

Abstract:

What has become known as 'the African agrarian crisis' is an extremely complex phenomenon. This much is clear from the fact that, despite the very considerable amount of literature which has been accumulated on the subject (Berry, 1984), there is still very little agreement as to its precise nature and dimensions and even less certainty on how to resolve it in the context of national level policies, plans and programmes. What this must mean, *inter alia*, is that explanations cannot be sought simply in pithy epigrams drawn from grand theories and hastily assembled micro-level data bases.