Agrarian Neoliberalism, Authoritarianism, and the Political Reactions from below in Southern Africa

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Introduction

The current neoliberal moment is characterized by the rise of a new wave of authoritarian and populist politics (Scoones et al. 2017; Chacko 2018; Babones 2018; De la Torre 2018; Halmai 2019). Ian Scoones et al. (2017) noted that a new political moment is underway, characterized by the rise of various forms of authoritarian populism. Torcuato Di Tella (1965) defines populism as a political discourse that "enjoys the support of the mass of the urban working class and/or peasantry, but … does not result from the autonomous organisational power of either of these two sectors" (ibid., 47). Marc Edelman (2020, 2) notes that authoritarian populism almost always has the following characteristics: (1) a claim to represent or advocate for 'the people', the latter typically defined in exclusionary terms; (2) a political base composed of multiple classes; (3) contempt for traditional political and economic elites and their cultural cosmopolitanism; (4) hatred and repressive policies toward stigmatized others at home; and (5) distrust of opponents abroad who are deemed 'threatening'.

Generally, one of the ways in which populism and authoritarianism are expressed and exercised is through the rise of a powerful 'big man' who mobilizes the masses for racist, misogynistic, xenophobic, and nationalist agendas (Sinha 2021; Bello 2018; Curato 2016). Common features of authoritarian populism are that it often bypasses, undermines, or captures democratic institutions while using them to legitimize its dominance, centralize power, and suppress or severely limit dissent (Scoones et al. 2017, 3).

Although the 'big man' characteristic of authoritarian populism is also observable—in cases such as Zimbabwe's former President Robert Mugabe, Angola's former President José Eduardo dos Santos, Tanzania's late President John Magufuli, and, to a lesser extent, Mozambique's former President Armando Guebuza—authoritarian populism in Southern Africa is generally associated with liberation

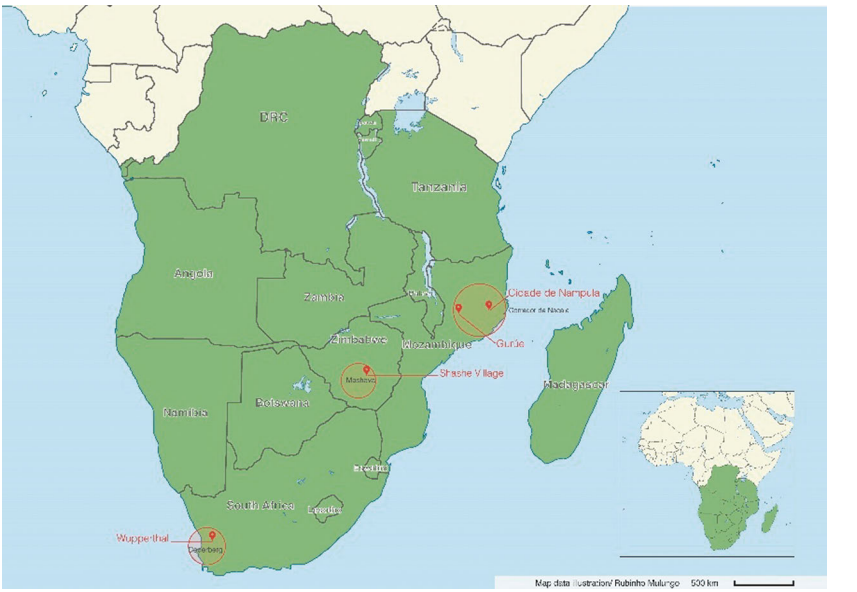
movements that have secured political power as governments. They are said to like using populist positions as a means of legitimizing their power by appealing to the ongoing struggle against foreign domination, thus marketing themselves as the only true alternative for a better future and keeping themselves in power through authoritarian means. When politically challenged, they employ populist discourse, accusing their opponents of being remote agents of imperialism seeking regime change as an instrument of foreign agendas (Melber 2018; Wesso 2021). However, more than the 'big man', it is usually the 'liberation parties' that exercise authoritarianism in the region: FRELIMO in Mozambique, ZANU-PF in Zimbabwe, the ANC in South Africa, and the MPLA in Angola, to name a few.

This chapter brings a regional perspective from Southern Africa. It places emphasis on the countryside, where a deepening of neoliberal agrarian policies is taking place in an authoritarian way, especially in the enforcement of these policies. Just as public law can be 'weaponized' to incrementally hollow out democratic rule (Daly 2019), agrarian policies are being designed to push neoliberal agendas. This is shaping new agrarian relations and struggles, especially in terms of access to and control of land and other natural resources. Looking at Mozambique, Zimbabwe, and South Africa, the chapter discusses agrarian neoliberalism and develops a concept of agrarian authoritarianism to explore the nuances of another dimension of authoritarianism. The chapter also deals with how agrarian authoritarianism is confronted by agrarian movements. Based on long-term field research in those countries, I look at the work of three agrarian movements, namely UNAC in Mozambique, ZIMSOFF, and the FSC in South Africa. One of the characteristics of the agrarian movements in this study is their theoretical contribution to articulating ideas that challenge the current food regime and propose alternatives to it. One such contribution includes the creation of concepts that arise from struggles (Santos and Meneses, 2014), such as agroecology, family agriculture, and food sovereignty.

The chapter is part of my PhD research, in which I compared these three countries and movements. These countries and movements were chosen for several reasons. The first reason is my epistemic proximity to these movements and their struggles through my previous role as an activist and part of the global peasant movement La Via Campesina, to which these movements belong. The second reason is the fact that in these countries the issue of land and agrarian reform remains central to people's struggles: while UNAC in Mozambique is fighting to preserve the gains of the land reform implemented upon independence and subsequent laws guaranteeing land rights to the peasantry, the struggles in Zimbabwe are focused on preventing the reversal of a land reform implemented in the early 2000s, which resolved a historical exclusion of Indigenous people from access to productive land by white British farmers. In South Africa the struggles centre on the demands of the agrarian movements, including the FSC, for agrarian reform to address the per-

sistent agrarian structure that still exists, based on a dualism in which a few white farming families control almost all productive farmland. The third reason, particularly for this chapter, is my argument that these struggles constitute counter-strategies against agrarian authoritarianism. They seek rural and agrarian emancipation. If we consider the centrality of land in the lives of most people in Southern Africa to their dignity, livelihood, social reproduction, and belonging, struggles to defend or for access to land show the continuing importance of land as a political and economic resource (Yeros 2012).

Figure 1. Map of Southern Africa, including the author's research sites.



Map illustration: Rubinho Mulungo

After this introduction, I first provide a context for understanding land and agrarian policies in Southern Africa in the context of neoliberalism, which lays the basis for the subsequent section in which I conceptualize agrarian authoritarianism. Third, I show the struggles of the selected agrarian movements in the three countries while discussing how those struggles confront agrarian authoritarianism.

Land and Agrarian Policies under Neoliberalism in Southern Africa

Southern Africa's agrarian structure, class dynamics, and politics have been shaped by successive and interlocking dynamics of colonialism, Apartheid, socialism, civil wars, and the advent of neoliberalism (Van den Berg 1987; O'Laughlin 1996; Saunders and Caramento 2017). Beginning with the adoption of the Washington Consensus starting in the late 1980s—especially in Mozambique and Zimbabwe—the neoliberal process went through several phases. While South Africa's democracy was born neoliberal in nature (with the end of Apartheid in 1994), Mozambique and Zimbabwe experienced the following progression: firstly, the neoliberalism of the 1980s and 1990s, characterized by capitalist restructuring through economic adjustment programmes; then the neoliberalism of the 2000s and 2010s, characterized by, among other things, the intensification of foreign direct investment, especially in mining, and the introduction of large-scale agricultural programmes; and finally, the current neoliberal moment with its authoritarian turn.

Neoliberalism is understood in this chapter as the updated version of classical liberal economic thought that prevailed in the United States and the United Kingdom before the Great Depression of the 1930s (Kotz 2002, 2003; Grewal and Purdy 2014; Quiggin 2018), based on the belief that capitalism requires substantial state regulation to be viable. Neoliberal theory asserts that a largely unregulated capitalist system not only embodies the ideal of free individual choice, but also achieves optimal economic performance in terms of efficiency, economic growth, technological progress, and distributive justice (Kotz 2002). While being a class project relying heavily on the state (Briziarelli 2011), the policy recommendations of neoliberalism are mainly aimed at dismantling the remnants of the regulated welfare state. In Southern Africa, neoliberalism has been characterized by the massive privatization of public assets and has been supported financially and ideologically by the Bretton Woods Institutions (Bond 2008).

In sectors such as energy and agriculture, the introduction and implementation of neoliberal policies has, on the one hand, been accompanied by the process of financialization, and on the other by the promotion of foreign direct investment. In recent years, various agricultural and extractivist-based investment projects have been proposed and/or implemented in the region, leading to conflicts over land and the displacement of rural farming communities, as has been the case in Mozambique (Wise 2016; Rodrigues, Cardoso, and Monjane 2018). Some authors point to the scramble for large tracts of land and water for further expansion of sugar and biofuel production, and later for mineral and energy extraction (coal, natural gas, and oil), guided by a neoliberal compass (Castel-Branco 2014; Manfredi 2017; Moyo, Chambati, and Yeros 2019).

The agrarian sector in Southern Africa is among those that have suffered most from the consequences of neoliberalism.[1] The wedge between governments and small-scale food producers was further reinforced during this neoliberal phase with the implementation of neoliberal agrarian policies. The imposition of land-based agricultural investments in specific regions of the countries concerned resulted in the expropriation of rural people's land. In Mozambique, in the last two decades, megaprojects by multinational companies expropriated hundreds of thousands of hectares from local peasants; consequently, a lot of people were displaced (Monjane and Bruna 2020). Neoliberalism has long dominated the land and agricultural sectors in Zimbabwe. This was partly why attempts to implement land reform in Zimbabwe failed: because it was market-oriented. It was only in the early 2000s that a major break in the agrarian structure occurred, when a popular land occupation movement resulted in radical land reform in the country, which forced a white minority of the agrarian capitalist class to cede land to Indigenous populations who had been landless for a long period (Cliffe et al. 2011; Hanlon, Manjengwa, and Smart 2013).

The land and agrarian structure in South Africa is, to all intents and purposes, much more skewed than in Mozambique and Zimbabwe. A report on land distribution showed that 67 percent of agricultural land belongs to a few white commercial farmers (Monjane 2021a). The South African state has done too little to address this inequality, opting instead to adopt the 'willing buyer- willing seller' market-based land reform. The willing seller-willing buyer approach generally refers to an entirely voluntary transaction between a seller and a buyer. In the South African context, this transaction takes the form of negotiations between landowners who wish to sell their land and government officials acting on behalf of the intended beneficiaries of the land (Dlamini 2007, 9). Edward Lahiff (2007) has demonstrated that the willing buyer-willing seller policy that was adopted at the end of Apartheid was not nearly as successful in redressing the underprivileged position of the peasantry in South Africa. He posits that the country's market-led agrarian reform was influenced by the World Bank and enjoyed the support of landowners and elements within the ruling ANC committed to maintaining the structure of large-scale, capital-intensive farming. This, he adds, contributed to the discrimination

1 In Mozambique, for example, the World Bank imposed the liberalization of the cashew sector in 1995 as a condition for granting loans to the country. Mozambique was one of the largest producers of this crop in the world. This condition resulted in the loss of 10,000 jobs, which were never restored despite several attempts in the sector. In this context, the international financial institutions have also imposed constraints to force the implementation of agricultural programmes that give priority to agribusiness and the promotion of industrial inputs (Barroso, Castel-Branco, and Monjane, 2020).

against peasants, most of whom live in poverty which prevents them from producing much to cover their own needs, or forces them to 'depeasantize' or 'semi-proletarianize' on white-owned farms, in mines, and in industries in urban centres. Perhaps more importantly, he adds that, besides the rate of land transfer being so low, where land was transferred, "it has made little positive impact on livelihoods or on the wider rural economy" (ibid., 1577).

The neoliberal state of affairs in South Africa has generated debate among scholars, analysts, and politicians about the future of South Africa amid such glaring (social, economic, racial, and agrarian) imbalances. Some argue that the non-committal posture taken by the state in South Africa to refuse to implement land reform has led to the rise of radical and populist elements adopting the land reform agenda as a political springboard. For instance, according to Ward Anseeuw and Ntombifuthi Mathebula (2008), the formation and relative popularity of the Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF)[2] and the intensification of the ideas of expropriation of land from white agrarian capitalists without compensation, can be attributed to unresolved issues in South African society. Indeed, the EFF has been riding on the absence of a genuinely nationalist approach to the land and agrarian reform agenda. The party has presented a new model of radicalized land reform ideology, one with great potential to impact South African land reform through its seemingly pro-poor inclination.

The land and policy orientation in (these) countries of Southern Africa is, as we have seen, thoroughly neoliberal and directed against poor, smallholder agriculture and rural areas, even if it takes place in a different political-economic context. We see this in the case of Mozambique, where the government has been "'interventionist,' 'authoritarian,' and 'coercive' for engaging in projects that belittled customary African practices, forcibly relocating people, or threatening the livelihoods of the peasantry" (Pitcher 2012, 19), with policies falling in line with undemocratic forms of governance.

Conceptualizing Agrarian Authoritarianism

As the contemporary world has witnessed an increasing rise of authoritarian politics and a deepening of neoliberalism, itself characterized by a shift in the relationship between the state and the market, recent scholarship has built on these concepts to discuss the extent and impact of populism, authoritarianism, and right-wing politics, as well as their relationship to the countryside. Daniela Andrade (2020) has argued that even in modern democracies, authoritarian populism is

2 A new political party, the third biggest in the South African parliament, which uses populist tactics.

much more common, with 21st-century states adopting what the author calls "populism from above and below". With reference to Latin America, Alberto Alonso-Fradejas (2021) posits that the profit motive has led to an alliance between the state and economic elites, whose interests now converge at the expense of the masses. He refers to this as authoritarian corporate populism, which has contributed to the emergence of the state-business axis that increasingly determines and controls the distribution of resources in its favour.

Another way in which political authoritarianism and populism can arguably be exercised is through public policies and legislation that are introduced and enforced in undemocratic ways to impose a particular elite and class agenda. In Southern Africa, this can be observed in the land and agricultural sectors, where the enforcement of neoliberal agrarian policies, and the contradictions that arise from their implementation, are shaping new agrarian relations and struggles in the current neoliberal moment. In light of this, I propose the notion of 'agrarian authoritarianism' to locate neoliberal policymaking and policy imposition. The concept presents an understanding of the current dynamics of the rise of agrarian neoliberalism, characterized by the anti-democratic imposition of exclusionary agrarian policies—policies which are hostile to the majority of small-scale food producers. Grounded in neoliberalism, agrarian authoritarianism is a concerted push to increase productivity through large-scale agricultural interventions at all costs. What is authoritarian about it? Authoritarianism is not in the pro-market policies per se. It is the way in which governments pursue them that is authoritarian. In other words, while neoliberalism is not inherently authoritarian, neoliberalism constitutes a fertile ground for authoritarianism. I therefore subscribe to Thomas Biebricher's account that "neoliberalism and authoritarianism are not intrinsically tied to each other, but even less are they inherently opposed to one another" (Biebricher 2020, 1).

Here, populism is used in the ways in which, discursively and rhetorically, policies are presented to the populations by governmental and political elites, often in a paternalistic manner. It is a populist approach since they claim to benefit small-scale producers when, by and large, they benefit more the agribusiness class and the so-called 'emerging farmers'.

Recently, the Zimbabwean government has been pushing for the return of massive agricultural investments which will likely lead to land concentration by capital and the alienation of smallholder farmers from the land, even though the government claims that this will benefit everyone. Taking a neoliberal and populist stand, the government in Zimbabwe is eager to raise capital via rents and in the process promote industrial capitalist agriculture. This has prompted the government to push for smallholder farmers to embark on joint ventures with foreign capital, while simultaneously crafting a new narrative that land should be given to those who have ample financial and material resources and can fully utilize this, thus pro-

moting the line that the country is now 'open for business' (Monjane and Tramel 2018; Mazwi et al. 2018). This is an example of the triumph of agrarian neoliberalism, which threatens to reverse the land reform from the early 2000s that put an end to unjust colonial land inequality, as will be explored later in this chapter.

Agrarian authoritarianism has been a common trend in other countries of Southern Africa. While promoting the language of investment, governments undermine contentions from grassroots and civil society. Over the last decade, the region of Southern Africa has, in fact, seen civic spaces shrink. In particular, there has been a growing trend for the state to use the criminal justice system to vilify, criminalize, and suppress activists, leaders, and local communities who are fighting for the right to land, denouncing land grabs, exposing corruption, and advocating for inclusive socio-economic development (Monjane 2021b; Wesso 2021).

While neoliberalism provokes resistance (Harris 2003; Lahiff, Borras, and Kay 2007; Stromquist and Sanyal 2013; Tilzey 2020), its authoritarian turn requires new strategies, since neoliberalism has already undermined the class basis for resistance in the countryside. The following section deals with the ways in which agrarian authoritarianism is contested, resisted, and fought against by agrarian movements.

Confronting Agrarian Authoritarianism: The Building of Emancipatory Alternatives

The peasantry has been the major victim of neoliberal agrarian policies, and agrarian movements have organized to object to and challenge them. In fact, contemporary rural movements worldwide are becoming an organizing centre for the masses of rural poor discarded by neoliberalism (Moyo and Yeros 2005, 45). The contradictions inherent to the penetration and development of agrarian capital in the countryside provoke a variety of political reactions from below; in most cases, agrarian movements emerged as a result of these developments in Southern Africa.

The political and social events of the 1980s, with particular attention to the introduction of economic adjustment programmes, sowed the seeds for agrarian movements across Southern Africa, even though rural and peasant organizing and political agency has a longer history prior to neoliberalism. The circumstances surrounding the emergence of these movements are found in the rise and penetration of agrarian capital in the countryside, with the tacit support of governments. This has led to the progressive and systematic rural- and urban-based land struggles to confront agrarian capital. In this section, three cases of resistance to agrarian authoritarianism are discussed.

An Overview of the Movements: UNAC, the FSC, and ZIMSOFF

The National Union of Peasants in Mozambique (UNAC) emerged in the late 1980s, when Mozambique adopted the Bretton Woods structural adjustment programmes (SAPs), where peasants found it necessary to initiate a national movement to defend the interests of the peasantry, as changes in economic strategy threatened the cooperative movement. UNAC has a membership of about 150,000 small and medium-scale farmers, organized in associations and cooperatives across the country.

The Right to Agrarian Reform for Food Sovereignty Campaign (FSC) was launched in 2008, when the world food crisis reached its peak as agrarian capital was intensifying its actions in the countryside, and social and agrarian inequalities were being exacerbated in South Africa. The FSC's interests are broader than just getting access to land for people. "The broad focus of the movement is to challenge neoliberal capitalism and its manifestations at local level, at regional level, at national level. That would include getting access to agricultural land that has been very unequally distributed in South Africa".[3] The FSC constituency consists of landless people, small-scale farmers, women and youth in rural areas, farmworkers, farm dwellers, people with insecure tenure (mostly on municipality and church-owned land), people on forestry land, and landless people in the Western and Northern Cape provinces.

The Zimbabwe Smallholder Organic Farmers' Forum (ZIMSOFF) was founded in 2002, but its origins predate this period. Two crucial ZIMSOFF leaders and founders, Nelson Mudzingwa and Elizabeth Mpofu, worked and played important roles in the Association of Zimbabwe Traditional Environmental Conservationists (AZTREC), a group formed in 1985 around an alliance of spirit mediums, chiefs, and veterans of the liberation struggle. The then-leader of the association, comrade Cosmas Gonese (as he was referred to by the interviewees), served as the secretary-general of the Zimbabwe National Liberation War Veterans Association (ZNLWVA) and was, as is widely recognized, the architect of the land occupation movement that would force land reform in the early 2000s in Zimbabwe. ZIMSOFF seeks to improve the livelihoods of organized and empowered smallholder farmers in Zimbabwe who are practicing sustainable and viable ecological agriculture. It also seeks to strengthen and expand a dynamic alliance of smallholder farmer organizations promoting a movement towards agroecological farming. The ZIMSOFF membership is drawn from farmers who are practising sustainable agriculture, such as agroecology and organic farming, and it has a membership of about 20,000 small to medium-scale farmers all over the country.

3 Harry May, programme manager of the Surplus People's Project, interview with the author, Cape Town, March 2018.

Movements in the Struggle against Agrarian Authoritarianism

ProSAVANA in Mozambique

The Programme for Agricultural Development of the Tropical Savannah in Mozambique (ProSAVANA) was a large-scale agrarian programme, introduced in the beginning of the 2010s, aiming to transform the agricultural sector to be more investment and business-friendly (Monjane and Bruna 2020). It was a triangular programme, as it was proposed by the governments of Mozambique, Brazil, and Japan. The idea was that Brazil would transfer technology and its models for agribusiness and monoculture (especially soybeans), that Japan would provide funding and guarantee markets for agricultural products, and that Mozambique would sign off on the project by 'granting' the land.

The main objective of this agrarian programme was to increase agricultural productivity, targeting millions of hectares in north-central Mozambique. The programme was earmarked to have access to 14 million hectares in the Nacala Corridor, and this constituted just half of the total 36 million hectares of arable land in Mozambique (Clements and Fernandes 2013; Monjane and Bruna 2020). The imposition of ProSAVANA in the 2010s sparked debates on whose interest this megaproject was serving. Details revealed that the governments of Japan, Brazil, and Mozambique were secretly paving the way for a massive land grab in Northern Mozambique (Justiça Ambiental et al. 2013, 1). This led to increased agitation and a sense of class solidarity among peasant organizations and other civil society groups. These formed a collective front against the government policy to prioritize agribusiness at the expense of peasant production.

UNAC was at the forefront in the emergence of the Campanha não ao ProSAVANA (No to ProSAVANA Campaign, NPC). The NPC presented an organized and explicit opposition to not only the ProSAVANA project itself, but also to the fundamental paradigm of rural development promoted by the project. The NPC, while demanding the discontinuation of ProSAVANA, also proposed alternatives to rural and agricultural development, such as the push for food sovereignty and support for family farming. The NPC did not limit itself to mobilizing among peasants but kept on incorporating more members from diversified sectors within Mozambique and abroad to include Brazilian agrarian movements and NGOs, as well as Japanese activists and academics, with the campaign soon becoming a transnational movement.

This demonstrates that opposition to neoliberal agrarian policies is taking on a new dimension, one which has a scope which is wider and beyond that of the peasantry. This indicates that the land question in Mozambique, like in Southern Africa, is a highly sensitive and emotive one within the peasant community and broader agrarian civil society. Beyond this, the land question offers interesting in-

sights into a range of wider issues on the policy environment in Mozambique. The land issue therefore overlaps into issues pertaining to political legitimacy and the Mozambican case, much like the land issue in Zimbabwe, demonstrates the complexities of land reform where capital interests are vested, as well as the potential implications in terms of economic performance and political legitimacy. The Mozambican case also emphasizes the negative implications of policymaking from above in the context of land reform. The hibernation—and later termination—of ProSAVANA can be explained as emerging from a combination of tactics intrinsic to the NPC, namely: (1) active agency from below; (2) an inter-sector civil society alliance; (3) communication, publicity, and media strategy; (4) transnationalization of the struggle; and (5) proposal of alternatives to confront the dominant narratives (Monjane and Bruna 2020).

Demands for land reform in South Africa

In South Africa, struggles for land reform are diverse and directed against different actors, but most demands are directed at the state. This is despite the fact that the state owns only tiny portions of the land compared to agrarian capitalists and churches. A case in point is Wupperthal, a village on the west coast of the municipality of Cederberg in the Western Cape. There, a group of landless peasant farmers, members of the Moravian Church (which owns the land), and residents of Wupperthal have been overtly challenging the leadership of the church for more than a decade and pushing for democratization of the land. The fact that churches own immense tracts of land in South Africa does not constitute a novelty. What makes this struggle for land unique is how a small group of believers has dared to protest against a rigid and highly hierarchical faith-based organization, claiming ownership of land in a context where the norm has been for people to relegate their agency to the church's leadership for almost everything. The Concerned Moravians, as the FSC members in Wupperthal call themselves, have on the contrary been articulating their demands very creatively by asking the church's leadership to "take care of the souls and leave the land to the people".[4]

As one land activist put it:

> Generally, the gospel of the church has been a very effective tranquilizer to radical ideas. Partly because they feel that they are a part of [the church]. The first character of their belonging of the church tranquilizes them and they do not see the church as an oppressor. The whole church setup is based on accepting inequal-

4 Dennis Bronton, leader of the Concerned Moravians, interview with the author, Wupperthal, March 2018.

> ity. How the hierarchy applies in church is much stronger than anywhere else. The issue of resistance can easily be framed as blasphemy.[5]

The tricky part of dealing with the church is that most people generally tend to accept the church as an organizing force, as some sources confirmed to me. This is because churches usually have all kinds of projects that support people in obtaining some form of income; this was the case for the Moravian Church in South Africa (MCSA) in Wupperthal. This equally explains why the Concerned Moravians are few in number (around 20) in a community with around 200 members.

Some would associate neoliberalism with financial institutions and the broader private sector, revealing that there was a blind spot when it came to faith-based organizations like churches. It turns out that churches have strong ties to private investors, to whom land is rented, and to financial institutions. This is the case in Wupperthal, where private landlords are allocated land to grow tea for the markets. As a landowning class, the churches in South Africa (especially the Catholic and Moravian churches) are also promoters and beneficiaries of agrarian authoritarianism.

Among their demands, the Concerned Moravians have always clarified that the fight is not against the church itself but rather the business holding thereof, MCiSA Holdings: "the business side of the church is not allowing us to have full control of the land to do our own thing".[6] This has had a number of consequences for the members. One of these happens to be the refusal of the Cederberg Municipality to support the cooperative that the Concerned Moravians have set up in Wupperthal, because the government cannot implement projects on 'private' land without the church's consent. MCiSA registered a holding in 2011 as an agriculture and tourism company.

Protecting land reform and building an agroecology 'revolution'

Before ZIMSOFF was founded, a number of the current ZIMSOFF leaders settled in Shashe, Zimbabwe as part of the Association of Zimbabwe Traditional Environmental Conservationists (AZTREC) that occupied what used to be a cattle range in the early 2000s. AZTREC had been working with chiefs, traditional leaders, war veterans, ex-combatants, village heads, and government departments for almost two decades prior to the land occupation movement that forced land reform in the early 2000s in Zimbabwe. The group that occupied Shashe was composed of more than 100 people and was led by Cosmas Gonese, the founder and director of

5 Siviwe Mdoda, land activist, interview with the author, Cape Town, February 2018.

6 Dennis Bronton, leader of the Concerned Moravians, interview with the author, Wupperthal, March 2018.

AZTREC who was also then secretary-general of the Zimbabwe National Liberation War Veterans Association (ZNLWVA). Today, more than 400 families live in Shashe.

ZIMSOFF is implementing an agroecology project that has been inspiring the Shashe community as well as other farmers' organizations across the country. ZIMSOFF has been showing impressive work in restoring indigenous seeds, especially of grain. The organization has focused on introducing ecologically-sensitive measures to their agriculture. This radical shift towards agriculture demonstrated that land reform transcended the boundaries of mere revolution as it transformed the mindsets of the farming community. This represents a major shift in peasant consciousness beyond encouraging land occupation and reveals the multiple layers of land reform in Zimbabwe.

These projects and activities have led to a considerable transformation in the agroecological outlook of Shashe, and livelihoods have been enhanced. Farmers have turned a ranch into the successful agricultural settlement that it is today. It is now a centre of excellence, an agricultural "college without walls". Shashe has become a successful pilot project which other clusters in Zimbabwe are emulating.[7]

Table 1. Transformation in Shashe, over 20 years

	Before 2000	**2010**	**2020**
Land Size	1000 ha arable	3104 ha arable	3104 ha arable
	14,020 ha for grazing	11,916 ha for grazing	11,916 ha for grazing
	Total: 15,020 ha	**Total**: 15,020 ha	**Total**: 15,020 ha
Livestock	Cattle: 3000	Cattle: 6000	Cattle: 7000
	Goats: 200	Goats: 10000	Goats: 10000
	Sheep: 150	Sheep: 500	Sheep: 1000
		Pigs: 500	Pigs: 1000
	Chickens (layers and broilers)	Donkeys, dogs, and poultry	Donkeys, dogs, poultry, rabbits, and fish
Food Crops	Cereals	Cereals (maize, sorghum, millet)	Cereals (maize, sorghum, millet)
	Pulses	Pulses (peanuts, cowpea, beans)	Pulses (peanuts, cowpea, beans)

7 Nelson Mudzingwa, ZIMSOFF national coordinator and Shashe resident, interview with the author, Shashe, January 2019.

		Oils (sunflower, soya, sesame)	Oils (sunflower, soya, sesame)
		Vegetables and fruits	Vegetables and fruits
Number of Families	50	400	550
Employment/ Jobs Created	Farmworkers: 50	Plot holders: 400	Plot holders: 500
		Casual workers: 100	Casual workers: 200
		Civil servants: 50	Civil servants: 100
		Total: 550	**Total**: 800
Other Business/ Economic Activities	Beef production	Beef production	Beef production
	Poultry production (chicken and eggs)	Poultry production (chicken and eggs)	Poultry production (chicken and eggs)
	Dairy	Piggery	Piggery
	Sheep and goats	Sheep and goats	Sheep and goats
			Fish production
		Crop production	Crop production
		Entrepreneurship	Entrepreneurship

Source: compiled by Brain Muvindi and the author, based on surveys and data provided by a government official in Mashava village, Masvingo Province

In many ways, livelihoods have been transformed and pre-existing poverty has been considerably reversed. This transformation is to be viewed as part of an emancipatory and counter-strategy to agrarian neoliberalism and authoritarianism. In this way, ZIMSOFF may be viewed as an agent for challenging the neoliberal way of approaching agricultural development and transformation. Furthermore, it is an agent for pushing the agenda of ensuring food sovereignty using local communities and resources. The case of Shashe allows us to look at the capacity for transformation and the resilience of peasant farmers who have come to have access to land (as a result of agrarian reform) to be able to transcend agrarian capital, which dominated the agrarian structure of Shashe prior to the land occupation and subsequent implementation of the land reform programme.

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I make sense of the data presented above in the conclusion.

Conclusion

As shown in this paper, one of the ways in which authoritarianism is exercised is through the manner in which policy is introduced and imposed, undemocratically, and its implementation forcibly, to push for a certain agenda for the benefit of a certain class (agrarian capital, state elites) to the detriment of the poor. The chapter has presented the struggles of three agrarian movements in Southern Africa. Opposing the hegemony of (agrarian) capitalism (Santos and Rodríguez-Garavito 2003, 23), these struggles confront agrarian authoritarianism, in that they refuse to accept enclosure of their farmland by agrarian capital, either to preserve land reform, to prevent reversals, or to push for an end to landlordship through land democratization. These struggles are equally confronting right-wing tendencies within and outside of governments. In the case of Mozambique, these tendencies can be identified in the form of propaganda by members of the governing FRELIMO party, when promoting the state's efforts to intensify a neoliberal agrarian agenda.

Resistance to agrarian authoritarianism goes beyond resisting unjust agrarian policies, as it also resists authoritarian aspects that are linked to other types of social injustice, such as the denial of the right to say no to large-scale agriculture and agrarian technologies, and hostility towards 'the rural' and 'rural life', as well as the social exclusion of rural populations.

Struggles against agrarian authoritarianism can happen reactively as well as proactively. They are reactive when contradictions arising from the implementation of the activities of (already penetrating) agrarian capital begin to manifest. Those contradictions include the exploitation of the peasantry, land grabs and encroachment on their land, or their exclusion from enjoying the benefits of accessing land (as has been the focus of the FSC in South Africa). They may emerge in a proactive manner, in the absence of agrarian capital, when measures, actions, and activities are implemented by agrarian movements and communities to build an alternative rural life in those communities. This is the case in Shashe where neoliberal agrarian policies and agrarian capital would not find fertile grounds for their imposition. In other words, the presence of rural emancipation expels agrarian authoritarianism. The pursuit of rural emancipation is therefore at the core of the struggle against agrarian authoritarianism. These struggles are, in fact, not merely for access of and control over land. Movements envisage the transformation of society, putting organizational alternatives that allow communities to share available resources. Shashe, in Zimbabwe, is an example of what rural emancipation could look like: today hundreds of families share farming and grazing plots, producing

a variety of food crops (grains, cereals, legumes, vegetables, fruit trees), medicinal plants, roots, and livestock (cows, sheep, goats, pigs, chickens, turkeys). A significant number of them save, reproduce, and reuse their own seeds (mostly for grains and cereals). Shashe peasant farmers have more control over both the means and processes of production, as they depend very minimally on external inputs.

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