLAS beneficiaries as lacking self-reliance. This means that they cannot be expected to devise their own solutions to the problems facing them. Rather the government must step in to rectify the situation.

## **Conclusion**

Prompted by the question of why so little has been achieved by successive post-apartheid policy initiatives around land reform, this chapter focuses on how post-apartheid policymakers construct the rural landless poor and land reform beneficiaries. These constructions are crucial to the success or failure of land reform, as they determine whether these policies will provide

tangible or symbolic benefits. The theoretical framework that underpinned the analysis offered in this chapter puts forward a hierarchy of constructions, with groups constructed as advantaged receiving tangible policy benefits, and those groups constructed as contenders, dependents or deviants receiving more symbolic benefits from policies. The application of this schema to the SLAG, LRAD and PLAS policies shows clearly that in all three policies, the rural landless poor and land reform beneficiaries were and are constructed as dependents.

In all three land reform policy iterations, the interests of the rural landless and of land reform beneficiaries are not conflated with the national interest. Rather, the interests of these target populations are seen as being subordinate to the interests of society at large. The interests of society at large are seen as being better served by the existing agrarian structure, created during the colonial, segregation and apartheid eras. This means that the rural landless and land reform beneficiaries are not constructed as advantaged.

Further analysis shows that the rural landless and land reform beneficiaries are not constructed as deviant or contenders, but as dependents. Both SLAG and LRAD provide limited (largely symbolic) subsidies designed to assist beneficiaries to purchase land on the market, indicating dependent constructions. In addition, in all three policy iterations, the relevant government departments do not reach out to potential beneficiaries, as they would if they were constructed as advantaged, contenders or deviants.

Rather, applicants have to present themselves, and as mentioned, subject themselves to strict eligibility criteria involving stigmatisation and labelling. The provision of symbolic subsidies under SLAG and LRAD was directed at those of the rural landless who complied with strict eligibility requirements. Similarly, while the resources directed to PLAS beneficiaries are more tangible and substantial, the strict eligibility criteria imposed on applicants, involving some labelling and stigmatisation, indicate that these beneficiaries are also constructed as dependent.

The clearest indication that the rural landless and land reform beneficiaries are constructed as dependents is in the lack of agency attributed to these target populations. SLAG assumed that beneficiaries were not competent enough to buy land on the market. LRAD required applicants to submit themselves to two separate government agencies. Under PLAS, the perceived failures of SLAG and LRAD are ascribed to the lack of ability of the rural landless and beneficiaries themselves. Beneficiaries here are required to submit to the almost complete control of government bureaucrats, and are never entrusted with private ownership of the land they own.

What is striking in this analysis is that in all three iterations of land reform policy, the rural landless and land reform beneficiaries are always constructed as dependent. While each policy contains strong rhetoric around the creation of independent, successful black commercial farmers, even the successful black entrepreneurs targeted by LRAD and PLAS are

constructed as unable to create their own solutions, and constantly needing the direction of government bureaucrats. The assumptions about black beneficiaries driving these constructions resonate strongly with colonial, segregation and apartheid constructions of black South Africans as lacking in intelligence and initiative, and needing constant guidance from others. The harsh punishments promised to those among the landless inclined to take the initiative to solve their own problems and invade vacant land (DLA, 1997) likewise show strong similarities to the deviant constructions apartheid policymakers ascribed to black South Africans who resisted their policies. This implies that apartheid paradigms, methods and social constructions have successfully made the transition to the post-apartheid era, especially in the assumptions of bureaucrats and policymakers about black participation in agriculture.

The question driving this thesis asks how so little could have been done in post-apartheid South Africa to change the patterns of land ownership created during the colonial and apartheid eras. The analysis in this chapter provides another part of the answer to this question: such a small quantity of land has been transferred so far under land redistribution because policymakers in South Africa construct the rural landless poor and land reform beneficiaries as dependents. They do not see the problems of the rural landless poor as being sufficiently important to the national interest, and they assume these target populations are incapable of solving their own problems.

## Chapter Nine

### **The Politics of Land Reform on the Ground: The Views of Farmers, Department Officials and NGO Members**

This study seeks to explain how, in the post-apartheid context, the agrarian structure inherited from apartheid has largely been preserved, despite successive post-apartheid policy initiatives addressed at changing this. A crucial part of this explanation will come from analysis of the ideas and discourses subscribed to by those tasked with implementing land reform policies at the provincial level. If the content of a policy, along with its impact on those affected can be substantially modified, elaborated or even negated during its implementation (Hill & Hupe, 2009), it is important to understand how those implementing land reform policy view the process.

MacDonald (2003) argues that discourses contribute to the construction of certain values and goals as more worthy than others, identify particular institutions as primary actors in a policy issue, and attribute authority to certain bodies of knowledge over others. Thus clarifying the discourses apparent at the provincial level in the South African land reform arena will bring into the open the assumptions of these participants on the proper goals of land reform, the best institutions to pursue these goals, and the appropriate knowledge they should use to do this. Exhuming and examining these deep assumptions is therefore a crucial step in providing an answer to the question of why so little has been done to change the patterns of land ownership set during the apartheid era in South Africa.

The ideas and beliefs found at the provincial level in this study were uncovered through a series of semi-structured interviews carried out in the Eastern Cape and KwaZulu-Natal provinces of South Africa. These interviews were with respondents from a range of groups involved including land redistribution beneficiaries, communal farmers, NGOs, black and white large-scale commercial farmers, and commodity organisations from the formal agricultural economy. In addition, interviews were carried out with representatives of the DRDLR, the provincial departments of agriculture in the two provinces, the Agricultural Development Agency in KwaZulu-Natal and consultants in both provinces. Representatives of the ANC and the DA in the Eastern Cape were also interviewed. The interview transcripts were closely read to draw out respondents' assumptions about the process of 'development', the place of land reform in this process, and policy proposals for land reform. These answers were then mapped out on a four-way matrix based on the views about the ideal form of farm ownership, and how this could be achieved through redistribution.

This facilitated the clarification of three discourses among the respondents interviewed, which have been named 'Assisted Integration', 'Competitive Integration' and 'Rural Support'. The largest number of respondents interviewed could be placed in the 'Assisted Integration' discourse, advocating that the government lead the process of land reform, through the creation of black large-scale commercial farmers. Respondents who expressed these beliefs were largely bureaucrats, beneficiaries and consultants involved in land reform. The 'Competitive Integration'

discourse was drawn on by those respondents already established in the formal agricultural economy — the white large-scale commercial farmers, the commodity organisations and the agricultural corporations. These respondents also see land reform as ideally involving the creation of black large-scale commercial farmers, but advocate that this be purely a market-led process. Finally, the remaining respondents drew from the ‘Rural Support’ discourse, arguing that land reform should form part of the process of improving the conditions of the rural landless poor.

This chapter outlines the existing literature on discourses at the local level of land reform in South Africa, before analysing the three discourses uncovered in this study. A discussion of these discourses follows, along with an exploration of some of the implications of the views of land reform uncovered in this study.

### **Previous studies of land reform discourses at the provincial level**

There are few published studies of discourses around land reform at the local or the provincial level in South Africa. A few studies explore the deployment of discourses within specific land reform projects (James, 2000, 2007; James et al., 2005; Lebert & Rohde, 2007; May & Lahiff, 2007). The only published in-depth study of discourses around land reform at the local level is based on a discourse analysis of policy discussions and documentation around the KwaZulu-Natal Land Reform Pilot Project during the period 1995–1996 (MacDonald, 2003), which identifies two influential discourses in that province at that time. An ‘economic

development' discourse is identified as dominant, which was drawn from mainly by the Department of Agriculture. In common with the libertarian discourse identified at the constitutional level, this discourse gave rise to support for the creation of small-scale black commercial farmers through market-led methods, who would use their land in a similar way to the existing white large-scale commercial farmers in the area. This dominant discourse was challenged by 'community leaders' or 'local elites' who drew from a discourse of 'need' and 'historical justice'. As in the case of the liberationist discourse identified at the constitutional level, this discourse asserted that in view of the extreme poverty and need for land in the area, economic development criteria could not be applied to the Pilot Project, as they would exclude the majority of the rural landless poor in the region from accessing land through it (MacDonald, 2003).

While this study gives an invaluable insight into the dynamics governing the implementation of the KwaZulu-Natal Pilot Project in the Estcourt area of KwaZulu-Natal province, the narrowness of this study — focused only on the discourses found among those involved in the creation of the Pilot Project — leaves many questions unanswered. What, for instance, were the discourses subscribed to by the NGOs assisting in the implementation of the Pilot Project? What were the ideas, beliefs and assumptions of the local white farmers in the area who sold their land to the Pilot Project? What were the narratives of land reform drawn on by local DLA staff, who must also have been involved in the project? Given the relative paucity of studies on the discourses present at any level of the land reform policy arena in

South Africa, and given the amount of time that has passed since this study, there is scope for a re-examination of these discourses. I turn next to a brief outline of the methods used in this re-examination.

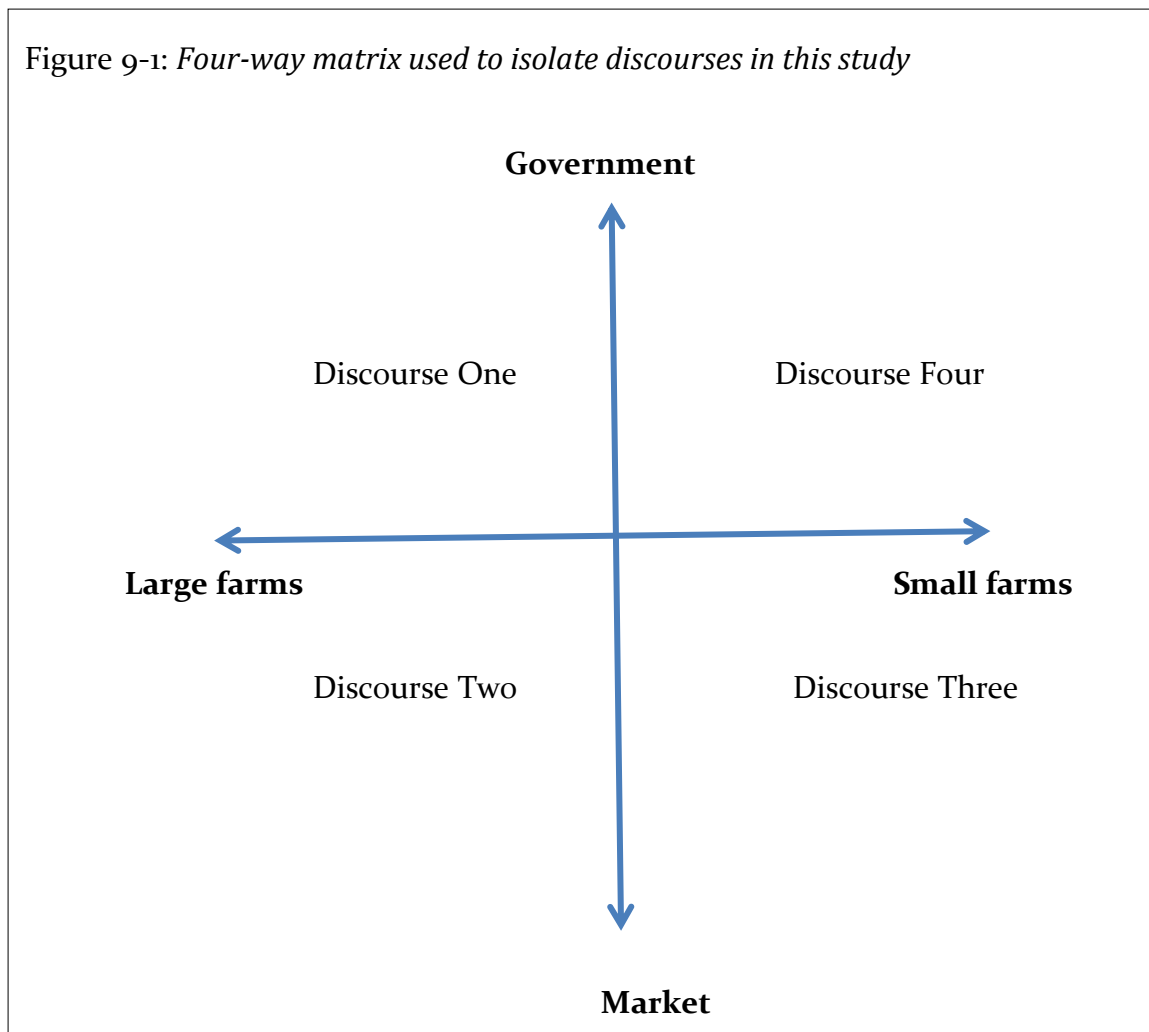
### **Data capture for this study**

Du Toit (2013) makes the point that land reform is not a central, self-contained project in and of itself — rather, it is a component of a much larger process of socio-economic change in South African society as a whole. Therefore, once the recorded interviews had been transcribed, I examined the narrative given about land reform in each interview in order to determine the answers to three basic questions. The first basic question focused on what each respondent assumed to be the overall process of development in South Africa. Secondly, I interrogated where respondents saw land reform and land redistribution fitting into this overall process. Finally, I asked what the respondent proposed as the appropriate land reform programme for South Africa. These responses allowed me to begin constructing the discourses drawn on by respondents during the interviews.

Given the format of the semi-structured interviews, the discussions in the interviews and the answers to these three questions varied widely. At the very extremes, one respondent saw land reform as part of a genocidal effort by the ANC government to eradicate the white farmers of South Africa (Rossouw, 2012), whereas another saw the process as a necessary step to establish socialism in South Africa (Njoli, 2012). It was at first difficult to see how fewer than 36 individual discourses could be extracted out of the

interviews. However, further analysis revealed that despite the widely differing narratives given in the interviews, most respondents could be placed on a single spectrum based on their opinions of whether land reform should be a market-led or a government-led process. Thus, while Rossouw saw land reform as part of an overall programme designed to eliminate white farmers, she agreed that if a land reform policy was absolutely necessary, it would best be carried out through the market (2012). Similarly, while Njoli saw land reform as part of the progress of humanity towards socialism, he felt that it should be carried out by the government rather than the market (Njoli, 2012). In addition, all respondents could be placed somewhere along a second spectrum according to their opinions on whether land reform should transfer farms in their existing form, or as smaller units. In this case, both Rossouw (2012) and Njoli (2012) agreed that land reform should transfer farms in their existing form. I therefore decided to construct a four-way matrix out of these two spectrums, as seen in Figure 9-1.

Figure 9-1: *Four-way matrix used to isolate discourses in this study*



With this matrix, I was able to group together those respondents advocating the redistribution of existing large farms through government action into a single discourse. Similarly, those advocating market means to achieve this are grouped into another discourse, as were those respondents advocating the creation of small farms through the market, and those preferring that the government lead such a process. Having created these groups, I was then able to return to the interview transcripts and the interview notes, and analyse the similarities among those respondents grouped into each

discourse. No respondents were placed within 'Discourse Three'. Therefore, no discourse was constructed for that quadrant of the four-way matrix, and this study describes only three discourses.

## Discourse One: 'Assisted Integration' (AI)

### *Development as integration through jobs and education*

Table 9-1

#### *Summary of Assisted Integration (AI) discourse*

ISSUE	CHARACTERISTICS
<u>"Development"</u>	Integration into formal economy
<u>Place of land reform</u>	Politically necessary; One of many methods of integration
<u>Existing large farms</u>	Created by apartheid Most efficient form of agriculture Guaranteed food security
<u>Policy prescriptions</u>	Government-led land reform Transfer existing farms to beneficiaries Create black large-scale farmers Transfer farms to small groups or individuals.
<u>Post-settlement</u>	Government financial support Mentorships for technical support
<u>Title for beneficiaries</u>	After probationary lease period
<u>Communal areas</u>	Provide long-term rights to land
<u>Rural Landless Women</u>	Not mentioned

'Discourse One' in Figure 9-1 (page 317) groups together those respondents advocating that the government lead the process of transferring farms in their existing large-scale capital-intensive form. To begin understanding this discourse, it is necessary to explore the assumptions around the process of development put forward by respondents in this category. In the course of the interviews, it became apparent that to those articulating this discourse, 'development' in the South African context is taken to mean the redistribution of economic resources from white ownership to black ownership. Due to apartheid and colonial policies, most resources in South Africa "... are currently concentrated still in the hands of whites" (Ngqameni, 2012). Therefore, the process of 'development' is the process of creating "... a fair distribution, of the resources that we have ... There's a lot of disbundling that needs to happen here" (Ngqameni, 2012). From 1994 to 1999 the politics of South Africa was aimed at reconciliation between whites and blacks. But "... the politics of the country have changed since then. Because we now talk about 'economic freedom in our lifetime'" (Mfuywa, 2012). Thus while black South Africans enjoy full political rights in the post-apartheid era, these respondents still see themselves as economically subjugated. 'Development' must therefore bring about a greater share of resources for black South Africans. However, further analysis shows that those subscribing to this discourse do not envision this redistribution of resources being carried out in a way that damages or radically changes the formal economy created during the colonial, segregation and apartheid eras.

Various ways of facilitating this integration are suggested by proponents of this discourse. Some emphasise the importance of providing a stronger and more complete education to black South Africans (Josephs, 2012). It is assumed here that the most devastating apartheid policy was the denial of adequate educational facilities: "... when you look at the policies of Verwoerd, the guy who actually invented the apartheid system, he said ... he will ensure that he gives a black inferior education" (Buthelezi, 2012). This means that today, "... the solution to the country's problems, and to the economic problems, is nothing else but one: education" (Buthelezi, 2012). Education is not only for young people however. Those who are not in school must be engaged in capacity-building programmes and projects (Buthelezi, 2012), which would allow them to be integrated into the existing formal economy. Others emphasise the importance of employment and argue that the quickest and most effective way to integrate black South Africans into the formal economy is through creating jobs and reducing unemployment (CS6, 2012). Most of the problems in the country are caused by unemployment (B2, 2012), that is, they are not integrated into the formal economy. It is necessary to "... give almost everybody something to do, some job, so that they earn some money" (CS5, 2012). Working permanently and earning steady salaries, they will be able to improve their lives and those of their families, as part of the formal economy. Various ways of creating these jobs are suggested, ranging from government job-creation schemes (B2, 2012), to facilitating higher rates of economic growth in the formal economy to stimulate the creation of new jobs (Mbeki, 2003). These respondents,

then, argued for a wider redistribution of economic resources, through the integration of black South Africans into the formal economy.

***Land reform a political necessity and part of a wider programme of development***

Most respondents located within this discourse agreed that land reform was an important political necessity, given the history of dispossession.

Interview respondents made it clear that “... if you understand the history of this country, the struggle was about the whole issue of the land question ... and if you ignore that, then you are asking for trouble” (CS6, 2012).

Respondents described a strong popular pressure for a land reform programme — “... in the minds of the majority of the people ... the issue of land is a serious issue ...” (B3, 2012). These assertions provide an interesting contrast to the lack of priority accorded to this issue at the national policy level, as analysed in chapter eight. While recognising a wide popular support for land reform, respondents also argue that it must be viewed as a part of the larger project of ‘development’. Land reform and land redistribution, however, are seen as only one of many ways of integrating people into the formal economy. “It’s not going to solve the [problem one] hundred per cent ... It will partly solve the problem. There are other things that should be done” (B2, 2012). Land reform is therefore seen as only being a small part of a larger process in this discourse.

***Large-scale commercial farms worth protecting***

In the conception of ‘development’ used in this discourse, the overall intention is not to change the existing formal economy of South Africa in

any far-reaching way. Rather, the intention is to facilitate the expansion of this economy in a way that includes black South Africans as well. This implies that the existing formal economy of South Africa is seen as worth preserving, extending and protecting, even though it was created through the large-scale oppression and dispossession of black South Africans. This view of the formal economy extends to how the large-scale commercial farming sector is conceptualised.

There is a clear recognition that the existing large-scale commercial farms were created through apartheid policies. Interview respondents commented that "... the land was taken unfairly. By force" (Njoli, 2012). "Our history is very clear in this country, that there has been an imbalance, when it comes to ownership of land and land distribution ..." (Ngqameni, 2012). In addition, after gaining the land in this manner, the existing white large-scale commercial farmers were given extensive

... assistance from the previous governments ... They were provided with support, and development. In terms of resources, they were given the land, they were given water ... You know, institutions were set up, financial institutions, Land Bank, and other institutions that ... were there to transfer skills, to the farmers of the time ... The market was even reserved (Buthelezi, 2012).

As a result, the large-scale commercial white farmers of South Africa's formal economy today have almost exclusive possession of agricultural land, and the expertise and capital required to make use of it (CS6, 2012).

Alongside this, these large-scale commercial farms are presented as the most efficient form of agriculture possible. The large-scale commercial agricultural sector has achieved commercial importance, developing "... from just subsistence farming ..." (ADA, 2013b, p. 3) to being a profit-generating, market-focused sector. This sector is highly productive, and has achieved this through investing in infrastructure, human capital, and the latest scientific research in agricultural production. Proponents of this discourse assume that there is no better way of using the country's agricultural resources than the example offered by its commercial farms (ADA, 2013b; B3, 2012; Buthelezi, 2012; Chetty, 2012; Loest, 2012).

Respondents articulating this discourse agreed that, in addition to being the most efficient and productive form of agriculture, the large-scale commercial farms guarantee the food security of South Africa (B2, 2012; B3, 2012; Josephs, 2012; Mfuywa, 2012; NG1, 2012). Therefore, on the basis that food security today is more important than the country's history of dispossession (B1, 2012), land reform should not be allowed to disrupt agricultural production. As an interview respondent from the DRDLR stated: "You know you can address the land question, but you must also balance it with food security" (CS6, 2012).

***Land reform to create black large-scale commercial farmers.***

The assumption that large-scale commercial farms are the most efficient form of agriculture and guarantee food security has direct implications for the type of land reform to be undertaken. Firstly, beneficiaries must be given farms as they are — farms should not be subdivided into smaller units (ADA, 2013b; AFASA, 2012; B3, 2012; CS6, 2012; Josephs, 2012; Mfuywa, 2012; Ngqameni, 2012; Njoli, 2012). Secondly, in order to preserve the efficiency of the agricultural sector and food security, land redistribution must concentrate on creating black large-scale commercial farmers, and integrating them into the existing class of white large-scale commercial farmers (ADA, 2013b, p. 10; Anonymous 5, 2012; B3, 2012; Buthelezi, 2012; CS1, 2012). An LRAD beneficiary, when describing the purpose of land redistribution emphasised the aspiration that black people “... will be incorporated into this farming business” (B2, 2012). Similarly, a respondent working in the DRDLR stated that the purpose of land reform was to support “... those who want to produce in the mainstream, that is commercial agriculture” (Mfuywa, 2012).

Respondents in this discourse also argued that land redistribution should concentrate on small-scale growers in the communal areas, giving them the chance to expand their operations and become large-scale agricultural producers outside of the communal areas. The focus should be on identifying those small-scale farmers currently renting land in the communal areas with potential, and supporting their development. A

DRDLR respondent commented: “... you can see that this person can do wonders if he were to get a bigger piece of land” (Anonymous 5, 2012).

Another said, “... we are supposed to prioritise those people, who have been small-scale growers, to graduate them to become commercial farmers” (CS1, 2012).

In the drive to create large-scale commercial farmers, adherents to this discourse allow for the transfer of farms to either individual beneficiaries, or small groups of beneficiaries. Group-based beneficiaries interviewed in the course of this study emphasised that their success as commercial farmers was at least partly due to the fact that their groups were small and based on family ties (B3, 2012; Njoli, 2012). This made it easier to make decisions and gain agreement when necessary. In addition, it would make possible the use of the technical knowledge of the older members of the family group, and the financial and management knowledge of their (more highly educated) children (Josephs, 2012). A DRDLR official emphasised that groups also needed to have ‘constructive dynamics’. Groups with ‘destructive dynamics’ would continue to fail no matter what the DRDLR tried to do. In contrast, groups with constructive dynamics were much more likely to succeed (Loest, 2012).

Others articulating this discourse express a preference for the transfer of land to individual black South African beneficiaries (ADA, 2013b; CS6, 2012; Mfuywa, 2012). The conflicts common in large groups were repeatedly highlighted by many respondents (B2, 2012; Chetty, 2012; Pletts, 2012).

Members of AFASA emphasised that land must be redistributed on the basis of “... one man, one farm. One farm, one entity, one company. Then you talk viable” (Ngqameni, 2012). Interview respondents from the DRDLR agreed that priority “... should at least be given to that person who is already established, who has already ... proved himself to be able and committed” (Anonymous 5, 2012).

Given the focus of the state on maintaining current food production levels and creating black large-scale commercial farmers to many of those identifying with this discourse, the long-term aim of land redistribution is no more than to ensure that overall black South Africans own as much land as do white South Africans. Respondents asserted that in many cases, much of the land owned by white farmers lies fallow: “... a white farmer is holding a number of farms. And ... maybe he’s only using one farm ... Not all those farms are used” (CS5, 2012). Redistributing these farms to aspirant black commercial farmers would both ensure a wider distribution of economic resources to black South Africans, and ensure agricultural land is used more intensively.

### ***The central role of government in land redistribution***

Many of the respondents drawing from this discourse presented a strong critique of the capacity of the state to deliver land reform policy (ADA, 2013b; B2, 2012; Chetty, 2012; CS3, 2012; CS6, 2012; Huddleston, 2012; Josephs, 2012; NG1, 2012; Pletts, 2012; Webber, 2012). Simultaneously, however, they were equally adamant that the open market alone could not be relied on to

transfer land to black South Africans. Members of AFASA argued strongly against market-based land reform in South Africa as it has been implemented since 1994: “We are saying as AFASA ‘it has not worked. It has failed us. The willing buyer-willing seller has failed us’” (Ngqameni, 2012). The “... willing buyer/willing seller approach [has] not been effective for transformation purposes” (AFASA, 2012, p. 4). Others agreed that the market is not the best way to achieve land redistribution (B3, 2012), asserting that so far willing buyer-willing seller had allowed a tiny minority of white farmers to maintain a grip on most of South Africa’s farmland (Njoli, 2012), and exorbitant prices had been paid for the few farms that have been transferred (Mfuywa, 2012). Those articulating this discourse, therefore, argued that despite its many failings, the government must step into the market to play a prominent role in land reform.

According to this discourse, then, the most important role of the government is to intervene in the land market, obtaining farms for land redistribution by expropriation (with adequate compensation) when necessary (CS5, 2012; CS6, 2012; Mfuywa, 2012; NG1, 2012; Ngqameni, 2012; Njoli, 2012). In addition to acquiring the land for redistribution, the government was also expected to support beneficiaries after they have been settled to enable them to develop as independent large-scale commercial farmers. A respondent elaborated that South Africa needs to learn from the mistakes made in Zimbabwe and Mozambique. In these countries, many were understandably eager to regain their land, but found that once in possession of that land, they were unable to farm it commercially. They

needed more than enthusiasm, because “... farming to me is like every business that we have in our country ... you need to have the knowledge and expertise to be able to run your own farm” (B2, 2012). A representative of NAFU commented that black South Africans have come to realise that

... we don't actually need land per se. We need land and the resources to work that land. We need water and the resources to work that land. The skills, and the resources to acquire those skills. We need the market, and we've got to have the resources to meet the requirements in terms of quality, in terms of the standard, the specifications and all those kind of things. And we need also to look at the issues of the infrastructure (Buthelezi, 2012).

This discourse, therefore, accords a strong role to the state in the provision of post-settlement support to beneficiaries.

Respondents drawing from this discourse assert that the existing white farmers of South Africa achieved their present position because of the intensive support they received from previous governments (AFASA, 2012; Buthelezi, 2012). Therefore, to ensure the success of beneficiaries, they also need full government support to access the capital, knowledge and markets they need to produce commercially (ADA, 2013a; Anonymous 5, 2012; CS1, 2012; CS5, 2012; CS6, 2012; Huddleston, 2012; Loest, 2012; Mfuywa, 2012; NG1, 2012; Ngqameni, 2012; Njoli, 2012; Pletts, 2012). Some of the respondents went on to stipulate that government support should only last for a set period, and should diminish each year, to ensure that beneficiaries do not

become dependent, but develop as independent large-scale commercial producers (B3, 2012; Chetty, 2012).

### ***The importance of mentors***

As part of the process of providing beneficiaries with the skills to succeed as commercial farmers, many of the respondents expressing this discourse agreed that beneficiaries should be allocated mentors from the existing large-scale commercial agricultural sector. Beneficiaries need to learn from “... the people who have been in the game for quite some time” (B2, 2012), tapping into the skills and experience of these established farmers to increase their chances of succeeding (B3, 2012). While a respondent in this study (who was a land reform beneficiary) describes a very successful and mutually beneficial relationship with a white mentor (B1, 2012), others articulating this discourse express distrust of the true motives of white mentors, alleging that they seek the failure of those black farmers they mentor (B2, 2012; Buthelezi, 2012). This is evidence of the low-trust environment in post-apartheid South Africa, and shows the effects of the informal institution of racism, inherited from the past, on the implementation of this policy.

### ***From probationary leasehold to private ownership***

Those in this discourse were also broadly united in arguing that beneficiaries should be given ownership of the land they access under PLAS after a period of probationary lease (AFASA, 2012; CS6, 2012; Mfuywa, 2012). Many PLAS beneficiaries were extremely discouraged to learn that they would not gain ownership of land leased under this programme (B2, 2012).

They argue that the integration of black South Africans into the formal economy, and their empowerment, “... will never be complete without ownership of land ...” (Ngqameni, 2012). In addition, knowing that they would own the land would encourage beneficiaries to invest in the land and develop it fully (B2, 2012).

### ***Providing land title to the rural landless***

There is some recognition that creating large-scale black commercial farmers will not benefit the vast majority of the rural landless poor, given the small number of existing farms available for transfer. Respondents suggested that the rural landless poor would still benefit from the creation of a few large-scale black commercial farmers, as it would create employment on those farms, encourage the growth of small businesses, and ensure the food security of the poor. In addition, the rural landless poor will be able to access jobs in the secondary processing and manufacturing industries that will arise around the increased production levels achieved on redistributed farms (ADA, 2013b; CS3, 2012; Ngqameni, 2012).

In addition, this discourse suggested that the plight of the rural landless poor would be most improved by either providing them with title, or with some form of long-term secure tenure in the communal areas where they live. It is generally assumed that doing this will allow people living in these situations to invest in their small pieces of land and bring them to their full productive potential, or use the value of their land to access capital and so improve their socio-economic lot (Mfuywa, 2012; Pletts, 2012).

In summary, the main distinguishing feature of the AI discourse is the assertion that land reform should be a government-led process to create black large-scale commercial farmers. The AI discourse constructs the process of 'development' as the integration of black South Africans into the formal economy, and land reform is seen as only one of many potential ways of achieving this integration. In addition, some form of land reform is seen as being politically necessary, to avert large-scale public anger. To those drawing from the AI discourse, while existing large-scale farms were created by apartheid legislation, they are the most efficient form of agriculture possible, and guarantee food security. The policy prescriptions arising from this discourse focus on a government-led process to transfer existing farms to black individuals or small groups, to create black large-scale commercial farmers. These beneficiaries are also to receive financial assistance from the government and technical advice from experienced mentors. Finally, to ensure the full integration of beneficiaries, they should gain ownership of redistributed land after a probationary lease period. The socio-economic conditions of the rural landless who do not gain farms from the government must be improved through the provision of title to the land they live on in the former bantustans.

## Discourse Two: ‘Competitive Integration’ (CI)

### *Development as integration through economic growth*

Table 9-2

#### *Summary of Competitive Integration (CI) discourse*

ISSUE	CHARACTERISTICS
<u>"Development"</u>	Integration into the formal economy
<u>Place of land reform</u>	Politically necessary Existing property rights must be respected Agriculture is a secondary development factor Adverse South African climate limits the potential of land reform Economies of scale limit the scale of land reform
<u>Existing large farms</u>	Survivors of post-apartheid deregulation Most efficient agricultural producers Guarantee food security
<u>Policy prescriptions</u>	Market-led redistribution of land Transfer existing farms Create black large-scale farmers Individuals, not groups
<u>Post-settlement</u>	Private sector financial support Mentorships to provide technical advice
<u>Title for beneficiaries</u>	Immediate on market purchase
<u>Communal areas</u>	Provide title to the rural landless in the former homelands
<u>Rural Landless Women</u>	Not mentioned

Although ‘Discourse Two’ from Figure 9-1 (page 317) also advocates for the transfer of farms in their existing form, the reasons given for this by respondents, and the means to do this differs. Firstly, though, it is necessary to trace out how these respondents describe the process of ‘development’,

which is seen here as the integration of black South Africans into the formal established economy as full participants, so that they can share in its benefits (C1, 2012; Every, 2012; F1, 2012; La Marque, 2012; Madhanpall, 2012; Rossouw, 2012; Trollip, 2012). The leader of Umncunube (an NGO involved in the mentoring of aspiring black large-scale commercial farmers) elaborated that in post-apartheid South Africa, no matter their ethnic background, everyone "... should have a chance to prove themselves. But to prove themselves fairly and squarely ... the world is there for you to make the best of it" (Kew, 2012). Within this discourse, this is recognised as being achievable by facilitating the growth of the existing formal economy, to create more jobs and opportunities for black South Africans. The founder of Amadlelo (an NGO devoted to training black large-scale commercial dairy farmers) explained that "... if you really want to do something about poverty alleviation, then jack the economy way beyond where it is now, and employ the people that are not employed" (Every, 2012). Another respondent explained that rather than cutting the existing economic cake into smaller slices for redistribution, "... ideally we should be baking a bigger cake, and there should be more to be able to go around" (CS4, 2012).

### ***Land reform politically necessary***

There is a general acceptance among those articulating this discourse that because of the history of South Africa, there is intense political pressure on the government to carry out some version of land reform. The interview respondent from the DA was explicit about the suffering of black South Africans in the apartheid and colonial eras, describing their systematic

dispossession “... either through wars, either through arbitrary land grabs, or through legislative land grabs, like the 1913 Land Act” (Trollip, 2012).

Another agreed that “... the fact that land is taken away from people — I’m not even going to discuss it, it’s despicable” (Kew, 2012). The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Kwanalu stated that the white large-scale commercial farmers of KwaZulu-Natal “... are all, of course, acutely mindful of our country’s past and recognise the necessity to commit to land reform, land restitution and land redistribution ...” (Agri SA & Kwanalu, 2008, p. 1). The leader of Agri-EC agreed that: “Unfortunately under the previous dispensations ... the whole land issue had been racialised ... Now one has to reverse, or try and reverse what ... history left us” (Pringle, 2012). While some cynicism was expressed about African leaders turning to land reform as a way to cling on to waning power and popularity in other African countries (Kew, 2012), the general consensus within this discourse is that the government needs to be seen to be implementing some form of land reform, given the scale of past dispossessions in South Africa.

### ***Factors limiting land redistribution policy***

#### *The need to respect existing property rights*

Having acknowledged that a land reform programme is politically necessary, most respondents articulating this discourse argued that the type of land redistribution that is feasible in South Africa is limited. As will be seen, the factors limiting land reform put forward by these respondents draw heavily from the ‘Large Farms’ and libertarian discourses identified in earlier chapters, or the neo-classical economics approach identified by

Cousins and Scoones (2010). Firstly, these respondents saw property rights as the basis of the entire formal economy in South Africa. Property rights are seen as important as they enable foreign and domestic investment, allow wealth in property to be transformed into other assets, and allow individuals to fully capture the fruit of their labours (Richardson, 2010). Most respondents linked the productivity of South Africa's large-scale commercial farming sector directly to the property rights enjoyed by the owners of these farms. Likewise, the low productivity of the communal areas is linked to a lack of property rights (Aitken, 2012b; B1, 2012; Gevers, 2011; Miller, 2012; Moorcroft, 2010; Pringle, 2012; Trollip, 2012). In addition, most respondents articulating this discourse saw the land restitution process as a threat to the property rights of large-scale commercial farmers, leading to uncertainty around the security of these rights (F1, 2012; Madhanpall, 2012; Pringle, 2012; Stewart, 2012). The CEO of Kwanalu argued that "... the majority of this province still remains under claims, which continues to play a negative role and which has undermined investor confidence in KwaZulu-Natal" (La Marque, 2012, p. 6). The then-President of the same organisation agreed that this means that farmers do not invest in their land, and do not take steps to increase their production, which "... can only worsen poverty and raise unemployment" (Aitken, 2012b, p. 2).

*Agriculture is a secondary development factor*

Secondly, it is argued that agriculture is a secondary development factor. A broader shift away from agriculture in the economy is assumed to be an inevitable accompaniment to the normal course of development.

'Development' always involves a process of urbanisation, as seen in the US and much of Europe (Miller, 2012). Both of these processes can already be seen in South Africa: the contribution of the agricultural sector has declined over time to only 2.5 per cent of the South African Gross Domestic Product (Aitken, 2012a), and there is already a general migration to the urban areas (Pringle, 2012). This implies that rural poverty is not resolved through land reform programmes, but through the creation of jobs in the towns and cities:

What the poor need is not the right to run two cows on a commons, or to plough an acre of arable land. They need a permanent job with the security of a pay cheque at the end of the month. They need access to schools, shops and clinics, and not a hand-to-mouth existence in some dreary rural backwater without essential infrastructure (Moorcroft, 2010, pp. 14-15).

This discourse, then, gives rise to assertions that rural poverty is not resolved through agricultural reforms, but rather through migration of the rural poor to the urban areas. This means that land reform policies cannot help the rural landless.

*Climatic drivers shaping land reform policy*

Thirdly, many respondents expressing this discourse argued that the natural environment in South Africa is highly variable and dry, thereby limiting the scope of land reforms. For example, "... only 30% of the country receives more than 500 mm of rainfall per annum. The remaining two thirds receives

less than this ...” (Pringle, 2010c, p. 20). This means that “... there’s a limited potential in agriculture in South Africa, and it’s restricted to where the rain falls” (Pringle, 2012). Due to these climatic factors, small-scale commercial farming is not feasible in most of the country (Kew, 2012). Therefore land reform programmes and attempts to increase agricultural production are not going to solve South Africa’s rural poverty problems: “... there’s a limited amount you can do with a piece of semi-desert. Ask the Australians” (Pringle, 2012). Given the climate of the region, then, land redistribution involving the transfer of small pieces of land cannot be expected to improve the socio-economic position of beneficiaries.

#### *Efficiency factors shaping land reform policy*

Fourth, this discourse includes assertions that to make the best use of machinery and new technologies and to increase production efficiency, an increase in the average size of commercial farms can be seen in South Africa over time. This is because economies of scale are important in commercial ‘First World’ agriculture around the world (F1, 2012; Kew, 2012). Farms are slowly getting bigger in the commercial farming areas of South Africa, and this is a natural process — “... farming is a marginal business all over the world. So people seek economies of scale ...” (Trollip, 2012). As they grow, they compete for the limited amount of land available for commercial agriculture in South Africa. This means that only the most efficient commercial farmers are able to expand to achieve economies of scale. In South Africa’s formal agricultural sector, those farmers “... that made it,

bought the neighbour's place or hired the neighbour's place. The neighbour ... moved on somewhere else, or used his rental to start a business somewhere else" (Trollip, 2012). In this way, large pieces of South Africa's farmland have come under the control of those most able to use it efficiently. This is consonant with the dominant view noted by Hebinck, Fay and Kondlo (2011) in the Eastern Cape, which constructs small-scale farms as inherently inefficient and mandates leaving existing large-scale farms intact.

Respondents articulating this discourse asserted that there is no better way of using South Africa's agricultural resources than the example offered by its commercial farms (Gevers, 2011). Only the large-scale commercial farmers are able to "... get optimal production out of the environment, without sending it into the sea" (Kew, 2012). Existing farmers were depicted as flexible and lateral-thinking entrepreneurs who are at the same time "... subject to the discipline of the profit and loss account. And commercial farming can't exist unless it is [environmentally] sustainable and economically viable" (CS4, 2012). It is made up of "... progressive individual farmers applying modern management techniques backed up by adequate financial facilities, effective research and relevant extension work" (Moorcroft, 2010, p. 5). In a deregulated, globalised and ultra-competitive agricultural marketplace, these farmers have been able to continue their operations (CS4, 2012; Every, 2012; F1, 2012; Naidoo, 2012; Rossouw, 2012). In addition, most large-scale commercial farmers are part of well-established

and lucrative value chains that guarantee the prosperity of many South Africans of all ethnic backgrounds (C1, 2012; Madhanpall, 2012).

Thus, the large-scale commercial farms are portrayed as the guarantors of food security (Aitken, 2012a; B1, 2012; F1, 2012; Hulbert, 2012; Rossouw, 2012).

The reality therefore is that not only does the commercial farming sector provide the food necessary to feed the country's growing urban population, but that it provides food for the subsistence farming sector as well (Pringle, 2010b, p. 3).

It follows that if the supply of food from the large-scale commercial farms were interrupted in any way, those affected the most and for the longest would be South Africa's poor: "... the people who are going to die are the poor" (Kew, 2012).

Not all large-scale commercial farms in South Africa produce basic food products, however. KwaZulu-Natal, for example, has long-established sugar and timber-production industries. SASA represents the interests of producers and processors in the sugar industry, while SAPPI and MONDI are both powerful corporations involved in the processing and export of timber and timber products. Respondents involved in these industries argued that in addition to securing the food security of South Africa, the large-scale commercial farms producing raw materials for these industries are part of long-lasting and lucrative chains of supply, which ensure the prosperity and employment security of millions of South Africans.

Therefore land reform cannot be carried out in a way which threatens the livelihoods and prosperity of so many ordinary South Africans (C1, 2012; Madhanpall, 2012; SASA).

In addition, those expressing this discourse argue that the large-scale commercial farmers in South Africa today are the survivors of the deregulated post-apartheid agricultural environment: “... it’s tough here, there’s no subsidies in this country. So you either make it on your own or you don’t. So, those that are left behind, aren’t being molly-coddled by anybody” (Pringle, 2012). Surviving in this environment, the existing large-scale commercial farmers in South Africa are “... super-intelligent people. Who live and thrive under the most difficult circumstances” (Rossouw, 2012).

***Transfer of farms to be restricted to the existing large-scale form***

For these six reasons then, respondents articulating this discourse suggested that land reform can only transfer farms to beneficiaries in their existing form (C1, 2012; Every, 2012). They must not be broken up into smaller units when redistributed. In addition, land reform can only transfer large-scale commercial farms to individuals. Most of the respondents expressing this discourse were adamant about the dangers of settling large groups of people on redistributed land (B1, 2012; C1, 2012; F1, 2012; Kew, 2012; Madhanpall, 2012; Pletts, 2012; Pringle, 2012). Large-scale commercial farmers speaking at the 2012 Kwanalu Annual Congress argued that individual black farmers are more likely to succeed, and that it is economically impossible for thousands

of people to make enough money to survive off one piece of land (Gumede, 2012). This discourse gives rise to suggestions that land reform must therefore concentrate on creating black large-scale commercial farmers, and supporting their integration alongside the existing class of white large-scale commercial farmers (B1, 2012; F1, 2012; Gumede, 2012; Madhanpall, 2012). Land redistribution must facilitate the development of a multi-racial, mutually co-operating “... middle class agriculture community that wants to see the other man succeed” (Kew, 2012).

***Integration into the formal agricultural economy through the market***

This discourse, therefore, shares the AI conception that land can only be transferred in the form of large-scale mechanised farms, even if the reasons for this differ slightly. Where these two discourses differ seriously is in *how* these black large-scale commercial farmers are to be created. Those articulating this discourse began answering this question by arguing that the current government in South Africa lacks management and governing capacity, and is in many cases corrupt. Respondents argued that government “... by its very nature is inefficient, and also using other people’s money doesn’t force the operator to be as disciplined as if it were in the private sector” (CS4, 2012). Incompetent government officials were accused of contributing to the inflated prices paid for land by the government (F1, 2012; Kew, 2012). Most of the extension officers employed by the government were portrayed as not knowing enough to help beneficiaries succeed as farmers (Kew, 2012). “Especially from a post-settlement

sustainability point — you can't expect the state to play this entire role. It's never going to have that capacity to play that role" (Madhanpall, 2012).

Respondents alleged that the land reform programme in KwaZulu-Natal "... has been plagued with mal-administration, nepotism, corruption, a total lack of transparency and disregard for the rule of law ..." (La Marque, 2012, p. 4). Reference was made to a steady increase in the incompetence of the officials involved in land reform, resulting in increasing confusion around the process (Eshowe Entumeni Farmers Association, 2008). From this perspective, then, the incapacity and the corruption in the government have meant that, so far, land reform has done nothing more than take commercial land out of production in South Africa (C1, 2012; Kew, 2012; Pletts, 2012; ProAgri, 2012; Stewart, 2012).

In contrast to the incapacity of the government, most respondents articulating this discourse expressed confidence that the market unfailingly transfers assets (like agricultural land) to their most efficient users in a 'natural evolutionary process' (B1, 2012; C1, 2012; F1, 2012; La Marque, 2012; Pletts, 2012; Pringle, 2012; Rossouw, 2012; Stewart, 2012; Trollip, 2012). This means that the black South Africans who will succeed as commercial farmers are those who buy their farms themselves "... through bank loans. Through the normal processes. And those are the guys I think in the end will be the successful black farmers" (Pringle, 2012). Among the black South Africans who buy land will be those who can use resources on the market more efficiently than anyone else. Over time, they will be able to obtain

resources from the market, use them as efficiently as possible, and so enrich themselves. In the process, they will maintain or increase the levels of agricultural production achieved on South African farmland. In order for this process to happen as quickly and as effectively as possible, the market must be as open and as undistorted as possible. “All farmers must be expected to survive in a market-driven economy: those who cannot, must be permitted to fail” (Pringle, 2010a, p. 55).

***Market-based land reform has transferred large amounts of land***

Many respondents expressing this discourse go further, arguing that despite normal rises in the price of farmland (Pletts, 2012), South Africa’s market-based land reform programme has “... in fact delivered handsomely in transferring previously white owned commercial farm land into the hands of black South Africans” (Kwanalu, 2012). While SASA argues that market processes have already transferred 21 per cent of all sugar-producing land to black South Africans (Madhanpall, 2012), others suggest that close to or more than 30 per cent of commercial farmland has already been transferred to black South Africans in the post-apartheid era (Aitken, 2012b; Kew, 2012; Pringle, 2012). These assertions contradict government statistics quoted in chapter one, that by 2009 only 6.9 per cent of white-owned land had been transferred through land redistribution (Greenberg, 2010). A lack of any new statistics on the amount of land transferred being made available since then, however, has enabled those drawing from this discourse to make these assertions without fear of contradiction. This discourse is thus able to

maintain that there is no real problem with market-based land reform that needs to be addressed.

***Post-settlement support best delivered by the private sector***

Having obtained their land on the market, most respondents articulating this discourse agreed that land reform beneficiaries do not have the skills necessary to farm commercially (Rossouw, 2012). Most received a poor education during the apartheid period (Aitken, 2012a) and lack basic business management skills (Pletts, 2012), or have no experience of agriculture at any level (Madhanpall, 2012). Those articulating this discourse therefore agree that beneficiaries need some form of post-settlement support. Interview respondents expressing this discourse offered two different opinions on who should offer post-settlement support to new black large-scale commercial farmers. Some felt that businesses, commodity organisations or NGOs should provide this support. Others felt that new black large-scale farmers would learn all they need to under mentors from the existing large-scale commercial farming sector.

Each of the interviewees from SAPPI, MONDI, SASA, Amadlelo and Umncunube expressed opinions strongly in favour of the government leaving the task of post-settlement support of land reform beneficiaries to themselves. SAPPI and MONDI would concentrate on new timber farmers, Amadlelo on new dairy farmers, SASA on new sugar producers, and Umncunube on new stock and food crop farmers. The representatives of SAPPI, MONDI and SASA frankly admitted that up to half of the farms

currently supplying them with materials for their mills were either redistributed, in the process of being redistributed, or under land claims. If these farms were to stop producing timber for SAPPI and MONDI's mills, or sugar cane for SASA's mills, all three industries would suffer catastrophic losses. The leaders of Amadlelo and Umncunube saw it as in the long-term interests of the existing large-scale farmers of South Africa to be involved in the process of creating new black large-scale farmers. Therefore these five interview respondents all indicated that their organisations were in the process of providing long-term, in-depth support to beneficiaries in their industries. This included extension advice, management training, access to capital and markets, and programmes to improve social cohesion in large groups. Therefore, these interviewees advocated that government should leave post-settlement support of land reform beneficiaries to private commodity organisations, businesses and NGOs (C1, 2012; Every, 2012; Madhanpall, 2012; Makhathini, 2012).

All five respondents from SASA, SAPPI, MONDI, Amadlelo and Umncunube also argued that beneficiaries would be best served if the state set the regulatory framework for land reform and post-settlement support, and allowed the relevant corporations, commodity organisations or industry NGOs to do the implementation of their behalf. They were more than capable of developing "... the methodology, the tools, the programme. And say 'government, here, we've done it. Now can you institutionalise it as a programme of your business ...'" (Madhanpall, 2012). There is no need for the government to provide these new black large-scale farmers with any

form of support — the relevant agri-corporations, commodity organisations or NGOs operating in the open marketplace are able to provide access to the mentors, information, technology and capital new black farmers need to make efficient use of their land.

You've got to have this partnership model between the claimants, or the grower, government, and organised agriculture. In whatever form it takes. It may be agribusiness directly. It may be an organised commodity like ourselves ... for South Africa to succeed in this programme, you need that partnership model (Madhanpall, 2012).

Various respondents reported that SASA had set a good example of doing this (B1, 2012; Pletts, 2012). It was suggested that therefore the other commodity organisations — those representing beef producers, maize producers and others, ought to follow suit (Every, 2012). In this way, land reform would contribute "... to the transformation of agri-business in South Africa through the training and mentoring of black farmers by entering into long term partnerships" (Amadlelo Agri, n.d.)

### ***The importance of farmer mentors***

As in the AI discourse, respondents argued part of the support given to beneficiaries needed to be experienced mentors from the established agricultural sector (CS4, 2012). "For any agricultural project to be successful we need three things, land, skills and access to finance. Remove any one of these and you will be doomed to failure. There is where we as farmers have the most valuable input of all, which is our skills" (Aitken, 2012b). The white

large-scale commercial farmers are “... the missing ingredient. You cannot start a business without management expertise” (Stewart, 2012). Given the low levels of trust expressed in the AI discourse towards mentors, however, it is not clear how the barriers created by the history of racism in the country can be overcome in the course of the transfer of this management expertise. While a respondent articulating the CI discourse insisted white farmers have successfully participated in mentorship programmes in the past, and are more than willing to help aspirant black farmers (Kew, 2012), other white farmers expressed doubt about the ability and willingness of beneficiaries to follow the advice their mentors provide (Every, 2012). This suggests that the mentorships required by PLAS are not generally easily implemented.

### ***A need to give title to the rural landless***

Finally, mirroring arguments put forward in the libertarian discourse and in line with the overall emphasis in the discourse on market processes and property rights, interview respondents expressing this discourse suggested that the best course of action to help the rural landless poor in the communal areas would be to give them title to the lands they live and work on (Miller, 2012; Pringle, 2010c; Trollip, 2012). This, more than anything else, will help them work themselves out of poverty, as it would enable them to borrow money from the banks, and bring their land to its full productive potential. As Pringle asserted, “It makes little sense to continue to squander our existing productive capacity by sacrificing our agricultural sector on the altar of Land Reform when the problem could be solved by making better

use of existing assets” (2010c, p. 22) in the communal areas. These assertions show strong parallels with assertions of the Large Farms and libertarian discourses, focused on the importance of creating property rights where they do not exist.

### ***Discourse summary***

The CI discourse, then, constructs the process of ‘development’ in the post-apartheid context as the integration of black South Africans into the formal economy created prior to 1990. As a process of integration, the existing property rights of white farmers must be respected. Within this overall process, land reform is seen as politically necessary, to satisfy black voters. However, articulators of this discourse argue that it cannot be expected to solve the problem of rural poverty, as historically rural poverty has been solved by the migration of the rural poor to urban areas. In addition, the adverse climate prevailing in the region mean that very few people can expect to succeed at farming. Finally, land reform must not break up existing large farms for redistribution, as they are the result of economies of scale. They are the most efficient form of agriculture, and must not be interfered with. White large-scale farmers in this discourse are portrayed as most able to produce and thrive in the deregulated globalised agriculture economy. As such, they guarantee food security, and so must not be adversely affected by land reform.

As a result of these assertions, the CI discourse advocates in favour of a market-led land reform programme, which creates individual black large-

scale commercial farmers through the transfer of existing farms.

Beneficiaries must receive post-settlement support from the private sector and commodity organisations, as well as mentors from the existing agricultural sector. Beneficiaries should immediately gain full ownership of the land they buy on the market, so they make full use of it. Similarly, the plight of the rural landless in the former 'homelands' would be best alleviated by giving them ownership of the land they live on in these areas. Finally, this discourse does not see any special role for rural landless women in this process.

## Discourse Four: 'Rural Support' (RS)

### *Development as poverty alleviation and capacity-building*

Table 9-3

#### *Summary of Rural Support (RS) discourse*

ISSUE	CHARACTERISTICS
<u>"Development"</u>	Basic needs, Capabilities, Resources
<u>Place of land reform</u>	Justice Property rights inessential Food security Break dependence 'Bottom-up'
<u>Existing large farms</u>	Created by apartheid Inefficient, Environmentally harmful Do not guarantee food security
<u>Policy prescriptions</u>	Government-led land reform Break up large farms Create commercial small-scale sector Groups or individuals
<u>Post-settlement</u>	Government NGOs
<u>Title for beneficiaries</u>	Not necessary
<u>Communal areas</u>	Infrastructure and investment
<u>Rural Landless Women</u>	Must be the primary focus

#### ***Basic conception of 'development'***

Many of the interviewees articulating this discourse gave responses corresponding in large part with the ideas around development and land reform found in the Critical discourse described in chapter five, and the two variants of the 'livelihoods' approach suggested by Cousins and Scoones (2010). Thus respondents expressing this discourse agreed that a minority of South Africans live comfortably and securely, in conditions that could be

called 'First World'. The majority of South Africans have been excluded from attaining this socio-economic level, both before 1994 and up to the present day. The lives of these people are characterised by almost constant insecurity and uncertainty (NG1, 2012). These people do not necessarily need to be integrated fully into the First World Economy. However, they need to be lifted out of their present state of insecurity and poverty.

To achieve this, a "... rights-based approach to land and agrarian reform" (Naidoo, 2005c, p. 6) is needed, as part of the creation of a 'comprehensive safety mechanism' (Naidoo, 2012). Whatever form this mechanism takes, it should include three main components: Firstly, members of the marginalised economy need to be given access to facilities that fulfil their basic needs — this includes a reasonable minimum wage, social grants, health facilities, decent housing, clean water and food security (Naidoo, 2012; Stewart, 2012). Secondly, members of the marginalised economy need better access to extension services and educational opportunities to expand their capabilities to use what they have (Hulbert, 2012; Pletts, 2012; Stewart, 2012). Thirdly, members of the marginalised economy need better access to capital and markets, giving them greater economic opportunities. In the communal areas, people need help in enterprise development (Stewart, 2012). Once the economic position of the poor majority has been improved through these measures, these people can then decide for themselves what they want to do next — "... when you've got healthy people, that are well-fed, then they can start thinking creatively" (Pletts, 2012).

### ***Land reform as a matter of justice***

Turning to land reform, respondents articulating this discourse agreed that the current agrarian economy is the result of great injustices and dispossessions carried out against the black people of South Africa during the colonial and apartheid eras. Many of the respondents expressing this discourse participated in the effort to catalogue and publicise these injustices during the apartheid era (Hulbert, 2012). As a result, there is a strong strand of opinion arising from this discourse arguing that land reform is a matter of justice — no matter what else happens, the land taken from black South Africans prior to 1994 must be returned to them under land reform (Hulbert, 2012; NG1, 2012).

In this light, some articulating this discourse argue that what beneficiaries do with the land is unimportant, as long as their land is given back to them (Hulbert, 2012). Others however point to the dependent position of the rural landless poor, who were forced into the bantustans under apartheid and colonial policies. These areas were created as part of a system of exclusion — and are areas that are excluded from the formal economy, where opportunities are fewer and the risk of slipping right out of its reach hovers (Del Grande & Hornby, 2010). Given the number of black South Africans forced into these small areas, they were never viable at more than a subsistence level at best. The people living in these areas were then forced into migrant labour by the imposition of cash taxes of various kinds. This had the effect of replacing South Africa's peasantry with a 'displaced proletariat' (Wildschut & Hulbert, 1998). The rural landless poor were

forced into a dependence on employment at low wages on white-owned large-scale commercial farms. Today, despite the advent of a new political order, many sections of the rural population still live and work under the same conditions (Naidoo, 2005c). They remain on the periphery of the economy, unable to enter it (Del Grande, 2012).

Those expressing this discourse argue that land reform must contribute to breaking this dependent relationship by giving the rural landless poor access to land, allowing them to work for their own benefit, and not only for the benefit of large-scale commercial farmers. Giving them control of land will expand the resources of the rural landless poor, "... and provide buffers against poverty and complete dependency on farmers" (ECARP, 2011, p. 4). The transformation of the dependent conditions of the poor "... can only be addressed by a broader agrarian transformation that involves shifting the power relations ..." (Naidoo & Manganeng, 2005, p. 113) created by apartheid policies.

### ***Land reform part of poverty alleviation***

Respondents articulating this discourse criticise the government for narrowly associating land redistribution only with the transfer of land for agricultural development (ECARP, 2011). But it is not only about putting people on farms — "... land reform should be about more than agriculture" (Del Grande, 2012). Land is in fact "... an integral part of socio-economic rights that enhances the capabilities and endowments of poor and landless members of society" (ECARP, 2011, p. 3). Land reform is therefore necessary

as part of the overall process of lifting the conditions of living of the rural landless. It is one of many actions that needs to be taken to enable people to access the “... means of social reproduction — housing, services, education, clinics ...” (Naidoo, 2012). According to those articulating this discourse, land and agrarian transformation should see land as a means to give the rural landless “... the capacity to achieve socially accepted standards of living” (ECARP, 2011, p. 2). It must be part of a comprehensive package. So land reform must not only be about the transfer of land for agriculture, but also as a secure place to live.

As part of the provision of a comprehensive social package, land reform can contribute significantly to creating food security. Giving people land would enable them to grow a greater proportion of their own food. This would mean that people would now have

... money left over at the end of the month, because they weren't buying certain things. And certain things that they couldn't dream of buying like fruit they were now getting off their own trees. So, if you could pursue a sort of a food security approach towards agriculture ... just using a small patch outside your house ... I think it could contribute. If you could get from there to a point where people were growing reasonable surpluses, even if by commercial standards they [are] tiny (Hulbert, 2012).

Those drawing from this discourse assert that once people have achieved food security, they “... can start thinking about how to progress beyond their

own little boundary” (Pletts, 2012). They can begin to access the infrastructure and inputs they need to begin improving others aspects of their lives.

### ***Land reform should be directed by the rural landless***

Those expressing this discourse argue that the process of planning and implementing land reform should be a ‘bottom-up’ process, directed by the rural landless poor themselves. As many as possible of the decisions around land reform “... should take place at a local level ... the closer you can bring it down to the people the better” (Loest, 2012). Those drawing from this discourse assert that to ensure the success of any rural development programme, it must include the rural landless in the planning stages (ECARP, 2011).

### ***Property ownership not essential***

This discourse is particularly distinctive in the insistence of many of its adherents that property ownership is not an essential part of rural development. In contrast to the assertions of the AI and the CI discourses, the founder and leader of a prominent NGO asserted that “Just because people own land, does not necessarily make them more productive” (Stewart, 2012). Those articulating this discourse argued against the great respect accorded to property rights, and the resulting need to purchase land on the market (Del Grande, 2012). From this perspective, this has forced the rural landless to adjust to the existing property system. Large groups are, therefore, settled on commercial farms expected to run them as agribusinesses, which they inevitably cannot do. Doing this only ensures

that the rural landless poor remain on the periphery of the economy (Del Grande, 2012).

Thus, the existing property ownership system maintains the denial of access to resources to the majority of the population of South Africa (Del Grande, 2012). The solution is, therefore, not necessarily to give people ownership of land (inside or outside the communal areas). Rather, those drawing from this discourse ask how the existing tenure system can be reformed in a way that allows the rural landless to improve their lives, while not destabilising the wider economy (Del Grande, 2012). As private individual property ownership is so damaging to the wider society, various tiers of land tenure should be created, to allow more poor people to access land. The rights of rural land owners must be “... balanced with certain more public objectives” (Del Grande, 2012). The property rights of white landowners must not be allowed to impede the ability of the rural landless poor to access land and improve their quality of life.

***Large farms inefficient, environmentally unsustainable and do not create food security***

Most white large-scale commercial farmers in South Africa received intensive state assistance during the apartheid era (Del Grande, 2012).

“Alongside the development of labour repressive measures that insulated commercial farmers from competition for labour from mines and urban-based industries, agriculture received massive state subsidies” (Naidoo 2011, 73). Articulants of this discourse argue that this support from the apartheid government helped cement the superior position of large-scale commercial

farmers, so that today the country depends on large-scale farms for its food to an extent only seen in the global North. In contrast, the small-scale farmers in the communal areas have been almost completely ignored (Stewart, 2012).

This discourse likewise gives rise to assertions that through apartheid subsidies, the large-scale commercial farm sector has also become over-capitalised, inefficient and unsustainable. It also plays a smaller part in the economy, contributing less to the GDP and creating fewer jobs than might be expected. “This places South Africa amongst the worst three or four performers in a list of 70 comparable countries for which data are available” (Wildschut & Hulbert, 1998).

In addition, articulators of this discourse argue that the large-scale commercial farms of South Africa are capital-intensive, and practice environmentally harmful types of farming. These include sustained monocropping, water wastage and the heavy use of pesticides, chemical fertilisers and genetically modified organisms (Hulbert, 2012). Respondents from within this discourse referred to it as having a heavy carbon footprint, which is not environmentally sustainable (Naidoo, 2012).

Respondents expressing this discourse also disputed the common assertion from other discourses that changing the existing agrarian system would negatively affect South Africa’s food security. One respondent pointed out that in 1994, after decades of strong state support for South Africa’s large-scale farms, the majority of the population were starving (Del Grande, 2012).

### ***Small farms rather than large***

Given all these factors, respondents drawing from this discourse argue that there is significant potential for the creation of small farms in South Africa, especially around the peripheries of the country's towns and cities (Del Grande, 2012). However, despite this the government continues to equate small-scale labour-intensive farming with 'backwardness' (Wildschut & Hulbert, 1998). The government continues to mistakenly discriminate against small farmers (Stewart, 2012), assuming that the best small farmers become large farmers over time (Del Grande, 2012). This reflects a kind of linear pre-determined growth pattern reflective of particular ideologies and worldviews. Much more needs to be done to provide small farmers with extension services, infrastructure and market access. These respondents asserted that the small-scale farming sector is a potential creator of many jobs (Stewart, 2012).

Those articulating this discourse argued that the government considers a failure any farm where "... they don't see big capital-intensive equipment ..." (Naidoo, 2012). Respondents asserted that any attachment to such ideas of what constitutes 'real' agriculture need to be abandoned. At present, land reform policies only promote "... large-scale capital intensive commercial farming to supply predominantly export markets " (ECARP, 2011, p. 11). Rather, the government should ensure that land reform in South Africa contributes towards the creation of a small-scale commercial farming sector (ECARP, 2011). Many of the small-scale producers in the communal areas are already very good producers. Their main problem is the areas they live

in lack the infrastructure necessary to get their produce to the market (Hulbert, 2012). Government should therefore be acting to create opportunities for the emergence of a small-scale commercial farming sector.

***Government-led, not market-led***

Interview respondents expressing this discourse were clear in their criticism of the various government departments tasked with land reform, who were portrayed as lacking capacity due to a wide variety of factors including an inability to deal with the negative effects of affirmative action policies, factionalism and corruption (Del Grande, 2012; Hulbert, 2012; Naidoo, 2012; Stewart, 2012). However, like those drawing from the AI discourse, respondents argued that the market in South Africa has inherent characteristics inherited from the colonial and apartheid past which have enormous negative impacts on the lives and prospects of the rural landless poor (Del Grande, 2012). Thus the market-based land reform programme in South Africa has led to a situation where people “... who were disadvantaged in the previous political dispensation continue to be ignored, while those who benefited from the past continue to enjoy positions of power” (Naidoo, 2005b, p. 74). The market-based ‘willing buyer-willing seller’ programme forces South Africa’s historically disadvantaged to compete with the historically advantaged for land (Naidoo, 2005a). Therefore, despite the many failings of the government, it must intervene in the market to ensure that the rural landless are able to access land.

### ***Post-settlement assistance from the state***

This discourse gives rise to suggestions that the government should provide beneficiaries with all the assistance they need to access the land, the capital, the skills, and the markets in order to succeed. Respondents suggested that the government buy functioning farms and allow beneficiaries to use their government grants to buy into the existing enterprises on the farm (Hulbert, 2012). In addition, it was suggested that the government create regional centres to provide beneficiaries with the extension advice and the resources they would need to produce on their land (Pletts, 2012).

Respondents also argued that the government should help beneficiaries access domestic markets for their produce, by protecting them from competition with cheap foreign food imports (Del Grande, 2012).

### ***Invest in the former 'bantustans'***

In addition to facilitating the growth of a small-scale commercial farming sector in the former 'white' areas of apartheid South Africa, this discourse also gives rise to arguments that more resources and government attention must be directed to the small farmers in the communal areas. Agricultural production in these areas is limited today, as "... there's an underinvestment there in training and in extension and in infrastructure and ... in farming incentives ..." (Stewart, 2012). Much more needs to be done to provide these small farmers with extension services, infrastructure, market access and business skills development.

### ***The need to focus on rural landless women***

There is finally a strong strand of opinion among those articulating this discourse that land reform should concentrate primarily on rural landless women. Respondents argued that these women generally care for the children in the family and perform most of the agricultural labour in the communal areas. This means that they are generally better farmers than men, and more likely to succeed in land reform programmes. This is evident in the experience of a black female respondent, who has established herself as a successful large-scale commercial farmer operating two farms simultaneously (B1, 2012; NG1, 2012; Pletts, 2012). Providing land access to women would also contribute to creating greater gender equity in South Africa (Wildschut & Hulbert, 1998).

### ***Discourse summary***

Respondents articulating this discourse construct the process of 'development' as a process of providing the rural poor with their basic needs, expanding their capabilities and giving them access to a greater range of economic resources. This discourse gives rise to assertions that land reform is a matter of justice, necessary to restore access to land to those dispossessed by apartheid policy. In addition, property rights are constructed here as inessential for economic improvement. Rather, the rural landless need access to land to improve their food security and break their dependence on farm and business owners. Thus, beneficiaries do not need to be given title to the land they access through land reform. Crucially,

respondents argued that land reform must be directed by the rural landless themselves.

This discourse gives rise to assertions that existing large-scale commercial farms were created by apartheid policies, are economically inefficient, and environmentally harmful. Respondents argued that they do not, in fact, guarantee food security. In this light, the policy proposals arising from this discourse are that land reform must be a government-led process rather than market-led. The government should break up large farms into smaller units, as part of a broader effort to create a small-scale commercial farming sector. These smaller units can be redistributed to groups or individuals. Once the land has been transferred, the government should provide beneficiaries with the financial and technical resources they need, with the support of NGOs. More infrastructure and investment must be directed to the communal areas to improve the capabilities and access to resources of the rural landless in these areas. Finally, rural landless women must be the primary focus of land redistribution.

Table 9-4

*AI, CI and RS discourses*

	ASSISTED INTEGRATION (AI)	COMPETITIVE INTEGRATION (CI)	RURAL SUPPORT (RS)
<u>"Development"</u>	Integration into formal economy	Integration into formal economy	Basic needs, Capabilities, Resources
<u>Place of land reform</u>	Politically necessary One of many methods of integration	Politically necessary Existing property rights must be respected Agriculture is a secondary development factor Adverse climate limits the potential of land reform Economies of scale limit the scale of land reform	Justice Property rights inessential Food security Break dependence 'Bottom-up'
<u>Existing large farms</u>	Created by apartheid Most efficient form of agriculture Guarantee food security	Survivors of post-apartheid deregulation Most efficient agricultural producers Guarantee food security	Created by apartheid Inefficient, Environmentally harmful Do not guarantee food security
<u>Policy prescriptions</u>	Government-led land reform Transfer existing farms to beneficiaries Create black large-scale farmers Transfer farms to small groups or individuals.	Market-led redistribution of land Transfer existing farms Create black large-scale farmers Individuals, not groups	Government-led land reform Break up large farms Create commercial small-scale sector Groups or individuals
<u>Post-settlement</u>	Government financial support Mentorships for technical support	Private sector financial support Mentorships for technical support	Government financial and technical support NGOs in a supporting role
<u>Title for beneficiaries</u>	After probationary lease period	Immediate on market purchase	Not necessary
<u>Communal areas</u>	Provide long-term rights to land	Provide title to the rural landless in the communal areas	Infrastructure and investment
<u>Rural Landless Women</u>	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	Must be the primary focus

A minority of respondents drew from multiple discourses in the course of their interviews. However, based on their responses the majority of the respondents could be placed wholly within one or another discourse. All the respondents from the bureaucracies (bar one) articulated the AI discourse, showing the dominant direction of opinion in this group. Similarly, all the black farmers interviewed (large- and small-scale, and again bar one) expressed the AI discourse. All the consultants involved in land reform are also placed in this discourse. A clear pattern of opinion is also evident among the commodity organisations, the agricultural corporations and the white large-scale commercial farmers interviewed in the course of this research — all articulate the CI discourse. Much more variation is apparent among the NGO representatives interviewed. Four of the respondents express the RS discourse, one within the AI discourse, and one within the CI discourse. Based on the responses of their representatives, the DA articulates the CI discourse and the ANC expresses the AI discourse.

### **Markets, state assistance and poverty alleviation**

The results of this discourse analysis support certain aspects and challenges others of previous studies of land reform discourses at the provincial level. As is discussed in chapter five, at the regional southern African level, a ‘neo-classical economics’ discourse is identified, which focuses on the transfer of (larger) farms to efficient farmers through the market (Cousins & Scoones, 2010). Similarly, a ‘technocratic discourse’ drawing on notions of national food security, sustainability and economic efficiency is noted (Du Toit, 1994, p. 376; 2013). A further study details apartheid-era efforts to incorporate

scientific advances into farming practices to stimulate the productivity of white Afrikaans-speaking farmers. The sole frame of reference of the agricultural experts trained to fill these roles came to be the white settler farm, pushing African farming practices to the periphery of knowledge and practice (Hebinck et al., 2011). Drawing on deeper assumptions that the market is the best institution for the exchange and allocation of resources (Jacobs, 2012), this discourse pits the economic efficiency of large-scale commercial farms against the inefficiency of low-input agriculture as practiced in the communal areas (Hall, 2004b). These powerful discourses were supported by the World Bank, the ANC and its aspirant bourgeois elements (James, 2000), along with white landowners, powerful business interests and elements within the Department of Agriculture (Lahiff, 2007). All of these groups seek to maintain property prices and confidence in the land market, promote the inclusion of black commercial farmers in a de-racialised agricultural sector (Hall, 2004b), and assume that the needs of the rural landless poor are best served not by restructuring the landownership patterns created prior to 1994, but by creating opportunities in the urban and communal areas (Lahiff, 2007). The discourses identified by these scholars all bear a close resemblance to the CI discourse discussed in this chapter.

Similarly, various aspects of the RS discourse identified in this study are supported in previous studies of discourses around land reform in South Africa, including the 'new institutional economics,' which gives rise to efforts to create efficient small farmers through government and market

action (Cousins & Scoones, 2010). It is further noted that South Africa's large-scale farms are inefficient thanks to decades of subsidies, protectionism and discriminatory policies, and should be restructured to allow the emergence of smaller, more 'family-sized' farms (Jacobs, 2012; Lahiff, 2007; Lipton, 1993a, 1993b, 2009; Lipton, Ellis, & Lipton, 1996). Such criticisms of large farms feature strongly in the RS discourse.

Likewise, the RS focus on providing basic needs, increasing the capabilities of the poor and increasing their access to resources is noted in a number of studies of discourses around land reform in South Africa. The 'developmentalist livelihoods' approach, the 'welfarist livelihoods' and the 'radical political economy' discourses all show some similarities to aspects of the RS discourse, seeing land redistribution as part of government efforts to provide the rural poor with multiple and diverse livelihoods, constructing land redistribution as part of efforts to provide the rural poor with food security, and giving rise to assertions that land reform must secure the land and resources held by peasant farmers against a global corporate food regime (Cousins & Scoones, 2010). Similarly, aspects of the RS discourse are identified in the 'radical populist' version of land reform, which frames the process in terms of restorative justice, and demands that the state redistributes land to the poor and landless with minimal compensation to landowners (Lahiff, 2007). Discourses situating land reform as part of the process of national reconciliation, restorative justice and reparation, and as necessary to protect and empower the marginalised and vulnerable are also identified (Du Toit, 2013). The tendency of many NGOs to subscribe to a

discourse stressing the communal ownership of land, as a jointly-owned resource to be used for the common good is also noted (James, 2000).

The RS discourse identified in this study similarly matches broadly with the discourse of 'need' and 'historical justice' suggested by MacDonald (2003).

The RS advocacy of the redistribution of small pieces of land through government action, in order to provide food security and break the dependence of the rural landless poor harmonises broadly with the challenges posed to the 'economic development' discourse by local elites in the Estcourt region of KwaZulu-Natal in 1995–1996. In addition, references to the need for historical justice in the RS discourse suggest that it is at the very least similar to the 'need' discourse identified by MacDonald. The main difference between the RS and the 'need' discourse is that, according to MacDonald, this discourse was espoused by 'local elites' and 'community leaders'. In contrast, the RS discourse is mainly the preserve of the NGOs involved in land reform. This could reflect the sample, and the fact that no interviews were carried out with 'community leaders' at the local level. If this had been achieved, the findings of MacDonald might have been corroborated in this respect. In addition, MacDonald does not appear to have analysed the discourse of local NGOs in KwaZulu-Natal province. Overall, however, this study supports MacDonald's assertion of the existence of a discourse at the local level justifying land redistribution in terms of 'need' and 'historical justice'.

Similarly, much of the CI discourse described in this study seems similar to the 'economic development' discourse proposed by MacDonald. Both discourses draw on the assumption that the existing large-scale commercial farms are the most efficient and productive form of agriculture. Both discourses advocate the redistribution of land mainly through the market, and both propose the creation of a class of black commercial farmers. This is where the similarities end, however. The CI discourse here gives rise to calls for the transfer of farms in their existing form, and those subscribing to it are strongly against the creation of smaller farms. In contrast, according to MacDonald in 1995–1996 those drawing from this discourse advocated the creation of a class of small-scale commercial black farmers. No respondents felt that land reform should be transferring small farms through market processes, and only those in the RS discourse supported the creation of a small-farm sector through government action. Among the majority of the discourses described in this chapter, there is very little support for the creation of a small-scale commercial farming sector, by whatever means. Rather, two of the three discourses described here favour the transfer of farms in their existing large-scale forms. Discourses at the provincial level seem to have undergone some change since 1996 — there is now drastically reduced support for the creation of small-scale commercial farms. In addition, where MacDonald identifies the then-Department of Agriculture as the main supporter of that discourse, the CI discourse identified here is mainly the domain of established white large-scale commercial farmers and agricultural corporations. The bureaucrats

interviewed subscribe to the AI discourse, which is not identified by MacDonald, and does not appear in the scholarly literature on land reform in South Africa.

### **A new discourse?**

While the CI discourse identified in this study can be linked to the 'economic development' discourse of MacDonald, the AI discourse shows sufficient differences from these two as they are described as to stand on its own as a separate discourse. Previous studies of discourses in South Africa have assumed that those advocating for the transfer of large farms all argue that this be done through the market. However, almost all the black large-scale commercial farmers, the communal farmers and all the consultants differed from the CI and MacDonald's 'economic development' discourse in their support for a strong government role in land reform. This seems to draw on aspects of the Dependency and liberationist discourses identified in chapters five and six.

Similarly, these respondents argued that market-led approaches to land reform in South Africa have not worked, as the market for farmland is distorted in favour of a select few. Therefore they advocate that the government must step in to bring about the desired outcomes from land reform. Thus, the black South Africans seeking to become integrated into the established formal agricultural sector in South Africa felt that the government should aid them in achieving this, in much the same way that the apartheid and colonial governments assisted white commercial farmers

prior to 1994. The changes noted in the SLAG, LRAD and PLAS policies in a previous chapter, in which the government has given itself a greater and greater role in land reform, suggest that policymakers at the highest levels in the DRDLR tend to agree with those drawing from the AI discourse at the Operating level.

These assertions that the government should lead the process of creating a new black commercial farming class do not appear in MacDonald's analysis. Neither do any of the discourses suggested by Cousins and Scoones or other scholars bear any resemblance to the AI discourse as described here. The potential presence of such a discourse is only hinted at in the published literature. Bernstein noted the presence of black large-scale commercial farmers in former 'white' areas in the early 1990s, and commented that they "... may have a political significance far beyond their numbers" (1996, pp. 28-29) and were likely to capture the limited land being made available for redistribution. Hall notes the presence of a small class of black commercial farmers, "... whose interests are to gain access to state resources and become beneficiaries of the deracialisation of the [large-scale commercial agricultural] sector ..." (2004b, p. 224). Later, Walker (2006) suggests that LRAD was informed by the aspirations of the nascent black middle class in South Africa. Hall agrees, arguing that:

LRAD was developed largely in response to the frustrations experienced by black farmers and bureaucrats with the white senior management of the DLA, who they maintained were only concerned

with mitigating black poverty and not committed to the redistribution of land in order to provide opportunities for black farmers to accumulate wealth (Hall, 2010c, p. 183).

Jacobs (2012) argues that the slogan of ‘de-racialising agriculture for profitable farmers’ serves to advance the interests of the aspirant black elite. Thus the AI discourse as described in this study is perhaps the product of the overall aim to create a black capitalist class in South Africa. The assertions of the liberationists (Du Plessis, 1994) during the negotiations around the Interim Constitution between 1990 and 1993 appear to have re-emerged at the provincial level of the land reform policy arena in 2012. Eighteen years on from MacDonald’s study, and 12 years on from the creation of the LRAD programme, the black farmers and bureaucrats identified by Bernstein (1996), Hall (2004b) and Walker (2006), and in this chapter, articulate their point of view more fully and forcefully — that the government must intervene in the market to ensure that black large-scale farmers are able to accumulate wealth. Since the development of the LRAD policy in 2000, bureaucrats, beneficiaries and consultants involved in land reform have developed their own unique discourse, largely discrete from that of the established commercial interest and the NGOs — the AI discourse.

### **Implications for land reform**

This study seeks to answer the question of why so little has been achieved by successive post-apartheid policy initiatives to address the inequitable

land ownership patterns created prior to 1990. This chapter focuses on the discourses drawn on by policy participants at the provincial level, and how these discourses how land reform policies are implemented. This chapter identifies three discourses drawn on by respondents — the AI, the CI and the RS discourses. While the AI discourse is a new discrete development at the local level, it still shares a number of assumptions and beliefs with the CI discourse. These shared assumptions have specific implications for the future course of land reform in South Africa, and for whom it will provide concrete benefits. As these two discourses are subscribed to by a majority of the respondents in this study, these shared assumptions are important for the way land reform policy is implemented at the provincial level. Both, for example, agree that land reform is a political necessity. No respondents in either discourse suggested that land reform is economically necessary, in order to ease the plight of the rural landless poor living in the communal areas, or to benefit the economy as a whole. This implies that land reform for them is more a symbolic policy than one that will deliver real economic benefits to the majority of the rural population. Further concurrences in opinion between these two discourses reinforce this conclusion.

Both the AI and the CI discourses give rise to assertions that large-scale capital-intensive farms are in fact the most efficient form of agriculture. Both draw from Large Farms, libertarian and neo-classical economics assumptions that large-scale individually-owned farms, as seen in the US's Midwest and UK's East Anglia (Cousins & Scoones, 2010), produce the most food at the lowest cost. These assumptions also drove policy-makers in

apartheid South Africa (Hebinck et al., 2011) — the massive support directed to white farmers during this period was aimed at creating an imitation of this prototype in the South African context. The post-apartheid heirs of agricultural policy planners in South Africa at the local level in the Eastern Cape and KwaZulu-Natal thus accept the same assumptions and preconceptions. Both discourses additionally assume that these large farms guarantee South Africa's food security. Respondents from both discourses assumed it was the large farms themselves that guarantee South Africa's food security, and not the support systems (e.g. banks that will only lend to large farms, privatised extension advice and marketing facilities preferring to handle only large amounts of produce) that enable South Africa's large farms to produce most of the country's food.

These two assumptions shared between the AI and the CI discourses thus lead to the argument evident in both discourses that land reform should transfer full ownership of farms in their existing large-scale capital-intensive form, to create black large-scale commercial farmers under the guidance of white mentors. As has been discussed in chapter seven, if 45 000 of the large-scale farms that existed in South Africa in 2002 were eventually transferred to successful individual black large-scale farmers, this would mean a maximum of 45 000 black South African families would benefit concretely from land reform, out of a total of 19 million rural landless people. Such a land reform programme, as envisaged in the AI and the CI discourses, can therefore only ever provide concrete economic benefits to a tiny proportion of the rural landless poor in South Africa.

With so few actual beneficiaries, such a policy is, in essence, primarily symbolic. Voters will see land being transferred to black South Africans, but the essential architecture of ownership and control created during the apartheid and colonial eras, where large amounts of land are controlled by a tiny minority, remains unchanged. Ordinary black voters will see land being returned to black South Africans, but in a manner ensuring that the overall majority of the rural landless poor continue to live in the situation forced on them by apartheid policies. The only change most discourses are willing to envisage is a gradual increase in the number of male black large-scale commercial farmers, integrated into the existing white large-scale commercial farming sector created during the apartheid era.

## Chapter Ten

### Conclusion

The establishment of a European settlement at the Cape of Good Hope in 1652 marked the commencement of a long process of land dispossession for the original inhabitants of what would become the Union of South Africa in 1910. This process was intensified following the discovery of massive deposits of minerals in the interior of the region, and reached its culmination with the promulgation of the Native Lands Act in 1913. This Act formally dispossessed black South Africans of the vast majority of the land, forcing them to seek employment on white farms, mines and industries. In the agricultural sector, a complex set of laws, policies and regulations successfully directed immense resources towards individual white landowners, while simultaneously maintaining the 'bantustans' as reservoirs of cheap landless labour.

The election of the ANC government to power in 1994 brought to an end this system, and ushered in a period of great anticipation. All citizens of the new post-apartheid South Africa awaited the implementation of a strong programme of action by the new government, aimed at reducing the inequalities created by colonial, segregation and apartheid policies.

Encouraged by promises made as far back as 1955 that "... the land shall be shared among those who work it ..." (Congress of the People, 1955), many of those forced into a situation of rural landlessness expected government

action aimed at reversing the process of land dispossession and a consequent improvement of their socio-economic situations. However, the policies formulated and implemented by successive post-apartheid governments have failed on both counts. Whilst articulating strong rhetoric around returning land to the dispossessed and restoring economic opportunities to the landless, the various iterations of land redistribution policy have ultimately focused on the creation of a small corps of large-scale black commercial farmers, or an 'aspirant bourgeoisie' (Drew, 1996), alongside the existing white large-scale commercial farmers. Today, the vast majority of the rural landless are ignored by these policies, or offered what could be described as token efforts to create opportunities for entrepreneurship. As articulated by a member of the ruling ANC, many South Africans believe that political freedom without economic empowerment is meaningless (Holomisa, 1994, pp. 2516-25176). Such a situation begs the question of why a government, elected with such a strong mandate to create social justice, economic and political equality, could (or would) do so little to change the lives of the rural landless.

This outcome was not necessarily inevitable, but reflects time- and location-specific decisions, that are culturally specific and institutionally contingent (Phillips & Jorgensen, 2002). The constructivist institutionalism approach builds from this premise, focusing attention on how the institutions through which land reform policy in South Africa has been formulated and implemented have shaped and defined the limits of these policies.

Specifically, this approach directs attention to the ideas and social constructions, which both form the basis of these institutions and inform the actions of those working within these institutions (Hay, 2006). To understand the course taken by land redistribution policy, then, it is necessary to understand the ideas embedded in this institutional context, and the implications of these ideas for land reform.

### **Review of findings**

The social constructions, ideas, and discourses that have both informed and have become embedded within the institutional context of post-apartheid South Africa have not originated in a vacuum. As becomes clear in chapter five, institutional actors and participants drew from international narratives around the process of development, and the place of land reform within this process, and adapted these ideas to their needs and goals. A first step to understanding the ideas influencing land reform in South Africa is, therefore, understanding these international narratives. This study revealed five broad discourses in the scholarship — the large farms, small farms, socialist, dependency and critical discourses. Each give rise to differing conceptions of ‘development’, and so to different policy proposals for land reform. As seen in the similarities between the recommendations of the World Bank and many aspects of SLAG, these discourses were influential in shaping what policymakers constructed as ‘possible’ and ‘impossible’ in land reform policy after 1994.

As policy participants prepared to negotiate new policies around land ownership during the period of crisis in South Africa, then, the three most influential discourses provided three very different visions of the limits of the possible. The dominant discourse, articulated by a wide variety of international organisations such as the World Bank, was the 'large farms' discourse. Closely related to neoliberal narratives regarding the ideal relationship between governments and markets, the large farms discourse advocates allowing beneficiaries to purchase farms on the market with minimal government assistance. Any measures to remove the property rights of white farmers gained during apartheid was constructed as impossible, as was any substantial government role in any land reform programme.

Positioned against this hegemonic approach, a range of alternative discourses offered different possibilities in land reform policy. The small farms discourse gives rise to recommendations that the government intervene in the market to transfer smaller units of land to the rural poor. This offered a substantial role for government in the process of land reform, and the possibility of access to land for a large number of the rural landless poor. A third discourse, labelled here as the 'critical' discourse, offered another alternative vision of possibilities, advocating policies driven by the rural landless themselves, with a focus on poor women as primary beneficiaries, and transferring smaller pieces of land to create food security and permanent places of residence.

Policymakers creating land reform policy in South Africa were thus informed by a wide variety of discourses and policy proposals. The large farms discourse included narratives favouring the preservation of the agrarian structure created during the colonial, segregation and apartheid eras. The critical discourse offered the possibility of greatly improved access to agricultural resources for the rural landless. The small farms discourse contained storylines presenting the possibility of the creation of a black small-scale commercial agricultural sector. Which of these discourses were drawn from, and by which policymakers, becomes clear through analysis of the discourses that contributed to and were enshrined in the primary institution governing land reform in South Africa — the final Constitution which enshrines the right to property.

During the creation of the new South African Constitution between 1990 and 1996, the long-standing apartheid policy consensus around land, which had been focused on the transfer of land and resources to whites, came to be renegotiated. Participants in this debate articulated the libertarian and the liberationist discourses, both of which echo themes and narratives found in the international discourses mapped out in this study. Many elements found in the libertarian discourse show strong similarities to those found in the large farms discourse — in many ways, the libertarian discourse can be seen as a practical application of the large farms discourse under the conditions prevailing in South Africa at the time. Accordingly,

land was assumed to be an economic resource, meaning that it was necessary to include a clause in the final post-apartheid Constitution guaranteeing the property rights of existing white land owners. In addition, it was argued that land reform should only give access to land to a select group of black agricultural entrepreneurs, rather than the rural landless poor.

In contrast, many elements of the liberationist position echoed themes from the 'dependency' and 'critical' discourses discussed in chapter five — the liberationist discourse can in some ways be seen as an articulation of the dependency and critical discourses in South Africa. Liberationists constructed white South Africans as having achieved their wealth and security through dispossessing black South Africans of their land, and retarding their socio-economic development, much as the 'metropolises' and the 'satellites' of the dependency discourse. This meant that land reform must be central to the future progress of black South Africans.

Liberationists asserted that there was no need for a property clause in the final post-apartheid Constitution as it would only entrench the existing disparities between whites and blacks in South Africa. Rather, those expressing this discourse argued in favour of a government-led land redistribution programme where land was expropriated and distributed to groups of black South Africans.

The property clause in the final Constitution was the result of a compromise between those articulating these two discourses. Through the influence of the liberationists, the new post-apartheid land policy allowed for the possibility of the restitution of land to those dispossessed between 1913 and 1990, and the expropriation of land by the post-apartheid government in the name of land redistribution. However, under the similar influence of the libertarians, the new post-apartheid equilibrium mandated the payment of market prices for land expropriated for redistribution or ruled as subject to legitimate land claims. The institutions within which land reform policy is made and implemented at the national and the provincial levels therefore function within the boundaries set by the compromise in the Constitution between the libertarian and liberationist discourses.

The dilemma posed by the compromise struck in the final Constitution resulted in three different responses at the national policy level (chapter seven). SLAG was aimed at helping as many as possible of the estimated 19 million people potentially benefitting from this policy. Showing influence from the large farms and the libertarian discourses, this policy ignored the injustices associated with the process of creating the land market, and presented the problems of the rural landless poor as simply a lack of market access by rural black households. SLAG was based on the assumption that giving property rights to rural landless households would automatically improve their socio-economic conditions. This assumption has contributed to the preservation of the agrarian structure created by apartheid — the fact

that beneficiaries have had to buy land on the market legitimized the property rights of the white farmers selling on the market, and ignored the injustices committed in the gaining of those rights. In addition, requiring the rural landless to buy land in large groups minimized the benefits they would gain from accessing land.

LRAD, likewise, showed a strong influence from the large farms and libertarian discourses — it also represented the problem of rural landlessness in South Africa as a lack of market access, and also assumed that providing black South Africans with access to land ownership through the market would automatically enable them to improve their socio-economic position. This continued the preservation of the apartheid agrarian structure. In addition, the rural landless were largely excluded from benefitting from this policy. This policy iteration did not aim to provide land access to the poorest of the rural landless households, but rather selected and rewarded individual black entrepreneurs. LRAD was largely silent on how the vast majority of the rural landless poor who were not successful entrepreneurs would benefit from the policy, and was equally silent about the government support beneficiaries might need to succeed as commercial farmers.

The current iteration in land redistribution policy, PLAS, shows a departure from the assumptions and problem representations derived from the large farms and the libertarian discourses evident in SLAG and LRAD. More

elements from the dependency and the liberationist discourses are evident in PLAS. For example, the injustices committed in the creation of the existing commercial agricultural economy are acknowledged. They are, however, constructed as being less important than South Africa's food security, which is seen as being guaranteed by the country's large-scale farms. This assumption provides a justification for continued post-apartheid government efforts to preserve the agrarian structure inherited from the colonial, segregation and apartheid eras.

The focus on a few aspiring large-scale black commercial farmers, as a consequence, continued. Rather than a problem of a lack of market access to property ownership, PLAS represents landlessness in South Africa as a lack of access to land, as well as the skills and capital required to successfully earn a profit on a mechanised large-scale commercial farm. Therefore, PLAS assumes that it is not necessary to give land ownership to black South Africans — rather, aspirant black South African commercial farmers need access to commercial farmland and the skills and capital required to make a profit from it. There, they can build up the capital and skills necessary to buy their own land elsewhere later. The silence around the plight of the rural landless poor is ended in PLAS, which makes provisions to provide them with the skills and infrastructure needed to participate in the formal South African economy under another policy effort. Seeking to create employment and opportunities in the communal areas, this aspect of PLAS, ironically, mimics apartheid-era efforts to

stimulate economic development in the 'bantustans.' It has the same effect as these efforts, serving mainly to preserve the agrarian structure created to favour white large-scale commercial farmers.

The focus of this study on social constructions included an examination of the way policies have implicitly represented the rural landless and land redistribution beneficiaries. The analysis showed that in SLAG, LRAD and PLAS, land reform beneficiaries are constructed as dependents. Moreover, the analysis of the positioning of the rural landless poor and land redistribution beneficiaries within these policies shows that their interests have not been identified with the interests of the wider nation. Instead, the policies construct the population of existing (white) large-scale commercial farmers as pivotal in maintaining South Africa's national interest, particularly in relation to the guarantee of food security. As a result, the need of the rural landless poor to access land is seen as subordinate to the needs of the existing white large-scale commercial farmers. This core assumption, again, contributes to the lack of achievement evident in post-apartheid land reform policies.

Additionally, these policies assume that the rural landless poor and land reform beneficiaries are incapable of creating their own solutions to their own problems. SLAG assumed that beneficiaries would be incapable of negotiating to buy land themselves. LRAD assumed that applicants would be unable to create grant applications on their own. PLAS assumes that

beneficiaries cannot be trusted with land ownership, and must submit to the guidance of bureaucrats and established white farmers. This construction of beneficiaries and the rural landless resonates strongly with apartheid-era constructions of black South Africans, and once again provides insight into why so little has been done to change the agrarian structure inherited from the apartheid era.

Finally, the analysis of land reform policies indicates that the rural landless poor are not seen as a politically significant group warranting concrete policy benefits. In fact, the policymakers who created SLAG saw the efforts of the rural landless to self-organise as a threat. LRAD policymakers silently excluded the vast majority of the rural landless poor from consideration as beneficiaries through the 'own contribution' requirement. PLAS policymakers do not offer land ownership rights to land redistribution beneficiaries. Such heavy policy burdens would not be placed on groups constructed by policymakers as politically powerful. The result of these constructions has been to free policymakers from the responsibility or need to carry out large-scale changes to the land-ownership structure inherited from the apartheid era.

As important as the discourses at the constitutional and national policy levels are, they are not sufficient to provide a comprehensive answer to the question of how so little could have been done in post-apartheid South Africa to address the economic inequalities in the agricultural sector.

Equally important is an examination of the ideas, social constructions and discourses evident at the provincial level, amongst those implementing land redistribution policy. The account provided in chapter nine identified echoes of discourses of land reform identified at the international and constitutional levels. The 'Assisted Integration' discourse emulates themes in the dependency and liberationist discourses, constructing the process of development as the integration of black South Africans into the formal economy created during the colonial, segregation and apartheid eras. This implies that land redistribution policy must create large-scale black commercial farmers, integrated into the existing white large-scale commercial farming sector. These respondents additionally argued that the government should intervene in the land market to secure land for aspirant black large-scale commercial farmers, and provide them all the post-settlement support they need to prosper. Crucially, this discourse does not call for the dismantling of the existing agrarian structure. Rather, it calls for the inclusion of a select few black beneficiaries into it.

Many aspects of the 'Competitive Integration' discourse repeat aspects of the large farms and the libertarian discourses. Accordingly, interview respondents articulating this discourse also saw 'development' as the integration of black South Africans into the existing formal economy. Respondents drawing from this discourse argued that land redistribution should only transfer farms in their existing forms to beneficiaries, and through the market. Again, large-scale changes to the existing agrarian

structure are not envisaged in this discourse — it is assumed here that this apartheid-era structure must be preserved.

The 'Rural Support' discourse echoes elements of the critical discourse. Respondents in this discourse constructed 'development' as a process of providing the rural landless with their basic needs, access to the information they need to increase their capabilities, and access to capital and markets. Those respondents articulating this discourse argued that large-scale mechanised farms are inefficient and environmentally destructive, implying that land redistribution should distribute smaller parcels of land to the rural landless through the government rather than the market. This is the only discourse found at the provincial level that envisages changes to the existing agrarian structure. Those drawing from this discourse, however, mostly had little to no access to key policy-making arenas, and the ideas they articulated had no effect on the agrarian structure.

Previous discourse analyses of land redistribution in South Africa have assumed that all policy actors advocating for the transfer of large farms see this being done through the market (Cousins and Scoones, 2010; Hall, 2004b). However, respondents articulating the Assisted Integration discourse understood the land market as distorted in favour of white large-scale farmers. Black respondents seeking to become large-scale commercial farmers argued that the government should aid them to achieve this, as the

colonial, segregation and apartheid governments had done for white farmers prior to 1994. The increasing role allocated to the government and the concomitant decreasing emphasis on the market in the progression from SLAG to PLAS suggests that DRDLR policymakers, likewise, might articulate something like the Assisted Integration discourse.

Prior studies of land redistribution in South Africa have not noted a discourse similar to the Assisted Integration discourse. The assertions of the liberationists emerge at the provincial level — the beneficiaries, bureaucrats and consultants involved in land redistribution implementation in the Eastern Cape and KwaZulu-Natal forcefully articulated this new discourse — that the government must intervene in the market to enable an aspirant black agricultural bourgeoisie to accumulate wealth.

While the Assisted Integration discourse is discrete from the Competitive Integration discourse, they share a number of assumptions, which have strong implications for the future course of land reform in South Africa. Neither discourse gives rise to suggestions that land redistribution could be beneficial to the overall economy of South Africa. In addition, both discourses agree that large-scale capital-intensive farms are the most efficient form of agriculture, and guarantee the food security of the country. As a result, respondents from both discourses proposed that land redistribution should transfer farms in their existing large-scale capital-intensive form to aspirant black commercial farmers. Such a land reform

programme is unlikely to bring about changes to the existing agrarian structure, and can only provide concrete economic benefits to a small proportion of the rural landless poor in South Africa. It can never be more than a symbolic policy that will leave the vast majority of the rural landless poor in the situation forced on them by policies inspired by racism prior to 1994.

### **Review of theoretical approach**

The theoretical approach adopted and adapted for this study combined elements of ‘new institutionalism’ with a focus on discourse. The ‘new institutionalism’ approach provides a focus on the limited set of choices made available to policy actors, with the overall aim of protecting a pre-determined principle, idea or set of ideas. The post-apartheid government inherited a full set of institutions from the colonial, segregation and apartheid governments. However, these had all been focused on preserving and maintaining the principle of white supremacy since 1652. To a greater or lesser extent, all these institutions changed this focus in post-apartheid South Africa.

Historical Institutionalism is unable to explain such a significant institutional change without recourse to unexpected outside events (Hay, 2006; Hira & Hira, 2000; Immergut, 1998; Lieberman, 2002; March & Olsen, 2006; Schmidt, 2010; Weyland, 2008). However, from 1990 – 1996, South Africa underwent a period of large-scale institutional change that cannot be

explained only by unexpected outside events. While the fall of international Communism and subsequent changes to the international order were unexpected and impacted the strategic position of the apartheid government, the survival of the apartheid order was not directly threatened. To help explain this, elements from the 'constructivist institutionalism' (Hay, 2006) were included in this study. In this approach, institutions are understood as being created to protect and further certain principles, and can persist over long periods of time even within the context of major systemic upheavals. The crucial insight here is that the actors working within and around institutions may subscribe to different principles, ideas or discourses. There is, therefore, a dissonance between the discourses enshrined in institutions and the discourses articulated by many of the actors working within them. These actors may take advantage of periodic opportunities to change the institutions they interact with so that the institutions more closely embody the discourses the actors subscribe to.

Evidence of such actor agency was observed in the course of this study. As described in chapter nine, the pre-existing informal institution of racism led both white farmers and black beneficiaries to express doubt about the potential success of the mentorships mandated by the PLAS programme. However, these sentiments were not universal. Countering dominant white narratives denigrating the abilities of black beneficiaries, one white respondent insisted that successful mentorship programmes have been achieved in the past, and white farmers are willing to do so again (Kew,

2012). Again as noted in chapter nine, countering black narratives casting doubt on the motives of white mentors, a black beneficiary described a very successful relationship with a white mentor (B1, 2012). Finally, again in chapter nine, a black female respondent had established herself as a successful large-scale commercial farmer operating two large-scale commercial farms simultaneously, successfully countering hegemonic discourses disparaging the abilities of black women. These instances, at least, exemplify the articulation of different discourses to those drawn on by the majority, and the way they have led to the implementation of differing ideas. This study focuses on the broader discourses found in land reform policy, then, but it must be recognised that it is not inevitable that all actors will automatically obey the dictates of hegemonic discourses. While small and individualised, these examples of actor agency can potentially spark larger changes to hegemonic discourses and institutions.

This theoretical approach of constructive institutionalism has been profitably used in the past to create greater insights into economic institutions in the US and Sweden (Blyth, 2002), globalisation and European integration (Hay & Rosamund, 2002), and the rise of 'neoliberalism' in the United Kingdom (Hay, 2001). While this approach has generated new insights in a broad range of studies of the developed world, the use of such a wide-ranging framework in the particular context of land reform policy in the South African context proved difficult. The incorporation of the insights of Bacchi (2009; 2012) and Schneider and Ingram (1993; 1997; 2005) into this

framework enabled a deeper and more fine-grained analysis of the SLAG, LRAD and PLAS policies. The resulting theoretical framework has proven to be robust, enabling a deeper understanding of the changes that have occurred in land redistribution policy in South Africa from 1990 to 2012. It has also proved highly flexible, allowing use of a wide range of empirical sources, including Parliamentary records, policy documents, interview transcripts and numerous secondary sources to gain new insights into land redistribution policy in South Africa. It has potential to facilitate future research into the discourses drawn on by groups not included in this study.

### **Significance of the research**

These conclusions have extended understanding of the South African land redistribution programme in four ways. Firstly, this study has deepened understanding of the discourses drawn on by established white property owners and farmers in their quest to protect the wealth they accumulated prior to 1994. The published scholarship on land redistribution in South Africa frequently refers to the set of ideas drawn on by this section of the population in South Africa — Cousins and Scoones (2010, p. 32), for example, refer to the “implicit model of the large-scale commercial farm”, and others to a focus on the market and the importance of property rights (Hall, 2004b; Jacobs, 2012). There are few attempts, however, to clearly map out these beliefs, and what narratives and specific policy proposals they give rise to at the various levels of analysis used in this study. This study clearly maps out the dominant discourses at the international level (the large farms

discourse), the constitutional level (the libertarians) and the provincial level (the CI discourse), studying both the specific policy proposals for land redistribution from these discourses, and the justifications given for them.

Secondly, this study has set out the discourses drawn on by the aspirant black agricultural bourgeoisie at the various levels. As discussed in chapter nine, fleeting reference is made to a 'would-be black agrarian entrepreneurial class' (Cliffe, 2000) by some scholars looking at land redistribution policy in South Africa. However, most writers assume that this aspirant black agricultural bourgeoisie exactly mimics the discourses of the established white agricultural bourgeoisie. Perhaps unconsciously confirming the contention of Ogunديpe-Leslie (2001) that black South Africans are often spoken for by others, and are assumed to be unable to participate in the world on their own behalf, no published attempt has been made to ascertain if the narratives and policy proposals of this group differ in any way from other groups involved in this policy arena. A significant contribution of this study to the scholarship is to set out the discourses drawn on by this group. At both the constitutional and the provincial levels, these policy actors draw on aspects of the dependency discourse, depicting black South Africans as having been restricted and unjustly held in unequal economic relationships by white South Africans. The shifts in redistribution policy apparent in the LRAD and PLAS programmes, changing the focus of land redistribution to the creation of black large-scale commercial farmers, indicate that many policymakers in the DLA/DRDLR also articulate these

ideas. In addition, the origin of features in PLAS that writers have found anomalous, such as hostile rhetoric against sales of land to foreigners (Jacobs, 2012), are made clear by examination of details of the liberationist and Assisted Integration discourses.

Thirdly, the application of the discourse analysis methods developed by Bacchi and Schneider and Ingram, while enabling the operationalisation of the constructivist institutionalism framework, bring new insights to the scholarship on land redistribution policy in South Africa. Few studies of the various iterations of land redistribution policy have focused on the problematisations inherent in these three policy iterations, and the assumptions, histories, silences and effects of these particular problematisations. The application of these theoretical approaches deepens understanding of these issues and contributes to the scholarship by revealing the assumptions underlying SLAG, LRAD and PLAS, such as that the needs of the rural landless poor are less important than those of the established white farmers and the aspirant black bourgeoisie. In addition, this study adds the insight that policymakers in the DLA/DRDLR have seen the rural landless poor and land redistribution beneficiaries as dependents — as requiring only symbolic policy benefits and hidden policy burdens, and as being inherently incapable of solving their own problems.

Finally, while much analysis of the SLAG and LRAD policies has been published, much less, if anything, has been published on the PLAS

programme. This study extends understanding of the issues around land redistribution, then, by extending the analysis to include PLAS policy documents.

### **Contributions to policy and practice**

The deeper assumptions of the most important institutions and actors in this policy arena have been studied in the hope that the insights gained will contribute to the ongoing debate around land redistribution and land reform in South Africa. As it is clear that the needs of the rural landless poor are not prioritised by those they have repeatedly elected to power, perhaps space for a new debate can be opened amongst the citizens of South Africa. Do a majority of the citizens accept that the needs of the rural landless poor are in fact less important than the established white middle class, and the minority of black South Africans that have so far been able to join them? Is the best way to improve the socio-economic lot of the rural landless poor to create (a maximum of) 45, 000 black large-scale commercial farmers and to improve the physical infrastructure in the communal areas? This study is a contribution to clarifying the terms of such a debate.

### **Future research**

This qualitative analysis of land redistribution in South Africa has been fruitful, uncovering a new series of discourses that have not been described in the published literature as yet. However, a number of important questions remain. Firstly, the analysis of the discourses at the constitutional

and the national policy levels concentrated on publicly-available records and policy documents. An important question arising from this research then would focus on the policy actors at this level — a series of interviews with key policy actors at these levels would be beneficial in building further on the understandings established in this study of the assumptions, narratives and policy proposals of actual policy actors at these levels. Secondly, the focus on qualitative analysis in this study prompts questions around what forms of quantitative analysis could be used to examine the conclusions of this study. A q-methodology survey<sup>29</sup>, for example, of participants at the provincial level would do much to develop understanding of the discourses drawn on by policy actors at this level as well as identify possible policy options that are likely to be broadly acceptable to the larger public.

Finally, this study has shown how post-apartheid land redistribution policy in South Africa so far has been the outcome of the interaction of two powerful sets of discourses — the large farms/libertarian/competitive integration discourses, and the dependency/liberationist/assisted

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<sup>29</sup> Q methodology combines qualitative and quantitative research methods (Addams, 2000, p. 14), using statistical techniques to uncover the range of discourses held by groups of people (Barry & Proops, 2000, p. 22). A sample of statements on a chosen topic is applied to a group of research participants, who are asked to rank these statements according to importance of agreement from their individual perspective. By ordering them, respondents give their subjective meaning to the sample of statements, and reveal their subjective standpoints. Correlations between individual participant rankings of statements indicate similar viewpoints on the topic. If statistically significant clusters of correlations exist, they are identified by factor analysis and described as common viewpoints (Cramm et al., 2010, p. 160). This builds understanding of entrenched positions in a given debate, as well as creating the possibility of identifying areas of common ground and shared understandings.

integration discourses. Both sets of discourses have been drawn on and deployed by two small and powerful elites — the minority of white South Africans currently farming commercially in South Africa, and the minority of black South Africans who wish to join and/or replace them. Land reform policy so far has been a compromise between the established white farmers and an aspirant black bourgeoisie. This study has focused on the discourses drawn on by policy actors, rather than the discourses drawn on by the vast majority of the rural landless. Further research is, therefore, urgently needed to make clear the experiences, ideas and policy proposals of those who have so far been shut out of the conversation around land redistribution policy in South Africa — the rural landless poor living and working on large-scale commercial farms and in the communal areas today.

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## Appendix

### Interview documentation

#### Request for interview

Hi

I am a PhD student at the University of Waikato in New Zealand, under the supervision of Dr. Patrick Barrett and Dr. Priya Kurian. My PhD thesis will examine land reform in South Africa after 1994. As part of the research for this project, I will be carrying out a number of interviews in the Eastern Cape in August and September 2012.

Your organisation plays a vital role in the successful implementation of land reform. As a member of ... , I anticipate that you will have some interesting insights into the land redistribution policy. I would really appreciate the opportunity to discuss some of these insights with you if at all possible.

I do not anticipate the interview taking more than an hour. If you are willing to take part in my research, please feel free to send me a reply. We can then discuss where and when the interview could take place.

Sincerely

Graeme Mackenzie

PhD Candidate, University of Waikato, New Zealand

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## Information for interview candidates

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THE UNIVERSITY OF  
**WAIKATO**  
*Te Whare Wānanga o Waikato*

Dear \_\_\_\_\_

I am a PhD student at the University of Waikato in New Zealand, under the supervision of Dr. Patrick Barrett and Dr. Priya Kurian. My PhD thesis will examine land reform in South Africa after 1994. As part of the research for this project, I would like to interview you about this topic.

I would like to explore what you see as being the best way to develop and strengthen the agricultural sector in South Africa. My aim will be to gain an understanding of the on-going debate over land reform policy and how best to proceed. I will have some questions to ask you, but my hope is that we can have an in-depth conversation about this. I anticipate that the interview will take about 60 minutes, and I will be happy to hold it at a time and a place most convenient to you.

The transcript of this interview will not be read by anyone other than myself and my two supervisors in New Zealand. The information from this interview will be used in my thesis, and in any articles I publish derived from the thesis. In all the material I publish, your identity will be kept anonymous, unless you give your explicit permission otherwise. You will also be given the option of keeping the name of the organisation you belong to anonymous. The interview details will be kept on a password-protected computer, and the transcript will be kept by me in a safely locked place.

They will be available only to my supervisors, and will be destroyed ten years after my thesis is published.

If you agree to take part in this interview, you will have the following rights:

- a) To refuse to answer any particular questions, and to terminate the interview at any time.
- b) To ask any further questions about the interview or research project that occur to you, either during the interview or at any other time.
- c) To remain anonymous, if you wish.
- d) To keep the name of the organisation you work for anonymous.
- e) To withdraw your consent at any time until three weeks after your interview by contacting me (see below for contact details).
- f) To take any questions you have about the interview to my two supervisors.
- g) To take any enquiries about the ethical conduct of this interview project to the University's Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences' Human Research Ethics Committee (University of Waikato, Private Bag 3105, Hamilton 3240, New Zealand, or [fass-ethics@waikato.ac.nz](mailto:fass-ethics@waikato.ac.nz)). This Committee has given approval for the interviews in this study to go ahead.

You are welcome to contact me directly at [graememackenzie73@gmail.com](mailto:graememackenzie73@gmail.com) or at +64 21 051 3591. In addition, if you prefer you could contact one of my supervisors for this project: Dr. Patrick Barrett, [pbarrett@waikato.ac.nz](mailto:pbarrett@waikato.ac.nz), +64 7 838 4466 ext 5028; or Dr. Priya Kurian, [pkurian@waikato.ac.nz](mailto:pkurian@waikato.ac.nz), +64 7 838 4466 ext 6109.

Yours Sincerely

Graeme Mackenzie

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## Consent form for interview candidates



THE UNIVERSITY OF  
**WAIKATO**  
*Te Whare Wānanga o Waikato*

### UNIVERSITY OF WAIKATO

Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences

*In-Depth Interview for a PhD study at the University of Waikato*

**Interview Topic:** "The Politics of Land Reform Policy in South Africa: An Institutional Analysis"

**Student:** Graeme Mackenzie

**Supervisors:** Dr. Patrick Barrett and Dr. Priya Kurian

**CONSENT FORM - Interviews**

**Description of Project:** This research aims to develop an understanding of land reform in South Africa after 1994.

I agree to participate in an interview as specified in the introductory letter.	Yes	No
I have been given the opportunity to ask any questions relating to my participation in the interview.	Yes	No
I agree to this interview being audio-recorded.	Yes	No
I understand that I can withdraw from this research project up to three weeks after the interview has taken place and that if I do so, the interviewer will delete the recorded interview and destroy the interview transcript.	Yes	No
I agree that the interview may be used in the thesis.	Yes	No
I wish to remain anonymous.	Yes	No
I wish to keep the name of the organisation I am part of anonymous.	Yes	No

"I consent to be interviewed for this research on the above conditions"

Signed:

*Interviewee* \_\_\_\_\_ *Date:* \_\_\_\_\_

"I agree to abide by the above conditions"

Signed:

*Interviewer* \_\_\_\_\_ *Date:* \_\_\_\_\_