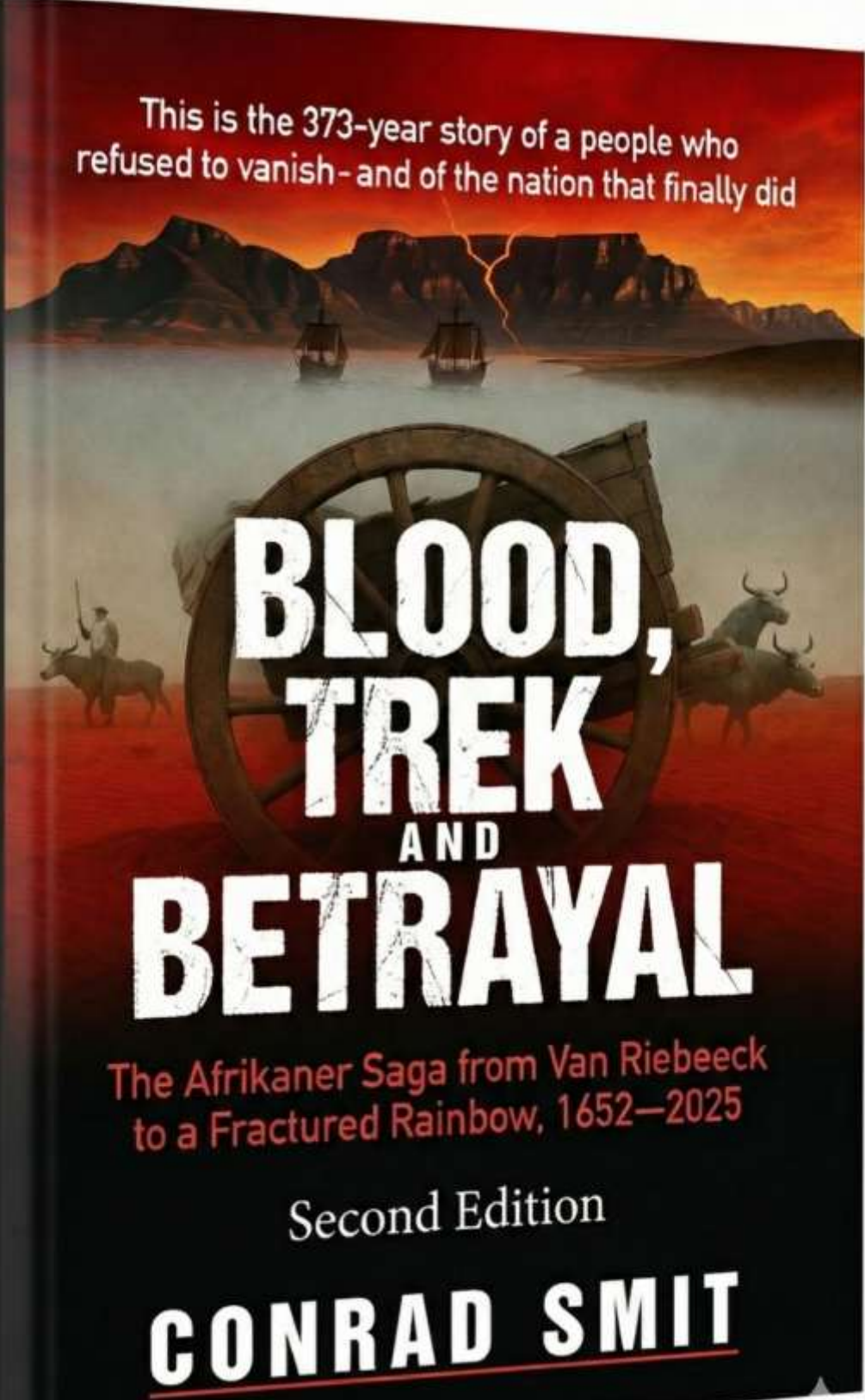


This is the 373-year story of a people who
refused to vanish - and of the nation that finally did

The book cover features a dramatic illustration. At the top, a red, stormy sky with a lightning bolt is visible. Below, a body of water shows two sailing ships. In the background, dark, jagged mountains rise. The foreground is a vast, flat, reddish landscape. A large, weathered wooden wagon wheel is positioned in the center. To the left of the wheel, a person on a horse is visible. To the right, two oxen are harnessed to a wooden structure. The title 'BLOOD, TREK AND BETRAYAL' is written in large, white, distressed capital letters across the center, with 'AND' in smaller letters between 'TREK' and 'BETRAYAL'.

BLOOD, TREK AND BETRAYAL

The Afrikaner Saga from Van Riebeeck
to a Fractured Rainbow, 1652—2025

Second Edition

CONRAD SMIT

BLOOD, TREK AND BETRAYAL



CONRAD SMIT



Blood, Trek, and Betrayal (second Edition)

The Afrikaner Saga from Van Riebeeck to a Fractured Rainbow, 1652–2025

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Blood, Trek, and Betrayal: The Afrikaner Saga from Van Riebeeck to a Fractured Rainbow, 1652–2025

Chapter 1: The Seed at Table Bay

Jan van Riebeeck's Arrival and the Birth of a Frontier People

(1652 – ca. 1700)

On the morning of 6 April 1652, three small ships of the Dutch East India Company – the *Drommedaris*, *Reijger*, and *Goede Hoop* – dropped anchor in a wide, windswept bay beneath the flat-topped mountain the Portuguese had named *Taboa do Cabo*, Table of the Cape. The commander, a thirty-three-year-old surgeon-turned-merchant named Jan Anthoniszoon van Riebeeck, stepped onto the beach with sixty-eight men and eight women, the first permanent European settlers south of the equator in Africa.

They had not come to colonise in the Spanish or Portuguese sense. The Vereenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie (VOC) wanted only a halfway refreshment station for its spice fleets rounding the Cape of Good Hope. Van Riebeeck's written orders were brutally clear:

“Plant gardens, barter cattle from the Hottentots, build a fort, and do not go inland further than a cannon-shot from the shore.”

Within twenty years every one of those instructions would be broken, and the seed of an entirely new people – the Afrikaners – would have been irrevocably planted.

The Company Garden and the First Free Burghers

The very first task was to lay out the famous Company Garden in the alluvial plain between Table Mountain and the salt pans of the bay. By 1654 cabbages, carrots, lettuce, and fruit trees were flourishing. But the salaried Company servants proved lazy and expensive gardeners. In February 1657, the Seventeen Gentlemen in Amsterdam authorised Van Riebeeck to release nine employees from their contracts on condition that they farm as “free burghers along the Liesbeeck River, provided they sold all surplus produce to the VOC at fixed prices and did not trade with passing ships.

These nine men – the founding patriarchs – were soon joined by others. They received plots of 13.5 morgen (about 28 acres) each, stretching in a long ribbon behind the mountain. They were forbidden to own slaves at first, so they bartered cattle from the Peninsula Khoekhoen (whom the Dutch called “Hottentots”) and used Khoekhoe labour under the *inboekstelsel* – a form of indenture that would harden into hereditary servitude.

By 1659 the first armed clash had already taken place: the Khoekhoe, realising they were being pushed off their grazing lands, drove off burgher cattle and destroyed crops. Van Riebeeck responded with a punitive expedition and the planting of a bitter-almond hedge (still visible today as the boundary roads like Hedge Street in Rondebosch). The hedge was the first apartheid line drawn on South African soil.

The Arrival of the Slaves

Gardens and grain were not enough to feed the growing settlement and the 150 ships a year that now called at Table Bay. Labour was the bottleneck. In 1658, the first shipload of slaves arrived from Angola and West Africa, followed in 1659 by 402 slaves from Madagascar and Dahomey. By 1679, when the white population was still under 300 souls, there were already more than 400 slaves in the Cape.

The racial hierarchy was set in those early decades never fundamentally altered: white owners, coloured or Malay slaves and freedmen in the middle, and indigenous Khoisan at the bottom, dispossessed and increasingly incorporated as servants. From this crucible the future Afrikaner world-view – patriarchal, hierarchical, and deeply conscious of colour – began to take shape.

The Huguenot Wave (1688–1700)

The single most decisive event in the ethnogenesis of the Afrikaners came a full generation after Van Riebeeck. In October 1685 Louis XIV revoked the Edict of Nantes. French Protestants – Huguenots – suddenly faced conversion or exile. The Dutch Republic offered refuge, and the VOC saw an opportunity to bolster the flagging white population at the Cape with skilled, Calvinist farmers.

Between 1688 and 1700 approximately 180 Huguenots arrived in four main parties. They were deliberately scattered among existing Dutch and German settlers to hasten assimilation, and forbidden to settle in their own quarter of Cape Town. The policy worked almost too well. Within two generations the French language had disappeared from church and school, but the genetic and cultural imprint remained astonishingly strong.

Although they never exceeded 8 % of the white population, the Huguenots contributed roughly 25 % of the founding Afrikaner surnames: de Villiers, du Toit, du Plessis, du Preez, Malan, Marais, Theron, le Roux, Joubert, Cronjé, Fouché, Retief, and many more. They brought superior viticultural knowledge (the Constantia and Franschhoek wines trace directly to them) and an intense, uncompromising Calvinism that would later fuel the Doppers and the Great Trek.

About the Edict of Nantes

The Edict of Nantes (1598): Europe's First Great Experiment in Religious Coexistence

The Edict of Nantes, signed by King Henry IV of France on 13 April 1598 and registered by the Parlement of Paris on 25 February 1599, was one of the most remarkable state documents of early modern Europe.

Comprising a principal edict of 93 public articles, 56 secret (or “particular”) articles, and two royal brevets (financial and military guarantees), it granted the Protestant minority (Huguenots) a degree of religious, civil, and military rights unprecedented in any major European kingdom since the Reformation. For eighty-seven years it brought an uneasy but genuine peace to a country that had been torn apart by eight civil wars between 1562 and 1598. *Yet its revocation by Louis XIV in 1685 would trigger one of the largest forced migrations in European history and expose the limits of royal absolutism when confronted with religious uniformity.*

Historical Context: A Kingdom Drenched in Blood

By the 1590s France had endured thirty-six years of almost uninterrupted religious warfare. The Wars of Religion (1562–1598) began with the Massacre of Vassy in 1562 and escalated through atrocities such as the St. Bartholomew's Day Massacre (1572), in which thousands of Huguenots were slaughtered in Paris and the provinces. The Catholic League, backed by Spain and the papacy, fought to prevent the Protestant Henry of Navarre from inheriting the throne after the assassination of Henry III in 1589. Henry's famous declaration “Paris is well worth a Mass” and his abjuration of Protestantism at Saint-Denis in July 1593 finally allowed his coronation as Henry IV in 1594, but it did not automatically pacify the realm.

Die-hard Catholic Leaguers continued resistance in several cities, while Huguenots feared that their former coreligionist king would abandon them entirely. The realm was bankrupt, famine-stricken, and militarily exhausted. Only a bold compromise could prevent renewed civil war.

The Content of the Edict

The Edict of Nantes was not, as often misrepresented, a declaration of complete religious freedom or equality. It was a carefully calibrated compromise that preserved Catholicism as the established religion of France while carving out protected spaces for Protestantism.

Key provisions included:

1. Liberty of Conscience: Huguenots were granted full liberty of conscience everywhere in the kingdom; no one could be forced to act against their religious beliefs.
2. Limited Liberty of Worship: Public Protestant worship was permitted in the suburbs of one town per bailliage (except Paris and its surroundings within a five-league radius), in the châteaux of some 3,500 noblemen who held the right of haute justice, and in those places where Protestant worship had been practiced before the wars.
3. Civil Rights: Huguenots gained full civil equality: access to all public offices, schools, universities, and hospitals without religious discrimination.
4. Judicial Protection: Special bipartisan chambers (chambres de l'édit or chambres mi-parties) were created within several parlements (notably Paris, Toulouse, Bordeaux, Grenoble, and Rouen) to ensure fair trials in cases involving Protestants.
5. Military and Financial Guarantees (the "brevets"): Approximately 150 fortified towns and castles were granted to the Huguenots as places of safety (places de sûreté) for eight years, with the Crown paying for their garrisons. This was the most controversial aspect for Catholics, as it effectively created a Protestant "state within the state."

Henry IV presented the edict as an act of royal grace rather than a contract, thereby preserving the fiction of absolute monarchical authority while granting concessions that no previous French king had dared.

Implementation and Immediate Effects

The edict faced fierce opposition. The Parlement of Paris registered it only after prolonged resistance and royal pressure, inserting clauses that weakened some provisions. Catholic clergy at the Estates-General of 1614–1615 repeatedly demanded its abolition.

Nevertheless, between 1598 and the 1620s France enjoyed its longest period of internal peace since the 1550s. Trade revived, agriculture recovered, and the royal treasury, under the skillful management of the Duke of Sully (a Huguenot), was restored to health.

Huguenot communities rebuilt churches, established academies (notably at Montauban, Saumur, and Sedan), and produced a remarkable intellectual flowering: scholars such as Moïse Amyraut and Philippe Duplessis-Mornay, and the great jurist Pierre Ayrault.

Demographically, Huguenots probably never exceeded 10–12 % of the population (about 1.2–1.5 million in a kingdom of 18–20 million), but they were disproportionately represented in commerce, finance, the officer corps, and the nobility of the robe and sword.

Decline and Revocation

The peace created by the Edict of Nantes was always fragile. After Henry IV's assassination by the Catholic fanatic François Ravaillac in 1610, the regency of Marie de' Medici and later the personal rule of Louis XIII and Cardinal Richelieu systematically undermined Protestant military and political power. The siege and fall of La Rochelle (1627–1628) marked the end of Huguenot autonomy; the Peace of Alès (1629) revoked the military clauses while preserving worship and civil rights.

Under Louis XIV, whose motto was “Un roi, une loi, une foi” (“One king, one law, one faith”), the remaining protections were gradually dismantled. Dragonnades (the quartering of dragoons in Protestant homes to force conversion) began in the 1680s. Finally, on 18 October 1685, Louis XIV signed the Edict of Fontainebleau, revoking the Edict of Nantes entirely. **Protestant worship was banned**, pastors were given two weeks to leave the kingdom or convert, and ordinary Huguenots were forbidden to emigrate on pain of galley slavery or death.

The result was catastrophic. Between 1685 and 1720 perhaps 200,000–250,000 Huguenots fled France (the Réfugiés), settling in England, the Dutch Republic, Brandenburg-Prussia, Switzerland, Ireland, and even South Africa and North America). France lost thousands of its most skilled artisans, merchants, officers, and intellectuals at the very moment when its European rivals were welcoming them with open arms. The Camisard rebellion (1702–1710) in the Cévennes showed that resistance continued, but it was brutally crushed.

Legacy

The Edict of Nantes remains a landmark in the history of religious toleration. It demonstrated that a pluralist society could function within a single state, even if imperfectly. Philosophers of the Enlightenment (Voltaire, Montesquieu, Rousseau) repeatedly cited it as proof that religious uniformity was neither necessary nor desirable. The French Revolution's Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen (1789) and later 19th- and 20th-century laws on laïcité owe an indirect debt to Henry IV's pragmatic compromise.

Yet its revocation also served as a grim warning: toleration granted by royal whim could be withdrawn by royal whim. True religious freedom would require constitutional guarantees beyond the reach of any single monarch.

In the end, the Edict of Nantes was both a triumph and a tragedy: a brief, brilliant moment when France chose coexistence over crusade, and a reminder of how easily that choice could be undone. Its 400th anniversary in 1998 was commemorated across France with exhibitions, conferences, and the rehabilitation of Henry IV as the “first modern king.” Few

documents in European history have carried such a paradoxical legacy: an act of reconciliation that saved a kingdom in 1598, and whose destruction gravely weakened it less than a century later.

The Birth of Afrikaans in Kitchen and Kraal

By the 1740s visitors already noted that whites born at the Cape spoke a “broken Dutch” quite different from the mother tongue of Holland. The new tongue was forged in three crucibles:

The simplified Dutch spoken by VOC officials and soldiers (many of whom were German or Scandinavian).

The creolised Dutch of Malay, Indian, and Madagascan slaves.

The click-infused grammar and vocabulary borrowed words from Khoekhoe herders.

Children of Dutch fathers and slave or Khoekhoe mothers grew up bilingual or trilingual, and the home language that emerged was neither Dutch nor Malay nor Khoekhoe, but something new.

The first written Afrikaans sentence appears in 1710 in a traveller’s journal: “Ik heb nou lang genog hier geleen” (I have now long enough here lain). By the 1770s Cape court records contain phrases like “ja my baas”, “die volk is moeg”, and “ons wil nie meer slaven wees nie”.

This was the true birth of the Afrikaner nation: not in blood alone, but in a language spoken nowhere else on earth.

Trekboers: The First Frontier Afrikaners

While Cape Town remained a neat, Dutch-style town of gabled houses and canals, the real story was happening inland. By 1700 stock farmers – trekboers – were pushing beyond the first mountain ranges into the Hottentots-Holland and then the arid Karoo. They travelled light: a wagon, a long-barrelled roer (musket), a Bible, and a slave or two to herd the cattle.

These trekboers were the prototype Afrikaners: nomadic pastoralists who measured wealth in livestock, distance in days of ox-wagon travel, and justice by the law of the veld. They baptised their children in the nearest river when a predikant finally arrived, married cousins to keep farms in the family, **and developed a fierce independence** that the Company found impossible to control.

By 1770 there were already white settlers 600 km from Cape Town, farther from the seat of government than Moscow is from Paris. When the VOC sent commissioners to assert authority, the trekboers simply loaded their wagons and moved another hundred kilometres. This pattern – retreat rather than submission – would be repeated in the 1830s on a far larger scale.

The Closing of the First Century

When Jan van Riebeeck died in Batavia in 1677, the Cape settlement had 250 whites, 400 slaves, and perhaps 10,000 Khoekhoen in the vicinity. By 1795, on the eve of the first British occupation, there were 16,000 whites, 17,000 slaves, 20,000 Khoesan servants, and an unknown but vastly larger number of dispossessed indigenous people beyond the frontier.

The whites now called themselves Afrikaners or Boers (farmers). They spoke Afrikaans at home, High Dutch in church, and regarded Holland as a distant, half-forgotten fatherland. They had fought nine frontier wars against the San and Xhosa, enslaved or indentured tens of thousands, and carved out a new society that was European in religion, African in its racial obsessions, and African in its adaptation to heat, drought, and endless space.

Jan van Riebeeck's refreshment station had become a nation in embryo. The next 330 years would be the long, bloody, and still unfinished story of that nation's attempt to survive.









Rijksl. Miesl

C.260-1680.

VOC
FUNDATIO COLONIÆ AD
CAPUT BONÆ SPEI
1652.



JAN VAN RIEBEECK.
6 April 1652.



Chapter 2: Huguenot Vines and Assimilated Blood Forging Language and Lineage, 1688–1750

The Night the French Became Boers

On the evening of 6 January 1688, the French refugee ship *Borssenburg* anchored in Table Bay after a stormy passage from Texel. Among the 23 Huguenots on board was a 28-year-old vine dresser from Provence named Pierre Joubert. He carried in his pocket a single vine cutting wrapped in damp moss – a Chenin Blanc later known as Steen. When Joubert stepped onto the jetty, he knelt and kissed the African soil, whispering in French: “*Enfin, la liberté.*”

Within fifty years his grandchildren would speak only Afrikaans, swear at their oxen in Dutch-Khoisan pidgin, and fight San raiders with the same ferocity as any pure-blooded Van der Merwe. The French had become Boers – and the Boers had become something the world had never seen before.

The Deliberate Scattering

The VOC was terrified of a French enclave. Governor Simon van der Stel therefore issued strict instructions in 1688:

“The French refugees are to be placed among the Dutch farmers, two or three families per district, so that they may learn our language and customs the sooner, and not form a separate congregation.”

The policy was ruthlessly enforced. The largest single group – 44 souls from the *Oosterlandt* and *Wapen van Alkmaar* – were settled in the new valleys of Drakenstein and Franschhoek (“French Corner”). Even there they were interspersed with German and Dutch neighbours. Church services remained in Dutch; French sermons were banned after 1703. Children were forbidden to attend the tiny French school that briefly existed in Drakenstein.

The result was linguistic genocide by design – and cultural triumph by accident. By 1720 only the oldest generation still spoke French fluently. Their children were bilingual; their grandchildren monolingual Afrikaans speakers who could read the Dutch Bible but stumbled over Parisian pronunciation.

Bloodlines That Refused to Fade

Numbers tell only half the story. The Huguenots were never more than 180 adults out of a white population that reached 1,300 by 1700. Yet because they married late, had large families, and rarely married slaves or Khoekhoe (unlike many Dutch settlers), their genes spread like wildfire through the upper strata of Cape society.

Modern genetic studies (2019–2024) confirm that Afrikaners carry on average 22–27 % French ancestry – three times higher than the original demographic proportion.

The surnames alone are a roll-call of Afrikaner history:

- De Villiers → 11,000 descendants today
- Du Toit → 18,000
- Du Plessis → 14,000
- Malan → produced two prime ministers and countless dominees
- Retief → led the Great Trek and died at Blood River
- Cronjé → Piet Cronjé of Paardeberg fame
- Theron → Charlize Theron's direct line

These families formed the backbone of the later Cape Patriot movement, the Boer republics, and the National Party itself.

The Vineyard Revolution

The French brought more than names. They brought viticulture. Within a decade of arrival, estates like La Bri, La Concorde, Bourgogne, and Cabrière, and L'Ormarins were producing wines that stunned European visitors. The sweet Constantia of Groot Constantia – developed by Simon van der Stel but perfected by Huguenot know-how – became the most expensive wine in the world in the 18th century, served at the courts of Frederick the Great and Napoleon.

When the Swedish botanist Carl Peter Thunberg visited Drakenstein in 1772 he wrote:

“The French refugees have turned these valleys into a little Provence. Their vineyards climb the mountainsides in perfect rows, and their cellars smell of heaven.”

That aromatic heaven still funds the Cape winelands today.

The Kitchen Where Afrikaans Was Born

The most revolutionary Huguenot contribution was invisible: language.

In the big Cape Dutch farmhouses, a French-speaking mother would scold her slave cook in broken Dutch while the Malay slave answered in Portuguese creole. The children absorbed everything. The resulting patois simplified Dutch grammar, dropped verb conjugations, borrowed Khoekhoe clicks for certain animals (!gô, !nô), and adopted Malay words for everyday objects (piering = saucer, baadjie = jacket, lekker = tasty).

By 1740 travellers were already complaining they could barely understand the “Cape Dutch” spoken by whites. A German visitor in 1743 recorded the first extended Afrikaans sentence overheard in a Stellenbosch kitchen:

“Die meid het die kombers op die vloer gegooi en sê sy’s moeg gewerk.”

(“The maid threw the blanket on the floor and said she was tired of working.”)

High Dutch remained the language of church and court, but Afrikaans was now the tongue of hearth, wagon-trail, and love song. The Afrikaner nation had found its voice.

Calvinism with a Vengeance

The Huguenots had fled the dragonnades and the galleys of Louis XIV. Their Calvinism was not the polite, mercantile version of Amsterdam but the fiery faith of persecuted minorities. They brought with them the conviction that God had led them, like the Israelites, out of bondage into a Promised Land.

This theology of election fused with Dutch predestination doctrine to create the explosive mixture that later produced the Day of the Covenant (1838), the Doppers, and the ideological backbone of apartheid. When a French descendant named Paul Kruger thundered from the pulpit of the Rustenburg church in 1880 that the Boers were God’s chosen people in Africa, he was speaking with the inherited certainty of a Provençal refugee who had kissed the soil two centuries earlier.

Closing the Circle: The First Afrikaner Rebellion

In 1706–1707, barely eighteen years after the main Huguenot influx, a young farmer named Adam Tas led a revolt against the corrupt VOC governor Willem Adriaan van der Stel. The petition he circulated – signed almost exclusively by Huguenot and Dutch frontier farmers – demanded freedom to trade and an end to Company monopolies.

Tas was imprisoned in the Castle, but the petition reached Amsterdam and forced Van der Stel’s recall. **It was the first time the settlers called themselves “Afrikaners”** in an official document, and the first time they acted as a single political body against European authority.

The seed planted by Jan van Riebeeck had grown roots that no overseas power would ever fully control again.



Chapter 3: Redcoats and Rebel Hearts The Anglo-Boer Rivalry Ignites, 1795–1834

The Day the Flag Changed

On 16 September 1795 the Dutch tricolour was hauled down over the Castle of Good Hope and the Union Jack run up in its place. A British fleet under Admiral Sir George Keith Elphinstone had seized the Cape “for safekeeping” during the Napoleonic Wars. The burghers of Cape Town watched in sullen silence as red-coated marines marched through the Heerengracht. **Few realised they were witnessing the birth of a hatred that would burn for more than two centuries.**

The British promised to respect Dutch law, language, and slavery, and religion. **They lied** about almost everything.

First Frictions: Slavery, Courts, and the Black Circuit

For the first decade the occupation was light-handed. British soldiers spent more time drinking Cape wine than enforcing unpopular laws. Then, in 1807, Britain abolished the slave trade. In 1816, the Cape bench was packed with English-speaking judges who replaced Roman-Dutch law with English procedure. Worst of all, in 1812 a travelling tribunal known as the Black Circuit rode into the eastern frontier to investigate allegations of cruelty against Khoekhoe and San servants. *(The irony being that at the height of the British Empire in 1920, it is estimated that Britain had killed more people in establishing their colonies than the combined death toll of both World Wars combined – an estimated 40 million. When combined with deaths caused by British policies, this estimate rises to over 100 million).*

When the court summoned frontier farmers to answer charges of murder and brutal flogging, the Afrikaners were stunned. In their world, a master’s authority over his servants was absolute, sanctioned by both Bible and centuries of custom. Five farmers were convicted; one, Frederik Bezuidenhout, fled to the mountains rather than submit. When his brother Hans tried to free him in 1815, British troops shot Hans dead at the Baviaans River.

The incident ignited the Slachter’s Nek Rebellion – the first armed uprising by Afrikaners against British rule. On 9 March 1816, five rebels were hanged on a single scaffold at Van Aardtspos. The beam broke under the weight of the first four; they were re-hanged one by one while their wives and children watched. The memory of Slachter’s Nek became the Afrikaner equivalent of the Boston Massacre – **proof that the British were capable of any cruelty against white men who stood in their way.**

The 1820 Settlers and the Eastern Frontier

In 1820, Britain shipped 4,500 English-speaking settlers to the eastern Cape, deliberately planting them as a buffer between the Xhosa chiefdoms and the existing Boer frontier farmers. The newcomers were town-dwellers from London and Yorkshire; the Boers were bearded, Bible-thumping stock farmers who spoke Afrikaans and measured distance by ox-wagon days.

The cultural collision was immediate and permanent. English newspapers mocked the Boers as lazy, dirty, and slave-driving. Boer commandants dismissed the settlers as godless rooinekke (red-necks) who could not shoot straight.

When the Sixth Frontier War erupted in 1834–35, British troops and 1820 settlers fought side by side against the Xhosa, while *many Boer farmers remained conspicuously neutral – or even quietly sympathetic to the Xhosa cause, seeing the British as the greater enemy.*

The Final Straw: Abolition and the “Hottentot Code”

On 1 December 1834, slavery was abolished throughout the British Empire. Cape slave-owners were promised compensation, but the money had to be collected in London – an impossible journey for frontier farmers. Most received less than a quarter of their slaves’ market value. At the same time, Ordinance 50 (1828) and Ordinance 3 (1831) gave Khoekhoe and “Coloured” people full legal equality with whites.

To the trekboers this was the end of civilisation. A man could no longer flog his own servant. A black labourer could sue his master in court and win. The Bible, they believed, clearly sanctioned both slavery and racial hierarchy. When British missionaries like Dr John Philip preached that “the Hottentot is your brother”, frontier pulpits exploded with sermons about Ham’s curse and the Tower of Babel.

The Birth of the Great Trek Myth

In the smoky kitchens of Graaff-Reinet and Uitenhage, a new story began to circulate: God had once led the Children of Israel out of Egypt; now He was calling His chosen Afrikaner volk out of British bondage into a new Promised Land beyond the Orange and Vaal rivers.

The leaders emerged quickly:

- Piet Retief, a prosperous farmer with Huguenot blood and a silver tongue.
- Gerrit Maritz, wagon-builder and lay preacher.
- Andries Pretorius, a giant of a man who would later give his name to the future capital.

- Hendrik Potgieter, the hard-line frontier fighter who distrusted Retief's diplomacy.

Between 1835 and 1840 roughly 15,000 Voortrekkers – men, women, children, slaves, and servants – abandoned their farms and loaded their canvas-covered wagons. They took with them 60,000 cattle, the Dutch Bible, and a burning sense of divine mission.

The Trek Begins: Blood River and the Covenant

On 16 December 1838 Andries Pretorius's commando of 464 men faced 12,000 Zulu warriors under Dingane at the Ncome River. The Boers formed their 64 wagons into a laager, prayed through the night, and vowed that if God granted victory they would build a church and keep the day holy forever.

When the sun rose the Zulus attacked in the classic "horns of the beast" formation. For three hours the Boers poured disciplined musket and cannon fire into the black ranks. When the smoke cleared, more than 3,000 Zulus lay dead; not a single Boer had been killed. The river ran red – Blood River.

The Day of the Covenant (later Dingane's Day, later the Day of the Vow) became the central sacrament of Afrikaner identity. Every year on 16 December, barefoot children in veldskoene would recite the vow while dominees thundered that God had proven the Boers were indeed His chosen people in Africa.

The Real Nature of the Conflict

Modern narratives often frame the Great Trek as white expansionism against black tribes. The truth is more complex – and more revealing of the core thesis of this book.

The Voortrekkers fought Zulu, Ndebele, and later Pedi and Sotho armies with ferocity. Thousands died on both sides. *Yet the driving force was never primarily racial conquest. It was flight from British liberalism* – from a government that insisted on racial equality before the law, that paid slave-owners in London pounds instead of Cape rix-dollars, and that hanged white rebels at Slachter's Nek.

The British Empire was the only power the trekkers genuinely feared. Black kingdoms, however formidable, could be defeated by laager and musket. The redcoats represented something far worse: the destruction of a way of life built on hierarchy, patriarchy, and the unquestioned mastery of the white man over his household and his labourers.

In short, the Great Trek was the first great clash between two white tribes – the imperial British and the frontier Afrikaners – fought out on African soil with black armies as tragic auxiliaries.

The Trek's Last Echo

By 1840 the wagons had rolled to a halt on the highveld and in Natal. Three fragile Boer republics struggled for existence: the Winburg-Potchefstroom alliance in the north, Pietermaritzburg in the south-east, and tiny utopian communities like Ohrigstad in the fever lowveld.

Britain would soon come looking for them again.





Chapter 4: The Great Trek Exodus to Independence, 1835–1854

A Nation on Wheels

Between 1835 and 1843 the largest voluntary migration in modern history unfolded on the southern African highveld. Roughly 15,000 Afrikaners – one-sixth of the entire Cape white population – abandoned their farms, loaded their worldly goods onto ox-wagons, and rolled north and east in search of land where no British magistrate would ever again tell a white man how to treat his servants.

They called themselves **Voortrekkers** – those who trek ahead. The British called them **emigrants**. Their descendants would call it **Die Groot Trek**, the founding epic of the Afrikaner nation.

The First Wagons Roll

The first organised party left the Tarka district in September 1835 under Louis Trichardt and Hans van Rensburg. They aimed for Delagoa Bay, hoping for a port that would keep them free of British control. Behind them came wave after wave:

- Hendrik Potgieter's group (1836)
- Gerrit Maritz's enormous wagon train of 700 people (1837)
- Piet Retief's disciplined column of 300 souls (1837)
- Andries Pretorius's late but decisive commando (1838)

Each party carried the same essentials: a heavy tent-wagon with a 4,000-pound load capacity, a water barrel, a yoke of sixteen oxen, a long flintlock roer, a leather-covered Dutch Bible, and a slave or two to walk beside the wheels. Women rode inside or walked barefoot; children were born on the veld and buried there when fever took them.

Weenen – The Place of Weeping

The deadliest encounter came in Natal. In February 1838 Piet Retief and seventy followers accepted Dingane's invitation to a beer drink at the royal kraal uMgungundlovu. They left their guns outside as a gesture of trust. **At a signal the Zulu regiments closed in and clubbed every man to death.**

That night Dingane sent impis to attack the sleeping Voortrekker camps along the Bloukrans and Bushman's rivers. Before dawn on 17 February, **531 people lay dead** – 41 men, 56 women, 185 children, and 250 Coloured and black servants. The survivors named the devastated region **Weenen** – weeping.

The massacre electrified the Trek. Reinforcements poured in. On 16 December 1838 Andries Pretorius won the vow-protected victory at Blood River (see Chapter 3) By April 1839, the Voortrekkers had shattered Zulu power, and the short-lived Republic of Natalia was proclaimed around Pietermaritzburg.

British Annexation – The Pattern Repeats

Britain could not tolerate an independent Boer republic with a harbour. In December 1843 a tiny British garrison marched into Durban and raised the Union Jack over the fledgling capital. Most Natal Voortrekkers packed their wagons again and rolled back over the Drakensberg, swearing never again to live under the “rooinek” yoke.

Highveld Republics Rise

North of the Vaal River the trekkers found what they had risked everything to obtain: empty grasslands, well-watered grasslands with few strong African kingdoms. Hendrik Potgieter founded Winburg and later Potchefstroom. Andries Pretorius settled the nucleus that would become Pretoria. Between 1844 and 1852 four small Boer states emerged:

1. Winburg-Potchefstroom (later Transvaal)
2. Utrecht-Klip River Republic
3. Lydenburg Republic
4. Zoutpansberg Republic

They were rough democracies where every white male over eighteen could vote in open-air assemblies called **volksraads**. Laws were simple: no slavery of Christians, but full rights to own “apprenticed” black labour, and the death penalty for cattle theft. The capitals were little more than churches surrounded by mud-brick houses, yet these republics *represented the first time in history that Afrikaners ruled themselves without European oversight.*

The Sand River and Bloemfontein Conventions

Britain, exhausted by frontier wars and treasury deficits, decided containment was cheaper than conquest.

- **Sand River Convention (17 January 1852)** Britain recognised the independence of the Boers north of the Vaal River (the future South African Republic/Transvaal).
- **Bloemfontein Convention (23 February 1854)** Britain granted independence to the Boers between the Orange and Vaal rivers (the future Orange Free State).

For the first time in two centuries, Afrikaners had sovereign states of their own. The signatories on the British side never imagined diamonds and gold would soon make those dusty treaties the most expensive pieces of paper in imperial history.

Life in the New Republics

The republics were poor, pious, and patriarchal. A visitor in 1855 described a typical Sunday in Potchefstroom:

“At sunrise the bell in the little clay church rings. Every burgher rides in with his Sunday black, long whip coiled on the saddle. Women in kappies and long dresses walk beside the horses. Inside the church the dominee preaches for three hours without notes, thundering against drink, dancing, and the sin of Ham. After service the men smoke outside and discuss cattle prices while the women serve coffee and coffee in the shade.”

Land was virtually free – a farm of 6,000 acres cost the price of a Bible and a handshake with the landdrost. Taxes were almost non-existent. Every white man carried a gun and considered himself the equal of any other. Black tribes that resisted were crushed with commando raids; those that submitted paid tribute in cattle and labour.

The Myth Takes Shape

Within a generation the Great Trek was transformed from historical event into sacred history. School primers told children:

- God had hardened Pharaoh’s heart so that Israel might be delivered.
- God had hardened the British heart so that the Afrikaner volk might be delivered.
- The circle of wagons at Blood River was the new Ark of the Covenant.

Songs were composed – **“Die Lied van die Voortrekkers”** and **“Op die Voortrekkerpad”** – still sung today. Murals were painted on church walls showed bearded men in waistcoats defending blonde women against assegai-waving hordes. The Trek became the Afrikaner Genesis, Exodus, and Conquest rolled into one.

The Trek in Perspective

The Great Trek was never a simple land grab. It was the largest anti-colonial rebellion by white settlers in history – a refusal to accept London’s vision of a liberal, racially egalitarian empire.

Black kingdoms suffered terribly: the Ndebele were driven into Zimbabwe, the Zulu kingdom broken, the Sotho and Tswana raided for cattle and children. Yet the primary

enemy, the one the trekkers feared and hated above all others, was the British Empire and its missionaries who preached that a black man was the equal of a white.

Once again, the central conflict in South African history revealed itself not as black versus white, but as **two white tribes fighting** for mastery of the subcontinent, with African societies caught between the wagons and the redcoats.

The Great Trek did not end in 1843. It merely paused. The next act would begin with the discovery of diamonds in 1867 and gold in 1886 – and the final, apocalyptic confrontation between Boer and Brit.



Chapter 5: Gold, Raids, and Republics Under Siege The Road to War, 1854–1899

The Quiet Before the Storm

For three decades after the Sand River and Bloemfontein Conventions the Boer republics enjoyed a precarious golden age. The Transvaal (officially the Zuid-Afrikaansche Republiek, ZAR) and the Orange Free State (Oranje-Vrystaat) were poor, pastoral, and proudly backward. Pretoria in 1870 consisted of 300 mud-brick houses and a church square where oxen grazed between services. Revenue came from cattle taxes and the sale of ivory; the entire civil service of the Transvaal in 1875 consisted of nine officials.

Then, in 1867, a Griqua shepherd boy picked up a shiny stone near Hopetown. It was a 21-carat diamond. Three years later the dry diggings at Kimberley and the river diggings along the Vaal exploded into the greatest diamond rush the world had ever seen. By 1880 the Cape Colony was exporting £4 million in diamonds a year; by 1888 Cecil Rhodes's De Beers controlled 90 % of world production.

The republics themselves seemed untouched. Then, on 15 June 1886, an Australian prospector named George Harrison stumbled over a reef of gold-bearing conglomerate on a dusty ridge called Witwatersrand. Within five years the ridge had become Johannesburg – a roaring city of 100,000 people, most of them foreign uitlanders (outlanders) who spoke English, drank whisky, and voted with their wallets for British annexation.

Paul Kruger's Nightmare

President Paul Kruger – the old Voortrekker lion, now 61 – saw the goldfields as the serpent in his republican Eden. He wrote in his memoirs:

“With gold comes the devil and his disciples. They bring money, but they also bring the British flag.”

Kruger's policy was simple: tax the uitlanders heavily, deny them the vote, and use the revenue to buy modern Mauser rifles from Germany. By 1895 the ZAR treasury was overflowing with £3 million a year while the uitlanders paid 80 % of taxes yet could not vote unless they waited fourteen years and surrendered their original citizenship.

Johannesburg seethed.

The Jameson Raid – Dress Rehearsal for War

On 29 December 1895 Dr Leander Starr Jameson – Rhodes's personal physician and administrator of Rhodesia – rode into the Transvaal at the head of 500 armed policemen of the British South Africa Company. The plan, hatched in Cape Town and London, was for

Jameson to link up with an uitlander uprising in Johannesburg and overthrow Kruger's government in a long weekend.

The uitlanders never rose. Jameson's column was surrounded at Doornkop on 2 January 1896 and forced to surrender. The raiders were handed over to the British authorities for trial, but the damage was done. Kruger became an international hero; Rhodes resigned in disgrace; and every Boer burgher now believed the British would never rest until the republics were swallowed.

Kruger used the crisis to arm feverishly. Between 1896 and 1899 the ZAR imported:

- 70,000 modern Mauser rifles
- 70 million rounds of ammunition
- 42 Krupp field guns
- 4 giant 155 mm "Long Tom" siege guns from France

The Orange Free State, bound to the Transvaal by blood and language, signed a military alliance and bought its own Mausers.

The Uitlander Grievances and the Bloemfontein Conference

British High Commissioner Sir Alfred Milner – a cold imperial ideologue – believed the republics were "mediaeval" obstacles to a united white South Africa under the Union Jack. In May–June 1899 he met Kruger at Bloemfontein. Milner demanded a five-year franchise for uitlanders. Kruger offered seven years with conditions. When Milner slammed his papers shut and declared "This conference is absolutely at an end," Kruger reportedly muttered in Afrikaans:

"Dit is ons land wat jy wil hê, en jy sal dit kry oor ons dooie liggame." ("It is our country you want, and you will get it over our dead bodies.")

The Ultimatum and the War That Followed

On 9 October 1899 the Transvaal and Free State governments delivered a joint ultimatum: withdraw all British troops from their borders within 48 hours or face war. London laughed at the "impudent" Boers. Two days later, on 11 October 1899, Boer commandos crossed the border into Natal and the Cape Colony.

The Second Anglo-Boer War – the South African War – had begun.

The Boer Offensive – The Week of Victories

In the first months the Boers stunned the world:

- Stormberg (10 Dec 1899) – British defeat
- Magersfontein (11 Dec) – Highland Brigade slaughtered
- Colenso (15 Dec) – Redvers Buller repulsed
- Spioenkop (24 Jan 1900) – one of the bloodiest 24 hours in British military history

For a moment it seemed the republics might win outright. Boer generals like Piet Joubert, Louis Botha, Koos de la Rey, and Christiaan de Wet became household names in Europe. In Paris and Berlin newspapers sold out with headlines screaming “Les Boers triomphent!”

The Guerrilla Phase and Scorched Earth

Britain responded by sending 450,000 troops – the largest army ever dispatched overseas until 1914. Lord Roberts captured Bloemfontein (March 1900) and Pretoria (June 1900). Kruger fled to Europe on a Dutch warship. Conventional resistance collapsed.

But the Boers did not surrender. From mid-1900 to May 1902 roughly 25,000 bitter-einders (“bitter-enders”) fought a guerrilla war that bled the British Empire white. De Wet’s flying columns derailed trains, cut telegraph lines, and vanished into the veld. Jan Smuts rode 2,000 km across the Cape to within 100 km of Cape Town.

Lord Kitchener’s answer was total war:

- 8,000 blockhouses linked by 6,000 km of barbed wire
- Farm-burning on a scale never before seen
- Concentration camps

The Camps – The British Atrocity That Seared the Afrikaner Soul

Between 1900 and 1902 the British rounded up 154,000 Boer civilians – mostly women and children – and 115,000 black Africans – into what they euphemistically called “refugee camps”. Conditions were medieval. Tinned beef was rotten, water contaminated, measles and typhoid rampant.

Official British figures admit 27,927 Boer deaths – 22,074 of them children under sixteen. Unofficial Afrikaner estimates run as high as 34,000. In the black camps another 20,000–30,000 perished. Emily Hobhouse’s 1901 report shocked Britain and turned world opinion against the war.

The camps became the single greatest grievance in Afrikaner history – greater even than Slachter’s Nek or Blood River in reverse. Every Boer child learned the names: Irene,

Merebank, Mafeking, Bethulie. Every Afrikaner woman who survived them carried the memory like a brand.

Peace of Vereeniging – Victory in Defeat

On 31 May 1902, exhausted and starving, the last Boer delegates signed the Treaty of Vereeniging in a tent outside Pretoria. The republics surrendered sovereignty but won three crucial concessions:

1. Dutch language rights preserved
2. Promise of eventual self-government
3. No immediate black franchise

The war cost Britain £222 million and 22,000 dead. The Boers lost 6,500 fighters in battle and 28,000 civilians in the camps. The republics were gone, but the Afrikaner nation had survived its crucifixion.

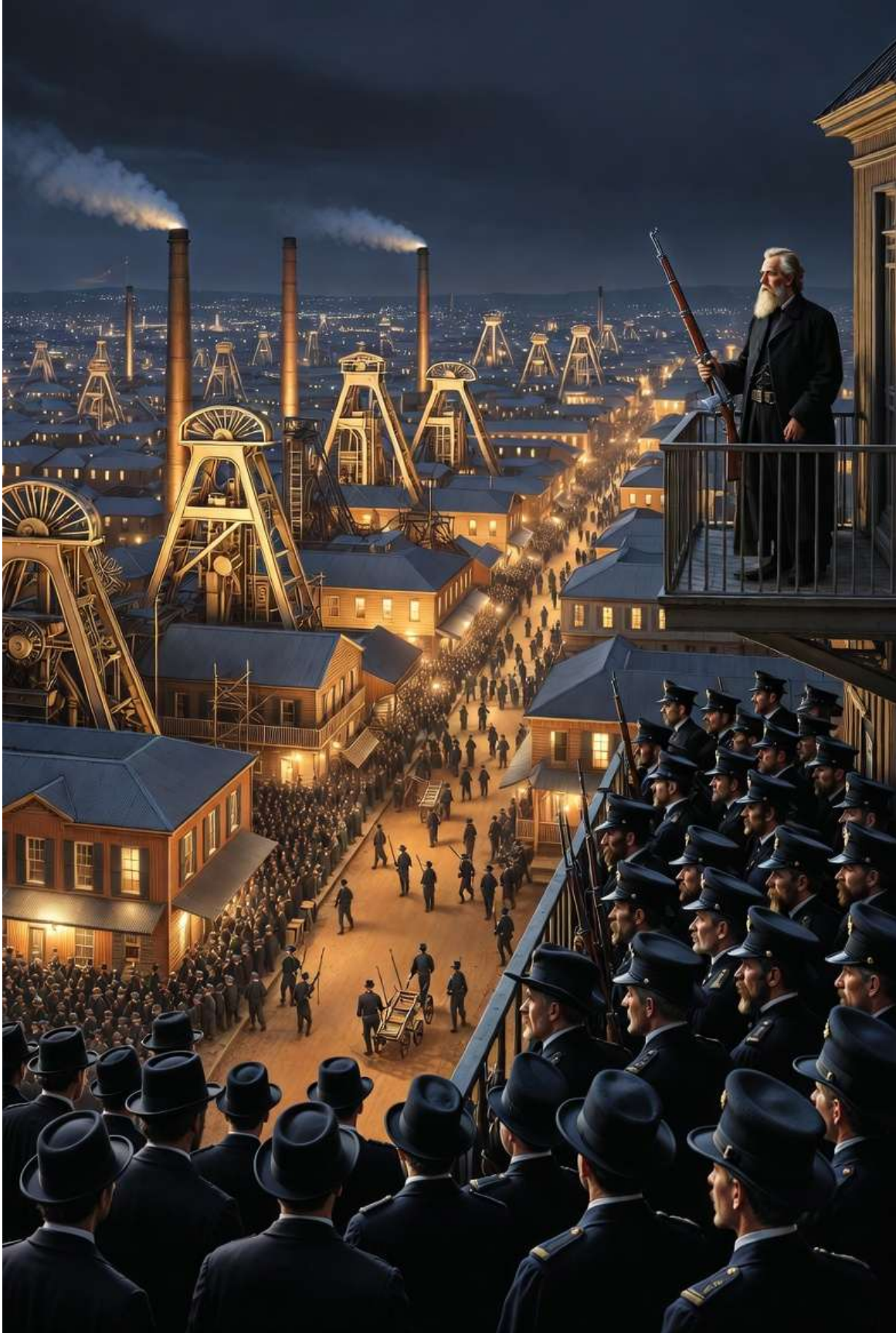
The Raid, the Gold, and the Real War

Look past the propaganda and the central truth of this entire period stands clear: the Anglo-Boer conflict of 1854–1902 was never primarily about black rights or uitlander grievances. **It was about gold, power, and which white tribe would rule southern Africa.**

Rhodes wanted a Cape-to-Cairo empire painted red. Kruger wanted an independent Afrikaner homeland. The uitlanders were pawns, the black population spectators and victims. When Jameson rode, when Milner issued his ultimatum, when Kitchener burned the farms, the clash was between two European peoples who happened to be fighting on African soil.

The British won the war. The Afrikaners lost the republics. But they would win the peace.





Chapter 6: The Bitter End of the Second War Scorched Earth and Concentration Camps

1900–1902

The Moment the War Turned Black

On 6 June 1900, Lord Roberts's army marched unopposed into Pretoria. Paul Kruger boarded a Dutch ship at Lourenço Marques and sailed into European exile. Church bells rang in London; the Morning Post declared "The Boer War is over." They were wrong. The real war (the war that would scar the Afrikaner soul for a century) began the next morning.

Kitchener's New Strategy: "Make the Land Howl"

General Lord Kitchener, fresh from Sudan, took command in November 1900. His assessment was brutally simple: the Boer republics were defeated on every battlefield, yet 25,000 mounted riflemen still roamed the veld, living off the farms of their own people. His solution: remove the farms and the people.

Between December 1900 and May 1902, Kitchener executed the most systematic scorched-earth campaign in modern history until 1914:

- 30,000 farmhouses burned to the ground
- 3 million sheep and 300,000 cattle slaughtered or driven off
- Grain stores torched, fruit trees ring-barked, wells poisoned with carcasses
- Every fence, plough, and wagon destroyed

A British officer in the Orange River Colony wrote home in March 1901:

"We sweep the country for thirty miles in every direction. The farms are blazing all night. One sees the women and children standing beside the burning homesteads with what little they could save in pathetic bundles. It is heartbreaking work, but it is the only way."

The White Camps: "A Wholesale Cruelty"

The displaced Boer families were herded into what the British press called "refugee camps" and the Boers called **konsentrasiekampe**. By October 1901 there were 45 white camps holding 154,000 people (mostly women and children). The largest, at Irene south of Pretoria, held 5,500 souls in bell-tents pitched on bare veld.

Conditions were catastrophic from the start:

- Rations: ½ lb meat (often rotten), ½ lb flour, no vegetables, no milk for babies

- Water: usually from rivers downstream of British troop latrines
- Medical care: one overworked doctor per 2,000–3,000 inmates
- Sanitation: open trenches, swarming with flies

Measles, typhoid, and dysentery swept through the camps like fire through dry grass. In October 1901 the monthly death rate reached 344 per 1,000 in some camps **(higher than the London Plague of 1665)**.

Emily Hobhouse, the English humanitarian who forced her way into the camps in early 1901, wrote:

“I call this camp system a wholesale cruelty... To keep these camps going is murder to the children.”

When her report reached Britain in June 1901, the Liberal leader Henry Campbell-Bannerman denounced the “methods of barbarism” in Parliament. Kitchener’s reply was to tighten control: he banned further visits by Hobhouse and ordered the camps to be run with military efficiency.

The Numbers That Still Burn

Official British statistics (published 1902):

- Total Boer civilians in camps: 154,148
- Deaths recorded: 27,927
 - of which 24,074 were children under 16
 - 81 % of all children under 16 who entered the camps died

Afrikaner historians, using church records and grave registers, place the true figure closer to 34,000. Either way, roughly one in six Boer women and one in four Boer children who entered the camps never came out.

The Black Camps: The Forgotten Holocaust

While the world focused on the white camps, Kitchener quietly created a second, larger system for African refugees and farm labourers. **By mid-1902 there were 64 black camps holding at least 115,000 people. Conditions were even worse:**

- Rations: ¼ lb mealie-meal per day, no meat
- No tents (people slept under wagons or in the open)

- Almost no medical care

Death rates are harder to verify because the British kept poor records, but estimates range from 20,000 to 30,000 dead. The black concentration camps were the direct precursor to the 20th-century idea of racialised mass internment.

The Bittereinders: The Men Who Would Not Yield

While their families starved in the camps, the last Boer commandos fought on. Names that still echo in Afrikaner memory:

- **Christiaan de Wet** (Orange Free State) – the “Boer Pimpernel,” who evaded capture 17 times
- **Koos de la Rey** (Western Transvaal) – the “Lion of the West,” who won 27 of 29 engagements
- **Jan Smuts** (Cape commandos) – rode 2,100 km through the Cape Colony in 1901–02, reaching the Atlantic coast
- **Deneys Reitz** – nineteen-year-old author of the classic *Commando*, who fought barefoot for two years

In March 1902 Kitchener admitted privately: “The war is costing us £2 million a month and we are no nearer the end than a year ago.

The End in a Railway Carriage

On 31 May 1902 thirty Boer delegates (half of them in rags, half in captured British khaki) met British officers in a dining saloon at Vereeniging siding. After three days of agonised debate they signed the **Treaty of Vereeniging**.

Key clauses:

- Boer forces to lay down arms
- Republics to be annexed
- Dutch language rights preserved
- No black franchise until after responsible government
- £3 million compensation for war damage (a fraction of actual losses)

General Christiaan de Wet wept openly when he signed. Koos de la Rey said quietly:

“Ons het ons land verloor, maar ons siel behou.” (We have lost our country, but kept our soul.)

The Aftermath: A Nation Forged in Fire

The war killed 6,500 Boer fighters in battle and 28,000–34,000 civilians in the camps (more than the combined Boer and British combat deaths). Proportionally, the Afrikaner nation lost roughly 10 % of its total population (the equivalent of Britain losing 5 million people in 1940).

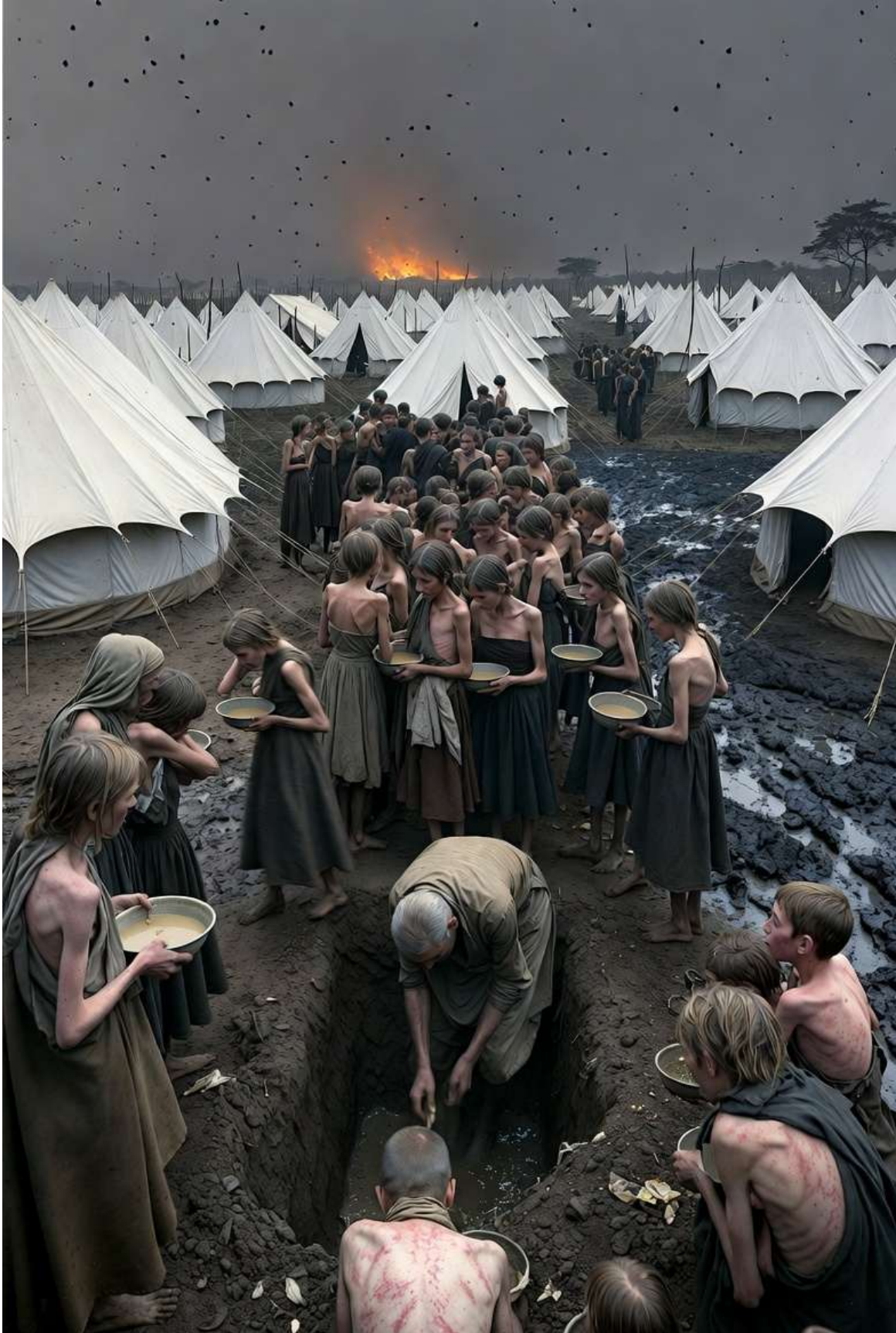
Every Boer family had a story:

- A grandmother who watched her three children die in Irene camp
- A farm burned three times in eighteen months
- A father who returned from commando to find only blackened chimneys and a row of small graves

These stories were told around kitchen tables for generations. They became the emotional fuel for Afrikaner nationalism, the emotional justification for 1948, and the emotional reason why, when Afrikaners finally took power again, **they would never again trust British promises.**

The concentration camps did not break the Afrikaners. They baptised them.





Chapter 7: Union from the Ruins 1910 and the Fragile Accord, 1902–1914

The People Without a Country

When the last Bittereinders rode home in June 1902 they found a landscape of ash. Chimneys stood alone in the veld like blackened fingers accusing heaven. Widows in mourning kappies walked the roads with barefoot children, searching for relatives. The census of 1904 counted 285,000 whites in the former republics; **fully half were classified as “poor whites” living in canvas shacks or abandoned mine compounds.**

The British called it reconstruction. The Boers called it **die verengelsing** – the making-English.

Milner’s Kindergarten and the Dream of Anglicisation

Lord Milner’s young Oxford-educated administrators – the famous “Kindergarten” – believed the war had given Britain a clean slate. Their plan:

- English as the sole official language in schools
- Import thousands of British settlers
- Turn Afrikaners into loyal imperial citizens within one generation

By 1907 they had failed on every count. Afrikaans-speaking children simply refused to learn in English; teachers who insisted were boycotted. When the Transvaal received responsible government in 1907, the first act of Louis Botha’s Het Volk party was to place Dutch (soon Afrikaans) on equal footing with English.

The Poor White Problem - The Afrikaner Nation’s Darkest Hour, 1902–1937

The Scale of the Catastrophe

When the Boer commandos laid down their Mausers in May 1902 they returned not to homes but to blackened chimneys. The British scorched-earth policy had destroyed 30 000 farms and left an entire rural economy. The 1904 Transvaal Indigency Commission delivered a verdict that shocked even the most pessimistic observers:

- 48 % of Afrikaner families in the former ZAR were “very poor”
- 25 % were “totally destitute”
- In Pretoria alone 4 500 white families (roughly 40 % of the Afrikaner population) were living in conditions “worse than those of the average native mine worker”

By 1916 the Carnegie Commission (an American-funded inquiry) found that out of 300 000 rural Afrikaners, at least 120 000 were landless bywoners (share-croppers) and another 60 000 had already drifted to the cities. By 1932, at the depth of the Great Depression, the figure had risen to an estimated 300 000 “poor whites” – **one-sixth of the entire Afrikaner population.**

These were not the drunken failures of colonial stereotype. They were the grandchildren of field cornets, the great-grandchildren of Voortrekker leaders. Men who could recite the names of every commando at Blood River now sold matches on Church Square. Women who once managed households of thirty souls now scrubbed floors for English madams in Parktown.

The Visible Shame

Contemporary photographs are merciless. A 1908 image taken in Pretoria shows a bearded man in a patched black waistcoat and veldskoene pushing a hand-cart piled with firewood, his wife and five barefoot children trailing behind. Another, from Vrededorp in Johannesburg, shows rows of corrugated-iron shacks flying the Vierkleur flag – the only possession the family still owned that proved they had once been burghers of a republic.

Missionary reports from the time speak of “**white kaffirs**” – Afrikaners who had sunk so low they lived in the same locations alongside black families, sharing mealie-meal and poverty. The phrase cut deeper than any British bayonet.

Why It Happened

The causes were structural and brutal:

1. Scorched-earth destruction of capital – livestock, implements, seed grain, houses
2. The rinderpest epidemic of 1896–97 had already wiped out 80 % of trek-oxen before the war
3. Post-war land prices soared as British speculators and loyalists bought up bankrupt farms
4. Gold and diamond mines needed cheap black labour; white men were deliberately excluded from skilled positions to keep wages low
5. Drought cycles (1903, 1912, 1919, 1926, 1933, each worse than the last
6. **The 1913 Natives Land Act ironically accelerated white dispossession:** black share-croppers were evicted, leaving white landlords with no tenants and white bywoners with nowhere to go

The result was a perfect storm: a proud, patriarchal people stripped of land, status, and hope.

The Psychological Wound

For Afrikaners the shame was existential. A Boer's identity had always rested on three pillars:

- Ownership of a farm
- Mastery over black labour
- Independence from any earthly authority except God

All three were shattered. Dominee J.D. du Toit (Totius) wrote in 1918:

“Ons volk sterf nie aan koeëls nie, maar aan armoede en vernedering. Die Engelsman het ons nie in die oorlog verslaan nie; hy verslaan ons nou met sy geld en sy treine en sy myne.”
(*“Our nation is not dying from bullets, but from poverty and humiliation. The Englishman did not defeat us in war; he is defeating us now with his money, his trains, and his mines.”*)

The Church Takes the Lead

The Dutch Reformed Church (NGK, DRC) understood before any political party that if the Afrikaner volk was to survive, the poor-white problem had to be solved by Afrikaners themselves.

In 1916 the three Afrikaans churches held the first **Volkskongres** in Bloemfontein. Five hundred dominees and elders gathered under the banner **“Red die Volk”** (“Save the Nation”). Resolutions were passed:

- Every congregation must appoint a “poor-relief committee”
- Church members to contribute 1 % of income to a central fund
- No more charity from English missionaries – “Ons help ons eie”

By 1920 the churches had established 42 **armblanke sendinggestigte** (poor-white mission stations) where entire families were taken in, taught trades, and re-Christianised “away from the contamination of the cities”.

Helpmekaar – “Help Each Other”

The most extraordinary response came from the women and children themselves. After the 1914 Rebellion executions, schoolchildren across the Transvaal and Free State began collecting pennies in tins labelled **Helpmekaar**. The movement exploded after a call from

General Hertzog in 1917: every Afrikaner child must give one penny to buy back the farms of rebel widows.

By 1920, the Helpmekaar funds had collected £300 000 (the equivalent of roughly R1.2 billion today). The money was used to:

- Buy 1 200 farms for landless families
- Pay legal costs for rebels still in prison
- Establish the first Afrikaans-medium high schools

A famous photograph from 1921 shows a line of former bywoners receiving title deeds at a ceremony in Ermelo – grown men openly weeping as the landdrost handed over the documents.

Sanlam, Volkskas, and the Economic Awakening

Out of the same desperation came the economic institutions that still dominate Afrikaans capitalism:

- 1918 – Sanlam founded in Cape Town with £20 000 capital raised from church collections
- 1924 – Federale Volksbeleggings (precursor to Rembrandt and Remgro)
- 1934 – Volkskas bank opened with the slogan **“Spaar in jou taal”** (“Save in your language”)

Willie Hofmeyr, Sanlam’s first actuary, famously said:

“If we do not create our own capital, the Englishman will own us forever.”

The Cultural Renaissance

While the churches saved bodies, the poets saved souls.

The **Eerste Taalbeweging** (First Language Movement) of the 1870s had been a gentleman’s hobby. The **Tweede Taalbeweging** (Second) of 1905–1925 was a war of national survival.

Key figures:

- **Totius** (J.D. du Toit) – translated the entire Bible into Afrikaans and wrote the anguished war poem **“Vergewe? Nooit!”** (“Forgive? Never!”)

- **C.J. Langenhoven** – authored **Die Stem van Suid-Afrika** (1918), later the apartheid-era national anthem
- **Eugène Marais** – opium-addicted genius whose **Winternag** and **Die Siel van die Mier** gave literary voice to Afrikaner loneliness
- **C. Louis Leipoldt** – doctor-poet who documented poor-white life in novels like **Geseënde Smart**

In 1925, Afrikaans finally replaced Dutch as an official language – a victory celebrated with torchlight processions in every dorp.

The Reddingsdaadbond and the 1938 Symbolic Trek

The climax came in 1938 with the centenary of the Great Trek. The National Party and the FAK (Federasie van Afrikaanse Kultuurvereniginge) organised a second, symbolic trek: nine ox-wagons left Cape Town in August 1938 and arrived in Pretoria on 16 December. Along the way hundreds of thousands of Afrikaners lined the roads in biblical scenes of emotion.

At the same time the **Reddingsdaadbond** (Rescue Action League) was launched under Cape businessman Albertus “Ampie” Roux. Its slogan: “**‘n Volk red homself**” (“A nation saves itself”). Within two years 300 000 Afrikaners had signed pledge cards promising to buy only from Afrikaans businesses. The economic boycott of English firms was so effective that some Johannesburg stores put up signs in Afrikaans to survive.

The Carnegie Commission and the Final Reckoning

In 1929–1932 the Carnegie Corporation of New York funded the most comprehensive study ever done on South African poverty. The five-volume report confirmed what Afrikaners already knew:

- 17.5 % of all whites (almost entirely Afrikaans-speaking) were “very poor”
- Poor whites had higher birth rates, higher infant mortality, and lower literacy than any other group
- The psychological effects were “devastating to national morale”

The report’s quiet recommendation – separate development to protect poor whites from black competition – would become the intellectual foundation of apartheid.

From Shame to Power

The poor-white problem did not disappear overnight, but by 1939 (when the National Party came to power) the worst was over. The mechanisms that lifted Afrikaners out of poverty were:

1. Massive state employment under the “civilised labour policy” (1924–1948) – railways, post office, police reserved for whites
2. Afrikaans trade unions that forced mines and factories to hire whites at protected wages
3. The rapid urbanisation of Afrikaners into a new middle class of teachers, civil servants, and small businessmen

By 1948, more than half of all Afrikaners lived in cities – a complete reversal of 1900. The bearded man selling firewood had become the railway clerk in a neat suit, the school principal, the postmaster, the magistrate.

But he never forgot where he came from.

The Lasting Scar

Every apartheid law passed after 1948 – job reservation, Group Areas, influx control – can be traced directly to the terror of the poor-white nightmare. Politicians did not need to invent racial fear; they had lived it. When D.F. Malan said in 1948 “We will not allow the Afrikaner to sink back into the poverty from which we have rescued him,” every voter over forty knew exactly what he meant.

The poor-white problem was more than an economic catastrophe. **It was the crucible in which modern Afrikaner nationalism was forged.** Out of absolute humiliation came absolute determination: never again would the volk be dependent on English capital or black labour. The price of that determination would be paid by others for the next half-century.

But in 1938, when the symbolic ox-wagons rolled into Pretoria and 100 000 voices sang **Die Stem** under floodlights on the new Voortrekker Monument hill, the Afrikaner nation believed it had risen from the dead.

They were not wrong.

The National Convention – A Deal Between White Men

In October 1908, delegates from the four colonies (Cape, Natal, Transvaal, Orange River Colony) met in Durban, then Cape Town, then Bloemfontein to draft a constitution for a united South Africa. The room contained 33 white men. Not one black, coloured, or Indian delegate was invited.

The key players:

- Louis Botha – ex-Boer general, now moderate conciliator
- Jan Smuts – brilliant young lawyer, ex-commando, future field marshal
- J. B. M. Hertzog – fiery republican purist who distrusted Botha’s softness toward Britain
- John X. Merriman and F. W. Reitz – Cape liberals who wanted votes for educated non-whites
- The British delegation – determined to keep South Africa white-ruled

After months of horse-trading they produced the **South Africa Act 1909**, ratified by the British Parliament in 1910.

The Union of South Africa is Born

On 31 May 1910 – exactly eight years after Vereeniging – the Union of South Africa became a self-governing dominion. Louis Botha became the first prime minister, Jan Smuts his deputy. The ceremony in Pretoria was carefully choreographed: British and old Boer flags flew side by side; the band played both “God Save the King” and “Die Stem van Suid-Afrika”.

Afrikaners had lost the war but won the peace. The new country’s constitution entrenched white rule:

- Cape liberal franchise (qualified non-racial vote) left untouched – for now
- Transvaal and Free State kept their colour bar (whites only)
- Senate and Parliament overwhelmingly white
- Afrikaans recognised as an official language alongside English from 1925

The Birth of Black Political Consciousness

The same year, 1912, a young lawyer named Pixley ka Isaka Seme called a meeting in Bloemfontein. On 8 January 1912 the **South African Native National Congress** was founded – renamed the **African National Congress (ANC)** in 1923.

Its founding resolution declared:

“The demon of racialism, the aberrations of the Xhosa-Fingo feud, the animosity that exists between Zulus and Tongaas... must be buried and forgotten. We are one people.”

The delegates – mission-educated teachers, clergymen, and chiefs – still hoped for inclusion was possible within the new Union. They sent a deputation to London to protest the 1913 Natives Land Act (which restricted black land ownership to 7 % of the country). The British government refused to intervene. The message was clear: South Africa’s racial future would be decided by whites alone.

Hertzog’s Breakaway and the Birth of Pure Nationalism

Not all Afrikaners accepted Botha’s reconciliation. In 1914 J. B. M. Hertzog founded the National Party, demanding:

- Afrikaans as the sole language of schools and courts
- South Africa neutral in British wars
- Protection of poor whites against black competition

His slogan was **“Suid-Afrika Eerste”** – South Africa First. It would become the battle-cry of 1948.

1914: The Rebellion That Almost Restarted the War

When Britain declared war on Germany in August 1914, Botha offered to conquer German South-West Africa (Namibia) for the Empire. Hertzog and old Bittereinders saw this as the final betrayal.

In September 1914, generals Koos de la Rey and Christiaan Beyers raised the Vierkleur again. Roughly 12,000 Afrikaners took up arms in the short, tragic **1914 Rebellion**. The rebels were crushed within months; Beyers drowned fleeing across the Vaal, Manie Maritz fled to Germany, and Jopie Fourie was executed for fighting in Boer uniform against the King.

The rebellion split Afrikanerdom permanently:

- **Verligtes** (enlightened) followed Botha and Smuts into the British war effort

- **Verkrampste** (narrow, bitter) nationalists followed Hertzog into opposition

The fracture would last until 1939 – and then reverse.

The Accord Reaches Its Limit

By 1914, the fragile post-war accord between Boer and Brit was already cracking.

Both groups had agreed on one thing above all: the new nation would remain white-controlled.

Black South Africans watched from the sidelines as the two white tribes, fresh from trying to exterminate each other, closed ranks to ensure neither would ever again be ruled by the other – and that no black person would ever rule any of them.

The Union Jack still flew over Pretoria, but the real victors of 1910 were the bearded men in black waistcoats who had once circled their wagons at Blood River. They had lost their republics. They had not lost their future.



Chapter 8: Broederbond Whispers - The National Party's Rise to 1948

The Secret Handshake

In a small room above a butcher shop in Johannesburg on the night of 5 June 1918, fifteen Afrikaner men – teachers, dominees, lawyers, and one railway clerk – took an oath of absolute secrecy. They called themselves the **Afrikaanse Broederbond** (Afrikaner Brotherhood). Their stated aim was simple:

“Die bevordering van al die belange van die Afrikaanse volk” – the advancement of all the interests of the Afrikaner people.”

What began as a dining club of bitter ex-rebels became, within twenty years, the most powerful secret society in South African history – an invisible government that would plan, finance, and execute the 1948 apartheid victory.

The Long March Through the Institutions

The Broederbond's genius was its patience. Its members infiltrated every pillar of Afrikaner life:

- Dutch Reformed Church (by 1940 almost every senior dominee was a member)
- Teaching profession (90 % of Afrikaans school inspectors by 1945)
- Civil service (especially the railways and post office)
- Universities (Potchefstroom and Stellenbosch became Broederbond fortresses)
- Press (Die Burger, Die Transvaler, Die Volksblad)

Cells met monthly in unmarked houses. Minutes were written in code. New members were recruited only after exhaustive vetting. The punishment for betrayal was social death.

Hertzog's Decade: Compromise and Frustration (1924–1939)

In 1924, J.B.M. Hertzog's National Party won power in coalition with the English-speaking Labour Party. Afrikaners celebrated wildly – the first purely Afrikaner-led government since 1902. Hertzog delivered:

- Afrikaans on banknotes and postage stamps
- The new flag (orange-white-blue with inset Union Jack) in 1928
- “Civilised labour policy” – thousands of poor whites lifted into state jobs
- Afrikaans as sole medium of instruction in primary schools

Yet many nationalists felt betrayed. Hertzog refused to leave the Commonwealth, fought on Britain's side in 1914, and in 1934 fused with Jan Smuts to form the United Party. To the purists he had sold the volk for English votes.

The Ossewabrandwag and the Stormjaers

When World War II broke out in 1939, Smuts took South Africa into the war on Britain's side. Afrikaner fury exploded. The **Ossewabrandwag** (OB – Ox-wagon Sentinel) was founded as a cultural movement but quickly became a paramilitary force of 300 000 members wearing khaki uniforms and giving the Nazi-style salute.

Its militant wing, the **Stormjaers**, dynamited power lines, robbed post offices for funds, and planned (but never executed) the assassination of Smuts. Future prime minister John Vorster commanded the OB in Port Elizabeth branch and was interned for sabotage.

Inside the United Party, a group of hard-line nationalists led by D.F. Malan broke away in 1934 and re-formed the **Purified National Party** (Herenigde Nasionale Party after 1940). Their 1943 election slogan was blunt: **“Die Engelse Jood en die Kommunis wil ons volk vernietig. Stem Nasionaal.”** (“The English Jew and the Communist want to destroy our people. Vote National.”)

The 1948 Earthquake

The war ended in 1945. Smuts was a global hero – co-author of the UN Charter, friend of Churchill. Everyone expected him to win the 1948 election easily. The Nationalists were given no chance.

Yet beneath the surface South Africa had changed:

- 400 000 Afrikaners had moved to the cities since 1936
- Afrikaans trade unions now controlled the mines and railways
- The Broederbond had cells in every constituency
- Fears of black urbanisation (“swart gevaar”) were fanned by a wave of squatters' camps around Johannesburg

The Nationalists fought the dirtiest, most racial campaign in South African history. Their manifesto promised:

1. **Apartheid** – total territorial and social separation of races
2. Banning black trade unions
3. Removing coloured voters from the common roll in the Cape

4. Stopping Indian immigration and repatriating those already here
5. Making white civilisation permanent

On 26 May 1948 the result stunned the world:

- United Party: 70 seats, 49 % of vote
- National Party + Afrikaner Party: 79 seats, 41 % of vote

Thanks to rural weighting (“the loaded vote”), D.F. Malan became prime minister with a nine-seat majority.

The volk had taken back its country.

The Night of the Long Knives – Afrikaner Style

Within weeks the purge began:

- English-speaking civil servants were retired or sidelined
- Afrikaans speakers promoted overnight
- The public broadcaster fell under Nationalist control
- The Broederbond list of “suitable” candidates for every state job

One English journalist wrote bitterly:

“They lost the war in 1902, but they have won the peace in 1948.”

The Intellectual Architecture of Apartheid

The ideology had been prepared decades in advance:

- 1930s Stellenbosch professors (especially Nico Diederichs and Piet Meyer) developed the theory of **volkskapitalisme** and Christian-National education
- The 1944 NGK report **“Ras, Volk en Nasie”** declared racial separation a biblical duty
- The Sauer Commission (1947) provided the detailed blueprint that became the apartheid laws of 1949–1953

All of it carried the quiet signature of the Broederbond.

Malan's First Speech as Prime Minister

On 4 June 1948, D.F. Malan addressed a cheering crowd of 40 000 on the slopes of the Voortrekker Monument site:

"In 1838 God led our forefathers to victory at Blood River. In 1902 the enemy burned our farms and murdered our women and children in concentration camps. In 1948 God has given us back our land. This time we will keep it."

The cheering lasted fifteen minutes.

The Meaning of 1948

The National Party victory was not a sudden lurch into racism. It was the final, triumphant act of a fifty-year struggle for survival that began in the ashes of the Boer War. Every law passed after 1948 – the Population Registration Act, the Group Areas Act, Immorality Act, Bantu Education – was designed to do one thing: ensure that the Afrikaner nation would never again sink into the poverty and humiliation of the poor-white era.

The Broederbond had planned it. The churches had prayed for it. The women had saved pennies for it. The poets had sung for it.

And on a cold autumn evening in 1948, the descendants of the Bittereinders took power – legally, democratically, and forever, they believed.

They were wrong about "forever". But in 1948 no one in that cheering crowd doubted it for a second.





Chapter 9: Iron Fist and Global Backlash Apartheid's Defence and Defeat, 1948–1994

The Machine Starts Rolling

Within eighteen months of taking power, D.F. Malan's government passed the foundational laws that turned the vague word "apartheid" into concrete steel:

- 1949 – Prohibition of Mixed Marriages Act
- 1950 – Population Registration Act (every South African classified by race at birth)
- 1950 – Group Areas Act (urban South Africa divided into racial zones)
- 1950 – Suppression of Communism Act (gave the state power to ban any person or organisation)
- 1953 – Bantu Education Act (Hendrik Verwoerd, Minister of Native Affairs and the cold architect of "grand apartheid", described the vision in Parliament:

"There is no place for the Bantu in the European community above the level of certain forms of labour... It is of no avail for him to receive a training which draws him away from his own community and misleads him by showing him the green pastures of European society in which he is not allowed to graze."

The laws were not secret. They were proudly published, debated, and enforced with bureaucratic precision.

The Golden Age of Apartheid (1958–1976)

When Hendrik Verwoerd became Prime Minister in 1958, the system looked invincible:

- Economy growing at 6–8 % a year
- Gold price soaring
- White unemployment virtually zero
- New Afrikaans universities (Rand Afrikaans, Port Elizabeth, Free State)
- Sasol oil-from-coal plants making South Africa sanction-proof
- Nuclear weapons programme quietly begun with Israeli help
- Homeland policy launched – Transkei "independent" in 1963, six more to follow

Afrikaner civil servants, teachers, railwaymen, and policemen enjoyed the highest living standard of any white working class in the world. The Voortrekkerhoogte military base

became a city of 100 000. Orania did not yet exist, but its spiritual blueprint was being drawn in Pretoria's Union Buildings.

The First Cracks

The illusion of permanence shattered on 21 March 1960 at Sharpeville. Police opened fire on a peaceful PAC-led pass-law protest, killing 69 and wounding 180, mostly shot in the back. Photographs of the dead flashed across the world. Foreign capital fled; the rand crashed; South Africa left the Commonwealth in 1961 and became a republic.

Verwoerd survived an assassination attempt weeks later (two bullets in the face from a deranged white farmer), but the message was clear: the world would no longer tolerate even the pretence of "separate development".

Total Strategy – The Securocrats Take Over

After Verwoerd's murder in 1966, John Vorster and then P.W. Botha turned South Africa into a militarised security state:

- Bureau of State Security (BOSS) and its successor, National Intelligence
- Compulsory military service extended to two years for white males
- SADF invasions of Angola (1975–1988)
- Covert funding of RENAMO in Mozambique and UNITA in Angola
- "Third Force" death squads inside the country
- Chemical and biological warfare programme under Wouter Basson

P.W. Botha's famous **Total Strategy** doctrine (1977) declared that South Africa was fighting a "total onslaught" from communism and black nationalism. The response would be total war – on every front.

The Townships Erupt – 1976–1986

On 16 June 1976 schoolchildren in Soweto marched against Afrikaans-medium education. Police opened fire; Hector Pieterse, aged 13, became the iconic photograph of the uprising. Within months 600 were dead and the townships were ungovernable.

The 1980s became a low-grade civil war:

- ANC bombs in Wimpy bars, churches, shopping centres
- Neck-lacing of suspected collaborators

- SADF raids into Lesotho, Zimbabwe, Zambia
- States of emergency (1985–1990) – 30 000 detained without trial
- Koevoet and 32 Battalion operating like private armies in Namibia

By 1989 South Africa had the highest per-capita **prison population** in the world and the most sophisticated internal security apparatus outside the Soviet Union.

The Economic Noose Tightens

Sanctions began as a moral gesture were one thing. Sanctions that actually hurt were another. After Chase Manhattan Bank refused to roll over South Africa's loans in 1985, the rand collapsed from R2 to the dollar to R24 in eighteen months. Gold fell from \$850 an ounce in 1980 to \$300 in 1988. White emigration soared – 15 000 skilled people a year leaving by the late 1980s.

Inside the Afrikaner establishment panic set in. Businessmen formed the Consultative Business Movement. Even Sanlam and Volkskas quietly told the government: the system is no longer sustainable.

The Great Betrayal – 2 February 1990

On 2 February 1990, President F.W. de Klerk stood up in Parliament and did what no one (least of all the security police) expected:

- Unbanned the ANC, PAC, and SACP
- Announced the release of Nelson Mandela
- Lifted the state of emergency
- Promised negotiations for a new constitution

Die-hard verkrampte Afrikaners called it **Die Groot Verraad** – the Great Betrayal. Conservative Party leader Andries Treurnicht stormed out of the chamber. In living rooms across the country dominees wept openly during Sunday sermons.

Mandela walked free nine days later.

The Negotiations – Knives Under the Table

Between 1990 and 1994 South Africa teetered on the edge of civil war:

- 14 000 political deaths (more than the previous thirty years combined)
- Inkatha–ANC fighting in Natal and the Reef

- AWB invasions of the World Trade Centre negotiations venue
- Assassination of Chris Hani (10 April 1993) – the moment the country almost exploded
- St James Church massacre, Heidelberg tavern massacre, countless taxi-rank bombs

Yet the negotiators (Roelf Meyer and Cyril Ramaphosa drinking beer together at secret venues) hammered out a deal:

- Sunset clauses protecting white civil servants' jobs
- Power-sharing Government of National Unity for five years
- Amnesty process (Truth and Reconciliation Commission)
- No nationalisation of mines or farms

On 27 April 1994, South Africans queued for hours in the first democratic election. The ANC won 62.6 %. Nelson Mandela became president. F.W. de Klerk deputy president. The old flag came down.

The Last Afrikaner Strongholds

A few refused to surrender:

- Orania founded in 1991 as a Volkstaat enclave
- Freedom Front (Constand Viljoen) won 400 000 votes demanding self-determination
- Eugene Terre'Blanche's AWB attempted a doomed invasion of Bophuthatswana days before the election and was humiliated on live television

Most Afrikaners simply adapted. Afrikaans universities switched to dual-medium. Afrikaans suburbs became English-speaking within a generation. The old National Party dissolved itself in 2004.

What Apartheid Achieved – and What It Cost

In the cold light of history, apartheid delivered exactly what it promised Afrikaners and nothing more:

- Lifted an entire ethnic group from poor-white poverty to first-world prosperity
- Created Afrikaans universities, corporations, and a modern military
- Preserved Afrikaans language and culture for another half-century

But the price was monstrous:

- 21 000 political deaths
- Millions forcibly removed under Group Areas
- A generation of black children with deliberately inferior Bantu Education
- Global isolation and moral disgrace

When the system finally collapsed, many Afrikaners felt the same mixture of relief and betrayal they had felt in 1902 – only this time there was no commando to ride into the veld.

The Final Image

On 10 May 1994, Nelson Mandela was inaugurated on the lawns of the Union Buildings. Above him flew the new rainbow flag. In the VIP seats sat F.W. de Klerk, Pik Botha, and the last apartheid cabinet – the men who had dismantled the system they once enforced.

Behind them, in the shadows almost no one noticed, stood a small group of elderly women in traditional black kappies and voortrekker dresses. They had come to watch the end of the world their grandfathers had died for in concentration camps and on commando.

One of them, 92-year-old Tant Hannie Coetzee from Bethulie camp, was heard to whisper:

“Hulle het ons land gegee vir ‘n vlag van lappe.” (“They gave our country away for a flag made of rags.”)

She died three months later.





Chapter 10: Honeymoon's End Mandela to Mbeki's Steady Hand, 1994–2007

The Miracle That Wasn't Magic

On the evening of 10 May 1994, Nelson Mandela stood on the Union Buildings lawn and told the world South Africa had closed the book on apartheid “forever and forever”. Fireworks exploded over Pretoria, the new flag fluttered beside the old provincial banners, and even hard-line Afrikaners allowed themselves a moment of wonder. The country had stepped back from the abyss. The miracle was real. But miracles have expiry dates.

Mandela's Five Years – The National Therapy Session (1994–1999)

Mandela governed less like a president and more like a national therapist:

- The Government of National Unity kept F.W. de Klerk and Pik Botha in cabinet until 1996
- The Rugby World Cup victory in 1995 was turned into a deliberate act of racial theatre – Mandela in a Springbok jersey handing the trophy to François Pienaar
- The Truth and Reconciliation Commission (1995–2002) gave perpetrators and victims a stage to speak the unspeakable
- “Madiba Magic” tours took him to Orania (where he drank tea with Betsie Verwoerd) and to tea with Percy Yutar, the prosecutor who once demanded his execution

Economically the picture was mixed:

- Growth averaged 3 % – respectable after sanctions, but not the promised jobs bonanza
- The Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) built 1.1 million low-cost houses, electrified 2 million homes, and brought water to 9 million people
- Yet unemployment rose from 20 % in 1994 to 30 % by 1999 as white-owned conglomerates retrenched thousands to “rationalise”

Afrikaners watched warily. Afrikaans schools became dual-medium almost overnight. Stellenbosch University appointed its first black vice-chancellor in 1997. White civil servants took generous “voluntary severance packages” rather than work under black directors. Emigration ticked upward – 10 000 a year, mostly young skilled people heading for Perth and Atlanta.

Still, the social contract held. Whites kept their suburbs, their pensions, their language on SABC. Blacks got the flag and the moral victory. Everyone pretended this was sustainable.

Thabo Mbeki – The Intellectual in Power (1999–2008)

When Mandela stepped down in 1999, Thabo Mbeki inherited a country that looked stable on spreadsheets and fragile everywhere else.

Mbeki's achievements were technocratic and impressive:

- Treasury under Trevor Manuel and Tito Mboweni ran consistent budget surpluses
- Black Economic Empowerment (BEE) created a new black middle class and a handful of black billionaires (Patrice Motsepe, Tokyo Sexwale, Cyril Ramaphosa)
- Inflation fell from 15 % to under 5 %
- The rand strengthened, foreign reserves tripled
- South Africa rejoined the Commonwealth, hosted the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development, and won the 2010 FIFA World Cup bid

Yet Mbeki's presidency is remembered for two catastrophic obsessions:

1. **HIV/AIDS denialism** Mbeki and Health Minister Manto Tshabalala-Msimang questioned the link between HIV and AIDS, promoted beetroot and garlic and African potatoes, and delayed ARV rollout. A 2008 Harvard study estimated **365 000 unnecessary deaths** between 2000 and 2005.
2. **The “two economies” delusion** Mbeki spoke constantly of South Africa's “first-world” and “third-world” economies existing side by side. Critics called it an excuse for not tackling the informal settlements and rural poverty that exploded after 1994.

The Service-Delivery Volcano Begins to Smoke

By 2004 the townships were no longer celebrating. The ANC had delivered houses, electricity, and water, but not jobs. Unemployment (broad definition) hovered at 40 %. The youth – the “born frees” – felt betrayed.

The first major service-delivery protests erupted in Harrismith (2004) and spread like veld fire. By 2007 South Africa was averaging 8 000 protests a year – burning tyres, overturned buses, and the universal language of the unheard.

The Afrikaner Adaptation

While the country argued about AIDS and growth rates, Afrikaners quietly consolidated three survival strategies:

1. **Economic retreat into enclaves** Orania grew from 300 to 1 200 residents. Kleinfontein, Balmoral, and other volkstaat experiments sprang up. Afrikaans businesses (Naspers, Remgro, Sanlam) globalised aggressively.
2. **Cultural rebranding** The FAK and ATKV promoted “Afrikaans as heritage language” rather than apartheid language. Festivals like Aardklop and KKNK boomed. Afrikaans music (Koos Kombuis, Karen Zoid, Die Antwoord) found new audiences.
3. **Emigration as safety valve** Between 1994 and 2007, roughly 400 000 whites (mostly Afrikaans-speaking) left – the largest proportional exodus of any white community has ever undertaken voluntarily.

The Electricity Goes Out – Literally

In January 2008, Eskom announced nationwide load-shedding for the first time since 1994. The lights went off in hospitals, traffic lights failed, mines closed. It was the moment the middle class (black and white) realised the post-apartheid dream cracked.

Mbeki’s government had been warned as early as 1998 that new power stations were needed. Ideology (fear of “privatisation”) and incompetence (cadre deployment) had trumped planning. The blackouts became the physical symbol of a deeper rot.

Polokwane – The Palace Revolution (December 2007)

At the ANC’s 52nd national conference in Polokwane, Jacob Zuma defeated Thabo Mbeki for the party presidency by 60 % to 40 %. The hall erupted in struggle songs and chants of “Umshini Wami”. Mbeki sat stone-faced as the delegates danced.

Nine months later, in September 2008, the ANC National Executive Committee “recalled” Mbeki as state president – a polite coup. Kgalema Motlanthe became caretaker president until the 2009 election.

The honeymoon was officially over.

The Numbers Behind the Rainbow

By the end of Mbeki's term the report card looked like this:

Indicator	1994	2007	Verdict
GDP growth (avg)	–	5.1 %	Strong
Black middle class	~300k	~3 million	Transformative
Unemployment (strict)	20 %	23 %	Failed
Unemployment (broad)	31 %	40 %	Catastrophic
Gini coefficient	0.64	0.69	Most unequal on earth
Murder rate (per 100k)	45	38	Slight improvement
Life expectancy	62	52	AIDS disaster
Whites as % of population	13 %	9 %	Emigration + demographics

The miracle had delivered a new black elite and a fragile black middle class, but it had not touched the structural poverty of the majority. The townships remained townships. The informal settlements grew. The anger simmered.

The Last Days of Innocence

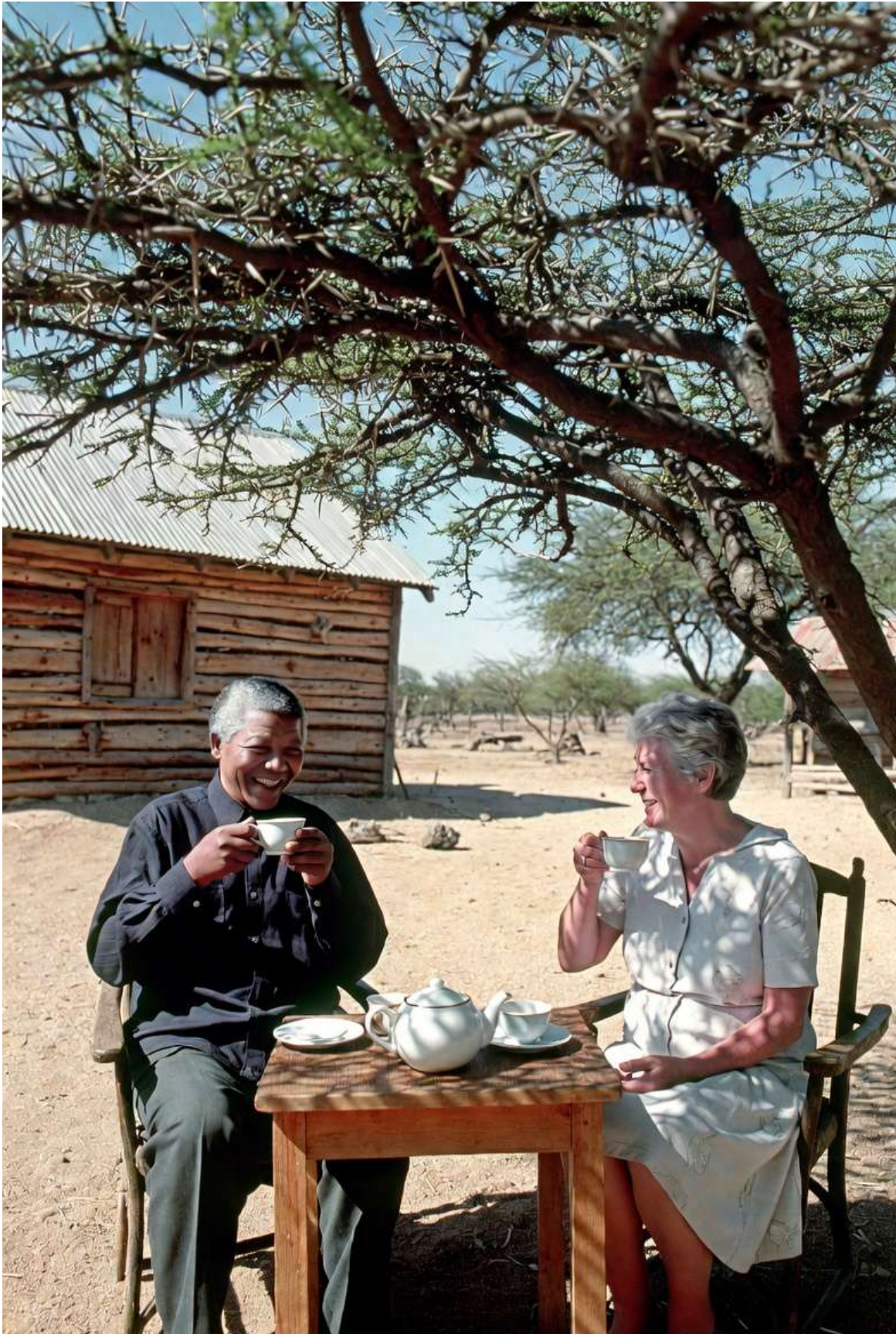
In May 2008, just as Mbeki's presidency collapsed, xenophobic riots swept Alexandra, Diepsloot, and dozens of other townships. Fifty-six foreign nationals were killed, thousands driven from their homes. The images of burning men and looted spaza shops shocked the world.

A decade earlier, Mandela had declared: *"Never again shall one group oppress another."*

In 2008 the oppressed had begun to oppress the even poorer.

The rainbow nation's colours were still bright, but the cracks were now impossible to ignore.





Chapter 11: Zuma's Shadow - Corruption's Cancer Takes Hold, 2007–2018

The Night the Music Died

52nd National Conference of the ANC, Polokwane, 18 December 2007

The conference hall shook with the old struggle songs. Delegates in red COSATU T-shirts danced in the aisles, waving posters that read **100 % ZULU BOY**. Thabo Mbeki sat motionless on the stage, the architect of the African Renaissance now reduced to a spectator. When the results were announced at 2 a.m. Jacob Zuma had won 2 329 votes to Mbeki's 1 505. The hall erupted.

Outside, in the parking lot, a veteran journalist turned to a colleague and said quietly:

“That noise you just heard was the death rattle of the South African dream.”

The Rise of the Patronage King

Jacob Gedleyihlekisa Zuma had spent ten years on Robben Island, risen to ANC intelligence chief in exile, and survived rape and corruption trials with a grin and a shower joke. He was the ultimate anti-Mbeki: rural, Zulu, populist, unapologetically traditional. His supporters called him **Msholoz**i; his enemies called him **Number One**. What few understood in 2007 was that Zuma did not arrive alone. He arrived with an entire ecosystem of patronage networks that had been waiting in the shadows since 1994.

The First 100 Days – The Purge Begins May–August 2009

Within weeks of his inauguration on 9 May 2009 Zuma began the systematic capture of the state:

- The Scorpions (elite anti-corruption unit) were disbanded and folded into a toothless new body called the Hawks
- Vusi Pikoli (the National Director of Public Prosecutions who had charged Zuma) was fired
- Bulelani Ngcuka and Mokotedi Mpshe, the prosecutors who had pursued the arms-deal cases, were quietly retired
- Schabir Shaik (convicted arms-deal fixer) was released on medical parole after serving 28 months of a 15-year sentence

The message was unmistakable: loyalty would be rewarded, disloyalty punished.

The Gupta Web – A Parallel State

The Gupta brothers (Ajay, Atul, and Rajesh) had arrived from India in 1993 with two suitcases and big ambitions. By 2009 they owned mines, media (The New Age, ANN7), IT companies, and a sprawling estate in Saxonwold, Johannesburg. Their compound became known as the **Shebeen of State Capture**.

Key appointments that followed the Polokwane victory:

- Dudu Myeni (Zuma's close friend) → chairperson of South African Airways
- Brian Molefe → Transnet CEO, then Eskom CEO
- Mosebenzi Zwane → Minister of Mineral Resources (from 2015)
- Des van Rooyen → Minister of Finance for one infamous weekend in December 2015
- Lynne Brown → Minister of Public Enterprises (overseeing Eskom, Transnet, Denel, SAA)

Every one of these appointments was later shown by the Zondo Commission to have been made at the direct instruction of the Guptas. Treasury officials who resisted were fired or “redeployed” to obscure embassies.

The Nuclear Deal That Almost Bankrupted the Nation

In 2014, Zuma and Vladimir Putin signed a secret \$76-billion nuclear agreement for ten Russian reactors. The deal was structured so that Eskom would be forced to borrow the money at punitive rates, with kickbacks allegedly flowing back to Zuma via his son Duduzane and the Guptas.

When Finance Minister Nhlanhla Nene refused to sign the guarantee in December 2015, Zuma fired him on a Thursday night and appointed the unknown Des van Rooyen on Friday. By Monday the rand had lost 15 % and South Africa was hours from junk status. Zuma was forced to reinstate Pravin Gordhan. It was the closest the country ever came to total financial collapse.

State Capture in Numbers (Estimates from the Zondo Commission, Public Protector, and academic studies)

Institution	Estimated looting (Rand)	Key figures involved
Eskom	R178 billion	Brian Molefe, Matshela Koko, Guptas
Transnet	R106 billion	Brian Molefe, Siyabonga Gama, Guptas
Denel	R5–10 billion	Guptas, Salim Essa
SAA	R30 billion	Dudu Myeni, Guptas
PRASA (rail)	R24 billion	Lucky Montana, Makhensa Mabunda
Total (conservative)	R500–1000 billion	Equivalent to one-third of GDP in 2018

That money bought private jets, Dubai palaces, Saxonwold weddings with 500 guests, and a R250-million Nkandla homestead complete with firepool, amphitheatre, and cattle kraal.

Nkandla – The Firepool That Lit the Fuse

In 2014, Public Protector Thuli Madonsela, released her “Secure in Comfort” report on upgrades to Zuma’s private homestead at Nkandla. Cost: **R246 million** of public money. Recommended improvements included a swimming pool “for fire-fighting purposes”. Zuma laughed it off in Parliament: “I did not ask for any of these things.” The phrase “**pay back the money**” entered South African political lexicon forever.

The Constitutional Court Speaks – And Is Ignored

On 31 March 2016, Chief Justice Mogoeng Mogoeng delivered a unanimous judgment: Zuma had violated his oath of office. He must personally repay a portion of the Nkandla costs. Zuma appeared on national television that night and said, with a straight face:

“I respect the judgment. I never knowingly did anything wrong.”

The laughter that greeted the statement marked the moment many South Africans stopped believing anything the president said.

The Fees Must Fall Explosion

In October 2015, students at Wits University began protesting tuition fees. Within days the movement (branded **#FeesMustFall**) had spread nationwide. Campuses burned. Police

used stun grenades and rubber bullets. Zuma eventually capitulated and froze fees for 2016, but the genie was out of the bottle. The born-free generation had discovered its voice – and its anger. By 2017, universities were spending more on private security than on libraries.

The Rise of the RET Faction and the “White Monopoly Capital” Myth

Zuma’s intellectual enablers (especially the British PR firm Bell Pottinger) crafted a new narrative: South Africa’s problems were caused not by corruption but by **White Monopoly Capital** and Stellenbosch mafia. The phrase was repeated endlessly on ANN7 and in paid-for tweets by the Gupta fake-news network. It worked. The EFF adopted the slogan. The ANC Youth League adopted it. Even parts of the SACP swallowed it. The real purpose was simple: deflect attention from state capture while **racialising every critique**.

The SARS Wars

Between 2014 and 2018, the South African Revenue Service – once Africa’s most efficient tax authority – was deliberately dismantled:

- Commissioner Pravin Gordhan replaced by Tom Moyane (a Zuma loyalist)
- The “rogue unit” narrative used to fire 200 top investigators
- Tax compliance collapsed; revenue shortfalls of R50–100 billion a year
- Bain & Company (paid R164 million by Moyane) produced a “restructuring” plan that gutted capacity

The Nugent Commission later found the destruction was “planned and executed with precision”.

Eskom in Darkness

While the Guptas stripped the power utility, South Africa began experiencing the worst load-shedding in history:

Year	Days of load-shedding	Estimated economic cost
2008	11	R10 billion
2014	87	R80 billion
2015	188	R120 billion

Year	Days of load-shedding	Estimated economic cost
2018	134	R75 billion

Whole towns went weeks without power. Factories closed. The phrase “**keeping the lights on**” became a bitter national joke.

The Judicial Fightback

A handful of institutions refused to kneel:

- Public Protector Thuli Madonsela (2009–2016)
- Finance Ministers Gordhan and Nene
- Judges like Mogoeng, Zondo, Khampepe
- Journalists at amaBhungane, Daily Maverick, News24
- Civil-society movements like Save South Africa and #UniteBehind

In 2016, the Gupta emails (hundreds of thousands leaked to journalists) provided the smoking gun. South Africans learned exactly how the parallel state worked.

The Endgame – December 2017 to February 2018

At the ANC’s Nasrec conference in December 2017, Cyril Ramaphosa narrowly defeated Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma (Zuma’s preferred successor) by 179 votes. Ramaphosa’s victory speech promised a “new dawn”. Zuma clung to power for another 53 days.

On 14 February 2018, the ANC NEC gave him 48 hours to resign. At 11:47 p.m. on Valentine’s Day he finally went on television, smiling his trademark smile, and said:

“I disagree with the decision... but I have always been a disciplined member of the ANC.”
He resigned at midnight. South Africans partied in the streets.

The Damage Report – 2009–2018

Indicator	2009	2018	Change
State debt (% of GDP)	27 %	53 %	Doubled

Indicator	2009	2018	Change
Unemployment (broad)	32 %	47 %	Catastrophic
GDP growth (avg)	3.1 %	1.1 %	Collapsed
Eskom debt	R40 bn	R419 bn	Tenfold
Murder rate (per 100k)	34	36	Worse
Doctors per 1000 people	0.78	0.68	Decline
Life expectancy	58	64	Recovery only after ARVs finally rolled out

The lost decade had cost South Africa an estimated R1.5–2 trillion in growth that never happened.

The Last Image

In May 2019, Jacob Zuma appeared before the Zondo Commission. Dressed in a sharp suit, smiling for the cameras, he claimed to be the victim of a vast conspiracy involving apartheid spies, the CIA, and “stratcom”.

When Deputy Chief Justice Raymond Zondo asked him directly whether he had ever accepted a bribe, Zuma replied: ***“I am not a corrupt person. I have never been corrupt and I will never be corrupt.”***

The nation watched in silence. Some laughed. Many cried.

The man who had sung **Umshini Wami** (“Bring me my machine gun”) on every campaign trail had finally run out of songs.





Figure 1 - Zuma's Nkandla Homestead

Chapter 12: Ramaphosa's Reckoning Mafia State Exposed and Borders Breached 2018–2025

The New Dawn That Wasn't

When Cyril Ramaphosa took the oath of office on 15 February 2018, church bells rang in Soweto and the rand jumped 5 % overnight. Markets believed the nightmare was over. They were wrong. The patient was off life support, but the cancer had metastasised into every organ of the state.

The First 1 000 Days – Hope, Paralysis, and Load-Shedding

Ramaphosa's opening moves looked decisive:

- Zuma, Ace Magashule, Nomvula Mokonyane, Bathabile Dlamini, Malusi Gigaba, and dozens of lesser crooks were removed from cabinet
- The Hawks and NPA received new, credible heads (Shamila Bato, Hermione Cronje)
- The Zondo Commission began public hearings in August 2018
- Eskom was split into three divisions and André de Ruyter appointed CEO in 2019

Yet every reform ran into the same wall: **the ANC itself**. Ramaphosa's Nasrec majority had been razor-thin. The RET (Radical Economic Transformation) faction still controlled most provinces, the NEC, and the crucial "cadre deployment committee". Every clean appointment required a dirty compromise.

The result was paralysis. Load-shedding returned with a vengeance:

Year	Stage reached	Days of blackout	Estimated GDP loss
2019	Stage 6	98	R120 billion
2022	Stage 6	207	R300 billion
2023	Stage 6+	335	R900 billion
2024	Stage 4–6	289	R680 billion

By 2025, South Africa had endured more days without electricity than with it since records began.

The Zondo Commission – Truth Without Consequence

Between 2018 and 2022, the State Capture Commission heard 278 witnesses and filled 87 000 pages of transcript. The picture it painted was worse than anyone had imagined:

- A criminal syndicate (not a political faction) had hollowed out Eskom, Transnet, PRASA, Denel, SAA, and SARS
- Ministers had sold entire state entities for cash delivered in Louis Vuitton bags
- The President of the Republic had been a paid employee of the Gupta family
- Police and intelligence services had been repurposed to protect the syndicate

Yet, when the final report was handed to Ramaphosa in June 2022, almost nothing happened. Ace Magashule was suspended but not expelled. Zizi Kodwa, Gwede Mantashe, and Paul Mashatile kept their jobs despite credible evidence against them.

By 2025, only 12 low-level convictions had resulted from the entire R1-billion inquiry.

South Africans began calling it the **Zondo Theatre Company**.

The July 2021 Riots – The Day the State Collapsed

On 8 July 2021, Jacob Zuma was sentenced to 15 months for contempt of the Zondo Commission. That night the looting began in KwaZulu-Natal. Within 72 hours:

- 354 people dead
- 5 500 arrested
- R50 billion in damage
- 150 000 jobs lost
- Entire shopping centres, factories, and blood banks burned to the ground

Intelligence services later revealed the violence had been planned by RET operatives using WhatsApp groups with names like “MK Veterans Take Back What Belongs to Us”. The police simply vanished from the streets for four crucial days. **When the army finally arrived, soldiers stood and watched looters carry fridges past them.**

The riots were the first time since 1994 that large parts of the country experienced total state collapse. It would not be the last.

The Mafia State Thesis – From Conspiracy Theory to Official Finding

In 2022, the South African Institute of Race Relations published a 900-page report titled **Betrayal of the Promise**. It concluded that South Africa had become a **mafia state**:

- Criminal networks had captured key municipalities, police stations, and SOEs
- Tender fraud in KwaZulu-Natal and Eastern Cape alone exceeded R30 billion a year
- Construction mafias extorted 20–30 % “protection fees” on every public project
- Police colluded with cash-in-transit gangs and illegal mining syndicates

By 2024, the National Prosecuting Authority estimated that organised crime cost the economy R300–400 billion annually – more than the entire education budget.

The Madlanga Commission – The Final Exposure (2025)

In July 2025, under intense public pressure after the assassination of whistle-blower Babita Deokaran and the collapse of Johannesburg’s water system, President Ramaphosa appointed the **Madlanga Commission** (chaired by retired Constitutional Court justice Mbuyiseli Madlanga) to investigate “state capture 2.0” – the criminal networks that had survived Zondo.

Early findings (leaked December 2025) were explosive:

- A syndicate known as the “Big Five” (five senior police generals and three politicians) controlled the R100-billion-a-year illegal cigarette, drug, and mining trade
- 42 hitmen were on police payrolls
- The entire Durban harbour had been handed over to smuggling cartels
- R18 billion in COVID-relief funds had simply vanished

The commission’s interim report used the phrase “**criminal governance**” for the first time in an official South African document.

The Porous Borders Crisis

While the state collapsed inward, the borders collapsed outward.

Period	Estimated illegal entries	Main source countries
2019–2022	2.5 million	Zimbabwe, Mozambique, Lesotho
2023–2025	4–6 million	+ Bangladesh, Pakistan, Ethiopia

By 2025, the Department of Home Affairs admitted it had lost control of 97 % of the land border. The SANDF deployment (Operation Corona) was a joke – soldiers earned R800 a month to guard a 4 800 km frontier and simply looked the other way when bakkies full of people crossed at night.

The consequences:

- 410 000 undocumented migrants processed 2022–2024 (the real number ten times higher)
- 215 % spike in illegal crossings during 2024–25 festive season
- Tshwane, Ekurhuleni, and eThekweni water and electricity infrastructure collapse blamed partly on illegal connections
- Vigilante groups (Operation Dudula, ActionSA marches) began “citizen arrests” of foreigners

In October 2025, a viral video showed Dudula members dragging alleged Bangladeshi shop owners through the streets of Durban. The police stood by. The ghost of May 2008 had returned – only this time the state was cheering from the sidelines.

The Economic Free-Fall

Indicator	2018	2025	Notes
GDP per capita (USD)	6 300	5 500	Lower than 2008
Unemployment (broad)	47 %	58 %	Youth rate 74 %
State debt/GDP	53 %	92 %	Heading for 100 %
Eskom debt	R419 bn	R720 bn	Unsustainable
Murder rate (per 100k)	36	45	Highest in 20 years
Doctors per 1 000	0.68	0.41	Mass emigration

Grey List status (FATF 2023), credit downgrades, and capital flight completed the picture. South Africa was no longer “emerging”. It was submerging.

The GNU Experiment – May 2024 Onwards

After the ANC dropped below 50 % for the first time in the 2024 election, Ramaphosa formed a **Government of National Unity** with the DA, IFP, and smaller parties. Markets rallied briefly. Then reality returned:

- RET faction sabotaged every reform
- Public-sector wage bill still 35 % of budget
- Transnet and Eskom reform blocked by unions
- Land expropriation debates reignited
- By mid-2025 the GNU was being called the **Government of No Unity**

The Afrikaner Endgame

While the country burned, Afrikaners executed their final survival strategies:

- Orania reached 3 500 residents and its own cryptocurrency (e-Orania)
- 1.2 million whites had emigrated since 1994 (20 % of the 1994 total)
- Afrikaans-medium schools dropped from 1 400 in 1994 to under 300 by 2025

- AfriForum’s private prosecutions unit secured more convictions than the NPA in some categories

In 2025, Willem Petzer’s YouTube channel posted a video titled **“The Last Boer”** – 4 million views in a week. The comments section was a roll-call of countries: Australia, New Zealand, Texas, Poland, Netherlands. The Great Trek had resumed – this time by aeroplane.

The Last Image

December 2025. A drone video goes viral: the Union Buildings in darkness during Stage 6 load-shedding, the giant Mandela statue lit only by a small generator. In the foreground, a lone security guard warms his hands over a fire made from broken palisades. In the background, the new South African flag flaps limply at half-mast – someone forgot to raise it again after yet another state funeral.

The caption reads: ***“From cradle of humankind to cradle of collapse. 1994–2025.”***

No one argues with the caption anymore.



Chapter 13: What Went Wrong Since 2007? A Dissection of Decay

The Fork in the Road

In December 2007, South Africa stood at a quiet crossroads that looked, to most observers, like just another noisy ANC conference. It was the moment the country chose the path of systematic self-destruction.

Everything that has happened since (state capture, Eskom darkness, 58 % unemployment, mafia governance, collapsing cities, mass emigration, and the slow death of the rainbow dream) flows from a handful of decisions taken between Polokwane 2007 and the end of the first Zuma cabinet in 2009.

This chapter is the autopsy.

1. The Original Sin: Cadre Deployment on Steroids

The ANC had always appointed loyalists, but after Polokwane the practice became industrial.

- 2008–2018: every SOE board, every municipal manager post, every police generalship, every SARS regional director was decided by the ANC's secretive **Cadre Deployment Committee** (minutes only surfaced in 2022).
- Qualification was replaced by factional loyalty.
- A 2023 study found that 87 % of municipal managers appointed after 2009 had no prior financial or engineering qualifications.

Result: by 2025, 247 of 257 municipalities were classified as “dysfunctional” or “in crisis” by the Auditor-General.

2. The Deliberate Destruction of State Capacity

The Zuma years were not merely corrupt; they were anti-institutional.

Institution	2007 condition	2025 condition	Mechanism of collapse
SARS	Africa's best tax authority	Revenue shortfall R300 bn/year	Rogue-unit purge, Moyane/Bain gutting
Eskom	15 % reserve margin	Negative reserve margin since 2018	Coal contracts to Guptas, no maintenance
Transnet	Functional ports & rail	Durban 42nd of 42 global container ports	Locomotive tenders to Gupta kickbacks
PRASA	2 200 working trains	< 400 working trains	R24 bn looted, no spare parts
Police (SAPS)	1 detective per 1 100 cases	1 detective per 7 800 cases	Promotion by loyalty, not merit
NPA	91 % conviction rate	41 % conviction rate	Scorpions disbanded, Hawks neutered

These were not accidents. They were policy.

3. The Economic Choices That Killed Growth

Year	Decision	Consequence by 2025
2008	Eskom warned of looming shortfall – ignored	R2–3 trillion cumulative GDP loss
2011	Refused private power generation licences	No new capacity for 15 years
2015	Nuclear deal with Russia (cancelled)	Would have bankrupted the country
2017	Mining Charter III (100 % BEE ownership)	Investment collapsed; junior mining dead

Year	Decision	Consequence by 2025
2018	Expropriation without compensation debate	R600 bn capital flight in 18 months
2020	COVID hard lockdown (world's longest)	2.5 million jobs lost permanently

Each decision was defended as “transformation”. Each delivered the opposite.

4. The Racial Laws That Backfired

Post-2007 the ANC doubled down on race-based legislation:

- Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment codes made rigid
- Employment Equity Act quotas enforced with fines
- Property ownership restrictions debated
- Sport quotas at national level

Intended to redress apartheid, they instead:

- Drove skilled minorities (white, Indian, coloured) into emigration or early retirement
- Created a tiny, hyper-rich BEE elite while the black poor stayed poor
- Collapsed municipal engineering departments when experienced (mostly white) staff were pushed out and not replaced

By 2025, Johannesburg had 11 000 vacant engineering posts it could not fill because the candidates did not meet racial targets.

5. The Collapse of the Justice-Crime Nexus

Murder went from 34 per 100 000 in 2009 to 45 in 2025. But the real story is detection:

Crime	2007 detection rate	2025 detection rate
Murder	42 %	11 %
Cash-in-transit heists	28 %	3 %
Corruption (public)	19 %	< 1 %

Police stations became revenue-collection points for syndicates. Entire towns (e.g., Westbury, Eldorado Park, Manenberg) were governed by gangs that paid monthly “protection” to station commanders.

6. The Education Catastrophe

Matric pass rate looks respectable at 80–85 %, but:

- Only 37 % achieve a bachelor’s pass (down from 42 % in 2008)
- Mathematics pass rate (30 % threshold) fell from 54 % to 41 %
- 72 % of Grade 4 children cannot read for meaning in any language (PIRLS 2021)
- Teacher unions blocked every attempt at performance testing

The result: a lost generation of 50 % functionally illiterate, 74 % of youth unemployed.

7. The Demographic Trap Nobody Talks About

Between 1994 and 2025 the population grew from 40 million to 63 million. Legal immigration + illegal immigration + higher black birth rates = an extra 23 million people. But the economy created net formal jobs for only 2.8 million of them.

The surplus 20 million live in shacks, on welfare grants, or in the informal economy. The grant system (now 29 million recipients, **half the population**) costs R280 billion a year and rising. It is politically untouchable and fiscally unsustainable.

8. The Electricity Death Spiral – A Case Study in Self-Inflicted Wounds

Eskom's fall is the perfect microcosm of everything that went wrong:

Year	Event	Result by 2025
2007	Mbeki cabinet rejects new build programme	No new stations for 18 years
2010	Medupi & Kusile contracts awarded to ANC cronies	Cost overruns from R120 bn to R900 bn
2015	Gupta coal contracts replace optimal coal	Plants run at 45 % capacity
2019	De Ruyter appointed → sabotage campaign begins	1 200 acts of deliberate damage recorded
2024	Coal fleet EAF (energy availability factor)	44 % (world average 85 %)

In 2025, Eskom needs R400 billion just to stop the lights going out completely. It has R28 billion in cash.

9. The Moral and Psychological Collapse

Perhaps the deepest wound was invisible.

- **A generation grew up believing tenders, not work, are the route to wealth**
- “Deployees” in government openly boast “it’s our time to eat”
- Whistle-blowers are assassinated (Babita Deokaran, Cloete Murray, 47 others since 2016)
- The middle class (black and white) now regards the state as hostile

Trust in every major institution has collapsed:

Institution	Trust level 2007	Trust level 2025
Presidency	68 %	19 %
Parliament	65 %	11 %
Police	58 %	27 %
Courts	72 %	41 %
ANC	68 %	29 %

10. The Afrikaner Exit – A Silent Trek

While the country decayed, Afrikaners executed the most successful survival strategy of all: leaving.

Metric	1994	2025	Loss
White population (millions)	5.2	4.4	–800 000
Afrikaans mother-tongue	6.1 m	5.3 m	–800 000
Afrikaans-medium schools	~1 400	< 300	–80 %
Afrikaner millionaires (USD)	~180	~2 400	Wealth flight

The new trek was not with wagons but with passports. Destinations: Australia (250 000+), New Zealand, UK, USA, Netherlands, Poland. The brain drain became a lifeboat.

The Final Verdict

What went wrong after 2007 was not bad luck. It was a deliberate, decade-long elite project to loot the state while preserving the fiction of liberation morality.

The ANC did not “lose its way”. It chose the way of patronage over performance, race-baiting over reconciliation, cadre loyalty over competence, and short-term survival over long-term sustainability.

The rainbow nation died not with a bang but with a thousand tenders, a million shack fires, and the quiet click of departure gates at OR Tambo International.

By 2025 the only question left was whether anything could still be saved.



Chapter 14: Horizons of Hope or Hemorrhage?

Prospects for South Africa and the Afrikaner Volk, 2025–2050

Four Futures

By the end of 2025, South Africa is no longer debating whether the state has failed. It is debating how completely, how permanently, and whether anything can still be salvaged.

Four broad scenarios now dominate serious conversation. None of them is comfortable:

Scenario 1 – The Slow Haemorrhage (most likely, 55 % probability)

The country continues its current trajectory:

- GDP growth 0.5–1.5 % a year
- Debt-to-GDP crosses 120 % by 2032
- Eskom and Transnet never recover; private micro-grids and diesel generators become the norm for anyone who can afford them
- Formal unemployment stabilises at 55–60 %; the informal/grant economy absorbs the rest
- Emigration of skilled minorities (white, Indian, black professionals) continues at 80 000–120 000 a year
- Crime remains among the world's highest, but plateaus as the middle class arms itself behind ever-higher walls
- The ANC limps along in coalitions, trading patronage for votes until the treasury is empty

Outcome by 2050: a middle-income country with first-world enclaves (Constantia, Umhlanga, Orania, Sandton) surrounded by third-world chaos. The national flag still flies, but the national idea is dead.

Scenario 2 – The Hard Reset (25 % probability)

A sovereign-debt crisis (2028–2032 forces an IMF package with brutal conditions:

- Privatisation of Eskom generation and Transnet ports
- End of race-based procurement and equity laws

- Drastic public-sector wage cuts
- Land-reform programme frozen

Violent resistance follows: nationwide strikes, burning cities, a possible military intervention by SANDF units that refuse orders. If the government survives the storm, South Africa emerges around 2040 as a smaller, poorer, but functional state (think Uruguay with better weather). If it does not, the country fragments into regional fiefdoms.

Scenario 3 – The Balkan Option (15 % probability)

The centre cannot hold. By the mid-2030s:

- KwaZulu-Natal effectively secedes under an MK Party/IFP coalition
- Western Cape declares a form of autonomy (the “Cape Republic” never formally proclaimed but de facto independent in taxation and policing)
- Gauteng becomes a city-state run by a coalition of private security firms and remaining taxpayers
- The Northern Cape and Free State are absorbed into agricultural corporations
- The Eastern Cape simply collapses into warlordism

The national government in Pretoria retains the flag and the UN seat but controls little beyond the Union Buildings lawn.

Scenario 4 – The Phoenix (5 % probability)

A genuine national convention (not the talk-shop kind) is forced by economic collapse and mass protest. Political parties, business, labour, churches, and civil society agree on a new social compact:

- Federal constitution with strong provinces
- Privatisation plus regulation energy and logistics model within five years
- Merit-based civil service
- School vouchers and education tax credits
- Sunset clauses on all racial legislation

Growth returns to 4–6 % within a decade. Emigration reverses. The miracle is reborn.

Most analysts regard this scenario as wishful thinking.

The Afrikaner Futures – Five Strategies in Play

While the country fractures, the Afrikaner minority (now ≈ 4.2 million, 6.5 % of population) has already chosen its paths.

1. The Orania Model – Micro-Republic (growing fast)

Orania, Kleinfontein, and a dozen smaller settlements have proved that a self-sufficient, Afrikaans-only community can work.

- Population of greater Orania area: 25 000 by late 2025, projected 100 000 by 2040
- Own currency (e-Oras), own bank, own university campus, private schools, solar grid, water purification
- Zero crime, 100 % employment inside the town
- Explicitly racial entry policy upheld in court (2024 Constitutional Court judgment)

Orania is no longer a curiosity. It is the template.

2. The Emigration Lifeline – The New Trek

Roughly 1.4 million people of Afrikaans descent now live abroad (2025 estimate). Annual outflow 2022–2025 averaged 95 000. Popular destinations:

Country	Afrikaner/SA citizens	Notes
Australia	380 000	Perth = “Little Pretoria”
New Zealand	140 000	
USA (Texas, Georgia)	220 000	Trump-era “refugee” applications spiked
Netherlands	180 000	Language advantage
Poland	45 000	Low taxes, conservative values

Many keep South African passports and property, waiting to see which scenario wins.

3. The Fortress Suburb Strategy

In every major city, Afrikaans (and English) middle-class families have retreated into gated eco-estates with private schools, private security, private solar, and private boreholes.

Examples: Eye of Africa (Gauteng), Val de Vie (Western Cape), Izinga (KZN).

Population inside these enclaves ≈1.8 million whites + 600 000 middle-class blacks and Indians who can afford the levies.

4. The Cultural Remnant – Museums and Festivals

Afrikaans language and culture survive in:

- Private Afrikaans universities (Sol-Tech, Akademia)
- Streaming platforms (Kyknet, Via)
- Music festivals that still draw 80 000 people
- A diminished but fierce identity that refuses to die

5. The Political Fight – AfriForum and Solidarity

Civil-rights organisations have become quasi-governments:

- AfriForum's private prosecutions unit secures more convictions than the NPA in certain categories
- Solidarity runs 42 schools, a medical-aid scheme for 300 000 members, and a venture-capital fund
- Both organisations have taken the government to court more than 180 times since 2010 and won 92 % of cases

They are the last functioning institutions many Afrikaners still trust.

The Numbers That Will Decide Everything (2035–2050)

Variable	Current (2025)	Critical threshold	Likely 2050 outcome
Debt/GDP	92 %	120 %	Crossed by 2032
Youth unemployment	74 %	80 %+ revolution risk	Probably crossed

Variable	Current (2025)	Critical threshold	Likely 2050 outcome
Electricity availability (EAF)	48 %	< 30 % total collapse	Already flirting
Skilled emigration (annual)	100k	150k+ irreversible	On track
Orania-area population	25k	250k self-sustaining	Possible

A Personal Epilogue – The Last Conversation

In November 2025, a friend of mine visited Orania. An elderly man in a khaki safari suit was repairing the famous **Koos de la Rey** statue that had been vandalised elsewhere and moved here for safety. My friend asked him whether the Afrikaner nation still had a future inside South Africa.

He thought for a long time, then pointed to a group of blonde children speaking flawless Afrikaans as they planted pecan trees in the red Kalahari sand.

“Meneer,” he said, “ons het al twee keer alles verloor – in 1902 en in 1994. Elke keer het ons weer begin met minder as dit.” (“Sir, we have already lost everything twice – in 1902 and in 1994. Every time we started again with less than this.”)

He wiped the dust from his hands and went back to work.

Somewhere in the distance a church bell rang for the evening service, and the children began singing **“De la Rey, De la Rey...”** in voices that carried across the orange dunes.

The wagons had long ago been replaced by solar panels and cryptocurrencies. The language had survived apartheid, sanctions, and the end of the republic. It would probably survive whatever came next.

Whether the country itself would survive was another question.

But the Afrikaner volk, against all historical odds, had learned how to live without a country.

They had done it before. They were ready to do it again.



APPENDIX A: The French Wars of Religion, 1562–1598

A Thirty-Six-Year Catastrophe that Reshaped France

The French Wars of Religion (1562–1598) were not one war but eight or nine distinct civil wars (depending on how historians count the truces), interspersed with fragile peaces that never lasted more than six years. Between the Massacre of Vassy in March 1562 and Henry IV's coronation at Chartres in February 1594 (followed by the Edict of Nantes in 1598), France suffered what many contemporaries called “les troubles”. An estimated 2 to 4 million people died from battle, massacre, famine, and disease in a kingdom of roughly 18–20 million inhabitants. Entire provinces were depopulated, cities ruined, the royal debt exploded, and foreign armies (Spanish, English, German, Swiss, Italian) fought on French soil. Yet out of this crucible emerged the modern French state, the theory and practice of limited monarchy, and the first sustained experiment in religious coexistence in post-Reformation Europe.

I. Roots of the Conflict (1517–1562)

The French Reformation began quietly. By 1560, however, Calvinist churches (églises dressées) existed in more than 2,000 locations, and perhaps 10–12 % of the population (1.5–2 million people) had become Protestant, called Huguenots after a probably mythical Genevan conspirator named Besançon Hugues. The movement was strongest in a great crescent running from La Rochelle through Poitou, Guyenne, Languedoc, and Dauphiné, and among the urban middle classes and a surprising proportion of the nobility — nearly half the titled nobility had at least one Huguenot branch by 1560.

The premature death of Henry II in a jousting accident (1559) left the throne to his sickly fifteen-year-old son Francis II, whose wife was Mary Stuart and whose uncles were the ultra-Catholic François Duke of Guise and Charles Cardinal of Lorraine. The Guise family dominated the court and persecuted Protestants with growing ferocity. In response, a group of Protestant nobles attempted to seize the king at Amboise in March 1560 (the “Conspiracy of Amboise”). The plot failed bloodily; hundreds were executed, their bodies dangling from the château balconies as a warning. The massacre radicalised both sides.

After Francis II died in December 1560, his ten-year-old brother became Charles IX under the regency of their Italian mother, Catherine de' Medici. Catherine, a political realist rather than a religious zealot, attempted a middle path: the Colloquy of Poissy (1561) failed to reconcile Catholic and Protestant theologians, but the Edict of Saint-Germain (January 1562) granted limited rights of worship outside town walls. Hard-line Catholics saw this as heresy; Huguenots saw it as insufficient. The spark came on 1 March 1562 when François

de Guise and his armed retainers massacred dozens of worshipping Huguenots at Vassy in Champagne. The First War had begun.

II. The Eight Wars: A Chronology of the Wars

1. First War (1562–1563)

Louis de Bourbon, Prince of Condé, and Gaspard de Coligny, Admiral of France, led the Huguenot forces. They seized Orléans, Rouen, Lyon and dozens of other towns. The Catholic royal army, commanded by the triumvirate of Guise, Montmorency and Saint-André recaptured Rouen (where the Protestant king of arms was executed by being tied to a cannon's mouth). The war ended with the assassination of François de Guise outside Orléans (February 1563) and the Peace of Amboise (March 1563), which reaffirmed limited Protestant worship.

2. Second War (1567–1568)

Fear that Catherine planned to arrest Condé and Coligny provoked the “Surprise of Meaux” (September 1567). Fighting was brief and ended with the Peace of Longjumeau (1568), essentially a return to Amboise.

3. Third War (1568–1570)

The most destructive phase so far. Catherine voided Longjumeau and ordered the arrest of the Protestant leaders. Condé and Coligny fled south and joined Jeanne d’Albret, queen of Navarre, and her teenage son Henry of Navarre. The war saw the battles of Jarnac (1569, where Condé was killed and his body paraded on an ass) and Moncontour (1569, a crushing Catholic victory).

The Huguenot cause was saved by Coligny’s brilliant retreat into Languedoc and the Peace of Saint-Germain-en-Laye (August 1570), the most favourable treaty the Huguenots ever obtained: amnesty, freedom of conscience, and four security towns (La Rochelle, Cognac, Montauban, La Charité).

4. The St. Bartholomew’s Day Massacre (1572)

The fragile peace permitted the marriage of Henry of Navarre to Marguerite de Valois, Catherine’s daughter, in Paris in August 1572. On 22 August an assassin wounded Coligny. Fearing retaliation, Catherine and her advisers convinced the weak Charles IX that a Huguenot coup was imminent. In the early hours of 24 August (St. Bartholomew’s Day) Coligny and dozens of Huguenot nobles were murdered in their beds. The killing spread to the Paris streets; between 2,000 and 4,000 died in the capital alone and perhaps 10,000–20,000 across France in the

following weeks. Henry of Navarre saved his life by abjuring Protestantism (he later recanted). The massacre shocked Europe and turned a French civil war into an international ideological struggle.

5. Fourth War (1572–1573)

The siege of La Rochelle (still Protestant) ended only when the duke of Anjou (the future Henry III) was elected king of Poland and a compromise peace was signed.

6. Fifth War (1574–1576)

After Charles IX's death (1574) the new king Henry III faced rebellion from Catholic "Malcontents" as well as Huguenots. The Peace of Monsieur (May 1576) was astonishingly generous to Protestants, granting them full worship except in Paris and eight security towns for six years. Catholic outrage produced...

7. Sixth War (1577)

Brief; ended with the Peace of Bergerac (1577), which scaled back Protestant rights.

8. Seventh War – the "Lovers' War" (1580)

Minor skirmishing over Henry of Navarre's mistress; ended with the Treaty of Fleix.

9. Eighth War – the War of the Three Henrys (1585–1589)

The death of the duke of Anjou (1584), Henry III's last brother, made the Protestant Henry of Navarre heir presumptive. Catholic fury produced the Holy League, financed by Philip II of Spain and led by Henry, duke of Guise ("Henri le Balafré"). The Treaty of Nemours (1585) revoked all Protestant rights. Henry III, caught between League and Huguenots, had Guise assassinated at Blois (23 December 1588). The League declared him deposed; Henry III allied with Henry of Navarre. On 1 August 1589 a Dominican fanatic, Jacques Clément, stabbed Henry III; as he died he recognised Navarre as his successor.

10. The Succession War (1589–1598)

Henry IV fought the League and Spanish armies for nine more years. Key moments: battles of Arques (1589) and Ivry (1590, "Ralliez-vous à mon panache blanc!"), the long siege of Paris (1590, where thousands starved), and Henry's abjuration of Protestantism ("Paris vaut bien une messe", July 1593). Paris finally opened its gates in March 1594; Henry was crowned at Chartres (the League held Reims). The war dragged on in the provinces until the Peace of Vervins with Spain (2 May 1598) and the Edict of Nantes (13 April 1598).

III. Nature of the Fighting

These were not modern wars of manoeuvre with standing armies. They were a chaotic mixture of:

- sieges of walled cities (Paris, Rouen, La Rochelle, Sancerre, etc.)
- raids and chevauchées by noble retinues
- guerrilla warfare in the south and west
- massacres and counter-massacres of civilians
- religious terrorism (iconoclasm by Huguenots, Catholic processions of flagellants, assassinations)

Mercenaries (Swiss, German Landsknechte, Scottish, Italian) fought on both sides. The crown was usually bankrupt and paid troops late or not at all, producing widespread desertion and pillage. Famine and plague followed armies; the harvest of 1586–1587 was so bad that cannibalism was reported.

IV. Political and Social Consequences

1. Weakening of the nobility.

Scores of great houses were extinguished or impoverished. The Guise, Montmorency, and Bourbon-Condé lines were decimated.

2. Rise of the “politiques”

A party of Catholic moderates (Michel de L'Hôpital, Jean Bodin) argued that the survival of the state mattered more than religious uniformity. Their ideas fed into theories of sovereignty and toleration.

3. Financial ruin

Royal debt rose from 100 million livres in 1560 to over 300 million by 1598. Taxation became permanent and oppressive.

4. Intellectual impact

The wars produced a flood of political pamphlets (thousands survive) and the first French theories of resistance (*Vindiciae contra tyrannos*, *Franco-Gallia*). Montaigne's *Essais* are inseparable from the era's scepticism.

5. Demographic disaster

Perhaps 10–20 % of the population died or emigrated. Whole regions (Normandy, Languedoc) lost a third of their inhabitants.

V. The Edict of Nantes and Aftermath

Henry IV's great edict (1598) granted Huguenots liberty of conscience, limited public worship, full civil rights, and 150 fortified places de sûreté for eight years. It was a pragmatic compromise, not modern toleration, but it worked: France enjoyed twenty-five years of recovery. Yet the military clauses rankled Catholics, and after Henry's assassination (1610) the regency and Louis XIII gradually dismantled Protestant power (fall of La Rochelle 1628, Peace of Alès 1629). The final revocation by Louis XIV (1685) proved that peace imposed from above could be undone from above.

Conclusion

The French Wars of Religion were the most destructive internal conflict in Western Europe between the Hundred Years War and the Thirty Years War. They killed proportionately more Frenchmen than World War I would three centuries later. Yet they also killed the medieval dream of a uniformly Catholic realm and forced France — slowly, painfully — toward the secular state. When Henry IV entered Paris in 1594 he is said to have remarked, "I have come to a city that has suffered more than any other." The scars of 1562–1598 would shape French politics, religion, and collective memory for centuries to come.

APPENDIX B: The Birth of the Two Branches and How They Became Mortal Enemies

A brief overview of the of the rupture that split Western Christendom (c. 1054–1648)

I. One Church to Two Churches: The First Great Schism (1054)

For the first thousand years of Christianity there was, in theory, only one Church. In practice, two distinct cultural and ecclesiastical worlds had been growing apart since the 4th century:

- The Latin/Western Church, centred on Rome, speaking Latin, governed by the Pope.
- The Greek/Eastern Church, centred on Constantinople (New Rome), speaking Greek, governed by the Patriarch in symbiosis with the Byzantine Emperor.

Tensions were ancient: disputes over the Filioque clause in the Creed, the use of leavened vs unleavened bread, clerical celibacy, and above all papal claims to universal jurisdiction. The final breach came in 1054 when Cardinal Humbert and Patriarch Michael Cerularius solemnly excommunicated each other in Hagia Sophia. The “Great Schism” created the Roman Catholic Church and the Eastern Orthodox Church. Although the mutual hatred between Latins and Greeks would explode in the sack of Constantinople during the Fourth Crusade (1204), this split is not the origin of Catholic–Protestant enmity. It is mentioned here only to remind us that Western Christendom was already accustomed to the idea that “schism = heresy = war”.

II. The Medieval Catholic Synthesis (1100–1500)

By 1100 Western Europe had achieved a remarkable religious unity under the Roman papacy:

- One creed (Nicene with Filioque)
- One sacramental system (seven sacraments)
- One clergy under mandatory celibacy (enforced after the Gregorian Reform)
- One canon law
- One language of worship and learning (Latin)
- One obligatory tithing system
- One international institution (the Papacy) that crowned and occasionally deposed emperors

This unity was never perfect. Heretical movements (Cathars, Waldensians, Lollards, Hussites) were brutally suppressed, but they were relatively small and regional. The overwhelming majority of Europeans in 1500 were baptised, confessing, Mass-going Catholics who believed the Pope was the Vicar of Christ and that there was “no salvation outside the Church”.

III. The Cracks Appear: Why the Late-Medieval Church Was Ripe for Explosion

By the early 16th century the Catholic edifice was creaking:

1. Financial scandals Sale of indulgences (especially the St Peter’s indulgence campaign of 1515–1517) became notorious.
2. Moral scandals Popes such as Alexander VI (Borgia) and Leo X lived like Renaissance princes with mistresses and nephews.
3. Clerical ignorance and absenteeism Thousands of priests could barely read the Mass; bishops often ruled a dozen dioceses without ever visiting them.
4. The Renaissance recovery of Greek and Hebrew texts Scholars such as Lorenzo Valla (1440) and Erasmus (1516 New Testament) showed that many “ancient” practices were medieval inventions.
5. The rise of nation-states Kings of France, England and Spain resented sending money to Rome and wanted control of their own churches (Gallicanism, Caesaropapism).
6. Printing press (c. 1450) Ideas, Bibles and caricatures could now spread at unprecedented speed.

IV. 1517: The Spark – Martin Luther and the Birth of Protestantism

On 31 October 1517 an Augustinian monk and theology professor, Martin Luther, nailed 95 academic theses to the castle church door in Wittenberg. He was protesting the sale of indulgences, but the debate quickly escalated to core doctrines:

- Sola Scriptura (Scripture alone, not tradition)
- Sola Fide (justification by faith alone, not works or sacraments)
- The priesthood of all believers (no ontological difference between clergy and laity)
- Only two sacraments (Baptism and Eucharist)
- Eucharist as spiritual presence or mere memorial (not transubstantiation)

Pope Leo X condemned Luther in the bull *Exsurdo* (1520). Luther publicly burned the bull and was excommunicated in January 1521. At the Diet of Worms (April 1521) he refused to recant: “Here I stand. I can do no other.” The Edict of Worms declared him an outlaw, but the Elector Frederick the Wise of Saxony hid him at the Wartburg castle, where he translated the New Testament into German in eleven weeks.

Luther’s ideas spread like wildfire. By 1525 perhaps half of Germany sympathised. The Peasants’ War (1524–1525) showed the danger: peasants used Luther’s “freedom of a Christian” to demand social revolution; Luther responded with the pamphlet *Against the Murderous, Thieving Hordes of Peasants*, urging princes to “smite, strangle, stab” the rebels. This alienated the radical wing but cemented the alliance between Lutheranism and German princes who wanted to seize church lands.

V. The Three Main Branches of Protestantism Are Born (1520s–1550s)

1. Lutheranism (Germany, Scandinavia) Retained liturgy, bishops (superintendents), crucifixes, infant baptism. Confession was kept but not as a sacrament.
2. Reformed/Calvinism (Switzerland, France, Netherlands, Scotland, Hungary) Led by Huldrych Zwingli (Zurich) and Jean Calvin (Geneva). More radical: iconoclasm, rejection of any “idolatrous” images, presbyterian or synodical church government, strong emphasis on predestination and moral discipline. Calvin’s *Institutes of the Christian Religion* (1536, final edition 1559) became the most influential systematic theology of Protestantism.
3. Anabaptists (“re-baptisers”) and Radical Reformation Rejected infant baptism, state churches, oaths and war. Persecuted by both Catholics and Protestants. Small but persistent (Mennonites, Hutterites, Amish descend from them).
4. Anglicanism (England) Henry VIII broke with Rome in 1534 for dynastic reasons (Act of Supremacy), but doctrine remained Catholic until Edward VI (1547–1553) and Elizabeth I (1558–1603) moved it toward a Reformed middle way.

VI. Why Did They Become Enemies So Quickly?

Within twenty years of 1517, Catholic and Protestant were killing each other with a ferocity that shocked even the medieval crusaders. The reasons:

1. Theology became identity To be Catholic or Protestant was no longer just about ritual; it was about salvation itself. Each side believed the other was damned.

2. Confessionalisation and the state After the 1555 Peace of Augsburg (*cuius regio, eius religio* – “whose realm, his religion”), religion became a marker of political loyalty. Rulers expelled or executed those of the wrong faith.
3. Propaganda and demonisation Woodcuts, pamphlets and sermons portrayed the opposing side as agents of the Antichrist. Luther called the Pope “the whore of Babylon”; Catholics called Luther “the German swine” and Calvin “the Geneva monster”.
4. Economic motives Princes and cities confiscated billions in church property. To give it back would mean bankruptcy and revolution.
5. Fear of the other side winning completely A Catholic victory would mean the Inquisition and burning; a Protestant victory would mean iconoclasm and the end of the Mass.

VII. The Wars (1540s–1648)

- Schmalkaldic War (1546–1547): Emperor Charles V crushed the Lutheran princes but could not stamp out the movement.
- Second Schmalkaldic War and Princes’ Revolt (1552: Maurice of Saxony betrayed Charles V and forced the Peace of Augsburg.
- French Wars of Religion (1562–1598): 2–4 million dead (see previous answer).
- Dutch Revolt (1568–1648): Calvinists vs Catholic Spain; birth of the Dutch Republic.
- Thirty Years’ War (1618–1648): began as Bohemian Protestant rebellion, ended as European catastrophe with 5–8 million dead. The Peace of Westphalia (1648) finally recognised Calvinists alongside Catholics and Lutherans and effectively ended the medieval dream of religious unity.

VIII. Mechanisms of Persecution

- Catholic side: Roman and Spanish Inquisitions, Index of Forbidden Books, Jesuit missions, burning at the stake (e.g. 60,000–100,000 executed in Spain 1480–1834).
- Protestant side: drowning or beheading Anabaptists (thousands), burning anti-Trinitarians (Servetus in Geneva 1553), banishing Catholics from England and Scandinavia.

IX. Slow Road to Coexistence

- Edict of Nantes (1598) – first large-scale toleration (revoked 1685).

- Peace of Westphalia (1648) – legal parity in the Empire.
- English Toleration Act (1689) – limited toleration after the Glorious Revolution.
- Enlightenment and French Revolution finally separated church and citizenship.

X. Conclusion: A Wound That Took 400 Years to Scar

The Catholic–Protestant schism was not a polite doctrinal disagreement. It was the violent birth of the modern world: nation-states, freedom of conscience, capitalism (Weber thesis), wars of ideology, and eventually secularism all flow from it. Between 1520 and 1648 perhaps 10–15 million Europeans died because of the answer to the question “How is a sinner justified before God?” The enmity was so profound that only total exhaustion and mutual ruin finally forced princes to tolerate what they could not eradicate.

Today, when a Catholic pope and a Lutheran archbishop pray together, or when Belfast finally has peace walls coming down, we are living in the long, unexpected epilogue to the catastrophe that began when a Saxon monk nailed ninety-five theses to a door on All Saints’ Eve 1517.

APPENDIX C: Why the British Never Stopped Chasing the Boers

An explanation of the relentless British pursuit of the Voortrekkers and their republics, 1835–1902

The Boers packed their wagons, crossed the Orange and the Vaal, and deliberately left British territory. They signed treaties of independence in 1852 and 1854. So why on earth did the British keep coming after them for the next seventy years?

The answer is not one reason. It is a perfect storm of geography, strategy, ideology, economics, missionary zeal, and sheer imperial momentum. By the time the Boers realised they were not emigrating out of the British Empire but merely moving to a different corner of it, it was too late.

1. The Cape Route to India – The Non-Negotiable Lifeline

Everything starts here. From the moment the Dutch lost the Cape in 1795–1806, Britain understood that Table Bay was the single most important piece of real estate on the planet outside Europe itself.

- In the age of sail, the Cape was the only reliable halfway house between Europe and Asia.
- Every year 150–200 East Indiamen and troopships rounded the Cape carrying the commerce and soldiers that kept the Indian Empire alive.
- A hostile or even neutral power controlling any harbour between Cape Town and Delagoa Bay could choke that artery in a week.

Admiralty war plans from the 1830s onward are explicit: “The Cape route must remain British from Simon’s Town to Zanzibar.” Any independent white polity that might one day offer coaling stations or naval bases to France, Germany, Russia, or even the United States was unacceptable.

That single strategic fact overrode every treaty, every promise of non-interference, every declaration that the interior was “not worth a sixpence.” The moment the Boers looked like securing a port – Natal in 1838, Delagoa Bay in the 1860s, or even St Lucia Bay in the 1880s – British policy snapped into action.

2. The Doctrine of “Spheres of Influence” and the Moving Frontier

In the 19th century, European powers did not recognise empty space on the map. They recognised “spheres of influence” that expanded like ink blots until they met another power’s ink.

Britain's sphere was declared to be "all of southern Africa south of 22°S" as early as the 1840s (Lord Grey, Colonial Secretary). The fact that Boer republics occupied part of that space was treated as a temporary anomaly, the way the United States treated Native American sovereignty before the Trail of Tears.

Successive British governments used three legal fictions to justify encroachment:

a) The "suzerainty" clause (even after 1852/54 treaties) b) The "protection of native tribes" (a convenient humanitarian flag) c) The "protection of British subjects" (once diamonds and gold drew thousands of uitlanders into the republics)

Each fiction was elastic enough to justify any intervention.

3. Ports, Ports, Ports – The Recurrent Nightmare

The Boers only had to get within fifty kilometres of the Indian Ocean for London to suffer a collective nervous breakdown.

1838–1843 – Republic of Natalia The Voortrekkers founded Pietermaritzburg and a functioning port at Durban. British merchants in Cape Town panicked that trade would bypass them. Missionaries claimed the Boers were enslaving Zulu. In 1842 a single company of redcoats marched into Durban; in 1843 Natal was annexed. The Trekkers packed their wagons again and fled over the Drakensberg, swearing never to live under the Union Jack again.

1860s–1870s – The Delagoa Bay Obsession Louis Tregardt and Hans van Rensburg had tried to reach Delagoa Bay (Maputo) in 1836–38. Thirty years later Transvaal Boers again dreamed of a trade route to the Portuguese port that would free them from Cape and Natal customs. Britain responded with secret diplomacy: the 1875 MacMahon Arbitration awarded the bay to Portugal on condition that Portugal never cede it to another power. When Transvaal President Burgers tried to build a railway to Delagoa Bay in 1875, Britain annexed the Transvaal two years later (1877) "to prevent complications".

1880s – St Lucia Bay and Swaziland Boer volunteers declared tiny republics on the Zululand coast. Britain annexed Zululand (1887) and Swaziland (as a protectorate) to close the last gaps.

Every single time the Boers neared salt water, the British moved the border.

4. The Missionary Lobby – Humanitarianism as a Weapon

The London Missionary Society (LMS), Wesleyan Missionary Society, and later the Anglican Church had enormous political clout in Victorian Britain. Their narrative was simple and devastating:

“The Trekboers are slave-raiders who treat Africans worse than the Zulus ever did. They shoot San children for sport, apprentice orphans for life, and claim divine sanction for white supremacy.”

Whether exaggerated or not, the stories filled Parliament and the press. Dr John Philip, Robert Moffat, David Livingstone – all painted the Boer republics as the moral antithesis of British civilisation.

When the Orange Free State tried to incorporate Basutoland (Lesotho) in the 1860s, Moshoeshe sent a desperate plea to London. Britain declared Basutoland a protectorate in 1868 – inside territory the Bloemfontein Convention had recognised as Free State sphere.

Humanitarian rhetoric became the perfect cover for strategic expansion.

5. Diamonds Rewrite Every Treaty (1867–1880)

For fifteen years after the Sand River and Bloemfontein Conventions the republics were genuinely left alone. They were poor, landlocked, and harmless.

Then, in 1867, a Griqua shepherd boy picked up a 21-carat diamond near Hopetown.

- 1870: Kimberley diggings explode.
- 1871: Britain annexes the diamond fields (West Griqualand) even though they lay inside territory awarded to the Orange Free State and local Griqua chiefs.
- The Free State protested; Britain paid a derisory £90,000 compensation and kept the fields that would produce hundreds of millions.

Paul Kruger later wrote bitterly: “With diamonds came the end of our independence. Gold merely finished the job.”

6. Gold and the Final Reckoning (1886–1899)

The discovery of the Witwatersrand gold reef in 1886 turned a sleepy pastoral republic into the richest state on earth overnight.

- By 1895 Johannesburg had 100,000 people, electric lights, and a stock exchange.
- The Transvaal treasury took in more revenue than the Cape Colony.
- Uitlanders (mostly British subjects) paid 80 % of taxes but had no vote.

Britain now had every excuse it needed:

- Economic: control the world’s gold supply.

- Strategic: a rich, armed, landlocked Boer state could buy Krupp guns and ally with Germany.
- Moral: “taxation without representation” for British subjects.

The Jameson Raid (1895–96) was the clumsy dress rehearsal. The Anglo-Boer War (1899–1902) was the final act.

7. The Ideology of Confederation

From the 1870s the British Colonial Office was obsessed with Canadian-style confederation. Lord Carnarvon (the architect of Canadian federation in 1867) believed South Africa must follow the same path.

- 1875–1880: Carnarvon tried to force confederation by annexing Transvaal (1877), fighting the Zulu War (1879), and provoking the First Boer War (1880–81).
- He failed, but the idea never died.
- Cecil Rhodes took it up in the 1890s: “From the Cape to Cairo – one telegraph wire, one railway, one flag.”
- Independent Boer republics were intolerable obstacles.

8. The Racial Paradox

This is the deepest irony.

The Boers trekked in large part to escape British liberalism – abolition of slavery (1834), legal equality for Khoekhoe (1828), missionary interference. They wanted a society where white mastery was unquestioned.

Yet Britain’s ultimate justification for destroying Boer independence was... the defence of black rights and “equal laws for all civilised men” (Milner’s phrase).

In reality, Britain had no intention of granting Africans political rights. They simply needed a moral fig-leaf for annexation. Once the republics were crushed, African disenfranchisement was cheerfully continued under British rule.

9. Timeline – The Relentless Encroachment

Year	Boer Action	British Reaction (immediate or eventual)
1835–40	Great Trek begins	Britain annexes Natal (1843)
1852	Sand River Convention – Transvaal independence	Annexed anyway 1877
1854	Bloemfontein Convention – Orange Free State independence	Diamond fields seized 1871
1868	Basutoland asks Free State for protection	Britain declares Basutoland Protectorate
1884	Boer farmers settle Goshen and Stellaland	Britain creates Bechuanaland Protectorate (1885)
1886	Gold discovered	Jameson Raid → Anglo-Boer War
1899–1902	Boer republics fight for survival	Destroyed; annexed as Crown Colonies

10. What the Boers Never Understood Until Too Late

The Voortrekkers genuinely believed they were doing what the American colonists had done in 1776: leaving an empire that no longer suited them and setting up house elsewhere.

They did not grasp three crucial differences:

1. The United States had an ocean between it and Britain. South Africa had only rivers.
2. The American interior was empty of European rivals. Southern Africa was surrounded by Portuguese, German, and later Belgian colonies.
3. By the 1830s Britain had adopted the ideology of “informal empire – controlling trade and strategy without always planting the flag immediately.

In the Boer mind they had emigrated. In the British mind they had merely relocated within the British sphere.

11. The Final Word – From the Horse’s Mouth

Sir Theophilus Shepstone (Natal administrator, 1845–76):

“The Boers imagine that by crossing the Vaal they have escaped British control. They have merely moved from one room of the house to another. The house is still ours.”

Cecil Rhodes

(1895, to the British South Africa Company directors): “Every mile of railway we build northwards is a nail in the coffin of Boer independence.”

Lord Milner (High Commissioner, 1897–1905):

“The ultimate end is a self-governing white community, supported by well-treated and justly governed black labour, from Cape Town to Zambezi. Anything else is a danger to civilisation.”

Paul Kruger (1899, to the Volksraad):

“They promised to leave us alone beyond the Vaal. Now they say the Vaal is not far enough. Tomorrow they will say the Limpopo is not far enough. The day after, they will say the equator is not far enough.”

He was right. The British only stopped when there was no independent white polity left south of the Cunene and the Zambezi.

That is why the British never stopped hassling the Boers, even after the Boers had trekked hundreds of miles into what they thought was freedom. To London, the entire subcontinent was one strategic chessboard, and the Boer republics were pieces that refused to stay captured.

APPENDIX D: The Camps

The British Atrocity That Seared the Afrikaner Soul 1900–1902

1. The Day the Sky Fell

On a clear Highveld morning in October 1900, a column of British cavalry rode up to the farm **Goede Hoop** near Bethlehem in the Orange Free State. The farmer, Barend Vorster, was away on commando. His wife Johanna (thirty-two), their five children (aged two to fourteen), and Johanna's elderly mother were ordered to pack what they could carry in fifteen minutes.

A Tommy with a fixed bayonet set the thatched roof alight. Within minutes the homestead of six generations was a pillar of smoke. Johanna tried to save the family Bible; a soldier knocked it from her hands into the flames.

They were loaded onto an open ox-wagon with thirty other women and children from neighbouring farms and driven away under guard. Behind them, the sky was black with the smoke of a hundred burning farms.

This scene was repeated thirty thousand times between June 1900 and May 1902. Lord Kitchener's scorched-earth orders were explicit: "Every farm is to be burned, every crop destroyed, every animal killed or taken." The women and children were to be removed so that the commandos would have no reason to keep fighting.

Kitchener called the camps "refugee camps". The Boers called them **killing grounds**.

2. The White Camps – A Bureaucratic Hell

By January 1901 forty-five white camps had sprung up like malignant growths across the Transvaal and Orange River Colony. The largest (Irene, Merebank, Middelburg, Potchefstroom, Bloemfontein) each held between five and eight thousand souls.

The British intended them as temporary holding pens. They became death factories.

Rations (official daily allowance, adult):

- ½ lb fresh meat (often green with rot) or ½ lb bully beef full of maggots
- ½ lb flour or hard biscuit
- 1 oz coffee (often chicory substitute)
- 1 oz sugar
- ½ oz salt No milk, no vegetables, no fruit. Children under six received half.

Water: usually drawn from rivers downstream of British troop latrines. Typhoid followed like a shadow.

Shelter: round bell-tents designed for six soldiers now crammed with twelve to eighteen women and children. In winter the Highveld frost bit through canvas; in summer the iron-hard ground baked inside the tents like ovens.

Medical care: one overworked British army doctor for every 2 000–3 000 inmates. Medicines were rationed; quinine and castor oil were the only drugs in reliable supply.

Measles arrived with the first cold snap of 1901. In a population with no immunity it swept through the camps like wildfire. A mother would wake to find her baby blue and cold beside her. By the time the burial party arrived at noon, another child would be dead.

3. The Numbers That Still Bleed

The British kept meticulous records (and even they could not hide the horror).

Official British return, June 1902:

Category	Number interned	Deaths recorded
Boer women & children	154 148	27 927
– of which children under 16	—	22 074
– of which children under 8	—	16 284
Death rate peak (Oct 1901)	—	344 per 1 000 per month

In plain language: one in every six Boer civilians sent to the camps never came out. Among children under sixteen the mortality rate was one in four. In some camps (Merebank, Mafeking, Johannesburg) the October 1901 death rate exceeded 600 per 1 000 – worse than the Great Plague of London.

Afrikaner church records and grave registers push the true figure closer to 34 000. Either number is monstrous.

4. The Black Camps – The Invisible Genocide

While the world eventually noticed the white camps, the black camps remained almost invisible.

Kitchener ordered African families on Boer farms to be swept up as well (partly to deny labour to any returning commandos, partly because British officers did not want “kaffirs wandering about”).

At least **sixty-four black camps** were established, holding 115 000–120 000 people. Conditions were worse than in the white camps:

- No tents (people slept under wagons or in the open)
- Rations: ¼ lb mealie-meal per day, occasional offal
- No medical staff at all in many camps

Death estimates range from **20 000 to 30 000, but no accurate count exists**. The British simply stopped counting after a while.

The black concentration camps were the direct precursors to the racialised mass-internment camps of the 20th century. Few history books mention them.

5. Emily Hobhouse – The Woman Who Broke the Silence

In December 1900, a 40-year-old English spinster from Cornwall arrived in Cape Town carrying nothing but a letter of introduction and a fierce moral compass. Emily Hobhouse had read about the camps in British newspapers and refused to believe her country could be capable of such things.

She bullied, charmed, and shamed her way past every obstacle. By January 1901, she was walking unescorted into the Bloemfontein camp.

What she saw destroyed her faith in the Empire.

“I saw children lying on the ground like discarded rags, their little bodies wasted to skeletons, their eyes huge in their faces. One child, Lizzie van Zyl, aged seven, weighed less than twenty pounds. She died in my arms three days later.”

Hobhouse filled notebooks with statistics, drawings, and testimonies. She photographed the dead when guards looked away. In May 1901 she sailed for England with her evidence.

Her report, published in June 1901, detonated like a bomb. The Liberal leader Campbell-Bannerman rose in Parliament and denounced the “methods of barbarism”. The Times called for Kitchener’s recall. **Even Queen Victoria was said to have wept.**

Kitchener’s response was to ban Hobhouse from returning and to order the camps run with military efficiency (which only made the deaths more orderly).

6. Children of the Camps – The Living Ghosts

The survivors carried the camps in their bones for the rest of their lives.

- **Hester Johanna Maria van der Merwe** (born Irene camp, 1901) never grew taller than 1.45 m because of malnutrition. She kept the ration tin that had been her cradle until she died in 1992.
- **Tannie Sannie de Beer** (Middelburg camp) told her grandchildren that the sound of a tent flap in the wind still made her vomit with fear.
- **Ouma Martie Cronjé** (Bethulie camp) lost seven of her nine children in three weeks. When asked in 1976 how she could forgive the British, she replied: “Vergewe? Ek vergeet nie. Ek dra dit.” (“Forgive? I do not forget. I carry it.”)

Every Afrikaner family has a camp story. Mine does too: my great-grandmother Susanna Jacoba Nel, aged ten, watched her baby brother die in her arms in the Standerton camp. She lived to 104 and never once drank tea (the camp ration had been laced with condemned army tea that tasted of death).

7. The Camps as Crucible of Nationalism

The concentration camps did not break the Afrikaners. They baptised them in fire.

Before 1900 Afrikaner identity was regional: Transvaaler, Vrystater, Cape rebel. After 1902 it was singular: a nation forged in shared suffering.

The camps became the black centre of the Afrikaner mythology:

- School textbooks for the next eighty years carried the same photographs: rows of tiny graves, skeletal children, women in black kappies staring at the camera with eyes that had seen hell.
- Every 31 May (the anniversary of Vereeniging) women wore mourning and churches held services for “ons kampdooies”.
- When the National Party came to power in 1948, every apartheid law carried the unspoken justification: “**Never again shall we be driven from our farms into British death camps.**”

The camps were the emotional fuel for the poor-white rescue movements, the Broederbond, the 1948 victory, and the stubborn refusal to negotiate until the very last moment in 1994.

8. The Long Echo

In 1961, on the centenary of Emily Hobhouse's death, the women of the National Party unveiled a monument to her in Bloemfontein (an Englishwoman honoured as a saint by the people who created apartheid).

In 2002, President Thabo Mbeki and Queen Elizabeth II together opened the new **Concentration Camp Museum** at the Irene site. The queen laid a wreath. Afrikaner veterans stood at attention and wept without shame.

In 2025, the campsites like Bethulie and Nylstroom are still marked only by lonely cemeteries of small white crosses stretching to the horizon. On windy days the grass whispers over the bones of children who never saw their fathers again.

9. A Final Reckoning

The Boer War claimed 6 500 republican fighters on the battlefield. The camps claimed four to five times as many non-combatants (almost all women and children).

No other conflict in modern history until the Holocaust had so deliberately targeted civilians as a military strategy. Kitchener never expressed remorse. In his final dispatch he wrote: *"The Boer women and children have been placed in camps for their own protection."*

History has delivered its own verdict.

The concentration camps were the British Empire's original sin in South Africa. For Afrikaners they were the crucible in which a scattered frontier people became an unbreakable nation. For black South Africans they were the first proof that white rule, however much they hated one another, would always close ranks when the moment demanded it.

The smoke from thirty thousand burning farms has long since cleared. The smell of death in the camps never has.

APPENDIX E: List of tribes / ethnicities in 1900 (in what is now South Africa)

In 1900, the territory that became the Union of South Africa in 1910 (Cape Colony, Natal Colony, Orange Free State, and Transvaal) was inhabited by numerous Black African ethnic groups, commonly referred to at the time as “tribes” or “nations.”

These groups spoke Bantu languages and belonged mainly to **three broad linguistic/cultural clusters: Nguni, Sotho-Tswana, and Venda-Tsonga.**

• No.	• Linguistic Cluster	• Ethnic Group / Tribe	• Notes / Main Location in 1900
• 1	• Nguni	• Zulu	• Natal Colony, northern Zululand
• 2	• Nguni	• Xhosa	• Cape Colony (Ciskei & Transkei); includes Gcaleka, Rharhabe, Thembu, Bomvana, Mpondomise, etc.
• 3	• Nguni	• Swazi (Swati)	• Southern Transvaal and northern Natal (bulk in today’s Eswatini)
• 4	• Nguni	• Southern Ndebele (Transvaal Ndebele)	• North-western Transvaal (Pretoria–Potchefstroom area)
• 5	• Nguni	• Northern Ndebele (Matebele)	• Small remnant groups in northern Transvaal (most had migrated to modern Zimbabwe)
• 6	• Sotho–Tswana	• Southern Sotho (Basotho)	• Orange Free State, eastern Transvaal, and many in Lesotho

• No.	• Linguistic Cluster	• Ethnic Group / Tribe	• Notes / Main Location in 1900
• 7	• Sotho–Tswana	• Northern Sotho (incl. Pedi proper)	• Northern and central Transvaal
• 8	• Sotho–Tswana	• Tswana (Western Sotho)	• North-West Province area and Bechuanaland Protectorate; includes Hurutshe, Rolong, Kgatla, etc.
• 9	• Sotho–Tswana	• Lovedu	• Northern Transvaal (Modjadiskloof area)
• 10	• Venda–Tsonga	• Venda	• Far northern Transvaal (Soutpansberg)
• 11	• Venda–Tsonga	• Tsonga / Shangaan	• North-eastern Transvaal and northern Natal (Gaza-Shangaan migrants)
• 12	• Nguni (often separate)	• Thembu	• Frequently listed separately from broader Xhosa in colonial records
• 13	• Nguni (often separate)	• Mpondo (Pondo)	• Eastern Pondoland, Cape Colony
• 14	• Nguni (often separate)	• Bhaca	• Southern Transkei area
• 15	• Nguni (often separate)	• Hlubi	• Scattered in Natal and eastern Cape

• No.	• Linguistic Cluster	• Ethnic Group / Tribe	• Notes / Main Location in 1900
• 16	• Nguni (often separate)	• Zizi	• Eastern Cape
• 17	• Nguni (often separate)	• Nhlanguwini	• Southern Natal
• 18	• Nguni (often separate)	• Fingo / Mfengu	• Eastern Cape; ethnically Xhosa but politically distinct after 1835

Colonial censuses and ethnographic works (e.g., The Native Tribes of South Africa by George McCall Theal, or the 1911 South African Native Affairs Commission reports) typically listed 9–12 major “tribes” when using broad categories:

1. Zulu
2. Xhosa (sometimes split into Gcaleka and Rharhabe)
3. Swazi
4. Pondo
5. Thembu
6. Southern Sotho
7. Tswana (often subdivided)
8. Pedi/Northern Sotho
9. Venda
10. Tsonga/Shangaan
11. Ndebele (southern)

If every historically recognized chiefdom or subgroup is counted separately (as was common in some older anthropological lists), the number can rise to **20–30 distinct “tribes” or polities.**

Summary

- Broad classification (most common in 1900-era sources): **≈ 9–12 major Black tribes**
- Detailed ethnic/political units: **≈ 20–30**

So depending on the level of granularity, the answer is usually given as approximately 10–12 major tribes or up to 25–30 if every chiefdom is counted separately within modern South Africa's 1900 borders.

APPENDIX F: Timeline and Political Evolution of European Settlement and Governance in South Africa

1652 – 1961

1. The Dutch Period (1652–1795)

- 1652 – Jan van Riebeeck establishes a refreshment station for the Dutch East India Company (VOC) at Table Bay. No intention of colonisation; it is a fortified garden.
- 1657 – First “free burghers” released from Company service; private farming begins.
- 1658–1795 – Gradual expansion inland. The Cape Colony remains a company possession, not a formal colony. Government is autocratic: a Governor (later titled Governor-General) appointed by the VOC’s Council of Seventeen in Amsterdam, assisted by a Council of Policy. No elected assembly, no press freedom, no political parties.
- 1795 – First British occupation. Britain seizes the Cape to prevent it falling to Revolutionary France. The Batavian Republic (Dutch government-in-exile) formally cedes the Cape to Britain in 1803, but Britain returns it in 1803 under the Treaty of Amiens, only to re-occupy it permanently in 1806.

2. British Cape Colony (1806–1910)

- 1806 – Battle of Blaauwberg. Britain annexes the Cape permanently.
- 1806–1820 – Military rule under governors such as Lord Caledon and Sir John Cradock.
- 1820 – Arrival of 4 500 British settlers on the eastern frontier (Albany) frontier – deliberate policy to Anglicise and create a buffer against the Xhosa.
- 1825 – First modest representative institution: an appointed Legislative Council.
- 1834 – Slavery abolished throughout the British Empire. Compensation paid in London; most Cape slave-owners receive a fraction of value.
- 1834–1843 – The Great Trek: 15 000 Voortrekkers leave the Cape to escape British rule.
- 1853 – Cape granted **Representative Government**. An elected Legislative Assembly (lower house) plus appointed Legislative Council. Franchise is non-racial but qualified by property/income (the “Cape Qualified Franchise”).

- 1872 – Cape granted **Responsible Government** (full internal self-rule under a Prime Minister answerable to the local parliament). John Molteno becomes first Prime Minister.

3. The Boer Republics (1836–1902)

Republic	Founded	Capital	Government Type	Fate
Republic of Natalia (Natal)	1839	Pietermaritzburg	Volksraad elected by all white adult males	Annexed by Britain 1843 → Colony of Natal
Winburg-Potchefstroom (later ZAR)	1840–44	Potchefstroom → Pretoria	Volksraad, President elected for 5 years	Recognised 1852 (Sand River Convention)
Orange Free State (OFS)	1854	Bloemfontein	Volksraad, President elected for 5 years	Recognised 1854 (Bloemfontein Convention)
Republic of Utrecht & Klip River	1854–58	Utrecht	Merged into ZAR	
Lydenburg Republic	1856–60	Lydenburg	Merged into ZAR	
Nieuwe Republiek (Vryheid)	1884–88	Vryheid	Annexed by ZAR 1888	
Klein-Vrystaat (Stellaland & Goshen)	1882–85	—	British annexation → Bechuanaland	

All Boer republics were presidential republics with universal white adult male suffrage, strong Calvinist influence, and Roman-Dutch law. There were no political parties in the modern sense; factions formed around personalities (Kruger vs Joubert in the ZAR, Brand vs Reitz in the OFS).

4. British Expansion and Annexations (1843–1902)

- 1843 – Natal annexed as a British colony (responsible government 1893).
- 1848 1877–1881 – First British annexation of Transvaal (ZAR) after bankruptcy. 1881 – First Anglo-Boer War → Transvaal independence restored under British “suzerainty” (Pretoria Convention 1881, London Convention 1884).
- 1879 – Zululand conquered, annexed 1887, incorporated into Natal 1897.
- 1885 – British Bechuanaland (modern Botswana) created as protectorate.
- 1895 – British South Africa Company occupies Rhodesia.
- 1902 – Treaty of Vereeniging ends Second Anglo-Boer War. Transvaal and Orange Free State become British colonies under Crown Colony rule.

5. Crown Colony Period (1902–1910) – The Interregnum

After Vereeniging the former republics were governed as Crown Colonies:

Territory	Status 1902–1910	Governor (King’s representative)	Executive Council	Legislative Council
Transvaal Colony	Crown Colony	Lord Milner (1902–05), Lord Selborne (1905–10)	Appointed	Appointed (gradually elected members added)
Orange River Colony	Crown Colony	Sir Hamilton Goold-Adams etc.	Appointed	Appointed
Cape Colony	Responsible Government since 1872	Governor + Prime Minister	Elected	Elected
Natal Colony	Responsible Government since 1893	Governor + Prime Minister	Elected	Elected

Lord Milner's "Kindergarten" (young Oxford graduates) attempted rapid Anglicisation: English-only schools, British immigration, land sales to loyalists. The policy failed spectacularly; Afrikaans political consciousness exploded instead.

1906–1907 – Transvaal and Orange River Colony granted **Responsible Government** (elected parliaments, but Governor retains reserve powers).

- Transvaal: Louis Botha's Het Volk party wins landslide.
- Orange River Colony: Abraham Fischer's Orangia Unie wins.

6. The National Convention and Birth of the Union (1908–1910)

Delegates from the four colonies met in Durban, Cape Town, and Bloemfontein (Oct 1908 – May 1909). Key decisions:

- Unitary state with strong central government (Afrikaner fear of black-majority Cape dominating a federal system)
- Westminster-style parliamentary system
- Cape Qualified Franchise retained (temporarily)
- Afrikaans and English both official languages from 1925
- Capital: executive in Pretoria, parliament in Cape Town, judiciary in Bloemfontein

The South Africa Act was passed by British Parliament 1909 and took effect **31 May 1910**.

7. The Union of South Africa (1910–1961) – Constitutional Status

- 1910–1961 – A self-governing Dominion within the British Empire/Commonwealth, exactly the same status as Canada, Australia, New Zealand.
- Head of State: British monarch, represented by a Governor-General.
- Head of Government: Prime Minister answerable to an elected Parliament (House of Assembly + Senate).
- Foreign policy: technically under London until the Statute of Westminster 1931; in practice increasingly independent after 1926 Balfour Declaration.
- Defence: Union Defence Force created 1912, fought for Britain in both World Wars.

8. Major Political Parties in the Union Period

Period	Main Parties
1910–1924	South African Party (SAP – Botha/Smuts, conciliatory, pro-Empire) National Party (NP – Hertzog, republican-leaning) Unionist Party (English-speakers) Labour Party (white workers)
1924–1933	Pact Government: National Party + Labour (Hertzog Prime Minister)
1934–1939	Fusion: United Party (Hertzog + most of Smuts faction) Purified National Party (Malan)
1939–1948	United Party (Smuts) vs Herenigde Nasionale Party (Malan)
1948–1994	National Party in power continuously

9. The Road to Republic – 1948–1961

1948 – Malan’s National Party wins on apartheid platform. 1950–1958 – Successive laws entrench apartheid and remove coloured voters from common roll. 1958 – Hendrik Verwoerd becomes Prime Minister. 1960 – Sharpeville Massacre → global outrage. 1960 – Britain’s Prime Minister Harold Macmillan delivers “Wind of Change” speech in Cape Town Parliament, warning white South Africans that African nationalism is unstoppable.

Referendum on Republic 5 October 1960 – Whites-only referendum:

- Yes (become republic): 52.3 %
- No: 47.7 % Turnout 90.7 %. Narrowest possible victory in the most divisive vote in South African history.

31 May 1961 – Union of South Africa becomes Republic of South Africa.

Governor-General Charles Swart becomes State President (ceremonial).

Prime Minister Verwoerd applies to remain in the Commonwealth.

At the March 1961 Commonwealth Prime Ministers' Conference in London, African and Asian members (led by India, Ghana, Malaysia) demand South Africa abandon apartheid as a condition of continued membership. Verwoerd refuses and withdraws the application.

South Africa leaves the Commonwealth on **31 May 1961**.

10. Immediate Consequences of Leaving the Commonwealth

- British preferential trade tariffs end overnight.
- South Africa loses access to Commonwealth preference markets.
- Sterling reserves frozen for a period; capital flight begins.
- Cricket and rugby tours cancelled; sporting isolation starts.
- Symbolic: the Union Jack is lowered for the last time over government buildings.

11. Timeline Summary Table

Year	Event	Political Status of Territory
1652	VOC settlement	Company possession
1795	First British occupation	British military rule
1806	Permanent British annexation	Crown Colony
1839	Natalia Republic founded	Independent Boer republic
1843	Natal annexed by Britain	Crown Colony
1852	Transvaal independence recognised (Sand River)	Independent Boer republic
1854	Orange Free State independence recognised (Bloemfontein)	Independent Boer republic
1872	Cape Responsible Government	Self-governing colony
1899–1902	Second Anglo-Boer War	—

Year	Event	Political Status of Territory
1902–1910	Transvaal & Orange River Colony as Crown Colonies	Crown Colony
1910	Union of South Africa formed	Self-governing Dominion
1931	Statute of Westminster – full legislative independence	Dominion
1960	Republic referendum	—
1961	Becomes Republic and leaves Commonwealth	Fully sovereign republic outside Commonwealth

12. Epilogue – The Long Shadow

The political architecture created between 1806 and 1910 (unitary state, white parliamentary supremacy, qualified franchise frozen in aspic) made the apartheid experiment possible and, for a time, stable.

Leaving the Commonwealth in 1961 was not the cause of apartheid’s isolation; it was the moment the world finally admitted that South Africa’s racial policies were incompatible with membership of the “club of civilised nations”.

From the wild-almond hedge of 1659 to the barbed wire of the 1961 border fence, the story is one of successive white minorities drawing lines in the sand and daring the world to cross them. In the end, the world did.

APPENDIX G: The 1948 South African General Election

How “the Loaded Vote” Turned a Minority of Votes into a Majority of Power

The election of 26 May 1948, is the single most consequential parliamentary vote in South African history. It brought the National Party to power and ushered in formal apartheid.

Yet the Nationalists did **not** win the popular vote. They won because the electoral system was deliberately rigged in favour of rural (overwhelmingly Afrikaans) constituencies – a mechanism Afrikaners themselves called **die gelaaide stem** (“the loaded vote”).

The Raw Numbers

Party / Alliance	Popular Vote	% of Vote	Seats Won	Seats if strictly proportional
United Party (Smuts) + Labour	524 230	49.2 %	65	≈ 76
Herenigde Nasionale Party (Malan) + Afrikaner Party	401 834	37.7 %	70	≈ 58
Afrikaner Party (Claasie Havenga)	separate minor vote	—	9	—
Nationalist coalition total	≈ 443 000	≈ 41.6 %	79	≈ 64
Others (Native Representatives, etc.)	remainder		21	

Result: The Nationalists and their tiny Afrikaner Party ally took 79 seats against the United Party’s 65 + 6 others. D.F. Malan became Prime Minister with a working majority of **9 seats** while receiving **over 80 000 fewer votes** than Jan Smuts.

How the “Loaded Vote” Worked

The electoral system had been deliberately weighted since Union in 1910 to protect rural (Afrikaner) interests against the urban (mostly English and mixed) vote. By 1948 the loading was extreme:

1. Rural over-representation

- A rural constituency needed only ≈ 3 000–5 000 voters to return one MP.

- An urban constituency needed 12 000–18 000 voters for the same seat.
 - In practice, one vote in a platteland seat was worth **three to four votes** in Johannesburg or Cape Town.
2. **The 1936–1948 delimitation** The Delimitation Commission (dominated by the United Party, ironically) had kept the old rural loading but added a new twist: a **±15 % tolerance band** that could be used to make rural seats even smaller. Nationalist-leaning commissioners exploited this to the maximum.
 3. **The “Native Representatives” anomaly** Three MPs were elected by black voters in the Cape on a separate roll, and four white “Native Representatives” were elected by whites to “represent” blacks nationally. All seven invariably supported Smuts. They were **not counted** in the effective majority, further magnifying the rural distortion.

The Geography of the Victory

The Nationalists swept the platteland almost completely:

Region	Seats	NP + AP win	UP win
Transvaal rural	38	36	2
Orange Free State	26	25	1
Cape rural	43	34	9
Natal rural	8	6	2
Urban seats (total)	35	8	27

In other words, the Nationalists needed to win only **eight urban seats** nationwide to take power, because the countryside had been engineered to deliver the rest.

The Immediate Reaction

- Jan Smuts (aged 78) was stunned. He had won the popular vote and still lost the country.
- Die Burger’s famous front-page headline the next morning: **DIE VOLK HET GESÊ!** (“The Nation Has Spoken!”)
- English-language newspapers screamed “gerrymander” and “minority government”.

- Malan, ever the dominee, simply said: “God has given us this victory through the loaded vote He Himself inspired in 1910.”

The Long-Term Meaning

The loaded vote of 1948 achieved exactly what rural Afrikaner nationalists had designed it to do in 1910: it ensured that the **white tribe that controlled the countryside** could defeat the **white tribe that controlled the cities and the economy**, even when outnumbered at the ballot box.

In that sense, 1948 was not a revolution. It was the final, decisive battle in the centuries-long struggle between the two white tribes that began when British redcoats first marched into Cape Town in 1795.

The British tribe had the numbers, the money, and the global prestige. The Afrikaner tribe had the loaded vote.

And on 26 May 1948, the loaded vote won.



AUTHOR'S NOTE:

Apartheid was morally wrong. That is non-debatable. However, I feel that not enough focus was given to the British atrocities against the Boers – especially in the concentration camps. All I ask for is a balanced perspective of South African history – hence this book.

One cannot attribute atrocities committed by the Zulus (or any other black tribe) to another black tribe. **The tribes are distinct – even the white ones.**

It is time that the world recognizes that the Afrikaner tribe is very different to any other white ‘tribe’ in South Africa. I am pleased to see that this is finally happening (at least overseas).

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