

*Dynamics of social differentiation
after land reform among former
labour tenants in Besters,
KwaZulu-Natal.*

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Theoretical context

- Locate land reform in SA in changes in 1970s which ended “state activism in capitalism” and started the “moment of ‘globalization”
- Global restructuring of capital has been accompanied by the “fragmentation” of classes of labour and intense struggles for survival and reproduction.
- Petty commodity production, combining contradictory class positions of capital and labour, is prevalent and also contributes to this fragmentation
- So does LR enable expanded petty commodity production or does it simply diversify the strategies of survival of these fragmented classes of labour?

Land reform policy context

- “a rapid and fundamental change in the relations (... ownership and control) of land, livestock, cropping and community” will lead to “social cohesion” and the restoration of the “centrality of indigenous culture”. Mention of class and gender differentiation dropped.
- Widespread discourse of commercialisation ... Still no clarity on who actually benefits despite built in assumptions of social differentiation contained in this discourse – there will be winners and losers but who are they?

Research context

- KZN Agricultural Development Agency that supports entrant black commercial farmers – **Premier: “no more failures”**
- Emergence of commercial farmers to be stimulated through set of uniform, standard measures including:
 - Redistribution of functioning commercial farms
 - Partnerships with sector organisations
 - Integrating LR farms into commodity value chains
 - Creation of semi-independent agencies to deliver/co-ordinate the identified services

Research focus

- Local dynamics of social differentiation among former farm dwellers (labour tenants and farm occupiers) who, in 2005, obtained ownership of 14 farms
- Are there petty commodity producers who are accumulating capital, expanding production and employing wage labour?
- What are the “classes of labour” and means by which they reproduce themselves?
- How do other identities intersect with and shape these class formations?
- Do the nature and conditions of the farming activity itself cast light on the nature of the social relations underpinning it and how these may be transforming?

Research design

- Case study
- Extensive research
 - survey of 84 households
 - cattle register of 30 households
- Intensive research
 - Participatory workshops
 - Focus sessions
 - Semi structured interviews
 - Life history interviews
 - Participant observations

The research site

- Situated in the Bester's District in northern KwaZulu-Natal.
- Main economy of the area is mainly rangeland beef farming on sourveld
- The nearest towns are Ladysmith in the south and Harrismith in the north.
- Project is 17,700 hectares, transferred 14 CPAs with a total membership of 183 households, with total cost of R36 million – ie mean p/HH expenditure of R197,000; use 97 hectares.
- Each CPA received beef cattle – explicitly commercial

Demographic characteristics

	Percentage	Mean per household	Median per household	Mode per household	Range
Household size		10.8	8	8	1-29
No of men	27%	2.9	2	1	0-14
No of women	29.6%	3.2	3	3	0-10
No of children	42.9%	4.6	4	4	0-14
No of generations		2.8	3	3	1-5
No of adults home most nights	37%	3.9	3	3	0-14

Work and income

	Percentage	Mean per household	Median per household	Mode per household	Range
Income sources		5	5	5	1-10
Adults with permanent jobs	13.6%	0.8	0	0	0-5
Adults with casual or contract jobs	14.6%	0.9	0	0	0-6
Adults permanently employed on farms	8.2%	0.5	0	0	0-3
Unemployed adults	18.9%	1.1	1	1	0-7
No of adults receiving govt pensions	6.6%	0.4	0	0	0-3
No of adults receiving disability grants	4.5%	0.3	0	0	0-2
No of adults receiving child grants	26.7%	1.6	1	1	0-5

Land and crops

- Average length of occupation 15 years (0-99)
- 8% no arable land; 80% gardens and 25% bigger arable fields BUT 17% did not use land = lack of machinery/cash; drought; recent or impending move.
- Range of 8 crops grown, widest range in gardens, main crops pumpkins, white maize and spinach
- Everybody grows to eat; 11% also sell, and 35% gave some away
- le – Crops supplement food purchases

Cattle compared

Cattle	Besters N=84	Mathintha N = 178	Msinga N=268
No of households with cattle	79	40	149
% of homesteads with cattle	94%	22.5%	55.6%
Mean no of cattle: all	22	2.3	5.6
Mean no of cattle: owners	23	10.2	10
No of HH with less than owner mean	34	17	109
Range of cattle /homestead	0-154	0-50	0-43

Cattle sales

Sales	Numbers
Households that sold cattle	62
Homestead cattle sold	201
% herd sold	11%
Stock sales	139
Sold to local or passer-bys	60

Gendered nature of cattle ownership

% adults who own cattle	24%
Mean no owned / individual	14
% owners who are women	24%
Mean no owned by women	12

Relationships – but not with jobs

Variable 1	Variable 2	Pearson's correlation	Significance level
Cattle ownership	Total assets per household	0.547	0.01
Cattle ownership	Agricultural assets	0.509	0.01
Cattle ownership	Goats owned	0.508	0.01
Cattle ownership	Cattle sales	0.472	0.01

Labour

- Two households employ full time wage labourers – not sure if they're relatives or not
- Ten households made use of seasonal "helpers" for either payment in cash or kind
- Every household uses family labour, all adults at various time for different tasks, often children
- On one CPAs, household cattle tasks are undertaken by the CPA employees

Guns and cattle

- Violence woven into strategies of both survival and accumulation

- Many stories in the area but here's one –

Large cattle owner, a school principal, an induna, a municipal exec councillor

..... with a reputation for having murdered the previous principal to get his job.

And, largest cattle owner at Besters is in jail for illegal possession of an R1; his strong muthi stopped him serving time for murder ...