



# Unsettled Land: State-making and the Politics of Land in Zimbabwe 1893-2003

*Jocelyn Alexander*

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## **Unsettled Land: State-making and the Politics of Land in Zimbabwe 1893-2003** Jocelyn Alexander

In early 2000, a process of land occupation began in Zimbabwe. It involved the movement of hundreds of thousands of black farmers onto mostly white-owned farms, often under the leadership of veterans of Zimbabwe's 1970s liberation war. The ZANU(PF) government cast this moment as the end of colonialism. Others saw it as mere electioneering, the desperate machinations of an illegitimate government. This poorly understood crisis has deep roots. In the settler period the government of Rhodesia divided the land along racial lines leaving the black population in poor and overcrowded reserves. Independent Zimbabwe not only inherited this profoundly unequal division of land but also a potent institutional and ideological legacy of contested claims to authority over the land. This combustible mix shaped political desires and discourses, as well as state and African institutions, setting the stage for the dramatic upheavals of 2000 and beyond. North America: Ohio U Press; Zimbabwe: Weaver Press(PB)

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