

of use appears to have been limited considering the available information on his subject contained there, particularly a rich archive of his columns carried in the *Umteteli wa Bantu* newspaper.

The quibbles I have mentioned in the section above do not and should not take anything away from the outstanding contribution Mkhize's book makes to scholarship. It is not just a fascinating account of the public life of one of the remarkable and complex political figures of the 20th century in South Africa. Through examining the life of one man, Mkhize also provides a rich history of a people and their country. When all is said and done, this book's major contribution may be its challenge to what has become a dominant narrative regarding the struggle for liberation in South Africa. Msimang's long and complex life in politics demonstrates vividly that there was no single path to liberation; there was no, as Mkhize contends persuasively, "unbreakable thread". Different people contributed in different ways, some occupying large political stages, while other contributions were made in the obscure and quiet corners of this land. The ambiguities and complexities in Msimang's long career in public life should cause us to question the Manichean view of our past, a world that is inhabited only by political heroes and villains. Mkhize's nuanced discussion of his subject's political life pays attention to these ambiguities and complexities. It is no wonder that it won a prestigious literary award in 2020 for its outstanding contribution to scholarship.

The rise & demise of the Afrikaners

(Cape Town, Tafelberg, 2019, 360 pp. ISBN 978-0-624-08671-0)

Hermann Giliomee

Wessel Visser
Stellenbosch University
wpv@sun.ac.za

This work by renowned historian Hermann Giliomee on the history of Afrikaners can, to an extent, be regarded an abridged and explanatory version of his *magnum opus* on Afrikaner history, *The Afrikaners* published in 2003.

In the foreword the author explains that all chapters in the book, except the last, have been published before as journal articles, and, as said, the contents

of this publication correspond in a summarising way to that of *The Afrikaners*. The book includes sixteen chapters divided into four sections.

The author begins the foreword with an interesting correction on a previous statement regarding PW Botha's supposed stroke in 1985, which later proved to be a false assumption. Giliomee also explains how Botha's actual medical indisposition did affect his ill-fated 1985 Rubicon speech.

Section one of the book (chapters 1-5) explains the development of Afrikaner nationalism and apartheid in what Giliomee calls a "radical survival plan" for Afrikaners. In the 1930s a quarter of all Afrikaners were considered poor whites, without the means to maintain a so-called "white living standard". Thus, when Jan Smuts of the South African Party and Barry Hertzog of the National Party privately exchanged views after the 1929 election, and Smuts proposed a qualified franchise based on occupation and income or salary, Hertzog rejected the proposal because it would exclude unskilled and unemployed whites. Chapter one discusses the Coloured vote, which white Afrikaners generally accepted in the 1910s and 1920s. DF Malan, Cape leader of the NP, and Dr HF Verwoerd, then a professor at Stellenbosch University, considered the poverty of Afrikaner and Coloured people as of a similar kind, requiring similar solutions.

The situation changed in the early 1930s when Hertzog and Smuts joined forces to form the United Party and Malan broke away to form the Purified National Party. Malan and his followers then did an about-turn and vigorously promoted a separate voters' roll for Coloured people. They claimed this would improve race relations, but the opposite was true. An exclusive Afrikaner identity and culture emerged after Coloured people had been disfranchised.

Chapter 2 ("The making of the apartheid plan") analyses the main influences on apartheid. For example, the aggressive policies that the NP government implemented to segregate the Coloured community troubled NP van Wyk Louw deeply. He was as influential and leading Afrikaans poet and literary critic. Apart from Van Wyk Louw, Giliomee also discusses the outlook on Afrikaner nationalism of the so-called southern and northern parts of South Africa, the Dutch Reformed Church's ideas on apartheid as well as the crystallisation of this ideology from 1944 onwards.

Chapter 3 ("Survival in justice") investigates Van Wyk Louw's rhetorical question in his 1952 essay asking whether a small people can survive for

long in an immoral and unjustified state, thus preferring “mere survival” or abandoning the quest for “survival in justice”. Chapters 4 and 5 deal with two critically important tests the Afrikaner nationalists faced: whether or not they could advance economically without patronage by the ruling party, and whether they could put a system of segregated mass education in place. Chapter 4 provides a brief overview of Afrikaner economic development in the 20th century. Economically, Afrikaners made steady progress. Between 1938 and 1975 the Afrikaner share of the private sector grew in mining from 1% to 18%; in manufacturing and construction from 3% to 15%; and in trade and commerce 8% to 16%. Chapter 5 probes the first twenty years of the Bantu Education system (introduced in 1954) under apartheid. Section two of the book (chapters 6-10) discusses the NP’s attempts at political reform between the mid-1970s and the mid-1990s. The author illustrates how attempts to remove the nationality of black South Africans amounted to squandering limited time on political reform. Chapter 6 analyses BJ Vorster’s administration and chapters 7 and 8 explains why PW Botha’s efforts to share power without losing control, met with little success. Chapter 9 describes what happened behind the scenes prior to Botha’s Rubicon speech and why it was a disaster that, for all practical purposes, meant the end of reform from above. According to Giliomee, the Rubicon speech signalled the day when the Botha government lost both the initiative and its credibility in international politics. Because the NP government continued to fritter away time and opportunities, the outside world, including the influential West, soon insisted that the only equitable solution in South Africa was one that the ANC endorsed. Chapter 10 is an addition about the ideas of liberal-leftist intellectuals on the extra-parliamentary periphery of Afrikaner thinking and looks at the politics of reform proposed by Breyten Breytenbach, Frederik Van Zyl Slabbert and others. It also refers briefly to the so-called Dakar conference between ANC officials including Thabo Mbeki and Pally Jordan and the Afrikaner intellectuals. Chapter 11 compares, by way of example, the quest of a political settlement in South Africa to similar settlement problems such as those in Palestine and Northern Ireland.

The third section (chapters 12-14) investigates the difficulties in finding a solution to satisfy both white and black and examines the interaction between Nelson Mandela and the last four leaders of Afrikaner rule in South Africa. The section describes the intricacies and political and moral dilemmas of the Afrikaner transfer of political power. Giliomee, for example, criticizes the

NP's failure to secure minority rights, especially language rights and control over schools during the negotiation process.

In section 4 (chapters 15 and 16) the author focuses on the declining position of Afrikaans as a medium of instruction at school level and in the tertiary sector. Giliomee is critical in particular of the strategy that former Afrikaans-medium universities took, taking the University of Stellenbosch to task for its failure to re-establish itself according to the new political and demographic reality of a post-apartheid South Africa. This, Giliomee argues, was done in a way that favoured the hegemonic position of English in education even further, and was to the detriment and eventual downfall of Afrikaans at these institutions.

The book ends rather bluntly after chapter 16 and lacks a summary of the salient points and arguments made in the various chapters. Furthermore, there is indeed, as claimed, some repetition of certain themes. However,

this is a useful reflection on the Afrikaners' ascent to political ruling power and the eventual transition of this power to the ANC via a negotiation process. The book is a handy reference for researchers on South African contemporary politics and history and on the Afrikaners *pe se* and is recommended to readers searching for a pocket-version analysis of Afrikaners' control over the South African state and their decline from power.

Privileged precariat: White workers and South Africa's long transition to majority rule

D van Zyl-Hermann

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Simon Bekker
Stellenbosch University
sb3@sun.ac.za

If we examine South African society today through the institutional lens of NGOs, one group that emerges as highly visible and influential is that of liberal and libertarian organisations. There are for example a number