

**LAND DEMAND AND RURAL STRUGGLES IN XHALANGA, EASTERN
CAPE: WHO WANTS LAND AND FOR WHAT?**

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Philosophy in Land and Agrarian Studies



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Declaration

I declare that this thesis, “LAND DEMAND AND RURAL STRUGGLES IN XHALANGA, EASTERN CAPE: WHO WANTS LAND AND FOR WHAT?” is my own work, that it has not been submitted for any degree or examination at any university, and that all the sources I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

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Abstract

LAND DEMAND AND RURAL STRUGGLES IN XHALANGA, EASTERN CAPE: WHO WANTS LAND AND FOR WHAT?

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MPhil Thesis (Land and Agrarian Studies)

This study explores and investigates demand and struggles for land in the communal areas of South Africa with particular reference to Lumphasi in the former Xhalanga magisterial district, in the Eastern Cape. The study argues that despite arguments about proletarianisation and conversion of rural land users into wage labourers, leading to assumptions that there was less interest in land use by rural people, there is and has always been demand and struggles for land in communal areas such as Xhalanga.

The study argues that this demand is primarily led by migrant workers and former farm workers. As the study shows, this has been the case even before the advent of democracy in 1994. In the case of Xhalanga some of these land-seeking people were quitrent titleholders who wanted more land for crop production. However, these were also people who wanted land for residential sites, and grazing purposes, which they could not get access in the villages because of overcrowding and land shortage. The current demand for land is thus of people who need land for residential and grazing purposes. My overall conclusion is that the current land demand and struggles are not a new phenomenon, which was sparked by unemployment, and joblessness, as some would argue. They illustrate that there are Africans with attachment to land. However, most of these are not accommodated by the land reform programme with its focus in promoting a class of black commercial farmers.

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Acronyms

AAC	All African Convention
AGS	Africa Groups of Sweden
ANC	African National Congress
CALUSA	Cala University Students Association
CC	Closed Corporation
COSATU	Congress of South African Trade Unions
CPA	Communal Property Association
CPSA	Communist Party of South Africa
CRLS	Centre for Rural Legal Studies
DCPA	Delindlala Communal Property Association
DDG	Deputy Director General
DLA	Department of Land Affairs
DSC	District Screening Committee
GEAR	Growth, Employment and Redistribution
ICCO	Interchurch Organisation for Development Co-operation
LAMOSASA	Land Access Movement of South Africa
LPM	Landless People's Movement
LRAD	Land Redistribution for Agricultural Development
NAFU	National African Farmers Union
NCHR	Norwegian Centre for Human Right
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NLC	National Land Committee
NRDF	National Rural Development Forum
PGAC	Provincial Grants Approval Committee
RDP	Reconstruction and Development Programme
SABC	South African Broadcasting Corporation
SLAG	Settlement Land Acquisition Grant
TCOE	Trust for Community Outreach and Education

TRAC Transvaal Rural Action Committee
TRLK The Restoration Land Committee
UTTGC United Transkeian Territories General Council
XAYCO Xhalanga Youth Congress

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

1.1 Introduction

Radical historians and social scientists writing in the 1970s, 1980s, and early 1990s have argued that colonial conquest and land dispossession resulted in chronic land shortages in the reserves. A consequence of this land shortage was the conversion of the indigenous people of South Africa from a land-based livelihood to poorly paid wage labourers (Wolpe 1992; Legassick and Wolpe 1976; Hendricks 1990). Following this reasoning, recent studies on de-agrarianisation have concluded that there is less interest in the use of land by rural people. Manona (1998), for example, has argued that practises of rural people indicate an inclination away from land usage towards non-agricultural activities and occupations. Similarly, researchers such as Cross (1988) argue that rural families only use the land when circumstances force them. On a more cautious note, Walker (2003), while not disputing the need for land, argues that the extent of landlessness is exaggerated.

These arguments may create the impression and even lead others to conclude that the need for land in rural areas is not overwhelming and urgent. Yet, the establishment of the Land Access Movement of South Africa (LAMOSA) in 1996¹, the Landless People's Movement (LPM) in 2001, and the various testimonies in a People's Land Tribunal, which was organised by the Trust for Community Outreach and Education (TCOE) in December 2003 in Port Elizabeth, Eastern Cape², suggest that there is an urgent and overwhelming demand for land. The recent threats in late 2003 and early 2004 by Mangaliso Kubheka, spokesperson of the LPM, that their members would not vote in the 2004 elections if the pace of land redistribution was not accelerated, is again

¹ LAMOSA was formerly called "The Land Restoration Committee" (TLRC) established in 1991 with the facilitation of Transvaal Rural Action Committee (TRAC).

² TCOE is a national non-governmental organisation that has programmes some of which focus on land. It organised the Tribunal in December 2003 and March 2004, to allow rural communities to highlight the problems they experienced with land reform in South Africa. The Department of Land Affairs had representatives who made presentations in the Tribunal. Although business and white farmers were invited to the Tribunal, they did not attend.

an indication of this mounting pressure for land³. The LPM's call for its members not to vote in the 2003 general elections received some support from land-hungry people in the Eastern Cape, including Xhalanga, my research area. The launch of the Red October by the South African Communist Party (SACP) in 2004 and the national Land Summit in July 2005 are further examples of the extent of the demand and need for land. In the Land Summit, rural people expressed their frustrations with the slow pace of land reform in South Africa.

My own fieldwork experience as an employee of a land-based non-governmental organisation (NGO) in the Eastern Cape, the Cala University Students' Association (CALUSA), also strongly suggests that there is a demand for land. Over the last five years, I have assisted various communities in the former Xhalanga district, in their struggles for land, including those seeking land through the government's land reform programme. In this period, the number of groups of people that needed land has grown from one in 2001 to nine groups in 2003 (CALUSA Annual Report 2003). As at the end of 2004, the number of groups had gone up to ten, with the addition of a group of former farm workers.

This study investigates the demand and struggles for land in the communal areas of South Africa. It particularly focuses in one administrative area in the former Xhalanga district: Lumphaphasi. I argue that despite debates about proletarianisation and deagrarianisation, there is demand for land in the communal areas of Xhalanga. I will show that this demand is not a new phenomenon that was sparked by joblessness in the current phase of neo-liberal capitalism as some scholars may suggest (Bernstein 2003). The demand for land in communal areas appears to be as old as land dispossession itself. I also argue that land is but one of the many strategies that rural people pursue to make a living. The study investigates land demand in rural areas with a focus on who wants land, what the people want land for and the kinds of struggles they have embarked on to get the land. The case of Lumphaphasi will be used for illustrative purposes.

This chapter explores the debates about the nature of rural societies against the backdrop of colonisation, land dispossession and capitalist development in South

³ Mr. Mangaliso Kubeka's comments in TCOE's 20th Anniversary in Port Elizabeth, December 2003.

Africa. In this regard, emphasis and focus will be on theories developed by scholars such as Wolpe (1972), Beinart (1995), Hendricks (1990) and Bernstein (2003), amongst others.

The study attempts to answer the questions: who wants land, for what purposes, and what those who want land do to get it.

1.2 The nature of rural society: the debate

In his seminal work, Wolpe has argued that the development of capitalism in South Africa is historically linked to the establishment and decline of the reserves (later called Bantustans/homelands) (1995:66)⁴. He argued that:

The development of this dominant mode of production has been inextricably linked with two other modes of production – the African redistributive economies (*in the reserves*) and the system of labour tenancy and sharecropping on White farms (1995:66).

According to Wolpe, the process of proletarianisation was gradual and uneven. It was gradual because it took place over a number of years, and uneven in the sense that while some rural residents were turned into migrant workers, others became permanent urban dwellers. He divides the development of capitalism in South Africa into three periods: the 1870s to 1930s; the 1930s to the advent of apartheid in the late 1940s; and the period up to the early 1970s.

Wolpe argues that,

in the period of capitalist development (from, say, 1870) African redistributive economies constituted the predominant mode of rural existence for a substantial (for much of the period, a majority), but continuously decreasing number of people (1995:67).

Wolpe disagrees with Frank (1969) and others who, referring to the Latin American experience, argued that the two modes of production co-existed. To him “the assumption that different modes of production can be treated as independent of one another is untenable” (Wolpe 1995:67). He points out that:

In South Africa, the development of capitalism has been bound up with, first, the deterioration of the productive capacity of and then, with increasing rapidity, the destruction of the pre-capitalist societies (1995:67).

⁴ Wolpe’s article was originally published in 1972, but this study uses a version of the article which was published in 1995.

In simple terms, the pre-capitalist mode of production Wolpe refers to was made up of peasant societies, who depended on land-based livelihoods such as agriculture and livestock farming. Colonialism, land dispossession, the establishment of the reserves and the development of capitalism, on the other hand, led to the gradual destruction of these peasant societies, forcing rural people into capitalist wage labour. This means that the collapse of the pre-capitalist mode of production meant the integration and destruction of peasant societies in South Africa, and the conversion of most of the rural residents into waged workers. About this developing labour force from the rural areas, he remarks thus:

The peculiar feature of this labour force is that it is migrant and temporary, returning to the reserves in between periods of work, and retains means of production in the African economy or has a claim on such means (1995:68).

According to Wolpe, from the 1920s, conditions in the pre-capitalist societies became worse as agricultural production dropped tremendously. Wolpe shows the development of “classes” or “strata within classes”, as land became concentrated in the hands of a few and growth in the group of landless rural people (1995:75). During this period, production in the African reserves, “of a marketable surplus became increasingly rare, finally disappearing altogether” (1995:68). This point was made by Bundy earlier in his *“Rise and fall of South African peasantry”* (1979). According to Wolpe, the disappearance of production was because “the state’s expenditure on agricultural development in the reserves has always been extremely low, increasing only marginally as conditions of production worsened”. Wolpe explains that:

the capitalist sector had succeeded, whether through unequal terms of trade or otherwise, in underdeveloping the African economy so that it no longer presented a significant competitive threat to White farmers (Wolpe 1995:68).

He emphasises that relations between the two sectors became that of the “backward sector” supplying “labour power to the capitalist sector” (1995:68). Wolpe argues that although the capitalist rulers tried to avert land concentration through the Glen Grey Act and the Natives Land Act of 1913, by the 1930s there were already landless people in the reserves (1995:71).

The collapse of subsistence production in the reserves posed a challenge for the capitalists in that the production and reproduction of the labour force depended on the capacity of the reserves to provide a subsistence existence for the family of the migrant worker. This means that by late the 1940s rural residents were poor, as some families

had lost land (1995:77). Because of these conditions, a substantial number of rural dwellers were turned into wageworkers in urban areas, in some cases on a permanent basis. This happened particularly during the growth of the secondary industry and development of the tertiary sector (1995:77-8). This movement of rural dwellers to settle in urban areas posed a problem to the apartheid government, which came to power in 1948.

According to Wolpe, the apartheid state resolved to continue with the policy which regarded Africans as “temporary migrants in the urban areas, there only as long as they ministered to White needs” (1995:81). The Bantu Authorities Act of 1951, which among others strengthened the powers of compliant chiefs, was used as a “cheap” form of control and which the apartheid government regarded as a system that would be “acceptable to the African people” (1995:82). Wolpe further argues that the apartheid government realised that “political control in the reserves was obviously ... no solution to the problem of the never-ending enlargement” of a working class (1995:83). In this regard the apartheid state introduced the idea of industrial decentralisation or border industries, from the 1960s, as an alternative measure to migration of cheap labour to urban centres (1995:86). This meant that the government realised that the subsistence economy had collapsed and that more rural dwellers became workers who lived in the villages but worked in the nearby industries (Wolpe 1995:86).

Wolpe’s position has been criticised by a number of scholars. For purposes of this study, focus will be on Hendricks (1990) and Beinart (1995). Beinart accuses Wolpe of focusing on the mode of production and the specific role of capital and downplays the role of African societies in the development of the migrant labour system in South Africa (1995:180). He argues that:

Colonial penetration, needs created through trade, appropriation of land and taxation certainly made it necessary for an increasing majority of African families to secure some wage income. But many of those who went to work did so in such a way as to avoid full incorporation as settled and permanent wage labourers (1995:180).

For Beinart some of those who went to work wanted to be temporary wageworkers and resisted their permanent incorporation into the capitalist system. Beinart goes on to say:

It could be suggested, then, that migrancy as a specific form of proletarianisation arose out of the dynamics of African societies rather than out of the demands of the

mine-owners. The system was, at least initially, a compromise between capital and the peasantry – it reflected the inability of the state to transform African society (1995:180).

Beinart, following Bundy (1988) also argues that during the initial stages the peasantry was not homogenous. He claims that:

There certainly were improving, progressive, sometimes Christian peasant communities, responding to the market by increasing production and enjoying a period of moderate prosperity in some Cape districts (1995:180).

This indicates that there were indeed successful peasants in the late 19th century, who also assimilated Christian values. They benefited from the emerging capitalist system through trading. It appears that in the process, there was “rapid accumulation and individualization of productive resources”, which was supported by the state (Beinart 1995:81). The implication of what Beinart says is that the majority of rural dwellers no longer derived their livelihood from land instead they depended on wages. On this point, he agrees with Wolpe. We will see in the next chapter how this evolved in the case of the Xhalinga district.

However, Beinart points out that there was landlessness that led to rural mobilisation from the 1920s to the 1950s. Because of this emerging landlessness, he claims that: “(T)he vast majority of reserve-based families depended in varying degrees on both wages and rural production” (1995:186).

Beinart’s argument is that in the initial stages of capitalist penetration there were more or less equal power relations between the capitalists and African rural societies, which allowed Africans to have decision-making powers on whether to participate in the capitalist economy or not. His argument, which Hendricks challenges and I also find problematic, suggests that there was negotiation between the capitalists and African societies, hence the compromise.

Hendricks (1990:6) sees the debate on proletarianisation as between the “revisionist school”, which he associates with the “Marxist or materialist” interpretation of history and the “social historians”⁵. According to him, Wolpe represents the “revisionist”

⁵ Hendricks does not explain what “social historians” are, but the explanation of the term means historians who believed in the importance of the role of ordinary people in the writing of history (Beinart and Bundy 1987).

school and Beinart the “social historians”. As a response to the “revisionists”, Hendricks agrees that:

The migratory labour system which involves the forced repulsion of potential urban dwellers back to the reserves has given capitalist development its distinctive form in South Africa. A large portion of the work force is, due to this system of labour organization, in constant circulation between town and country (1990:8).

Hendricks disagrees with Beinart that rural people resisted proletarianisation. He argues that: “(T)he state has devised a formidable oppressive machinery, not however for the purposes of retarding proletarianization of blacks, but rather to displace it onto the reserves” (Hendricks 1990:13). He supports his argument by saying, “(I)n South Africa there has been a considerable proliferation of Africans who had proletarianization compelled upon them rather than prevented” (1990:13).

What was paramount in plans of all governments of South Africa, according to Hendricks, was to “prevent the emergence of a proletarian consciousness” by keeping their thinking fixed to land-based livelihoods (1990:13). For him, the reluctance of Africans to enter wage labour was because there was an abundance of land during the initial stages of colonial penetration. When access to land became difficult, in later stages, the land question became a central issue around which struggles of rural people revolved (Hendricks 1990:14). The land question arose because the development of capitalism meant the destruction of the pre-capitalist African societies, “separating the people from their land and hence creating a wage-labouring class” (Hendricks 1990:14).

In response to social historians, Hendricks argues that the cooption of chiefs was not because the state succumbed to rural preferences (1990:10). To him colonialists were not “compelled to compromise or accommodate to a policy direction which seriously threatened the interests of capitalists”. He concludes that the system of migrancy did not arise out of a “compromise between capital and peasants” and it did not arise out of dynamism of African societies (1990:10). Whilst Africans resisted capitalism, they were eventually defeated hence they were restricted to the reserves (1990:11).

Hendricks’s own thesis is that, “the process of proletarianization has assumed a particular form, shaped by apartheid policy and it has not been retarded, or inhibited or prevented” (1990: 16). He also argues, “the vast majority of the reserve population is heavily dependent upon wage labour for its survival” (1990:16). For him, the reserves

became reservoirs of labour because it was where “a mass of human material always” was “ready for exploitation” (1990:17). Exploitation of Africans was possible because by the 1960s concentrated villages were occupied by “displaced proletarians” who annually moved between their place of work in the broader South Africa and the rural homes (Hendricks 1990:3).

As was pointed out earlier, Africans were barred from residing permanently in urban areas whilst they worked in urban areas. Instead, they were workers that were expected to have permanent residence in the reserves, away from their places of work. Hendricks concedes that the reserves are a home to proletarians a majority of which is just there waiting for their next job opportunity in urban areas. One critical aspect that comes out of the discussions of Wolpe, Beinart and Hendricks is the shifting role of the reserves: from being initially the home of migrants tied to wage labour to that of serving or facilitating social and political control in the second half of the twentieth century.

There is agreement among the above scholars that in the later stages of capitalist development, in particular, a majority of rural people became waged workers. There is also agreement among them that landlessness had developed in rural areas. They also agree that there are people who needed land in rural areas. Their studies, however, do not focus on this group of people that needs land in the rural areas. It is this group of people that my study focuses on. Of interest to me is a question seeking to know who wants land and for what purpose(s), and the struggles embarked upon to get land.

Wolpe points out that while rural people earned wages in urban areas, they still returned to their villages and used land as a means of production. A theoretical question this poses is whether this labour, which has access to means of production in the form of land, can be referred to as a proletariat. In classical terms, the proletariat means people with no access of any kind to the means of production, except their labour power to sell to the owners of the means of production. The fact that the migrant labourer has access to the means of subsistence in the reserves makes it possible for the capitalists to justify the cheap labour practice, Wolpe argues (1995: 69). That is to “pay the worker below the cost of his reproduction” (1995: 69).

Whilst I agree with Wolpe’s argument that a major portion of the rural population was proletarianised, some permanently; that a group of landless people emerged and; that

subsistence production largely collapsed in rural areas, my empirical chapters indicate that some people in rural areas still used and continue to use land not only for residential purposes, but also for crop production or grazing purposes. By and large, some rural people maintained a pattern whereby they engaged in migrancy in their younger ages but returned to their villages in their middle ages. In this context, they continued to use land as one of the means of livelihood in the villages.

The reference by Wolpe and Beinart to rural dwellers as a reserve army of labour and reservoir of labour, respectively, is problematic since it implies that rural people were waiting in the villages for jobs and not using land. This is not entirely accurate. Similarly, the argument by Hendricks that rural dwellers are a “displaced proletariat” does not capture convincingly the current conditions of livelihoods and production activities in the rural areas of South Africa. These are issues that are also challenged by this thesis.

The debates about proletarianisation by the above scholars took place in a context where capitalism was able to absorb labour. However, since the 1960s capitalism entered a new phase called neo-liberal capitalism. According to Ntsebeza, neo-liberalism challenges a key feature of the Keynesian form of capitalism, which was “state intervention in market economies with the aim of achieving growth and employment ...” (2005:21). One of the central features of this global neo-liberal capitalism is large-scale unemployment. Large-scale unemployment emerged in South Africa from the late 1970s. The implications of neo-liberal capitalism are that retrenched migrant workers returned to their villages. Scholars writing on rural societies tried to grapple with this phenomenon. It is in grappling with this phenomenon that scholars such as Bernstein (2003), argue about possibilities of re-peasantisation of rural societies, and others such as Manona (1998), Cross (1988) and Walker (2003) argued about de-agrarianisation. Though taking a different position on the debate on de-agrarianisation, McAllister, is also part of the scholars that have tried to theorise about the current phase of capitalist development.

Bernstein uses his international experience and does not discuss a specific country, certainly not South Africa. His discussion is about the effects of neo-liberal capitalism to agricultural societies, especially the “varied peasant societies” in third world countries such as Africa (2003:10). Periodising changes that have taken place in

agricultural development from 1870 to 1970, he argues that the present approach to agricultural production is characterised by technological advancement in agricultural and food production for exportation, with developed countries dominating markets in the agricultural sector (Bernstein 2003:10-11). Developing countries have also been incorporated into the globalised agricultural production system, which he refers to as “increasingly internationalised” (2003:11). Poor and middle peasant farmers, according to him, are “displaced” in the face of “large-scale mechanised” agricultural production, which is export oriented (2003:13). He asserts that:

In short, while it is impossible to generalise about the impact of (uneven and forms of) globalisation on (differentiated) peasantries, it is likely that in this current phase of imperialism, most poor peasants confront an increasing simple reproduction ‘squeeze’, as indeed do the great majority of the poor in both South and North (Bernstein 2003:13).

According to Bernstein, the “current phase” of the global economy leads to the inability of backward (peasant) communities to reproduce labour for the capitalist sector. He further argues that the “landless rural proletariat and poor peasants form part of the expanding reserve army of labour in the countryside and in the cities and towns” (Bernstein 2003:14). For him the economic changes brought about by global capitalism, resulting in “pressures on industrial and urban employment, and the immiseration that results, may generate tendencies to ‘re-peasantisation’ in some instances” (Bernstein 2003:14). Re-peasantisation means the process of conversion of people who have been wagedworkers into peasants. The implication of Bernstein’s argument is that the inability of this form of capitalist development to address unemployment, converts workers in rural areas into peasants.

However, a study on de-agrarianisation by Manona (1998) shows that post 1960s, rural people no longer attach significance to agricultural land, due to a variety of factors. He argues that this means an orientation of rural people away from using the land for agriculture. Using a case study of a village in the Ciskei, Manona points out that long periods of lack of access to land in the reserves; the creation of civil servants by the Ciskei homeland government; and industrial development within the homelands; have led to a “process of economic activity re-orientation, occupational adjustment and realignment of human settlement away from strictly agrarian patterns” (1998:78). He argues: “(A)s the significance of agriculture has dwindled, the people desperately need residential sites and infrastructural improvements to their environment rather than land

for agricultural production” (1998:81). On the other hand, Cross (1988:262), argues that “for most families, agriculture stands fairly low among the household’s various enterprises: depending on circumstances, most families seem to put intensive effort into cultivation only when something goes wrong elsewhere in their economic support structure”. On his part, though, McAllister’s (2001:9) study of Shixini, a village in the Transkei, shows that: “the great majority of homesteads still actively practise agriculture”.

This study explores the applicability of these debates to Lumphaphasi, an administrative area in the former Xhalanga district of the Eastern Cape. As already indicated, the issue is about land demand : who wants land, what do people want land for, and the struggles people have embarked on, with specific reference to Lumphaphasi.

1.3 Terminology

A couple of terms which are used in this study are worth explaining.

Farmer: a farmer in the context of this study is someone who uses the land for farming in terms of livestock and agriculture. Also, in the context of this study the term farmer is used to draw a distinction between people who lived in a communal area and were allocated pieces of land of not more than five morgens and the farmers that were allocated land much bigger than the five morgens. Some of them had more than 200 morgens of land each. These farmers had their own individual grazing land. After the Tembuland Commission, they were given quitrent titles, which had weaker land rights than freehold titles given to the neighbouring white farmers. Since the 1920s these farmers became migrant workers when they were young and returned to the land in their middle ages. Some spent all their working lives as migrant workers and pensioned in the communal areas.

Landholders: These were people that got pieces of land of about five morgens as fields. Unlike farmers who had their individual grazing land, landholders had access to communal grazing land. Although some landholders were also given quitrent titles after the Thembuland Commission, most of them held their land through permits to occupy (PTO), which had lesser land rights than the quitrent titles.

Landless people: This group emerged in Xhalanga as a result of mainly population growth within a limited land space, but also due to the movement of people from the neighbouring farms. In other words, landless people consisted of children of farmers and landholders that could not inherit land, and former farm workers who came from the neighbouring farms. When landless people emerged as a group in the 1930s, they wanted land for residential and agricultural purposes. As grazing land became scarce both them and landholders were affected.

Native Locations: Although the concept a 'native location' was a nineteenth century colonial, dispossession and resettlement term, the initial legal framework for the reserve system was the 1913 Land Act that scheduled specific areas of South Africa for strictly African population and prevented further acquisition of land by Africans outside these 'scheduled areas'. Scheduled areas or reserves, as they were often referred, were revised and consolidated by the 1936 Native Trust and Land Act. After 1948, they became a major basis of Bantustan policy that culminated in some becoming independent homelands from the 1970s.

Peasant: means a person who derives a livelihood from the land by using the labour of his/her family (Bottomore 1983:363-365). Generally, peasants used the bulk of the production for domestic consumption, and only sold the surplus. In the context of Xhalanga, the concept of a peasantry underwent changes. The initial group of farmers from 1865 to the early 1920s, relied on land and were involved in trading of their production. With the development of capitalism in South Africa and deterioration of economic conditions in rural areas, more rural residents moved to urban to take up wage work. Thus peasant life became intertwined with the capitalist mode of production and a new person linked to the capitalist economy as a migrant worker who also owned a farm, emerged. In this sense I refrain from referring to farmers and small landholders as peasants in Xhalanga.

Tenant: These people owned no land, but lived on other people's land. Some of them worked for the landowners as labour tenants. In Xhalanga, such people also existed. The African farmers accommodated them. When the tenants moved from the farms and sought land in the villages, landholders accommodated some of them. In the villages, they were referred to as loose people (*Amalose*). *Amalose* emerged in Xhalanga from

people displaced by the Anglo-Boer War, and tenants and sharecroppers in neighbouring farms at about 1902.

1.4 Choice of the case study

Luphaphasi is different from other administrative areas in Xhalanga. It is the only area where big farmers, landholders and people without rights to land existed side-by-side. Luphaphasi was the first administrative area where land occupations occurred in the 1990s.

Further, a study on “Livestock production in Xhalanga”, conducted in 1999 revealed that there was a dire need for grazing land in the village (Ntsebeza 2002b). Subsequent to the study, CALUSA formulated a land programme in 2000, to assist rural people to acquire land through the government’s land reform programme. A group of people from Luphaphasi approached CALUSA for assistance in getting additional land.

When the people of this area indicated that they wanted to get land, the foremost question was: who were these people? Following the debates about proletarianisation as presented by Wolpe and others, and de-agrarianisation as represented by Manona, my research focused on understanding the reasons for this land demand in Luphaphasi.

Luphaphasi became the first area to acquire land in 2001, and I was directly involved in the processes that led to the transfer of land to the Luphaphasi people. The above reasons motivated me to choose Luphaphasi as my case study.

1.5 Methodology

The study adopts a historical approach and predominantly, uses historical research methodology. I used both primary and secondary sources in this study.

1.5.1 Primary sources

For the historical section of the study, I refer to archives and interviews. Archival material was supplemented with interviews to corroborate and supplement the information I got from the archives.

1.5.1.1 Archives

The archives I consulted cover mostly the period from the beginning of relocations in the 1960s to land occupations in the early 1990s. I consulted archives in the Department of Agriculture, which has offices in the former Cala General Hospital, for information on land applications, titling and records of people who held land and how land was held. For files on land applications, allocations and disputes, I consulted files in the office of Tribal Authorities (now referred to as Traditional Councils) in the premises of the former Arthur Tsengwiwe College of Education, in Cala. The office is for chiefs and headmen in the former Xhalanga District. To get information on policies post-1994, I consulted policy documents, reports of the Department of Land Affairs (DLA), internet documents and unpublished documents such as annual reports of non-governmental organisations (NGOs).

1.5.1.2 State of files in government offices in Cala

When I started the archival research, I went to the local Magistrate's Office in Cala, where files on land matters used to be kept. I found out from Ms. Nomaxabiso Hlabeni, who works at the Department of Justice that files on land issues are no longer in her office. They are kept in the Department of Agriculture, in the old Cala General Hospital. In the Department of Agriculture and Land Affairs, the files are not catalogued, although some are kept in filing cabinets. For instance, while going through the Cala Reserve file I came across information about Luphaphasi.

There does not seem to be a plan on the part of the officers about the files and something needs to be done to ensure the safety of the files. It was equally not easy to locate relevant files in the office of the "Traditional Council", because they were not catalogued. This is partly because the office was in the process of being set-up when I visited it.

The other issue about the files is that while records during the advent of the Bantustans were detailed, this is no longer the case. The skill of recording and the purpose of the recording seem to have been lost. This is a challenge that the government has to deal with in relation to his officials that deal with records. Otherwise, important information will get lost not because it is not recorded but because it is inadequately recorded. As

Morrow and Wotshela (2005:313), put it: “archives can contribute powerfully to informing and maintaining a state whose political and administrative functionaries have the opportunity to be aware of the past and can therefore hope to avoid continually stumbling down the same culs-de-sac”.

1.5.1.3 Interviews

The interviews were conducted also to get information about the history of the district generally, and Lumphaphasi in particular. Interviews were also useful in getting information about contemporary issues in Xhalanga.

Twenty-seven selected community members from Cala Reserve and Lumphaphasi were interviewed between April 2004 and October 2005 and these are profiled in footnotes and the bibliography. Cala Reserve was also chosen with Lumphaphasi because it was the first area to indicate in 1997 that it needed land. Of the twenty-seven respondents, there were 10 women. The interviewees are, mostly, people who currently have applied for land through the South African government’s Land Redistribution for Agricultural Development (LRAD) programme. They represent people who have been involved in land struggles in the two villages. They are former migrant workers, former farm workers, and children of landholders.

1.5.2 Secondary sources

Published papers, books on history and political economy, academic journals and a doctorate thesis on Xhalanga were used. For the period from the mid -19th century to the early 1990s, I refer mostly to Ntsebeza (2002a; 2005) who has done a comprehensive study of Xhalanga. It was difficult to get other relevant sources on Xhalanga.

1.5.3 Participant observation

I have also been a participant observer in developments related to land in villages of Xhalanga. As I indicated earlier, from 1996 to the present I have worked with people of Cala Reserve, Lumphaphasi and many other communities in their quest for land. During this period, I participated in my capacity as a fieldworker of CALUSA in various community meetings and workshops that dealt with land issues not only in the two villages, but also in other villages of Xhalanga. As part of the assistance I

provided to people who wanted land, including people from the village of my study, I and my colleague, Sipho Tabo, compiled profiles of the beneficiaries of the land reform programme. The profiles included, among others, assets of the beneficiaries, their ages and their sources of income. As part of my work, I also organised and had meetings with officials of the Department of Land Affairs, concerning problems and frustrations of communities about the land reform programme.

1.6 Significance and limitations of the study

The issue of land demand, particularly the question of the extent of the demand and who wants land has hardly been researched. This makes it difficult for policymakers and implementers in particular to plan. The study will help policy formulators to have a better understanding of the challenges and concerns of rural people with regard to land issues, especially as it comes at a time when the government is in the process of reviewing its strategies and interventions in the land reform programme.

The study will add to the emerging body of knowledge about Xhalanga. So far, my study will help in developing an understanding not only of the history of land struggles in Xhalanga; but the critical question of who the role-players are in these struggles, including what their concerns are.

There are limitations, though. Time constraints and work commitments were key factors. The writing of the study was undertaken at a time when CALUSA (the organisation I work for) was undergoing rapid internal changes some of which required that I should take more responsibilities. A challenge that faced me was to perform my managerial responsibilities whilst also involved in the study. As a result of these difficulties, it took me longer to finish the study than I had planned, as I had to strike a balance between the two major responsibilities. Conversely, my direct involvement in CALUSA programmes added value to the study. This meant using evenings, weekends and holidays, including the festive season to finish writing the study.

There have been studies that have been conducted on Xhalanga by Bundy (1988), Kodwa-Agyekum (1997) and Ntsebeza (2002a and 2005). Bundy's work is historical and deals with early history up to the early 20th century in Xhalanga. Kodwa-Agyekum's work focuses on rural development in Xhalanga, with specific interest on

income-generating projects and does not deal with land issues. Ntsebeza's work focuses on the land question within the context of the role of chiefs in land administration. It covers the period up to the early 1990s. However, his work does not look in any detail at Xhalanga after the advent of democracy in 1994.

The study focused on one village out of 22 villages of the former Xhalanga District. This is a limited area and its findings cannot be generalised for the whole country. But, because the study focuses on a limited area, it has allowed me to get into detail in my study of the area, which provides useful lessons about Xhalanga, and a contribution to the debate on the land need in democratic South Africa.

On hindsight, the study also does not focus on women, which is an important group in the context of rural areas. However, the study argues that women also needed land in the context of Xhalanga.

1.7 Thesis outline

The thesis comprises of five chapters, including this introductory one.

Chapter Two provides an overview to the history of land demand and struggles in the former magisterial district of Xhalanga; from 1865 to 1994. The central question the chapter addresses is: whether there is a demand for land in Xhalanga given that various scholars have argued that rural people have been turned into wage workers (proletarianisation), others argued that rural people have lost interest in the agricultural use of land (de-agrarianisation); and some argued that the collapse of urban economies have led to conversion of migrant workers into peasants (re-peasantisation).

Chapter Three is a case study of Lumphaphasi. I have used the case study for illustrative purposes, not to generalise in dealing with the concerns of the study. The chapter shows that people of Lumphaphasi need land, despite the proletarianisation process; arguments about de-agrarianisation; and re-peasantisation.

Chapter Four focuses on land demand and struggles in Lumphaphasi after 1994. The chapter shows how the people of Xhalanga, in particular Lumphaphasi used the land reform programme as a site of struggle to get additional land after 1994.

Chapter Five is the conclusion of the study. I show in it that the land demand and struggles are not a new phenomenon that is caused by the global economic crisis of the 1970s. There has always been land demand and struggles since the establishment of Xhalanga as a district in 1865.

Chapter 2

THE LAND QUESTION IN XHALANGA: AN OVERVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter provides an overview of land demand and struggles in Xhalanga from 1865, when the district was established, to the advent of democracy in 1994. The chapter provides the context within which the case study of Lumphaphasi can be understood. The chapter is divided into four periods. The first period from 1865 to the 1930s, deals with the establishment of the district and a series of debates regarding land tenure issues. It also looks at how those debates were resolved. The second period from the 1930s to the 1950s shows how land conditions deteriorated in Xhalanga, due to a number of factors, including population growth. It is also in this period that landlessness emerges as an issue. The period also covers struggles against betterment planning and the leading role of landholders. The third period deals with the land demand and struggles during the period of Tribal Authorities in Xhalanga. It shows that from the 1960s landless people emerged as the dominant force in the struggle for land. The fourth period, from around the late 1980s and early 1990s covers the transition to democracy in 1994, when landless people used land occupations as a form of struggle.

The critical issue the chapter is debating is: whether there is a demand for land in Xhalanga, given that some scholars have argued that rural people have been turned into wage workers (proletarianisation): with others arguing that rural people have lost interest in the agricultural use of land (de-agrarianisation); and some having argued that the collapse of urban economies has led to the conversion of migrant workers into peasants (re-peasantisation). This is in keeping with the central questions of the study are: who needs land and for what; and what strategies have people who want land employed to get it.

2.2 The establishment of Xhalanga and the land question (1865-1930s)

2.2.1 The establishment of Xhalanga and a brief history

In 1865, the colonialists persuaded four chiefs and their people to move from the Glen Grey District to what became known as Emigrant Thembuland. The four chiefs were Gecelo, Matanzima (Grandfather to K.D. Matanzima), Ndarala and Stokwe. This was in a bid to clear land for occupation by whites in the Glen Grey area (Ntsebeza 2005:38). The Emigrant Thembuland had two districts, Xhalanga and Southeyville. Xhalanga was under chief Gecelo and Southeyville was under the jurisdiction of the other three chiefs who included Stokwe. The village town of Cala, which was white-dominated, was separate from the two districts (Ntsebeza 2005:39).

When boundaries of the Xhalanga district were redrawn after the Thembuland Commission of 1883⁶, a portion of Xhalanga was given to white farmers, Cala was incorporated into Xhalanga and a portion of Southeyville under chief Stokwe, became part of Xhalanga. This meant that after 1883, Xhalanga had two chiefs – chiefs Gecelo and Stokwe. The boundaries of the new district remained more or less the same until 2000, when the democratic government of South Africa demarcated new boundaries and new municipalities were established. A new municipality, Sakhisizwe, was established, comprising the white-dominated Elliot District and 18 of the 20 administrative areas of Xhalanga. The other two administrative areas, including the area of the case study, Luphaphasi, became part of a new municipality, Emalahleni, which has an administrative capital in Lady Frere.

2.2.2 The people of Xhalanga up to 1883

The population of Xhalanga was from its establishment not homogenous. For example, among Gecelo's people there were amaGcina, amaYirha and abaThembu. The people under Gecelo were further divided into 'red' and 'school' people. Red people referred to people that were seen to have avoided Western values and practices. School people, on the other hand, referred to people that, to a large extent had accepted these values and practices (Ntsebeza 2005:40). Colonialists had been influential in the development of the divisions between school and red people. As part of their civilising mission, they

⁶ The Thembuland Commission will be dealt with later on.

exposed some Africans to Western values and practices through education, Christianity and the style of dressing (Mayer 1980; Jordan 1982; Beinart and Bundy 1987; Allen 1994; Magubane 1998). In Xhalanga, these divisions between red and school people were made more pronounced with the arrival of amaMfengu in 1872. AmaMfengu have been without a chief since the first half of the nineteenth century (Maylam 1986:62). They were generally regarded as school people (Ntsebeza 2005:40). In the context of Xhalanga, people tended to associate red people with amaXhosa and abaThembu (Ntsebeza 2005:40).

The people of Xhalanga further differentiated in terms of class. There were people with farms whereas there were also people with very limited land. When AmaMfengu arrived in Xhalanga, chief Gecelo gave them land. There seems to be evidence that in some instances, amaMfengu bribed the chief to get land (Ntsebeza 2005:49). That amaMfengu were prepared to bribe to get the land, is an indication that they desperately needed land.

By this time, colonialists had embarked on a project of promoting the development of African farmers that would be independent of chiefs (Ntsebeza 2005:49). In the context of the Cape, and as a result of the frontier wars fought between chiefs and colonialists, colonialists wanted to marginalise chiefs (Odendaal 1984; Maylam 1986; Peires 1989). In Xhalanga, colonialists continued with their strategy of undermining chiefs. For example, in his 1877 report, Cumming, the magistrate of Xhalanga argued that the chiefs' influence retarded the development of Africans (Ntsebeza 2005:49). This was in many ways how he justified his strategy of propping up independent African farmers. Cumming believed that to achieve the colonial mission, land should be given to thoroughly "civilised" Africans. Indeed, a group of nine African farmers from Xhalanga mostly, but not exclusively amaMfengu, got small farms with certificates of occupation (Ntsebeza 2005:61). This was about 1877. In 1879, magistrate Cumming marvelled the development of this group of African farmers in Xhalanga when he wrote:

These men had grown up under the care of the late Mr. Warner, and are pleasing examples of what the native may become under judicious training. ... They were located on farms, and the right of occupation was secured to them so long as they remained in the country. ... There is a vast difference between the condition of these native farmers, and that of the people who were left unreservedly under the control of the chiefs (Quoted in Ntsebeza 2005:36).

Although there were also other African farmers who had made improvements to meet the requirements set by colonialists, there were no other farmers that were granted certificates of occupation after 1877 (Ntsebeza 2005:61). It is not clear why this was the case. The bulk of the people of Xhalanga, in particular the 'red' people remained under the authority of their chief, without any form of legal documentation for the land they occupied.

Cumming's comment in his report of 1879 suggests that colonialists did not bother to interfere with this group. According to him: "(T)here is a vast difference between the condition of these native farmers, and that of the people who were left unreservedly under the control of the chiefs" (Cited in Ntsebeza 2005:38). Although not showing any direct linkage to the influence of colonialists, Bundy points out that there were African farmers in Xhalanga who progressed in their development (1979:93). Making use of two farmers in Xhalanga, in 1882, Bundy points out that "Sol Kalipa⁷ owned 120 cattle, 20 horses, 500 sheep and goats, two wagons and three ploughs; Mayongo ran 220 cattle, 44 horses, and 350 small stock, ..." (1979:93).

The outbreak of the Gun War in 1879 and the involvement of the two chiefs, Gecelo and Stokwe in the war as so-called rebels had implications for the composition of Xhalanga and its people. The two chiefs were defeated. Stokwe was killed during the war, while Gecelo was arrested. For their participation in the war, the two chiefs were stripped of their chieftainship (Ntsebeza 2005:54-5). Another development after the war was the establishment of the Thembuland Commission.

2.2.3 The Thembuland Commission and its recommendations

The Thembuland Commission was established in 1882 "to consider and report upon the question of the permanent occupation of the country lately occupied by the Rebel Emigrant Tembus, ..." (Ntsebeza 2005:55). In 1883, the Commission made a number of recommendations. As was pointed out earlier, it recommended that a portion of Xhalanga be given to white farmers. A portion of Southeyville that was under Stokwe was incorporated into Xhalanga. Cala was also incorporated into Gecelo's Xhalanga and became the administrative seat with Charles J. Levey as the resident magistrate (Ntsebeza 2005:6).

Apart from the demarcation of new boundaries for Xhalanga, people who did not participate in the war, the “loyalists”, were given small farms with quitrent titles⁸, a title that gave landholders limited rights compared to freehold titles. The loyalist were moved and given small farms of not more than 15 morgens per farm. The position of their farms was such that they formed a border between the land given to white farmers and the land that remained Xhalanga (Ntsebeza 2005:61). As regards land tenure, Ntsebeza points out that:

The Commission left the Xhalanga landholders with the clear impression that, pending further clarification by the government, the survey and certificates of occupation were temporary measures until such time as the people could afford to pay for a complete survey, at which point appropriate titles would be issued (Ntsebeza 2005:63).

The Commission’s recommendations were an indication that colonialists were still committed to the idea of dividing Africans by establishing a class of farmers. The colonial promise to grant landholders freehold titles was to become a major source of the struggles of the Xhalanga landholders from the beginning of the 20th century to 1911, when the matter was legally resolved.

The majority of those who participated in the Gun War, the “rebels”, all rural Africans, were under headmen. Colonialists relocated most of the rebels to Mthingwevu and Nququ in the Southeyville District (Ntsebeza 2005:61). They did not get land on quitrent titles as the loyalists did. Although chiefs participated in the war, they were treated differently from the other rebels. They were also given land under quitrent (Ntsebeza 2005:63). Gecelo got a farm at Mbenge to stay with his people, and Stokwe’s widow was given a farm at Ndwana. That was how the issue of chiefs was resolved.

What emerges in this section is that differentiation in land ownership developed as a result of colonial intervention. People considered loyal to colonialists were given land on quitrent titles while on the other hand people under headmen, were not given any form of legal land ownership.

⁷ Mr. Kalipa was one of the farmers in Luphaphasi. More about him is in the next chapter.

⁸ Quitrent titles have lesser restrictions than those of certificate of occupation or permit to occupy. But have more limiting provisions than a freehold title.

2.2.4 The Mineral Revolution and its impact to Xhalanga

As is well documented, the discovery of minerals in South Africa changed the colonial plans in the Cape, of establishing a class of African farmers. For the developing mining industry to succeed, it needed a supply of cheap labour from the reserves (Bundy 1979; Lacey 1981; Warwick 1983; Hendricks 1990 and Davenport 1991). The introduction of the Glen Grey Act in the Cape in 1894, aimed to force Africans off the land and make them wage workers (Lacey 1981, Ntsebeza 2005). A key provision of the Glen Grey Act that is relevant for this study was the “principle of one-man-one-lot”. This meant that each household was allowed to have a lot that was not more than four morgens. This principle was based on the belief that “a four morgen lot, . . . , gave a man and his family a partial subsistence base, yet small enough to prevent uncontrolled squatting” (Lacey 1981:15).

In Xhalanga, the effects of the Glen Grey Act were not immediately evident. They became evident in 1897, when the implementation of the Glen Grey Act was extended to the district (Ntsebeza 2005:64). It will be remembered that by 1890s Xhalanga had very productive farmers, such as Messrs. Khalipha and Mayongo (Bundy 1979). The implementation of the Glen Grey Act in the district would negatively affect these farmers. The Act meant that their land would be reduced drastically.

It was in response to these developments that landholders started to demand their freehold titles from 1902, just immediately after the South African (Anglo-Boer) War of 1899-1902. This was also 20 years after the landholders had been promised that the ir quitrent titles would be converted into freehold titles. The landholders wanted freehold titles similar to those of their white counterparts in nearby farms, in Embokotwa (Ntsebeza 2005:74). Pambani Figlan, a farmer in the Mbenge location, provides an indication of the concerns of the landholders when he said,

it is now not like in olden times. Now people must get titles as in the Colony to enable the father of a family to apportion his property. Even in England this is done after each son is allowed its sufficient portion (Cited in Ntsebeza 2005:75-6).

The seriousness of the issue of tenure could be judged from the turn-up of people to meetings called to discuss the matter. For instance, in a meeting called by the Chief Magistrate, Walter Stanford, in December 1902, the courtroom was packed, despite the

fact that the meeting was held in December, “a busy time of the year” (Ntsebeza 2005:75).

The issue of freehold titles remained unresolved until the publication of *Proclamation No. 241 of 1911*. This Proclamation was published just a year after the formation of the Union of South Africa in 1910, and two years before the passing of the notorious Natives Land Act of 1913, which restricted land of Africans to seven per cent in the reserves. The Proclamation “dashed all hopes that the Xhalanga landholders had of getting a title similar to their white counterparts at Embokotwa” (Ntsebeza 2005:82). For purposes of this study, it is important to note that the Proclamation provided two types of titles in Xhalanga. People with certificates of occupation were issued quitrent titles in terms of Schedule A. The Schedule A landholders were also referred to as Proprietors. The Proclamation also provided for people considered as “Registered landholders” with Schedule B titles (Ntsebeza 2005:84). The main difference between the two titles related to how the landholders would lose the granted allotments. Schedule A holders would lose their allotments if they participated in a rebellion. Holders of Schedule B titles were to forfeit their land if they failed to “beneficially occupy” it for a period of three years (Ntsebeza 2005:85). In sum, these titles had far more restrictions than freehold titles.

The landholders used various methods, including sending delegations to government officials and ministers, to resist the implementation of the Proclamation. The more the landholders pushed to resist the Proclamation, the more the government’s position became tough. Eventually, the landholders lost the battle to upgrade their quitrent titles to freehold.

2.3 The demand and struggle for land (Up to the 1930s)

The above discussion raises the central questions of this study: who wanted land in this period, for what, and how did they try to get it. Landholders were in the forefront of the struggles that took place in Xhalanga from the 1870s right into the late 1920s. As has been shown in the previous section, they had land for residential, agricultural and grazing purposes. Their initial concern was the form of tenure, in particular upgrading their quitrent titles to freehold. They used a number of strategies, such as attending meetings to raise their issues, sending deputations and later resorting to confrontation,

to put their views across to the colonial rulers. At the initial stages of the engagement between landholders and the colonialists, landholders mostly used peaceful and respectful methods.

When it became clear to the landholders that agreement could not be reached with the colonial rulers, they sent delegations to meet with the colonial administrators at the provincial level. For instance, a delegation from Xhalanga met Messrs. Sprigg and Schreiner in Cape Town, in 1900 (Ntsebeza 2002a:144; 2005:71). Central in that meeting, was the issue of the freehold titles for landholders. The matter was not resolved in that meeting. After the Proclamation of 1911, the landholders changed their tactics and started to be confrontational. In a meeting between a delegation of 17 members from Xhalanga and the Chief Magistrate, in Umtata, in November 1911, the delegation categorically assured the government official that they were not going to take the matter lying down (Ntsebeza 2005:86). Landholders took up their promise from 1912, when they became defiant towards the government. A report of the Resident Magistrate Bell, written in 1912 confirms this: “The Natives, I regret to say, have assumed a tone of passive indifference to the survey which will not be removed until they have received a reply to the petition recently submitted by them” (Cited in Ntsebeza 2005:88).

Interestingly, after 1911 the colonial government’s view had changed about the Xhalanga landholders. The collaborators or loyalists of yesterday had now turned into “agitators” in the eyes of the colonial government (Bundy 1979; Ntsebeza 2005). This also illustrated a change of attitude from the government towards the landholders.

On the part of landholders, there was unity in their struggles up until 1911. However, from then onwards, divisions started to emerge, as some members including headmen, developed individual positions. An example of the divisions among landholders was in 1912, when Figlan and others tried to participate in the survey, which was opposed by a majority of the Xhalanga landholders (2005:88). The landholders also started to make compromises after 1911. For instance, in 1911 they negotiated for issuing of Schedule A titles, which was different from their original demand for freehold titles.

When the landholders argued for issuing of Schedule A titles to all landholders in Xhalanga, they did not show the same concern about other people living under the

headmen. They argued for consideration of their children for land allocation and issuing of Schedule A titles to all landholders in Xhalanga. As can be seen, the intervention of landholders aimed at entrenching their class interests, and was not in the interests of the wider population of the district.

There is no evidence showing that there were landless people in Xhalanga, from its establishment to 1900. However, in 1902, the first indications that there were landless people in the district emerged. This was in the form of people that were displaced by the South Africa (Anglo-Boer) War when it ended in 1902. These people were called loose people (*amalose*). There were also people who were sharecroppers and tenants in land of those with certificates of occupation that constituted the group of loose people. This group was allocated land from the commonage of Cala Reserve (Ntsebeza 2005:82-83).

The allocation of land to the loose people did not sit well with the landholders in Cala Reserve. They tried to challenge the action but failed. What the action did was to confirm that the grazing rights the landholders had were not absolute. On the part of the loose people, it showed that in some places of Xhalanga, there was a category of people that was landless.

There were three groups of people in Xhalanga during this period: landholders outside the communal area, people with quitrent titles within the communal area and the landless (loose people). All these groups were under the jurisdiction of headmen. Landholders and people with quitrent titles within the communal area demanded the upgrading of their quitrent titles into freehold titles, similar to their white counterparts at Embokotwa. Landless people wanted residential and grazing land. Land was the main source of livelihood for these groups and there is no indication that the landholders had become wagedworkers during the period up to the 1930s. It will be shown in the next chapter that children of landholders in Xhalanga were taking up migrant work during this time. Landholders' struggle for freehold titles stopped in the 1930s, as their focus changed and was opposition to the implementation of the betterment schemes.

2.4 The land demand and struggles in Xhalanga (1930s-1950s)

Poverty in the 1930s resulted in the introduction of conservation schemes in the reserves (Chaskalson 1987:48). It will be recalled from Chapter One that it is in the same period of the 1930s that Wolpe pointed out that production had already collapsed and landlessness emerged in the African reserves. In Xhalanga, the deteriorating land conditions caught the attention of the Magistrate of Cala, Fred J. Kockott. In response to the deteriorated conditions, he proposed in October 1933 that conservation measures be introduced to the rural areas of Transkei, including Xhalanga (Ntsebeza 2002a:181). He made the proposal to the United Transkeian Territories General Council (UTTGC). Cala Reserve, Emnxhe and Seplan were the first locations where the measures were implemented in 1935, four years earlier than the publication of Proclamation No. 1 of 1939 that provided for the implementation of the conservation measures in the reserves (Ntsebeza 2002a:181). According to Ntsebeza, there was no implementation of betterment in Xhalanga until the Second World War, in 1945 (2005:110).

Although the Xhalanga landholders continued to raise the issue of freehold titles within meetings of the District Council, opposition to the implementation of the Betterment Scheme occupied the landholders from the early 1930s. Landholders were people that have not more than 20 hectares of land within the communal areas of Xhalanga, and have access to communal grazing land. They opposed the implementation of the Betterment Scheme because some of its measures threatened to reduce their land. For instance, they were concerned that the Planning Committee was not going to compensate them for badly eroded land that was surrendered (Ntsebeza 2005:112). The division of land in the villages into residential, arable and grazing areas threatened the landholders. They were also worried that the erection of contour banks in the fields would reduce their land (Ntsebeza 2005:113).

The effects of the deteriorated land conditions to Xhalanga residents were that more of them left for wage labour in urban centres. The collapse of the rural economies forced children of landholders to take up migrant work. Some of them came back later on and took over from their parents as landholders. This new breed of landholders had direct relations with the capitalist economy as wageworkers, unlike their parents who only related with the capitalist economy through trade. For example, Hazel Bengo who was

also a migrant worker took over land of his parents in Lumphaphasi around the mid-1930s⁹. In the case study of Lumphaphasi, I will deal in some detail with this changing nature of rural society.

From around 1946, a different mood prevailed in Xhalanga. There was open resistance to the implementation of the Betterment measures. This changed mood is reflected in a report Magistrate R.A. Bowen wrote to the General Council on 26 November 1946. He reported that: “some contour banks erected at great expense by the Council (in Seplan) had been ploughed over” (Ntsebeza 2005:113). This was a mark of open rejection and confrontation between the government and the landholders in Xhalanga. Landholders were critical of the erection of contours in the fields because they felt that the contours were reducing their fields.

By the late 1940s, there was widespread opposition to the Betterment Scheme as the general population also joined. As an illustration of concern to the widespread opposition magistrate Bowen appealed to the headmen “to use every means of inducing their people to agree to the proclamation of locations as Betterment areas” (Ntsebeza 2005:113). It is worth noting that during the late 1940s, it was not only landholders that opposed the implementation of betterment, the general residents of Xhalanga were also involved. Ntsebeza says about the opposition of residents to the Betterment Scheme:

It became clear in the first months of 1947 that the majority of rural residents and headmen had joined forces in their rejection of the Rehabilitation Scheme in Xhalanga.

The change in the mood of the people of Xhalanga was linked to the changed political mood in the whole country. This was reflected by a growth in resistance nationally during the 1940s. The African National Congress Youth League (ANCYL) was established in 1944. It advocated for militant action against the state (Karis and Carter 1979:102). A general stepping up of political mobilisation by political organisations such as the Communist Party of South Africa (CPSA) and the All African Convention (AAC) (Hirson 1989; Ntsebeza 2005) also marked the period. There was also the workers strike of 1946, which involved migrant workers. Natrass argues that the migrant labour system contributes in the increasing politicisation of rural societies (1985:25). The influence of the developments taking place in urban areas was also felt

⁹ Telephone interview of Mr. O.T. Dyantyi at Delindla la on 13 September 2005.

in Xhalanga, as some of the migrant workers came from the district. Mr. Ambrose Makiwane, a member of the ANC, was directly involved in this strike. He was a migrant worker from Xhalanga (Hirson 1989:185). Mr. Abel Mavandla Ntwana, a migrant worker and an activist of the CPSA, was also from Xhalanga. He was directly involved in the land struggles of the area.

Interestingly, some of the migrant workers were already coming back to their villages in Xhalanga, in the 1940s. Some took over landholding from their parents. For instance, Mr. Mlota worked as a carpenter in Cape Town. He was a child of a landholder at Mnxe. In 1943, he came back to his village. He took over his father's land and became a farmer. He also practised as a herbalist (Ntsebeza 2005:101). This showed that he had an interest in productive land. The taking over of former migrant workers as landholders also introduced a new dimension in landholding in Xhalanga. The new landholders had direct relations with the capitalist system as waged workers. This was unlike their parents who only related with the capitalist system through trade.

In the 1930s, landless people in Xhalanga also demanded residential and agricultural land. It will be recalled from the previous section that landless people emerged in Xhalanga because of population growth from the 1930s. For example, grown-up children in Xhalanga wanted to move out of their parents and be independent hence they demanded land for residential and agricultural purposes.

There is also archival evidence to the effect that there were people from the farms who came and acquired land in Xhalanga during this period¹⁰. They too, wanted residential and agricultural land. The movement of people from the farms to rural areas such as Xhalanga was caused by, among others, a drought that forced many white farmers off farming around the 1930s (Wilson cited from Hirson 1989:17). Economic difficulties also pushed many white farmers off farming in the 1930s (Lancour-Gayet 1977; Stadler 1987). Such developments caused the laying off of farm workers by farmers.

It is clear from this section that the collapse of the rural economy and the emergence of landlessness from the early 1930s drove rural residents to become waged workers in urban areas. On the other hand, the government introduced betterment planning as a

¹⁰ File No. N2/8/3/1/12/ of Lumphaphasi in the Department of Agriculture offices in Cala.

response to land degradation. However, the measures implemented through Betterment did not help in addressing land degradation.

It is also worth noting that when Mr. Mlota returned to his village at Emnxe, he did not become the “reserve army of labour” or the “reservoir of labour” that Wolpe and Beinart referred to respectively, in the earlier chapter. He used the land to farm but also ran his own business as a herbalist. Mr. Mlota also did not become a “displaced proletariat” that Hendricks talks about in his thesis. Mr. Mlota’s situation somehow became an indication of what was to become a future trend with most former migrant workers in Xhalanga. Mr. Mlota’s example showed that although rural people took up wage work (proletarianisation), they did not become fully proletarianised. Some still came back and became landholders who made land one of the sources of their livelihoods. At least in the case of Xhalanga, this also shows that the people who have taken up wage work have maintained some interest in agriculture hence they used the land for agriculture when they came back. Some left because they could not endure working conditions, while others left because they had to take over from their parents. Nevertheless, this does not mean that former migrant workers turned back into a peasant way of life (re-peasantisation). The impact of influx controls and pass laws in forcing people back to the reserves was another factor that played a role.

2.5 The land demand and struggles during the era of Tribal

Authorities (1951 to 1989)

This section draws from Ntsebeza’s (2005) study of Xhalanga. The introduction of Tribal Authorities is linked to the implementation of the Betterment Schemes in the Bantustans. In other words, the apartheid government used Tribal Authorities to implement Betterment. Following the failure of the previous version of the Betterment programme, a “less complicated, but more extensive” system was introduced in 1954 (Ntsebeza 2005:117).

Xhalanga residents reacted strongly against the Tribal Authority’s attempts to introduce the Betterment programme in the 1950s. At the heart of the opposition to the Betterment measures were the government’s efforts to restrict the vast majority of Africans to small, overcrowded and overstocked areas. Commenting about the

opposition of Xhalanga residents to stabilisation, Mr. Matsiliza, an Agricultural Officer said:

I assumed duty at Cala in August 1956. I know to my own knowledge that every attempt by the Authorities to secure the cooperation of the people of Xhalanga District in regard to stabilisation of the various locations in this District has failed. In particular, the people of Emnxe Location No. 11 have refused to have anything to do with stabilisation of their location (Cited from Ntsebeza 2005:118).

The government went ahead with efforts of introducing and implementing the Betterment programme, despite the opposition. This was before the declaration of the district a betterment area.

The declaration of Xhalanga as a betterment area on 23 November 1962 sparked another round of resistance from landholders in the 1960s. A new version of betterment, called Rehabilitation, which also included “the need to control and cull stock” was introduced. The measures of Rehabilitation affected both landholders and landless people (Ntsebeza 2005:119). Landholders were directly affected by Rehabilitation, especially holders of Schedule A and B titles. The Scheme meant the separation of residents from the fields. This new land-use arrangement, among others, caused landholders to oppose the implementation of betterment. Landholders were also opposed to the implementation of the livestock culling measures. The livestock limiting measures did not affect landholders only, but also landless people who were also livestock owners. Grazing land was a major issue for landholders and landless people that had livestock.

In some areas of Xhalanga, people were prepared to fight anything associated with Betterment. Ntsebeza indicates that the rejection by the government in 1958 of a community-appointed headman and his replacement by a government-appointed one caused an angry reaction from the residents of Mnxe. At the centre of the reaction was a feeling among the residents that a government-appointed headman would enforce the Rehabilitation programme (2005:178). From July 1960, the differences between the government and Emnxe residents over the issue of the headman led to the “Tshisa-tshisa” campaign in the village. The campaign involved the setting alight of houses by both sides: those pro-government and retaliation by those that were anti-government in the village.

The government disregarded this opposition and went ahead to implement the Betterment programme. Different villages were declared betterment areas one after the other. For instance, Cala Reserve was declared a Betterment area on 23/11/1962, and Lumphaphasi became a Betterment area on 04/01/1963. The relocation process brought about by Betterment affected a wide range of people in Xhalanga. Interviews revealed that the sizes of the residential sites after relocation were of concern to the residents. For example, Mrs. Xaliphi of Cala Reserve argued that: “(T)he residential stands were bigger and there was no congestion before the relocation programme. After the relocation, sites were reduced”. She further pointed out that:

We thought that life in the newly demarcated land would be better. We thought that because of fencing children would be able to go to school. Although fencing was installed, it did not last long as it was immediately destroyed. Conditions changed for the worst compared to when we were in our original areas¹¹.

Not only were sites reduced, some people got land that could not be used for any other purpose besides building a house. Mr. Sakiwe¹², a former farm worker, and the Mabhadi family, were allocated land in rocky areas in Cala Reserve. On their part, the Mabhadi family argued that they were allocated land in a rocky area as a way of punishing them for their opposition to the relocation programme. Mr. Mcebisi Ntamo and Mrs. Nosebenzile Fani confirmed that the Mabhadi family was a strong opponent of the relocation programme in 1967¹³. The family was the last to relocate. Detailing how the process affected them, Mrs. Nozolile Mabhadi said:

Betterment did not go down well in the family. It caused tensions and divisions in the community as some people opposed it, and others accepted it. Those opposed to it were referred to as Poqo. Our family was referred to as Poqo as a result of its stance on the issue of betterment. Other family members were arrested and charged. It was only then that we agreed to move to the new settlement. Because of our opposition and the fact that we were the last to arrive here, we were given a site that is on a rocky and wet area. It becomes worse in summer. You cannot even go out of the house because of waterlogging in front of it¹⁴.

The above experiences about reduction of sites and the allocation of unsuitable land reinforced the concerns people had about the relocations associated with the Rehabilitation programme. Given these bad experiences, it is understandable why people opposed the programme.

¹¹ Mrs. N. Xaliphi interviewed in Cala Reserve on 26 May 2004.

¹² Mr. Z. Sakiwe interviewed in Cala Reserve, 01/07/2004.

¹³ Mrs. N. Fani interviewed in Cala Reserve on 26 May 2004.

¹⁴ Mrs. Nozolile Mabhadi was interviewed in Cala Reserve on 01/07/2004.

Mrs. Nozolile Mabhadhi also pointed out that they did not have arable land because her husband was the youngest in the family and that arable land was given to the elder brother as inheritance. This means that there were landless people among the children of landholders. This confirms the claim that grown-up children in Xhalanga contributed to the increase in land demand from the late 1960s.

The influx of former farm workers from the early 1970s, added to the group of landless people in Xhalanga. For example, Mr. Peter Nqezo¹⁵ of Lumphaphasi and Mr. Madoda Dyonta¹⁶ of Cala Reserve, left the farms in 1976 and 1978 respectively, because of low wages. They wanted to develop themselves in the villages. Within this group of farm workers there were people who came to the villages because they wanted to get their own land. Mr. Zungu Sakiwe came to Xhalanga in 1976. He saw opportunities of acquiring his own land in the villages.

Interestingly, there was interference by Tribal Authorities in the allocation of land in the case of Mr. Sakiwe. Archival records show that Paramount Chief Kaizer Matanzima wrote a letter to Headman Fani of Cala Reserve, instructing him to allocate land to Mr. Sakiwe as a matter of priority¹⁷. According to Mr. Sakiwe, they both belong to the same clan – the Madiba clan. During the interview, Mr. Sakiwe confirmed the assistance provided by Paramount Chief Matanzima to him getting land in Cala Reserve¹⁸.

The movement of farm workers into the communal areas in Xhalanga should be understood within the context of a general movement of farm workers from the farms to communal areas in South Africa during the 1970s (Stadler 1987:57). The movement of farm workers was already propelled by the 1951 Prevention of Illegal Squatting Act. Thousands of removed families from the Western Cape and Eastern Cape farms constituted the dumping grounds of apartheid such as Ilinge, Sada and Dimbaza. According to Cooper, the movement of Africans from farms to communal areas happened at a period when the commercial agricultural sector shed “a high proportion of its workforce” (1987:568). It was also the effects of the expulsion of “hundreds of thousands of agricultural workers” as white agriculture industrialised and required semi-

¹⁵ Mr. Nqezo was interviewed at Delindlala Farm on 08/01/2004.

¹⁶ Mr. Dyonta was interviewed in Cala Reserve on 08/01/2004.

¹⁷ File No. F/1/23 of the Department of Agriculture and Forestry, Planning and Reclamation: Cala Reserve Location No. 15.

¹⁸ Interviewed in Cala Reserve on 01/07/2004.

skilled and skilled labour force in the 1960s (Wolpe 1988:71-2). As prices increased and agricultural profits fell, farmers were unable to service their debts, making them indebted (Kaplan 1987:530). It led to decline in employment in the white agricultural sector from 1971. In many ways, the economic problems of agriculture were part of a general economic crisis that South Africa experienced from the early 1970s, which was sparked by the oil crisis (Kaplan 1987:530). The oil crisis in turn led to increase in prices and rising unemployment (Schlemer 1978; du Toit 1981; Kaplan 1987; Cassim 1987).

Some migrant workers also came back in the 1970s in Xhalanga. Mr. Mcebisi Ntamo returned to Cala Reserve in 1971. He came back not because of retrenchment though¹⁹. Mcebisi pointed out that:

Ndadinwa kukuphathwa yenye indoda. Ndaqonda ukuba endaweni yokuphathwa yenye indoda, uhlale uhlale ubethwe yenye indoda, uthi wakuphinda uthathwe uyokuvalwa ejele ubethwa ngumntu wonke, ndabona ukuba ayilunganga lo nto. Ndathi naxa ndizicingela ndabona ukuba le nto yokuziphilela, mhlawumbi usebenze umhlaba nezinye izinto ungakwazi ukuzimela. Kuba le nto uyenzayo uyazenzela wena. Ukuba uya-lose(r) uluzela wena, awenzeli omnye umntu. Kanti ukuba usebenzela omnye umntu uthi nokuba awufuni ukusebenza ngalo mini unyanzeleke ukuba yiya. Ndabona ukuba mandiyeke ukusebenzela enye indoda ngalo ndlela (*I came back because I wanted my independence. I grew tired of the ill-treatment we got from our employers. When they beat you, you could not retaliate, otherwise you would be arrested. I decided that it was better to work for myself, which would give me independence and the right to make my own decisions. I reasoned that using land and other economic activities would create a livelihood for me*).

What he says in the above extract is that he came back because he wanted economic independence. He further revealed during the interview that he embarked on agriculture and income-generating activities.

The current headman of Cala Reserve, Mr. Hamilton Fani, is another example of the migrant workers that came back to their villages during the 1970s. He came back and took over from his aging parents the family responsibilities such as using the fields, looking after livestock, and so on.

The flow of people from the farms into the village, the return of migrant workers and population growth led to changed conditions in Xhalanga. Interviews showed that

¹⁹ Interviewed in Cala Reserve on 26/05/2004.

things started to change from the mid-1970s. Fencing for grazing land collapsed. Mr. Mcebisi Ntamo argued that about changed conditions in their village:

Things changed after the Trust. We started to see changes around the 1970s. Because some people were opposed to the implementation of the betterment (Rehabilitation) programme, they destroyed fencing to grazing land as a sign of protest. Thereafter it became difficult to embark on any agricultural activity²⁰.

Mrs. Nowayitile Xaliphi confirmed what Mr. Ntamo said. She pointed out that even though they had fields, it was impossible to embark on agriculture because livestock destroyed their production. According to her, residents of Cala Reserve became discouraged to embark on agriculture because of the problem of livestock that destroyed production²¹. It is not surprising then that there was more demand for residential land than for other purposes during this time. However, this does not mean that there was less interest in land for agricultural purposes among rural residents, as Cross (1988) and Manona (1998) argue. There was interest in productive land, as the case of Mr. Ntamo shows. Mr. Ntamo argued that he even tried to lease fields from the Xaliphi family. In his words:

There is nothing else that I depend on except agriculture. Besides building and speculating on livestock, I never took up formal employment after coming back from Cape Town. But of all the income-generating activities I embark on, agriculture is the main one.

Mr. Ntamo argued that the flow of people to settle permanently in communal areas, in the 1970s, led to shortage of grazing land in some parts of Xhalanga. This argument is corroborated by a letter of complaint about lack of grazing land in Cala Reserve. The letter, dated 03/08/1977, was from the Western Transkei Regional Authority to Mr. B.L. Mantlana, a senior Agricultural Officer in Cala. Despite the fact that Mantlana realised the lack of grazing land in Cala Reserve, he still turned down an application for demarcation of sites at Sihlabeni in Cala Reserve, in October 1978²².

Throughout the 1980s, there were more applications for poultry, communal gardens and residential sites in both Cala Reserve and Lumphaphasi. For instance, there were requests for residential sites in 1981, as a letter dated 23/2/1981 from M.P. Funani to the District

²⁰ Interviewed in Cala Reserve on 26/05/2004.

²¹ Interviewed in Cala Reserve on 26/05/2004.

²² File No. F/1/23 of the Department of Agriculture and Forestry, Planning and Reclamation: Cala Reserve Location No. 15.

Commissioner; Officer in Charge; and Dept of Agriculture shows²³. The applications for poultry and communal gardens were an indication of the changing land use patterns, which were geared towards mixed agricultural activities. This also shows that while the Xhalanga residents pursued production on land they also explored options of land use other than those provided by 'betterment agriculture'.

Towards the end of the 1980s, it seems delays from government in responding to the applications, and mounting demand for land, led to increasing desperation among the landless. Archives show that field officials of the Department of Agriculture complained about the pressure for land they were getting from people and the lack of speedy response from officials. It was this lack of progress that led to land occupations, which will be the subject of the next section.

During this period of the 1950s to the late 1980s there was more integration of rural societies with the capitalist economy as more rural residents became migrant workers. From the 1960s, there was more demand for residential and land for agricultural purposes from former migrant workers and farm workers. Their struggles for land showed that rural people were still interested in agriculture. With more demand for residential and agricultural land, grazing land was reduced further. Both agricultural production and livestock production became almost impossible in villages of Xhalanga during the 1980s, because of the continued reduction of grazing land and expansion of residential settlement.

2.6 The demand and land struggles during the transition period (1989 – 1994)

To understand developments that took place in Xhalanga in the late 1980s, it is important to view them in relation to the broader political developments in South Africa, during that time. From the early 1980s, South Africa experienced a period of political upsurge, which culminated in the declaration of a state of emergency in various parts of South Africa, in July 1985 (Baynham 1987:107). The military coup of Major-General Bantu Holomisa in 1987 opened some limited space for political activities in the Transkei (Roux 1990:65). The developments allowed some freedom of expression

²³ File No. F/1/23 of the Department of Agriculture and Forestry, Planning and Reclamation: Cala Reserve Location No. 15.

and movement in the former homeland. By 1988, the former homeland experienced a wave of labour strikes (Roux 1990:57). The climax of this political upsurge in the former Transkei was the reburial of Chief Sabata Dalindyebo in 1989. In Xhalanga, a series of developments that took place contributed in the emergence of political activity, such as the establishment of the Xhalanga Youth Club (XYC) in July 1989. The Congress-inclined youth structure called Xhalanga Youth Congress (XAYCO) was launched early in 1990 (Ntsebeza 2002a:327).

The seizure of land on 18 June 1990 in Cala town by the Xhalanga Youth Congress (XAYCO) sparked a chain of similar actions in Xhalanga, with land for residential sites being the central demand. When the struggles spread to rural villages of Xhalanga, Lumphaphasi became the first village to embark on a land struggle (Ntsebeza 2002a:330). Unlike the previous struggles, this one presented an 'organised' form of resistance with land being the main issue (Ntsebeza 2002a:329). This form of resistance was part of a general pattern in areas of the Eastern Cape in which commonages or portions of state land were invaded.

Migrant workers, unionists and youth such as Mr. Mbulelo Ngamlana, Mr. Gwede Mantashe and Mr. Loyiso Mdleleni played a critical role in the land struggles of the late 1980s to the early 1990s (Ntsebeza 2005:242). All these people had their roots in Xhalanga. They led meetings that decided on the establishment of Emnxe Residents Association (EMRA). On 26 December 1991, EMRA members demarcated land in Lower Cala. The reasoning behind the actions of EMRA was to access land for the landless. It also seems that there was also a decision among members of EMRA to challenge the role of Tribal Authorities in land administration. Among the local leaders in the land struggles were Messrs. Andile Sondlo, Loyiso Mdleleni and Vakele Kewana, who were also children of landholders. There were also children of landless people such as Mr. Charles Mabhadi and Mrs. Nolungile Mkwaiyi (Ntsebeza 2005:243).

The land occupations were a sign of frustration to the slow reaction from government in the approval of applications. Archives also show correspondence between local extension officers and their seniors, where extension officers complained about the delays in responding to applications. For instance, on 23/04/1993 an official in the Dept of Agriculture and Forestry in Cala, Mr. M.S. Taho, wrote to the regional Agricultural Office in Qamata reporting that people in Lumphaphasi illegally demarcated plots. He

further pointed out in the correspondence that this happened after the people of the area had applied in September 1992 and a year later, “nothing happened”. Applications for land continued to pour in despite the land occupations. Out of concern about the mounting pressure and demand for demarcation of land, extension officers made recommendations to their seniors for demarcation of land. A letter written by Mr. H.F. Ncoko on 11/05/1992, to the Western Thembuland Regional Authority, in Qamata, illustrates this point. Mr. Ncoko recommended demarcation of land for grazing camps. Within the letter he claims that people of Lumphaphasi were “prepared to reduce their stock rate”. This is an interesting claim considering that I have shown how people of Xhalanga, including Lumphaphasi, opposed previous government efforts aimed at reducing livestock.

On the other hand, there was a group of landholders that wanted to be relocated to their pre-betterment land. Mrs. Madeyi Mguli was one of eleven landholders who wanted to be allowed to return to their land. Interestingly, a woman was a leader of landholders in the land struggles at Emnxe in the 1990s. This means that women also played a prominent role in struggles for land in Xhalanga. They wanted to be closer to their fields. Although she had fields, it was not possible to make use of them because they were too far from her house, and because fencing was destroyed, it was not easy to control livestock from destroying production (Ntsebeza 2005:224-5). Emnxe seems to have been the only area where there was an active involvement of landholders. Some villages of Xhalanga managed to avoid land occupations. For instance, in Cala Reserve, headman Fani pre-empted the process by demarcating and allocating land to residents. It seems that he took a decision to allocate land after noticing the land occupations in neighbouring villages. Even in the land allocations that took place in Cala Reserve, it was only residential land that was allocated.

The land that was demarcated for residential purposes was taken from grazing land. Mrs Xaliphi argued that the demarcation of grazing land for residential purposes worsened the situation in Cala Reserve. She said about the situation in village:

Cala Reserve is the worst area in terms of land shortage. We only have three camps, besides the rocky area. Population growth led to reduction of camps because they were demarcated for residential purposes.

In the case of Cala Reserve, the demarcation of camps into residential land followed the legal route. However, it had the same effects of reducing grazing land as in places

where there were land occupations. It seems that the fact that the Congress alliance structures were involved in these land struggles means that it was co-ordinating them.

This section has shown that youth, unionists and migrant workers with roots in Cala became the catalyst of the struggles in Xhalanga in the late 1980s to early 1990s. The main demand was land for residential purposes during these struggles. However, landholders still continued to take up their struggle in Mnxe. They wanted to return to their land they left as a result of betterment. During this period, grazing land was occupied and demarcated for residential sites. Although the struggles were militant, they were still reformist in the sense that they took place within the confines of the land demarcations created by colonial and apartheid governments. They never challenged those boundaries.

2.7 Conclusion

This chapter set out to give an overview of land demand and struggles in Xhalanga from 1865, when the district was established, to the advent of democracy in 1994. It has shown that there has been a growing demand for land in Xhalanga from 1865 to 1994. Because of this growing demand, land that had been put aside for grazing purposes was used for residential purposes in many villages of Xhalanga, especially from the late 1980s. The demand for land in Xhalanga was from three groups of people: migrant workers as represented by children of farmers and landholders; landless people, consisting of children of landholders who could not inherit land, and displaced farm workers; and women. They wanted land for residential, grazing and production purposes.

This chapter also showed that landholders stopped pursuing the issue of freehold titles towards the end of the 1920s. From the early 1940s, their struggles focused on opposing the implementation of the Betterment Schemes. The landholders initially adopted peaceful approach in their struggles, which was replaced by more confrontational methods, especially towards the end of the 1940s. From the late 1940s, there was a general support to the landholder's struggles of opposition to betterment by the residents of Xhalanga. Gradually, landless people gained dominance over these land struggles from the 1960s.

The chapter highlighted issues such as: the changing nature of landholders in Xhalanga as former migrant workers took over as landholders in the villages. At the same time, it showed the role played by migrant workers and youth in rural land struggles. They were influential in determining the tone and in changing the focus of the struggles. For instance, the militancy displayed by the struggles of the late 1940s and late 1980s was as a result of their influence. They also influenced the focus of the land struggles in Xhalanga to be for residential land, in the late 1980s. This role of the urban-based migrant workers, unionists and youth illustrated a linkage that exists between urban and rural struggles.

Chapter 3

LAND DEMAND AND STRUGGLES: THE CASE OF LUPHAPHASI

3.1 Introduction

As outlined in the introductory chapter of this study, the case study of Lumphaphasi administrative area is presented to explore in some detail the implications of the theoretical debates discussed in Chapter One. While the previous chapter provided an overview and showed some of the complexities surrounding land issues in Xhalanga, the current chapter offers an in-depth understanding and appreciation of these complexities in the district by looking at one particular area. Lumphaphasi has a lot of similarities to other administrative areas of Xhalanga. However, it is also different from them in that it is the only administrative area in Xhalanga, which, as will be shown below, is surrounded by farms of Africans. The concept of African farmers is discussed in this chapter. Based on being hemmed in and sandwiched by African farmers, Lumphaphasi has no option for expansion and thus its demand for land is rife.

This case study investigates land demand and struggles in Lumphaphasi and concerns itself with who wants land, and for what. It also looks at struggles the people of Lumphaphasi engaged in to address their need for land. The chapter illustrates how the local residents struggled; and the various forms these struggles have assumed over time. Until the formation of the Land Reform Programme in 1994, the land struggles of the people of Lumphaphasi were waged within the area that was designated for Africans in the homelands. I argue that the political changes that took place since 1994 changed the context of the struggles in Xhalanga, particularly in Lumphaphasi.

The case study is divided into two chapters. The current chapter is on land demand and struggles in Lumphaphasi up to the advent of democracy in 1994. This chapter is further divided into four periods: the earlier period of land demand up to the 1930s. Following this period is that of land degradation and collapse of the subsistence economy as well as the emergence of landlessness from the 1930s until the introduction of Tribal Authorities in the early 1950s. The next period is that of the 1950s to the late 1980s,

which marks increasing landlessness in Lumphaphasi. The last section is from the late 1980s to the advent of democracy in 1994, which is characterised by mounting desperation and pressure for more land that culminated in open resistance and confrontational challenge. Chapter Four is from 1994 until land was acquired in 2001. Land struggles from 1994 focused on land outside the communal areas.

The issue explored in this case study is whether there is land need in Lumphaphasi in view of the proletarianisation and de-agrarianisation argument. The central questions the case study is addressing are: who needs land, for what purpose and what struggles have been embarked upon to get the land.

3.2 The establishment of Lumphaphasi

3.2.1 Brief information about the Lumphaphasi location

The administrative area of Lumphaphasi is about 17 kilometres from the village town of Indwe. Almost all the people in the area conduct their day-to-day shopping activities in this town. The major urban centre for the people of Lumphaphasi, though, is Queenstown. Lumphaphasi is also about 90 kilometres from Queenstown. Until the second democratic elections in 2000, Cala has been the administrative town of the district. Cala is about 40 kilometres from Lumphaphasi. However, after the second local government elections in 2000, following the demarcation of boundaries, Lady Frere has become the administrative town of Lumphaphasi. Lumphaphasi is about 35 kilometres to Lady Frere.

As will be recalled from the previous chapter, four chiefs and their people responded to a call from colonialists for people in the Glen Grey area to move to the Emigrant Thembuland. The chiefs moved with their people and settled in Emigrant Thembuland, in 1865 (Ntsebeza 2005:38). Emigrant Thembuland had two districts, Xhalanga and Southeyville, with Xhalanga under chief Gecelo and Southeyville under the jurisdiction of the other three chiefs who included Stokwe (Ntsebeza 2005:39). When new boundaries were developed for Xhalanga during the Thembuland Commission in 1883, Stokwe's portion of Southeyville was incorporated into Xhalanga. Interviews with various people of Lumphaphasi and knowledgeable people about the area expressed different views on whether the area has been part of Southeyville or Xhalanga. Mr. Mthuthuzeli Mgcineni, born in 1921, argued that:

Luphaphasi became part of MaQwathini Tribal Authority after the introduction of Bantu Authorities, in the early 1950s. According to popular knowledge, the area has been part of Xhalanga all along. When Tribal Authorities were introduced, Luphaphasi was demarcated to MaQwathini to balance the administrative areas in the various Tribal Authorities. Luphaphasi became the sixth village under MaQwathini²⁴.

Mrs. Nosamkele Eleni had a different view on the matter. She argued that, “I heard from elderly people that Luphaphasi had always been under chief Stokwe”²⁵. Given the limited time I had, it was not possible to resolve the differences in interpretation of this particular issue with regard to Luphaphasi. It is an issue that I will pursue in future studies.

The exact date of the establishment of Luphaphasi is not clear, but I will argue that it was established in or soon after 1865, as part of the development of villages under the Emigrant Thembuland. What seems certain, from the work of Bundy (1979) is that by the early 1880s, before the Thembuland Commission, Luphaphasi already existed and had farmers such as Mr. Khalipha who were some of the successful African commercial farmers Bundy and local magistrates referred to in their writings.

3.2.2 Luphaphasi and its people

By the 1880s, there is evidence that as with Xhalanga, the people of Luphaphasi were heterogeneous. The people differentiated along class, ethnic, and social lines. As in Xhalanga, Luphaphasi had people with farms. In Xhalanga, colonialists gave a group of amaMfengu and school people small farms from the 1870s in a bid to promote the development of African farmers. As was indicated earlier, Mr. Khalipha was by 1882 one of the farmers that owned a big farm in Luphaphasi. As in Xhalanga, the African farmers in Luphaphasi constituted a small group of people. Archival material indicates that there were seven farms that surrounded Luphaphasi (see the Luphaphasi Plan of 1964)²⁶.

The population of Luphaphasi also consisted of different ethnic groups. For example, Mr. Fungile Mndini who was born in Luphaphasi, in 1925, states:

²⁴ Mr. Mgcineni was born at Upper Indwana, but grew up in Luphaphasi until 1948, when he left the area. Interviewed at Upper Indwana on 16/10/2005.

²⁵ Interviewed at CALUSA office on 6 October 2005.

²⁶ In File No. N2/8/3/1/12/ of Luphaphasi in the Department of Agriculture offices in Cala.

The first people in Lumphaphasi were amaQwathi and amaQwambe. When I grew up there were very few houses in MaQwathini. There were not more than 12 households and areas that are now residential areas were open spaces used as grazing land. ... Old people used to tell us that the MaQwathini village was named after amaQwathi that were the first group to arrive in the village. The area of Ntsinga took its name from amaGcina (oNtsinga). The first families to arrive in Ntsinga were Chewu and Limba, who are both amaGcina²⁷.

Socially, the people of Lumphaphasi separated into school and red people too. Although it is not clear when exactly the divisions manifested themselves in Lumphaphasi, but as in Xhalanga, the divisions existed from the establishment of Lumphaphasi.

It seems that divisions between the school and red people endured. They were still evident in the 1930s, as Mndini's case illustrates. Not only did these divisions endure, there was also mutual suspicion. In his recollection about the late 1930s, Mr. F. Mndini argued that,

Because of mistrust that existed between school and red people, some red people learnt to be dependent on lawyers to protect their livestock. School people used to cheat red people here at Lumphaphasi. Sometimes your livestock, as a red person, would be taken away and when you followed that you would not get assistance to recover the livestock.

The above shows that there were tensions and mistrust between the two groups of people. By the 1990s, the divisions were not as stark as they were before. However, interviews with some people of the area revealed that the divisions became blurred by the late 1990s²⁸. It would seem that the militant political mood of the late 1980s made the divisions blurred. Former migrant workers, some of whom were children of landholders, and former farm workers joined hands in their struggle for access to residential land during this period.

As was indicated earlier, Lumphaphasi experienced a population growth from the 1920s with some people coming into the area from outside as the case of Mndini indicated. Archives also show that natural population growth within the area also contributed to the increase in land demand in the area. The population growth of the 1920s was to lead to land demarcations in the early 1930s, as will be shown in the next section.

²⁷ Mr. F. Mndini was interviewed in Lumphaphasi on 11/06/2005.

²⁸ Interview with Mr. Z. Dyantyi, Mrs N. Qayi and Mr. D. Nyambali of Lumphaphasi on 09/06/2005, at Cala Social Centre.

3.3 The land question in Lumphaphasi up to the 1930s

Soon after its establishment, it seems that Lumphaphasi had two parts: the surrounding private farms and the communal area under Mr. Solomon Khalipha, the first headman of Lumphaphasi. The same Mr. Solomon Khalipha was also one of the big farmers in Lumphaphasi. In the communal area of Lumphaphasi, there were broadly two groups of people: landholders and people most of whom only had residential sites. The difference between the farmers and landholders was that farmers had their own individual grazing land. The landholders had residential and arable land. They also had access to communal grazing land.

Whereas the Thembuland Commission recommended in 1883 that farmers be given land not more than 15 morgens, it would seem that in Lumphaphasi the recommendations were not implemented. For instance, Khalipha had land more than the stipulated land size. According to Mr. Gcinizizwe Khalipha, a grandson of Mr. Solomon Khalipha, the original size of the farm was 872 morgens²⁹. After subdivision of the farm into four farms, each farm was 218 morgens, which he gave to his daughters. Mr. O.T. Dyantyi confirmed this claim made by Mr. Gcinizizwe Khalipha³⁰. Mr. Khalipha also pointed out that the three daughters, who became the owners of farms married to Conjwa, Tsengiwe and Xhashimba. They sub-divided the farm and sold portions to other people. Trying to explain why farmers such as Mr. Solomon Khalipha were able to keep big farms, Mr. Sunduza Nkomana argued that:

What I know about Khalipha and others is that they were the ones involved in the implementation of the recommendations of the Commission. What I think happened was that as they implemented the Commission recommendations, they must have excluded their land. People that were given the 15 morgen land were those in the communal area. Even there, there were some landholders I know of who had up to 20 morgens of land.³¹

The claim made by Mr. Nkomana was confirmed by the grandson of Mr. Solomon Khalipha, Mr. Gcinizizwe Khalipha. He pointed out that while a headman of Lumphaphasi, his grandfather brought his relatives and friends in and gave them bigger pieces of land within the communal area.

²⁹ Mr. Gcinizizwe Khalipha was interviewed in Lumphaphasi on 21 October 2005.

³⁰ Telephone interview by Ncapayi on 13/09/2005.

³¹ Telephone interview by Ncapayi on 21/09/2005.

It is clear that the recommendations of the Thembuland Commission were not implemented up to the letter in the case of Lumphaphasi hence Mr. Khalipha and others remained with huge pieces of land. This makes Lumphaphasi a peculiar case in that there is no similar arrangement in other villages of Xhalanga. However, the existence of landholders within the communal areas was not unique in Lumphaphasi, though. In fact, this seems to have been the pattern in most of Xhalanga.

Mr. Nkomana also raises in the quotation, as I have also pointed out, that there were also people under headman who were landholders but with smaller pieces of land. Mr. Dyantyi confirmed what Mr. Nkomana said by pointing out that his grandfather had a four-morgen piece of land that he inherited. That there were people with up to 20 morgen and others with only four morgens of land also shows that there was no uniformity in land allocations.

People that were not landholders in Lumphaphasi came from various places. Mr. Mthuthuzeli Mgcineni argued that the majority of people of Ntsinga came from Guba farms, under Lady Frere. He pointed out that amaQwathi came from farms too³². Mr. Mndini confirmed some of what Mr. Mgcineni said. He agreed that there were people who came from farms in the two villages of Lumphaphasi: Ntsinga and MaQwathini. According to him, some of amaQwathi came from Engcobo. Mr. Mndini's father left Mr. Solomon Khalipha's farm to establish himself in MaQwathini. These people got residential sites within Lumphaphasi.

The next section will focus on the land need in Lumphaphasi, addressing the central questions of the study: who wants land and for what, as well as what efforts those in need of land have embarked upon to get it.

3.4 The land demand up to the 1930s

As already pointed out, Lumphaphasi was peculiar in the sense that it had farmers with private land outside the communal area and landholders co-existing with people that were not landholders within the communal area. The differences between the farmers and landholders, on the one hand, and people that were not landholders in the communal areas of Lumphaphasi determined the initial land struggles in the area.

Farmers and landholders came together and struggled for upgrading of their tenure rights during this period.

Mr. Solomon Khalipha was one of the leaders of farmers and landholders in Xhalanga from 1902. In one of the meetings with the Chief Magistrate, he uttered the following words after the magistrate made a promise that they would get their titles:

We shall go to our homes gladly and inform our wives and families that he (Stanford) is not against the title which has caused such earnest (sic) discussions among ourselves. We look to the fact that we were the first to have a survey, and we think we are in front of whatever subsequently occurred and that we ought not to suffer by laws subsequently made, nor by the Glen Grey Act survey. We were afraid that the Glen Grey Act would eventually come to us and that made us restless. We are thankful that our Chief Magistrate feels for us and that he recognizes the fact that we obtained a survey before the Act become law. We were much afraid at first thinking that the Chief Magistrate would “jump” at us, but he has not done so and has given us a kind of a promise instead (Cited from Ntsebeza 2005:78).

In a local meeting with the Cala Magistrate, in 1902, Mr. Solomon Khalipha made this point: “both our chiefs have spoken correctly. We recently had a meeting here partly convened by the Magistrate. Our discussion at that meeting was short and resulted in our unanimous wish for the Embokotwa title” (Cited from Ntsebeza 2005:90). The above not only shows the role played by Mr. Solomon Khalipha in struggles of landholders and farmers, it also highlights the type of tenure they wanted.

It will be remembered that the struggle of landholders for freehold titles suffered a major setback when the government published Proclamation 241 in 1911. Instead of addressing the tenure rights of farmers and landholders, the Proclamation created two types of landholders: proprietors and registered landholders. Proprietors were issued land under Schedule A quitrent titles. Registered holders became Schedule B landholders (Ntsebeza 2005:84). About the different categories of landholders in Lumphaphasi, Mr. Mgcineni argued that,

The Schedule A landholders had bigger pieces of land compared to Schedule B holders. Most of the people in MaQwathini had Schedule A quitrent titles. In Thembelihle, the majority of people had Schedule B quitrent titles. Schedule A landholders had between 15 and 20 morgens of land, whereas Schedule B holders were landholders with less than six morgens.

The Proclamation also categorised the people of Xhalanga into three groups. The categories give an indication that there were people who did not have land such as

³² Mr. Mgcineni was interviewed in Upper Indwana on 16/10/2005.

children of “occupiers”, which the Proclamation sought to provide for. Mr. Mndini pointed out that his family: “grew up in a village called Ngqogo in Lady Frere. My family left the village and went to work in the Guba farms. They left the farms and came to settle in Lumphaphasi where they got a residential site and arable land. This was before 1924”³³.

Over and above the private farmers and landholders within the communal area, there were people from outside Lumphaphasi who also wanted land in the area before the 1930s. The Proclamation also shows that there were people “who pay tax but cultivate no land”. Although there is no evidence about existence of such a group of people in Lumphaphasi currently, it seems that such people existed. Given that Mr. Solomon Khalipha, during his headmanship, gave people not associated with him smaller pieces of land, these must have been the residential stands. It seems that Mr. Solomon Khalipha used his association with people as a criterion to decide who to give land to and the type of land.

Because the population was still small, it was easy to get land in the village in the early 1920s. However, my argument is that while it was easy to acquire land in the area, the demarcation of land from grazing land reduced the amount of grazing land in Lumphaphasi. Thirty years later, lack of grazing land became a major problem that haunted people of the area.

3.5 Land degradation in Lumphaphasi (1930s to the early 1950s)

This section illustrates three issues. It shows how the nature of landholders changed in Lumphaphasi and became integrated as wagers into the capitalist economy. During this period migrant workers and former farm workers emerged as critical players in land struggles of the 1930s to the 1950s. I also show in this section the factors that caused the land conditions to deteriorate in Lumphaphasi. I argue that population growth and drought contributed in the destruction of grazing land in Lumphaphasi. As there was population growth, which resulted in the demarcation of grazing land for residential and agricultural purposes, there was also pressure on the grazing land for livestock production.

³³ Interviewed in Lumphaphasi on 11 June 2005.

There is no evidence of a direct involvement of the private farmers and landholders in the struggles in Lumphaphasi from the 1930s. What clearly comes out is a growing demand for residential and agricultural land from migrant workers and former farm workers. Archival material shows that by the 1930s, a growing number of the Lumphaphasi residents were becoming migrant workers³⁴. This means that they must have started migrant work in the 1920s. This links with Wolpe's argument in Chapter One, when he pointed to the collapse of the subsistence economy in the reserves, and an existence of landless people in the 1920s. According to him, the unfolding conditions in the reserves led to a movement of rural people to urban areas as migrant workers. Archival material shows that in Lumphaphasi, some of these migrant workers applied for residential and arable land from 1931. For instance, some migrants applied to the local magistrate, Fred Kockott, for residential and arable land. Some of those migrant workers got land in Lumphaphasi, in 1932³⁵. They became landholders.

While confirming that there were land allocations in Lumphaphasi, Mr. F. Eleni pointed out in his interview that land demarcations took place in 1933, a year later than the period reflected in the archives. According to him, the land demarcations for kraal sites and fields were mostly for children of Lumphaphasi who had grown up and wanted to move out of their homes³⁶.

However, the demand for land did not end. It continued into the late 1940s, as the application of Mr. Sesman Tyoko for residential land on 20 November 1949 shows. The archives also show that disputes about land allocations in Lumphaphasi arose after the survey of 1932. For instance, Mr. Walter May challenged the fact that during the land allocation, somebody else was given land that was originally allocated to him³⁷. Interviews also showed that some migrant workers took over land of their parents. According to Mr. O.T. Dyantyi, Mr. Bengo who was a migrant worker took over land of his parents after 1936³⁸.

It was not only migrant workers, who caused pressure on the land in the area. Former farm workers from the surrounding farms came to Lumphaphasi and demanded land.

³⁴ File No. N2/8/3/1/12/ of Lumphaphasi, Department of Agriculture offices, Cala

³⁵ File No. N2/8/3/1/12/ of Lumphaphasi, Department of Agriculture, in Cala.

³⁶ Fikile Eleni was born in Lumphaphasi in 1924. He is one of the landholders within the communal area. He was interviewed in Lumphaphasi on 11/06/2005.

³⁷ File No. N2/8/3/1/12/ of Lumphaphasi, Department of Agriculture, in Cala

They contributed to the pressure on land. Both Mr. Fikile Eleni and Mr. Fungile Mndini indicated that people from the nearby farms also contributed to the population growth of Lumphaphasi. According to Mr. Fikile Eleni:

The demarcation of land in 1933 led to growth in the number of households. It was grazing land that was demarcated for residential sites. This reduced the amount of grazing land, and affected production in Lumphaphasi.

As grazing land was given for residential use, there is no evidence that there was a corresponding reduction of livestock numbers in Lumphaphasi. My argument is that as there was an increasing pressure on the grazing land due to population growth, there was equally pressure on the reduced grazing land from livestock. This caused deterioration of land conditions in Lumphaphasi. Mr. Eleni indicated that Lumphaphasi also experienced a severe drought in 1949 with devastating effects to livestock owners. Talking about effects of the drought, Mr. Eleni dramatised the situation in the following terms:

In 1949, livestock died in big numbers because of drought. Some people returned their books for recording of livestock to extension officers because they lost all their livestock (*Amadoda azijikisa iincwadi zokudipha imfuyo azinik' abelimi*).³⁹

According to Mr. Eleni, “conditions never normalised since then. Food production also never improved. The drought had devastating effects on the grazing land, which became sensitive from then”. The significance of the above to this study is that, for Lumphaphasi residents over and above the economic factors, drought was another factor that contributed to land degradation in Lumphaphasi.

What emerges in this section is that from the 1930s onwards the composition of landholders in Lumphaphasi had changed, like in Xhalanga, as some of them had become migrant workers. For instance, Mr. Hazel Bengo took over land of his parents to become a landholder. Unlike Mr. Solomon Khalipha whose only link with the capitalist economy was through trading, the new landholders were also initially wageworkers in the capitalist system. This confirms Wolpe’s argument that by the 1930s the gradual destruction of peasant societies meant their integration into the capitalist economy. By the 1930s, landholders had also stopped pursuing the issue of upgrading of their quitrent titles into freehold titles. Their focus was now on opposing the introduction and implementation of the Betterment planning schemes.

³⁸ Mr. O.T. Dyantyi was interviewed telephonically in Delindlala on 13 September 2005

³⁹ Mr. Eleni Fikile was interviewed in Lumphaphasi on 11/06/2005.

Land degradation in Lumphaphasi came about because of population growth, which exerted pressure on the limited land in the area. Like any other area, Lumphaphasi experienced population growth and grown-up children of the area demanded their own land, mostly as migrant and former migrant workers. The arrival of people from outside, especially from the commercial farms also contributed to the population growth in Lumphaphasi. As there was population growth, grazing was reduced to cater for the demand for residential and agricultural land. In addition, drought contributed to the deterioration of land conditions in Lumphaphasi. As indicated, as there was growing pressure for demarcation of grazing land for residential and agricultural purposes, there was equally pressure for grazing land for livestock.

3.6 The era of Tribal Authorities in Lumphaphasi (1950s to late 1980s)

In this section I show how Lumphaphasi was declared a betterment area following the implementation of the Bantu Authorities Act of 1951. I argue that the implementation of the Stabilisation programme, which was another version of betterment, did not give relief to the pressurised land in Lumphaphasi. Instead of taking the pressure off the land, more people demanded land for residential sites. The demand for residential land became central in the struggle of people of Lumphaphasi during this period. I also show that by the 1960s landlessness had grown to an extent that the land was unable to cope with the demand. Unlike in the previous period where it was possible to meet the land demand, in the 1960s, it was difficult to meet it.

The deterioration of land conditions was a process that continued throughout the 1950s to early 1960s. By 1964, after Lumphaphasi was declared a betterment area, conditions had deteriorated such that McGregor, the Principal Agricultural Officer in Cala, had to comment a year later that:

This land has been badly misused and the present grazing capacity is about 10 morgen per cattle unit. It is possibly the worst location in the whole district ... Conditions in this location have to be seen to be believed and earnest representations are made here for the setting aside of the Trust grazing to assist in the rehabilitation of this land unit ... The removal of all dry stock both cattle and small stock is essential to the ultimate recovery of the area ... This location is the worst ever planned.⁴⁰

⁴⁰ Memo written by McGregor. Lumphaphasi Location (Location No. 12) file, Department of Agriculture and Land Affairs, Cala.

This was fifteen years after the devastating drought of 1949 that was mentioned in the previous section.

As part of trying to address the land conditions, the government developed a plan for Lumphaphasi. The plan was approved “subject to the following conditions: “Brown Swiss Bulls should be the approved breed but Afrikaner will be allowed initially. The people must reduce their stock drastically as Trust grazing cannot be relied upon” (Plan number A.F. 2115/64)⁴¹. According to Mr. O.T. Dyantyi, livestock owners of Lumphaphasi chose Afrikaner because the quality of their land was unsuitable for the Brown Swiss Bulls⁴². He claimed the Brown Swiss were only introduced in Sifonondile administrative area.

Archives further showed that a report of an ad-hoc committee written in 1964 pointed to chronic landlessness and poverty in Lumphaphasi⁴³. The report revealed that out of 333 families, 138 (about 42 per cent) had neither land nor livestock⁴⁴. Only 123 families (36.9 per cent) had land rights, apart from a piece of land provided for one school. There were only 92 families (about 28 per cent), which had both land and livestock, with 72 families (21 per cent) owning stock, but no land, and 31 (9.3 per cent) with land, but no livestock. This meant that the majority of families had neither land nor livestock.

Whilst there was growing landlessness within the communal area, 27.5 per cent of land (782 morgens) of the 2844 total land area of Lumphaphasi belonged to private farmers. The seven farms were: Solomon Farm, Ncamiso Farm, Kalipa Farm, Saule Farm, Taliwe Farm, Nombayo Farm and Funani Farm (Map dated 19/11/1964 in Lumphaphasi Location No. 12, Department of Agriculture and Land Affairs, Cala). This meant that the farmers that constituted only two per cent of the families in Lumphaphasi owned 27.5 per cent of land in Lumphaphasi and 98 per cent of the families had access to 72.5 per cent of the Lumphaphasi land area. As was pointed out earlier, these African farmers surrounded the communal area of Lumphaphasi, separating the village from the white commercial farms. Ntsebeza argues that colonialists made the African farmers a buffer

⁴¹ Lumphaphasi Location (Location No. 12) file, Department of Agriculture and Land Affairs, Cala.

⁴² Mr O.T. Dyantyi - former ranger, Lumphaphasi (Telephone interview on 31/08/2004).

⁴³ Lumphaphasi Location No 12, Department of Agriculture, Cala.

⁴⁴ The size of the population in 1963 was estimated at 1864.

between them and the communal areas in Xhalanga (2002a:137). Mr. Zwelinzima Dyantyi's view about this settlement arrangement was that:

The African farms were placed next to white farms because they were educated and could communicate better with whites. Even when there was communication from the magistrates, they would be the first ones to hear it and be able to translate to others.

Whilst Mr. Dyantyi may be having a simplistic way of explaining the reasoning behind this spatial arrangement, the significance of the explanation though, was that it confirmed how colonialists arranged settlement in Xhalanga. The effect of this spatial arrangement in Luphaphasi was that it nullified any chances of growth for the area.

The process of land demarcations in Luphaphasi prompted grown-up children of the area to demand their own land, as was the case in the previous section. According to Mr. Eleni,

When there were land demarcations in 1965, people who stayed with their parents were ready to move out and stay on their own. They demanded land. There were also loose people who stayed in other people's land who also demanded their own land.

The other group that flowed into the area during the implementation of the stabilisation programme was former farm workers. Mr. Fungile Mndini argued that: "Many people came back from the white commercial farms to get their own land". Talking about his experience, he pointed out that: "(W)e left Luphaphasi for the commercial farms before the land allocations in 1965, because we did not have land in the village. When the relocations occurred, we were not around. We came back in 1966, when we heard that people were getting land in the village"⁴⁵. This shows that the possibilities of getting land in Luphaphasi influenced the movement of former farm workers to the area.

Ironically, the relocation associated with the Stabilisation programme, took place on grazing land, which further reduced grazing land with negative effects to livestock owners. Mr. Ntshwenca, a former farm worker, illustrated the condition of livestock owners in this manner: "(W)hen I came to Luphaphasi in 1970, I had three cows. Because of lack of grazing land, they all starved and died"⁴⁶. A year later, the hardships in the village forced him to decide to go for wage labour. Mr. Ntshwenca adds that, "Because it soon became clear that my family was starving and we lacked clothing, I

⁴⁵ Interviewed in Luphaphasi on 11/06/2005

⁴⁶ Member of Luphaphasi interviewed in Delindlala farm on 13/05/2005.

decided to go to work”. Mr. Fungile Mndini further confirmed the experience highlighted by Mr. Ntshwenca that: “The shortage of grazing land emerged as a result of the demarcation of residential sites on grazing land”. Mrs N. Dyantyi pointed out that:

Shortage of grazing land was a problem. Our livestock grazed on a small camp, which was not enough. As we also had a field, we fed calving livestock on the field, so that when it got to the grazing camp it was already well fed.⁴⁷

The shortage of land did not only affect livestock owners. Getting residential land in Lumphaphasi also became difficult towards the end of the 1960s.

3.6.1 The deepening landlessness

Although there had been a growing demand for land from the 1930s, some people were still able to get land. The period of the 1960s marked a turning point in the land struggles of Lumphaphasi where the availability of land could not match the demand for demarcation of land. Mr. Chophiso, a child from Lumphaphasi and a former migrant worker, pointed out that:

Although we were born and bred in Lumphaphasi our parents were removed from their land, which was taken over by the government and later declared Trust land. Our parents were ordered to go to Sifonondile and others to other areas. We could not have fields as a result of that. My old brother only got residential land after going through initiation. I got my own residential site after I got married.⁴⁸

This shows that it was becoming difficult to get land in Lumphaphasi. Mr. Ntshwenca’s explanation of why it was becoming difficult to get land in Lumphaphasi was that the demand for land from children of Lumphaphasi exacerbated the situation. In his words:

By the 1970s, conditions changed in Lumphaphasi as children of the area demanded their own land. Even though residential sites were allocated, no fields were obtained because of shortage of land. In 1977, people occupied land and started a village in a grazing camp for Lumphaphasi. This exacerbated the shortage of grazing land in the village.

The other group that had trouble in accessing land in Lumphaphasi was the group of former farm workers. This led to a situation where local people developed attitude towards outsiders trying to get land in the area. The locals sometimes labelled former farm workers as loose people (*amalose*) or gate-openers (*amavula-gate*)⁴⁹. Talking

⁴⁷ She is a wife of a former migrant worker and a landholder within the communal area of Lumphaphasi. She was interviewed in Delindlala on 13/05/2004.

⁴⁸ Interviewed in Delindlala farm on 06/05/2005.

⁴⁹ Amavula-gate refers to the fact that farm workers have to dutifully open gates for their white bosses.

about their situation, Mr. Nqezo points out that “For a long time I was a loose person in Lumphaphasi”. The negative attitude of locals towards outsiders carried on into the 1980s. Mrs. Qayi, a former farm worker who remained a loose person for more than 10 years, dramatised the situation of former farm workers in Lumphaphasi in these terms:

When our family arrived in this village, it was difficult to get residential land. Locals had an attitude to outsiders getting land here. When my mother-in-law got land from the headman, there was a protest from local people, wanting to know how she got land when their children had long been waiting for land. The MaQwathini Tribal Authority resolved the matter by pointing out that she had a right to get land.⁵⁰

It will be recalled that the term – *amalose* - emerged in 1902 with the arrival in Cala Reserve of a group of people that was displaced by the Anglo-Boer War in 1899-1902. What this indicates is that the term has survived and continued to be used in Xhalanga up to the 1970s.

Part of the explanation for the difficulties in getting land in Lumphaphasi was associated with delays in the processing of applications. The dominant demand from residents in Lumphaphasi was residential land. Residents have come to accept that there was no more land for allocation for agriculture or grazing purposes. Archival records show that MaQwathini Tribal Authority made a formal application to the magistrate on 29 August 1979 for 77 residential sites. The approval of the application was two years later, that is three years after the apartheid government had granted independence to the Transkei (Lumphaphasi Location No. 12 file, Department of Agriculture and Land Affairs, Cala).

Interviews also show that some of those who were migrant workers invested on livestock and implements. They bought them while they were still employed and brought them to their villages. Mr. Zwelinzima Dyantyi pointed out that: “All the things I have, I bought them while I was in Cape Town, including the tractor”. When he came back, he made use of the tractor to plough the fields. Similarly, Mr. Mistake Chophiso pointed out that: “When I came back, I bought a few cows and sheep for farming”. The fact that migrant and former migrant workers invested on both livestock and agricultural implements shows that they were still interested in agriculture and livestock farming.

⁵⁰ Interviewed in CALUSA offices on 05/01/2004. She was also interviewed as part of a group of 3 respondents in Cala Social Centre on 09/06/2005.

3.6.2 The changing nature of the land struggle in Lumphaphasi

To highlight their plight, people of Lumphaphasi used a variety of methods. Some passively resisted the rehabilitation programme and refused to leave their old residential plots. The Principal Agricultural Officer in Cala wrote on the 30/6/1969 to Mr. Wenzweni Mdlalo, ordering him to vacate a camp on which he unlawfully resided. Another letter dated 10/9/1970, written by Mr. M.S. Kota, an agricultural officer in Cala, to Headman Shude warned that “people who still reside in camp G.B. 3” should move.

In some instances decisions of the government were challenged. For instance, in the case of boundaries the Lumphaphasi residents challenged the allocation of portions of Landula Farm to other villages. The residents wrote to the government about the farm claiming it to be theirs. The disputes about boundaries also emerged among community people themselves. The District Commissioner wrote two letters in October and December 1988, reporting boundary disputes among community members of Lumphaphasi. These were disputes about boundaries between Mr. Peter Nqezo and Nyambali on the one hand and between Mr. Ngaziyeki Ngcukayithobi and Mr. Watu Godla, on the other.

This chapter has shown that land conditions continued to deteriorate despite the government’s intervention. Even declaring Lumphaphasi a betterment area did not resolve the land demand in the area. The continuous deteriorating land conditions were accompanied by difficulties in getting land in Lumphaphasi from the 1960s. Administrative bottlenecks and a demand for land that was more than the supply contributed to this difficulty in getting land. In turn, this difficulty in accessing land in Lumphaphasi led to locals having a negative attitude towards people from outside Lumphaphasi.

There was also an emergence of new methods of struggle among people of Lumphaphasi. Defiance and challenge of decisions of government officials became the new methods used by the residents. The next section shows how this developing new trend of defiance develops in Lumphaphasi.

3.7 The period of defiance (1989 to 1994)

The political developments of the late 1980s in South Africa had a bearing on developments in Xhalanga, and Lumphaphasi in particular. During this period, there was release of the first group of South African political leaders⁵¹. Commenting on the developments of the 1980s, Mayekiso points out that the developments ‘suggested a reshaping of the political situation...’ (1996:142). In most urban areas civic organisations were “involved in protests and negotiations over rent, development and service provision, and local government restructuring” (Seekings 1992:216). A turning point in the former Transkei was the re-burial of Paramount Chief Sabata Dalindyebo, which opened space for political activity in the former homeland.

In Xhalanga, these struggles started in the village town of Cala after the re-burial towards the end of 1989. Migrant workers and unionists with roots in Xhalanga played a critical role in mobilising people of Xhalanga during this period (Ntsebeza 2002a:338). The above is in line with the argument advanced by Nattrass that the migrant labour system contributed in the politicisation of rural people (1985:25). Indeed migrant workers played a critical role in influencing the turn of events in Xhalanga generally. Unionists such as Messrs. Gwede Mantashe and Mbulelo Ngamlana were actively involved in these struggles (Ntsebeza 2005).

Youth was also critical in the struggles of this period (Ntsebeza 2002a:342). Central in these struggles was a demand for land for residential purposes (Ntsebeza 2005:239). By 1992, these struggles had shifted to the rural areas of Xhalanga, and Lumphaphasi was the first area where signs of resistance emerged. As has been illustrated, Lumphaphasi had a severe land shortage. Given the conditions in Lumphaphasi, it is not surprising that the area was the first to embark on a land occupation exercise.

3.7.1 Land demand in the late 1980s to mid-1990s

Unlike previous struggles in Lumphaphasi, which occurred in a less organised manner, the struggles from the late 1980s presented an ‘organised’ form of resistance with land being the main issue (Ntsebeza 2002a:329). The process started in a community meeting held in January 1990, where the Lumphaphasi people took a decision to

demarcate land for residential purposes (Ntsebeza 2002a:330). Although there does not seem to be immediate results to the decision of this meeting, it laid a basis for events that were to follow.

It was delays in the approval of applications that infuriated the Lumphaphasi residents and led them to take action. For instance, some residents applied to the MaQwathini Tribal Authority for kraal sites as early as 22/05/1990. The applicants wanted to go back to their old sites that had been turned into camps (*ukuphindela kwimizi esemanxiweni azinkampu ngoku*). Government officials apparently ignored the application, as there is no evidence that action was taken with regard to it. In February 1992, almost two years after the application, residence went back to their old sites and occupied the land.

Those who wanted land were children of the farmers and landholders, as well as landless people under headman within the communal area most of whom had become former migrant workers, and former farm workers. Most of the migrant workers came back from work between the 1980s and the 1990s, as the table below shows⁵².

Figure 1: Migrant workers in Lumphaphasi

Name of respondent	Born	Started working	Stopped working	Age when stopped working	Reasons for stopping	Ages now
Mr. Mistake Chophiso	1943	1965 (22)	1983	40 years	Self-employment	62
Mr. Peter Kandisa	1961	1978 (17)	1988	27 years	Health reasons	44
Mr. Peter Nqezo	1923	1955 (33)	1969	46 years	Company left SA	82
Mr. Ngqele Mabala	1954	1972 (18)	1994	40 years	Retrenched	51
Mrs. Mrhawuli	1936	1971 (35)	1990	54 years	Family matters	69
Mr. Z. Mbungwana	1960	1978 (18)	1994	34 years	Retrenched	45
Mr. Z. Ntshwenca	1939	1971 (32)	1997	58 years	Retrenched	66
Mr. Zwelinzima Dyantyi	1943	1957 (14)	1972	29 years	Self-employment	62

As the table shows, the respondents started working from their early ages and most of them stopped working when they were 40 years and beyond. What this means is that rural people took migrant wage labour at an early age and in their middle ages they came back to the village. Some of them wanted land when they came back from migrant work, such as Mr. Z. Mbungwana who needed land for production.

⁵¹ Among political leaders released in 1989 were Walter Sisulu, Wilton Mkwayi, Jeph Masemola, Zephania Mothopeng, etc.

⁵² The names are from the list of applicants in the government's land redistribution programme.

All respondents that were former migrant workers indicated that they did not only rely on land for survival, they also used skills they acquired while working in urban areas. One of the former migrant workers, Mr. Kandisa pointed out:

When I stopped working as a migrant worker and came back, my plan was to buy a van and sell goods, but that never worked. I survived on agriculture, and my mother also got old age grant. We supported each other.

Mr. Kandisa's experience is similar to many other former migrant workers in Lumphaphasi.

Youth also played a critical role in the struggle for land in Lumphaphasi. It was not only youth from the communal area that was part of the struggle, children of farmers also became part of the struggle. Mr. Vusumzi Nkomana, for instance, played a leadership role in the land struggle. The youth leadership in Lumphaphasi consisted of Messrs. Vusumzi Nkomana, Nkululeko Khalipha, Sibathathu Stuurman, Dalubuhle Nyambali, and Mangaliso Nqezo⁵³. The fact that youth was central in the land struggles during this period gave them the opportunity to influence the form land demand took. Most of the youth of Lumphaphasi were urban-based where they studied or worked. In urban centres, they were exposed to struggles about housing. Cobbett points out that the major urban centres of South Africa experienced a housing crisis that was marked by a sharp increase in shacks since 1985 (1989:325). It is this influence of urban struggles that shaped the form taken by the land struggle in Lumphaphasi during the late 1980s to the early 1990s. That was why land for residential purposes became the main demand in Lumphaphasi.

That the demand was for residential sites does not mean that there were no people who were interested in getting land for agricultural purposes. There were people who still wanted land for agricultural and grazing purposes. For example, Mr. Mbungwana represented those who needed fields for production. Those who owned livestock wanted land for grazing. According to Mr. Mabala :

The lack of grazing land always troubled me because even if I wanted to embark on agriculture, livestock disturbed me because it destroyed my production. This was due to the fact that livestock did not have grazing land⁵⁴.

⁵³ Telephone interview of Mrs. Qayi in Lumphaphasi on 14/06/2005.

⁵⁴ Interviewed at Delindlala on 13/05/2005.

Mrs. MamQwathi Mrhawuli who explained the situation of livestock owners in these terms further confirmed the crisis of lack of grazing land;

Luphaphasi is surrounded by farms. There is very limited grazing land and as a result our livestock gets impounded daily. It does not matter whether you had your livestock impounded today, if tomorrow it is impounded you pay R100 per head, every time they get impounded⁵⁵.

By the late 1980s, livestock owners had come to accept the fact that there was no longer a possibility of getting additional land for grazing in Luphaphasi. Mrs. Qayi stated that, “(I)t was not that we did not want grazing land, when we demanded residential land. We knew that there was no other land to create grazing land from”⁵⁶.

When residents decided to demarcate land, Headman Shude was violently opposed to that. Mrs. Qayi alleged that Headman Shude tried to stop the land occupation in the portion now known as Trust. This is what she said about headman Shude:

To stop people from going to occupy land, Shude erected a fence, which people broke down. He furiously took his firearm racing on horseback towards the place where people were demarcating land. Residents defied him and carried on with the land allocations to people who did not have land. That is how people got their land.

One of the positive aspects of the struggles of the late 1980s and early 1990s is that they were able to bridge the divisions that marked earlier land allocations in Luphaphasi. In the past people that were not considered born and bred in Luphaphasi found it very difficult to acquire land in the village. The opposition to the Qayi family getting residential land in the 1970s, as was shown, confirms this claim about the existence of an attitude towards ‘outsiders’ getting land in Luphaphasi. As in Mnxe, this period also drew in children of farmers to participate in land struggles in Luphaphasi. Mr. Vusumzi Nkomana is a good illustration of the involvement of children of farmers in land struggles of Luphaphasi.

3.7.2 Government’s response to the demand for land

There were varied responses from different levels of government to the pressure exerted by the people of Luphaphasi. Officials closer to the communities where there was pressure, a lot of concern was shown about the delays in the processing of applications.

⁵⁵ Interviewed in Luphaphasi on 21/05/2005.

⁵⁶ Interviewed in CALUSA offices on 05/01/2005.

Officials higher up the bureaucratic ladder showed less concern about speeding up processes. Some officials argued for usage of the police and army to stop the defiance.

This extract from a letter written by H.F. Ncoko (uMablawuti) on the 25/2/1992, to the Magistrate (R.M.O., Cala. Ref. A5/1) explains what happened and what Mr. Ncoko recommended:

Demarcation of unlawfully kraal sites by the residents of Lumphaphasi A/A:-
Cala District

On the 20-02-92, the Ranger ... came to this office with the report that the above mentioned community has demarcated kraal sites on a woodlot site by their own without consulting any office. On 24-02-92 this office visited the spot and found that there are squatters which are built on the said spot.

According to our comments this bad behaviour cannot be stopped unless the Military Council can send soldiers with sjamboks to stop this matter. Again according to my own information which I'm getting from different rangers, there are ANC members who are going around the Admin areas, convulsing R12.00 to each and every people promising them with kraal sites which will be demarcated.

So I decided to forward this matter to you as it is beyond my control.⁵⁷

Archival material also showed that an application for residential plots (*amanxiwa*), which was submitted to the MaQwathini Tribal Authority on 29/7/1992, five months after the first occupations early in the year, and which was promptly approved on 1/8/1992 by the Tribal Authority, was delayed in the lengthy departmental bureaucratic process of land allocation.

Feeling pressure of the people, M.S. Laho, an official in the Department of Agriculture and Forestry in Cala, wrote to the regional Agricultural Officer in Qamata on 23/4/1993. He reported that people in Lumphaphasi were illegally demarcating plots. He further acknowledged that people of Lumphaphasi had made an application in September 1992 and "nothing happened". He complained that

This long period taken by application before approval may also be one of the causes of this unlawful demarcation. People of the administrative area became impatient and they became unruly. As I view it in this angle I advise this department to prevent bottlenecks as those will lay a bad name in our department.

On 8 March 1993, the Lumphaphasi ranger, Mr. T.O. Dyantyi reported that there were people who were building/erecting structures despite being stopped. He took down their names and among them was Mrs Sthoza, who came to Lumphaphasi from the farms

⁵⁷ Cited from Lumphaphasi Location (Location No. 12) file, Department of Agriculture and Land Affairs, Cala.

and became a loose person. Again, nothing seems to have happened. On 21 May 1993, T. Kama, an official of the Department of Agriculture reported to the Cala Magistrate that on 5 May 1993 the Ranger of Lumphaphasi reported that kraal sites had been demarcated unlawfully on grazing camps. Residents had by then, clearly taken matters into their hands.

3.8 Conclusion

This chapter was used to illustrate the demand for land in the district by looking at Lumphaphasi. It also aimed to highlight the struggles people embarked on to get the land, and the various forms these struggles have assumed in Lumphaphasi. The situation of Lumphaphasi was slightly different to that of Xhalanga, in that the area had African farmers with big farms surrounding it. On the other hand, landholders with smaller pieces of land and landless people existed within the communal area. The farmers and landholders played a leading role in land struggles in Lumphaphasi up to the 1930s. The initial focus of their struggles was on upgrading their quitrent titles into freehold titles. From the early 1930s, the focus of their struggles was to oppose the implementation of betterment planning until landless people took the centre stage in the land struggles of Lumphaphasi from the 1960s.

As in Chapter Two, landholders were integrated into the capitalist economy by the 1930s. This marked a shift from the original concept of landholders, whose association with the capitalist economy was trading and not as waged workers. The new form of a landholder was one that was also a waged worker. This relates with Wolpe's argument that the capitalist economy had managed to subdue the subsistence African economies by the 1930s and that more rural dwellers had become waged workers.

The demand for productive land persisted in Lumphaphasi from the 1930s to the 1970s. The persistence of the demand for land even during periods of economic development, illustrated that the land demand in Lumphaphasi was not associated with economic crisis that resulted in joblessness. This is contrary to Bernstein's (2003) argument that the economic crises made land to assume a new significance to rural people. The economic crisis that resulted in unemployment from the late 1970s did not result to re-peasantisation as Bernstein also argued.

The land struggles of the late 1980s were able to overcome the social divisions that existed in Lumphaphasi between people considered better off and those regarded as poor. The divisions were blurred because landlessness affected former farm workers and tenants as much as it affected the children of landholders. However, the struggles of the late 1980s were unable to overcome colonial and apartheid barriers that separated black and white areas. The struggles were waged within the boundaries of the areas designated for Africans, despite the fact that there was no longer land to demarcate, especially in Lumphaphasi.

Chapter 4

LAND DEMAND AND STRUGGLES (1994-2001)

4.1 Introduction

An important development since the political transition to democracy in the early 1990s, which is relevant for this study, was the introduction of the land reform programme. The land reform programme has three components: land restitution, to restore and compensate for land dispossession that occurred after June 1913; land tenure reform, to “eliminate tenure insecurity”; and land redistribution, to “enable equitable access to land” (Hendricks and Ntsebeza 2004:18)⁵⁸. For purposes of this study, the focus will be on the land redistribution component of the land reform programme.

This chapter looks at the demand for land in Lumphaphasi between 1994 and 2001. The chapter has four sections. The first section takes a brief look at the land reform programme. This is followed by a section, which looks at how the people of Lumphaphasi made use of the land reform programme to acquire white-claimed land. The third section is about the processes followed until the people of Lumphaphasi acquired the land. Lastly and by way of conclusion, a section on reflections on the land acquisition process.

I argue in this chapter that while the policy on land reform created the opportunity for the people to acquire land, its bias towards the promotion of commercial farmers makes it difficult for poor people of Lumphaphasi to acquire land through it. I argue that while there is a huge demand for land for productive purposes, the land reform programme as it stands will not be able to address this demand.

⁵⁸ Unpublished report of the Land Tribunal on landlessness and poverty, organised by the Trust for Community Outreach and Education (TCOE) held in Port Elizabeth and Bersheba in December 2003 and March 2004.

4.2 The land reform programme: a contextual background

The South African Constitution puts an obligation on the post-1994 state to address inequalities in land ownership through land redistribution (Act 108 of 1996:12).

Section 25(5) of the constitution stipulates that,

the state must take reasonable legislative and other measures, within its available resources, to foster conditions which will enable citizens to gain access to land on an equitable basis.

Although the Constitution was adopted in 1996, processes leading to its adoption took place during the political transition in the early 1990s. The processes culminated in the formulation of proposals on land reform in South Africa. The World Bank argued that it should be the market, rather than the government that plays a leading role on land reform (National Rural Development Forum 1994:8). It further argued that, instead of giving landless people land, the government should give them grants to buy the land. For the ANC, land reform was to be central in rural development. This is captured in the ANC's Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP). The RDP was formulated in 1994, as an election manifesto of the ANC. Land reform, according to the RDP was to supply "residential and productive land to the poorest section of the rural population and aspirant farmers" (ANC 1994:20).

The development of land policies for the new government took its cue from the principles that were elaborated in the RDP. The White Paper on South African Land Policy was published in 1997. According to the White Paper, giving households productive land would contribute to economic development. The land policy further points out that, "(R)edistributive land reform will be largely based on willing-buyer; willing-seller arrangements" (DLA 1997:7). This means that land reform "depends largely upon voluntary transactions between willing-buyers and willing-sellers" (DLA 1997:39).

Until 1999, land redistribution was implemented through a policy called the Settlement Land Acquisition Grant (SLAG). SLAG offered a grant of R16000 to each household to "purchase land directly from willing sellers, including the state" (DLA 1997:ix). The SLAG grant was designed to serve households with a monthly income of less than R1500 (Lyne and Darroch 2003:4). This meant that the SLAG had a focus on poor households. However, the SLAG was criticised from various quarters, including the

government itself. Government officials, for example, argued that SLAG promoted acquisition of land by big groups who, in turn, faced major problems about lack of cohesion (Lodge 2002:78).

By 1999, there was a policy shift within the DLA. The policy changes co-incided with changes in the Ministry of Land Affairs after the second general elections in 1999. The new minister, Ms Thoko Didiza, took over the reigns from Derek Hanekom. After taking over, she imposed a moratorium on redistribution projects, assessing how the programme worked. Hendricks and Ntsebeza say about the changes that took place within DLA, “(A)s a result, all the redistribution projects ground to a halt and budgetary spending on redistribution also nosedived accordingly” (2004:21). The review process identified that there were failures, due to a host of reasons. Among the reasons identified was the time taken to approve projects, including the size of the grant. The review concluded that the size of the grant resulted in large numbers of households applying for grants to buy one farm

When the moratorium was lifted in February 2000, the Minister introduced new policy direction in her policy statement entitled “A Strategic Direction in Land Issues”. This new shift replaced the SLAG with a draft policy document called “Integrated Programme for Land Redistribution and Agricultural Development” (IPLRAD). This draft document was introduced in June 2000. In August 2001, the DLA finally launched the new programme called Land Redistribution for Agricultural Development (LRAD). The LRAD offers a grant that ranges from R20000 to R100000 depending on the amount of own contribution. Each individual beneficiary is expected to provide an own contribution of a minimum of R5000. The own contribution can be paid in cash, in kind or as labour. The LRAD caters for different types of projects, such as food safety nets, equity schemes, production for markets, and agriculture in communal areas (Ministry for Agriculture and Land Affairs 2001:5).

A significant shift from SLAG to the LRAD, according to Hendricks and Ntsebeza, is its focus on the promotion of a commercial class of black farmers (2004:23). Scholars and development practitioners criticised the LRAD programme for not focussing where the need is greatest (CRLS 2000; Lahiff and Rugege 2002; Mingo 2002), which is the poor black people in rural areas. Cousins (2000:4), points out that LRAD is intended to serve “diverse needs of different groups of people”. He also points out that the skewed

allocation of resources towards the well off is problematic (2000:4). Lahiff (2002:3 and 2003:37), points out that LRAD is not meant to support poor black people. Greenberg has forthrightly argued that the LRAD programme,

signified the consolidation of a black economic empowerment agenda that recently has been translated into the construction of a black economic elite. This is coupled with a growth strategy that aims to strengthen the ability of a locally-based capital to compete in global markets (2003a:15).

Greenberg points out that the LRAD programme aimed at promoting the development of black commercial farmers (Greenberg 2003b:110). It also aimed at making these black commercial farmers to be globally competitive in an export-oriented agricultural sector.

De Klerk on the other side points out that while wanting to change land ownership patterns, it seems, the government also wanted to protect commercial agriculture for fear of disrupting “the productive capacity of agriculture” (1990:53). The fact that land redistribution aimed at addressing inequalities in land ownership while at the same time harbouring fears of not wanting to disrupt the productive capacity of the country, seemed to be an excuse that tended to be misused by some of those involved in land reform. Jacobs et al argue that although the LRAD seems to provide “for a range of commercial and subsistence uses, but in practice the programme has favoured commercial agricultural uses of land ...” (2003:5).

4.3 Developments in Xhalanga after the introduction of the land reform programme

The introduction of the land reform programme created opportunities for the people of Xhalanga to look for land outside their communal areas. A study on “Livestock Production in Xhalanga” that was conducted by Ntsebeza in 1999, became a catalyst for local processes and events. The study revealed that there was a dire need for land in Lumphaphasi, in particular for grazing purposes⁵⁹. In 2000, the Cala University Students Association (CALUSA), a local non-governmental organisation (NGO), organised a workshop for representatives of communities in Xhalanga. During the workshop, Ntsebeza reported on the findings of the study. At the same time, he also informed the

⁵⁹ The study was published in 2002 as part of a broader study on “Cattle ownership and production in the communal areas of the Eastern Cape, South Africa”, by Ainslie A. 2002.

participants about the existence of the land reform programme⁶⁰. He explained the opportunities the programme presented to people who wanted land outside their communal areas. Ntsebeza further encouraged people interested in the land reform programme to get in touch with CALUSA. At this workshop, delegates from Lumphaphasi and Cala Reserve showed interest in acquiring land through the South African land reform programme (CALUSA Annual Report 2000).

Based on the report of the study on Livestock production, CALUSA decided to formulate a programme to assist groups that wanted land (see Jacobs et al 2003; Ncapayi 2001). Up to that stage, CALUSA had focused on developmental programmes, broadly. The organisation was already working with community groups, including the Lumphaphasi group, in promoting organic methods of agriculture, since 1998. It encouraged communities to use communal gardens for food production in their villages. Given that this was a new focus for the organisation, the greater part of 2000 was devoted to learning more about the land reform programme. The learning process involved reading the White Paper on South African Land Policy and the LRAD document. Besides the policy documents, the staff members read papers written by scholars and practitioners on the land reform programme. Staff members of CALUSA happen to know from Lungisile Ntsebeza that there was a DLA office in Queenstown. The experience about CALUSA offers an insight on how community based organisations (CBOs) and NGOs adapted to changes that are related to policy formulation and implementation processes in South Africa.

In its planning meeting in December 2000, CALUSA took a decision to take a delegation of people from both Cala Reserve and Lumphaphasi to the DLA office in Queenstown. Queenstown was and is still a sub-regional centre of the Eastern Cape Province that accommodates various government departments. The visit to the DLA office was planned to take place at the beginning of 2001. Lumphaphasi already had a group of 10 members, which was involved in agricultural activities using organic farming methods. The group used a pre-school garden in MaQwathini, one of the villages of Lumphaphasi (CALUSA Annual Report 1999). CALUSA worked with this group since its establishment in 1998. Due to limited space in the pre-school garden, the group wanted more land. In 2000, members of the group took a decision to

⁶⁰ I was also part of the workshop as a staff member of CALUSA.

approach Mr. Gcinizizwe Khalipha to lease some land from him. It will be recalled from Chapter Three that Mr. Gcinizizwe Khalipha is a grandson of Mr. Solomon Khalipha, one of the big farmers in Lumphaphasi. The idea of leasing land never worked, as Mr. Khalipha terminated the arrangement. Mr. Nqezo has this to say about their efforts to lease land from Mr. Khalipha:

Khalipha agreed to lease us his land. We started to plough a portion of the land, while trying to work out terms of the lease. It was then that his wife unilaterally decided to terminate the arrangement⁶¹.

A group similar to the Lumphaphasi group existed in Cala Reserve. It consisted of members that had been working together in a communal garden since 1997. The group had 15 members. Both groups later formed the nucleus of those residents in Cala Reserve and Lumphaphasi who pursued the idea of land acquisition outside their areas.

4.4 The process of land acquisition

4.4.1 Engaging the DLA and the application process

In February 2001, CALUSA organised a meeting involving the representatives of Cala Reserve and Lumphaphasi groups and the regional office of the Department of Land Affairs in Queenstown (CALUSA Annual 2001). A delegation of eight people (four women and four men) met with a DLA official, Mr. Monde Sukula, in Queenstown, to discuss the problem of shortage of grazing land in their areas. The delegates pointed out that they wanted additional land. Mrs. Nozolile Qayi, Mrs. Nosamkele Eleni and Messrs. Zwelinzima Dyantyi and Sunduza Nkomana represented Lumphaphasi and Cala Reserve had Mr. Mcebisi Ntamo, Mr. Bobby Ntamo, Mrs. Nosebenzile Fani and Mrs. Nomvuzo Nopothe, as its representatives. Mr. Sukula explained to the delegates the process to be followed. He also pointed out that there was already a farm available at Indwe. In addition, he encouraged the delegation to go and view the farm. Contact with the owner was established on that same day. He gave the delegation details including a map of the farm. An arrangement was also made for representatives of both groups to view the farm.

The farm, Thornhill, is about five kilometres from Indwe, off the road to Dordrecht. It is 2029 hectares in size and its owner was Mr. Etienne Cloete. Mr. Cloete priced the

⁶¹ Mr. Peter Nqezo was interviewed on 06/05/2005.

farm at R1,1 million, excluding equipment and implements. Inclusive of equipment and implements, the cost of the farm was R1,3 million.

A co-ordinating committee was established to oversee the processes that were to be undertaken, and to ensure that all people concerned were kept aware of the developments. The committee consisted of eight members, the same people who were delegates that met with the DLA in Queenstown. Within February 2001, the co-ordinating committee visited Thornhill farm.

On arrival at the farm, the owner showed the delegation around. He took members to the various parts of the farm: the camps, fields and the sheds. He even showed members the equipment and implements he had on the farm. As members moved around, they could not control themselves from excitement. Mrs. Nosamkele Eleni remarked that: “(I)t seems like a dream that we are about to get our farm. In the past, we never thought this could be possible”⁶².

Having seen the farm, members of the co-ordinating committee expressed their satisfaction with it. Delegates indicated that they wanted to report to their members and discuss a way forward. In separate reports back meetings, the general members of both groups expressed the desire to see the farm for themselves. Transport was organised for the different groups to visit the farm in early March 2001. On the farm, the owner willingly took the groups around his farm. The trip was filled with excitement and songs of joy.

From the trip, both groups went back to reflect about the farm and to take decisions. In their separate discussions, members of the two groups agreed that they were satisfied with the farm. In a meeting of the co-ordinating committee, delegates from both groups reported that their groups expressed their willingness to work together on the farm. To justify the decision, the delegates argued that this was because of the efforts they had made together in trying to get a farm. An agreement between the two groups was that each group should compile its list of 30 applicants for the farm, to make a combined group of 60 members.

⁶² She uttered these words while visiting the farm in early February 2001.

Each group recruited additional members from their communities to make 30 members. The number of 30 members from each group was based on the assumption that if each member got the R20 000 grant, the amount would be R1,2 million. The R20 000 is the standard amount that an applicant qualifies for if the applicant has assets worth R5 000 or no assets at all. In the latter case the labour of the applicant arbitrarily gets valued at R5 000, which makes one to qualify for the R20 000 grant. Out of curiosity from some staff members of CALUSA, an enquiry was made from Mr. Sukula on how to calculate the “own contribution” of beneficiaries, in particular how the amount of livestock was determined. Based on the information, CALUSA calculated an estimated amount of money that could be raised from the livestock. The total value of their livestock worked out to about R150 000. However, this information did not have much influence on the group in its decision about the number of beneficiaries. The number remained 60 members. CALUSA put together the information and submitted an application to the DLA office in Queenstown at the beginning of March 2001.

As can be seen, the price determined the number of beneficiaries to get into the farm. Certainly, for poor people it would have been impossible to acquire the farm, without pulling their grants together.

At the end of March 2001, Mr. Sukula reported that the application was presented to the District Screening Committee (DSC). He reported that the DSC gave the application a “go-ahead” (CALUSA Annual Report 2001). This meant that the DSC gave the officer the mandate to develop a project and present it in the next DSC meeting. He further reported that the Committee advertised a tender for valuation of the farm, to determine its price. After a month, CALUSA contacted Mr. Sukula, to find out progress of the application. Mr. Sukula reported that the application was delayed by the pending valuation report. He pointed out that it took time for the department to find a suitable consultant and that the consultant delayed to finish the valuation report.

In May, Mr. Sukula broke the sad news, over the telephone that the application was turned down by the DSC. He indicated that the DSC turned the application down because its members felt that the applicants were many. When Mr. Sukula was asked what would be an acceptable number, he indicated that a group of 25 members was acceptable to DLA. He even made a suggestion that for them it would be better if the

Luphaphasi group were to take the farm. Mr. Sukula and Mr. Cloete were of the opinion that the Luphaphasi group had enough assets to purchase the farm.

A response from the CALUSA fieldworker was that Mr. Sukula should come and report the matter to the groups. A meeting that involved the co-ordinating committee, Mr. Cloete, Mr. Sukula and CALUSA was convened in Thornhill farm at the beginning of May 2001. Mr. Sukula indicated that they (himself and Mr. Cloete) were suggesting that 30 members from Luphaphasi should take the farm. It is not clear why he suggested 30 members when he earlier on indicated that his department wanted groups of not more than 25 members. After a long debate, a resolution was that the delegates should go back to their members, discuss this, and make suggestions as how to deal with it. A date for another meeting was set for the following week. The meeting took place on the farm. At this meeting, the Luphaphasi delegation indicated that they had considered the suggestion. They agreed to take the farm as Luphaphasi. This meant Cala Reserve was left out. The decision caused serious tensions between the two groups with accusations and counter accusations of betrayal. The DLA made an undertaking that it would look for another farm for the Cala Reserve group. The Cala Reserve group grudgingly accepted its exclusion from the list.

Although the two groups were no longer working together, CALUSA decided to retain the co-ordinating committee that involved both groups. The reason behind that decision was to ensure close contact between the two groups. It was also in a bid to ensure that the groups supported each other. CALUSA also wanted to use the co-ordinating committee to share experiences during the land acquisition process. For purposes of this study, focus will be on the Luphaphasi group.

When the Cala Reserve list was removed, Luphaphasi was left with 30 applicants. The DLA officer further advised the Luphaphasi group to apply as families, rather than as individuals. This meant that the applicants could include household members that met the requirements of the LRAD grant. One of the differences between LRAD and the SLAG was that in SLAG people applied as households and in LRAD as individuals. That was why Mr. Sukula made this suggestion.

In response to the advice, the Luphaphasi group applied as husband and wife in a household. The result of the approach was that the list of Luphaphasi applicants went

up to 60 again. Some members included their children that met the LRAD requirements. Mr. Sukula argued that this meant that there were 30 families on the farm. According to him that was not totally out from the 25 applicants the department preferred.

4.4.2 Profile of the Luphaphasi applicants

CALUSA assisted the Luphaphasi group to submit the application together with the profile to the DLA. The table below shows the profile of applicants from Luphaphasi.

Figure 2: Age and gender breakdown

Age groups	No. of people	Gender breakdown	
		Male	Female
18-24 years	1		1
25 – 34 years	4	2	2
35 – 44 years	3	1	2
45 – 54 years	19	10	9
55 – 64 years	10	4	6
65 years and above	21	13	8
Unspecified ages	2	0	2
Totals	60	30	30

It can be seen from the table that beneficiaries who are 65 years and above constituted the majority of the applicants from Luphaphasi. The majority of the applicants were within the age groups: 45 and above 65 years. As I pointed out in Chapter 3, this is the group of people that returned in their middle-ages from migrant work and established themselves in the village. It is the same group that has been struggling for land in Luphaphasi prior-1994. Most of them only have residential sites. For example, the 82-year old Mr. Peter Nqezo was one of them. He was a migrant worker who returned in 1969. He only had a residential site in Luphaphasi.

Male applicants are in the majority in the age group between 45 and above 65. Part of an explanation for this situation is that LRAD expected applicants to come with their own contribution and most applicants used livestock as own contribution. This is the age range where migrant workers built their livestock, creating a male-dominated ownership of livestock. This is also a reflection of realities in rural households where women mostly do not own any livestock. The age groups between 18 and 44 are the least represented. This seems to confirm my point in the previous chapter, that youth

was not interested in land for farming purposes. Only as they grow older do young people show interest in land-based livelihoods.

Figure 3 Spread of assets among members

Age groups	Cattle	Sheep	Goats	Pigs	Chicken	Implements
18-24 years	0	0	0	0	0	0
25 – 34 years	0	0	0	0	0	0
35 – 44 years	12	0	0	2	0	0
45 – 54 years	51	130	18	6	3	1
55 – 64 years	45	84	18	3	38	3
65 years and above	59	265	14	6	14	13
Unspecified ages	3	28	0	1	0	0

As Table 3 above shows, most assets are concentrated in people from 45 years and above. This is the group of people most of whom returned from migrant work. Some of them invested in livestock while they were migrant workers. The group of people from 18 to 34 years are children of those applicants who included their children in the list. As can be seen from the table, they have no assets because some are still at school and others are still looking for work. They were included in the list to raise the amount of money. The table also shows that the people of Lumphaphasi mainly concentrated on cattle and sheep. An argument they advanced was that it was easy to control cattle and sheep within a confined area, compared to keeping goats. They argued that goats go through fencing easily, something that causes quarrels with other people in a community.

In terms of land in communal areas, only five out of 20 respondents from Lumphaphasi have fields. Their fields are mostly less than 5 morgens. The majority only have residential stands. This confirms the demand for land for productive purposes.

4.4.3 Preparations for taking over ownership of the farm

Mr. Sukula promised that the process would take less than six months to be finalised. He confidently said that people could phone him regularly to check the progress of their application. He made this remark to the delegates and was well aware that they were desperate and hoped that the process of farm transfer would be fast.

While waiting for results of the application, the DLA project officer organised a one-day workshop to explain options through which the group could register as a legal

entity. He pointed out that groups could register as: a Communal Property Association, a Section 21 Company, a Trust, and a Closed Corporation. His explanation was that each of the options had certain requirements that have to be met. He briefly explained some of the requirements. He left the group at a stage when it had to decide on the form of a legal entity it would choose. A CALUSA fieldworker organised material on what each of the options entailed. The information was presented to the applicants in a two-day workshop. The outcome of the workshop was a decision taken by the group to register as a Communal Property Association (CPA). The group called itself Delindlala⁶³. They believed that getting the land would help them to address the hunger or poverty in their families.

Meanwhile, CALUSA used the period to gather information about experiences of other groups that existed within the province. A fieldworker visited Gallawater in Whittlesea and a group of people that acquired a farm in similar terms in Cradock. The experiences were shared with the groups, focussing on problems the groups experienced and how they operated. In addition to workshops, exposure visits were also organised for the group to learn from other operations. CALUSA organised a trip of 10 people that involved members of Delindlala and a delegation from Cala Reserve to visit Uphaphe Empowerment Centre in KwaZulu Natal and Isidingo Farmers Association in Cradock (see CALUSA Annual Report 2001).

By mid-July 2001, there was no sign of progress on the application. The Luphaphasi beneficiaries showed signs of frustration at this lack of progress. Some began to doubt the possibilities of getting land outside their villages. A meeting of the co-ordinating committee was organised on 18 July 2001, in CALUSA offices, to discuss strategies of dealing with the delays. The meeting, which was attended by members of the co-ordinating committee, agreed that DLA officials should be called to explain why there were delays. Out of frustration about progress of the application Mrs. Nozolile Qayi declared during the meeting of the 18 July 2001 that:

The government is disappointing us because Monde⁶⁴ promised that the process would be quick. This delay will revive the doubts we have about the reality of this programme. People in our village were laughing at us saying we were stupid to think that the government would simply give land to people without paying for it. We will now be a laughing stock.

⁶³ Delindlala means to defy hunger.

⁶⁴ DLA official responsible for the Luphaphasi land reform project.

Because of the level of concern from beneficiaries, participants in the meeting indicated that a different form of pressure might have to be used to force movement from the government. People such as Mr. Zwelinzima Dyantyi argued that the government would not move unless those in need of land took drastic steps such as staging a sit-in in DLA offices. A more conciliatory view from Mrs. Nosebenzile Fani was that the government should be persuaded and not be forced because the opportunity of getting the land may be lost.

The different views showed the diverse nature of the people in the co-ordinating committee. Part of this diversity was related to social and political backgrounds of the members of the committee. For instance, Mrs. Fani is a wife of a headman. She seems reluctant to get into a situation of confrontation with the government. On the other hand, Mr. Zwelinzima Dyantyi was directly involved in the land struggles of Lumphaphasi.

The concerns expressed by people of Lumphaphasi about the slow pace of the process echoed national concerns. In a radio talk show on the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC) on 24/04/2001, Tom Liebert of the National Land Committee (NLC) had pointed out that the government was dragging its feet in dealing with the land demand. He cited land invasions that were taking place in various parts of the country, including Mpumalanga and the Southern Cape, as indicative of his claim. It is also worth noting that it was in the same year that the much-publicised Bredell land invasion took place (Ncapayi 2001:1)⁶⁵. It is also in this year that the Landless People's Movement (LPM) was established, as a national movement to lobby for land reform and rights of the disadvantaged people in the farms and informal settlements. There was also the Anti-racism Conference that was held in Durban whereby issues of social justice and redistribution of resources in the 'third world' were raised. How much these national events influenced local ones is not clear, but we should note that Mr. Zwelinzima Dyantyi was part of a CALUSA delegation that went to that conference.

The proposed meeting between the DLA and the co-ordinating committee eventually took place on 31 July 2001 in the offices of CALUSA. The DLA official, Mr. Sukula,

⁶⁵ Unpublished paper titled "Land redistribution in rural area: Examples from Sakhisizwe and Emalahleni municipalities". The paper was presented to the LEARN Public Policy Dialogue Seminar, 2nd October 2001, Fort Hare University, Bisho.

explained that they were awaiting a valuation report of the farm. Expressing concerns about progress of their application in the meeting, Mr. Dyantyi made it clear that they had waited long and they had grown tired of waiting indefinitely. He pointed out that:

We do not understand why there is this delay when the owner of the farm has already agreed to sell. When we listen to the radio we hear what other people do in situations where government does not respond promptly to their needs. We do not want to take the route other people have taken. We urge the government to speed up processes.

The reference to “what other people do in situations where government does not respond promptly” was a clear reference to the national events such as the land invasions that were led by the LPM.

Consistent in her approach, Mrs. Nosebenzile Fani, tried to plead with the government official to show progress in the matter. She pointed out that, “(W)e would not like a clash with the government because we are aware that it was a favour that the government offered us land”.

Towards the end of October 2001, Mr. Monde Sukula phoned to indicate that the report had been finalised. He further pointed out that there was need for the group to formalise its constitution, which CALUSA helped in its development. CALUSA organised workshops with the Delindlala beneficiaries to discuss the constitution. Mr. Sukula and another DLA official presided over a meeting of the group that adopted and signed the CPA constitution, on the 25 October 2001 (CALUSA Annual Report 2001). A Management Committee of nine members, five women and four men, was also elected in the same meeting in which the constitution was adopted. On the 29 October 2001, the Chairperson of the management, Mr. Zwelinzima Dyantyi and Secretary, Mrs. Nosamkele Eleni went to sign a Deed of Sale in Queenstown. During the signing ceremony, the officer indicated that the application had gone through the DSC (CALUSA Annual Report 2001).

However, the issue of the size of the group of applicants cropped up again. The DLA project officer came back and reported that the Provincial Director, Mr. Mike Kenyon, refused to approve the application. According to Mr. Sukula, the Director’s argument was that the group was too big. Mr. Sukula also pointed out that the Provincial Director was concerned that there was “no indication that all the members of the group will be employed” (CALUSA Annual Report 2001). Mr. Sukula further proposed that the

group be reduced to 40 members. The field worker of CALUSA demanded that Mr. Sukula should explain the matter to the members of Delindlala.

It is worth noting that the issue of the employment of members of the group was never an idea of the group. In its founding document, the group indicated that its primary objective was to produce food for their household consumption. It further indicated that the group would only sell surplus. There was no mention of employment in the document. Creation of employment was just an expectation from the department. This is a case of different expectations from LRAD beneficiaries and DLA.

The project officer approached the management committee of Delindlala, requesting them to reduce the numbers. The contact was through telephone. The leadership of the group, out of frustration, indicated that it was not willing to reduce the numbers. It further told Mr. Sukula to come and reduce the numbers themselves. Eventually, DLA officials reduced the number of applicants to 40 members. As a criterion, DLA selected the members with assets and kept them in the group and excluded those with less or no assets. Because of the selection, the final list of 40 members consisted of 19 women, 19 men and two young persons that were above 18 years. The livestock of the group was: a cattle herd of 185, 586 sheep, 44 goats and 19 pigs.

The reduction of members of the group caused unhappiness among members as they argued that government officials were aware of the development of the group. They argued that when their application went through the various stages, the issue about the group's size should have been raised. They also could not understand why the officials allowed the process to develop in the manner it did when they knew that it was not acceptable. People of Lumphaphasi argued that LRAD, as it stood, did not assist them much in getting land. To them LRAD was essentially of assistance to people who have resources and can afford to raise their own contribution to match the government's grant, to afford the ever-increasing land prices. Mrs. Nozolile Qayi, one of the leaders in Lumphaphasi, argued that:

LRAD is not meant for poor people like us. It excludes us from being beneficiaries because we do not have resources to match the government's grant. The government still has to cater for us in its land reform programme. We need

land for agriculture and livestock. We cannot develop within the village because of overcrowding⁶⁶.

Mrs. Qayi summarises the perception of poor people in Lumphaphasi concerning the government's land reform programme. She also captures the essence of what the land demand is about in Lumphaphasi.

The DLA finally approved the application of 40 beneficiaries in December of 2001. After the approval, there was dialogue, through e-mails between CALUSA in collaboration with the Lumphaphasi group, and the Provincial Director of Land Affairs. CALUSA raised concerns about the approach the government used to resolve the composition of the group. Of particular concern for CALUSA was the fact that DLA excluded poor people in its implementation of LRAD⁶⁷.

My argument is that the government has a political mandate to address inequalities in land ownership in South Africa. The government chose to use the approach of making land a commodity that should be bought from the willing sellers for redistribution to those who need it. The formation of big numbers of beneficiaries is closely related to the land prices and the fact that landless people have limited resources to be able to buy the land as individuals.

In subsequent communication between CALUSA and the Provincial Director, it appeared that the government's strategy was to push people it considered better-off out of the communal areas to become the envisaged black commercial farmers. This claim is confirmed by this communication from Mr. Kenyon, who argued:

In these unfavourable circumstances and with DLA's very limited resources we are asking ourselves how we can make the best impact. It is in this specific context that I am suggesting that one tactic is to deliberately get the emergent farmers out of the communal areas into freehold areas where they will have to succeed or fail on their own (there are just not enough CALUSAs to provide on-going support to these projects) and then try to focus whatever attention and resource we can mobilise from municipalities, Dept Agric, NGOs, etc. on homestead production within the communal areas⁶⁸.

In the above quotation, the government's strategy is revealed. It shows that the government intends to take people with resources out of the communal area, and leave

⁶⁶ Mrs. Nozolile Qayi reacting to the response of DLA in a meeting of the Management Committee of Delindlak on 18 November 2001.

⁶⁷ Memorandum written by CALUSA to the Provincial Director on 12 December 2001

⁶⁸ Email message from Mr. Mike Kenyon addressed to the author on 17 October 2003.

poor people within the communal area. Interestingly, this approach follows the same approach adopted by colonialists from the 1870s. Their strategy was to give land to African farmers to prosper outside the communal area. It will be recalled that in Chapter 2 it was pointed out that colonialists gave land to Africans that were considered to be civilised. These farmers got the land on certificates of occupation, whereas other people under headmen had no land rights.

Mr. Etienne Cloete left and handed the farm over to the management committee of Delindlala in mid-December 2001. The members of the group moved in immediately after Mr. Cloete's departure. That was on 27 December 2001.

4.5 Reflections and conclusion

I have shown in this chapter how the introduction of the land reform programme and the study on livestock production in Xhalanga affected the chain of events that took place in Lumphaphasi. The developments also influenced the local development organisation, CALUSA, to change its focus. It used the developments to assist poor communities to acquire land from the white commercial farms. As we have seen in this chapter, the same group of people that were involved in land struggles pre-1994 was involved in the post-1994 land struggles. Their central demand in the post-1994 land struggles was land for grazing and agricultural purposes. They wanted to move out of the communal area and get land in the white-claimed land.

The chapter also showed the central role played by CALUSA in the struggles of the people of Lumphaphasi. The organisation helped the people of this area to understand what the land reform programme entailed. On the other hand, the relationship between the Programme for Land and Agrarian Studies (PLAAS), through Lungisile Ntsebeza, helped in developing the knowledge of CALUSA members about the land reform programme.

Lastly, the chapter showed the limitations of the LRAD programme in terms of meeting needs of the poor people of Lumphaphasi who needed to acquire land outside their communal area. The chapter showed that it was difficult for the people of Lumphaphasi to get land through the land reform programme because it focuses at supporting emerging black commercial farmers.

Chapter 5

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION

This study set out to explore land demand and rural struggles in Xhalanga, a former Transkei magisterial district of the Eastern Cape province. The study attempted to deal with three questions: who wanted land, for what purpose(s) and what did those who want land do to get it? The focus of the study is on Lumphaphasi, a communal administrative area, in the former magisterial district of Xhalanga. Furthermore, the study looked at the theoretical debate on proletarianisation as presented by Wolpe (1972), Beinart (1995), Hendricks (1990) and Bernstein (2003). It assessed the applicability of the theses to the Xhalanga situation, with particular reference to Lumphaphasi.

Lumphaphasi was chosen because of the fact that, it was one of the first areas to show a need for grazing land, and was also the first area to acquire land through the LRAD programme. The study makes a distinction between the Africans with big farms in areas such as Lumphaphasi and the Africans who owned less than 20 morgens of land. The big landowners are referred to as farmers because they are different from the landholders. The farmers have their own individual grazing land, while the landholders only have access to communal grazing land. This is something that earlier studies on Xhalanga did not pick up, including Ntsebeza's studies (2002a; 2005). These farmers and landholders, in areas such as Lumphaphasi, played a leading role in the struggles to upgrade quitrent titles into freehold titles from the 1870s to the 1930s.

5.1 The demand and struggle for land

The study showed that there has been a demand for land from the establishment of Xhalanga in 1865 to 2001. The study also showed that the demand for land changed over time in Xhalanga, as conditions changed. Three distinct groups demanded land in the district: migrant workers that returned to the villages of Xhalanga, former farm workers and women, as was shown by the case of Mrs. Sthoza, Mrs. Qayi and other women involved in the long struggles for land in the former magisterial district. They demanded land for residential, grazing and production purposes.

5.1.1 Migrant workers

Farmers and small landholders were, initially, in the forefront of the land struggles waged in Xhalanga. They struggled to secure their land rights, by upgrading their quitrent titles into freehold titles. Their main strategy was to send delegations to make representations to the colonial administrators.

Although the struggles of farmers and landholders never showed a demand for land until the late 1920s, a demand for land emerged from this group in 1902, when the headman of Cala Reserve, Mr. Makhohliso, allocated commonage land to landless people. However, it was not sustained, as their efforts focused on strengthening their tenure right.

When economic conditions collapsed in the rural areas and landlessness emerged in the 1920s, some children of farmers and landholders, such as Mr. Bengo, took up migrant work. By the 1940s, some started coming back to take over landholding from their parents, as in the case of Mlota at Mnxe. In other words, from the 1940s onwards, children of farmers and landholders who were migrant workers took over landholding from their parents, as inheritance. Those who could not inherit became landless. It is this group of migrant workers that demanded land for residential and productive purposes.

As the population grew, from the late 1940s, and due to the reduction of grazing land as it was demarcated for residential sites during the implementation of betterment, the demand for land for grazing purposes also became an issue for migrant workers. In other words, they did not only demand land for residential and agricultural purposes, they also demanded land for livestock grazing.

Migrant workers and unionists, such as Makiwane, Ntwana contributed in development of militancy in the struggles of the people of Xhalanga in the 1940s. By this time opposition to the implementation of betterment had become confrontational. There were reports that “some contour banks ... had been ploughed over” (Ntsebeza 2005:113).

When it became impossible to embark on any form of meaningful agriculture in communal areas, and land for grazing purposes became scarce from the 1960s, migrant

workers demanded land for residential and grazing purposes. By the late 1980s, the demand was for land for residential purposes only. This was when there was emergence of the civic movement in urban areas of South Africa, which campaigned for provision of housing in urban areas. The influence of the urban-based migrant workers and youth, together with the fact that there was no longer any land for allocation in the villages, made migrant workers to demand land for residential purposes.

The introduction of the land reform programme after 1994, resulted in a change of focus in the land demand of the migrant workers. They demanded land for grazing and agricultural purposes outside the communal areas.

5.1.2 Former farm workers

The second group of people who wanted land in Xhalanga, as depicted by the study, were the landless people, who emerged from 1902, as labour tenants, sharecroppers and people that were displaced by war. They wanted land for residential and grazing purposes, which was allocated to them from the grazing land in Cala Reserve. They did not embark on any struggles of significance at the initial stage.

From the late 1920s, a movement of people from the nearby white farms led to emergence of a group of landless people in the 1930s. This group demanded land for residential and agricultural purposes in the 1930s. Together with landless children of the farmers and landholders, former farm workers joined the farmers and landholders in their opposition to implementation of betterment planning from the late 1940s. As grazing land was reduced the former farm workers demanded land for residential, agricultural and grazing purposes. However, by the late 1980s, the land struggle of landless people was mainly about land for residential purposes, because of the influence of migrant workers and youth from urban areas. With the introduction of the land reform programme after 1994, the demand of the former farm workers was also, as that of migrant workers, for land for grazing and agricultural purposes outside the communal areas.

From the 1960s, former farm workers as part of landless people lodged applications for residential and agricultural land. When it became impossible to acquire land, this group resorted to defiance, which culminated into land occupations from the late 1980s. Once again, migrant workers, unionists and youth were influential in struggles of this period.

After 1994, the struggles had been through meetings, some confrontational, and sending of delegations to government officials.

5.1.3 Women

Although not discussed in the study as a separate group, women were part of the struggles of both landholders and landless people. There was not enough evidence about their involvement in land struggles in the earlier stages. However, I assume that as part of residents of Xhalanga they participated in those struggles, particularly from the 1930s, when their husbands left for migrant work.

Mrs. Madeyi Mguli of Emnxe led efforts of landholders in the late 1980s to early 1990s, to return to their pre-betterment land. Women were also involved in struggles of landless people to get land for residential purposes from the late 1980s, as the case of Mrs. Qayi illustrates. Further, they were in the forefront in struggles of landless people who, after the introduction of the land reform programme in 1994, wanted land for grazing and agricultural purposes outside the communal areas.

5.2 The land reform programme

The post-1994 period introduced the land reform programme. The land reform programme has land redistribution as one of its three components. From 1997 to 1999, land redistribution used the SLAG to assist households to acquire land from willing sellers. The SLAG provided a grant of R16 000 to a household, with poor people as its primary focus. From 2001, the LRAD replaced the SLAG. LRAD focuses on creating a class of black commercial farmers. It offers a grant ranging from R20 000 to R100 000, depending on own contribution. Applicants are expected to come up with a minimum own contribution of R5 000 in the form of cash, assets or labour.

The study showed similarities in approach between the nineteenth century colonialists and the democratic government. Both the colonialists and the democratic government promoted the emergence of black commercial farmers. As part of their 'civilising mission', colonialists wanted an emergence of independent African farmers in the reserves. The new government uses the LRAD programme to promote the development of black commercial farmers in South Africa. The effects of both approaches have been the exclusion of poor African people in the ownership of productive land. The current

government's approach is to "release pressure on land" in communal areas by taking rich black farmers out of them.

My argument is that this is just a short-term solution. It still confines the majority of poor black people within the same overpopulated and overstocked land where the colonial and apartheid governments confined them. Land redistribution with its focus to black commercial farmers will not help poor people in communal areas to address their desire to get land for production outside their current areas. What this means is that the more the country tries to effect changes, the more things stay the same. The political changes from 1994 were meant to be a break with the colonial and apartheid past, but that past has retained a stranglehold on the land reform policy of post-1994.

5.3 The theoretical debates revisited

A question that arises from the study is: how to characterise the people who live in rural areas at this stage, taking into account the arguments about proletarianisation, re-peasantisation and de-agrarianisation. The study agrees with Wolpe, Beinart and Hendricks that there was proletarianisation of rural residents by the late 1920s. It also acknowledges that some of the rural residents were fully proletarianised, while some returned to the villages at some stage. I showed in this study that most of the rural residents followed a particular trend as they converted into migrant wage workers. They took up wage work at an early age and when they reached middle ages they came back to establish themselves in their rural areas. Some came when they retired from wage labour, though. In the villages, they made a living using various means, land being one among many, of the strategies they used. I contend that they are not the reserve army of labour, or the reservoir of labour Wolpe and Beinart write about. They are also not a displaced proletariat that Hendricks refers to, because they became part of rural society and life, as I illustrated in the case of Mr. Zwelinzima Dyantyi and others in Chapter Three.

In Xhalanga, the interest in residential land was linked to the influence of the urban-based youth and migrant workers, but that did not mean there was less interest in productive land as the de-agrarianisation theorists suggest. However, this does not mean that rural residents are becoming peasants again, as Bernstein argues. The study

has shown that land-based livelihoods become one of the means through which the rural residents survive, but certainly not the only one.

The interest of people of Lumphaphasi in productive land is not mainly because of the current global economic system. The history of the land struggles in Lumphaphasi has been dominated by a demand for productive land. This demand for land persisted even at a time when South Africa experienced an economic growth, from the 1940s. However, some migrant workers who came back after retrenchment, particularly in the late 1980s, they made use of the land as one of the sources of livelihood.

I have also shown how the concept of landholders underwent transformation in the 1930s. Up to that stage, landholders had been people whose relationship with the capitalist system was through trade. From then, a new breed of landholders emerged. The migrant workers who came back to their villages took over as landholders from their parents. A difference between them and their parents was that the new landholders were also waged workers.

In summary, the study has shown that people who want land are migrant workers, displaced farm workers and women. Migrant workers consist of children of farmers and landholders; and landless people most of whom were children of farmers and landholders who could not inherit land from their parents. Former farm workers came from the surrounding white farming areas due to evictions or retrenchments. Although women have not been discussed as a group in the study, they are equally an important group of people that want land in rural areas of Xhalanga.

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