

LAND TO THE TILLER: A COMPARISON OF LAND REFORM IN SOUTH AFRICA AND SOUTH KOREA

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Abstract

This paper seeks to inform South Africa's current land reform effort, which remains a deeply divisive issue in post-apartheid South Africa. Demonstrably, state-led land reform in Korea had significant economic benefits, namely, higher food supply, enhanced agricultural productivity, improved human capital, increased household income, and the emergence of a capitalist entrepreneurial class. Zimbabwe-style state-led land reform, on the other hand, would be destructive. Elements of state role in Korean land reform can be identified for use in South Africa, first through the adoption of a smallholder system in communal areas for profitable farming. Nationwide tenure reform projects should be launched in subsistence-farming areas to measure potential success. This would involve rural land tenure reform that sees ownership move from communal/government to individual level; where property rights are guaranteed to individuals. Ultimately, such reforms could support South Africa's goal of achieving 30% land reform in the agricultural sector by cultivating successful black farmers who would be able to successfully manage larger commercial farms, whether they be divided into a number of smaller lots or stay intact.

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I. Introduction

Rural poverty is a persistent affliction faced by a substantial percentage of South Africans and has hampered development effort. By contrast, South Korea, which experienced absolute rural poverty after the Korean War, no longer suffers from rural destitution partially due to its successful implementation of land reform. The core research question of this study is therefore whether, by way of comparison, land reform in South Korea – which was largely a success – can be of any conceptual or practical use in the South African context, for land reform has been very limited in South Africa and is often considered to have failed in its aims and objectives.

Observably, land reform remains a very divisive issue in South Africa, and studying South Korea's agricultural reform experience can provide new perspectives. The South Korean case is of particular practical value since agrarian success followed the land reform of the 1940's and 1950's. One of the major obstacles to land reform in South Africa is the generally perceived uncertainty over its economic viability. Zimbabwe, just north of the border, provides a good example of the possible negative effects of forced land reform, and it is in precluding such a development in South Africa that this study finds value – by showing that there are viable alternatives.

Therefore, this question will be approached with the following aims: (a) to determine the theoretical links between land reform and economic development; (b) to detail the backdrop of land reform in Korea (i.e., why it was necessary); (c) how was it implemented; (d) how the actors (i.e., landlords, tenant-farmers, the USAMGIK (United States Army Military Government in Korea), and the government of the south) responded to it; (e) to establish whether land reform was conducive to economic development (including income increase) in South Korea; and, finally, (f) to analyze how applicable South Korea's land reform experience is to South Africa.

II. Literature Review

The issue of land reform is theoretically pertinent as it pertains to man-land relationships at its very core. Typically, any process that alters land ownership patterns presents tangible ramifications in terms of its usage, agricultural productivity and productivities in general, settlement patterns, and the spatial or geographical movements linked to agriculture. In areas where half or more of the labor force is absorbed in agricultural-related endeavors, the issue of land reform becomes especially relevant. These normally include developing or underdeveloped areas, mainly rural with low standards of living.

The agrarian development cannot be separated from land ownership and tenure arrangements, although there are other components that also warrant consideration, such as agricultural credit, communications, health and education services, marketing, and technical services (Bernstein, 2002). Furthermore, as land issues almost by default involve political power as a fixed variable (both in the sense of the political power of those in its favor and those who are opposing it), it is necessary to define what exactly ‘political power’ means.

According to Giddens (1989: 52), ‘power’ can be defined as “the ability of individuals or groups to make their own concerns or interests count, even where others resist. Power sometimes involves the direct use of force, but is almost always also accompanied by the development of ideas... which justify the actions of the powerful.” Max Weber (1925) defines ‘power’ as “the probability that one actor within a social relationship will be in a position to carry out his will despite resistance, regardless of the basis on which this probability rests.”¹

As Cummings (2005: 9) states, politics, as interrelated with the notion of power as it is, can be defined as “a process involving the exercise of control, constraint and coercion in society”. Political power can for the purposes of the argument to follow, be defined “as the authority held by a group within a society-either acquired as a means of governmental direction or in opposition to a

¹ Weber(1947)

governmental group-that allows for the administration of public resources and implementation of policies for society” (Oghenesivbe, 2014).

There is no single, unified theory of land reform and much of the literature is inchoate, not least in that there is no clear consensus on the notions, concepts, and conceptual frameworks associated with land reform. It is therefore essential to distinguish between the notions of ‘land reform’ and ‘agrarian reform’ – both of which are foundational to this field of inquiry. Traditionally, the term ‘land reform’ has referred to “the redistribution of landed property for the benefit of landless workers, tenants, and small farmers.”

Hence, the notion of ‘land reform’ largely deals with ownership rights. ‘Land reform’ is, in the first instance, defined by two polar initiatives, the first being ‘land redistribution’ (fragmentizing and/or coalescing of existing holdings by refashioning in terms of the scale of ownership). A second type of land reform is known as ‘tenancy reform’ (aims at bolstering tenancy contracts through, *inter alia*, rent reduction and/or measures that allow for greater security of tenure). ‘Land reform’ can thus be taken to primarily refer to the redistribution of land ownership, which ordinarily involves the expropriation and redistribution of land from landowners to tenants and/or semi-landless or landless peasants (Tai, 1974; Horowitz, 1993). Therefore, the majority of land reform initiatives are thus governed by three basic motives, namely, the economic, the political, and the social.

Yet, the debate on the impact of land reform on agricultural productivity worldwide is an important one. In the case of land reform in Korea, land reform initially saw a drop in productivity compared to the higher productivity of the Japanese landlords of the colonial period and the landlord-tenant farms. By the late 1950’s, however, land productivity had recovered and then further increased to exceed the land productivity of the 1930’s (Cho, 2013). Redistributive land reform’s relationship to productivity has been subject to much debate, with the hope of pro-reformers typically resting on the ‘farm size-productivity inverse relationship’ theory, leading to small farms often conceived as a ‘magic bullet’ against rural poverty (Borras and Franco, 2010: 10-16), which in itself has been

contested both in terms of productivity of small farms in relation to large farms and small farms as a means for poverty alleviation, which can also be qualified in terms of whether a farm is collectively or individually owned, with individually-owned farms typically being more productive (Griffin et al, 2002).

In addition, exploitative land tenure systems often act as the main obstacle to general rural development, as was also the case in Ethiopia. In Ethiopia, land reform was successfully undertaken in 1975, successfully eliminating large holdings and addressing the issues of absentee landlordism and landlessness. Yet, the Dergue regime of Ethiopia gradually enfeebled individual farmers through a succession of ill-designed policies, coercing farmers into joining producer cooperatives. While extractive landlord-tenant relationships were cut, they were simply supplanted by an unequal relationship between government and farmers. Indeed, truthfully Ethiopian farmers have had to deal with the harsh reality of being “tenants of the state”, with all rural land belonging to the state since the 1975 land reform initiative (Belay, 2003: 129-130). Furthermore, land reform as a rights-securing, history and class-conscious, gender and ethnic-sensitive livelihood-enhancing means (including post-settlement support services (Aliber & Cousins, 2013: 163)) to transfer land-based wealth and political power in favor of the poor plurality (landless peasants, rural laborers, indigenous communities, male and female, et cetera) are open to questions of to what extent it is truly pro-poor and whether it can achieve an efficient allocation and use of (scarce) land resources (Borras and Franco, 2010: 10-16). The literature highlights the importance of inclusive institutions in securing successful land reform (Borras and Franco, 2010: 5). It has been variously argued that market-friendly land reforms that aim for full compensation are unlikely to be successful (as is the case in Brazil, Colombia, Kenya, and South Africa), and that successful land reforms have seen high degrees of land confiscation (Borras, 2003: 367; 390; Griffin et al, 2002: 279). Naturally, whether land reform has a positive impact on beneficiaries and whether it is just in the first place and how these two elements can be reconciled are worth examining. Equally important, full and maximal compensation to landlords/landowners should be strived for in pursuing land reform in the context of a liberal, democratic market economy, as partial compensation represents a degree of injustice

may sidetrack the process. Friedrich Hayek argued that, according to his conception of social justice that when governments violate the rights of people through the imposition of discriminatory laws, corrective action may be necessary (in Boudreaux, 2009), yet, whether this applies to intergenerational justice can be questioned (Thompson, 2009: 118). Thirumalai (in Moore, 1955: 124) draws attention to this problem:

“It is difficult to strike a balance between social equity and economic efficiency so long as the former is a variable factor. There is a real conflict between the current measures of land reform which propose a ceiling on the land holdings and the objective of efficiency in agriculture which cannot be attained without an enlargement in the size of operating units. A clear decision must be taken on whether economic efficiency should be the dominant objective or social equity?”

III. South African Context

Land reform is political in nature and always has a political motive. Yet, it is the social motive (egalitarianism) that fundamentally spurs the need for reform. The economic motive for reform is secondary to the social motive (i.e., land reform in itself is typically not motivated primarily by pure, rational financial calculations). Nevertheless, this is not to say that economic consideration is not significant since all three motives are inextricably connected; land reform will ideally improve agricultural productivity and potentially ensure employment opportunities and greater disposable income. Unlike agrarian reform, land reform in South Africa is controversial and the issue dates back to at least 1652 if not earlier. The roots of the controversy lie in the Natives Land Act No. 27 of 1913 which prohibited natives (i.e., people not of European descent) from renting or owning any land in areas proclaimed for ownership by whites (people of European descent, or at least those who appeared to be of European descent). The government of the time instead nominated and allocated various areas for the exclusive ownership of non-whites, leading to large-scale displacement. Addressing this injustice is one of the main political motivators for land reform in South Africa.

Following the 1994 general election, the African National Congress (ANC) took office under President Nelson R. Mandela. Among the ANC's promises in its manifesto was that of land reform. The ANC's landslide victory in 1994 was thus commonly seen as ushering in a new era of change and transformation. Upon ascending to power, the ANC reaffirmed that it would promote a common citizenship founded on equal rights for all South Africans. By implication, the non-white majority would not be allowed to simply ride roughshod over the white minority with regard to land ownership patterns, although a policy of positive discrimination would be applied. Accordingly, the 1995 Freedom Charter contained the following pronouncements (Anseeuw and Alden, 2011): (1) All the land shall be shared among those who work it; (2) Restrictions of land ownership on a racial basis shall be ended, and all the land re-divided among those who work it to banish famine and hunger; (3) The state shall help the peasants with implements, seed, tractors, and dams to save the soil and assist tillers; (4) Freedom of movement shall be guaranteed to all who work on the land and all shall have the right to occupy land wherever they choose; (5) Forced labor on farms shall be abolished.

Yet progress in land reform has been elusive despite the new South African government's target of redistributing 30% of productive farmland from whites to previously disadvantaged groups (mostly black Africans) by 2015 (Anseeuw and Alden, 2011).

In 2011 the Green Paper on Agrarian Transformation, Rural Development and Land Reform was published. It outlined various proposed methods of land reform which can all be subsumed into the following methods:

- (a) Land Tenure
- (b) Land Restitution
- (c) Land Redistribution

The failure to achieve objective - which is a focus of this study - calls for an alternative approach, since the political make-up of South Africa has hampered reform efforts (Anseeuw and Alden, 2011). From the year 2000 until the present, the ANC-led government has continuously reviewed and amended the re-

distribution and tenure process, resulting in more decentralized approach to land reform as manifested in the design of integrated development plans for 47 local government districts. The said plans are inclusive, as opposed to being top-down and racialized. However, the initiative has failed to be implemented fully, partly due to its foundation on the 'willing buyer-willing seller' or free market approach (Hall, 2008).

For instance, North West Province has a total land area of 11,632,000 ha of which 6,179,490 ha belongs to commercial agriculture farms. By 2003/2004 a mere 71,484 ha of said land had been redistributed to non-whites. Indeed, up until September 2001, a paltry 17 land claims had been settled nationally. Moreover, few of the cases where land has been transferred have resulted in profitable, successful agricultural production. This may be due to insufficient levels of agricultural or business knowledge. According to Lund (2010), 90% of completed land transfers have failed as productive enterprises as the Department of Agricultural Development and Land Reform has come to readily admit (Hall, 2008; Ntsebeza and Hall, 2007).

A prime example of such failure can be found in North West Province in the form of Putfontein farm located in the vicinity of Coligny. Prior to the transfer of its ownership, it was a highly successful farm specializing in the cultivation of grain and peanuts. It also had a successfully-run beef herd and dairy as well as sheep farming venture. The two former owners of the farm indicated that they had invested thousands of rands in improving the farm, providing them with a combined income of approximately R7 million a year. Yet, following the expropriation of the farm and its allocation to six individuals and their families, the farm has seen a reduction in annual productivity.

Similarly, a nearby 600 ha farm not far from Lichtenburg was purchased for R1 million by the Department of Land Affairs in conforming to the government's black economic empowerment (BEE) policy. It possessed a flourishing dairy and beef herd as well as sustainable water resources, yet after its reallocation all of the farm's tractors and implements disappeared. Nothing is produced on the farm anymore, and it houses approximately 60-70 families who have no formal income.

As a final example, after a 700 ha farm near Lichtenburg had gone insolvent it was purchased in May 2003 by the Department of Land Affairs, who in turn transferred its ownership to five youth members of the ANC who had formed a Community Property Association. Their ownership was formalized under much fanfare, with 500 people – including some dignitaries who were flown in with two of the national air force’s helicopters – attending the unveiling. The government awarded the new owners 120 cattle as a token gift. Yet, it was reported that by 2004 the new owners were already seeking financial support in order to salvage the operation.

In 2006, the ANC government announced that it would at least partially pursue land expropriation with compensation being paid to landowners, unlike what had happened in Zimbabwe (Bernstein, 2002). However, reform is yet to be realized. The Department of Rural Development and Land Reform admitted that the present land reform plan is at a stalemate and therefore remains a source of inter-ethnic tension in South Africa. It is under such circumstances that Peter Mokaba coined the phrase “Kill the boer, kill the farmer” in the 1990s. Despite having been eventually declared hate speech by a judge, it became a popular refrain for, among others, the President of South Africa, Jacob Zuma (Tau, 2013).

In fact, the previously set timeline for redistributing 30% of South Africa’s productive land before 2014 has already elapsed, with the revised goal being 2025 (Lahiff, 2007). Partly due to the stalling of the land reform process, in the period from 1990 to 2012 there were approximately 2,863 farm attacks and 1,592 murders. Certain independent think-tanks put the number closer to 3,000 (Conway-Smith, 2012). As of 2012, in South Africa it was almost twice as dangerous to be a farmer as to be a police officer, yet in 2012 South Africa’s murder rate was approximately 31.9 people per every 100,000 people, which was 30 times higher than in the United Kingdom (Bernstein, 2002).

The Department of Rural Development and Land Reform adopted at a four-tier system in 2011, as outlined in a Green Paper, detailing policy on: (1) State and public land on leasehold, (2) private-owned land on freehold with limited extent, (3) foreign-ownership on freehold but with precarious tenure, and (4)

communally-owned land on communal tenure.

Three broad points explain this system. First, restrictions will be set on the amount of land individuals and companies may privately own. The first condition will largely be determined by the geographic location of the land and the type of farming being conducted on it. Secondly, according to the Green Paper, all state-owned land should be leased out. Third, foreigners may only own land if they have a South African partner. Yet, as of June 2016, after 22 years, only a mere 8-9% of farmland has been transferred (Cousins, 2016).

South Africa's parliament approved a land expropriation bill on the 26th of May, 2016, that aimed to speed up the land reform process by allowing the state to compensate expropriated land according to a value determined by a "Valuer-General". Yet, the bill has had no substantial impact thus far, and has merely served as a populist gesture for the ruling party to maintain support in rural areas. The bill is subject to the constitution of South Africa, which means that fair market prices will still have to be paid. Given that the South African government does not have the funds available to do so on a meaningful scale, the process of land reform is likely to be unaffected by the bill (The Economist, 2016).

IV. A Comparison with Land Reform in Korea

In addressing South Africa's land reform conundrum, it may be suggested that the merits and demerits and the applicability in general of South Korea's own experience should be considered due to differences between both countries.

To begin with, South Korea's land reform project was born in highly unique circumstances; in the context of the Cold War when the USAMGIK and the Rhee Administration stripped the land-owning elite of their land through a 'Land-to-the-Tiller' policy, providing limited compensation to landlords, in order to appease the poor peasant masses and nullify the threat posed by North Korea and possibly communist revolution. Land reform policy in Korea was based on the

following three conditions; (a) the distribution of farmland to farmers based on a suitable compensation model for Korean landlords; (b) payments—in the form of instalments over a relatively long period of time—by farmers for the last they were to receive; and (c) the enactment of the Farmland Act so as to prevent the re-concentration of land ownership (Park, 2013: 63-65).

During the Japanese colonial occupation of Korea (1910-45), the rate of land tenancy decreased gradually due to Japan's support of landlords and the purchasing of the land of independent farmers for the purpose of facilitating the delivery of Korean agricultural goods to Japan by exploiting the efficient collection mechanism of agricultural products that was made possible by land tenancy (Shin, 1976: 16-7). This was achieved through the Land Census Project (1910-18) that entailed the measurement of arable land and the identification and registration of land ownership. The Japanese colonial government used the census to provide ownership of land to the landlord class (Jang, 2007: 173).

Following the Second World War, the USAMGIK expropriated land from Japanese landlords without compensation and redistributed most vested land through USAMGIK ordinances no. 9, 33, and 173 and set up the 'New Korea Company' which later evolved into the 'National Land Administration'. Vested land was sold by the New Korea Company to tenants who were, at the time, tillers of the land. Priority was given to the farmers that were actually cultivating National Land Administration-owned land and who had a desire to purchase land. This represented the first stage of land reform in Korea. The USAMGIK's reallocation of vested land set the tone of land reform in Korea and provided the Rhee Administration with a viable blueprint for the reform of land owned by Korean landlords. Moreover, it also encouraged landlords to sell their land, or face expropriation (Park, 2013: 54-5).

When power was transferred to Syngman Rhee in 1948, the 'National Land Administration' fell under the administration of the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, and the Farm Land Bill was passed after consultation with the Land Commission - which was constituted by stakeholders from all sides - and implemented in March 10, 1950, which effectively led to the execution of land reform

in Korea. However, most farmland was redistributed through buying and selling prior to the implementation of the government's land reform bill, and not through expropriation (Park, 2013: 104). Land reform under the Rhee Administration saw the full redistribution of all vested lands in Korea by February 1952. This period represented the second stage of land reform in Korea (Park, 2013: 64-5).

The key measures of the Rhee Administration's land-to-the-tiller land reform policy were as follows: (a) government was to purchase farmland owned by non-farmers (i.e. those who did not comply with the land-to-the-tiller criterion); (b) the size of the farm could not exceed three jeongbo (almost three hectares) and that any excess farmland should be sold to government; (c) farmland sold to government was to be redistributed to former tenants and/or smallholder farmers and anyone who wished to farm or continue farming; (d) those who received land had to pay their dues within 5 years; and, (e) landlords were to be compensated by government (Wang, 1987: 26-9).

Land reform stripped landlords of their entrenched economic foundations of power and encouraged the formation of a new societal class of peasant farmers. Two observations should be made; first, there was no huge population of landless peasants which the USAMGIK and Rhee Administration had to contend with and accommodate, albeit the peasants that had to be contended with were by and large poor farmers. During that period, South Korea was competing with the North socio-economically for development, and land reform was one of the top agendas to succeed. Secondly, Korea was an almost entirely homogeneous society, which removed some barriers to societal transformation (Shin, 1998; Jang, 2007; Park, 2013). Third, the Korean agricultural sector and the associated land ownership patterns and managements systems in themselves were very different from that of South Africa today. 'Land-to-the-Tiller' was marked by the transferal of the ownership of small plots of land that was already being cultivated by peasants, which means that the size of landholdings had no real impact on the land reform process and that agricultural productivity was not affected overly negatively since landlords did not have a significant direct impact on the agricultural productivity of their tenants. Fourth, rice was an export commodity during the Japanese colonial occupation of Korea, and could easily be converted into a commodity for local

consumption. Finally, Korea did not have a high degree of urbanization at the time, leaving farmers with little opportunity to leave rural areas.

Generally, positive links between land reform and capitalist development in Korea included the abolition of the feudal class system and chains of semi-feudal land ownership, increased food supply through enhanced agricultural productivity, and more disposable income through redistribution - hence better educated workers through investments in human capital, mostly farmers' children. Given that rice cultivation in Korea was labor intensive at the time, land reform directly benefited farmers by incentivizing higher rice production yields. This encouraged development in urban-industrial spheres and rural development when Saemaul Undong was implemented, which aimed to increase rural income. Ultimately, Korean land reform successfully fulfilled its economic rationale: it actually improved the livelihoods of the landless (Shin, 1998; Jang, 2007; Park, 2013). Land reform in Korea can be evaluated as having been successful (Park, 2013; Putzel, 2000; Shin, 1976; You, 2014). Importantly, the beneficiaries of smallholder-oriented land reform enjoyed government support in various subsequent programs aimed at improving their livelihoods.

TABLE 1. Educational Achievements

Year	1945	1952	1955	1960
Academic High School	50,343 (100)	59,421 (118)	141,701 (358)	164,492 (327)
Vocational High School	33,171 (100)	74,463 (224)	118,911 (358)	99,071 (299)
University and College	7,810 (100)	34,089 (436)	80,391 (1,028)	101,045 (1,292)

Source: Jang (2007)

Japan's experience with land reform is comparable to that of Korea and was even more successful. Like Korea, in Japan, following the Second World War, tenanted land was converted into owner-cultivated land. This expedited long-term investment in agriculture, and as a result led, combined with technological progress, to agricultural productivity increases. Land reform in Japan raised both the average consumption level and average propensity to consume of farmers, which led to a significant expansion of the domestic consumption market (Kawano, 1965).

The vast majority of modern governments either lack the political means and/or will to carry out such a complete transferral of property and, by association, power.

In South Africa, however, given the context of a post-Cold War world that is expected to abide by free market principles and the domestic political context of strong landlords coupled with minority economic strength, the government has little leeway to practically undertake complete, immediate state-led land reform, as was the case in Korea.

Zimbabwe, once labelled the “bread basket” of Southern Africa, in defiance of the ‘willing buyer-willing seller’ principle, pursued a racialized fast-track state-led land reform in February 2000 (although approximately 300 white farmers still remain in Zimbabwe). This led to a precipitous fall in agricultural production with an estimated 45% of Zimbabwe’s population now being malnourished. The USA, among others, sanctioned Zimbabwe’s government by implementing a credit freeze in 2001 via the Zimbabwe Democracy and Economic Recovery Act, with Section 4C (titled “Multilateral Financing Restriction”) being of special relevance. As a result, Zimbabwe’s trade surplus quickly dropped from a surplus of 322,000,000 USD in 2001 to a deficit of 18,000,000 USD in 2002.

Land reform was, in the Zimbabwean context, a disaster. Zimbabwean experience is greatly informative and relevant since Zimbabwe’s pre-fast-track state-led land reform context was greatly similar to South Africa’s present one – in 1979 white Zimbabweans were approximately 5% of the population, yet they owned 70% of Zimbabwe’s most fertile land. South Africa’s political elite (i.e., the ruling party) have taken heed of Zimbabwe’s failed land reform project and are therefore very hesitant to implement similar reforms (Greenberg, 2013; *The Economist*, 2002).

Yet, like in the south of Korea in 1945, in South Africa there is a strong social and political motive for land reform. South Africa’s rural population is approximately 20,000,000 – urban population is approximately 30,000,000 – and the minimum legal daily wage is R105 (Business Report, 2013; World Bank, 2013). The fact

that the majority of farmland is owned by white farmers as a result of the Natives Land Act even though whites represent a minority has been a persistent source of social tension that has seriously hampered South Africa's socio-economic development. Furthermore, the vast majority of black rural inhabitants live in communal areas where they enjoy no tenure rights. Both of these phenomena are obvious motives for land reform.

Unequal land ownership patterns in South Africa have seen rural poverty persisting as an affliction faced by nearly all black rural inhabitants in South Africa. This poverty is reflected by the distressing degree of income inequality in South Africa, with South Africa's Gini coefficient ranging from about 0.660 to 0.696. Restated, there is a strong social and political motive for the redistribution of (disposable) income and the lessening of inequality for if the income levels of the poor and landless are not raised political instability is likely to follow (Business Report, 2013; World Bank, 2013).

Despite the obvious need for land reform, a practical solution is not easily forthcoming. Unlike South Korea, farm ownership in South Africa conforms to the latifundium model of ownership, which necessarily implies large numbers of landless farm workers. In the south of Korea land ownership was merely transferred to already existing tenants who merely resumed farming as per usual, yet in South Africa such a smooth transferral would appear to be impracticable. In the South African context, a complete transferral of land would imply transfer to landless farm workers who have virtually no experience running a large-scale farm (Tran, 2011).

Moreover, the mere division of large-scale farms into small plots of land would mean the creation of a new farming environment that previously landless farm workers often have scant familiarity with (in terms of running a successful financial enterprise). Most lack proper training and have inadequate state support and/or access to markets. In other words, such schemes almost always involve an organisational deficiency. Furthermore, transferring large commercial farms to multiple owners leads to a dynamic where the profits of the farm may have to be divided numerous more times, leading to overall disappointment in profit levels, if they continue to exist at all.

Nevertheless, Korea's experience of land reform does have clear applicability to communal patterns of land ownership in South Africa. Most (90%/16-19 million) rural inhabitants live in communal areas and are subject to informal land tenure, and do not possess formal ownership of the land they till, so to speak. This means that smallholders have no guaranteed tenure security, effectively leaving them without collateral and any incentive to develop land profitably.

There are further obstacles that exist in South Africa that the south of Korea did not have to contend with, such as the existence of collectively powerful landowners, ethnic groups (primarily Afrikaners), business interest groups, and even government officials that would rather preserve the status quo. Generally, this group does recognize that increasing participation by black farmers is necessary to suppress social tension. Another faction argues that land reform should be resolved through the market - namely the World Bank and proponents of BEE, among others - and that those of black African descent should receive state assistance in gaining entry into the farming sector. This faction is notably opposed to radical land reform as it occurred in Zimbabwe. The 'willing buyer-willing seller' approach advocated by this faction has largely failed and basically preserves the status quo, doing little to resolve increasing social tensions.

On the far left of the spectrum, a third faction composed of EFF (Economic Freedom Fighters), The Landless Peoples Movement, and some grassroots ANCYL (ANC Youth League) members advocates radical reform with minimum to no compensation. However, such proposals resemble the Zimbabwean model and have been dismissed by the ruling party.

Unlike Korea, however, the political power and/or influence of those who prefer to preserve the status quo and those who advocate free market approaches has not waned sufficiently enough for the wishes of those who support radical, complete state-led land reform to be fully accommodated. South Africa's largely heterogeneous ethnic make-up, recent memory of Apartheid, as well as its history of inter-ethnic violence, oppression, and turmoil have created a climate of distrust that acts as a barrier to effective, successful land reform. The tensions and mistrust that exist between South Africa's black and white populations have served as a se-

rious impediment to land reform.

South Korea's land reform experience may have limited direct relevance to South Africa in terms of transplanting the Korean model, but some important lessons can be extracted from Korea's experience.

Based on Korea's experience, the South African government should first investigate the possibility securing the formal tenure rights of smallholders in communal areas – a sizable percentage of which is government-owned. The targeted 30% of commercial farmland to be redistributed should only be attempted once communal tenure rights have been secured for smallholders and smallholders on lots in communal areas have become viable commercial farms. Following tenure reform, there should thus be an immediate focus on providing support measures to smallholders so as to facilitate greater food security and an increase in overall farm productivity and thus profitability (and consequently, disposable income).

If such reforms succeed, then South Africa's land reform initiative could be implemented and extended to cover approximately 80% of South Africa's commercial farms, since in 2012 it was estimated that only 12% of farms contributed to 62% of the national turnover. Unproductive farms can thus be expropriated with compensation and redistributed to willing smallholders, with the rural poor who are not interested in agricultural enterprise being awarded a one-off payment. Redistributed farms should not be redistributed in the form of Communal Property Association (CPAs), but individual lots (Cousins, 2016).

V. Pro-poor Rural Development

Effective land reform could play an important role in addressing the needs of rural poverty alleviation and development, yet strong state support would be necessary if participants are to move beyond subsistence farming and achieve decent livelihoods. Juma (in Bowdler, 2010) points out that "Agriculture and economy for Africa are one and the same" and that "It is the responsibility of an African presi-

dent to modernize the economy and that means essentially starting with the modernization of agriculture.” Amongst others, given the realities of the modern era of globalization, the state should ensure that small-scale farmers have direct access to markets (middlemen should be eliminated), which implies the development of transport infrastructure that would ensure for the easy transportation of foodstuffs (Tran, 2011). Small-scale farmers should, furthermore, enjoy state support in the form of agricultural extension services and training and should, additionally, have access to agricultural inputs (Tran, 2011). State support should include the identification of profitable agricultural enterprises.

The large tracts of land used mainly for subsistence that exist in rural South Africa warrant small-scale farming reforms – as of 2010 there were about 1,200,000 mainly black subsistence farmers, as opposed to an estimated 40,000 commercial farms (Sandrey et al, 2011: 8).

It should be noted that the success of any small-scale farming land reform and agricultural revolution in general in South Africa will be based upon political will. The government of the South African state has the duty to improve the skills and technological capacity of farmers in order to ensure successful reform. Smallholder-oriented agricultural research and a supervisory mechanism are necessary too. Smallholder-focused training, proliferation of tools and technology, and research would necessarily emphasize harvest storage mechanisms in order to cut losses and also emphasize land productivity enhancing methods and technological capacity of farmers in order to ensure successful reform.

Accordingly, infrastructure expansion – including new roads and water and irrigation schemes – and the mechanization of farms along with the construction of storage and processing facilities in addition to the usage of appropriate biotechnology and crops would be very necessary (Bowdler, 2010). Infrastructure development would require capital (Massarenti and Alemu, 2011), though, and thus it is essential that the government of South Africa identifies and coordinates development partners interested in agriculture, and also attempts to encourage and persuade the private sector to fund and invest in agricultural development projects in order to make agricultural development sustainable and provide it with a strong foundation.

Success via governmental assistance would naturally change the image of farmers from impoverished survivors to successful entrepreneurs, which is especially significant given the potential a positive and confident image has of attracting investment and directly improving the capacity of the farmer (Massarenti and Alemu, 2011). Through government support, farmers could conceivably gain a comparative advantage in certain agricultural products, but merely emphasizing the role of farmers would certainly not lead an agricultural revolution of any kind. Part of this process should involve determining how smallholder land usage and agricultural output can be made profitable in rural communal areas within the context of domestic and international markets. Necessarily, the government of South Africa should recommend cash crops or livestock that can make producers competitive in both the domestic and international markets.

Moreover, smallholdings need to be involved in well-organized commercial communities if they are to be profitable (which is a necessary condition for sustainability) and also create potential employment opportunities. The government should encourage the formation of such communities. Indeed, it could be conjectured that involving the masses in such agricultural projects would lead to, in general, greater communal confidence and a greater sense of responsibility – both towards themselves and others – via the acquisition of skills and jobs and a decent quality of life as a result of successful participation and thus pave the way for successful large-scale land reform.

When the capacity of small-scale farmers within their community contexts is increased sufficiently, it might be suggested that large commercial farms adjacent to rural communal areas (i.e., areas with large rural populations) or small towns with high growth potential should be subject to possible land reform initiatives. In the case of the latter, implementing land reform aimed at the sub-division of farms creates the possibility of supplementing income via urban-based employment and also provides direct access to produce markets while also removing hurdles for the emergence of agro-processing enterprises (Lahiff and Cousins, 2005: 130).

Similarly, commercial farms in peri-urban areas and areas with high percentages of land restitution claims should also be investigated as possible areas for reform. In the case of the former, there exists high potential for the development of smallholdings with an emphasis on intensive production, such as in the case of dairying and market gardening. In the case of the latter, land redistribution and restitution are not only highly complementary but also create the opportunity for the introduction of small-scale farming (Lahiff and Cousins, 2005: 130).

Finally, areas that are known to have a high potential for expanded production of high-value cash crops (such as subtropical fruit, cotton, sugar, and specialist vegetables) that small-scale farming enterprises can exploit, as well as the associated agro-processing mechanisms, should be investigated for possible land reform (Lahiff and Cousins, 2005: 130).

VI. Conclusion and Recommendations

Ultimately, cooperation between landowners/farmers, farm workers, subsistence farmers, the landless, and government is necessary if South Africa is to deal with its land issue. AgriSA (Agri South Africa) could and should play a fundamentally important role in facilitating this process. The partial implementation of a network of small-scale farming units should be considered. Patterns of land ownership in South Africa need to be altered through responsible state-led land reform.

It is the considered opinion of this research that the history of land reform and especially land reform in Korea is helpful in potentially achieving land reform in South Africa because it highlights the state-led land reform which involves all actors. Very importantly, it shares lessons about passive reliance on the free market to resolve past land injustices (like the 'willing buyer, willing seller' policy in South Africa); this approach is not likely to lead to rural development. Persistently high levels of corruption and lack of trust in government must be addressed because they make successful rural reform nearly impossible.

Finally, based on South Korea's experience, the adoption of a smallholder system based on tenure reform in communal areas - a substantial amount of which is owned by the government - should be identified as a priority to precede the eventual implementation or large-scale land reform. Any transferal of land to a traditional council, as was proposed by the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform under its 'Communal Land Tenure Policy', should be avoided. Furthermore, it may not be possible to have as strong a policy objective as the South Korean government had as a result of existing tensions with North Korea at the time, which put land reform as one of the items at the top of the agenda. Although land reform is an important agenda item in the South African context, it does not enjoy the same urgency of land reform in the erstwhile Korean context.

Accordingly, a nationwide program should first be launched in areas where subsistence farming is prevalent in order to measure and improve government and state capacity to implement potential land reform as well as improve the capacity of farmers, with particular reference to communal areas where land tenure reform is critical. The state should play an important, proactive, leading role in supporting such initiatives if they are to succeed. Merely creating a legal framework which bases land reform on free market mechanisms is bound to fail. Ultimately, such reforms would support South Africa's goal of achieving 30% land reform in the agricultural sector by cultivating successful black farmers who would be able to successfully manage larger commercial farms, whether they be divided into a number of smaller lots or kept intact.

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