ABSTRACT

Land governance has historically been contested due to its intricate connections with occupancy and settlements. For Africa, the latter phenomena have involved emotive issues of colonialism and land expropriation that came to define the access to means of capitalist production and/or absence thereof. For this reason, Africa is now synonymous with the ironic continent of mineral and biodiversity wealth amidst millions of socially excluded and impoverished people. Theoretically, the concept of extraverted subjugation invokes the idea of Africans themselves participating in the use of land resources in discriminatory ways that perpetuated enduring societal inequalities. In tribal societies, whose land governance was defined by patriarchy, such contestations have tended to be deep and volatile as part of the specific breed of accumulation and, to large extent, capitalist development. The paper argues that such contestations on land governance of South Africa’s tribal non-urban settlements have simultaneously defined stark divides between the social and economic, as private and public domains, respectively. The artificial divide between the private social and public economic domains has justified the continued subsidization of the modernist capitalist sectors by the traditional systems. This paper concludes that the absence of sustainable development in tribal non-urban localities in South Africa, is a function of the same old phenomenon of land occupancy which has translated into capitalist discrimination that is sustained through tribal customs and value systems.