Preface

It is with great pleasure and a dash of pride that we present this first book in a sub-series of the Afrika-Studiecentrum Series, published by Brill Academic Publishers. The sub-series is the result of a co-operation between the African Studies Centre (ASC) in Leiden and South Africa-Vrije Universiteit-Strategic Alliances (SAVUSA) in Amsterdam, the Netherlands. Both institutions share a long history of academic co-operation with and research on the African continent, the ASC in the whole of sub-Saharan Africa and the Vrije Universiteit more in particular in southern Africa.

The ASC’s Afrika-Studiecentrum Series came into existence in 2003 and aims to offer the best of African studies in the Netherlands. Its disciplinary scope is the same as the ASC’s research profile, namely social sciences and humanities in the broadest sense. SAVUSA is a co-operative network between the Vrije Universiteit and a number of South African universities, with the intention of stimulating, facilitating and generating academic publications in a wide range of disciplines within the humanities field. The connecting element within this network is its focus on socially relevant subjects in the various contexts of southern Africa, each one looking at it from its own particular disciplinary background.

In the light of current developments in southern Africa, it seems appropriate that the first book in the sub-series, by Marja Spierenburg, is about a conflict over land in Dande, in the Zambezi Valley in Zimbabwe. The various developments concerning the land question in Zimbabwe have cast their shadows well beyond the national borders, influencing, amongst others, South Africa. We hope that this first book in the sub-series sets an inspiring tone for further critical debates on various socially relevant issues in southern Africa.

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