Contours of Confrontation: Factors that mobilised the Cape Rebels in the South African War, 1896–1902

by

Lauren Coetzee

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Supervisor: Prof. Johan Fourie (Stellenbosch University)
Co-supervisor: Prof. Joachim Wehner (London School of Economics)

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Declaration

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Date: MARCH 2023
Abstract

Heroes, traitors, and social outcasts – the Cape Rebels of the South African War, 1899–1902, have been cast in several roles throughout history. Not only do they continue to capture the interests of social historians, but with the incorporation of quantitative history methods, their histories have been revisited in new ways. Using a combination of archival sources and methods like GIS, this thesis presents a study of the social, economic and political circumstances of this group to analyse why they mobilised. With honour, security and livelihoods at stake, the question is raised why these rebels chose to abandon their homes and families at the high cost of hope elsewhere for a better future. Several theories of mobilisation were tested and found wanting.

This thesis has used GIS to combine archival research with mapping software to show a visual representation of the historical context of the rebels. The most prevalent theories cited in the literature on the Cape Rebels were mapped and analysed to evaluate the conditions and influences on mobilisation levels in the Cape Colony before the war. The most popular theory, the rinderpest epidemic, was shown to have some correlation with rebel mobilisation rates. However, this was mostly relegated to the districts with heavier cattle losses in the north of the Cape. Proximity to the republics and differences in lifestyle and culture on the frontier were also evaluated in terms of whether this influenced people to side with those more similar to them, demonstrating that ideas, attitudes and ideologies were free-flowing in these regions. This was shown using education levels, the establishment of schools and distances to the borders. The differentiation between frontier regions and republics was proven to be political rather than physical, meaning many rebels in the area were closer to republican communication networks than that of the Cape. Some rebels were motivated by their personal convictions to aid the republics whose sovereignty was threatened. Moreover, the pre-eminent political conditions spurred people to seek alternative leadership after repeated political blunders had compounded the political and ideological vulnerabilities of potential rebels. Finally, the appeal of strong, charismatic leadership has been shown to be a powerful tool in mobilising groups. This was done through mapping the route taken by General Jan Smuts as a proxy for quantifying charismatic leadership. Ultimately, rebels mobilised in the Cape because they shared common goals and interests with the Boer republics.
Opsomming

Helde, verraaiers en sosiale uitgeworpenes. Die Kaapse-rebelle van die Suid-Afrikaanse Oorlog, 1899-1902, is deur die geskiedenis heen in verskeie rolle getipeer. Hulle bly egter steeds sosiale historici se belangstelling te prikkel. Die inkorporering van kwantitatiewe metodes skep moontlikhede waarop hul geskiedenis op nuwe maniere herverbeeld kan word. Met behulp van ’n kombinasie van argivale bronne en metodes soos GIS, fokus die tesis op die sosiale, ekonomiese en politieke omstandighede van hierdie groep met die doel om te bepaal waarom hulle gerebelleer het. Die vraag word gestel waarom hierdie rebelle gekies het om hul huise en gesinne te verlaat met die hoop op ’n beter toekoms elders - teen die hoë koste van die potensiele verlies van hul eer, veiligheid en lewensbestaan. Verskeie teorieë oor mobilisering word getoets en gebrekkig gevind.

Die tesis gebruik GIS om argivale navorsing met kaartwerk sagteware te combineer in ’n poging om die historiese konteks van die rebelle visueel voor te stel. Die mees algemene teorieë wat in die literatuur voorkom is geografies uitgebeeld en geanaliseer in ’n poging om die invloed daarvan op mobilisasie vlakke in die Kaapkolonie voor die oorlog te evalueer. Die mees algemene teorie wat deur navorsers aangehaal word, die rinderpes-epidemie, het ’n mate van korrelasie met rebellmobiliseringsyfers getoon. Die korrelasie het egter meestal voorgekom in die Noord-Kaap in die distriekte waar groter veeverliese aangeteken is. Afstand van die republikeinse grense en die gepaardgaande verschillende grens leefstyl en kultuur is ook geëvalueer om te bepaal of dit persone beïnvloed het om hulle te skakel by diegene wat meer soortgelyk aan hulle was - en dus aantoon dat idees, houdings en ideologieë vryvloeiend (dus nie noodwendig deur geografiese grense beperk is nie) was oor grense heen. Dit is gedemonstreer deur vlakke van onderwys/opvoeding, die stigting van skole en afstand van die republikeinse grense te gebruik. Die onderskeid tussen grensstreke en republieke was polities eerder as fisies, en baie rebelle in die gebiede was nader aan republikeinse as Kaapse kommunikasienetwerke. Sommige rebelle is deur hul persoonlike oortuigings gemotiveer om die republieke, wie se soewereiniteit bedreig is, te help. Die heersende politieke toestande het mense aangespoor om alternatiewe leierskap te soek nadat herhaalde politieke flaters die politieke en ideologiese kwesbaarhede (besware) van potensiële rebelle vererger het. Die aantrekkingskrag van sterk, charismatiese leierskap geblek ’n krachtige instrument te wees om groepe te mobiliseer. In die finale instansie het rebelle in die Kaap gerebelleer omdat hulle gemeenskaplike doelwitte en belange met die Boererepublieke gedeel het.
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CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

The history of the Cape Rebels in the South African War (1889–1902) is not unfamiliar to most South Africans and continues to capture the interest of social, political and economic historians alike. The Cape Rebels transitioned from being traitors to the British Cape Colony guilty of high treason to admirable and esteemed characters in the narrative of Afrikaner nationalism in the early twentieth century. Rather than being conspirators who betrayed their government, they became heralded as heroes and martyrs for the cause of the Boer Republics. However, this study considers why this group chose to side with the two Boer Republics: the Orange Free State (OFS, later Orange River Colony) and the South African Republic/Zuid-Afrikaansche Republiek (ZAR or Transvaal). In doing so, several theories of mobilisation cited in historical literature will be examined and some new theories posited. Due to the lack of primary sources left by the Cape Rebels, this study contributes to the historiography by using quantitative sources to evaluate theories of mobilisation.

The Cape Colony was a multiracial and multicultural society, with several groups of people being drawn to this bustling urban environment with the promise of higher pay and better standards of living under British care. Not everyone agreed with the governance of the British, believing it to be “oppressive, wrong-headed and insensitive to their aspirations”, which resulted in large numbers of Afrikaners leaving to find homes elsewhere, largely in the Boer Republics. This Great Trek had resulted in the establishment of two Boer republics – the Transvaal in 1852 and the Orange Free State in 1854, both recognised by the British as independent. This trek was also one of the initial stands taken by Afrikaners against British rule in the Cape. Warwick describes the Boer Republics as “composed of widely dispersed farming communities that effectively controlled their own affairs”. Despite various conflicts of interest and cultural disagreements, both English- and Afrikaans-speaking white societies had lived fairly harmoniously in the Cape. The relationship between the

English and Dutch colonists in the Cape was described as warm and frank.\(^4\) By the mid-nineteenth century, three-quarters of the white rural population were Dutch farmers, with English-speaking colonists situated in smaller towns and villages as shopkeepers, civil servants and artisans. These colonists were described as peaceful, loyal subjects who enjoyed the stability and security of the colonial state. Tamarkin stated that “they exploited the economic spaces that opened up with the expansion of the capitalist economy” and that they “were prominent on municipal boards and in divisional councils. They controlled most Afrikaner Bond branches and ultimately their representative became the arbiters of power in Parliament”.\(^5\) This demonstrates the extent of involvement of this political group, their class of wealth and their potential influence through the various established networks. Tamarkin demonstrates how these individuals were not only entrepreneurs, but also politically active at a community level and to a wider parliamentary level through their representatives. This is important to note due to the ecological and environmental impacts that were later to change the wealth, and thus class, status of this group, further influencing their reactions and grievances in the pre-war context.

However, Trapido paints a different picture, where most Afrikaners were reliant on government protection and policy for the expansion of this working group and only became more successful urban dwellers in the twentieth century.\(^6\) He explains how Afrikaners were a separate identity, mostly farmers, often frontiersmen, or a dispossessed working class, and most poor whites in the late nineteenth century were Afrikaans-speaking.\(^7\) They were “extremely poor, compelled to compete with African societies for land and livestock, and only communicating with the outside world by the long ox-waggon routes passing through the British colonies to the coast.”\(^8\) Trapido explains how the occupants of these frontiers and farming economies were dependent on the control of political power for their protection and advancement.\(^9\)


However, the mineral revolution in South Africa sparked a great deal of change. The discovery of diamonds in Kimberley “turned the political map upside down”, causing a rush of people to flood the region. Van Onselen explains how this became a cauldron of political and capitalist development that attracted people internationally, creating cultural diversity, social texture and vitality. Van Onselen describes how, in less than thirty years, a republic founded on an agrarian economy had transformed into one that boasted the world’s largest and most technologically sophisticated goldmining industry. Pakenham describes how the diamond discovery smoothed the path for the Cape Colony to achieve self-governance within the British Empire.

Strained relations between the Cape government and the Boer Republics became increasingly apparent. The discovery of riches in the Transvaal swung the power in favour of the Boer Republics, and fortunes were made once again when gold was discovered in the Witwatersrand (Die Rand) in 1886. Meanwhile, the gold fortunes had created an Afrikaner oligarchy that sought to modernise the republic. By the time war broke out, there was vast stratification of Afrikaner society in the Transvaal. Economic enrichment had occurred, making the Transvaal one of the richest and most militarily powerful nations in southern Africa at the time. This attracted a new industrial community. British interests in mining fortunes began to look for alternative ways to shift political power in Johannesburg to a more favourable situation. The Jameson Raid of 1895 was a ploy conceptualised by Rhodes and Beit in secret to seize power in Johannesburg, which would consolidate mineral riches in South Africa under Cape control. However, this was the tipping point for the already strained relations between the Boer Republics and the Cape Colony, which would ultimately result in the South African War.

Warwick describes the political consequences of the failed raid as disastrous, prompting Boer mistrust of the British government’s intentions. This resulted in the Transvaal creating a concrete alliance

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12 Ibid.
16 Ibid., p. 15.
with the Orange Free State, which had remained neutral before this event. Milner, the high commissioner for South Africa and lieutenant governor of the Cape Colony, saw only two ways out of the abyss for the British Empire in South Africa – either Kruger needed to make political reforms that suited the demands of the Cape government, or, if this was not ceded, the only alternative was war. Of the two options – reform or war – Milner believed “war was more likely”. Colonial Secretary Joseph Chamberlain strongly objected to a war in South Africa, stating that:

A war in South Africa would be one of the most serious wars that could possibly be waged. It would be in the nature of a Civil War. It would be a long war, a bitter war and a costly war… it would leave behind it the embers of a strife which I believe generations would hardly be long enough to extinguish… to go to war with President Kruger, to force upon him reforms in the internal affairs of his state, with which [we] have repudiated all right of interference – that would have been a course of action as immoral as it would have been unwise.

In the Cape, Schreiner narrowly won the election in October 1898 and quickly soured his reputation in how he dealt with the worrying number of armaments being imported to the Boer Republics and due to his denial of the severity of the threat of war. These political events compounded the threat of war and the deteriorating relations between the Cape Colony and the Boer Republics. Through detailing these incidents, a track record develops where the Cape Colony becomes guilty of hindering and infringing upon the development of the Boer Republics as independent, self-governing entities, as well as other repeated political blunders. This denial of self-governance and repeated economic blocs created fuel for the fire and largely triggered the war. This also demonstrated why some Cape citizens may have opted to align with the interests and ambitions of the Boer Republics over those of the Cape. The group of citizens in the British Cape Colony who fought for the independence of the Boer Republics was named the “Cape Rebels”. Although they are not a prominent feature in the historical literature on the South African War, they have since acquired a long folk history tied to Afrikaner nationalism after the war.

In all, it was estimated that approximately 16,198 Cape Rebels participated in the war efforts. The Boer forces were estimated to have 53,643 men between the ages of 16 and 60, with 31,329 from the

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19 Ibid., p. 49. Quoting Joseph Chamberlain speaking as Colonial Secretary in the House of Commons, May 1896.
20 H.A. Shearing estimates this figure to be slightly higher than Amery’s figure of no more than 10, 000 rebels. The official return of Cape Rebels for 1903 was 12, 205 men.
Transvaal and 22,374 from the Orange Free State. However, these lists were not kept accurately, and it was estimated to be a higher number of between 60,000 to 65,000 men, including 5,000 foreign forces. In comparison, it was estimated that 300,000 British troops were sent to South Africa against the Boer forces, and that total strength reached nearly 500,000 men. These estimates show the numerical importance of the Cape Rebels in the efforts and campaigns of the republicans.

THE CAPE REBELS

The overall theme of this research pertains to the Cape Rebels of the South African War, 1899–1902, particularly why they chose to fight for the republics. While they have become popular in Afrikaans literature, especially after the 1914–1915 rebellion, the Cape Rebels rarely feature in the seminal resources on the South African War. Relegated to passing comments and footnotes, they have been paid little consistent attention by few researchers. One of the more prominent researchers on the Cape Rebels is H. A. Shearing, whose doctoral dissertation was completed in 2005. Additionally, R. J. Constantine published his doctoral dissertation in 1996. These are the only sources that speak explicitly of the Cape Rebels. Aside from these dissertations, there are biographies of Boer commandos and leaders who led some Cape Rebels. A. M. Grundlingh wrote about “Die Hendsoppers en Joiners”, but no explicit mention is made of the Cape Rebels, although some had laid down arms. G. Jordaan’s “Hoe Zij Stierven” remains a rare find and details the last hours before

22 Ibid.
23 These estimates are provided as a guide for demonstrating the strategic importance of the Cape Rebels for the Boer forces. However, these statistics need to be interrogated in their historical context. During times of war, records were less accurately maintained, or lists may have been lost. These statistics are estimates rather than the true representation of their population, but are helpful for framing the importance and proportion of these populations.
the execution of various rebels.\textsuperscript{26} This was first published in 1904 and provides a jarring insight into the last words and testaments of various individuals who were sentenced for treason. Lastly, G. Jooste and R. Webster documented the executions throughout the war, which included the Cape Rebels, in a book that appears to be the only monolith questioning the definition and treatment of this group.

L. Amery describes how there were two unusual constituents in the forces of the Boer republics – the colonial rebels and foreign volunteers. Amery outlines how these colonial rebels were regarded as “an inferior copy of [their] republican kinsfolk” because they were recruited from districts where “the bywoner or ‘poor white’ class” lived and lacked the “military experience and warlike spirit” that was popularised in the republican forces.\textsuperscript{27} These groups tended to loot more than they fought. However, the Transvaal government had placed their hopes in these rebels, aiding their campaign in the Cape. Reports had estimated that 30,000 to 40,000 rebels joined the Boer forces once the Cape had been invaded and Ladysmith had fallen.\textsuperscript{28} Amery suggests that if the republican forces had been successful in their earlier campaigns and pushed into the Cape quickly, this rebel population estimate might have been justified. However, Amery concludes that the total number of British subjects who partook in active rebellion was unlikely to have exceeded 10,000 people. Moreover, he claims that it was doubtful that more than 5,000 rebels were in the field at any one time.\textsuperscript{29} Interestingly, there had been British subjects residing in the republics who had taken burgher rights immediately before the war with the express object of fighting for the cause of the Boer republics. This suggests that the independence of the republics was a political right that many agreed with.

The history of the rebels is complex; they arose in the literature as aggrieved farmers in faraway British lands in the Cape, and from these backgrounds, they became assimilated into the narrative of Afrikaner nationalism after the war.\textsuperscript{30} For many South Africans, the folklore element appears to be the most substantial drawcard for the Cape Rebels, portrayed in stories of national heroes and martyrs in the war and then later as figures championed in Afrikaner nationalism. This heroism has been framed around how various British colonists opted to support the Boer Republics during the war. However, several elements within the history of the Cape Rebels are problematic.

\textsuperscript{26} G. Jordaan. Hoe Zij Stierven: Medelingen aangaande het einde dergenen, aan wie gedurende de oorlog 1899-1902, in de Kaap-Kolonie het doodvonnis voltrokken is, (Burghersdorp: De Stem Drukkery, 1904).
\textsuperscript{27} L. S. Amery, B. Williams & E. Childers, E. (eds.). \textit{The Times History of the War in South Africa 1899-1902}, p. 85.
\textsuperscript{28} \textit{Ibid}.
\textsuperscript{29} \textit{Ibid}.
\textsuperscript{30} This was mostly noted in the research of Shearing, but is also mentioned in that of Constantine.
The first point of contention is the definition of the Cape Rebel. Those who were sentenced for treason were not necessarily Cape Rebels, and not all Cape Rebels were sentenced for treason. As expected during times of war, the lines were blurred between morality and compliance. Jooste and Webster define a rebel as someone who “fights against, resists or refuses allegiance to the established government; a person who resists authority and control; a person who would overthrow a legal power by force.”

They acknowledge that these citizens of the Cape had indeed taken up arms against the British and were therefore guilty of high treason and liable for prosecution to dissuade further criminal deeds. The authors state that they “did not have the right to commit deeds that were against the norms of civilised warfare” and question whether the Cape Rebel was an insurgent or a hero. Jooste and Webster delineate the most important differences in the 1914 rebellion, namely, that it was a “popular protest against legal authorities regarding the annexation of South-West Africa”, which was not the case with the activities of the Cape Rebels during the war. Rather than trying to overthrow their legal authorities, the Cape Rebels went to the aid of the republics who were fighting for their independence. They were not fighting against a particular regime; instead, they were fighting for the independence of another regime.

For many, the standard definition of a Cape Rebel was a Cape colonist who had joined, aided or fought for the Boer Republics during the South African War. However, this definition excludes much of the complexities of the various people included in its categorisation. In its simplicity, this definition would include a larger population of rebels than if treason were accounted for as part of their actions. Additionally, Jooste and Webster question what authority these Cape Rebels were trying to destabilise and overthrow. Although Shearing’s dissertation was published after Jooste and Webster’s book, Shearing has not referenced this research. The term “rebel” is questioned in the book, while it was not questioned in Shearing’s account of the war.

Numerous Cape Rebels had stated that they had not perceived the two notions as contrasting agendas. Jooste and Webster point out that the Cape Rebels were, in fact, loyal to the Queen and British Cape Colony but had come to the aid of the republics who were fighting for their independence.

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32 Ibid.

33 Ibid.


Snyman’s dissertation, he notes that many rebels displayed portraits of the Queen in their homes and, during their trials, had not found it to be an irreconcilable difference that they aided the republics while remaining loyal to Britain. Additionally, Amery commented that “the Afrikaner is essentially a law-abiding citizen and obedient to the authority of its own creation”. Jooste and Webster conclude that since this group was accepting of the lawful British government, the term “rebel” should be considered a misnomer. Thus, the conceptualisation of how Cape Rebels were defined and prosecuted requires further questioning.

MOTIVATIONS FOR MOBILISATION

The question of who these Cape Rebels were and why they rebelled is still disputed. The main reasons for mobilisation offered in the literature on the Cape Rebels are that there was severe deprivation in the agricultural sector after the rinderpest epidemic, which coincided with Griqualand West being invaded, and the failure of the Schreiner ministry to defend Cape borders that encouraged rebellion. Some additional theories posed by Shearing hypothesise that they rebelled in support of friends and family, being ambitious or hopeful of a better life under republican governance. Shearing also notes that the Afrikaner Bond government had deserted their voters in some of the border districts and that the Free State forces had threatened to send them to Delagoa Bay if they did not join their commandos. These theories can be summarised as social and political motivations for rebelling against the Cape government. However, Shearing shows that this is not so clear-cut, as the actions of the Cape Rebels suggest more varied behaviour. These rebels wavered in their loyalties, with several fights being had with republican forces, and they were never on the field for great lengths of time or in large numbers, opting to hang back behind republican forces. Moreover, even some of the Cape Rebel leaders made decisions to use tactics that “courted defeat”. This suggests that the Cape Rebels were not as strongly motivated to display grand loyalty to republican forces. The view that good performance is an indicator of ideological commitment is problematic, as it is a self-serving observation where rebel victories are recorded as a sign of moral strength and ideological commitment, and defeats are associated with betrayal. Instead, political scientist Kalyvas proposes that combatants are usually not motivated by ideological reasons alone, or by hate or fear. Instead,

37 Ibid. p. iii.
39 Ibid.
most people mobilise due to peer pressure, their respect and admiration for their comrades and leaders, concern for their own reputation and wanting to contribute to the success of the group – known as primary group cohesion.  

This thesis has considered theories of nationalism and national identity, as well as why people choose to volunteer for military service and how loyalties to various entities influence their decision, to better understand some of these motivations. Perhaps they were not so much disillusioned by the British government as they were geographically and socially isolated, falling prey to charismatic leaders and empty promises of a more promising future. Boer manhood and group identity is another possibility.

There are similarities between the Cape Rebels of the war and the 1914 rebellion. Swart notes that in the 1914 rebellion, “the story of the rebellion is simple, but the stories of the rebels are manifold”. One of these stories was about “a sense of Boer manhood and how it was used as part of the Rebellion’s raison d’etre”.  

Studying the history of this group comes with its frustrations. Their representation remains a contentious topic, made into heroes and martyrs after the war. During the war, they appeared to hold little sway over the outcome of events and acted as logistical teams scouting areas and finding food, transmitting messages and setting up bases, with limited strategic contributions. Their greatest impact appears to have been after the war, when their disenfranchisement meant that several hundreds of voters were now excluded from critical elections in the Cape Colony. For many of these rebels, very few sources detail their actions and daily lives before and during the war. No diaries have been found, and most of the information comes from official statements while being prosecuted for treason. Shearing notes how many of the memoirs and biographies available were written several decades after the war, making their reliability fallible. Typically, their motivations for rebelling against the British are cited as sympathy for the Afrikaner nation, with renewed efforts after reports of the atrocities committed in the concentration camps were circulated. This differs from the reasons initially claimed in the literature. Shearing claims that “nobody has admitted to political ambition”.  

While political and social motivations are evident, much of the literature on the rebels, especially that of Shearing, cites humanitarian and ecological disasters as the main reasons for switching their

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40 S. Kalyvas. The Logic of Violence in Civil War. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), [eReader version], ch. 2: Pathologies, sec. 2.4: Urban Bias.


allegiances. Shearing investigates the ramifications of the rinderpest disease, showing that Bechuanaland and Griqualand West were the first regions to rebel. She argues that the “attrition” suffered by the rural population in the aftermath of this epidemic was a probable major cause of rebellion north of the Orange River. This theory on the impacts of rinderpest is tested in Chapter 4. Indeed, the agrarian society had been hit on multiple fronts, making desperation and poverty widespread.

Griqualand West had reclassified people as Cape colonists, and many had been rebelling alongside peers with shared interests and cultural ties. The sway of identity, culture and ties to the republics is evaluated in Chapter 5. These connections to friends and family are understood through the rebels’ distance from the republics. Additionally, class, religion and education, which relate to the changing profile of the frontier region, are examined.

Lastly, the probability of political motivations is shown in Chapter 6, which looks at pre-eminent political conditions and the deterioration of the Schreiner ministry. The political power of the Bond government was a contributing factor, and their desertion towards the outbreak of war had knock-on effects for people feeling abandoned by their government. This further relates to the influence of charismatic leadership in inspiring loyalties and rebellion, which is explored in Chapter 6 by studying Jan Smuts and his potential capacity to sway Cape colonists into joining the republican cause.

The circumstances before the war played an influential role in how the first few months of the war were unpacked. With political agendas varying in Schreiner’s ministry and leadership clashes between Schreiner and Milner, there was a sense of unpreparedness in the Cape Colony. Much of this was due to Schreiner’s denial that a war would break out between the Cape and the Boer Republics. Some sources question whether Schreiner was disconnected from the zeitgeist, whether he was simply naïve regarding the ambitions and desires of the Boer forces, or whether he was sympathetic to their cause. Another reason cited by Shearing was that the Cape Colony was included as a signatory of the Hague Convention’s Agreement.

From this research, it is evident that pre-existing conditions compounded the probabilities of the Boers’ efforts to win over British territories. The British territories were severely underprepared for the war compared to the Boer territories due to Schreiner’s denialism, disagreements between officials and government apathy. Schreiner had opted to advocate for a stance of neutrality as far as possible, while Milner had succumbed to pressures caused by public unrest and insecurities in losing important areas to the Boer forces. In this way, it seemed that the territories bordering the Boer Republics had been left defenceless and to fend for themselves, which was in itself a cause for
agitation and government apathy. Martial law was implemented in the Cape Colony in specific areas from 18 October 1899.\footnote{H.A. Shearing. “The Cape Rebel of the South African War, 1899-1902,” PhD diss., Stellenbosch University, 2004, p. 41.}

The cost of rebellion was high, with legislation delimiting that those who had committed high treason be executed while martial law was employed. However, the number of rebels who still chose to mobilise indicates that the motivations or severity of grievances were substantial. Jooste and Webster document the executions conducted during the war, but not limited to the Cape Rebels. From their research, it was discovered that at least 60 burghers from the Cape Colony and the republics were executed by firing squads or the gallows during the war after being trialled by the military courts. Despite the severity of the punishment, many Cape colonists were still called to arms, demonstrating the extreme convictions they held for rebelling and joining the republican forces. Some of these convictions are captured in the inscriptions on the graves or monuments of the executed Boers in the Cape Colony.
“Highest toll paid for Nation and Fatherland”

“Greater love hath no man, that he lays down his life for his friends”

“For country and nation, you gave your life, Duty, courage and glory never be forgotten”.44

From these inscriptions, one can appreciate that dedication and loyalty to family and their homelands was a poignant and overarching feeling. Moreover, this demonstrates their motivations and convictions for fighting for the independence of the republics. There were several reasons for mobilisation. This thesis attempts to contextualise and understand these reasons better by studying the social, economic and political circumstances of this group to analyse why they mobilised, in spite of the high cost of rebellion. This research is important as it demonstrates how national identity can be better understood through this case study of an 1890s Cape Afrikaner with potentially contrasting loyalties – one who was loyal to the British government at the time, but also sought to fight against this government in support of the Boer Republics’ cause for independence.45

BRIEF CHAPTER OVERVIEW

While the historical literature does not offer comprehensive reasons for what caused the Cape Rebels to mobilise against the British, two main reasons are generally noted: family ties to the Boer Republics and the economic recession caused by the rinderpest epidemic. Chapter 1 has introduced the main thesis question, contextualised the study and laid out the theories and literature used. Chapter 2 is a literature review of all available and relevant sources on the Cape Rebels. Chapter 3 explains the methodology, research question and approach used for this study, outlining the benefits and use of the Geographic Information Systems (GIS) software and some potential limitations. Chapter 4 is the first content chapter, which analyses the effects of the rinderpest epidemic, giving reasons for the high cattle mortalities north of the Orange River compared with the containment policies implemented in lower sections of the Cape. Following the ecological disaster of rinderpest, this section also compares rainfall levels to analyse the effects of drought on agricultural status. This offers some explanation for how ecological and agricultural factors may have influenced rebel mobilisation rates. Chapter 5 investigates life on the frontier, the districts within the closest proximity to the Boer Republics. This chapter questions whether it was distance to the border that influenced whether rebels joined the cause, or if there was a different lifestyle that contrasted the values in the


45 The term Cape Afrikaner seeks to distinguish the Afrikaners living in the Cape Colony from those inhabiting the other South African British colony of Natal and the two republics of Transvaal and Orange Free State.
Cape at this time. Social and cultural differences offer some insight into the differing attitudes and views on the war. This section also evaluates the effects of identity by considering language and education as key elements that could affect attitudes and decisions to join a differing political agenda espoused in the Boer Republics. Chapter 6 examines the influence of leadership and political ideology on mobilisation by considering the political values of the Boer Republics in drawing allies and the political environment before the war. It analyses the effect of charismatic leadership and proposes that this was a strong motivator for rebels. The chapter includes an analysis of African and Coloured population concentrations and questions whether people were aiding the Boer Republics to bar African voters from being enfranchised further. Finally, Chapter 7 compares these findings and offers conclusions on which factors were more strongly correlated with rebels mobilising for the Boer Republics.
CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE REVIEW

INTRODUCTION

The following chapter will provide an overview of the available research on the Cape Rebels during the South African War of 1899–1902. This will outline the focus, contributions and limitations of these studies to the research question of this thesis. H. A. Shearing and R. J. Constantine’s doctoral dissertations remain the sole concentrated studies on this group, and the conclusions of these studies are provided to demonstrate where further enquiry is necessary. This chapter discusses the parameters within which the Cape Rebels have been studied in previous works and outlines how this thesis expands on the available literature on this group and contributes to their further study. Furthermore, this thesis demonstrates that insufficient research has investigated the motivations for the Cape Rebels joining the republican forces during the war and contributes to this gap in the literature.

EXISTING LITERATURE ON THE CAPE REBELS

The South African War has endured over a century of research and public interest. The extensive research conducted has produced considerable literature on almost every aspect and field of interest of the war. Despite comprehensive research on this war, the Cape Rebels remain an unexplored field of enquiry. Most of the research done on this group has been limited to military strategies, individual battles and notable commando leaders. Evidently, there is a gap in the historiography for the Cape Rebels that invites expansive study, particularly regarding the pre-eminent motivations and ambitions of the rebels. Consequently, this thesis seeks to explore the motivations of the Cape Rebels by investigating their pre-war context and contributing factors by studying and testing popular reasons offered in the literature that documents the rebels. These theories will be unpacked in their social, economic and political contexts, using legislation, political debates, diaries, newspapers and statistics to offer conclusions on their validity and strength. The aim of this study is to demonstrate how the formation and motivations of the Cape Rebels were not an isolated incident, nor simply a case of high treason. The varied hypotheses and spatial distance between the most affected areas suggest that there is more complexity to the creation and agitation of this group that has yet to be comprehensively researched.

There is limited research that deals strictly with the Cape Rebels. The rebels are mostly mentioned in passing, or sometimes as a footnote or indexed topic of interest. With regard to concentrated interest in the rebels, H. A. Shearing and R. J. Constantine remain the sole researchers to focus on the activities and events involving the Cape Rebels during the South African War.
Shearing has provided the broadest conceptualisation of the rebels, considering the pre-existing economic and ecological conditions, the strained relations between English- and Dutch-speaking people in the Cape and the rebellions, annexations and political tensions before the war. The majority of Shearing’s dissertation focuses on the activities of the rebels during the course of the war, specifically the individual battles of commandos and their leaders and the scope of their involvement during the war.\textsuperscript{46} In her research, Shearing considers the role of a group of Cape colonists who rose in rebellion against the colonial government; however, this does not extend further to question what their motivations were for rebelling. Shearing’s research covers the entire duration of the South African War, discussing the implementation of martial law, the military courts and the categorisation of rebels into two classes of treason. The commando lifestyle, duties, munitons and resource collection, as well as the involvement of women and African troops on commando, are also discussed. The last sections of Shearing’s dissertation focus on the rebels losing their freedom, becoming prisoners of war and the various types of internment legislated, as well as the peace negotiations and amnesty conditions. The dissertation investigates the adversarial attitudes towards the end of the war, the role of the Afrikaner Bond in political discussions around the culmination of the war, and the effects of the punishment of the rebels on the voter tallies after the war. Lastly, Shearing considers the centenary of the war and the implications and effects it has had over the \textit{longue durée}, as well as research becoming more inclusive of other voices and parties.\textsuperscript{47}

Shearing estimated that the final official return of the Cape Rebels for 1903 was 12,205 or 0.5% of the total population, according to the official Cape Colony records. According to the Rebel Record database, the return is 16,198 rebels, or 0.7%.\textsuperscript{48} She determined that the Cape Rebels played a limited role in the overall republican effort during the war, despite the individual rebel’s self-sacrifice to the cause.\textsuperscript{49} Shearing concluded that while the rebel population was small, their rebellion had an enormous impact on colonial life after the war, leading to a thinly guised civil war and hostility between the Afrikaner and English colonists, which took years to resolve.\textsuperscript{50}

While Shearing has conducted a comprehensive overview of the activities of the Cape Rebels during the entirety of the war, the pre-war conditions and sources of grievances are insufficiently outlined. Shearing’s study of these pre-eminent conditions and grievances offers a basic foundation from which

\textsuperscript{47} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{48} Ibid., p. iv.
\textsuperscript{49} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{50} Ibid.
to question what the motivations of the rebels were. Thus, Shearing is able to contribute to the
research question of the thesis by providing a point of departure for further enquiry. Shearing provides
a robust overview of the efforts and outcomes of the Cape Rebels, creating a sound foundation from
which to investigate further details. Theories of political and social mobilisation are important in
understanding why people rebel or partake in rebellion, which may influence the type and extent of
their involvement. This became increasingly important once martial law was implemented and high
treason trials were underway in which the motivations and involvement of individual rebels would
be scrutinised and tried in military courts against accounts by witnesses. However, Shearing’s
research only briefly mentions some reasons for mobilisation, making a minimal contribution to this
study’s research question. Thus, this thesis intends to contribute to a national historiographic
conversation surrounding the Cape Rebels and theories of mobilisation.

Military strategies and commando histories remain a prominent theme in the historiography of the
South African War. Constantine studied the rebel commando movement in his doctoral dissertation,
accompanied by an analysis of additional military tactics and guerrilla warfare and a case study of
the republican and rebel commando movements.\(^{51}\) Similar to Shearing, Constantine analyses the rebel
commandos according to their military efforts and commando involvement. The nature and extent of
the conflict in the Cape Colony was the focus of his dissertation. In his research, he explores
theoretical differences between invasion and rebellion and the tactics and strategies of the Boer
commando movements. Given its close examination of the rebel and republican forces, his research
provides a singular perspective of military strategies employed during the war, ignoring efforts by
the British Imperial army, the colonial state and African militants on either side. Constantine’s
research focus differs drastically from the research question of this thesis, with little interest shown
in what factors had swayed this group to become rebels. Rather, Constantine states in his introduction
that his research does not deal with the causes or results of rebellion.

However, Constantine’s research demonstrates commando efforts and the rebels’ involvement in the
war, which was an insightful contribution to this research. In his study, he formulated a typology
dependent on whether the commando was rebel, republican or a hybrid formation.\(^{52}\) Importantly, one
of Constantine’s aims was to plot the movements of recognised Boer commandos and leaders,
drawing on elements of geography and historically environmental characteristics. This is a useful
comparison for the works of this thesis, with plotting spatial data using statistics and analysing those

\(^{51}\) R. J. Constantine. “The Guerrilla War in the Cape Colony during the South African War of 1899-1902: a case study

patterns. While this was done in a narrative way by Constantine, it provides a useful benchmark from which to expand the ideas and hypotheses of this thesis. Constantine’s plotting of the commando movements serves as a qualitative comparison for the quantitative insights provided in this study using the data. This is helpful for validating some of the assertions made in later chapters of the thesis and offers new perspectives into some of the theories postulated through the use of new methods.

Constantine notes the history of the commando system in South Africa, which started in the 1670s and operated as a militia unit. This transitioned into a force consisting of both burghers and soldiers. Importantly, Constantine suggests that the commandos served a political role during the war, spreading republican ideologies. According to Constantine, it was widely commented that a mere show of republican force was sufficient to transmit these ideologies in particular areas. However, his research did not deal with the cause or the results of this rebellion. Thus, this study aims to fill this gap.

Constantine’s work was the first reliable secondary account that served as a guide to the guerrilla warfare in the Boer Republics. While the rebels were largely relegated to lesser tasks and not treated well by republican forces during the war, or the Cape Colony after the war, several sources conclude that they played a crucial role. The rebels can be studied passively through remarks passed on rebels in a commando or where they came from, but rarely do the Cape Rebels make it to the index or become a prominent feature in the research.

F. Pretorius has written extensively and prolifically on the war. In Pretorius’s overview of the war, the rebels are mentioned for the afflicted position in which they were placed. Notably, Pretorius described the rebels as having been “left in the lurch” when republican forces withdrew from the Cape Colony between the two phases of the war. He differentiated between rebels and Cape Afrikaners, stating how Cape Afrikaners were in a conflicted position; they found the invasions of Boer commandos in the Cape “embarrassing”, but assisted them in their mission and provided hospitality regardless. Pretorius concluded that most Cape Afrikaners chose the path of “loyal resistance”, but estimated that around 10% of the white male population in the Cape were rebels. Additionally, Pretorius reported that of the 12,828 Cape Afrikaners who were trialled in court for

54 Ibid., p. xvi.
56 Ibid., p. 122.
57 Ibid.
high treason, only 9,747 were found guilty. These statistics differ from the official report and from Shearing’s tally. The official return of Cape Rebels for 1903 was 12,205, 0.5% of the total population. While Pretorius has not dealt with the case of the rebels comprehensively, his research does describe the personal challenges experienced by the Cape Afrikaners and their cultural and personal ties to the Boer Republics as one reason why they had sympathy for the Boer cause, which offers insights into why some Cape Afrikaners may have chosen to rebel.

One of the most formative researchers on the effects of the war was C. J. S. Strydom. To broaden the research conducted during his doctoral dissertation Kaapland en die Tweede Vryheidsoorlog in 1932, Strydom focused on the causes and results of the war, both uprisings, Cape politics and martial law.58 This research emphasised the political climate prior to the outbreak of war. Another important contribution was Die Afrikaner in Kaapland by J. H. Snyman in 1973 who focused on the war being fought at an ideological and consciousness level, by exploring the ideological clashes between imperialism and republicanism and the plight of Britain within South Africa, as well as a developing ethnic consciousness.59 Snyman was critical of the military aspects of the rebels during the war but sympathetic to the cause of the Cape Afrikaners. Snyman was also critical of republicanism and emphasised how a significant portion of the Afrikaner population demonstrated extreme loyalism. Uninterested in the military aspects, Snyman’s study focuses more on the theoretical, political and ideological war waged. These insights have contributed towards differentiating the culture and identities of the frontier regions, which are explained in Chapter 5.

One source that features a few rebels was written by G. Jooste and R. Webster on the executions performed during the war.60 Many of these executions were of rebels, corroborated by the lists in Shearing’s Rebel Record. In the appendix, thirty-one executed rebels are listed from the Military Blue Book.61 This list is supplemented by extracts taken from military court records in the Cape Colony regarding trials. These extracts provide personal details of these rebels, such as occupation, farm name and district, where and how they were trialled, which military court and the witnesses and court personnel involved in the proceeding. The extracts also describe the sentences, which were mostly execution by firing squad after the conclusion of the military court case.62 Jooste and Webster’s book

61 Ibid., p. 220.
62 Ibid., p. 221.
details the testimonies and accounts of those executed by court martials in military courts during the martial law period of the war. The research focuses on the legal system in the Cape Colony, which dealt with cases of treason and the execution of rebels who had committed high treason. Their research compares the definitions of rebel and rebellion and explores whether the Cape Rebels were indeed rebels or ordinary soldiers. Following this, the military courts are outlined. The first section of the book focuses on the Cape Colony, documenting the illegal executions that took place, as well as those who were hung in public rather than executed by firing squad. Burghersdorp was one case study, nicknamed a “rebel nest”, followed by the case studies of Graaff-Reinet and Colesberg. The second section of the book deals with executions that took place in the Boer Republics, notably of deserters, oath violators and those who had committed murder during the war.

Jooste and Webster also demonstrate the emotive aspects of the war and present testimonies of individuals disillusionsed by the legal system. Their research shows that the right of appeal was not yet in place during the war and that court martials had not thoroughly investigated the individual circumstances of each accused victim, with some cases taking less than a day to conclude as guilty, while others were found guilty in their absence and were later told that they were to be executed. While this is not uncommon during times of war, it does depict the tragic and unjust legal system in place at the time. Moreover, the study highlights how the British had subscribed to the conditions of the Hague Convention, while the republics had not signed these articles due to not being in attendance. Thus, the “uncivilised” military tactics utilised by either side were disputed publicly due to the commitments of the British to gentlemanly warfare. The authors question the extent to which the executions of condemned troops, on either side, had also violated the Hague Convention. From the testimonies, motivations and personal stories offered, this book demonstrates the reasons why these rebels joined the Boer forces and unpacks the political and ideological conditions present during the war, which serves as one of the main contributions of this research to the research question.

After reviewing the literature sourced, there is little written strictly on the Cape Rebels during the South African War. Little research has enquired into why these Cape colonists chose to switch their allegiances from the Cape to supporting the Boer Republics. Theories of mobilisation, social and political, may offer some theoretical insights into why individuals chose to rebel or to take a differing standpoint. One limitation of researching the Cape Rebels is the lack of personal records or diaries left. For historians, first-hand accounts are essential to compiling a comprehensive report. Memoirs and accounts written after the war are more readily available, but memory and motivation for writing

remain more dubious and unreliable, requiring comprehensive source critique and analysis, with corroboration from further sources. In these accounts, many cite empathy for the Boer Republics and the cause of the Afrikaner as their reason for becoming Cape Rebels. However, that reason alone is not a convincing argument for committing high treason against the Cape Colony. This thesis intends to narrow its focus to questioning why the Cape Rebels mobilised with the Boer Republics, testing the most prominently cited reasons and justifications offered in the aforementioned literature. This contribution adds to the historiography of the war and theories of mobilisation during the late nineteenth century.

CONCLUSION

The South African War has produced ample research and publications with consideration for almost every aspect of the war. Despite the dense literature, few researchers have investigated the Cape Rebels in their own right. Of those available, the enquiry has been mostly limited to military efforts and strategy and provides little context for why this group aligned with the Boer Republics. Building on this research and incorporating the testimonies found in archival sources and testimonies, this study contributes to the historiography by unpacking the broader history of the Cape Rebels. Importantly, this thesis asks what one can surmise the motivations of the Cape Rebels to be by testing the most prominent theories suggested in the historical literature. This contribution is significant in that it is one of the few studies that investigates this group in their own right, not just as a passing comment on their involvement or treatment.
CHAPTER 3 METHODOLOGY

INTRODUCTION

The following chapter will discuss the research design and approach, research questions, data sources and method of analysis for this study. It explains the datasets compiled for the analysis in the study, as well as the use of Geographic Information System (GIS) software, which was utilised to show the spatial relationships between the variables analysed. Finally, the limitations of this study and its main contributions will be described.

RESEARCH DESIGN AND APPROACH

This thesis uses several sources to align with an empirical-analytical approach. Utilising both qualitative and quantitative research methodologies, it exploits the richness of the statistical data in supporting the historical narrative and qualitative nuances while upholding the vigorous research methodologies of the historical discipline. This was essential because there were scant primary sources written by Cape Rebels personally, necessitating the use of alternative sources. By incorporating a mixed method of analysis, the strengths of historical analysis and data analysis can be combined to complement one another. This is aligned with that of Cohen, Manion and Morrison, who outline this as a “systematic and objective location, evaluation and synthesis of evidence to establish facts and draw conclusions about past events”.

Quantitative methods combine large compilations of numerical information and statistical techniques to arrive at systematic patterns. Archival sources were used to create a dataset in Microsoft Excel covering a broad range of factors. The objective was to identify insights that might remain unnoticed without the assistance of statistical and geographic software and data. Both qualitative and quantitative research approaches share the common goal of better understanding the complexities of the relationship between two or more phenomena or variables. One of the methodological issues with this approach, as highlighted by Kamga, is the challenges in “gathering and analysing appropriate data to show the impact or value of the project”, which requires choosing an appropriate methodology for the collection of data, as well as a relevant process for data analysis. To overcome

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66 Ibid.
67 Ibid.
these challenges, a mixed-method approach is an appropriate solution, which combines the best features of data analysis and rigorous historical qualitative research.

The Cape Rebel lists, censuses, statistical registers and various government publications were used as primary archival sources to underpin the quantitative aspects of this discussion. This is supported by primary and secondary qualitative sources that tie together the historical narrative and context with insights from the data. This involved analysing books, archival materials, debates and articles to provide the historical context. By combining quantitative data with qualitative sources, the mixed-method approach allows for the best research methodology for answering why the Cape Rebels chose to mobilise by investigating hidden patterns in the data, combined with historical accounts and analysis.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

All the studies referred to in the literature review evaluate the Cape Rebels in a military and strategic capacity. However, to the best of the researcher’s knowledge, the reasons why this group fought for the republics, committing high treason and defecting, have not been the specialisation of any other study. Some reasons for why they did this are offered in Shearing’s work, but it is not extensive and comprehensive evidence for those reasons is not provided. This thesis contributes to the historical literature on the Cape Rebels as it is interested in the motivations of Cape colonists to assist the Boer Republics during the South African War, which has yet to be comprehensively examined. It questions what reasons were offered, how these theories were developed and in which context these decisions were formed. This is important given the role the rebels played after the war in the narrative on Afrikaner nationalism. Numerous hypotheses are offered in the aforementioned literature without further efforts to evaluate the validity and strength of these claims. The aim of this thesis is thus to investigate the reasons for the mobilisation of the Cape Rebels more comprehensively, which contributes towards filling the gap in the literature on this group.

DATA SOURCES

Throughout this study, extensive use of secondary sources, including academic theses, articles and books, has been made. In addition, primary sources have also been consulted, including the Cape Colonial Blue Books and statistical registers, Cape Colony censuses for 1891, 1904 and 1911, and the Cape Hansard Parliamentary Debates (including debates within the house of assembly (1884–1909) and the legislative council (1885–1909)). The Cape Colony voter’s rolls have been utilised alongside the list of the Cape Rebels, which have formed the bulk of the primary sources used. The lists of rebels have been compiled from various archives, museums and memorials, as well as
magistrate records, military reports and prison records. These documents are in the public domain and accessible online through the British Online Archives\textsuperscript{68} and at the Western Cape Archival Repository.

\textit{Government publications}

Given the legislative and social histories of the Cape Rebels, various government publications have been consulted in conjunction with the datasets compiled. Being the official records of the colonial office, parliament, council and assembly, these documents provide insights into the debates, decisions and developments made in the Cape.

The Cape Colonial Blue Books provide a rich history of the Cape of Good Hope from 1821 to 1953. Included in these statistical registers were accounts, population data, lists of officers, trading partners, social services and economic developments. The Blue Books were an attempt to standardise statistical reports to allow for the analysis of these changes and developments. Furthermore, these reports demonstrate colonial administration during this period in connection with the socio-political and economic climates, showing changes over time. These reports were consolidated by the colonial secretary through the aid of civil commissioner records and resident magistrates of the districts. This study focuses on census information regarding the ages, education, conjugal condition and genders of the people in the Cape. They have also been used to provide an economic context of the districts studied through cattle populations, crop outputs, rainfall levels and infrastructure. These books provide information per district, percent of the population and per race, and can be matched to proclamations and special committee reports.

\textit{Censuses}

For this thesis, census information was crucial for combining various fields of information and developing a better grasp of the health and status of the economy and various outputs. The Cape Colony statistical registers complement the information provided in the Blue Books, containing mini censuses conducted annually within various departments, as well as reporting the full census information. The census was a comprehensive and exhaustive tally of every department, and this thesis uses those conducted in 1891, 1904 and 1911. Additionally, this provides population information that is used with the annual summary censuses in non-census years. Further explanation of the tables and departments referred to when compiling the dataset for this thesis is discussed in Appendix 3A. This study has made use of data on rainfall levels, cattle populations, crop outputs,

population tallies, conjugal conditions, education levels and ages. This information provided individual- and district-level data for analysis in this thesis.

The Hansard Debates in the house of assembly were studied to demonstrate political opinions, objectives and agenda shifts during this period. These debates were verbatim records of the proceedings in the house of assembly, the lower house of the Cape Colonial parliament. From 1854 to 1884, the debates were reported in the newspapers. From 1854 to 1869, these debates were reported in the South African Commercial Advertiser, in the Standard and Mail from 1870 to 1875 and in the Cape Times from 1876 to 1883.69

The voter’s rolls

The voter’s rolls of the Cape Colony were used to demonstrate the registration of voters and participation in the Cape political scene during this period. They were lists of candidates eligible to vote within a particular electoral division, compiled by the field cornet (veldkornet) of the district and the magistrate. The process of collecting these records is expanded further in Appendix 3B. Registration recorded individual-level information, such as the electoral division, the field cornetcy, surname and first name. Later, education and race were also recorded.

From the first voter’s roll in 1872, eligible candidates were required to register every second year for the franchise, except for 1886 to 1887 due to adjustments made in the franchise legislation. The micro-level data provided from these voter’s rolls allow for an analysis of who qualified to participate in the franchise, the districts in which they had participated, and how they had qualified, such as property ownership or their occupation. Through the information provided, several theories regarding the political and economic conditions in the Cape Colony can be tested. This study uses the voter’s rolls to combine information about individuals who may have been Cape Rebels. This dataset will be combined with the list of Cape Rebels compiled by David and Hilary Shearing in 2004, titled The Rebel Record.

The Cape Rebel records

There are two main sources for compiling a dataset of the Cape Rebels during the war. The Anglo–Boer War Museum has compiled a list of Cape Rebels on their website, which is publicly available and compiled through various volunteers and family insights.70 Individual rebels are recorded with a unique reference ID, specifying their surname, first name, occupation, district and commando. Some


have additional information when available, such as their address, trial date, where they were sentenced, what their sentence was, and what resources are available (such as photographs).

The second source is *The Rebel Record*, which was compiled by Hilary (Taffy) Shearing and her husband, David Shearing. H. Shearing completed her PhD on “The Cape Rebel of the South African War, 1899–1902” in 2004. The Shearings had been compiling a personal record of the Cape Rebels for several decades, which is an encyclopaedic record of individual Cape Rebels based on their personal archival research and travels to museums and memorials. This dataset is thorough, novel and a labour of love. A detailed description of their process is provided in Appendix 3C. The dataset includes a unique reference ID, their names, personal notes, archival reference numbers, commando, if captured, if sentenced, race, if a photo exists, if they were prisoners of war (POW), details regarding their death, their involvement in the first or second invasion, and whether they were farmers, republicans or aliens (citizenry). The notes on each individual are detailed, including where they had been registered as a voter, amongst many other features, beliefs and historical events. This dataset is the basis for the empirical analysis of this thesis.

In conjunction with this dataset, the high treason preparatory examinations (Cape Rebels) have been consulted. These are archival records that include testimonies under oath, witnesses and personal details of the individual rebels. These were compiled for the military courts set up in various districts during martial law. Some trials include more information than others, most likely owing to complicated testimonies and the hefty criminal sentence for treason being death. Douglas sparked much media attention due to forty-one rebels being on trial at once. This is combined with the testimonies recorded by G. Jordaan published in 1917, which offer insights into the last hours of various members of the Boer forces and the colonial rebels before their execution.

**METHODOLOGICAL ISSUES AND RESEARCH LIMITATIONS**

Regardless of their fortitude and safeguards, all research studies have their limitations. Access to resources was constrained by the COVID-19 pandemic throughout this study. Several lockdowns have been implemented with varying levels of extremity. Digitally available sources have been relied upon; however, the digitised datasets have allowed for the degree of analysis not to be compromised

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71 While both are now deceased, both daughters have permitted the dataset to be used in this study.

72 *The Journal, Graham’s Town*, 16 January 1900; *The Bulawayo Chronicle*, 20 January 1900.

73 G. Jordaan. Hoe Zij Stierven: Medelingen aangaande het einde dergenen, aan wie gedurende de oorlog 1899-1902, in de Kaap-Kolonie het doodvonnis voltrokken is, (Burghersdorp: De Stem Drukkery, 1904).
by the proportion of digitised archival sources and secondary sources. This has also allowed for thorough data analysis and new methodologies to be explored.

Due to the South African War occurring more than a century prior to this study, this study has utilised the available sources in archives, museums, memorials, private collections and secondary sources and research pertaining to the Cape Rebels. A wealth of information exists for this war in several archives, museums and libraries – international and locally. However, there are scant records, diaries, photographs or letters left by Cape Rebels. Moreover, oral testimonies have not been possible due to the period of study being too far away from the present time. Thus, this thesis has sought out alternative sources in the archive that contribute to painting a picture of the pre-eminent conditions. Some of these sources include statistical registers, census records, court transcripts, petition prayers and newspaper articles. This thesis demonstrates the benefits and value of using quantitative sources in providing a lens into historical events and the wealth of information they provide – especially in the case of Cape Rebels, where one is forced to rely on alternative sources of information.74 Jordanova states:

The materials from which history is made are, therefore, diverse and we need to be able to appreciate the richness and the limitations of each type. One characteristic of outstanding historical scholarship lies in the creative and self-aware use of the complexities of evidence.75

Bearing this in mind, the use of quantitative sources is imperative to the case of the Cape Rebels. Importantly, this thesis benefits from Shearing’s research, which used decades of data collection on individual rebels and incorporated this into the history of the war and the rebels. More than a doctoral dissertation, this was the culmination of a life’s work of archival research on the rebels. This is an incredibly valuable and rich source, which in turn was converted into a five-volume encyclopaedic source for the rebels. This included information gathered from museums, memorials, graveyards, government correspondence and reports, diaries and archives.76 Its descriptive power regarding the concentration and extent of rebel activity is invaluable to this study. While this thesis is over-reliant on this source in some places, this source is not unreliable and represents decades of research and archival investigation, as well as source critique. However, this reliance on Shearing’s research is a limitation of this study, and it requires delineation of why further primary sources are not visible in some sections of the thesis. This study builds on this data collection by incorporating additional

74 Further reflection on the various sources and methods regarding how they contributed to the argument of this study is included in Appendix 3D.


76 Further explanation of the archives referred to and the types of archival sources included in this dataset are expanded on in Appendix 3B.
archival sources and representing this in a descriptive, spatial manner using geographic analysis. Shearing’s most prolific contribution to the historiography was the Rebel Record, a genealogical record, encyclopaedic in nature, documenting the names and details of Cape Rebels according to information available from the archives.\(^77\) This is a self-published, five-volume account of individuals who had been classified as rebels by the Cape colonial state. This dataset has been made available for this study and serves as the foundation for individual-level analysis.

The Cape Rebel list used in this thesis is a combination of two datasets, namely one compiled by H. A. and D. Shearing over several decades and by the Anglo–Boer War Museum.\(^78\) This underwent comprehensive data cleaning and manual checking to provide a measure of robustness to the dataset and to allow for the additional identification of possible problematic categories and classifications and duplications. Some districts had more comprehensive information recorded regarding population totals, departmental tallies and various other fields. For other districts, it was difficult to gauge the population size accurately, which made analysing the rebel concentration difficult for these regions. Variation in the documentation was unsurprising, as standardisation of these documents was introduced more rigorously later in the British administration of the Cape Colony. Standardisation remains a known challenge to historians consulting statistical sources. Hence, using both sources adds to the strength and reliability of the Shearings dataset used in this thesis.

GIS MAPPING OF SPATIAL DATA

Geographic Information Systems (GIS) is a means of visualising data through maps. The open source software QGIS has been used to create, manage and analyse maps.\(^79\) The data is imported into various layers as a .csv dataset file, read by the software and integrated into a map. For this study, a historical map during the period of analysis was georeferenced with more current maps and historical shapefiles. This primarily included Environmental Systems Research Institute (ESRI) imagery and Google Maps satellite imagery of southern Africa. Various other packages were imported to improve accuracy and spatial visualisation. One of the core elements utilised was shapefiles of geographic landmarks, such as historic railroads, ports, main cities and national roads in southern Africa. The British Blue Books were then transcribed into Microsoft Excel and imported into QGIS to be georeferenced and represented spatially. Some of the information imported included population,

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\(^{78}\) Further explanation of the process and contents of this source is explained in Appendix 3B.

rainfall levels, livestock populations, age, marriage and education statistics from districts, schools and mission station locations, as well as the concentration of rebels in towns according to the white male population and the total population. Maps were created that compared various hypotheses proposed in the research conducted on the Cape Rebels and showed whether there was any correlation by combining quantitative and qualitative research. The use of GIS is a major contribution of this study as it is able to provide visual quantitative evidence to question the theories offered in the literature on this group – sometimes supporting theories, and sometimes uncovering areas for further enquiry. By importing the datasets into GIS, the relationship between the Cape Colony and the Boer Republics can be seen more clearly, and various patterns can be more easily demonstrated. This provides a visual representation of the ecological, political, social and economic events suggested as reasons for mobilisation in the historical literature.

MAP METHODOLOGY AND DATASET BUILDING

This thesis uses information from various records and archival documents to build its case. To create a map, there are several steps that need to happen first. The dataset built in Microsoft Excel records information for every district in the Cape Colony. Each district was georeferenced with GPS coordinates corresponding to the central point of the district area. All information for that district is then represented at that coordinate. A polygon shape was created by grouping districts to indicate the different colonies in South Africa and to make interpretations of the geographic patterns easier. Shapefiles that use GPS points to indicate historic railroads, ports and waterways (rivers and dams) were added to the map, sourced from historical records and maps. The dataset has several columns for each district, categorising the data and providing different insights that can be toggled on the map once it has been coded. This allowed for the analysis of the various historical statistics that were transcribed from archival sources into Microsoft Excel. With the information being digitised, it made for simpler spatial data analysis that shows the historic patterns or visual representations of the data, making it easier to understand what was happening qualitatively when the research had been mostly

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80 This was completed as far as possible with not all information being standardised or available for each district in archival records.
based on qualitative research, which is a novel contribution to the historiography of the Cape Rebels and the pre-war conditions in the Cape Colony.

Map 3.1 shows a map of South Africa using the historic electoral districts, according to the David Rumsey Electoral Districts compiled in 1911, which were turned into a shapefile. The rivers and dams are indicated in blue lines, ports are indicated as blue dots, and the historic railroads using the passenger services map and 1907 train tracks are indicated by yellow lines. The colonies are indicated in various colours by the polygon shape. The red dots show the rebel populations in the Cape Colony based on scale. In this map, two variables are demonstrated simultaneously. First, the size of the dots is proportionally scaled to the number of rebels in that district, whereby the larger the dot, the greater the number of rebels in that district. No dot in a district means that no rebels were recorded in that area in the archival sources. Second, the colour (shade of red) of the dot shows the proportional number of rebels in the district according to the percentage of white males in the 1904 census, with a darker red indicating a higher percentage. Scaling the number of rebels proportionally according to the white male population shows the extent to which rebels existed in the population and standardises the analysis, still allowing for a district with a bigger population to be analysed and compared to a
district with a smaller population. This creates a contextualised visual representation of the concentration of rebels per district. This is the basic map setup from which additional layers of information can be shown on top of or in relation to the given information on the rebels and colonies. Each chapter uses this basic layout for its map analysis but includes additional variables to show the relationship between the rebel mobilisation levels and the variable in question.

Various columns of information were analysed in relation to other variables to determine the nature and persuasiveness of their relationship, such as whether it was correlated, strongly influential or causal. Standard deviation was used to gauge whether an area received more or less rain than the average in a series of ten years, indicating normal, flood or drought conditions. Education level and cattle populations were also analysed to see if they were statistically significant when correlated with the rebel populations in their respective districts. This was done through a basic model in Stata. These methodologies are important for data analysis as their formulas make a convincing argument when combined with qualitative sources.

Data

Individual-level data has been considered in the building of the dataset for this thesis. The Rebel Record has been “cleaned” to extract helpful information that could be analysed from the detailed notes written for individual rebels. This includes information about the rebels, such as (1) their voter status, (2) voter number, (3) registered voting district, (4) religion, (5) age, (6) family information, (7) commando, (8) if they had been commandeered, sometimes including an affidavit that this was against their will, (9) rebel class, (10) if they had laid down arms, (11) if they were a POW and which camp they were sent to, (12) which legislation they were examined and sentenced under, and (13) their punishment (execution, prison, fine or disenfranchisement).

There were additional categories created for rebels that had more information detailed. Each rebel’s description was analysed to expand their profile information, which provided rich, detailed data that offered interesting geographic and historical context for the individual rebels. In all, there were 17,330 entries in the dataset, making this a novel contribution to further research on the Cape Rebels. The dataset also included information for people who were aliens, republicans or naturalised citizens, and had been charged under the same legislation as residents of the Cape Colony. Lastly, this was paired with archival sources, such as the 1899 and 1904 censuses for the Cape of Good Hope. While

81 The number of naturalised citizens in 1900 was 189 people. This number escalated during the war to 336 in 1901, 1045 in 1902 and 1242 in 1903. The number of naturalised citizens in 1904 was a total of 775 people, all from international countries and not including Boer Republics or Natal Colony. Taken from British Blue Book for the Cape of Good Hope, p. 36Q.
this is not always standardised, the information was matched at the district level as closely as possible to use the same unit of analysis throughout the thesis. The census provides information such as population size, white male population, number of people per age category, education levels, marital status and the number of people registered as a congregant of the various religious institutions. Individual reports, such as special reports, have also been compiled into the dataset. In some years, extreme or unconventional events occurred that necessitated government intervention and were then recorded in a special report housed in the archives. This was done for rinderpest, recording the cattle population before the disease, the number of cattle inoculated, the number of cattle not treated and the number of cattle that had died. This adds more information to the history of the disease than simply using census information that captured the size of the cattle population between 1899, 1904 and 1909.

Through detailing the archival sources and reports compiled into this dataset, this section shows how this dataset contributes to the historiography of the Cape Rebels. In this thesis, maps offer a visual representation of information that had previously been accessible only as a table, which needed interpretation or calculation to make it usable in research. By drawing together and analysing different data sources with new methods, this thesis demonstrates this dataset’s contributions through novel insights into the factors influencing the Cape Rebels, allowing for the framing of new questions. This thesis outlines the theories and hypotheses previously offered by other authors and compares these theories to the information now learnt through this dataset.

CONCLUSION

This chapter has demonstrated the abundance of archival and secondary sources that were included in this thesis. It stipulates the research design, research questions and main contributions of the dataset to the historiography, and outlines some of the research limitations. The Rebel Record dataset was detailed to show the data and archival sources used, demonstrating the individual-level and district-level data that was accumulated. This dataset was explained in the context of GIS as a tool to show the visual representation of these sources. Moreover, this chapter addresses how it was necessary to combine alternative, more creative archival sources with the conventional historical sources and secondary sources due to the limitations of source availability regarding the Cape Rebels. Importantly, this thesis has shown how the use of quantitative archival sources in combination with primary and secondary qualitative sources was an asset to the rigorous research methodologies and source critiques employed in this thesis. By combining qualitative and quantitative sources, this thesis has shown the advantages of using new research methodologies and software when answering
historical questions. This will be demonstrated further in the following chapter, which evaluates the effects of ecological factors on the mobilisation of Cape Rebels.
CHAPTER 4 RINDERPEST THEORY

INTRODUCTION

The rinderpest epidemic of 1896 to 1897 remains one of the most prevalent reasons offered for why the Cape Rebels changed allegiances. Due to the limited research on the Cape Rebels, very few sources have questioned why these individuals chose to rebel. Shearing offers the rinderpest epidemic as one theory for mobilisation, positing a debate noting that:

Buchanan questions today why we are unable to understand why wars break out when they do. His argument is that nothing reaches a critical point by itself. Maladjustment, and the human distress that goes with it, has to reach a threshold of severity before the social fabric will give way. Gutsche states, “The great rinderpest pandemic was to change all that; while its impact has been ignored in the historiography of the Anglo-Boer War. Like the Irish famine, the devastation of the rinderpest has not been fully assessed. As much as the Jameson Raid veiled the approaching pandemic, so the Boer War obscured the changes it wrought”.82

This indicates that the rinderpest epidemic was believed to be a plausible theory for why people chose to rebel. Furthermore, Shearing goes on to link the catastrophic conditions after the epidemic with people being wholly devastated and desperate – fertile ground for rousing rebellion:

The depression that followed the rinderpest affected every facet of farming society from the stockman to the man who made the whips the teamsters used. Many ruined and desperate men were angry at the quarantine measures, angry with any official from the Cape Colony, and were ripe for rebellion. As the talk of war in the Transvaal got louder, there were many bankrupt and desperate people who were ready to grasp any straw.83

However, this chapter questions the strength of that argument by using statistical registers, special committee reports and articles to evaluate its validity. The rinderpest epidemic had affected several aspects of society, creating a domino effect of grievances surfacing regarding the impoverishment, deterioration and decline of heavily affected communities. Complainants begged for assistance and amelioration from the Cape government, but their pleas went unheard, causing a tide of dissatisfaction towards the government. This was crucial as rinderpest created the ripening conditions for disgruntled and aggrieved citizens to find help elsewhere. The analysis of the rinderpest outbreak demonstrates how a series of ecological calamities compounded the destitution and impoverishment of large groups of people, in turn prompting the potential mobilisation of Cape Rebels.

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Rinderpest was a highly contagious cattle disease that spread throughout Africa, targeting southern Africa between 1896 and 1897. Specifically, it was a fever that resulted in the inflammation of mucous surfaces in cattle, game and various other livestock. While its presence in southern Africa was brief, it had devastating effects on cattle populations, with further consequences for the agricultural, economic and political spheres. Throughout Africa, there are several case studies where the epidemic had caused irreparable damage to several polities and populations. The first recorded outbreak occurred in 1891 in Kenya. Ofcansky describes the mark it left on the Maasai group as follows:

Skeleton-like women with the madness of starvation in their sunken eyes, children looking more like frogs than human beings, “warriors” who could hardly crawl on all fours, and apathetic, languishing elders. Ofcansky explains how rinderpest caused incalculable suffering and material losses amongst many African communities within eastern and southern Africa, with pastoral groups in particular being left in a “state of economic and social chaos”. Moreover, their political institutions were also weakened as a result of the epidemic, undermining the foundations of several societies and, in many cases, facilitating German and British colonisation. This was the case with the Maasai as rinderpest had destroyed their economy and weakened the fighting ability of the warriors, enabling the British to extend their rule without the risk of war. The Maasai were described as having been “inexplicably apathetic” to the spread of British imperialism once their herds were destroyed. However, this was not the case in southern Rhodesia.

In southern Rhodesia, the Ndebele experienced similar catastrophic events, as has been detailed in other areas throughout Africa. Their transport industry collapsed, and in less than two weeks, most of the cattle in Salisbury had been destroyed after the onset of the epidemic. However, the Ndebele responded to the epidemic by revolting against European rule. Precipitating events had influenced

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86 Ibid.
87 Ibid.
88 Ibid.
89 Ibid.
their resistance, and prior to the outbreak, there had already been dissatisfaction amongst the Ndebele with foreign rule, which had begun to gather momentum. In 1893, the Ndebele had fought and lost a war against an army of the British South African Company (BSAC). This allowed BSAC to gain further administrative control in Matabeleland. All Europeans who had participated in this war were awarded Ndebele farms and gold claims throughout the country. However, following their victory, the Company also implemented several onerous tax, labour and land laws, which resulted in further grievances brewing amongst the Ndebele. According to Ofcansky, these grievances had “festered” until the upcoming epidemic in 1896, and people quickly began to believe that the epidemic was a result of the actions of white men.90 When cattle were destroyed to prevent further spread, more complaints were added to the growing list that had begun in 1893. Similar to the Cape Colony, there had been a severe drought and locust plague simultaneous to the epidemic. Out of desperation, some turned to the guidance of Mwari priests, mediators of the Higher Beings. The prophecy given was:

These white men are your enemies. They killed your fathers, sent the locusts, this disease among the cattle, and bewitched the clouds so that we have no rain. Now you go and kill then white people and drive them out of your father’s land and I will take away the cattle disease and the locusts and send you rain.91

Following this, on 20 March 1896, the Ndebele revolted and began to attack a small party of BSAC police. Within days, several other smaller Ndebele war parties began attacking isolated European farms and settlements throughout Matabeleland. This was possible as most of the policemen assigned to this territory had been arrested and were detained in the Transvaal for their participation in the Jameson Raid, which will be discussed further in Chapter 6.92 The revolt was crushed by the Matabeleland Relief Force within six months. Importantly, the rinderpest epidemic was the last in a series of grievances, real or imagined, against European rule and had provoked a rebellion.93 Its failure led to the subjugation of the Ndebele nation.

Similarly, the Herero in German South West Africa had experienced drastic political and social changes due to the instability created by the epidemic, as well as their leaders. This enabled the consolidation and extension of rule by the German colonial government.94 In mid-1894, there was dissention within the Herero community, with Chief Maharero’s rule being questioned. A treaty with

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91 Ibid.

92 Ibid., p. 33.

93 Ibid. p. 34.

94 Ibid. p. 36.
the colonial government resulted in his rule being consolidated, but at a price. When rinderpest crossed the border in 1897, a malaria epidemic also followed, which affected about 90% of Herero people. These two epidemics weakened the Herero people, and their monopoly over the cattle market allowing German settlers to fill the gap in the market. Not long after this, their cattle economy was ruined, and the traditional Herero society eventually collapsed.

Although the epidemic is known to have heavily affected herds in the northern Cape Colony, districts south of the Orange River were less affected by these losses. There remains no study to date in which the mortality rates recorded are analysed alongside rebel populations to determine the effectiveness of this theory – a contribution that this study now makes to the historiography.

Shearing provides several reasons for the mobilisation of the Cape Rebels in her PhD, in which the rinderpest epidemic was named as one of the elements that “called the brothers to arms”. Shearing describes how in the Cape, the stringent quarantine measures and “stamping out” policies had caused widespread unrest, especially among Africans. She describes how several districts were reduced to utter poverty with their economies crippled, and many moved on to the railways and goldmines to supplement incomes. She notes how the death rates had increased, birth rates had decreased, and diseases such as malaria, influenza and diarrhoea plagued communities. This, in turn, caused a recession in the farming communities “from the stockman to the man who made the whips”. Many people were agitated and frustrated with the Cape government for implementing the quarantine measures and were angry at “any government officials from the Cape Colony”. As the situation worsened, the ground became increasingly ripe for rebellion. As noted above, Shearing notes how as talks of war in the Boer Republics became louder, there were “many bankrupt and desperate people who were ready to grasp at any straw”. The lack of sufficient mitigation measures and government assistance created mistrust in the government and led to people looking elsewhere for solutions in the Cape Colony. Thus, rinderpest was one theory cited for why groups of people living in the Cape Colony fought as allies of the Boer Republics during the South African War.


100 *Ibid.*
In this chapter, the rinderpest epidemic will be contextualised to show the economic, political and social impact it had. As will be shown, the epidemic had catastrophic consequences in several other areas throughout southern and eastern Africa, and in extreme cases, caused the devastation of whole polities and the extension of colonial power. This is important for situating the case of the Cape Colony in a wider historical context, as well as illustrating the capacity this epidemic appears to muster for spurring rebellion. This will foreground the rest of this thesis to provide the necessary background information from which the additional theories can be tested and questioned. Much of the literature on rinderpest focuses on the agricultural and economic impacts and the effect on African communities. However, there is limited analysis of its political effects in the Cape Colony, and none of the research formally links to the Cape Rebels.

**SPREAD OF RINDERPEST**

The speed of its spread made rinderpest a deadly disease that was difficult to control. The disease quickly spread from southern Rhodesia to Bechuanaland, a British protectorate that had been annexed by the Cape in 1895. Ofcansky explains that within nine months, the epidemic had destroyed the economic, social and political life of two Tswana groups in the area – the Thaping and Tlhargo. Rinderpest spread from Palapye around 10 March 1896 to Tuli on 31 March 1896, just sixteen miles north of the colonial border.\(^{101}\) It had spread throughout Bechuanaland in the space of twenty-five days, reaching Mafeking by early April and the Transvaal and Cape Colony in September. By November 1897, the disease had begun killing livestock at C.J. Rhodes’s estate near Groote Schuur, leaving devastation in its path. This disease did not only affect the Cape. P. Phoofolo describes how by May 1897 the Transvaal was riddled with rinderpest. In June, it was raging in the southern Orange Free State. In July, Natal was infected, spreading to Swaziland in August. By December, Pondoland and the Transkei were infected.\(^{102}\)

The Limpopo, Molope and Vaal rivers created a natural barrier that worked temporarily. The Orange River was attributed as the biggest obstacle to its spreading further south, being double-fenced with barbed wire for 1,600 kilometres, from the Atlantic to Basutoland, which the Natal government

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continued to their shores. In March 1897, it broke those barriers too and moved towards Basutoland. Unlike the Cape, the Transvaal government had taken precautions by forbidding all transport with neighbouring states once the disease had been reported in Rhodesia, although these steps soon proved temporary. The proactiveness of the republican governments was later used as an example for why rebels opted to support them. Importantly, the mitigation measures prescribed by the Cape would harm Basutoland before rinderpest had arrived. Phoofolo describes:

> Premature and ill-advised precautions by neighbouring states paralysed trade and commerce. Restrictions on ox-wagon transport, military cordons sanitaires, quarantine measures, fumigation, disinfection, and isolation disrupted the transportation of goods. Unable to reach markets outside their country, BaSotho producers were left with the perilous alternative of having to sell to unscrupulous local traders at low prices. Soon, however, these traders themselves became reluctant to buy produce because the closure of borders had shut off roads to market.

This economic distress was communicated to the Cape government to alleviate some of these measures, but the authorities opted to implement stricter mechanisms. The rinderpest epidemic presented political agitators with the opportunity to mobilise African populations against European rule, with their actions threatening to undermine the government’s authority in the Cape. This also generated serious disturbances in several areas of the Cape, including Basutoland. Ofcansky argues that the first credible challenge to British rule in Basutoland came as a result of the calamities wrought by the rinderpest. Similar conditions were seen near Griqualand’s eastern border where “serious native unrest” was obstructing efforts to fence off borders. Consequently, instances of mishandling and a lack of proactive mitigation were also offered for reasons that rebels mobilised, especially with the mobilising power it had manoeuvred elsewhere. The Free State government began to issue passes to Basutoland to bolster their own mitigation measures for rinderpest.


108 Ibid. p. 36.
The crux of the rinderpest argument is that the compounded economic, social and political turbulence was enough to push people towards rebellion and revolution. This theory answers why an epidemic had the power to motivate a group of colonists to aid the Boer Republics, rather than fight for the British Cape government. However, research on rinderpest concludes that epidemics play a minimal role in directly affecting social and political upheavals and that while there is potential power in epidemics to trigger rebellions, this did not occur in the case of rinderpest.

Charles van Onselen focuses on the reactions of people in various areas and the Cape government to the spread of the disease. In his article, Basutoland and Griqualand East are two areas that were of special interest due to the political entrepreneurship witnessed during this period. However, Phofofo regards van Onselen’s article as “pioneering work, and the standard reference in most allusion to the rinderpest, [but] exploratory”. Van Onselen believed that rinderpest had not produced any major structural changes in society, but had revealed and exaggerated the political, social and economic forces that would play a crucial role in the twentieth century in South Africa’s industrialisation. However, these tensions were not lying dormant but had been simmering underfoot before the rinderpest outbreak. Rinderpest had revealed underlying tensions but did not push tensions to the brink of rebellion. Where some disputes had erupted and efforts to overthrow authority were dreamt, these did not materialise successfully. Rather, an attitude of fatalism and apathy towards government seemed to overtake the frustrations originally felt, as has been demonstrated in the case of the Maasai in Kenya. Phofofo concludes that rinderpest did indeed have the capacity to start a rebellion, but it was aggravated and neutralised by the impact of the epidemic physically and emotionally. Thus, no wholesale rebellions materialised despite a turbulent period of history.

Van Onselen’s article is widely quoted as one of the most comprehensive studies of rinderpest in South Africa. One of the challenges with studying the rinderpest outbreak concerning the Cape Rebels is that the areas studied were the most heavily affected, located further north with large cattle populations. These areas did not necessarily contain large rebel populations, making it difficult to ascertain the strength of the rinderpest travesties in rebel-concentrated areas. However, the common grievances held against government policies and failed mitigation attempts still hold and to an extent can offer universal reasons for disgruntlement with Cape officials. Van Onselen presents several


reactions to rinderpest from various groups, which provides insights into whether this theory is a convincing mobilisation rationale.

Rinderpest remains an important factor of influence regarding mobilisation due to the various pressure points it affected. The rinderpest epidemic had created the perfect storm by risking livelihoods, endangering businesses, limiting food supplies and forcing adjustments in the labour market and in the broader economic realm. With much of the country at risk of disaster, appeals were made to government, which fell on deaf ears, and mitigation policies were ineffective by the time they were implemented. A more extreme containment and stamping out policy was necessary, which had angered those heavily affected as it had caused further harm and animosity. Instead, the rinderpest epidemic demonstrated the failure of the Cape government to respond during a time of crisis.

THE GOVERNMENT

One of the pressure points in the case of the rebels mobilising was the reaction and inaction of the Cape government regarding the epidemic. The government was critiqued for being slow to react and implement mitigation and preventative measures. While van Onselen notes that the Cape government had issued warnings of rinderpest as early as 1892, there were little to no precautions taken to prevent or mitigate the spread of the disease.112 Government relief programmes varied as they depended on the individual efforts of magistrates and veldkornets. The most severe cattle losses were experienced in Bechuanaland, a recently annexed British territory. This meant that Cape officials were unfamiliar with the landscape and local communities, and vice versa, resulting in several miscommunications regarding rinderpest. This unfamiliarity was one of the main reasons why the Cape government was ill-prepared, resulting in extremely high mortalities in this area.113 By reducing accessible tracts for grazing, the Cape government created “artificial pressure points” where infected and uninfected cattle had limited space and were exposed.114 Often, this led to the disease spilling over to white farms that were not monitored as thoroughly, creating an erratic and unpredictable course for the disease to spread through.115 A lack of government manpower, monetary resources and regional knowledge had guaranteed that rinderpest could not be properly contained and that pastoralists would risk penalties

114 Ibid.
115 Ibid.
rather than let their herds die of dehydration or lack of grazing. In Bechuanaland, it was a myriad of environmental factors that had overcome human efforts to suppress the disease.

A series of natural calamities and diseases had taken place prior to the outbreak of rinderpest, including famine, drought, trypanosomiases, malaria, smallpox, pleuropneumonia, and jigger fleas. In 1896, not just rinderpest, but many cattle diseases had killed livestock during the year. Just a few years prior, Fluke disease had caused high cattle losses in 1889. Additionally, the failure of the crop harvest in 1888 had meant that winter foliage had depleted, lowering the ability for cattle to build resistance to parasites and disease. Campbell explains that between 1882 and 1925, South Africa suffered from a severe drought every six years. Calamitous droughts occurred in 1894-95, just one year before the outbreak, affecting crop production and resulting in some cattle deaths. The 1896 locust plague caused wholesale destruction of crops, leading to starvation in cattle and humans, another contributing factor to the rebellion in Bechuanaland in 1896. Red water and gall sickness were also reported in the same years as the rinderpest epidemic, and no major wars had occurred prior to these outbreaks. Although the political tensions had been notably escalating during this period, the lack of rebellion prior to these ecological disasters, and a major war beginning a few years after does indicate that the epidemic may have played a role in influencing mobilisation in some districts.

With three cycles of ecological disaster, the agrarian economy was on its knees. The cattle stocks in South Africa were already in an enfeebled state by the time the rinderpest epidemic broke out. This necessitated the intervention of the chamber of commerce to aid the ailing rural economy by distributing between 5,000 to 6,000 bags of wheat seed on loan. This experience was not isolated; rather, the collapse of the transport industry had affected the agricultural sector in most districts as the costs of wagons and salted cattle became unaffordable. These prices affected every industry,

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117 Ibid.


120 Ibid. p. 112.

121 Ibid. p. 111.


with several people profiting off the fetching prices of viable crops and animals. A food crisis ensued, with the South African War compounding its effects. However, the war created a market for labour – military workers at inflated, high-demand prices.

The drastic mitigation measures implemented seemed to be ineffective in quelling the spread of rinderpest. This caused further anger and resentment towards the government. The lack of epidemiological knowledge meant that governments were forced to rely on outdated means of preventing the spread. A stamping out policy was implemented, where any cattle infected or suspected of infection were shot. The only other measure was to cordon off tracts of land to restrict the movement of cattle from infected areas.124 Veterinarians received backlash for not being able to save cattle and instead eliminating sick cattle. However, the government still tried to find cures, and eventually brought in a German doctor, Koch, in December 1896, whose serum was in short supply and had erratic results. Similarly, Edington’s serum also had issues with consistent results and poor supplies, thus inoculations were not made compulsory.125

The government’s mitigation plans were expensive and propagated distrust, limiting their ability to resolve the epidemic. There was mammoth opposition to this stamping out policy, which necessitated that the Cape government discontinue these measures and find alternatives.126 Their efforts seemed to only worsen the apathetic pessimism popularised during this time, making it difficult for the government to implement protective measures to help end the disaster even once the extreme losses were apparent.127 By late November, rinderpest was in Cape Town, and there were no effective ways to stop the spread of the disease. Understandably, there was a popular feeling that the government had done too little too late and that herds all over southern Africa were experiencing this devastation with no hope of survival or mitigation.

Marquardt dehumanises the disease and explains how the literature often pits people, the environment and the disease against each other in a struggle to dominate the region where the disease is victorious.128 Instead, he shows how rinderpest spread because of people and the environment, not in spite of them. The rinderpest epidemic created the backdrop from which political entrepreneurs could

stage revolts, although mostly unsuccessful. This desperation reflects the dire straits caused by rinderpest, which permeated several aspects of society, creating a tide of contempt held for the government.

RECESSION AND AGRICULTURAL DOWNTURN

The rinderpest epidemic was exacerbated by the additional ecological disasters that compounded the agrarian hardships. Phoofolo examines the rinderpest’s role in the shift from an agrarian to an industrial society in South Africa, which was possible through the impoverishment of Africans who were forced to find employment elsewhere once their finances and herds had been depleted by the disease. Another article by Phoofolo shows the economic aspect of the disease – specifically the loss of capital and prevention of future capital accumulation by Africans. Cattle were crucial in several aspects of the agricultural system; thus, rinderpest played a significant role in the agricultural downturn proceeding the disease. This resulted in a loss of income, food shortages, shifts in labour patterns and migration, and necessitated a shift to a more industrial society. Phoofolo describes how “throughout the final two decades of the nineteenth century, a cycle of disasters ricocheted off one another in unrelenting succession. A lack of draught animals, grazing and the proceeding drought, in addition to the winter frost conditions and later locust plague had all compounded the ecological disaster. Whatever crops remained hardy enough to attempt to grow were destroyed by these conditions, creating further knock-on effects.\textsuperscript{129} This oppressive pattern apparently spanned the entire continent during the same period, suggesting some very basic and deep-seated influences”.\textsuperscript{130}

However, Phoofolo argues that the rinderpest epidemic did not precipitate a major famine. He demonstrates that while rinderpest accompanied other ecological disasters in this period, it remained a temporary setback and recovery was quick. Phoofolo concurs with van Onselen that the rinderpest outbreak did not begin any new trends, but rather accelerated those already underway.\textsuperscript{131} Similar to rinderpest, the locust plague had a broader impact than just agriculture. C. Ballard analyses the 1896 locust plague in Natal and Zululand, demonstrating how it also had broad implications for the


economy and the structure of society. In this article, useful economic context is given for parts of the agricultural decline in this period, as well as the trade imbalances created by the drop in crop outputs. Ballard shows how the locust plague and drought had resulted in other international grain nations being able to establish themselves more firmly in the South African market than they would have been able to if not for these events. This created further competition for supplying markets, and further edged out farmers from being able to compete with larger-scale enterprises. Crop losses dropped between 30% to 95% in various districts, with eighteen of the twenty-six magisterial districts reporting heavy losses.

The toll on the agricultural sector was vast and heavy. The rinderpest epidemic cannot be blamed for the full extent of loss and devastation, but rather understood as another factor that compounded the extent of ecological disaster during this period. Rinderpest had physically left a path of devastation, with rotting cattle evidence of the lack of government intervention and alleviation, indicating the loss of the communities and the industry. However, much of this loss was limited to only a few districts, mostly north of the Orange River. While fears of the disease had been growing and travelled to less affected areas, much of the loss was restricted. Rather, the outspoken public opinions on the devastation and government ineffectiveness had created the impression that towns were isolated and needed to become self-reliant, which in turn negatively affected public opinions of the Cape government. This was not just limited to white communities; these hardships had far-reaching consequences for various classes, industries and communities.

AFRICAN SOCIETY & ANIMOSITY

Rinderpest not only had an impact physically, but also influenced attitudes and beliefs. One of the outcomes was a heightened tension between white and African societies, especially regarding suspicions of who was to blame for the devastation of the epidemic. This occurred in the Cape Colony, as well as in southern Rhodesia with the Ndebele, and even further north. This affected racial animosity and, as will be shown later, was linked to some people opting to support a government who wanted to bar African political participation.

African communities have been shown to be more fundamentally affected by rinderpest fatalities due to the central role cattle played in their societies. Importantly, cattle were not simply an economic

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133 Ibid., p. 36.
134 Ibid., p. 51.
135 Ibid.
venture in African communities, but a social, political and economic system. Cattle were a means of measuring wealth, a form of transaction between parties, and an important aspect of religious and social ceremonies. Phoofolo’s study shows the disproportionate effects that rinderpest had on African herds opposed to white herds. He estimates that over 95% of African herds were killed by rinderpest between 1896 and 1898, provoking a rural crisis. Moreover, most districts recorded higher African cattle mortalities than Europeans. Phoofolo compares the loss of cattle as a loss of investment and re-investible capital, likening it to the Wall Street Crash in how it diminished the only capital of African people and restricted their future capital accumulation. Unlike human diseases, Phoofolo explains how rinderpest had a more damaging effect by sparing the people, who had to “watch with utter shock and suspicion as their most valued means of livelihood perished dramatically”. This disaster included the wholesale collapse of the African transport system and the labour power of cattle. Phoofolo estimates that “for societies that measured economic, social and political standing through ownership of cattle, the rinderpest threatened social and political stability”. He describes how cattle stored the entire wealth of families and society in “moveable property” that increased over time and that stockholding was a form of capital accumulation.

The racial aspect of the disease permeated mitigation strategies as African areas were left unregulated while comparatively more cattle were killed. This was exaggerated by the effects of the rumours that had created widespread tension and suspicion. Colonial officials had worked against African and white pastoralists who spread the disease. Marquardt studies the process of the epidemic and


challenges scholarly assumptions, such as the “African passivity, colonial hegemony or environmental determinism” inherent in the historiography. Rather than likening it to a tsunami able to wipe out victims in its path, he takes away this agency and demonstrates how it was the contribution of several factors that created the ideal situation for its spread. This work builds off of McNeill’s efforts to contextualise disease and ecology without making them deterministic factors, privileging the role of disease in times of historical transformation. Rather, Marquardt argues that had environmental challenges, human conflict and plural cattle management practices not transpired, pastoralists in southern Africa might not have been so heavily affected by rinderpest.

Without effective solutions to stave the epidemic, devastation was widespread, attitudes hardened, and people became increasingly apathetic towards one another. Compounding these frustrations were reports of the devastation of cattle, but increasingly people were less determined to attempt to stop the disease. Van Onselen remarks how “the number of cattle lost was the most obvious dimension with which to gauge the havoc wrought throughout the country”. However, the statistics quoted show extraordinary cattle mortalities:

In the Transkei it was roughly estimated that 90 percent of the cattle, which formed the real wealth of the people, were swept off by the disease. For the Cape Colony as a whole (including Bechuanaland but excluding the native territories and Pondoland) it was estimated that the cattle herds were reduced by 35 per cent from 1.64 to 1.06 million.

These statistics show catastrophic cattle deaths, but the plausibility of the extent of death reported is questionable and probably inaccurate due to unreliable reporting and the nature of the disease. The most devastating fatalities were recorded in areas with minimal Cape officials providing reliable reports, such as the Transkei and Pondoland. These catastrophic mortalities were not the typical experience. Especially from an evolutionary basis, it would be unlikely that a disease kills most of its carriers as it cannot survive otherwise. Thus, while a more likely estimate would be impossible to ascertain for these regions, it is important to note that these statistics were likely exaggerated or outliers.


144 Ibid., p. 350.

145 Ibid., p. 351.


147 Ibid.
The secretary of native affairs stressed how alleviating the hardship was “not in government charity” and suggested that those affected consider joining the wage labour force in the gold mines, on white farms or for public works.\textsuperscript{148} Despite the exorbitant cost of cattle, Africans were reinvesting in stocking their herds by 1898 when the rinderpest outbreak ended. Campbell’s research documents the importing of Malagasy cattle from Madagascar and how the industry shifted and reacted to regulations and restrictions surrounding the rinderpest. Between 1892 and 1895, no cattle were imported from Madagascar into Natal. This increases to 81 cattle in 1897, then 2,129 cattle in 1898 and 3,044 cattle in 1899.\textsuperscript{149} This change into the cash economy necessitated that some Africans either make journeys to towns more regularly or move closer to reduce travel expenses. Ballard demonstrates how 1896 was the start of a series of calamities to endure for the remainder of the century, weakening the African peasantry and making farmers more vulnerable to rinderpest in 1897.\textsuperscript{150} This is important in demonstrating the precarious position of farmers and shows how trade and profits had been drastically altered.

Thus, there was also a shift in migration and settlement of African herds after the rinderpest epidemic. Van Onselen describes how considerable care was taken by African people for the choice and location of their new employment, making the best of being forced into a new migratory labour system.\textsuperscript{151} In Bechuanaland, many people opted to work for the railways rather than work for white farmers. It was only with reluctance that African farmers from the Cape worked in the Transvaal goldfields, infamous for their harsh working conditions.\textsuperscript{152} Similarly, other African polities heavily affected elsewhere had also inserted themselves into the settler urban centres in search of work. Increasingly, African farmers and pastoralists were forced to seek employment opportunities in alternative sectors to survive, and this was difficult in a suspicious, hostile and racial environment.

Phoofolo studies the correlations between epidemics and revolutions, focusing on the rinderpest epidemic and how it had failed to precipitate any rebellions or revolutions despite taking place in a

\textsuperscript{152} \textit{Ibid.}
turbulent region during a “tempestuous period of its history”.†53 Rather, the rinderpest outbreak revealed the underlying tensions, hysteria and mismanagement of government officials. Political tensions and opportunities for revolt and revolution in African communities are considered. He argues that these elements combined had the potential to be mobilised and turned into a massive rebellion or revolution.†54 Phoofolo believed that:

The epidemic’s greatest claim to historical significance rests not so much in its ability to lead directly to revolution, as in the unique way it highlighted contemporary tensions and latent antagonisms which other intervening factors could have turned into explosive social and political upheavals.†55

Van Onselen demonstrates the reactions to the spread of the disease, particularly the racial and political tensions that were aroused, and explores the effects of rinderpest on African political systems, focusing on the “dynastic politics”. Importantly, he notes how “in communities where every facet of life had a racial dimension, it is perhaps to be expected that rinderpest should reveal, and often place in sharp relief, the state of race relations”.†56 The rinderpest epidemic had created an agricultural recession, with limited opportunities for further unskilled labour in a declining business.

RACIAL ANIMOSITY

Racial tensions had grown further entrenched during the rinderpest outbreak. These racial tensions infiltrated several aspects of daily life, especially interracial interactions. The threat of African labour and their political participation was one theory for rebel mobilisation. These perceptions will be discussed later, but were evident especially in the mining regions and the republics. In the Cape, the government was anxious for people to learn of the extent of devastation that rinderpest caused, especially with “native unrest” being rife elsewhere.†57 Discrepancies in treatment, restrictions on movement and quarantine measures all created the impression that white farmers were being privileged and treated less suspiciously. The epidemic had worsened the racial and political tensions, with Africans being treated and scrutinised more strictly than white farmers.


†54 Ibid.

†55 Ibid.


†57 Ibid., p. 482.
Phoofolo describes how an anti-white, anti-colonial phobia had been universally reported, suspecting that the disease was a deliberate attempt by white men to impoverish Africans. Phoofolo shows how the “disturbed state of mind” that the epidemic generated was due to the “atmosphere of crisis” created by the devastation wrought by this unfamiliar disease. Suspicions were rampant in both racial groups: Africans believed that rinderpest had been spread by whites, and whites believed that it was spread by Africans. Many whites believed that Africans had spread the disease unconsciously, but one report noted that because African herds had been heavily affected by the disease, they now wished the same fate on white herds to “involve the whole country in ruin”. Phoofolo explains how most colonial officials and whites had mocked Africans for believing that rinderpest had been a deliberate action by the government. Rather, the rumours were blamed on mischievous troublemakers, African or white, blaming superstition and emotionalism. Van Onselen notes how it was likely white farmers had spread the disease through being more mobile in their trade and social activities, due to it being highly contagious. Mistrust was mutual, but stricter control and regulations had been applied to Africans. Some areas suspected that it was the unhygienic conditions of Africans that spread the disease. These strict measures were necessary to slow the spread of the disease, but the unequal application of these measures drove a wedge deeper between African and white relations, spurring a “native” uprising. Ignorance and fears had exacerbated the threat of the “other”, making racial tensions heightened and more prominent. With the republics wanting to obstruct a multiracial franchise in South Africa, some rebels mobilised because of these shared suspicions and political beliefs.

### AFTERMATH & EFFECTS

The rinderpest outbreak not only had an immediate effect, but its ripples were felt for an extended period after the disease had been staved off. These consequences would not recover before war broke out, making the aftershocks important regarding the physical, political and mental state of these

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159 Ibid., p. 124.


163 *The Bulawayo Chronicle*, 3 June 1896; *The Rhodesia Herald*, 10 June 1896.
regions. Personal circumstances in the aftermath of this disaster played a role in motivating why some rebelled. The immediate impacts of rinderpest were the devastation of cattle populations. Marquardt estimates that upwards of 97% of the livestock were killed in Bechuanaland and estimates that Mafeking and Vryburg were also devastated. However, no district outside of Bechuanaland had lost more than 75% of its cattle population and most lost less than 50% of their herds.\textsuperscript{164} This forces one to question why the rinderpest was awarded so much importance in rationalising why the rebels mobilised. Van Onselen’s study takes into consideration the many ways in which the disease not only affected cattle numbers but also made shifts in society in several different ways – the political, social and economic changes.

Rinderpest played a pivotal role in the shift from an agrarian society to an industrial society in South Africa. This was possible was through the impoverishment of Africans who were forced to work elsewhere. Some of the more fundamental changes made due to the loss of cattle were through the transport industry. Cattles losses impoverished a class of entrepreneurs reliant on their labour, which increased transport costs and had a knock-on effect for shop owners who had to increase prices, affecting the living standards of consumers.\textsuperscript{165} Daily life worsened, affecting attitudes and general wellbeing. Health was affected due to foodstuffs being unaffordable – several people were more vulnerable to malaria, and scurvy occurred due to monotonous diets.\textsuperscript{166} Additionally, rinderpest was paired with additional ecological disasters. The destruction of crops added to malnutrition, indebtedness, increase in migratory labour and starvation. Many people harboured resentment towards the government for the rapid deterioration in lifestyles. Again, people looked to the government to step in and alleviate the hardships experienced. One newspaper reported that:

\begin{quote}
The Government, however, seems to be indulging in a vein of scientific curiosity, by gauging the exact amount of toleration of which an apathetic public is capable, but while the prices of milk and meat and every other article of food are rising at an alarming rate, the Government still preserves an unbroken silence.\textsuperscript{167}
\end{quote}

The belief that rinderpest had been purposefully spread by white men to force Africans to work and become cheap labour due to their impoverishment was widespread, as skilled jobs with high wages remained reserved for white workers. The long-term effects of rinderpest had positive results for

\textsuperscript{164} G. Marquardt. “Water, Wood and Wild Animal Populations: Seeing the Spread of Rinderpest through the Physical Environment in Bechuanaland, 1896,” \textit{South African Historical Journal}, (53), (1), 2005, p. 73. Marquardt estimated that Mafeking lost 97,2%, and Vryburg lost 92,7%.


\textsuperscript{166} \textit{Ibid.}, p. 485.

\textsuperscript{167} \textit{Eastern Province Herald}, 24 November 1897.
mining companies and the government, who had increased cheap African labour supplies.\textsuperscript{168} The influx of African labourers was to become a contentious issue, with many poor white labourers uncomfortable and threatened. Through these changes, the rinderpest epidemic quickly became an agent of structural change to the benefit of some.

Rinderpest was to have a lasting impact on South African society. Not only had there been the immediate effects of cattle losses, financial losses and the agricultural decline, but the disease had alerted people to underlying issues. Van Onselen concluded that the rinderpest outbreak revealed the underlying and now exaggerated political, social and economic forces at play. Hegel explains how “poverty in itself does not make men into a rabble; a rabble is created only when there is joined to poverty a disposition of mind, an inner indignation against the rich, against society, against the government”.\textsuperscript{169} Using these grievances, leaders could harness the twin threats of big capital and black competition. Those heavily affected by rinderpest mortalities were desperate for compensation and restoration. However, Swart notes how poor whites were not necessarily the pawns of the dominant classes, and were capable of initiating social transformation in their own right.\textsuperscript{170} Evidence from outside the Cape Colony where pre-existing grievances had already been brewing had indeed led to revolt and uprising, as has been mentioned above. Southern Rhodesia and German South West Africa had experienced clashes between indigenous groups and the European settlers, often on the basis of land. Mutowo described how the social and economic consequences of rinderpest also contributed to the outbreak of the first \textit{Chimurenga/Umvukela} uprising of 1896-97. Mutowo quotes the owner of a trading firm:

\begin{quote}
The Jameson episode and rinderpest no doubt hastened an event (the African uprising) which had for some time been ‘casting shadows’ before, for warnings from time to time were received from prospectors and other outside districts that the Matebele were in a state of unrest and in some instances openly defiant. There warnings were however considered to be the warnings of alarmists, were treated accordingly and were generally laughed at by the Native Commissioners…\textsuperscript{171}
\end{quote}


The rinderpest epidemic offered one avenue of argument for why those affected should look elsewhere for assistance, but more importantly, it had emphasised and uncovered the underlying class and political tensions brewing.

The rinderpest epidemic had provided the destitute backdrop from which widespread societal changes were made. It provided an impetus to the industrialising state by creating an increased labour force of destitute, unhealthy labourers who had been forced away from farmlands through the devastation of their livelihoods. In the background, the rumours still held power. These societal and lifestyle changes were unsettling and uncomfortable, easily manipulated into a reason for turning to republican assistance and fight for their cause.

FROM DISASTER TO REBELLION?

Rinderpest is one of the most cited reasons why the Cape Rebels chose to side with the Boer Republics during the war. The rinderpest epidemic had occurred between 1896 and 1897, just three years before the war broke out in October 1899. Despite analysing rinderpest through several lenses to better understand its context and compounding consequences, there is no link made to the South African War in the literature on the epidemic in South Africa, apart from the need for African military labour, as has been indicated by Gutsche. The connection between rinderpest and rebel mobilisation requires further investigation. Many of the statistics quoted are from the British Blue Books, which were used with reports from various district magistrates. The direction of the spread of rinderpest is generally that the disease spread from the north south towards the coast, and was obstructed by natural barriers such as rivers. These barriers and pathways can be demonstrated spatially in QGIS mapping software. Additionally, the statistics captured per district for the cattle populations can be georeferenced to the district’s GPS coordinates, showing a spatial representation of the concentration of cattle in that region before and after rinderpest occurred.

While Phoofolo’s demonstration of the effects of rinderpest shows a convincing narrative of loss and devastation, the Rebel Record dataset has no entries from Basutoland, an independent territory, or Bechuanaland, a recently annexed British territory. Of the official Cape Rebels documented in the archives, approximately 700 came from these heavily affected regions, (0.4% of the rebels).


173 In spite of these low estimates, historians maintain that it was a devastating event that spurred mobilization, but the statistics are never full interrogated. Rather, the political and economic effects of rinderpest are detailed. Using the same statistical sources, this thesis shows that this was not a sufficient mobilizing factor.
However, there were vast discrepancies in the severity of the disease between regions north and south of the Orange River.

While the literature maintains that the rinderpest epidemic is a convincing reason as to why most rebels switched allegiances, the visual representation of the data questions the validity of this claim. As seen in Map 4.1, the districts that experienced the most cattle losses in the Cape Colony were Mafeking and Vryburg with 2.7% and 7.2% cattle remaining respectively. Unsurprisingly, 11% and 30% of the white male population were rebels, respectively. This pattern confirms the logic of the theory that rinderpest mobilised rebels. These were areas north of the Orange River, the biggest natural barrier. Most of the heaviest losses supposedly happened north of the river as not enough preparation was done before rinderpest first spread. However, most other areas north of the river fared reasonably well. Just west of Vryburg, Gordonia kept 88% of its cattle, and Kenhardt kept 79%, contradicting the theory. However, following the railways, the towns that ran south from Mafeking and Vryburg along the railway had more cattle deaths than Gordonia and Kenhardt, who were not on the railway route. Barkly West had one of the worst cattle losses, with 38% remaining and an extremely high rebel population of 74% of the white males in the district. These figures indicate a high mobilising influence in regions that were heavily affected, but this pattern does not hold true for all cases.

South of Barkly West, the mortality rates improved. In Hay and Herbert, 52% of cattle survived and 53% and 51% of their white male population were rebels, respectively. Kimberley maintained 60% of their cattle, despite being a prominent destination on the railway routes and a major economic hub.

The only rebels cited in the rinderpest literature were individuals who used the unrest and uneasiness of the epidemic to create an opportunity for political revolt. Rhodes had urged the Cape parliament to bestow administrators with the power to arrest rebels and entice chiefs and headmen to be cooperative. Those who were not cooperative were dismissed. 174 This analysis of the rinderpest epidemic brings into question the mobilising potential for the Cape Rebels.

The literature determined that African pastoralists were affected more than white farmers. This is confirmed in the statistics where majority-African populations in Glen Grey (28.5%), King William’s Town (24%) and Herschel (31%) experienced high cattle mortalities. However, despite the losses, there were low mobilisation rates with no rebels reported in these areas. Prieska had moderate cattle losses with 54% of its cattle surviving, and 56% of its white males rebelling. Aliwal North and Barkly East also had moderate losses, with 55% and 18% of its population becoming rebels, respectively.

Although rinderpest had a long-reaching impact on society in certain areas, the statistical records do not support that it had sufficient mobilising strength for this group. Rather, the statistics given in the 1899 report on the rinderpest outbreak indicate that there were large cattle populations in the districts that housed a large rebel population, but not all these areas experienced high cattle mortalities from rinderpest. These districts show the discrepancies in the data where it becomes evident that something else must have influenced mobilisation levels, as the number of cattle mortalities were not consistent in showing higher rebel mobilisation levels. However, rinderpest evidently contributed to mobilisation in some regions. Overall, the average number of cattle remaining in the Cape was 83% of the original cattle population, and 9% of the white male population became rebels, with several districts having no rebels. The percentage of cattle remaining was compared with the percentage of rebels in the white male population for seventy districts in the Cape Colony and the correlation coefficient was -0.42. This correlation shows that, on average, places with large cattle losses had higher percentages of rebels. This corresponds with the theories cited that the rinderpest outbreak influenced mobilisation, and the correlation coefficient shows that this is a robust result and argument. This is likely affected by the proportion of districts with both high cattle survival rates and still large rebel populations in better mitigated areas in the Cape, and although it shows correlation, it does not exclude that additional forces may have been influencing mobilisation.
The districts with the most rebels listed in the archives, on average, did not experience exponential cattle deaths from rinderpest. As shown in Map 4.2, most of these districts appear to border the Orange Free State, indicated in yellow, while the Cape Colony is indicated in green. The percentage of cattle remaining after rinderpest varies between 38% in Barkly West to 94% in Colesberg, with most areas experiencing moderate to few cattle deaths. The correlation coefficient for the number of cattle remaining when compared to the rebels in the district is 0.211. This shows that rinderpest mortalities were positive, but not strongly correlated with rebel mobilisation. This map is crucial in deflating this argument that rinderpest was a strong motivator for mobilisation. Rather, the statistics combined with the visual representation indicate that the deaths from rinderpest would not have had a sufficient impact in these districts.

Map created using historical statistics from various sources, transcribed into excel and georeferenced into QGIS. This shows a visual representation of the spread of the rinderpest using railroads and shows the delineation of rivers and districts. The Cape Rebel concentration is shown in red, with the additional dots representing the original cattle population prior to the epidemic. The percentages state the cattle population remaining after the rinderpest.

\(^{175}\) Map created using historical statistics from various sources, transcribed into excel and georeferenced into QGIS. This shows a visual representation of the spread of the rinderpest using railroads and shows the delineation of rivers and districts. The Cape Rebel concentration is shown in red, with the additional dots representing the original cattle population prior to the epidemic. The percentages state the cattle population remaining after the rinderpest.
The districts of Barkly West and Hay indicated being reasonably affected by rinderpest mortalities and housed a sizeable rebel population. In Barkly West, forty-one rebels were categorised as Class 1 and 1,154 as Class 2 in the Rebel Record. Hay housed fifty-five Class 1 and 624 Class 2 rebels. In Hay, there are multiple records that document how individuals had invited Free Staters to come to the area and “stand shoulder to shoulder”. J. J. Du Preez was an escort for the Free State and ensured that their wagons, loaded with ammunition and weapons, made it safely to the republic. These individuals were eventually categorised as Class 1 rebels for assisting the Boer Republics in a leading capacity. Given the proximity of Hay to the Orange Free State, several citizens had come from the Free State but had been naturalised, such as J. F. Peens (Piens) and W. J. Peens. Barkly West sported only one naturalised rebel, C. F. Steyn. Many of the rebels in Barkly West were farmers, with 362 listed in the Rebel Record, most of which were Class 2 rebels. While fewer rebels were classified as ringleaders or antagonists, the proportion of farmers who were not classed as leaders may suggest that despite the catastrophic farming conditions before the war, these were not sufficient motivations to be particularly charismatic contributors to the Boer cause. Of the farmers in Barkly West, only fifteen (4%) were Class 1 rebels. However, Hay tells a different story. Of the seventy-seven rebel farmers in Hay, only twenty-four (31%) were categorised as Class 1 and fifty-one as Class 2. While

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**MAP 0.2 SHOWING RINDERPEST CATTLE MORTALITIES IN DISTRICTS WITH HIGH CAPE REBEL POPULATIONS**

the numbers of rebels are too few to extrapolate any grand narratives, the farmers that were affected in Hay were dealt a harsher sentence for their rebellious actions than the proportion of farmers in Barkly West, which was more severely affected by the rinderpest epidemic.

Another district with a large rebel population was Aliwal North, located on the border of the Orange Free State and near Basutoland. With Basutoland being heavily affected by rinderpest, the areas around it would likely also have high cattle deaths. This is true for Herschel, which had 31% of its cattle remaining, but Barkly East had 62% of its cattle remaining. Neighbouring Aliwal North, Wodehouse had a sizeable rebel tally, and 67% of its cattle survived. The epidemic seems to not have a very clear visual pattern. If one follows the transport routes, high deaths can be found in some districts, but in others, there are also majority survivors.

MAP 0.3 SHOWING THE REBEL AND CATTLE POPULATIONS SOUTH OF THE ORANGE RIVER IN THE CAPE COLONY

As shown in Map 4.3, to the south of the Orange River, there were very few cases of wholesale disaster due to rinderpest. The most cattle losses were in districts near the border of the Orange Free State and Basutoland where pockets of cattle-ideal landscapes encouraged high cattle populations. However, areas inland and along the coastline experienced almost no distinctly significant losses. On average, the Cape Colony experienced a 35% decrease in cattle, but this figure is skewed due to the extreme outliers of some districts having almost no cattle remaining while many districts had most of their cattle survive. Many of the districts with minimal mortalities also boasted insignificant rebel
populations and would not suffice as rebel hotspots. Even Malmesbury, which was near Jan Smuts’s hometown, had 99% of their cattle intact after the rinderpest outbreak, although it also exhibited an above-average rebel population given its proximity to Cape Town and the lack of rebel support in surrounding districts. Coming from the Cape, Smuts was a uniquely positioned advocate for the republics as he had become attorney general in the South African Republic and went on to become a distinguished Boer general. Given his notable charisma, it is unsurprising that there was more support for the Boer cause in Malmesbury. The draw of charismatic leaders will be discussed further in Chapter 6.

In districts with higher cattle populations, only Vryburg, Mafeking and Glen Grey had significant cattle deaths. This could be because of the cattle spreading the disease quicker due to more carriers, or due to herding practices in these areas not following the quarantine measures closely. In areas with stricter containment policies, overgrazing and dehydration were concerns of the herders. Many herders might have chosen to risk the consequences of violating the policies in the hopes of keeping their cattle alive and as healthy as possible. Regardless, the rinderpest outbreak does not demonstrate a clear pattern or correlation that could unquestionably conclude whether it was a strong mobilising factor. Rather, the epidemic may have paved the way for underlying tensions to play a more influential role. It laid the foundations for aggrieved protests against policy and treatment by the government, and when these frustrations remained unattended to, these voices found a ready ear in the Boer Republics.

As has been demonstrated in van Onselen’s and Phoofolo’s research, rinderpest did not bring about any structural changes, but uncovered the underlying tensions pervading society and exposed the grievances that had been brewing. The strongest mobilising draw of the rinderpest outbreak was that it had brought groups of people to the brink of their tolerance levels, and once at capacity, it demanded that some form of change take place.

CONCLUSION

The inaction of the Cape officials had caused a lack of trust, which was a dangerous position for the Cape government to be in while tensions were rising against the Boer Republics. The stamping out policy had angered many, but the strict quarantining measures and limitations on personal freedoms provided the necessary impetus to switch to an ally fighting for its own freedom. The agricultural downturn, health implications and deteriorating racial climate had created conditions conducive to rebellion where grievances against the government’s inaction could be translated into mobilisation. Perhaps the greatest motivating element of the rinderpest epidemic was that by becoming a rebel, one would switch from a position of endangered freedoms to fighting on behalf of an ally advocating the
reinstatement of hard-earned independence. Moreover, the knock-on effects had exacerbated underlying tensions before the outbreak. However, this chapter has demonstrated that while rinderpest may have been influential on mobilisation patterns, its pattern is inconsistent. Where rinderpest outbreaks had spurred revolts and uprisings in other countries in southern and eastern Africa, only the Griqualand Uprising had resulted from Basuto grievances, and was quickly ended. Thus, this theory is over-emphasised in the historical literature and was unlikely to have played a significant explanatory role.
CHAPTER 5 FRONTIER THEORY

INTRODUCTION

The “frontier” describes the furthermost yet shifting boundaries between the Cape Colony and its neighbours. It was attributed as being a tumultuous, rebellious region where the reach of the Cape government was not always strictly implemented. This chapter examines life on the frontier, its unique people, temperament, culture and attitudes, and how these influenced mobilisation motivations for the Cape Rebels. These are analysed through various lenses to question whether life on the frontier contributed to the creation, or grooming, of Cape Rebels during the South African War. Theories on settler colonialism are paired with the analysis of maps to show the visual story of the historiography. The frontier was considered a contentious region in constant political and social flux. The British government became an increasingly powerful state able to impose its will and govern a less centralised territory; hence, as people moved and settled inland, land became political and contested.

There were three main frontiers: the northern, eastern and north-western (Griqualand West). The north-western frontier borders with the Orange Free State, while the eastern frontier borders with Basutoland and the Natal Colony. The Frontier Wars had two stages; first, the Dutch VOC Frontier Wars, and second, the British Frontier Wars. The last of the British Frontier Wars took place between 1850 and 1851. Much of the conflict with the Xhosa was concentrated between the Fish and Bushman rivers, extending into the Sundays River and Algoa Bay. In the northern territories, the Cape Afrikaners, also known as the Trekboers, threatened and pushed out the Khoesan. Although the wars ended before the period examined in this thesis, some historical context will assist with conceptualising life on the frontier and the establishment of these societies. The remainder of this chapter analyses these communities and their demographic profiles to consider whether these areas created more rebellious individuals than other districts. The north-eastern frontier was most populated by Cape Rebels, suggesting that something about the region created a uniquely suited environment for independent decision-making. Lastly, this chapter analyses whether it was in fact proximity to the Boer Republics, and not culture, that led to higher rebel populations.

179 Ibid.
THE FRONTIER

The frontier served a purpose for the Cape government. A. Lester describes the eastern frontier as a complicated ecosystem between European and African polities. The eastern frontier was the first arena wherein the British colonial administration came into contact with a coherent, independent African polity, the Xhosa.\textsuperscript{181} The frontiers were unique in that they were not just open land but required cohabitation with people who were willing to fight back against land dispossession and the rule of the British. They were treated as a strategic boundary that would protect the Cape Colony and also brought new opportunities for farming with fertile land and pastures. Some also viewed the frontiers as a key position for civilising the Xhosa groups and introducing Christian civility.\textsuperscript{182} Chronologically, the frontiers tell the histories of indigenous people, followed by the adaptation of

\textsuperscript{180} Figure taken from A. Lester. "‘Otherness’ and the frontiers of empire: the Eastern Cape Colony, 1806–c.1850,” Journal of Historical Geography, (24), (1), 1998, p. 7.

\textsuperscript{181} Ibid., p. 3.

\textsuperscript{182} Ibid., p. 4. The London Missionary Society had identified the duty of the colonial authorities as the improvement of the Xhosa people.
these communities to accommodate the *trekboers* of the Great Trek, and then the strategic settlement plan of the Cape government.

Kalyvas shows how non-ideological reasons for joining are often the case, but in the reconstruction of the narrative of the war, interviewees often offer ideological reasons. Kalyvas explains that this is because unsettled periods generate a need for strategic non-ideological action and ideological clarification of those actions. The ideological bias is reinforced by the impossibility of measuring attitudes and behaviour afterwards. Another urban bias is the assumption of given, fixed and unchanging identities, and he uses the examples of peasant, catholic, Albanian to demonstrate this. In the context of the Cape Rebels, this could be translated into white, poor, or Afrikaner. This implies that the war was between clearly demarcated sides with compact, stable and loyal social bases, but this thesis has demonstrated that the national identities, attitudes and loyalties of the Cape Afrikaner fluctuated, and that the borders between the Cape Colony and Boer Republics were political, rather than physical. Kalyvas describes how most civil conflicts are fought in rural areas, by predominantly peasant armies.183

Kalyvas explains how there is an urban bias when studying civil conflicts, as most political ideas are understood in the city context, and not how they are practised in the village context.184 Kalyvas expands on how civil wars and conflict are studied by warning that the experiences and perspectives of ordinary people are often excluded from the literature, especially within theoretical studies, on these wars. Because of their rural context, many civil wars are lost to obscurity, as most people involved in the conflict do not record their experiences, especially as most are illiterate and unable to record their testimonies. This chapter will demonstrate the context, class and environment of the Cape frontiers, differentiating the communities within them.

Importantly, Kalyvas argues that this urban bias exists due to prejudice and costly information.185 Urban bias also results in motivations being skewed towards ideology, showing an epistemic bias in research. Instead, additional motivations come into play, such as popular participation being in the nature of rural society, or how people are tentative or reluctant to pick an allegiance due to financial considerations, social cleavages, local politics, and personal animosities.186 These personal reasons

183 S. Kalyvas. The Logic of Violence in Civil War. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), [eReader version], ch. 2: Pathologies, sec. 2.4: Urban Bias.
184 Ibid.
185 Ibid.
186 Ibid.
for mobilisation leave little room for “national orientations”. Kalyvas emphasises that ordinary people caught in civil conflict are more often than not less than heroic, and simply wanting to save their jobs, their homes, their families and their lives. This results in participation being interpreted as baroque behaviour, fence sitting, or risk aversion driven by the desire to survive. Costly information adds to the urban bias of civil conflicts as there is an inherent danger in sharing information with outsiders (of which people were suspicious). Political messages are also often distorted by competing groups and interests, making the rebel mobilisation patterns difficult to interpret. Bottom-up approaches using non-ideological motivations of participants and fluid identities and choices is crucial to understanding these groups.

The reasons for mobilisation are important to understanding the conflict, but there is a difference between supporting a political cause or ideology, and actually volunteering for military service. This forces one to consider micro-level explanations, such as escapism, peer-pressure and the desire to test oneself in battle and be part of a greater group. This is different to macro-level motivations such as political cause, economic need or one’s class. When describing recruitment in Britain, Miller notes that volunteers had given up their incomes and homes to assist the war effort and wanted to do what was right, in response to the call to arms. Miller also notes how there was great enthusiasm amongst the militia battalions to go to war and serve overseas.

Some of the reasons for why these men had volunteered were pride and patriotism, of doing one’s duty, and honouring the reputation of the British Empire. Similarly, these sentiments were prevalent in South Africa. However, later research indicated that these feelings of patriotism did not reflect the motivations of the working class in Britain. For the working classes, some had volunteered out of economic need, while others had done so to better their social inferiority, and this was linked to fluctuations in unemployment. Similarly, the ecological disasters in the Cape had devastated the prospects of many Cape Afrikaners. Miller asserts that middle classes had volunteered out of patriotism, whilst poorer classes did so out of need. This is important and the class construction of the frontier is demonstrated further in this chapter.


188 Ibid.


190 Ibid., p. 63.
However, Miller outlines Colley’s research on the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars, which showed that bravery, aggression, and an excitement to protect what was one’s own played a role in why people volunteered in Britain. There were other motivations applicable, such as instinct, idealism, concern for their homeland, and being motivated by one’s youth. Spiers challenges the motive of unemployment and shares how money was insufficient in explaining why people would volunteer to risk their own lives. Most enlistees were younger, unmarried and healthy. In the case of the rebels, this information is not available and cannot be confirmed nor challenged, although the sense of adventure and danger of war was used in republican propaganda to motivate Cape Rebels to mobilise. Similarly, to the sentiments outlined by Kalyvas, the sense of belonging and contributing to something bigger was important. Peer pressure may have been a considerable motivator for Cape Afrikaners, especially in districts where the Afrikaner Bond and DRC had motivated that it was the right thing to do. Moreover, Boer commandos were stationed at the borders and were commandeering Cape Afrikaners, whether one volunteered or not. This was important, as several Cape Rebels had affidavits drawn up to note that they had been commandeered unwillingly. However, this may have also been a legal strategy to attempt to evade the legal consequences of treason. Thus, the reasons for mobilisation vary drastically, and personal convictions would play a considerable role in their decision, as well as the decision of their peers and leaders whom they trusted and admired. Miller also emphasises regional patterns of volunteer recruitment, and similar patterns are visible in the case of the Cape Rebels.

One theory that could be relevant to the Cape Rebels in the frontier regions is the borderlands theory, which has been briefly outlined, but has not been tested in this frontier theory. The borderlands theory, also known as border thinking, was first used by Gloria Anzaldúa in 1897 to describe a decolonial theory that demonstrates the need and value of understanding ethnicity as more than one heritage. The borderlands are evident where two or more cultures edge one another, occupying the same territory. Wastl-Walter explains how along a border, two extremely difficult political systems can meet, and in these borderlands, the territory is subordinated to a national regime and to the rules and


norms of that system. Borderland economies are found on the edges of nation states whose economic and geographical position varies from being interactive to being isolated.

These areas are also zones of cultural overlap, where national identities become blurred in the population. This blurring happens due to history and proximity, and these borders are highly dynamic, shifting over history. The borderlands are a differentiating zone that separates the different institutional systems of territories, and their location determines if they become integrated, shatter belts or peripheries. This conceptualisation is important as it demonstrates how nationalism, identity and loyalty can fluctuate, especially in these border districts that were strategically important to the Cape Colony, but also housed high concentrations of rebels. In these areas, individuals and their descendants might have a clear distinction between their regional belonging and identity rather than a territorial belonging and national identity. Political regimes are able to exercise influence over the borders, and these systems have a major influence on the borderlands and their inhabitants. This influence is persistent in the collective memories of the people, but can also be seen in the values and norms represented. This is important for the frontier regions of the Cape Colony and the Boer Republics as these differences in regimes, populations, national identities and values create a political zone. Anzaldúa captures this complex identity with her own description:

To Live in the Borderlands means you
are neither hispana india negra espanola
ni gabacha, eres mestiza, mulata, half-breed
caught in the crossfire between camps
while carrying all five races on your back
not knowing which side to turn to, run from;
… In the Borderlands
you are the battleground
where enemies are kin to each other;
you are at home, a stranger,
the border disputes have been settled


196 Ibid. p. 376.
the volley of shots have shattered the truce you are wounded, lost in action

dead, fighting back…”

The British had initially proposed official strategies for the exclusion and guarded incorporation of Africans within a British-administered colony. Lester describes how the Cape governors had initially seen the Xhosa as a group living within a territory that would be a strategic boundary crucial to protecting the colony and its “civilisation”. The frontier then literally delimited the frontline of the colonial border of the Cape Colony:

The ideal frontier [was] one that was clearly delineated, such as a large unfordable river running through the country with unlimited visibility and no prospects for concealment… each new line of demarcation was designed to enhance security.

However, the frontier espoused constant cycles of conflict. Ross describes a cyclical pattern of interior expansion in which the European pastoralists drove further into the interior of the Cape Colony, bringing steady impoverishment to displaced groups. He explains that the establishment of white agriculture in the interior was dependent on the conquest of the land from African populations. The “localised violence on the farms” grew into “open warfare and banditry” and was part of wider confrontations between colonists and the Xhosa on the eastern border, a large component of South African historiography. This was known as the Hundred Year War, 1779–1879. In summary, the war was a series of repeated battles over territory, with land for grazing and pasture being the prize. When treaties and truces had failed, land was formally annexed by the British (British Kaffraria) and incorporated into the Cape Colony in 1865, reserved solely for accommodating Africans. This created a longstanding legacy of resentment, loss and grudges held against white colonists, adding to the sources of racial tension mentioned in this thesis. After these wars, the


198 Ibid., p. 3.


201 Ibid., pp. 36-37.

202 Ibid., p. 37.

remaining Xhosa land was gradually incorporated into the Cape Colony, their independence lost and their lifestyles changed.

Not only did the frontier hold a strategic purpose, it had curated a distinct community of settlers able to perform this task. Between 1834 and 1840, approximately 15,000 Afrikaners left the Cape in various treks to escape British control. This Great Trek established the two Boer republics of Transvaal and Orange Free State. They were the majority population in the frontiers, accompanied by European settlers who were positioned there strategically. The British colonial government had engineered the idea of European emigration and settlement on the frontier to secure colonial borders. This was proposed as a means of unemployment relief through more proactive government policy. The government encouraged the settlement of “Highland Scots” who were a “warlike and cattle-raiding folk” to counteract the actions of the Xhosa in the region. Increasingly, these regions housed independent, ungovernable settlers. This description demonstrates how these frontier regions housed a unique community and blend of people. This was followed by the settlement of large landowners, small farmers and indentured employees to create a more secure barrier to the entry of Xhosa people into the Cape. Lastly, this settlement plan would appease humanitarian objections to the policy through providing a white working class for the colony and reduce its reliance on forced indigenous labour practices. Thus, the frontier became a deliberate government plan for settlement, which had curated a specific profile of settlers who had the means to deter Xhosa retaliation and the capacity to defend the borders themselves, without government aid. These regions were their own unique political and economic zones that had been compiled from those wanting to leave urban Cape settlements for a more adventurous, Armageddon-like life. Those who had moved were not just agriculturalists, but “ruffians” of the Cape Colony seeking a wilder lifestyle constantly within the throes of war and martial law, considered to be a military state. This character was important in motivating mobilisation of colonists before the war.

Lester describes how by mid-century, contact between settlers and indigenous people had changed into “an aggressive ordering of a materially integrative, but culturally defensive settler capitalism”.


206 Ibid.

207 Ibid.

There were inevitable clashes over the land available. While trading with one another was friendly, situations of exploitation built up animosity. The large Xhosa population made the Cape Afrikaners anxious but also created frustrations. Moreover, the Xhosa were often described as “troublesome neighbours”. The attitudes of the Afrikaners and Xhosa created clashes of ideologies; the Afrikaners displayed superiority for their Christian beliefs, including monogamy, dress style and civility. When their interactions with Xhosa groups were unsuccessful with wooing them to their beliefs, they were frustrated further by the Xhosa trying to absorb them into their society and under African leadership, including paying tribute to the chiefs. These racial tensions exacerbated the political tensions already underpinning these communities.

RELIGION AND EDUCATION

The frontier had curated a specific class of people with shared interests and concerns that would later contribute towards group identities and mobilisation potential. The relationship between the church, education and the frontier lifestyle are important in demonstrating why the rebels mobilised in these areas. Population studies in South Africa are difficult to analyse comprehensively due to limited record-keeping in the nineteenth century, when most of the original population movements and settler expansions occurred. The population growth in eighteenth-century South Africa has been studied by Robert Ross to determine the mechanics and character of its development, allowing insights into the frontier lifestyle. Ross argues that these patterns demonstrate a social group that was dominant within society, especially economically and socially, making their voices and sway important. Crucially, these people were the vast majority of rebels mobilised.

The frontier not only attracted a very specific group of people, but it had also created a very unique ecosystem in itself. Some population demographics show a convincing story of how, despite the strategic importance of frontier towns, they were left to their own devices and learnt not to expect any government assistance. The establishment of a church and education are some ways to show this trend. Typically, when a new town was founded, a church and a school were established soon after. The church often was involved in the education of its congregation, whether spiritual or with basic numeracy and reading. Many churches deployed satellite branches to act as schools or founded

210 Ibid., p. 109.
213 Ibid.
mission stations for the education of “uncivilised” indigenous people. This was not necessarily the case in the frontier, creating a distinctly uncharacteristic Cape colonist profile.

Giliomee discusses how the Cape Afrikaners living in the frontier during the first century of their settlement had not been particularly religious or close to the church. This was uncharacteristic for the time, given the importance of the church, both spiritually and politically, with its sway on humanitarian issues. Rather, a touring Dutch official stated that: “the indifference and ignorance in the frontier districts is such that it has the appearance more of an assembly of blind heathen than a colony of European Christians”. The Company established a congregation in the Cape immediately after its founding, but it took more than thirty years for there to be congregations in Stellenbosch, Drakenstein and Paarl. Fifty years after this report, congregations were established in Roodezand (Tulbagh) and Swartland (Malmesbury). Another fifty years later, a congregation was added in Graaff-Reinet (1792) and Swellendam (1798). Evidently, these congregations were more important to the settlers than the government.

The implementation of schools illustrates the emphasis their communities placed on education and the class and culture of the community. The oldest schools in South Africa were georeferenced in Map 5.5 to show the development of education in the frontier regions. This shows education levels and indicates the class of people, which were typically not formally educated in the frontier regions, and suggests reliance on alternative sources of information to inform decision-making. This is important in shaping their decision to mobilise. The archival sources contained in these maps are explained further in Appendix 5A.

Map 5.2 shows the visual representation of the establishment of mission schools (sendingstasies) in South Africa, which were linked to the “civilising” efforts of churches. The map indicates the schools in pink and their name in blue. The pattern of settlement indicates that most of the mission stations were located on the coastlines, and very few were established significantly far inland, which meant they had evaded the settler frontiers. Beaufort West’s mission station was 180 kilometres from the coastline, and Cradock was 170 kilometres from the coast. Most mission stations were approximately 50 kilometres from the coast. There was comparatively more emphasis placed on African education than white education in the frontier regions, as more mission schools had been set up. Moreover, the schools that had been set up were done much later than the mission stations. This demonstrates the lack of emphasis on education, shaping the type of settlers in these regions.


215 Ibid. Quoting G. van Imhoff, 1743.
This trend of minimal educational institutions shifted after the British took over from the Dutch and a religious awakening boomed throughout the Cape, with a leap in membership. In the 1830s, a traveller reports that “there are certainly no people in the world who are so truly God-fearing as the Afrikaner”, with more reports claiming that the Cape Afrikaners were “a serious and religious people […] with strong sentiments and genuine piety” and “consistent members of the Christian church”. Missionary work had also lagged under the rule of the Dutch. Giliomee describes how there was no independent religious order that was committed to missionary outreach, and the few ministers paid by the Dutch were understaffed and under-resourced. This made it difficult for a comprehensive outreach to be conducted beyond caring for the spiritual needs of colonists and other Europeans.

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216 Map shows the mission stations, using blue labels for the names of the mission stations, and pink dots to indicate the location of the mission stations.


Illiteracy among white males remained a prevalent issue, even a few years before the outbreak of the war, showing the unsuccessful education efforts in these frontier regions. Map 5.3 shows the number of white males who were unable to read and write in the district, according to the 1891 census. These dots are shown in blue and are scaled proportionally according to the white male population recorded for their district. In comparison, Map 5.4 shows the numbers of white males who were able to read and write according to the 1904 census. These are shown as purple dots and have been scaled proportionally to the white male population in their district. There were very few districts with a large educated population – namely Cape Town, Port Elizabeth and King William’s Town. In between these towns, literate males are few and far between. The map shows the extent of uneducated people in the frontier regions and indicates the class of people who were later mobilised as rebels.
The church heavily controlled education in these areas, but education did not seem to be a priority for these communities. Education was structured around reading, writing, numeracy and Christianity.219 Most of the teachers were unqualified in the early stages of education and usually affiliated with the church. Giliomee notes how many did not attend school at all.220 Even in affluent families, many children could not read or write. In Graaff-Reinet, approximately 100 of 3,000 white children had received formal education. In farming towns, such as the frontiers, most of the farmers usually left their children to be taught by a traveling teacher. The demand for education was weak but became increasingly necessary. In the late nineteenth century, British imperialism had spread throughout the world and brought with it further missionaries to their colonies. The churches played a significant role in advocating for a more wholesome lifestyle, beginning with careful instruction. These schools went on to become sites of broader learning too, such as the physical health of the students.221

In the Cape, there was a high concentration of illiterate white men. To understand the pattern of development and education, the oldest schools in South Africa were georeferenced into Map 5.5 where the year that they were established was classified to understand the various stages of development. This indicates the settlement of colonists into new towns.\(^{222}\)

MAP 0.5 SHOWING THE OLDEST SCHOOLS IN SOUTH AFRICA AND THEIR YEAR OF ESTABLISHMENT

In Map 5.5, the presence of a dot indicates that a school had been set up in that district. The year of establishment indicated on the map correlates with the demand for education in these areas. The dot was coded to be variegated according to the year. Every four years, the colour of the dot changes to show the period when it was established, starting with 1738 to 1842 being the first bracket, followed by 1842 to 1851, and so forth. This is accompanied by a label indicating the year it was established for easier interpretation of the speed of development of education in South Africa. This is combined with Maps 5.3 and 5.4, a representation of the number of people who were recorded to be illiterate in 1891 or literate in the 1904 census (British Blue Books). This shows which districts had higher or lower formal education levels, in combination with the location of schools. Consequently, Map 5.5

\(^{222}\) This was created through using datasets of the oldest schools in Southern Africa and was georeferenced into the dataset compiled for this thesis. https://www.news24.com/parent/learn/primary-school/this-list-with-200-of-south-africas-oldest-schools-may-surprise-you-20180409 (Accessed 19 August 2022).
illustrates how “well educated” these communities were to gauge whether education played a role in mobilisation patterns.

When considering the years established, Map 5.5 shows how most of the oldest schools were founded first in the Western Cape in the early eighteenth century, and then later in the Eastern Cape. In the North-Eastern Cape, the schools were established much later in the 1880s and 1890s. This is important as these regions had high levels of rebels. Later establishment could indicate the newness of towns, as well as the extent to which formal education was emphasised. Establishing schools requires considerable capital injections and resources; thus, a later year of establishment could indicate regional inequality regarding state resources. However, as has been demonstrated, there was originally less emphasis on the importance of schooling. This became increasingly valuable but had taken off later in the nineteenth century. Economic productivity can be linked to the human capital in the region whereby education increases productivity growth. As a region develops, it becomes necessary to educate more people to perform vital tasks and increase productive outputs. Education “as a critical component of a country’s human capital increases the efficiency of each individual worker and helps economies to move up the value chain beyond manual tasks or simple production processes”.

The World Economic Forum has theorised three main channels through which education influences the productivity of a country:

First, it increases the collective ability of the workforce to carry out existing tasks more quickly. Second, secondary and tertiary education especially facilitate the transfer of knowledge about new information, products, and technologies created by others. Finally, by increasing creativity it boosts a country’s own capacity to create new knowledge, products, and technologies.

The transferral of knowledge and increased capacity is crucial in mobilisation as it demonstrates group interests and ability to draw people to a cause. By analysing when schools were established, Map 5.6 shows how recently towns began to be productive in the frontier. Kimberley was prioritised later, as it was mostly a mining town with a large migrant labour force. However, diamonds were first discovered in Kimberley in 1867, and schools were established in 1887 and 1890. Barkly West established a school in 1885, a little earlier. The diamond rush drew labour to the mines quickly, and as the mines were more firmly established, a town began to grow around these mines. By 1870, more than 10,000 diggers of all races and nationalities had come to work in the mines.

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224 Ibid.

may have opted to bring their families to this new, developing town rather than migrate back and force or send remittances. This pattern of development is not consistent throughout the Cape Colony.

MAP 0.6 SHOWING SCHOOLS AND YEAR OF ESTABLISHMENT IN NORTH-EASTERN FRONTIER

In the eastern frontier, the pattern is earlier and can be seen in Map 5.7. This was one of the first areas of expansion for colonists and where much of the conflict in the Frontier Wars occurred. Algoa Bay, the Transkei and Pondoland were reserved for African settlement. This meant that colonists were forced further into the interior, closer to the border with the Boer Republics. Much of the frontier settlement occurred earlier in the nineteenth century, between the fourth and eighth wars of 1811 to 1851. Similarly, the establishment of schools occurs first in 1841 in Colesberg, with the majority of the schools in the area being established in the 1850s and 1860s. This section has demonstrated the growth and development of institutions within these regions, showing the patterns in which churches and schools were established and how this differed in the frontier regions compared to urban areas. Importantly, schools were established comparatively later in the frontier districts, and missionary schools were not instituted in these regions. The establishment of these institutions was linked to the comparatively high male illiteracy in these regions, and showed the social class typical of these districts.
Throughout the nineteenth century, South Africa underwent several institutional and developmental shifts. This played a role in how these communities changed and were structured alongside institutional and industrial development. The aftermath of the Great Trek had scattered Cape Afrikaners throughout the colony, with several families opting to move further away from the control of the Cape government, as well as a lack of usable and vast land for agriculture. The initial trek had resulted in Afrikaners moving inland and creating the Boer Republics. While life in the republics developed its own political and social structures, there was another group who remained in the Cape Colony but lived on the frontiers bordering the other provinces.

Ethnicity, nationalism, national identity and loyalties are important in understanding this distinct group – the Cape Afrikaners. Tamarkin explores the Cape Afrikaner ethnicity through analysing nationalism and tribalism. They assert that the Cape Afrikaner is a “mongrel ethnic variety”, and that
they have “no ethnic origin at all”, but that the British colonial experience had played a significant role in the “evolution of Afrikaner ethno-cultural consciousness”.226 Eriksen outlines that:

The first fact of ethnicity is the application of systematic distinction between insiders and outsiders; between Us and Them. If no such principle exists there can be no ethnicity, since ethnicity presupposes an institutionalised relationship between delineated categories whose members consider each other to be culturally distinctive ... Ethnicity is thus constituted through social contact.227

Their interactions with the British had resulted in a “Triple Revolution” in the economic, administrative and educational realms.228 Tamarkin describes how the Dutch Reformed Church had been a socialising agency for Afrikaners, especially playing a role in education, social matters, and the spiritual spheres of daily life, evoking stoic loyalties.229

The development of these frontier districts varied according to the families who settled there and the types of lifestyles the environment afforded. Farming varied depending on where one was based, and as more demand was created, these towns attracted more people and more skills to create complex microcosms. Ross describes how almost all colonial farmers were linked to an urban setting and an international trade market. Much of their farming was not subsistence, compared to African farmers; rather, colonial farmers were concerned with producing a surplus that could be sold in this market.230 These farmers were dependent on the Cape Town market for income, and much of a farm’s labour and outputs was determined by market demands. The Trekboers of the interior had been assumed to have withdrawn from the profits of these markets, except for necessities, but were largely self-sufficient.231 Tamarkin conceptualises these communities further:

Thus, isolated, parochial Afrikaner farming communities were engulfed by these new changes, becoming increasingly members of overlapping political, economic and cultural ‘common markets’. This in itself engendered among them a much greater sense of belonging to a broad colony-wide community. Further, the colonial distribution of economic and political resources, which was largely congruent with cultural


229 Ibid., p. 223.


communities, the English settlers having much better access to these resources, created optimal conditions for the emergence of ethnic consciousness among Cape Afrikaners.\textsuperscript{232}

This disconnection was crucial to how these regions developed independently and differed to those elsewhere. This independence is important as their perceptions and judgements shaped their mobilisation motivations, too. Walker describes how the market was irrelevant to these communities and that their settlements were motivated by the demographic pressure in urban centres, as well as the custom of sons inheriting the right to their own farms, which necessitated moving to areas with plentiful farmlands.\textsuperscript{233} However, Ross argues that the market had rejected these settlers from participating, and not the settlers who did not want to participate. Regardless, these frontier communities were forced to become self-sustaining.

Neumark challenges this perception of the Trekboers by describing the Afrikaner frontiersman as “an irrational non-economic being”, highlighting that every farmer, no matter their distance from the metropole, relied on these markets for some necessities. Neumark also explains that the interior farmers who had established themselves as pastoralists did so due to the returns on their investments being higher than those in arable farming.\textsuperscript{234} Ross disagrees, explaining that the standard of living for farmers in the south-west region was significantly higher than those of the interior farmers, and was preferable for those who could afford it. Thus, the rebels that arose from these regions were poorer, less educated, less connected to the urban setting and had developed independent needs and interests as a community. Guelke adds that these farmers were on the frontier because they were unable to compete with or afford the more valuable farms closer to the markets.\textsuperscript{235} Guelke further characterises the Trekboers of the interior as a group who had little wealth and sought out free land without the need to conquer it, pursuing an independent lifestyle in an agricultural economy that was mostly subsistence.\textsuperscript{236} This also insinuates that these groups had less social and economic capital to

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exchange, forcing them to be self-reliant and self-sustaining. This is important for the group identities that would develop, as these associations could influence their potential for mobilisation.

These insights paint a telling description of the increasingly stratified rural economy of the Cape, where the farming communities were not homogenous, but increasingly evolving. Ross speaks of this stratification in the sense that while Afrikaner society espoused an egalitarian outlook, wealth earned status. The majority of those who had settled north of the Orange River were those who had lost out on more valuable land in the south. A group of elite farmers had begun to dominate the colony, economically and politically, even if only at a district level. This profile of the interior settlers of the Cape demonstrates how no single description can be used. Rather, development occurred at various speeds and from various enterprises. The farming communities were individual microcosms, with their own political and economic profiles, who had developed a self-sustaining system and likely a strong community association. However, it is evident that most of these settlers were not part of an elite landowners’ class. Rather, many of these settlers were seeking opportunities on smaller budgets, with small-to-medium-sized capacity for enterprise. This confirms how resources were not prioritised to these areas and the rationale for later development of towns, churches and schools in the interior and frontier regions.

Given the context of the Great Trek, many of the families who dispersed throughout South Africa desired independence and increased freedoms from the Cape government. While still under the administrative and legal controls of the Cape, life on the frontier sported a markedly different lifestyle to the more concentrated and developed areas in the colony.

BECOMING INDUSTRIAL SOCIETIES

From the 1870s until the South African War, southern Africa had rapidly shifted from a colonial agricultural society to a capitalist industrial society. These industrial and economic changes had materialised within a short period of time and brought about massive labour changes, which played a role in the stratification and diversity in settlement. Ross argues that the pre-industrial society had influenced social relations with the colonies and had an impact on the organisation of capitalist South Africa. These shifts catalysed change in society, especially how it was organised and new economic hubs. Importantly, the relations fostered on the frontiers were not only class based, but race based, too. Legassick adds to this argument by showing how twentieth-century South African race


238 Ibid., p. 31.
relations resulted from the experiences of white frontiersmen in the nineteenth century who opposed African enemies. Ross argues that the history of pre-industrial, colonial South Africa had not been taken seriously in the historiography.\textsuperscript{239} Much of the pre-industrial histories had been concerned with the histories of churches, families and communities.\textsuperscript{240} Ross emphasises that:

No matter how much new was brought into South African society by the great transformation of the late nineteenth century, industrial capitalism was able to build on historical processes within pre-industrial colonial society to a degree that is far greater than is frequently realised.\textsuperscript{241}

It is worth considering the character of these pre-industrial societies regarding how these major societal shifts influenced mobilisation. Before the mineral revolution, much of South Africa was largely rural, and the towns that did exist were mainly used to service the countryside that required particular goods and skills, contributing to the development of colonial agriculture.\textsuperscript{242} This is important to visualise, as the South African War occurred only thirty years later, but extraordinary development had materialised at a rapid rate in that period.

Frontier settlements had been classified as comprising less wealthy, less profitable and less connected white farmers with a disdain for the urban lifestyle and the close control of Cape officials. Many had moved further into the interior to escape the far-reaching grasp of state control. Many of these regions were strategic points for securing the colony border. However, the second half of the nineteenth century brought significant changes to these areas, revolutionising their way of life, and in turn influencing mobilisation patterns. These regions had yielded high concentrations of Cape Rebels. The mineral revolution had shifted attention away from the frontier as a zone for keeping out unwanted groups to instead a political warzone where power and wealth could be accrued once gold and diamonds had been discovered.

\textbf{Diamonds}

Van Onselen explains how in less than thirty years, a modest agricultural economy in a Boer republic had been transformed into a colony with the world’s largest and most “technologically sophisticated gold-mining industry”. This was both traumatic and rapid and had been overseen by four different


\textsuperscript{242} \textit{Ibid.}
governments.\textsuperscript{243} Diamonds had been discovered in Kimberley in 1867, shifting the labour force from farms to mines and changing the economic and political power in southern Africa. Many authors attribute this mine to the origin of the migrant labour system, bringing thousands of labourers into one area, attracted by the high wages and incentive of additional freedoms.\textsuperscript{244} In 1871, the diamond fields were incorporated into the British colony, bringing a new territory and a new season of wealth and prosperity.\textsuperscript{245} However, it also signalled a new development: an imperial thrust into the interior, previously out of reach. The economic potential of this region made it a prioritised economic zone for industrialisation and trade, growing the mine, transport routes and infrastructure. The compounds in Kimberley became a centralised place of political and social change as ideas and ambitions were voiced. Moreover, the multiracial and stratified classes housed in Kimberley meant that frustrations were shared and spread like wildfire within close quarters. As quickly as industrial shifts were made, political consciousness in all forms was circulated. These shifts created fertile ground for ideas of rebellion to develop.

Protests occurred over the rising costs of living and falling diamond prices in the town, and white lower classes were concerned about African labourers. These concerns built on the racial tensions instigated by land dispossession, and later the increasing racial animosity stoked by the rinderpest epidemic. Various ethnic groups were kept separate to prevent “riotous combinations” from forming, and with African workers being considered troublesome, many were sent away and barred from being employed. Giliomee outlines how “this racial division of the workforce into white skilled and black unskilled labour was Kimberley’s last legacy to the political economy of the emerging South Africa”.\textsuperscript{246} These changes to the interior of the country had profound long-term effects, especially on labour opportunities. The interior’s culture shifted from that of wild, independent farmers escaping British control to those forced to adjust to the new groups drawn by the appeal of work opportunities and a better life. The uncertainty of daily life had created uneasiness within the original settlers now faced with a stronger dose of British imperialism.

The events in Kimberley did not only have an impact internally throughout southern Africa but had shifted the priorities of the British. South Africa became economically important and hinted at future wealth. The interior of South Africa had previously been left to its own whims and was viewed as a “black hole of quarrelsome and greedy settlers dragging a reluctant Imperial government into costly


\textsuperscript{245} Ibid., p. 276.

\textsuperscript{246} Ibid., p. 228.
and avoidable ‘native wars’,” contributing marginally to the Cape economy.\textsuperscript{247} With the discovery of diamonds, wealth shifted to the interior, into the hands of these disgruntled and fiery settlers.

Moreover, quarrels with the Boer Republics became increasingly frequent. Giliomee describes how the independent republics and African kingdoms were “political anachronisms retarding economic development” for the British.\textsuperscript{248} The Transvaal had legislated pass laws to keep African labourers working on farms, limiting the number of labourers available to the mine. As Kimberley was built up around the mine, the town itself became an important labour hub and key industrial zone. Prospects of the mineral boom drew thousands of workers to the Cape. Railroads connected Kimberley to urban centres and markets, and settlers helped build a town. This growth in migrant labourers also necessitated that new towns be established on the frontier and the Boer Republics.

The development of Kimberley had required technical and physical infrastructure to be built. Public works in the interior needed to be prioritised to effectively transport the goods for export. With the dramatic shift in priorities to the region, it was expected that there would be rifts with republican governments, but this was mostly avoided. However, this interior territory was difficult to govern and develop, and the British government became frustrated by the division in the interior between settler communities, the republics and the subjugated African communities. The metropole began discussions on how to create a federation whereby these territories and people could be grouped and more easily governed.\textsuperscript{249} The Boer Republics were approached with the plan of diplomacy and “peaceful pressure” to revert to British rule. However, the republics had no inclination to rejoin British authority. Eventually the town of Carnarvon had set the ball rolling when Griqualand West was annexed for its diamond mines in 1871, and then a confederation policy was re-evaluated. The Transvaal was on the brink of bankruptcy at this stage as it took several decades to stabilise once it had declared its independence. It was only once President Kruger came to power with new policies and reforms that its political and economic vulnerabilities were addressed more carefully. Their luck changed with the discovery of gold in the Witwatersrand, creating an attractive lifestyle that drew Cape colonists.

\textit{Gold}

Mineral wealth had been a turbulent discovery in South Africa, changing the political and economic landscape. When gold was discovered in the Witwatersrand in 1886, the town rapidly changed into an industrial, economic hub, bailing out the broke Transvaal Republic. Similar to Kimberley, this


\textsuperscript{248} Ibid., p. 230.

\textsuperscript{249} Ibid., p. 277.
discovery resulted in an inpouring of miners with similar tensions. Situated almost 400 kilometres from Mafeking, this mine was less accessible to the Cape Colony. However, migrant labourers quickly made their way to the gold mines for economic opportunities. The issue of the *Uitlander* became increasingly politicised. This group was excluded from political decisions as they were not formally citizens of the Boer Republics. Kruger estimated that between 60,000 to 70,000 *Uitlanders* had moved to the Transvaal to change their economic prospects, and that this population drastically outnumbered the locals. The issue of the *Uitlanders* in the Transvaal became one of the most important political clashes preceding, and contributing towards, the outbreak of the South African War in 1899. Both Joseph Chamberlain and Lord Milner were concerned that the balance of power may shift to the Transvaal if left to develop at its trajectory. The migration of skilled white labour from British territories to the republics was incredibly worrying. The Jameson Raid was the culmination of these fears – a political rebellion that aimed to allow the inclusion of British citizens in political decisions in the Boer Republics if the franchise was revised.

The discovery of gold had shifted the position and future of British rule and imperialism in South Africa. The gold mines in the Transvaal had quickly become the biggest single source of gold internationally, an overnight economic well of riches. The economic hub switched from Kimberley to the Witwatersrand, as did the power balance. Evan describes how “the stability of the Boer independence was overturned by the pressures that followed the discovery of gold on the Witwatersrand in 1886. Huge numbers of foreigners, *Uitlanders*, poured in and, after a time, demanded political recognition”. The influx of workers and funds was used by Kruger to develop the republic and create a formidable opponent to British imperialism in the Cape. With anti-British sentiments growing from its appearance of defeat, anti-republic and imperial attitudes hardened by the late 1890s. Rhodes’s attempt to overthrow Kruger’s government and incorporate this territory into the Cape Colony failed, but had created antagonism and aggression towards British officials who had ignored the sovereignty of the Boer Republics, a political misdemeanour that was unforgivable. This was a key sign for settlers on these transport routes that war was looming as armaments and supplies were brought past them, which will be discussed further in Chapter 6.

Ultimately, the industrialisation of South Africa after the discovery of mineral wealth deposits had demonstrated the extent to which Britain was willing to forgo all gentlemanly and stately behaviour to secure further territory and British imperialism at high costs. This behaviour was notably a cause of political agitation held by settlers that had been caught in the crossfire. Shearing theorises that

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some residents of the Cape had defected to the Boer forces because they expected a better life under the governance of the Boer Republics, especially President Kruger who had become an increasingly admired and respected leader. The failure of the Jameson Raid and the deterioration of British sovereignty after the mineral revolution in the interior was a key factor in changing the hearts and minds of the people against the British cause.

THE POWER OF PROXIMITY

With friends and family being one of the more prominent theories offered for why Cape residents fought for the Boer Republics, it is essential to look at where the rebels were located. The effect of distance and spatial dependence is a prevalent means of measuring the influence of external factors and spatial autocorrelation. Spatial autocorrelation in GIS helps represent the degree to which one object is similar to other nearby objects and the relationship they share. This helps determine the strength of their correlation. Haining explains spatial autocorrelation as:

…the presence of systematic spatial variation in a mapped variable. Where adjacent observations have similar data values the map shows positive spatial autocorrelation. Where adjacent observations tend to have very contrasting values then the map shows negative spatial autocorrelation.252

When faced with the map, it becomes striking that most of the Cape Rebels were concentrated in areas closer to the border with the Boer Republics, suggesting positive spatial autocorrelation. Statistical theories incorporated into geography divide spatial data into (a) descriptive, explanatory statistics used to summarise geographic data and describe relationships, and (b) statistics used for inference, confirmation or explanation.253

Distance is important to trade and markets, but also social networks and information. Communication networks are important for evaluating this group as it is necessary to know from where the rebels were receiving their information. If mostly from the Boer Republics, close to where they stayed, then it suggests that these rebels were sufficiently convinced and motivated by Boer information, more than British sources. It also questions if British information was reaching these districts on the periphery. Similarly, informal communication networks, such as “bush radio”, were important in forming opinions and perspectives on the war. As Kalyvas describes urban bias as being created by costly information, this was a major obstacle as access to the countryside is often difficult, especially during times of political tension. Additionally, there was inherent danger in these conflicts, which


253 Ibid., p. 366.
made people suspicious of outsiders and reluctant to convey information to people they did not know well. This makes it difficult to decidedly conclude the reasons for mobilisation. Thus, distance from the Boer Republics has implications for various theories as to why this group defected and fought for the republics. Distance, historically, is one of the greatest contributors and impediments to international trade. When studying trade economies, a measure of the distance from local markets to broader ones is important to understanding the effect of distance on communication networks historically. Similarly, the proximity of an information source may determine the overarching narrative prevalent in an area.

One theory for the larger rebel population closer to the Boer Republic borders was that there was a higher probability of overlap between the people, including ideas, attitudes and beliefs. However, Amery describes how “the attitude of the colonists was one of some hesitation” and that “many of the younger and more hot-headed men had already crossed the river to join the commandos”. Shearing suggests that this may have been due to friends and family in neighbouring Boer towns. However, proximity to Boer networks and “bush radio” inclined towards Boer news forgoes the need for personal lineage links, and rather suggests that distance was a sufficient explanatory factor. Importantly, the border between the Cape Colony and the Boer Republics was an artificial and political boundary. This meant that there was no physical delineation of the boundary between these territories, and people freely crossed over the Orange River to trade and interact with communities across the way. While this delineation became important once war broke out, prior to this, it was irrelevant in people’s daily lives. This suggests that some people may not have been conscious of their political and legal position when they chose to mobilise with the Boer Republics.

However, Tamarkin asserts that there was a distinction between the ethnic core and diaspora of Afrikaners in their process of ethnic and political consciousness. Tamarkin explains the importance of this distinction as:

Afrikaners in the nineteenth century lived in different states and under different regimes, two colonies and two republics. The nature of political consciousness and behaviour of Cape Afrikaners was primarily determined by their particular colonial circumstances which shaped their core experience. In this respect they formed a core

254 S. Kalyvas. The Logic of Violence in Civil War. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), [eReader version], ch. 2: Pathologies, sec. 2.4: Urban Bias.


While pan-Afrikaner solidarity existed in varying degrees, the interaction between the Cape core and the republican diaspora played a relatively minor role in the evolution of ethnic consciousness of the Cape Afrikaners.258

This is further entrenched in a newspaper article showing the distinction from a republican perspective:

The truth is hard but it cannot be hidden. The Cape and Orange are two. The Afrikaner here is different from the one there ... The colony is a colony! Orange is a republic. Around us the wind of freedom blows while above our heads blows the flag of independent Orange. There the freedom thirsty Afrikaners dwell under the broad and soft wings of the British Queen.259

Swart suggests that masculinity and brotherhood played a significant role, stating that “Afrikaner masculinity at that time was encoded and institutionalised in the Republican commando system, which functioned as a practical and symbolic mode of masculinity of Boers”.260 The commandos provided a space where comradery extended into politics, culture and social mythology.261 Status, group identity, a sense of belonging and social networks in these frontier regions held powerful sway over mobilising potential.

The border between the Cape Colony and the Boer Republics was not just a territorial boundary. It also showed a break in more abstract aspects of the political, economic and social environments. Importantly, this border indicated a change in leadership and government, but also opportunities and styles of state. After the disaster of the Jameson Raid, Rhodes and his government had stained reputations, leaving Schreiner’s new government in an awkward position. Schreiner had stepped into the role of prime minister but was met with immediate challenges of how to reconcile public trust in British authority, in addition to the challenge of war looming. Since the raid, Boer leadership had a new appeal of independence and honour, and the republics had demonstrated themselves to have respectable leaders. Notably, President Kruger had risen in personal appeal. The threat of war had forced people to re-evaluate their own personal convictions on their political stances. Hence, the cause of the Afrikaner republics appealed to the majority-Afrikaner population of the Cape Colony.

It was not just siding with friends and family who lived in the republics, but also distance from the border that indicated the nearing threat of Boer commandos. These commandos had been placed at


259 Zuid Afrikaan. 2/2/1892.


261 Ibid.
the border, ready for the Boer ultimatum with the Cape government to expire and for war to officially begin. Meanwhile, border districts in the Cape had been left unguarded and unprepared for war, while seeing the shipments of armaments imported into the Boer territories created uneasiness. Shearing suggests that some rebels had believed the Free State would send them to Delagoa Bay if they did not join Boer commandos. This threat of becoming an instant POW without the support and protection of the Cape government meant that many would rather avoid this fate and risk the repercussions. Legally, this would be considered treason, punishable by fines, imprisonment or death, depending on the severity of their actions against the Cape government. Some people in these districts seemed genuinely to be hopeful that they may come to experience a better life under the rule of the Boer governments.

Being closer to the Boer Republics may have meant that one’s town was at higher risk of being threatened more immediately by Boer forces when war broke out. Alternatively, it may have meant that one had relationships with Boer communities or empathised with the Boer cause from understanding their way of life. Afrikaner nationalism has been portrayed as one of the main reasons for people joining the Boer commandos in the historiography because they believed in the Boer cause and their right to independence. As Afrikaner nationalism rose exponentially in the early twentieth century, the narrative of the war was altered to fit its cause, and much of the actions of the Boer Republics and the Cape Rebels (or other allies) were explained in terms of shared political ideologies and identities. While there may have been anger against the British authorities, and thus sympathy for the Boer cause, it appears to be anachronistic to conclude that rebels displayed higher levels of Afrikaner nationalism in this period as it only really develops after the union of South Africa. However, this is difficult to prove or disprove. Shearing notes how one of the biggest challenges with studying the Cape Rebels was that many questions remain unanswered due to immediate sources being rare. Personal histories and memoirs were written decades later where memory and motive become blurred with post-war narratives. This remains the case. Shearing claims that no one admitted to political ambition as their reasoning. She states how the Cape Rebels were “hardly conscious of their place in history” and that meant that daily diaries or records were not found.

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263 Ibid.
264 Ibid.
265 Ibid.
266 Ibid.
Shearing considers some of these border districts in closer detail to ascertain why they had higher rebel populations. She concludes that although there were multiple reasons to fight for the Boers, there were multiple instances during the war that had thwarted the success of mobilisation. The Cape Rebels were expected to be mobilised in much greater numbers considering how large the Cape Afrikaner population was, but instead, this never really built much momentum. Instead, Shearing notes how the rebels had wavered in their support after their victory in battle in Stormberg, as well as there being numerous arguments and disagreements between the rebels and republican commandos.\(^{267}\) Additionally, the rebels tended to guard the rear of the commando forces, hanging back without much initiation, and they did not stay in the field for great lengths of time.\(^{268}\) Shearing goes so far as to say that rebel leaders “employ[ed] tactics that courted defeat”, painting a grim picture of a force that appeared to be more trouble to command than they were worth in the battlefield.\(^{269}\)

In Griqualand West and Bechuanaland, the rural population had experienced much loss at the hands of rinderpest. The rural populations were especially affected, and this caused a major rebellion in the northern territory of the Orange River. In this region, government reports had documented “appalling poverty and stagnation” with “hardly any coins in circulation”, and that “even the canteens were deserted” in Douglas and Campbell, April 1899.\(^{270}\) Chapter 4 illustrated how rinderpest was often cited as the cause for rebel mobilisation, but that it had not affected regions as dramatically as has been hypothesised in the literature. Rather, there were a few areas north of the Orange River that had experienced tragic losses. In these towns, there were exponentially more rebels. Shearing also reports that several thousand colonists were squatting in tents or living in makeshift huts due to their impoverishment.\(^{271}\) Shearing describes how several well-off landowners had become classified as “poor whites” and had blamed the colonial government for making conditions worse through their strict quarantine and restrictions on movements.\(^{272}\)

Another district close to the borders of the republics was Kimberley, which had experienced more radical and rapid development. Due to the diamond mines, Kimberley attracted a large migrant labour force and required rapid industrialisation to meet the needs of the town and the new industry.


\(^{268}\) Ibid.

\(^{269}\) Ibid.

\(^{270}\) Ibid., pp. 167-168. Douglas and Campbell were towns in Herbert and Hay. Individually, they reported low rebel numbers of 13 and 15, but the district total was high.

\(^{271}\) Ibid., p. 168.

\(^{272}\) Ibid.
Kimberley was 53 kilometres from the nearest OFS border, and a contentious territory due to its annexation by the British. Additionally, with the rapid development in the area, more schools were established than in other nearby districts. Three schools were established in 1887, 1890 and 1896. Thus, distance alone does not explain the mobilisation of rebels, but its proximity adds to the external pressure applied and ease of rebellion.

Nearby, Vryburg and Mafeking also housed a large population of “poor people in a state of unrelieved want”, and it was suspected that a large number of African people in the district had died of starvation, with more likely to follow suit. In Vryburg, the rebels seemed to have been more strongly motivated by potential rewards and by the influence of family and leaders. The poverty in Vryburg was mostly due to economic factors, but the mobilisation of rebels had been originally attributed to Afrikaner nationalism. In Vryburg, 674 rebels were reported, and this was likely due to the farming policies in the Transvaal that they believed would alleviate their economic losses. The farmers had expected that if they chose to side with the Transvaal, their mortgages would be remitted after the war. There were more rebels in Vryburg than in Mafeking, which had 661 voters, only eleven rebels and ten people taken into protective custody by officials. In Vryburg, there were 1,384 people registered on the voter’s rolls, indicating their status by needing to earn sufficient income or own assets to qualify to vote. Of these voters, there were 136 rebel landowners, and it was more likely that sons and siblings of landowners would also join the rebellion rather than the bywoners in the area. Due to the collapse of the transport and agricultural industry, only one voter who was a carrier or transport driver did not become a rebel, leaving 95% of that industry to find hope in another political power. However, there was still more loyalty found in fields employed by government. Of the eighty-one Cape policemen employed in Vryburg, only nine became rebels. This contingency had defended their district loyally, and ultimately became POWs in 1900. At the end of 1901, early 1902, they returned from these camps and defended Vryburg from the rebellion until the end.

On average, the north-eastern districts were affected disproportionately by economic disasters, which could be concluded as a persuasive motive for mobilisation. Areas in the North-Eastern Cape and Griqualand West showed much higher rebellion levels. The average was 32.1% of the white male

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274 Ibid.
275 Ibid.
276 Ibid., pp. 168-169.
277 Ibid., p. 169.
population for the North-Eastern Cape, with 3,614 rebels in total. Griqualand West had 4,432 rebels, an average of 29.9% of the white male population. However, this large concentration could be expected due to their fairly close proximity to the Boer Republics. This trend of mobilisation was not expected in the eastern and southern territories.

These case studies of the north-eastern districts were all above the Orange River, a natural barrier that had guarded lower districts from the effects of rinderpest. However, there were still rebels in lower regions, despite not being as badly affected by the cattle disease. Barkly East, Aliwal North and Wodehouse all sported high numbers of rebel populations. The case of the Southern Cape and Eastern Cape provide some nuance to the argument. While the Southern Cape would be hypothesised to have a low concentration of rebels due to its further distance from the Boer Republics, the Eastern Cape would be expected to have more rebels due to its closer proximity. However, both these broad areas produced very low rebel activity. The Southern Cape population had extremely low rebel concentrations, which varied between 0% and 3.4% rebels per the white male population, but most had no rebels, or an average of 0.6% of the white male population. Similarly, the Eastern Cape had mostly no rebels in its districts, apart from Bedford (3%) and Tarka (9.7%), averaging 0.9%.

Despite the low reports of rebel activity, this does not translate in the same manner when considering the visual representation. In the south-eastern border of the OFS, there were still large numbers of rebels. Aliwal North was 19 kilometres from the OFS border, and its neighbour, Albert, was 49 kilometres from the OFS. Aliwal North had 1,268 rebels recorded, which represented almost 55% of the white male population, and Albert had 1,048 rebels and was further away from the border, recording 25% of its white male population as rebels. Shearing reports that in Aliwal North, 648 of the 1,140 voters were recorded as rebels by the magistrate, and there were an additional 570 non-voting rebels and eighteen rebels of unknown voting status. Of the landowners in the area, 127 rebelled, which was 68.6% of the landowner population. Shearing determines that this high concentration meant that there was a higher level of confidence in this district that the Boer Republics would be victorious and that by joining their commandos, they would not be at risk of losing their land.²⁷⁸ One of the reasons offered for rebels mobilising was that they were promised to have their mortgages remitted. However, this is only one factor that may have contributed, and is not a prominent theory offered. Distance to the border, borderland identities and the influence of prominent leaders would likely have contributed to this decision.

In Colesberg, 514 rebels were found 30 kilometres away from the border, almost 30% of the white male population. Shearing records that despite it being on the border, there was not the same level of support for rebellions, and less than a third of registered voters had joined. This was despite the fact that there were republican forces present in the district, too. Shearing argues that this was because Colesberg was a railway hub town, and that railway men were “remarkably loyal” as 1% of 233 voters employed by the railway companies had rebelled. This is difficult to test beyond these statistics, but in the town, the shopkeepers and civil servants were also loyalists and only 20% of voters rebelled. In smaller wards, there were some records of people rebelling out of sympathy to the Afrikaner cause, as well as widespread admiration for the leadership displayed by President Steyn in the OFS, especially amongst the Dutch in the area. Thus, Colesberg demonstrates how despite having a successful economy and booming transport industry, there were still relatively high recruitment levels along the lines of respect and sympathy for the Boer people.

These case studies demonstrate how there is no clear pattern that equates being close to the republican borders with higher mobilisation levels. This is mostly due to the migratory labour that flocked to the Kimberley mines. Meanwhile, the North-Eastern Cape was 21,721,229 square kilometres, but had a higher absolute number of rebels yet a smaller proportion of rebels per the white male population. Hence, proximity was not the only influential factor.

It is impossible to attribute one theory as the overarching reason for why the Cape Rebels had decided to fight for the Boers. Rather, each region had a unique environmental, economic and political position that informed their decisions. In some regions, there were stronger overarching factors than in other districts. In the south-eastern areas, it appears that the rebels were hedging their bets on the success of the Boer forces and choosing the winning side to be able to benefit after the war and keep their valuable land and properties. In the northern areas, land and businesses had been reduced to devastation, and people no longer had anything to lose in the war, except for in Vryburg where there appears to be some anomalies. Alternatively, Shearing and Swart suggest that the spirit of bravado and adventure, as well as the role of masculinity and brotherhood, amongst the Boer commandos had led many younger people in the Cape to join the rebellion. This was later interpreted as patriotism for the Afrikaner cause. However, Shearing also concludes that colonial rebellion was intertwined with the military fortunes of the republican troops, as has been discussed. Patterns and rates of mobilisation changed during the war, too, as the stakes grew higher for traitors to be caught.

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280 Ibid., p. 170.
Does close proximity to the Boer Republics explain the higher concentration of rebels? The districts that were closer did have larger populations of rebels, but this does not explain the causal mechanisms. Rather, it simply indicates that it is correlated. It could demonstrate that closer regions were forced to declare their allegiances sooner due to the immediate imposition of Boer commandos in their districts. However, this does not explain why areas further away also housed many rebels. Further contextualisation of the lower Cape will be discussed in Chapter 6.

MAP 0.8 SHOWING REBELS IN THE SOUTHERN CAPE

THE POWER OF PERSUASION

Not all rebels would have joined from the offset of the war. It is also important to consider the actions and events that took place during the war that would have also contributed towards motivations to join the Boer Republics. The pattern of mobilisation and the rate of mobilisation changed during the war, especially after key battles. As the war went on, the Boer cause may have become more appealing, or the actions of the British, especially their policies, may have eroded the trust of those already veering off the fence into the hands of the Boer forces. The districts with the highest absolute number of rebels were indeed closest to the border with the Orange Free State. Aliwal North had the most absolute rebels, 1,268 (54.4% of the white male population). Barkly West followed with 1,255 (73.7%), and Albert had 1,048 rebels (25.6%).

Calculations use the Rebel Record and statistical registers.
Barkly West was caught in the crossfires in the siege of Kimberley. Because Kimberley was a valuable mining town, the Boer commandos had acted swiftly in wanting to capture it as soon as the war was officially declared. To be successful, they needed to establish a base close enough to Kimberley where strategies and resources could be planned. Just outside of the town of Barkly West, a town was created “as though it was a branch of the Boer republic”. Residents were herded into the mines for shelter against the military attacks. As criticism for the British policies during the war mounted, relief was necessary in Kimberley, Ladismith and Mafeking. De la Rey, a formidable and highly praised Boer commando leader, was based at the Kimberley siege and made relief of the town difficult. Through De la Rey’s leadership, the British forces were continually rattled, and high casualties were experienced in this area. The successful track record of the Boer commandos in Kimberley had been influential in encouraging several colonists to switch to the winning side, more so than simply being closer to the border.

The ability of an incumbent government to sway allegiances is crucial to the outcome of the conflict. In this case, the Boer Republics had been able to latch onto grievances and connect with the frontier communities and Cape Afrikaners’ values and identity. Kalyvas explains how access to rural communities where the conflict plays out by outsiders is contingent on demonstrable political allegiance to the incumbent regime or the insurgent organisation in control, calling these “stints in


283 Now ‘Mahikeng’.
the bush” means of propaganda for their sponsors, resulting in most observers of wars to be clustered in cities, rather than in the directly affected regions.²⁸⁴ By being able to connect and sway rebel mobilisation, it meant that these Boer commandos were not regarded as outsiders, but as allies. There were definitive battles played out on the doorstep of the towns of Kimberley and Barkly West, making them privy to the strength, charisma and ideologies of the Boer forces, and this is evident in the higher concentration of rebels in these areas. The Cape Afrikaners were encouraged to join arms with their allies in the republics, forsaking the British. Although legal threats were made against acts of treason by the British authorities, the charisma and successes of the Boer commandos may have been convincing enough. Alternatively, being close to the border, Aliwal North was an ideal location for many Boer families being sent to concentration camps. The camps may have convinced men to rebel, not just because of the conditions being infuriating but because it meant that many men were freed up in the neighbouring vicinity to join commandos without the guilt of forsaking their families. Finally, the Boer manifesto of independence from the British may have sounded more appealing once the bravado and honourable actions of the Boer commandos had been observed personally.

CONCLUSION

The frontier regions experienced rapid and fundamental changes in the late nineteenth century, which contributed towards the motivations for rebellion. These regions had developed a distinct character and purpose. Their independence and self-sustaining communities meant that they had evaded the broader control of the British and developed in a different manner to districts closer to the urban centres. Their backgrounds of conflict and independence meant that a distinct group of people were housed in these areas, known for being wilder and less amenable. However, these frontier regions saw rapid development during the mineral revolution, which had upturned life as they knew it and brought its own set of issues. Wealth, power, trade and labour were all impacted, and racial tensions were again exacerbated. These shifts had meant that the entire culture of these communities was forced to change, and that this had played a role in motivating some to seek out alternative options.

This chapter also analysed the sway of proximity to the republican borders and showed how distance did not have a standardised pattern for influencing mobilisation. Rather, many internal factors within districts close to the borders affected mobilisation levels, and other areas further away were also capable of summoning high concentrations of rebels. Moreover, the frontier regions became key political and economic players, necessitating special interests and protection of their assets. During the war, these regions were a key territory in contest, and it was during the war that many Cape

²⁸⁴ S. Kalyvas. The Logic of Violence in Civil War. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), [eReader version], ch. 2: Pathologies, sec. 2.4: Urban Bias.
colonists saw the appeal, charisma and successes of Boer commando leaders. The effect of charismatic leadership will be evaluated further below.
CHAPTER 6 CHARISMATIC LEADERSHIP & IDEOLOGY

INTRODUCTION

In the following chapter, the hypothesis that charismatic leadership and ideology mobilised the Cape Rebels will be analysed and compared with the conclusions made in the historical literature. Leadership is a strong motivator for engagement and mobilisation levels. Just as political campaigns are important to win votes, especially in swing districts, personal interaction with leaders also influences the mobilisation strength of groups for a cause. Leadership and the political campaigns of the Boer Republics would have been instrumental in winning support from Cape Afrikaners. Another explanation for the Cape Rebels choosing to defend the Boer Republics was sympathy for the Afrikaner cause and support for their independence. In later examinations of the rebels, they have been praised as true supporters of Afrikaner nationalism and heroes in the war against the British. However, in the pre-war context, this seems anachronistic.

This chapter will examine the influence of political ideologies in conjunction with charismatic leadership and prolific government officials in specific districts. This chapter will also expand on theories pertaining to nationalism, national identity and loyalty to demonstrate how Afrikaner nationality fluctuated in its various states, and what this meant for Afrikaner identity and loyalty. It will also conceptualise how they interacted with the state, the church and volk, and what this meant for white people living in the Cape Colony – British and Afrikaner. This will provide a political overview of the pre-war context and show how the influence of inspirational, honourable leaders had encouraged the growth of rebellion in the Cape. In particular, this chapter will evaluate the impacts of the Jameson Raid, the Schreiner ministry, the Bond government and the movements of prolific Boer generals through the Cape. The charisma of Jan Smuts will be assessed to determine whether it was this Cape-born Boer leader and his statesmanship that had influenced so many rebels to join. Lastly, the question of a non-racial franchise will be assessed to determine whether rebels chose to fight in support of suppressing the franchise revisions.

CHARISMATIC LEADERSHIP

Charismatic leadership has the potential to radically shift outcomes and ideas, making it a formidable opponent or asset. For the Boer Republics, this was an essential ingredient in the recipe of their successful mobilisation of Cape Rebels. In his chapter regarding theories of charismatic leadership, Tucker shows how some scholars were intrigued by the power or potential of charisma as a tool for analysing certain historical leadership situations and the present, while others were unconvinced by the argument and doubted whether the idea of charismatic leadership had much influence in political
Tucker addresses how one of the initial determinants of charismatic response is situational, where being in a state of acute distress predisposes people to perceive leaders as extraordinarily qualified and to follow individuals offering salvation. Kirkpatrick and Locke studied the “direct and indirect effects of three core charismatic leadership components on performance and attitudes” and found that a leader’s vision was crucial to motivating followers, which was more strongly related to attitude than any other leadership component. Ultimately, charismatic and transformational leadership was founded on communicating a vision or goal, implementing it, and demonstrating a charismatic communication style to positively influence follower outcomes. The agenda of commando leaders was attractive to rebels, while their leadership style and respect were important in swaying mobilisation. Vision had positively affected the congruence between leader’s and participants’ beliefs and values, their trust in the leader and whether they were intellectually stimulated and inspired by the leader. Charismatic communication style appeared inconsequential on its effect on performance and had little effect on attitude, suggesting that content was more important than style. This was not the case with politicians who had to rely on popularity and style to get elected, achieving their popularity because of their style rather than their content.

Importantly, nationalism, national identity and loyalty also play a contributing role in which leader is followed, or how effectively their vision is comprehended. Smith explains how the concept of plural identity is important to understanding the Cape Afrikaner. He expands on this by outlining how most of the Cape Afrikaners had a “low voltage” sense of ethnic solidarity with their kinsfolk in the republics, except when the republics were threatened. For the most part, they were unsupportive of republican ideas, and their loyalty to the British monarchy and Empire was important. Tamarkin’s research investigates the role of the Cape Afrikaner in the historical trajectory leading up until the outbreak of the war. Tamarkin describes how the Cape was a white colony wherein the non-British


286 Ibid.


288 Ibid. p. 37.

289 Ibid. p. 46.


291 Ibid.
element was dominant. Furthermore, Smith estimates that the Cape Afrikaner outnumbered the English-speaking population 3:2.

Consequently, Tamarkin posits that the perceptions of the Cape Afrikaners played a significant role in determining the British government’s policies and thinking towards escalating to a crisis level. This shows how the identity, culture and attitudes of this group were crucial to how these events played out. Moreover, their loyalties and nationalism were crucial in determining whether the Cape could go to war, as the Cape Afrikaners would be a necessary form of support, or their disapproval could ensure its defeat. Tamarkin asserts that during this period, the “European spirit of ethno-cultural nationalism seemed to come to roost in South Africa, the spectre of a pan-Afrikaner republican nationalism beset the imperial official mind”. Smith describes how in this period, most Cape Afrikaners in the self-governing Cape Colony felt no contradiction between one’s Cape Afrikaner identity and their loyalty to the British Empire. The first time where fears about pan-Afrikaner republicanism escalated and would turn hostile to the empire was after the first Anglo-Boer War (1880–1881). Cape Afrikaners had shown solidarity towards those in the Boer Republics during this war. Importantly, the late nineteenth century was a period in which Afrikaner nationality was in flux. Tamarkin asserts that between the 1880s and when Rhodes was the prime minister, the British interests were safe, but this “political honeymoon” came to an end after the Jameson Raid in 1895.

However, these are not the only reasons for why combatants mobilise to fight. Rather, Kalyvas argues that primary group cohesion was crucial to mobilisation, more so than ideology, hate or fear. Part of this group cohesion was understanding that there are more personal reasons that mobilise individuals, such as peer pressure, respect for their comrades, admiration for leaders, concern for their reputation and wanting to contribute to the success of the group. These factors can all be linked to charismatic leadership, and can be used by leaders to direct and sway allegiance. In the 1880s and 1890s, the


297 S. Kalyvas. The Logic of Violence in Civil War. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), [eReader version], ch. 2: Pathologies, sec. 2.4: Urban Bias.
Cape Colony had experienced periods of uncertainty, adjustment and strife. In the late 1870s, the Cape developed a party system, where candidates had run independently beforehand. This had led to many unusual collaborations between various politicians. The Afrikaner Bond (the Bond) was created, with its proposal suggested in 1879, and its constitution introduced in 1883. The rise of Rhodes and his powerful connections became a prominent feature in the political scene, as well as his growing familiarity and friendship with J. H. Hofmeyr. The clash of imperialism and independence was seen in frequent contradiction between Rhodes and Hofmeyr, whose friendship eventually led to the Rhodes Ministry coalition in 1890. Lord Milner (Governor of the Cape and High Commissioner of South Africa) also played a significant role in the political climate, as a strong imperialist and radicalist. These political conditions were important in shaping the reactions and mobilisation of rebels.

REPERCUSSIONS OF THE JAMESON RAID & POLITICAL UNCERTAINTY

The Jameson Raid was a pivotal political event that many researchers cite for tipping the scales towards the outbreak of war, and consequently a mobilisation factor. The raid had caused anger and disillusionment with the Cape leadership, namely Rhodes. This was compounded by the overarching sense of uncertainty and distrust brewing in the political realm. Rhodes spoke outwardly of his desire to unify the various colonies of South Africa and expand British imperialism throughout Africa at large. This plan would be impossible with the resistance of the Boer Republics, who were unwilling to sacrifice their independence. This led Rhodes to promote the Jameson Raid to try force the Boer Republics to part with their independence, displace political power and unite South Africa.

Independence was a contentious issue between Rhodes and Kruger due to their differing opinions regarding the Boer Republics. Following the failed attempts to win over political clout in the Transvaal, the anti-republic imperial attitudes in the Cape increasingly hardened towards the mid-1890s. Kruger’s aim of keeping the Boer Republics independent and free of British influence was a direct obstacle to Rhodes’s political ambitions. However, Williams estimates that in 1895, approximately 80,000 Uitlanders were employed on the Rand, outnumbering the Boer workers by

four to one.\textsuperscript{301} This posed a political problem, and in 1890, President Kruger restricted participation in presidential and \textit{Volksraad} elections.\textsuperscript{302} This new franchise policy kept the \textit{Uitlander} group “starved of political rights” and was one of the cited reasons for the war.\textsuperscript{303} \textit{Uitlander} grievances were exaggerated in the press, adding noise to the already prevalent public unrest and disgruntlement and their cause created the ideal background for Rhodes’s revolt. Rhodes’s patience and self-control were overruled by his “turbulent and volcanic nature” when he realised that he still had much to achieve.\textsuperscript{304} This is part of the reason why such an aggressive action was feasible to him. After the railway question was barred again by Kruger, Rhodes was furious and sought out a means of putting the Transvaal into more progressive leadership. Instead, Rhodes would bring Kruger under his influence and power by force rather than diplomacy.

By 1895, Rhodes’s vested interest in the goldfields moved from simply financial as an investor to also political as he realised the wealth and power that the Transvaal was accruing. The taxes procured for the state had encouraged further progress and development, and the republic had been growing stronger in its opposition to British authority. Wanting to use the momentum of the uprising for his own good, Rhodes rallied support against Kruger and directed the policy outcomes to avoid there being a disadvantageous policy of separatism and isolationism from the Cape after the rebellion.\textsuperscript{305} Already in November 1895, Jameson and his forces had occupied the border of the Transvaal, ready to invade the state. Jameson was convinced that Johannesburg was “seething with rebellion and ripe for anything”.\textsuperscript{306} Keeping his ministry in ignorance of his plans, Rhodes organised an uprising and armed invasion under Jameson. Rhodes could not build enthusiasm for the uprising personally, but


\textsuperscript{306} Ibid., p. 272.
he did sneak arms into the city, arrange for outside support if a fight ensued and used his influence to neutralise Cape Afrikaner sympathies.

The rebellion failed miserably and had directly implicated Chamberlain and his high commissioner, as well as randlords and mine owners who wanted to replace Kruger. In 1896, a select committee of the Cape parliament established that Rhodes was complicit in the raid, seemingly tarnishing his political career in the Cape. After the raid, political alliances were quickly revised. The sense of danger and a common enemy brought the Transvaal Republic and the Orange Free State closer, creating a feeling of solidarity that made them a powerful factor in South African politics. In 1897, the Transvaal and OFS signed a new military defensive treaty that pledged mutual support for one another should there be any external threat to republican independence. The republics started to ban together after the raid due to their shared feeling of the Cape being a threat to their independence. The treaty also initiated an extensive and costly defence programme where war supplies and armaments were stocked up on, raising alarms to the Cape Colony. From 1896 to 1899, there was a political stalemate with no resolution of the emerging crises between the Cape and the republics. While no one wanted to risk starting a war, the Jameson Raid had been the point of no return.

The repercussions of the raid were not limited to the damaged prestige and reputations of Rhodes and the British, but had created a deepening sense of distrust and strained inter-state relations. Tamarkin remarks that Sir Gordon Sprigg, Premier of the Cape after the raid, had enjoyed “lukewarm, reluctant support of the Afrikaner Bond, the dominant Cape Party”. The republics treated the Cape Afrikaners with the same distaste as Rhodes and the Cape government, where all communications with Rhodes were believed to have corrupted them with evil and tainted their good manners. Merriman summarised as follows:

There [was] a renewal throughout South Africa of all the old suspicion and distrust that had been allayed by the gradual withdrawal of the Imperial Government from interference with South African internal

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310 Ibid., p. 298.
affairs, nothing could have been more ingeniously contrived, than the Raid by Dr. Jameson, and the plot that preceded, and led up to it, to throw all the internal affairs of South Africa into a confusion from which it will take a generation to recover. The situation is full of the elements of future danger.\footnote{Merriman Papers, No. 8, 1898. Notes on Present Political Situation in S. Africa, 22 Jan, et vide; Imperial Blue Book.}

This demonstrates the tension between the imperial and colonial government in the Cape, which offers insights into the growing sense of a national identity amongst the Cape Afrikaners, and the nationalism that had developed since Responsible Government had been granted in 1872. The Afrikaner identity had been in a state of flux, but this identity was nuanced and influenced by several sources, including their relationship with their elected colonial government. By betraying their electorate, the colonial government had abused the trust of the people and severely damaged their reputation and clout in the Cape. Further evidence of this is shown in how Smith describes Smuts’ reaction to the raid, and encapsulates general sentiments:

The Jameson Raid, which struck Smuts like a bolt from the blue on New Year’s Day 1896, brought an abrupt end to his hero-worship of Cecil Rhodes and marked a watershed not only in Smuts’s own life but, so he always believed, in the history of South Africa. ‘It was the disaster’, he later declared. ‘It inflamed the national psychology of the Boers, made racial trust impossible, and created the very mentality for the Boer War.’\footnote{I. Smith. “Jan Smuts and the South African War,” South African Historical Journal, (41), (1), p. 176; Smith quotes from Smuts correspondence with S. G. Millin in Selections from the Smuts Papers, vol.5, 1966, p. 521.}

The eviction of Rhodes and the withdrawal of his supporters had resulted in a divisive atmosphere in Cape politics between 1896 and 1898. The 1898 elections were regarded as political duels between the English- and Afrikaans-speaking factions. The Progressive Party took a more severe slant on the cause of militant British imperialism in the Cape, while the Bond evolved from a broadly based South African nationalist party to one that countered the spread of imperialism.\footnote{A. J. Charrington Smith. “General Elections in the Cape Colony, 1898-1908,” PhD diss., University of Cape Town, 1980, pp. 13-14.} The Bond broke all ties with Rhodes, revolted by his actions and feeling blindsided by him.\footnote{M. A. S. Grundlingh. “The Parliament of the Cape of Good Hope, with special reference to party politics, 1872-1910,” PhD diss., Stellenbosch University, 1945, p. 276.} Rhodes became the frontman of imperialism while President Kruger of the Transvaal became the embodiment of Afrikaner nationalism and independence. Independent politicians and centrists were “unable to resist the temptation to align themselves for or against Rhodes and by 1898 they had allied themselves with
one of the two main political parties”, mostly aligned with the Bond.\footnote{317} Moreover, the Bondsmen who did not follow Hofmeyr’s condemnation of Rhodes were described as the Rhodes-Bond and were loosely classified as progressive candidates. The blurred lines in politics created confusion, unsettled voters and added to the mistrust already evident. This confusion was capitalised on in these border districts for mobilising support, especially in regions closer to the republics.

Chamberlain had been rash in siding with Rhodes during the raid and pushed the Uitlander cause in the Cape as a campaign for civil liberty and political freedoms, forcing tough diplomatic pressure on the republics.\footnote{318} In 1897, Milner was posted in the Cape by Chamberlain to push British imperial agendas. Milner was “aloof, arrogant, and a self-proclaimed ‘British Race Patriot’”, contemptuous of republican claims and suspicious of the loyalty of Cape Afrikaners.\footnote{319} When Milner had first arrived, he had made an effort to woo Cape Afrikaners to regain their support. There were “enthusiastic demonstrations of loyalty” at the Queen’s Jubilee, and Milner had written to Chamberlain that the loyalty of Cape Afrikaners was much stronger than had been believed.\footnote{320} This is evident in Hofmeyr’s official address to the Queen, representing the Afrikaner Bond and stating that “We… wish to assure you humbly and respectfully our true loyalty to your throne, and we feel proud that in the great British Empire there are not more loyal subjects than those we represent”.\footnote{321}

War was still a possibility, and it was hoped that should the threat of war be convincing, the Transvaal would give in rather than fight back. Compromise became increasingly unlikely, thus making political reforms unlikely and war increasingly probable. One of the conditions for entertaining a possible war with the republics was that it “must conquer the moral assent of as large a proportion as possible of our own Dutch in South Africa”.\footnote{322} Milner was tough in his negotiations, with pleas for a respectful negotiation being ignored and by October 1899, they had reached the end of their toleration. However, Milner still described how “the Dutch in the Colony are thoroughly loyal, and that they cannot help feeling a great affection for those relatives, and would regard a war between Great Britain and the

\footnotetext{319}{Ibid.}
\footnotetext{320}{M. Tamarkin. “Milner, the Cape Afrikaners, and the outbreak of the South African war: From a point of return to a dead end,” The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History, (25), (3), 2008, p. 394.}
\footnotetext{321}{Zuid Afrikaan. 25/6/1887.}
\footnotetext{322}{M. Tamarkin. “Milner, the Cape Afrikaners, and the outbreak of the South African war: From a point of return to a dead end,” The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History, (25), (3), 2008, p. 395.}
Transvaal as the worst of calamities”. Yet the negotiations had been unproductive and had come to a stalemate. Milner concluded that the solution to Britain’s problem in South Africa was to take up arms.

The political situation was uneasy and precarious before the 1898 elections. In 1898, Rose Innes, leader of the liberal faction, denounced Rhodes for causing disharmony between the English- and Afrikaans-speaking groups in the Cape and advised him to quit politics in the Cape and rather focus his efforts on Rhodesia. However, the Progressive Party housed league imperialists, Rhodes-Bondsmen and liberal supporters, making the policies incohesive. Thus, Rhodes was elected as the leader of the Progressive Party in the elections for 1898 and contributed towards party funds and financed other candidates’ campaigns, too. There was speculation at the time that the Afrikaner Bond had received funding from the Transvaal and the German Empire in secret. Although these allegations were unfounded, they spurred further distrust and political uncertainty at a crucial political period. The exact party affiliations for several candidates were difficult to ascertain in the 1898 legislative council election, with the Progressive Party winning fourteen seats, and the Bond winning nine, although the figures quoted were twelve and eleven seats. Election results were classified, published and reclassified in Ons Land and The Cape Times, making these anomalies confusing and creating a stir in public opinion. The Progressive Party won majority seats and entrenched themselves as a powerful political force. In the assembly general election, the Bond–Independent alliance won forty seats and the Progressive Party won thirty-eight, making the win marginal. The Bond–Independent alliance held a precarious two-seat majority in parliamentary divisions. This left many questioning the reliability of politicians and seeking solid leadership.

Both political parties remained in a state of flux during the first quarter of 1898, with memberships under question. The legislative council’s elections had caused polarisation in public opinion, with the parties using the election to test their relative strengths in preparation for the house of assembly election taking place in 1899. Additionally, Sprigg had increased political agitation by publishing a bill wanting to increase the number of seats in the house of assembly, siding with the minority, the Progressive stance of adding eighteen seats with three going to urban centres. This infuriated the

326 Ibid., p. 22.
327 Ibid., p. 18.
Bond, who were the majority and had voted for only fifteen seats to curb there being too much power for voters in larger towns.\textsuperscript{328} The bill did not reach the statute book due to Schreiner moving for a motion of no confidence in the Sprigg government, but political cleavages had only deepened. Before Sprigg resigned, he had moved a second redistribution bill, leaving the new Schreiner government with the issue of solving the redistribution controversy in a short amount of time. Not wanting to raise concerns within its first three weeks of office, Schreiner left this until 31 October 1898. These events set the scene for a precarious political year in 1899. The new government of W.P. Schreiner was in a vulnerable position, having obtained only a two-seat majority, and the opposition controlled the legislative council. Furthermore, numerous by-elections occurred with many members being unseated. Thus, the Schreiner ministry’s fate was still in the balance for the first few months of 1899, with no hope of election fever settling down until after the by-election in June 1899.\textsuperscript{329} This precarity paints a striking picture of the political uncertainty mere months before the outbreak of war. With his leadership still under fire, Schreiner’s authority had yet to be exercised fully in the Cape.

THE BOND GOVERNMENT IN THE CAPE COLONY

The Afrikaner Bond was the older of the two political parties that operated in the Cape Colony prior to union.\textsuperscript{330} Until 1897, the Afrikaner Bond was the only coherent political party in the Cape Colony, and all non-Bond members of parliament were considered “independents”.\textsuperscript{331} From 1884, it became the “king maker” in Cape politics. Thus, the power and influence of the Bond party was apparent and widespread, especially once its policies dedicated to protecting Afrikaner interests gained momentum. Tamarkin asserts that the Afrikaner Bond reflected the politically conscious Cape Afrikaner’s sentiments and ideological and political orientation.\textsuperscript{332}

After their alliance with Rhodes had been broken off after the Jameson Raid, the Bond was left feeling disillusioned. One of the most dominant factors in the affairs of South Africa in 1896 had been the feeling of “enormous revulsion” that events had brought about among Afrikaners.\textsuperscript{333} There was huge


\textsuperscript{329} Ibid., p. 18.

\textsuperscript{330} Ibid., p. 5.

\textsuperscript{331} Ibid., p. 6.


offence that they had been led astray by a man that they had grown to trust and support, even against the Cape Afrikaners. After the raid, the mistrust of the Cape Colony by the republics was rehabilitated. Moreover, the raid had united all Afrikaners throughout South Africa in favour of Kruger and his policies:

[The raid] has united all sections of the Dutch speaking community in determined opposition to what they consider, with some justice as a treacherous plot aimed at their nationality and undertaken with the object of stamping out their existence as a separate factor in South Africa. It has completely and absolutely rehabilitated President Kruger who now occupies without dispute the leading position in South Africa… [it was] shown that he was fully justified in his suspicion of British aims and British policy. His refusal of political rights and privileges to men who stand convicted of treacherously plotting to destroy the independence of the state under the spacious plea of reform will certainly meet the approval of his Volksraad.334

This quote captures the shift in the political zeitgeist and encapsulates the transition to a less tolerant and trusting Cape Colony. When combined with the ecological, economic and social evidence presented, the raid was evidently the point of no return. There were renewed efforts to rally support and new loyalties, and Kruger became recognised as a redeemed and respected leader. The raid had ended all cooperation between the European races in South Africa, which had been the objective of all political endeavours. Grundlingh describes how racialism burst forth again, revived more intensely, and all the anger, suspicion and bitterness resurfaced.335 The Afrikaners had believed that they could trust Rhodes, and after the raid, they felt that if they could not trust him, then no Englishman could be trusted. Rather, they felt that there were “many enemies in sheep’s clothing” among them, and the only way to protect themselves was to trust their own race.336 Rhodes’ actions had proven that British imperialism and the policies of the colonial government could not be trusted, and that Kruger had been justified in his rejection of political reforms for Uitlanders. Many of the Englishmen who had been opponents of the Bond switched sides after the raid. While many did not become official members, they agreed with their policies and sought a party that would embrace them and the Bond.337 Following the raid, Hofmeyr had made an address to the republican diaspora and Cape Afrikaner communities saying that:

336 Ons Land. 9/1/96 at 16/3/97.
Connected with the Boers of the Transvaal by the ties of descent, language, religion, and - many of us - of intermarriage and friendship, we feel that their wrongs are our wrongs, and services rendered to them are services rendered to us.\textsuperscript{338}

This demonstrates that the distinction between the ethnic core and diaspora of Afrikaners was diminishing after the raid, further encouraging sympathies and sentiments of solidarity with the republics and simultaneously to loyalty to Britain. Importantly, this study shows that the political ambitions of the Bond were still to unite the white groups of South Africa, even after the raid, and showed distinct loyalty to the British. This evidence challenges the assertion that all sections of the Dutch community had been united, but it did result in various branches of the Bond encouraging passive resistance, which is touched on later in this chapter.

Smuts had written columns in \textit{Ons Land} newspaper in March 1896, calling for Afrikaner rapprochement, and demonstrating how Rhodes had been the “dividing wall between Colonial Afrikaners and their brothers in the Republics”, and that wall had now disappeared after the raid.\textsuperscript{339} Smuts also spoke of how Afrikanerdom had awakened with new consciousness after the raid, and the Bond programme of self-reliance and national independence was proposed once more. Smuts encouraged that Afrikanerdom be extended beyond state borders, and that brotherhood, statesmanship and unity be employed. This supports the evidence offered in the above quote for how efforts to unite the Dutch community had been undertaken, and that this was possible through the revelatory consequences of the raid and the rehabilitation of the republican leadership.

In 1898, the Afrikaner Bond party had won the house of assembly election through an alliance between the Bond and numerous independent politicians, under the leadership of W. P. Schreiner. Although there had been no Afrikaner Bond ministry formed before 1898, no prime minister could afford to offend the Bond as no ministry would survive for long without its support.\textsuperscript{340} This alliance evolved into the South African Party, while the Afrikaner Bond also existed simultaneously as an independent political entity.\textsuperscript{341}

Despite its Afrikaner roots, the Bond supported the English ministry of Rhodes without seeking office itself. The co-operation of the Bond with Rhodes was one of close allyship and compromise. Rhodes


\textsuperscript{339} \textit{Ons Land}. 12/3/96.


\textsuperscript{341} \textit{Ibid.}, p. 2.
realised that the Cape Afrikaners were a key electorate in the colony, and that their organisation, the Bond, was the most powerful political party. Rhodes also won over the favour of Cape Afrikaners through supporting key interest policies. Many of these concessions had built trust between Rhodes and the Afrikaner sector and allowed for the reconciliation of racial differences between English- and Afrikaans-speaking people. Many members of the Bond had been surprised by the commonalities shared with Rhodes that even after the scandal of the Jameson Raid, many of the Bond who had been shocked by his involvement remembered him for his services to the agricultural sector. Realising that the Bond’s support for his premiership would be withdrawn once his involvement in the Jameson Raid was uncovered, Rhodes opted to resign on 7 January 1896, a few days after the raid had failed.

Charrington Smith describes how the Jameson Raid had created a deep distrust between Afrikaans- and English-speakers in the Cape, and throughout southern Africa. This had caused the two groups to divide into two political camps. The Afrikaner Bond made their interests clear by affirming that they would not be granting further support to Rhodes. However, the English electorate did not have a political party through which to articulate their views and policies, necessitating that a political organisation be formalised that would give voice to their political principles and imperialism. The South African League was formed and grew rapidly in support. The league became an influential source of political pressure but was described to have lacked the coherence of a political party, eventually becoming the Progressive Party. Additionally, the South African League was later accused by Ons Land, the mouthpiece of the Bond, of having instigated racial hatred after the raid, not the Afrikaner Bond. These insights into party politics after the raid show the dominance and power of the Bond, and also how unsettled many people were, including politicians. Without a clear majority, people questioned whether their concerns would be comprehensively handled or whether

345 Ibid., p. 8.
346 Ibid., p. 9.
347 Ibid.
348 Ibid., p. 9.
they should look for that representation elsewhere. This was one of the reasons people mobilised for the republics.

Once the war was looming, public opinions clashed over who to blame, and opinions were divided on the competing versions of what happened, how things played out and why. One of the opinions was that the Afrikaner Bond was to blame for the outbreak of war. Smith notes that between the raid and the outbreak of war, political leaders had focused their efforts on trying to avert a war, encouraging Kruger to make concessions. Smith explains that between 1896 and 1899, according to this analysis, the Afrikaner Bond were seen as the sheep hiding the wolf of Milner.\footnote{350}{I. Smith. “Jan Smuts and the South African War,” \textit{South African Historical Journal}, (41), (1), p. 177.}

Smith goes on to add that prior to the raid, the Cape Afrikaners were the “most loyal and devoted subjects of the empire”. Smuts had switched allegiance to the Transvaal after the raid, moving closer to Afrikaner Nationalism, and declaring that the Transvaal had become the inheritance of young South Africa.\footnote{351}{Ibid.} However, the Bond continued to adhere to its political aspirations of loyalty to Britain, and the unity of a non-ethnic white nation. Tamarkin states that “the expressions of loyalty to crown and empire were so abundant, universal and convincing that only political blindness and prejudice could account for the accusations of disloyalty levelled against Bondsmen.\footnote{352}{M. Tamarkin. “Nationalism or ‘tribalism’: the evolution of Cape Afrikaner ethnic consciousness in the late nineteenth century,” \textit{Nations and Nationalism}, (1), (2), 1995, p. 234.} These extreme stances taken after the raid demonstrate the extent to which South Africa had reached a turning point in its trajectory, and that the blinders were now off regarding this new, more aggressive form of British Imperialism which had been outed by the raid.

In 1901, petitions were collected for the suspension of the constitution, stating that the Bond had too much power and had been active in training “tens of thousands of so-called burgher sedition-mongers and rebels who have tried to overthrow British influence in South Africa”\footnote{353}{H.A. Shearing. “The Cape Rebel of the South African War, 1899-1902,” \textit{PhD diss.}, \textit{Stellenbosch University}, 2004, p. 232; CAR, PMO 83, No. 86, Letter forwarded from DAAG Cape Colonial District, January 1902.}. The sudden suspicion of the Afrikaner Bond was unusual, given its almost twenty-year history of being a moderate alliance and middle party in Cape politics. Rather, it was a training ground in politics for the Afrikaans community, and its constitution spoke of wanting to create an organisation in which “all Afrikaners can feel at home, and work together for the good of a united South Africa […] in which all who
recognise Africa as their fatherland can live together and work as brothers of a single house”.\textsuperscript{354} Smith describes the misrepresentation and mistaken assertions of the Bond as follows:

It has recently been argued that although the Afrikaner Bond did become more ethnic in its composition after the Jameson Raid, this shift was chiefly because of the departure of its English-speaking members. The main body of the Bond, under Hofmeyr’s leadership, remained true to its broad, inclusive tradition and its commitment to the amalgamation of the two white populations. Many within the Bond remained deeply critical of ‘Krugerism’; most remained loyal to the British imperial connection - despite Milner’s mistaken assertions to the contrary; practically all Cape Afrikaners dreaded a war between Britain and the Transvaal.\textsuperscript{355}

This demonstrates the extent of scepticism and suspicion evident during this period, and the need to find other political scapegoats.

This misrepresentation can also be attributed as the fallout of leadership clashes. There were clashes within the Bond regarding ideals and leadership. It had begun as an anti-British organisation proposed by Reverend S. J. du Toit. He released a pamphlet of anti-British hate speech, urging Afrikaners to boycott British business, not sell their land to the British, and to start their own banks and make their own war materials. This was only translated into English in April 1900, alongside Slater’s journal of “De Transvaalse Oorlog”, with the objective of proving beyond doubt how deep-laid and well planned the plotting of the Afrikaner party had been to overthrow British supremacy in South Africa. Moreover, Schreiner’s own brother wrote of how the Afrikaner Bond “has been most active and most pernicious in its efforts and inference and existence because of the energy of evil. The war was the result of the influence of the Bond”.\textsuperscript{356} However, the Bond had proven its loyalties as it had selected Schreiner as prime minister, an English-speaker with German roots who was loyal to empire and whose government comprised mostly English-speakers and not Bond members.\textsuperscript{357} In spite of their displays of loyalty, these theories spread throughout the Cape, and by 1900, the suspicions regarding the Bond had spread rapidly amongst the military and the loyalists. Many believed that the Bond was involved in republican invasion strategies. They began to be referred to as the pan-Afrikaner.


conspiracy, which Hofmeyr dismissed as a myth, but the damage had been done. Hofmeyr had no seat in parliament but was a supporter of Schreiner. It is easy to blame him for his failure to speak of the dangers of an armed insurrection to the Bondsmen living in the frontiers with the republics, especially with Bondsmen appealing to him for assistance. However, there were tensions within the ministry and between Hofmeyr. Meetings of the Bond had been called, asking that politicians return to their respective districts and keep them true to their alliances. Perceptions of the Bond and their intentions had started to shift and they were increasingly viewed as anti-British and siding with the republics, making people distrustful of the Schreiner ministry’s intentions.

However, trouble was brewing in Griqualand West, with the mines being under threat. There were indications that members of the Bond had been encouraged to join the republican forces in Griqualand West. Vryburg had sent a delegation to De la Rey, stating that they would join the commandos if their mortgages were remitted after the war, hoping for the success of the republicans. In Kuruman, it was also the Bond who had convinced people to join the republican forces. All stances of remaining neutral were thrown out, and all who opposed were thrown out and accused of being Rhodesmen. North of the Orange River, there was strong support for the Bond, and their voting strength correlated with the rebel activities. In Barkly West, 1,612 people voted for the Bond in 1898, and 2,126 voters and non-voters appeared in the final rebel tally. In Kimberley, 174 voters translated into 368 rebels. The Bond was accused of inciting rebellion and the Dutch Reformed Church was also accused of doing nothing to prevent rebellion and of using their influence to assist the republican forces. South of the river, the most prominent Bond branch was in Burghersdorp where the Bond was founded. Meetings were held to discuss the Transvaal question, and they passed resolutions that the imperial government was “in danger of taking unjust and unrighteous actions against the Transvaal Republic”. However, support of the Boer Republics by Bondsmen was strong only in districts closest to the borders and along the routes of Free State commandos during the first invasion, and this support was not universal. Instead, it was remarked that the Bond had lamented the impact that the

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359 Ibid., p. 235.
360 Ibid., p. 236.
361 Ibid.
362 Cape Argus, 9 June 1899.
raid had on their goal of uniting the two white races in South Africa, calling for the eradication of racial hatred, contempt, agitation and suspicions.\textsuperscript{363}

Once an inquiry was opened into the Bond after the war, it was determined that it was the Bond’s name that had mostly been used as a propaganda tool by the Boer Republics. They had been accused of receiving funds from foreign sources. Additionally, a conspiracy that they were to revoke British rule ran amok, and they were accused of assisting with the invasion of the British territory and encouraging rebellion. The breaking point was the political uncertainty and tension caused by the dissolution of the Bond government. Moreover, the Bond had very little support from the Dutch Reformed Church prior to the raid, which was an essential social institution of the Cape Afrikaners and influence on thoughts and attitudes. It was only after the raid that the DRC became less hostile to the Bond, illustrating how the Bond was misconstrued as a political agitator. Shearing questions whether one of the stronger reasons for people to mobilise for the Boer Republics was due to the Bond government deserting their voters in the border districts.\textsuperscript{364} The Bond had been the political mouthpiece of the Cape Afrikaners since its inception, and thus suffered a political blow with the outbreak of the war. Its organisation was disjointed and funds had dwindled.\textsuperscript{365} However, it regained support after the war due to it being the only organisation that was able to protect the rights and interests of the Afrikaner after the war.\textsuperscript{366}

\textbf{MISSING THE MARK IN THE SCHREINER MINISTRY}

Following the chaos of the Jameson Raid, Rhodes was forced to resign as prime minister of the Cape Colony. Between 1896 and 1898, Sir Gordon Sprigg was elected as prime minister, followed by William Schreiner in 1898 to 1900. Schreiner’s denialism and ineffectiveness had angered residents in the Cape Colony, contributing to why some opted to rebel. This section demonstrates the political uncertainty created after the Jameson Raid, with political parties being upset, new alliances being formed and insecure memberships. Due to the turbulence of the 1898 and 1899 elections, the dominance of Schreiner’s ministry was in question well into June 1899, a mere five months prior to the war. For any ministry, this is a short amount of time to solidify alliances and instil trust.


\textsuperscript{366} \textit{Ibid.}
Schreiner’s inaction in several incidences had not eased the tensions or division in public opinion. Public opinion spoke of how Schreiner had mishandled political tensions, without restoring political trust, and had not taken threats of war with the Boer Republics seriously.

Shearing describes Schreiner as having been convinced that the Transvaal cause was just, and blocked Milner’s preparations for war. He did so by delaying military action and by holding up the acquisition of arms. 367 He was convinced that if the Cape ministry remained neutral in the case of war, the frontier farmers would not rebel against the Cape and join the Boer forces. 368 At a meeting in Dordrecht, Merriman spoke of how the Afrikaner Bond was the chief supporter of the ministry, and that as the government in power, they relied on the Bond for support. Expecting that the Bond farmers would be the last to rebel, Merriman was not concerned for their allegiance.

Schreiner, however, stated that he did not expect an attack on the Cape Colony by the Transvaal, nor a native uprising. Despite his sentiments, there was public outcry when large shipments of arms and ammunition were passing through the ports and railways to the Boer Republics. With the speed of the events playing out, both in parliament and in the public, there was no one publicly opposed to Schreiner at the time except for Spri gg and Col. Harris of Griqualand West who were concerned about Kimberley falling into the hands of the republics due to their armaments being superior to local weapons, but this was not acted upon. 369

Quickly, panic was starting to set in months before the war. As the Boer Republics were stocking up on food, supplies and weapons, districts in the Cape were pleading for defence assistance, which Schreiner was unwilling to comply with. The mayor of Kimberley appealed to Schreiner in June asking that supplies and defence weapons be sent to Griqualand West, insisting it would calm local unrest. Schreiner refused, dismissing their fears of war as “groundless”. Suspicions grew that the Boer forces were going to invade soon, as detachments were stationed near bridges in the Vaal. Schreiner clung to his policy of detachment and appeasement, angering many with his apathy and denialism. In Kimberley, he was accused of favouring republican forces.


Pakenham argues that how the war played out was largely due to the British not taking the Boer threats seriously.\textsuperscript{370} Harris turned to Milner for assistance and convinced him of the political disaster that would unfold should the diamond industry fall under Boer control. The Boer Republics had been preparing for several weeks by this stage. Schreiner eventually permitted those bridges be guarded but forbade any civil servant from volunteering. The districts that did receive assistance were Mafeking, Bechuanaland and Vryburg, although just days before the war. Shearing notes how no defence plans were made for Douglas, Campbell, Potmasburg, Griquastad or Kuruman. Rather, they were offered proclamations urging them to stay loyal.\textsuperscript{371} As the Boer Republics were armed and ready, public meetings were held in Vryburg, Queenstown, Aliwal North, Herschel and Modderrivier where they appealed for help, which the government refused. The political situation soured as increasingly people felt abandoned by their government and left to defend themselves against the looming threat of war.

With the Anglo–Boer diplomacy deteriorating after the disaster of the Jameson Raid and Milner’s agitations with the republics, the prospect of war was increasingly inevitable. Milner believed that should there be war, it would be quick and easy to win once reinforcements from Britain arrived. Milner was not a military man, without experience of wars, and was suspicious of Afrikaners.\textsuperscript{372} He had towed a hard line and was uncompromising in his demands for imperial authority over the Boer Republics. There was a sense of ignorance in the ministry, oblivious to the reality playing out on the borders, and not aware that there were too few British forces in the country who would not be effective in defending the Cape. Moreover, if the Cape mounted riflemen were not deployed before the war broke out officially, the Boer forces would easily be able to invade and nothing would stop their efforts of commandeering and recruiting Cape Afrikaners, their prime targets.\textsuperscript{373} By September 1899, the war office despatched 10,000 troops to reinforce Natal and the Cape, in addition to a warning to the Orange Free State to remain neutral in the hostilities rather than act on the defence treaty. However, this treaty was more than defence, but ideologically based, too. Both Boer republics began to mobilise forces at the beginning of October, ready for a swift offensive strategy where they would


\textsuperscript{371} Ibid.


have advantage over the smaller enemy forces. This was worrying to many in the frontier districts of the Cape, with not enough reinforcements present and no support from the government.

Kruger and Steyn presented an ultimatum to London, demanding that British forces back down and consent to the neutral arbitration of their political differences and avoid a war. The British, however, were “long irritated at having to negotiate with what it saw as a primitive state run by Dutch farmers”, and this ultimatum was the breaking point. On 10 October, republican terms were rejected, and the Boer Republics declared war the following day. Chamberlain and Milner were convinced of British victory and did not foresee the long and costly war that their less sophisticated enemies would draw out.

It was only on 7 October 1899 that the imperial authorities took control of the colonial forces. Schreiner wanted to stop the Cape forces from defending the frontiers. Instead, the colonial forces had to wait until a senior British officer, General Buller, superseded Schreiner’s authority. Shearing writes how Schreiner was “mesmerised into a feeling of false security” and that even Buller complained that “Schreiner just stood and did nothing, his government folded its arms and allowed rebellion to walk unchecked”. Thus, due to Schreiner’s inaction, the Cape’s borders with the republics became an open frontier that was controlled by the republicans, except for Mafeking and Kimberley due to their additional assistance from Milner and Baden Powell. The borders were left purposefully undefended by the ministry, and Schreiner disregarded the rebellion of the Cape Afrikaners during the invasion. One article describes how Aliwal North’s “excuse for rebellion” was because the government had not proteted them, leaving them to be annexed. Once annexed, they became burghers of the Free State and were obliged to fight rather than be shot by the enemy. Schreiner’s inaction and denialism encouraged people in the Cape to side with the republics as they were convinced that they would be the victors, but also because his inaction forced their hands.

375 Ibid.
379 The Journal, Graham’s Town, 18 November 1899.
During the war, the Schreiner ministry collapsed and was succeeded by Sprigg. With this, the policy of militant imperialism was “triumphant”\(^\text{380}\). However, below the surface, South African nationalism was building and would eventually replace imperialism as the dominant ideology after the war. During the first phase of the war, the Boer Republics were quick to invade the Cape Colony after their ultimatum had expired. During their invasion, Boer forces had virtually annexed the districts where they held power. Most of the Cape Afrikaners in these regions had sympathy for the Boer cause, and many joined as rebels, some willing while others were commandeered.\(^\text{381}\) A strong Boer offensive had been the crux of Smuts’ plan, as he had believed that many Cape Afrikaners would flock to join the republican armies.\(^\text{382}\) However, once the British forces retaliated, many of the Cape Rebels surrendered or were captured by British troops. This created further issues for Schreiner’s ministry as most of the rebels were supporters of the Bond–Independent alliance, endangering Schreiner’s political power.

After consultation, Schreiner decided that the consequence for rebellion should be disenfranchisement for life, unless a free pardon was given, thus risking his authority.\(^\text{383}\) Furthermore, Joseph Chamberlain indicated that the British imperial government would not allow for more lenient penalties to be granted for rebels, even for rebels who were commandeered. Harsher penalties were to be implemented for rebels who had rebelled willingly and were ringleaders or looters, or who perpetrated atrocities during the war (Class 1). Schreiner limited the penalty for rank-and-file rebels to five years of disenfranchisement regardless of Chamberlain’s decision (Class 2), but when the cabinet voted on Schreiner’s policy, it was rejected.\(^\text{384}\) Schreiner resigned as prime minister after the proposal was rejected on 13 June 1900. A mere five days after his resignation, Sprigg was in power and able to disenfranchise rebels. Continuous political rifts and mishandling crises had played an influential role in many rebels mobilising, despite the consequences. Schreiner’s ministry was blamed for agitating people and leaving the colony severely unprepared for the war, especially in regions near the borders where more people were mobilising.

THE JAN SMUTS EFFECT


\(^{381}\) *The Journal, Graham’s Town*, 18 November 1899.


The influence of Jan Christiaan Smuts could be regarded as one factor contributing to rebel mobilisation in the Cape. When researching the pre-war conditions, Smuts is often regarded as an important figure between the Cape Colony and Boer Republics, both before and after the war in extensive sources on the war. In research on the Cape Rebels, there were not many suggestions for why they had mobilised. However, studying this period demonstrated that certain figures were instrumental in shifts in events and their outcomes. Smuts was repeatedly one of these influential figures, and his invasion of the Cape Colony during the second phase of the war was an interesting anomaly and channel of further enquiry, and the basis for this theory.

Smuts was a rising star in Cape politics prior to the South African War. Coming from an Afrikaner home in the Cape, Smuts was only introduced to English when studying and through his time in Cambridge. His father was a member of the Afrikaner Bond, which Smuts then also joined. Smith describes how Smuts’s political views developed out of the broad, inclusive tradition within the Afrikaner Bond, and from this upbringing, Smuts acquired his lifelong goal of amalgamating Afrikaners and English-speakers in South Africa into one white political community or nation. This was important later during the war. At the request of Hofmeyr, Smuts met with Rhodes and quickly became a prominent figure in the ministry and represented Rhodes at delegations. Smuts had fiercely defended Rhodes’s policies and ideals, believing in his notions of creating a united South Africa. When the Jameson Raid occurred, Smuts was deeply angered and felt betrayed by Rhodes’s role. This caused Smuts to recede from Cape public life and find a position elsewhere, eventually moving to Pretoria where he won over the attention of Kruger. He developed great sympathy and reverence for Kruger and admired his dreams for the republic, and in 1898, Kruger fired the state attorney of the Transvaal and hired Smuts in their place. Smith describes Smuts as a prominent imperial figure, tracing his complexities and character:

A Cape Afrikaner, ‘without a drop of English blood in his veins’, he fought as a Boer general in the South African War against British imperialism and everything for which he felt it then stood. Thereafter, he played a leading part in creating a South African Union which was Boer-led and Boer-dominated but firmly anchored within the British Empire.

Smuts’s involvement and contribution “ran like a thread through the Boer War” where he played a significant role in the events leading up to its outbreak, in its conduct and events, and in its peace negotiations. When rumours of war started, Smuts represented the Transvaal delegation in the

386 Ibid., p. 173.
Bloemfontein conference, under the leadership of Kruger. Smuts fervently combatted the efforts of Milner to go to war and suggested concessions and compromises between the Cape and the Transvaal. Milner had met his match with Smuts, making them formidable foes, which likely also contributed to the war breaking out. The central clause was the franchise of Uitlanders in the Transvaal. If this was ceded to the Cape, they would outvote the Afrikaners in the republic two to one. This clause was deeply emotive and political, especially since Kruger had shown that his suspicions of British aims and policies had been justified after the Jameson Raid. Smuts had urged Kruger to make concessions and suggested a five-year residential franchise, but this was also rejected by Milner. Despite every effort, Smuts and his delegation returned to the Transvaal to prepare for war after their ultimatum had been rejected by Milner.

During the first phase of the war, Smuts quickly went to work organising the administration and producing manifestos on how to best prepare Boer units for the war. Despite no military experience, Smuts quickly rose as a key player in republican strategies and switched the Transvaal economy from a modern industrial state to one prioritising its war efforts. His plan called for a surprise assault by Boer forces and simultaneous preparation for a long and costly war. Smuts worked with Deneys Reitz to serve as Kruger’s eyes and ears, handling propaganda, logistics, communication with generals and diplomats, and anything else that was required. Smuts quickly became an integral part of the success of the republics.

This first stage was busy and politically frustrating for Smuts, who frequently requested to be stationed in the field. Smuts was mostly confined to administrative duties and ensuring that the Transvaal was kept in order. His empathy and passion for the cause made him an effective leader. His desire to bring about a rebellion in the Cape Colony, his home, was a paramount theme to his travels with his own commando during the second phase of the war. As a resident of Riebeeck West, Smuts understood the pressures and lifestyles of the Cape Afrikaner. As a member of the Afrikaner Bond, he had intimate knowledge of the policies and agendas of Cape politicians towards the Afrikaner cause. Having switched allegiances after the Jameson Raid and becoming state attorney, Smuts had newfound appreciation and respect for the manner and policies of Kruger and hoped to convey this vision to forlorn Afrikaners in the Cape seeking better-fitting political leadership. This makes Smuts an ideal study for the impact of a charismatic leader who knew the context and political environment of the Cape intimately. Having forsaken his Cape residency for the Transvaal, Smuts also understood the cost.

During the second phase of the war, Smuts became more involved on the ground as a Boer leader. After the battle of Diamond Hill in June 1900, Smuts joined as General De la Rey’s second-in-
command, assistant administrator and political commissar in the area. Smuts quickly learnt military strategies and tactics from De la Rey, and later went on to lead his own commando during the latter half of the year from January 1901 in the Gatsrand area of the Western Transvaal, capturing a British post in Modderfontien. Steyn wrote of how Smuts had imagined, quietly to himself, that if the Afrikaners in the Cape were to come to the aid of their neighbours and declare a third Afrikaner republic, the Afrikaner cause and Afrikanerdom might overtake Britain’s hegemony over territory from the Cape to the Zambezi. As a Cape Afrikaner for most of his life, Smuts was the ideal man to lead a commando into the Cape Colony, with the purpose of trying to encourage the hoped-for rising of Boer sympathisers in the Cape Colony. Trew writes:

He had all the qualities necessary for such a command – clarity of mind, audacity, resolution and, perhaps surprisingly to those who had known him as a reclusive student, the power of command allied to exceptional toughness and physical endurance.

One reason cited for the mobilising of Cape Rebels was the impact of charismatic leaders who had the ability to motivate people toward a shared goal: the independence of the Boer Republics. These leaders were not only charismatic, but they empathised with the conditions of the Cape Afrikaner and accentuated how they shared common cause and grievances against the British Cape government. There is no singular leader highlighted in the research on the Cape Rebels; rather, it is meant more broadly that the Boer leaders were highly respected and extremely skilled in battle. Multiple sources on the war remark on the superior skill and aptitude of the Boer forces. Because Smuts was in a unique position of having worked for both sides in his political career, he was investigated more closely, especially since he had led a commando into the Cape. Measuring the effect of charismatic leadership in the mobilisation of rebels in the Cape makes for an interesting means of practically demonstrating whether leaders have an influential effect on people. There are many Boer leaders who have been celebrated and revered in the aftermath of the war. As charismatic leadership is not easy to “measure” or gauge, this study will instead look at the efforts of Smuts and his ability to affect mobilisation rallies. This thesis does not propose that Smuts’s leadership was causal in influencing the mobilisation of Cape Rebels, but rather that it appears to be correlated and that charismatic leadership offers a strong argument for why people would choose to mobilise. During the war, Smuts

389 Ibid.
originally did not play a prominent leadership role, but grew in reputation and skills under mentorship from others. As a resident of the Cape Colony, Smuts makes for a novel person of interest and a rebel himself. Smuts also went on to become a prominent attorney and participant in the negotiations for peace, and later, a highly regarded statesman in South Africa.

To measure the effect of leadership, Smuts’s travels and accounts of his commando have been used as a case study for showing rebel mobilisation. A path has been mapped to show where Smuts had visited. This route may have been influenced by reverse causality where Smuts visited areas that were supportive of the republics and Smuts, but the route still offers insights into the effects of charismatic leadership. This case study offers insights into how leadership may have mobilised rebels, but it is important to note that spill-over effects could also occur. Neighbouring towns could hear the news of Smuts’s appearances and mobilise according to what information people had shared. This would depend on the distance between these towns and the state of the communication networks. One tactic of the Boer commandos was to devastate supply lines and communication networks, making it difficult to send news. Smuts’s journey is not linear, as he had made several attempts to infiltrate the Cape and was pushed back in several cases. Having no military experience, Smuts’s strategies relied on knowing the Cape terrain and the tactics he had learnt from his mentorship by De la Rey.

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393 The spillover effect is when an event in a country has a ripple effect on the economy of another, usually more dependent country, or when an economic event in one context occurs because of something else in a seemingly unrelated context. In this case, the higher levels of mobilisation in neighbouring towns to Smuts’ path.
Map 6.1 draws on information from various sources to compile dates and routes taken by Smuts. The red dotted line shows the path he travelled, first appearing in the Cape between Zastron and Aliwal North. Smuts mostly kept to the mountainous regions, travelling by horse along escarpments and cliffs to avoid British patrols and guards, as well as their blockhouses and barbed wire. This is important as it suggests that Smuts’s path was random, and not influenced by potential supporters dictating his path. This map begins to indicate correlation between where Smuts visited and a higher number of rebels in those towns. This is significant as it shows the demonstrable effect of leadership and the impact of Smuts on the mobilisation of Cape Afrikaners. Consequently, this evidence shows how Smuts’s path was less structured around rebel presence, and more responsive to changing troop movements and conditions. Moreover, there were several close calls with British patrols that determined the direction of Smuts’s path, opting to use the natural obstacles of river crossings and mountain ranges to evade capture and further conflicts. This implies that Smuts may have been more dependent on instinct than rebel concentrations in towns in determining the direction he took.

From this map, it is evident that the significant regions of impact were in the eastern frontier, where he first crossed into the Cape, and near his hometown of Riebeeck West, until he was called out of the field to assist with peace negotiations after a final assault in May 1902 near O’Kiep.

This map demonstrates some correlation between Smuts’s presence and the mobilisation of rebels. Smuts’s political ideals had convinced him that the Cape Afrikaners would be natural allies to the Boer Republics. He had not taken into consideration the extreme legal ramifications for aiding commandos implemented in martial law districts. Another important hindrance is that Smuts was only active in the field during the second phase of the war. This was when the Boer efforts were starting to become less effective. Lord Roberts had implemented the scorched earth policy, and Lord Kitchener had implemented blockhouses and barbed wire, making the raid-and-run tactics of the Boers ineffective and less mobile. Instead, guerrilla warfare was pursued, coupled with acts of demolition and sabotage to hinder British supplies and fight on more equal terms.

Due to the extreme conditions, when Smuts had finally entered the fighting field, many commandos had smaller numbers, less supplies and were tired and demotivated. Volunteers were the main source of new energy, and this was where Smuts had focused his efforts. Smuts’s reputation in the Transvaal had preceded him, and as the British received word that Smuts was planning to invade the Cape, they feared that “under bold and clear-sighted leadership, potential Boer fighters scattered around the Colony might become a magnet for the many Afrikaners with anti-colonial sympathies”. Specific British generals were charged with the objective of cornering Smuts and his men, causing the commando to be constantly on the run evading enemy patrols and barely avoiding capture.

Importantly, with the commando size waning as conditions in the Cape worsened, Smuts was reliant on new volunteers. For this, strong leadership and vision was essential, especially due to the Boer forces beginning to appear as though they were losing the war during the second phase. This is important as people were unlikely to join commandos if it seemed futile, too costly or too risky. This indicates that charismatic leadership would have been a defining distinction as to why Smuts’s invasion of the Cape was comparatively more successful and able to survive in the hostile conditions in the Cape for longer than any other Boer commando, even with more experienced Boer leaders. This is entrenched further in how Reitz, a member of Smuts’s commando, documents how the commando under Smuts’s leadership had moved in the Cape. Smuts had entered the Cape by making a dangerous crossing of the Orange River in single file at three in the morning to evade British troops who were guarding the approaches to the river. Rationally, one would not put themselves in an

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extremely hazardous and precarious position without faith in the leadership advocating for it. This account speaks to the leadership of Smuts and the loyalty he evoked from his men.

Map 6.2 shows a clearer story of Smuts’s entrance in the Cape Colony during the second phase of the war, zooming into the eastern frontier, with the rebels from the Rebel Record. It shows that along the path that Smuts travelled into the Cape, there were higher numbers of rebels in the towns visited and surrounding towns. The neighbouring towns show the extent of the spill-over effect of Smuts’s commando. The eastern frontier was not the first choice for entering the Cape, but the British blockhouses and patrols had made entering near the north-eastern sector impossible, suggesting again that Smuts’s path was more random. Even entering elsewhere had its challenges, and the Cape Colony had become a hostile environment for any commandos, especially if they were unfamiliar with the terrain.

Many Boer leaders had hoped to have the assistance of the mine owners, believing that the British would not encourage a “mine owners’ war”. However, Smuts believed that the mine owners were, at their core, profit seekers, not patriots for the Boer Republics, and thus not reliable. These mining areas were not only crucial financial centres, but they posed a bigger threat in the form of the wealthy magnates who controlled and secured the region. Thus, the invasion of the Cape would be impossible through the northern territories, but much more plausible through the south-eastern sections. Smuts
believed in a strong bond of sympathy between “the Boers of the Cape and those of the Republics” and that the Cape possessed a rich source of recruitment for the Boer commandos. Having gained his experience under De la Rey’s mentorship in the Magaliesberg, Smuts had the necessary skills to balance a commando in more strenuous environments and could enter the Cape in precarious conditions.

Entering the Cape through Aliwal North and Zastron, Smuts’s first task was crossing the Orange River, followed by evading the blockhouses set up to catch Smuts’s commando. Near the end of August 1901, Smuts’s commando had made its way towards the Orange River where Reitz described its entrance:

It was the finest commando with which I ever served. The rank and file were mostly keen young farmers from the Western Transvaal, the pick of De la Rey’s fighting men, and in command of them was perhaps the one man in South Africa who could have led us through the perilous days to come.

According to Reitz, the British had heard of Smuts’s plans to invade the Cape Colony, and strenuous efforts had been made to keep them out, including additional forces and adding pressure by not pausing, day or night. From their trip through the Orange Free State, Smuts’s men had evaded capture through “hard riding and hard fighting”, at the loss of many men and horses. Smuts’s reputation was one of his biggest obstacles with the British, but his greatest asset with commandeering support. According to the *Times History*, “the adventures of this handful of resolute men led by General Jan Smuts forms one of the most interesting episodes in the whole course of the guerrilla war”. Moreover, Smuts’s motto throughout this period served as a rally cry that many empathised with: “We had, I was satisfied, sacred principles to maintain and rights to defend, for which we were in duty bound to do our best, even if we perished in the endeavour”.

Referring to Map 6.2, the *Rebel Record* shows that 1,268 rebels were housed in Aliwal North, making up 12.7% of the total population for that district and 54.4% of the white male population. This is a significant proportion of the population and emphasises that there were crucial underlying factors in the area, as most theories offered for mobilisation have not recorded such concentrated mobilisation levels. Albert also had high numbers of rebels with 1,048 rebels, 25.6% of the white male population.

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and 6.3% of the district total population. Further down, Wodehouse had 31.5% of its white male population become rebels, totalling 849 people (9.4% of the total population). This region clearly shows high levels of mobilisation, and all of these rebellious towns follow Smuts’s travels. In the midlands, this pattern changes slightly. Steynsburg, also near the route, sported a much lower rebel population of 194 people, making up only 14.5% of the white male population and 2.8% overall. Tarka only had 9.7% of its white male population, totalling 153 rebels, whereas Cradock had increased mobilisation with 15.4% of their white males rebelling, 502 rebels in all. This suggests that perhaps the momentum of commandeering and rounding up volunteers had dipped around the sparser regions between Wodehouse and increased once more in Cradock.

The path of Smuts can be seen in its historical context through the geographical externalities swaying his decision for routes taken. Smuts’s route was a difficult one, determined by several mountain ranges to navigate in these regions, accompanied by dense foliage and vegetation and sometimes sparse areas. From this, one can see how Smuts used his environment to his advantage, taking more physically difficult routes to avoid the British.

There was a surge of rebels near Smuts’s hometown of Riebeeck West, especially in the Malmesbury and Piquetberg regions, both within 60 kilometres of the town. Smuts’s knowledge of the area and people, as well as being remembered for his involvement in the church and Afrikaner Bond, all likely played a role in why he was able to sway Cape colonists to fight for the Boer cause near his hometown. Additionally, his reputation had gained the attention of many in the Cape, with the British deploying manhunts to capture him, building excitement around his name and a mystery that captured the imaginations of those hearing of his battles.

Shearing describes how by 1901, during the second invasion, the quasi-commandeering of Cape colonists by Boer forces had become a thing of the past. Rather, rebels were recruited individually and urged to join the Afrikaners’ fight against the British. They were also motivated to partake in a grand adventure. This more personal approach meant that personal appeal was used, but also that the cause and the leader needed to be persuasive. After 1900, the Boers had started to lose the war, and conditions in laagers were noticeably terrible, lacking many necessities. The high recruitment of rebels in the Cape along Smuts’s path suggests that his reputation, leadership and respect had garnered a substantial following. Tactics for recruitment were also able to change because of the concentration camps erected by the British. These camps were used to assure would-be recruits that

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403 The Journal, Graham’s Town, 5 February 1900.
their wives and children would be safe in the camps. While this was not the case in reality, it did mean that some responsibility to protect the property and their families was alleviated. The sense of adventure was often evoked in the news. Kritzinger’s commando told recruits that they were going to see the sea, meet their cousins in the colony and make the rooineks desperate. The spirit of bravado and adventure in the young rebels would later be reinterpreted as patriotism for the Afrikaner cause, making the rebels key characters in Afrikaner nationalism after the war.

Further north, the numbers spike again near Van Rhynsdorp, Clanwilliam, Calvinia and Namaqualand, as seen in Map 6.3. On average, the Western Cape had approximately one hundred rebels per district. Malmesbury housed 101 rebels, making up 2% of the white male population. Piquetberg sported a significant rebel population of 234 people comprising 7.2% of its white male population, or 2% of its total population. However, in Calvinia, there were 486 rebels, making up 19.2% of its white male population, followed by 175 rebels in Clanwilliam and 150 in Van Rhynsdorp. Namaqualand, mostly an arid desert region with little foot traffic, housed 199 rebels, which was almost 11% of its white male population. All of these regions were strategically used by Smuts and were either directly travelled through or looped around by his commando. Significantly, Smuts’s last battle was at O’Kiep in Namaqualand, not far from Springbok where he devastated railroad tracks and the town in the beginning of May 1902. This was their final fight before being called away to partake in the peace negotiations.

404 The Journal, Graham’s Town, 5 February 1900.
405 Beaufort Courier, reprinted from Uitenhage Times, 23 February 1901.
Smuts had enjoyed a number of successful sieges in the area, where many had surrendered, and the British still patrolled with rebel guards. These battles were hard work, but Smuts’s leadership continually inspired perseverance for their cause. The journey towards Namaqualand was rugged and barren, and there were difficulties with food and water supplies, forcing the commando to be split into smaller groups with instructions to meet at Kamiesbergen. Once they had arrived, Reitz describes that they “found the place sacked and gutted, and, among the rocks beyond the burned houses, lay twenty or thirty dead Hottentots, still clutching to their antiquated muzzle-loaders”. For three days, the Boers fired at the forts of Springbok, until the town surrendered and over one hundred prisoners were captured, with rifles, ammunition and supplies gathered and no Boer deaths. The next day, Concordia also surrendered to Smuts, with 150 prisoners. From these successes, Smuts sent a delegation to O’Kiep demanding surrender, which was met with refusal to surrender, resulting in the town being bombed, with several left dead and injured from the efforts of the commando. Despite

407 Ibid., pp. 298-308.
408 Ibid., pp. 308-313.
the toll, Smuts’s commando continued to wage war passionately. Reitz speaks of how on the surface things looked prosperous:

Five months ago we had come into this western country hunted like outlaws, and to-day we practically held the whole area from the Olifants to the Orange River four hundred miles away, save for the small garrison towns here and there, whose occupants could not show themselves beyond the range of their forts and without the risk of instant capture at the hands of the rebel patrols told off to watch them, while we roamed the territory at will. We had enjoyed a number of successes which the British probably regarded as minor incidents, but which our men looked upon as important victories, and all this had greatly raised their spirits. Unfortunately, while matters stood thus well with us, the situation in the two Republics up north was far otherwise.  

Smuts’s virtual control of this 300-mile British territory and invasion into the Cape had come too late. There was to be no en masse uprising in the Cape as Smuts had wished for, and while he besieged O’Kiep, he was summoned to attend the peace talks. Towards the end of April 1902, a car waving a white flag and a dispatch from Lord Kitchener had been sent to say that a meeting was to be held in Vereeniging between the British and Boer leaders to discuss peace terms, and Smuts was summoned to attend.

In all, Smuts had the potential to affect mobilisation patterns between June 1901 and his final attack in May 1902. During his incursions in the Cape, Smuts started with 340 hand-picked volunteers, and his first attempt was crossing at a remote point on the Orange River between Zastraon and Aliwal North, where the borders of Basutoland, the Free State and the Cape met. Steyn estimates that this was the beginning of a journey that would cover 2,000 miles and occupy approximately 35,000 British troops in pursuit of these invaders. Staring with these volunteers, Smuts succeeded in consolidating the disparate commandos already operating in the Cape, rallying the scattered fragments of resistance in the Cape into an effective force. Smuts gave a renewed identity to these groups, touching on the sense of national identity mentioned in Chapter 5 about the borderlands theory. This is supported by Smith’s proposal of the Cape Afrikaners having plural loyalties – both to place and race.

At the end of the war, Smuts led nineteen commandos, with over 2,000 men nominally under his command. Smuts’s commando had created a strategic diversion across a large area of the

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“unscorched” Cape Colony, which had occupied thousands of British troops, and British leaders did not shy away from the danger that his commando presented, small as it was, for acting as a magnet and attracting growing support from within the Cape. From 1899, Boer forces commandeered disaffected colonists, criss-crossing the interior with mobile commandos. The Boer commandos were better equipped and had the winning strategy during the first invasion of the war. Once their forces were better prepared and more stringent obstacles were used, the British forces began to build momentum towards 1900. From April to May 1901, martial law was implemented, along with the Indemnity and Special Tribunals Act.

When revisiting his involvement in the South African War and time on commando, Smuts writes the following in Reitz’s book:

Many military books have been written for the Boer War – books full of interest and of valuable material for the future historian; but something else was wanted. The Boer War was other than most wars. It was a vast tragedy in the life of a people, whose human interest far surpassed its military value. A book was wanted which would give us some insight into the human side of this epic struggle between the smallest and the greatest of peoples.

In the Rebel Record, 141 rebels were part of Smuts’s commando, and 205 had interacted with Smuts, during an ambush, battle or in their travels. The first rebel to be allowed to join Smuts’s commando during his invasion of the Cape was a thirteen-year-old called Botha, who had insisted on joining the rebellion with his brother. Overall, the official return of Cape Rebels in 1903 was 12,205 (0.5% of the total population). The Rebel Record estimates that this was more likely 0.7% of the total population (16,198 rebels). Cape Rebels were not the bulk of the commando force, but they did risk much to join the cause. Their rebellion also played a significant role in colonial life in the Cape, leading to a “thinly disguised civil war and enmity between the Afrikaner and the Cape colonists, which took years to disappear”. Smuts’s impact on the mobilising of rebels may have been more abstract than the numbers of people. Rather, his leadership and knowledge of the Cape may have been the signal to Cape Afrikaners of the need to address the political situation in the Cape and decide


416 Ibid.


418 Rebel Record, entry 975.

where their interests would be best respected and protected. The governor of the Cape Colony, Hely-Hutchinson, reported that 50% of the white population in the Cape was relatively pro-Boer and that most of the Cape was “in a half suppressed state of secret rebellion”, which Smuts and his commando were able to revive into “a war of revolution against British rule”. Thus, Smuts’s impact may have been more long-term and deep-seated than simply influencing people to fight in his commando.

What made Smuts a massive drawcard for mobilising people was not simply his passion for the cause of the Boer Republics, but his reputation, character and the respect he garnered from his peers over time. After his passing, The Star newspaper captured him as the following:

To say that he was beloved is trite and inadequate. Smuts had the quality of greatness that attracted to itself not only a passionate loyalty from his followers but a kind of awed reverence alike from those who supported him and those who opposed him. It was impossible to be in his company without falling under his spell. Few understood him fully, yet he commanded the devotion of many to whom his philosophy had not even a name. In war and peace, men were prepared to follow him to unseen goals. No other man of comparable stature has appeared on the South African scene for 300 years. Many nations have had to wait much longer.

The maps show a visual representation of Smuts’s path in fighting for the independence of the Boer Republics. However, Smuts’s reputation for excellence and his diplomacy and sense of justice for the Afrikaner cause was disseminated widely. The aforementioned testimony of Smuts illustrates the effect of charismatic leadership and its importance in the mobilising of rebels in the Cape. From the numbers and locations of rebels, it is evident that Smuts had an impact on the mobilisation patterns during the second phase of the South African War.

CASE STUDY OF WILLIE LOUW

Charismatic leaders came in several shapes and forms. The case study of William Hofmeyr Louw offers some insights into the influence of smaller community members on rebel mobilisation. Willie Louw grew up in a long-serving family within the Dutch Reformed Church in Paarl. His uncle, Andrew Murray, was a well-known revivalist evangelist in South Africa and had a prominent voice and influence. Murray had authored over 250 books and was a distinguished and highly regarded preacher, praised for being one of the most distinguished and influential Christian theologians and writers of the last century. Several members of his family were ministers in the church and


421 The Star, 12 September 1950.

maintained devout lifestyles, constantly sharing new books and revelations through letters to one another. Willie and his brother George lived in the Colesberg district where they were successful farmers, respected members of the community and deacons in the church. They were politically savvy, too, with one brother offering to perform scab inspections free of charge to become a member of the Divisional Council. The sway of the church during this period was important, as many had turned to religious advice, believing that the government had failed and that its immoral practices had created a larger disjuncture between the government and the people. Being a devout people, especially the Dutch Reformed Church congregations, Cape Afrikaners were influenced heavily by the guidance of religious leaders. The church was believed to have been influential in convincing people to rebel and assist the republics, especially in frontier districts. Repeated themes of abandonment, distrust and scepticism about the government are evident in letters between the family members. For many years, the reputation of the government and its agenda had been deteriorating. In 1895, the government called for an appointed “day of humiliation and prayer”, but this did not spark much participation amongst the believers:

... but the proclamation coming from Government so corrupt as ours and the Transvaal, [they] could never observe it. After they forsake their evil ways we can pray but while they persist in openly breaking God’s laws, it seems like mockery to confess and pray. One at least has taken offence at this, our M.P., and I am only hoping that no evil will result from it.423

This shows that there were differences in opinion between the government and Kerkeraad. The case of Willie Louw serves as a helpful example of how one’s beliefs could influence one’s choice to mobilise. Louw joined the Boer forces under Commandant Lategan on 21 November 1899, not long after war broke out. He served as a veldkornet during the war and was described as a steadfast character with a religious sense of bravery and a leader among his peers. He was captured at De Aar, sent to Graaff-Reinet for trial, and placed in Colesberg prison to await his sentence, after which he was executed on 23 November 1901 for high treason.424 His sister, Mimie, used to visit him while he was imprisoned. Although part of the rebellion, Louw and his family showed conflicting beliefs. First, they often prayed for the soldiers in the veldt, “both Boer and Brit”.425 Even during difficult periods of fighting, Louw was encouraged by his sister, who said she had no doubt if he searched, he would

423 NGK Argief Stellenbosch. PPV 148, Letter from Mimie Louw to her brother John, 21 November 1895.


425 NGK Argief Stellenbosch. PPV 148, Letter from Mimie Louw to her mother, 21 January 1901.
find abundant cause for praise. Second, they spoke remorsefully of the declining health of the Queen in 1901:

How terribly sad to read the official report: ‘The great strain of the past year has to a certain extent affected the Queen’s nervous system’. I often thought during the past year: ‘I wonder how she is feeling it?’ and I used to feel sure if she could she would put a stop to the war. Is she also to be a sacrifice to the war? If so, what a lifelong reproach it will be to those who clamored for war when it might have been prevented.\(^{426}\)

Evidently, loyalty to the Queen did not exclude people from fighting for the independence of the republics as rebels. Instead, this was not seen to be a conflict of interest. The independence of the republics seems to have been portrayed as an emotive, spiritual blessing. They prayed that “His infinite wisdom sees that a larger blessing may be ours only by withholding of the lesser good which we seek”.\(^{427}\)

The exchanges between Louw and his family frequently speak of his rebellion as being done “for the glory and honour of His Name”. Mimie wrote how one of the strongest giants many have to fight is “moedeloosheid”.\(^{428}\) She seems to be a constant encouragement, saying: “I never knew the value of our Christian religion as I do now”.\(^{429}\) The communication regarding Willie was inconsistent, but despite rumours, they did not take notice until official information was sent.\(^{430}\) Mimie was able to visit her brother in jail. Once imprisoned in Colesberg, Louw spent twenty-nine days reckoning with his faith and his destiny. In his final letter to his parents on the day he was executed, Louw wrote that “What, what is the value of one soul. God our loving Father allows all this to be done to the Honour and Glory of His Name”.\(^{431}\) Mimie and her husband were given permission to go to his cell an hour before he was to be executed. She describes that last hour in a letter to her parents.

I put my arms about the strong neck which bent down over me and with his head on my shoulder I said: ‘Al ging ook in een dal der schadow des doods ik zal geen kwaad vreezen want Gy zyt met my, U stok en U staf die vertrooste my’. We then sat down, my husband at his right and I at the left. All that was spoken by him bore unspeakable precious and sure evidence of his trust in Jesus merit, of his preparedness to meet his God, of his hope and glory. He told us how thankful he was that he had had the 29 days to prepare himself for “this” – how

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\(^{426}\) NGK Argief Stellenbosch. PPV 148, Letter from Mimie Louw to her mother, 21 January 1901.

\(^{427}\) NGK Argief Stellenbosch. PPV 148, Letter from Mimie Louw to her mother, 6 May 1901.


\(^{429}\) NGK Argief Stellenbosch. PPV 148, Letter from Mimie Louw to her mother, 29 July 1901.

\(^{430}\) NGK Argief Stellenbosch. PPV 148. Letter from Mimie Louw to her mother, 4 November 1901.

\(^{431}\) NGK Argief Stellenbosch. PPV 148, Letter from Willie Louw, 23 November 1901.
he had not been alone, how precious the Saviour had become to him and that he was only sorry he had not loved Him more fervently in years gone by.\textsuperscript{432}

In spite of his unfortunate outcome, Louw serves as one example of the many individuals that make up the Cape Rebels. It is easy to become fixated on the historical character and lose sight of the individual. Louw was a rebel guilty of treason, but from this excerpt, it is evident that he was an influential community member, disillusioned by the corruption and incompetence of the Cape government, and whose convictions directed him towards mobilising for the republics. He likely played an influential role in the mobilisation of additional community members. In total, there were 399 rebels from Colesberg where he farmed. Republican forces had invaded the area\textsuperscript{433}, calling upon people to join them, from which the leading farmers in the area had formed a commandeering committee. Several of these rebels were in Lategan’s commando, as was Louw. Almost 28\% of the white male population were rebels in Colesberg. During the war, several arrests were made in Colesberg for rebels.\textsuperscript{434} This case study demonstrates the power of religious leaders and how they had a discerning, trustworthy voice during the war. With a charismatic uncle, Andrew Murray, Louw would have been a respected and knowledgeable person to turn to for council. While this does not solve the question of why rebels mobilised, it provides some insights into the individual-level circumstances, an important consideration.

\textbf{ANTAGONISM OF AFRICAN FRANCHISE}

The two central political issues before the outbreak of war were the franchise of the \textit{Uitlanders} in the Transvaal and the non-racial franchise in the Cape Colony. The \textit{Uitlanders} were a more prominent antagonism between the Cape Colony and Boer Republics, as has been demonstrated in Chapter 5 regarding the frontier regions. The voting rights of African, Coloured and Indian voters came under scrutiny before the war with the revisions made to the franchise in the Cape and the qualifications being upped. However, there was no clear line in the sand indicating one party who advocated for it


\textsuperscript{433} \textit{The Beira Post}, 31 January 1900.

\textsuperscript{434} \textit{The Journal, Graham’s Town}, 23 November 1899; \textit{The Beira Post}, 29 November 1899.
while another opposed it.\textsuperscript{435} After the war, non-racial franchise and the independence of the Boer Republics were the central debates in the treaty. The Boer Republics wanted to limit the extension of the franchise to African voters, making the Cape liberal franchise a divisive system. One possible motivation for fighting for the Boer Republics as a Cape Rebel was to prevent the extension of the franchise further to additional persons. By mobilising with the Boer Republics, these rebels would be supporting the political bloc against the non-racial franchise, securing their voting power and protecting their political interests.

The Cape had a comparatively liberal political environment, in contrast to the Natal Colony and the Boer Republics during this period. The Boer Republics and Natal operated as loosely independent British colonies to the Cape. Only white males were allowed to vote in the Boer Republics, and Natal had implemented stringent qualifications that made it a rare occurrence for an African, Indian or Coloured male to be registered to vote. The Cape Colony instituted Cape liberalism, which was different to other areas during this period in its treatment of African and Coloured people in its territory. The Cape was the only territory where a non-racial, qualified franchise had been implemented, making the Cape Colony an exceptional political environment during this historical context. Within this legal framework, all African and Coloured men in the Cape Colony were eligible to qualify for the franchise if they had met particular qualifications pertaining to income and property ownership.

During the late nineteenth century, the legislation regarding voter qualifications had changed. Importantly, additional African voters had registered in the Cape, creating push-back from various concerned white politicians at the time. This included groups such as the Afrikaner Bond, who were concerned with African voters aligning with English-speaking parties and politicians and creating political imbalance. Notable legislative revisions during this period included the 1887 Parliamentary Registration Act, the 1892 Franchise and Ballot Act, the 1894 Glen Grey Act and the 1899 Registration of Parliamentary Voters Amendment Act. There were several amendments made to the various laws throughout this period; however, these were to have drastic effects on voter registrations and participation.

The Cape had prioritised attaining local self-government, combined with an explicit commitment to a liberal, inclusive and multiracial political system.\textsuperscript{436} One of the ways that this was encouraged was


through the voter qualifications. To qualify to vote in the Cape Colony, one needed to be a male older than twenty-one years’ old who met an income and property quota. No racial discrimination was indicated in the legislation during this time, but through analyses of the earlier voter’s rolls, it can be observed that the political sphere was mostly dominated by white Cape colonists. Within these electoral districts, this multiracial franchise allowed for political participation through voting, thus creating space for additional representation and participation.

The franchise had been made sufficiently low to enable most owners of any form of property or land to vote. While the economic boom during this period had resulted in rising levels of wealth in the Cape, legislators had resisted raising the qualification standards, believing that these higher levels of wealth would eventually render the qualifications as obsolete. The political sphere was undergoing new shifts in party politics, campaigning and issue politics. Additionally, there were several drives to register new voters during this period, especially from Xhosa-speaking rural areas. Several opportunistic politicians had campaigned for African voters, making “friends of Natives” in parliament a popular means of being awarded further political sway and parliamentary seats.

There was only one homogenous political party that had dominated the discussions on the question of the franchise in the house of assembly – the Afrikaner Bond.437 The cooperation between Rhodes and the Bond had resulted in changes to the question of the “Native” franchise. The Bond had vehemently objected to the black franchise but was not opposed to the Coloured franchise. The Bond had the support of the Coloured vote in the Cape, making them necessary votes for collecting political power. However, the African votes in the Eastern Cape were in favour of the opponents of the Bond government. The Bond Native Policy aimed to exploit the labour of the native people, especially on farms, and wanted to keep class and social structures as status quo. The policy advocated for no equality between Europeans and other races but did not want the policy to be construed as one of oppression. Rather it was willing to uplift the natives and provide fair treatment, but as servants and not masters.438 Rhodes had originally been pro-Native franchise and took a more liberal political stance on the issue, but after becoming more aligned to the Bond, he proposed that property and education quotas be added to raise the qualifications. This ensured that anyone could vote if they were able to prove that they were more civilised and not “raw natives”.439

438 Ibid., pp. 215-216.
439 Ibid., p. 216.
The annexation of predominantly African territories had resulted in accelerated migration to the Cape, where many of these Africans were more socially and economically independent than most of the Coloured groups in the Cape. According to Williams, when the proportion of Africans in the colony was a little more than two to one, and the few qualified African voters rarely voted, the practical objections to this low qualification were negligible. Large numbers of African voters had registered in the late 1870s and early 1880s. By 1891, efforts to register new voters, combined with an enlargement of the territory and its productivity, had led to fourfold increases in African voters, with whites only increasing twofold.\(^{440}\) This resulted in various objections to the rising numbers of “blanket voters” who played a decisive role in certain constituencies. The Cape Hansard Parliamentary Debates demonstrated concerns over the enlargement of the black franchise.

Indeed, the political situation had changed from prioritising a non-racial franchise and political openness, to playing a numbers game to win voters. There were three main options to remedy this flood of African voters. First, it was suggested that a separate voter’s roll be created wherein African voters would be registered. Second, it was suggested that the legislation be amended to only allow for educated and civilised Africans to vote. This hinted at the educational tests that were to be introduced into later legislative amendments. Lastly, it was remarked that black people should not have been allowed to vote in the first place, challenging the non-racial franchise in the Cape.\(^{441}\) The voting power of African people drew increasingly more criticism as people were led to believe that this would affect their political representation, making many uneasy and more amenable to the political ideologies of the republics who were wanting to prevent this.

The numbers of black voters were threatening in the new political climate post-war, and also post-union. This made the franchise a particularly emotive and contentious clause in the Treaty of Vereeniging, and also before the outbreak of war. From this contextualisation, in the racial lens of the Boer Republics, the franchise was as threatening to the independence and political control of Boer leaders as the acceptance of further *Uitlander* voters in the republics. Furthermore, the booming labour market meant that many races were drawn to the mines, creating further potential for residents of the republics to be outvoted.

\(^{440}\) B. Williams & H. Elliot. (eds.). Makers of the nineteenth century: Cecil Rhodes, p. 205.

\(^{441}\) *Ibid.*
In Map 6.4, the African and Coloured population is shown in blue alongside the rebel population. The dots are scaled and coloured according to their population size, which was calculated from subtracting the white population from the total population per district. In census records, the white population is recorded more consistently than other races. Predominantly African territories that had been annexed also had less systematic census records than predominantly white districts. Thus, the African and Coloured population shown is an estimate taken from the 1901 census records. Map 6.5 shows the dispersal of the African and Coloured population throughout the Cape Colony. Notably, Glen Grey and Cape Town have the largest populations, followed by Kimberley. This map matches the historical narrative of a large African population in the Pondoland and Transkei territories. From these majority African areas, the labour market in Cape Town and the mines in Kimberley pulled migrant labour into new territories. In most of the districts, the populations are roughly equal between white and other populations. The exceptions are Cape Town, with a higher white population and Glen Grey with a higher African population. The mining areas of Kimberley, Barkly West and Herbert also have slightly more variegated populations.

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Map 6.5 provides a closer perspective of the mining districts. In red, the rebel population is shown. In blue, the African and Coloured population is shown. Throughout this area, the white population was smaller, as more migrant labour was continuously drawn to the labour market of the mines. In these areas, Kimberley and Barkly West had the highest nominal African and Coloured populations of 28,000 and 14,083, which was 57.9% of the total population in Kimberley and 80.5% of the total population in Barkly West.\footnote{British Blue Books. Cape of Good Hope. Census, 1901.} Herbert housed 6,640 Africans, 73.1% of the total population, and Hay had 4,982 Africans, or 58.5% of the total population. Whether these population totals were statistically significant is difficult to gauge, but the rebel populations were higher in these towns than in non-industrial surrounding districts. This makes the African and Coloured population correlated with the labour demands of the mines, which likely added racial tension to the working environment, as has been demonstrated regarding the need to increase wages for white employees on the mines and to award more specialised jobs to white employees.

Notably, the surrounding districts had much smaller African and Coloured populations. Hopetown had 3,462 African and Coloured persons, which was 53.2% of its total population. No population data was recorded in the 1901 census for Mafeking, Vryburg and Taung, which were later classified as
Bechuanaland in 1904. Map 6.6 shows a unique dispersal of race, with an above-average number of African people living in the area, at 64.6%. This suggests the start of the population being skewed towards higher African populations. Mining histories explain how the demand for cheap African labour was increasing, threatening the labour demand for white labourers who were unwilling to do menial work, hoping for better pay and positions. Of all the districts most likely to mobilise for the sake of barring further political sway by African populations, this theory might hold truer for these mining territories than elsewhere. However, these areas were impacted by several other factors that have been explored in previous chapters. The extension of a non-racial franchise may have been one of several contributing factors to why there were more Cape Rebels mobilising in these areas. As a standalone theory, the political tensions in the area combined with the economic circumstances would be influential in the mobilising of rebels who would support a political regime that advocated for white worker protection and limiting the franchise.

MAP 0.6 SHOWING AFRICAN POPULATIONS IN THE EASTERN FRONTIER

In the eastern frontier, the African population was much higher due to it consisting of predominantly African territories that had been annexed by the Cape Colony. Notably, Glen Grey sports the highest population with 152,544 African people and only 1,019 white people in the district. Much of the “native” territories did not have reliable records and census information. For 1901, Glen Grey is the only district with a population record. However, further north, Aliwal North had 5,302, Albert had 8,456 and Herschel had 24,866 African and Coloured people. Additionally, 3,637 African and Coloured people lived in Wodehouse and 5,647 lived in Middelburg. Like Glen Grey, Herschel was also mostly African, near the Basutoland border, and 99% of the population was not white. Colesberg,
Hopetown, Phillipstown and Prieska all averaged around 53% of their population being African and Coloured. What these maps suggest is that the rebels in these areas were unlikely to be motivated by the threat of the growing African population and extension of the franchise as the populations were fairly equal. The number of rebels in these areas were not particularly higher than other areas.

The western frontier, north of Cape Town, shows a very different visual story, as seen in Map 6.7. The greatest absolute number of African and Coloured people were housed in Cape Town, with 48,739 people, although this accounted for only 50.1% of the population. Namaqualand had the highest proportion, with 78% African and Coloured inhabitants, followed by Tulbagh with 67%. On average, 56% of the population was not white, making the “threat” of increased African voters low. On average, approximately 9,370 African and Coloured people co-habited in the Western Cape region, compared to 8,430 white inhabitants. In these regions, Cape Town, Malmesbury and Paarl had the largest populations and thus more labour demand in the region. Cape Town had a small population of twenty-two rebels, while Malmesbury had ninety-seven and Paarl had twenty-nine. This indicates that there was no strain on the environment in Cape Town, but that Malmesbury and Paarl had more agitation than other regions, thus more rebels mobilised. Piquetberg makes for an interesting case study as it had 215 rebels from its population of 11,587 people, of which only 5,072 were African and Coloured. While this is only 1.8% of the population, on average, the rebels were 0.7% of the total population. As was shown in the previous section, Jan Smuts likely played a substantial role in the mobilisation levels in Malmesbury and Piquetberg due to his upbringing in Riebeeck West, less than 60 kilometres away.

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From this analysis, the theory that rebels were mobilised to stunt African political rights is inconclusive. At its crux, it considers whether people were joining because they did not want a non-racial franchise, therefore supporting the Boer Republics in hopes that their political beliefs would supersede those of the British in the Cape. However, using the population differences in towns as a measure of the proportion of potential voters and the perceived political threat does not quantify every factor informing this theory. In the eastern frontier, there were more African inhabitants in some towns than in others. Similarly, the western frontier and Cape Town had some towns with greater numbers of African and Coloured inhabitants, but most of these areas were important economic zones with increased labour demands. The area with the most correlated argument was the mining districts in the north-eastern frontier surrounding Kimberley.

Previous analysis has demonstrated how the labour demands in the mines were high, and that there was increased incentive to prioritise the employment of white workers in higher paying, more skilled roles at the risk of losing political support. While this theory may have been most convincing in this area, the number of rebels combined were 3,435 from a total population of 83,375, or 4.1%. Barkly West and Herbert had the highest share of rebels per total population, with 7.2% and 6.9%, respectively.\footnote{Rebel Record. Statistics taken from 1903 census information and H.A. Shearing’s 2004 Rebel Record calculations.} These towns had distinctly higher proportions than the average of 0.7% of the total population, yet most of the mining industry was in Kimberley, where 0.9% of the total population
rebelled. This shows that this theory may contribute to one of several reasons why people mobilised, but is not a strongly conclusive argument.

Rather, a more likely argument is that it was the imagination of the threat of the “other” that played on the minds of people more than the population growth or influx of new migrant labourers. This was especially true in the eastern and north-eastern frontiers where these districts had been strategically founded as a line of defence against African people. As has been repeatedly mentioned in this thesis, there was an ongoing thread of increased racial tensions building in the Cape. Thus, the threat of the non-racial franchise was based on abstractions of a perceived threat and forged upon public opinions and scepticisms that had grown out of the rinderpest epidemic, which had uncovered the underlying racial animosity simmering below the surface.

CONCLUSION

This chapter has shown how pre-eminent political conditions had created a sense of uneasiness and distrust in the Cape. The outcomes of the Jameson Raid illustrate how political blunders in the late nineteenth century had unsettled the political realm, creating a political crisis that was not easily resolved. The Bond government was a powerful political force; however, their reputation was desecrated before the war, blamed for its outbreak and for spreading anti-British sentiments, creating further dissatisfaction and disharmonious conditions. While this was not the truth, many people were left believing that they had been abandoned by their representatives and needed to seek out new political allies more aligned with their interests. This was compounded by the apathy and denialism espoused by the Schreiner ministry, which left people feeling fearful and agitated with the Cape government and the colony severely unprepared for the war. Given the reactions and inaction of the government, many chose to support who they perceived to be the winning team – the Boer Republics.

However, the influence of charismatic leadership was also shown to be a strong influence on mobilisation levels in the Cape. The reputation and military strategies of Smuts were shown to have a strong mobilising effect on people in the Cape near his travel route. This is a novel contribution as it shows how the influence of strong, effective and honourable leadership during a time of political crisis was paramount to mobilising support. Lastly, this chapter has analysed the sway of shared political agendas and ideologies in mobilising rebels by showing how people may have aligned with the republics based on their shared concerns with the growing political clout of African voters in the Cape. This was likely influenced by the growing number of migrant African labourers to economic hubs, but also the perceived threat of the “other” that captured people’s imaginations amidst the rising racial animosities before the war. This chapter has shown how the political climate was a substantial factor contributing to the mobilisation of rebels.

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CHAPTER 7 CONCLUSION

CONCLUSIONS

In this thesis, several hypotheses were researched, analysed and evaluated as the reasons offered in the historical literature for why the Cape Rebels were mobilised to fight on the side of the Boer Republics during the South African War. In this research, the Cape Rebels were shown to be a group of Cape colonists who were sympathetic to or shared in the political aspirations and ideologies of the Boer Republics. Although they have been defined as “rebels” in the literature, this definition is problematic as many had not seen their sympathies as contrasting their allegiances to Britain. However, there were also individuals who were knowingly working against the British due to grievances that had gone unresolved and unmitigated in the pre-war years. Thus, the blanket term of “rebel” needs further interrogation.

Rather than focusing on mobilisation theories, this study has used issue politics to analyse the motivations of the Cape Rebels. Mobilisation theories are usually specific to a location or class category who share similar social and structural conditions that influence their outlooks. However, the Cape Rebels were not relegated to one area or class. As has been shown, there were several districts that housed rebels and in differing concentrations. While it is possible to theorise that mobilisation along structural and relational instability was possible in the north-eastern frontier near the Kimberley mines, there were not the same institutional and economic conditions shaping mobilisation patterns elsewhere. Mobilisation along the lines of ideology offers a stronger, although not fully convincing explanation. Many rebels were thought to have mobilised for the interests of the Boer Republics, believing they shared similar political beliefs and aspirations. This may have been the case for many rebels, especially those with family ties to the Boer Republics. However, the most convincing arguments has been mobilisation along issue politics. Using several key economic, ecological and political events, this study has shown how the government in the Cape Colony had aggravated the circumstances of the rebels, mishandled various issues and committed several “unforgivable” political blunders. From this stance, this thesis has demonstrated the impacts of the various events in question to understand its mobilising capacity and the strength of the argument.

The first reason offered in Chapter 4 was that the devastation of rinderpest north of the Orange River had caused extreme poverty and devastation, with the government being accused of having done too little too late to protect livelihoods in those districts. The inaction of the Cape government had caused a lack of trust and created conditions conducive to rebellion wherein grievances and underlying tensions could be translated into mobilisation. This political apathy may have influenced some people to align with a government that better understood their lifestyle and concerns. However, this theory
has been proved wanting, as the regions with the heaviest rinderpest mortalities did not produce high rebel concentrations. Although there is some correlation between the effects of the rinderpest and the rebel mobilisation levels, this theory is insufficient for explaining why people rebelled and has been over-emphasised in the historical literature.

The second factor investigated in Chapter 5 was the lifestyle and culture of the frontier. These territories were closer to the Boer Republics, had a more independent and challenging way of life further away from British control, and had been described as a tumultuous, rebellious region. It was argued that this led to a distinct group culture in a unique political and economic zone. The livelihoods and identities of the people on the frontier were shaped by their hardy, independent culture. Education, language and age were used to test the culture and identity of the various frontiers, questioning whether these factors influenced, or even groomed, the Cape Rebels in those districts. The various frontiers experienced educational upliftment at different stages, but most of the towns in the frontier regions had a larger uneducated population, showing that districts with larger rebel populations had less educated white males. However, these frontier regions saw rapid development during the mineral revolution, which had upturned life as they knew it and brought its own set of issues. Wealth, power, trade and labour were all impacted, and racial tensions were again exacerbated. These shifts had meant that the entire culture of these communities was forced to change, and this had played a role in motivating some to seek out alternative options. Proximity to the Boer Republics was also examined, as information and social networks were important for making value judgements and building beliefs and identity. However, distance did not show a standardised pattern for influencing rebel mobilisation as not all towns close to the border had higher rebel populations. This chapter demonstrated that many theories offered in the literature were inconclusive statistically, and once shown visually, the patterns brought up further questions of what would be motivating these decisions. Instead, several internal factors within districts close to the borders affected mobilisation levels, while other areas further away were capable of rallying high rebel numbers. Thus, the lifestyle on the frontier may have been affected, changed and swayed, but further explanation was required for analogous districts.

Finally, Chapter 6 attempted to answer these questions of mobilisation by considering leadership and political ideologies as a possible explanation. The pre-eminent political conditions created a sense of uneasiness and distrust in the Cape. The Jameson Raid was shown to have negatively affected perceptions of the Cape government, especially in Afrikaner circles. Furthermore, the influence and actions of the Afrikaner Bond, a powerful political influence in the government and in its satellite locations were diminished. Clashes within the Bond leadership and its betrayal by Rhodes had led to the tainting of public opinions of the Bond. It was accused of playing a role in the outbreak of the
war, pushing members to support the Boer Republics, inciting rebellion and deserting its voters, which left many people without a guiding voice. Furthermore, the Schreiner ministry was shown to have influenced the negative perceptions of the government through mishandling several issues and being slow to intervene. Schreiner’s denialism and neutral stance had convinced people that the government would not assist them and that they would be left to defend their homes and livelihoods without any government assistance. This created the impression of government apathy and soured public opinions further, making the strong leadership and political ideologies of the Boer Republics more attractive. Many people chose to support who they had perceived to be the winning team.

The effect of charismatic leadership was shown to be a powerful explanation. Through mapping the route taken by Smuts and including accounts of his character, decision-making, strategies and leadership, this seemed to be the most convincing explanation. The towns that Smuts’s commando had travelled through showed distinctly higher rebel populations, indicating that his commando, and likely his leadership, had been an influential factor. This is a novel contribution as it shows how the influence of strong leadership during a time of political crisis was paramount to mobilising support.

Lastly, this chapter questioned the sway of political ideologies by investigating whether people fought for the Boer Republics due to their political beliefs regarding the franchise and who should be allowed to participate. Through analysing racial population differences per district, the research showed that in areas with smaller white populations, there was no distinctive difference in rebel populations. Mobilisation was unlikely to have been motivated by a threat of growing African populations and political participation. Rather, the increase in migrant labourers in economic hubs, combined with the perceived threat of the “other” as a dangerous opponent inflated racial animosities in this period. This demonstrates that political climate and effective leadership were substantial factors in influencing rebel mobilisation motivations in the Cape.

In summary, the theories offered in the historical literature provided a starting point from which to question what had mobilised the Cape Rebels. However, through the incorporation of historical statistics from archival records, combined with close, contextual historical analysis, the reality looks very different. The maps created in this thesis show a visual representation that provides interesting insights into this period and shows how these factors alone cannot explain the mobilisation patterns. From these maps, it has been demonstrated that many theories offered have been insufficient in providing a conclusive explanation. Rather, the political and economic context before the war was largely agitated by issues being mishandled or the severity being underestimated. However, the most significant contribution has been the closer examination of the effect of charismatic leadership, which indicated the most successful influence on mobilisation patterns. Often, the literature gives the impression of the Cape Rebels being fickle in their decision-making and personal convictions. The
outcome of an event or issue would change their minds, and a battle lost would sway their affiliation. Instead, this thesis has shown the independent thinking and lifestyle of this group who took loyalty extremely seriously. The Cape Rebels were careful to choose who they wanted to be affiliated with and whose attitudes and beliefs resonated with them. However, in all, what had influenced their mobilisation was the compounded effects of many factors. For some, it was simply that they believed it to be the morally justified and correct thing to do.

SUMMARY OF CONTRIBUTIONS

This thesis has resourced and compiled various unique datasets to conduct a comprehensive analysis asking why the Cape Rebels fought for the Boer Republics during the war. During this study, these datasets provided the evidence to analyse the main reasons cited for why this group was mobilised. From this analysis, this thesis has contributed to the literature in proving and disproving some of the most salient reasons for mobilisation in the Cape Colony. Several theories were tested and left wanting. However, the influence of charismatic leadership and political ideologies was shown to be a strong influence of mobilisation patterns along the route taken by Smuts. This is a unique contribution to the literature and has not been tested or theorised in the historical literature.

In addition, this thesis has demonstrated interesting perspectives that can be analysed through the inclusion of archival records into historically based maps. This has shown a novel visual representation of events in this period and makes for new questions to be asked. The dataset is important, dense and interesting with many different modes of enquiry available from the data collected. This thesis has shown the benefits of incorporating archival sources, historical statistics and datasets into historical research, showing how they complement and strengthen one another. Moreover, this research would not have been possible without the inclusion of these sources, given the lack of archival records specifically focused on the Cape Rebels. Given the outcomes of the theories tested in this study, this thesis has shown how data and statistics have the potential to make convincing and illustrative conclusions given the available methodologies and technological capacities of research. This thesis has shown the benefit of using quantitative research in combination with historical research to reveal previously misunderstood conclusions.

FUTURE RESEARCH

In this thesis, the scope was narrowed to asking why the Cape Rebels were mobilised. Given the novel insights of the datasets compiled during this study, several other hypotheses could be tested further. Additionally, during this study, most of the analysis was limited to spatial relationships in GIS, which opens the door for using these datasets in more exhaustive and robust econometric
techniques. There is room for including additional datasets and aspects of the census information to further question the research on the rebels. Education is one area that seemed to strongly influence the districts with lower concentrations of rebels. Missing information and a lack of standardisation in the statistics was one challenge experienced during this study that may be overcome through further hours spent seeking out alternative sources of this information in the archives.

This thesis has investigated why the Cape Rebels mobilised but did not ask any broader questions. Due to the scope of the thesis, there is room for further enquiry into specific case studies and districts, especially with the volume of individual-level data available in the Rebel Record. This research has contributed to the historiography of the Cape Rebels, a niche group in South African history. Future research on the Cape Rebels should assess the benefit and impact of this group on the Boer commandos during the war. This researcher hopes to analyse the case of the Cape Rebels in future research, using the datasets and knowledge built during this study.
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ADDENDUM

TABLE 1 SHOWING OVERVIEW STATISTICS FROM REBEL RECORD

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>REBELS IN THE REBEL RECORD</th>
<th>17,331</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ABSCONDED</td>
<td>2,175</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ALIENS</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CLASS 1 REBELS</td>
<td>469</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CLASS 2 REBELS</td>
<td>3,772</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DIED IN WAR</td>
<td>683</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DISQUALIFIED</td>
<td>3,554</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ELECTORAL WARD NOTED</td>
<td>5,117</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EXECUTED</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EXECUTED</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FARMERS/ AGRICULTURALISTS</td>
<td>3,084</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LAID DOWN ARMS</td>
<td>3,677</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LANDOWNER/ HOUSEHOLDER</td>
<td>2,274</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NATURALISED</td>
<td>149</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NON-VOTER</td>
<td>1,386</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PARTIAL AMNESTY GRANTED</td>
<td>187</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PERMANENTLY DISQUALIFIED</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRISONER OF WAR</td>
<td>1,917</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REJOINED</td>
<td>445</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REPUBLICAN</td>
<td>1,064</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SENTENCE COMMUTED</td>
<td>449</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SENTENCED TO DEATH</td>
<td>447</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VOTER</td>
<td>3,647</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

APPENDIX 3A

Rainfall levels were recorded from 1804 to 1904, listing the stations in the district, their altitude, and how much rainfall they received annually. In the departmental reports, this can be seen as monthly tallies. This information was used to gauge the drought and flood prospects, which contributed to the health of the agrarian economy. Cattle populations were evaluated from the 1891 and 1904 censuses to determine the impact of the rinderpest epidemic. This was used in conjunction with the rinderpest statistics for the Cape Colony, which was compiled in May 1898. Crop outputs were also consulted and show the impact of the rainfall levels and the health of the agricultural economy. Population
information was recorded as population per district, the proportions according to gender and sometimes also race. Ages of the population were used to demonstrate the fertility and health of the population. One hypothesis tested is whether a district with a large young adult population might be more conducive to housing a larger population of rebels. Education rates of the population per district have also been evaluated. The census provides information on how many people in the district can read and write, just read, or were illiterate. This is also broken down by gender. This allows one to question whether education played a role in whether people were more likely to become rebels.

APPENDIX 3B

The Voter’s rolls were lists compiled, revised and sent to the colonial office of the Cape Colony, forming part of the government publications. This process was conducted biennially and occurred first during the period of responsible government in the Cape Colony. These lists were compiled to regulate who qualified to vote, to estimate the number of potential voters who could qualify to vote in an electoral division and to prevent personation (double voting). Voting officials were able to prevent those who were not qualified for the franchise from voting and ensure that individuals were unable to vote multiple times. After the war, additional exclusionary clauses were introduced to limit participation in the franchise. One of the clauses in the Treaty of Vereeniging stipulated that only white people should be allowed to vote, as proposed by the Boer Republics. Race had not been an exclusionary factor in the Cape Colony before this. In 1903, the voter’s rolls began to record the race of candidates. This was an important shift in allowing for the monitoring of various electoral groups and voting behaviours. With the introduction of race being recorded, candidates could be classified as white, Coloured or African voters. This study will focus on registrations before this amendment.

APPENDIX 3C

THE REBEL RECORD DATASET (H. A. & D. SHEARING)

This thesis would not have been possible without the dataset compiled by Taffy and David Shearing. This dataset was a labour of love. Much of the dataset created by husband and wife, H. A. and D. Shearing had originally been handwritten index cards stored in shoe boxes that were later transcribed into Microsoft Access. This was a passion project and lifelong work. Importantly, this was archivally robust research. The following archives were consulted: the Cape Town Archives Repository, National Library of South Africa, the Orange Free State Archives Repository, War Museum of the Boer Republics in Bloemfontein, National Archives Repository in Pretoria, the Dutch Reformed Church, and several district’s museums.
From these archives, a wealth of sources related to the Cape Rebels were consulted and their details were compiled into an encyclopaedic record of the individuals. Some of the archival sources included: the archives of Magistrate courts, lists of prisoners of war, personal collections of documents, archives of the Attorney-General, surrender statements, lists of absconded rebels, High treason cases, war correspondence, special treason cases, lists of rebels surrendering outside the Cape colony, South African Heritage Resources Agency (National Monuments Commission), the Smuts Papers, prison registers, royal commission reports, public records documents and newspaper articles (Beaufort Courier, Barkly East Reporter, Cape Times Weekly Edition, EP Herald, Frontier Guardian, Grocott’s Daily Mail Weekly War Summary, George and Knysna Herald, Gordonia News, Grocott’s Penny Mail, Huisgenoot, Mafeking Mail Special Siege Slips, Midland News, Oudtshoorn Coerant Ons Land, SA News Weekly, Victoria West Messenger and Woonburger).

Included below is the story of how the dataset was collected, as told by daughters Eleanor Muller and Michelle Shearing: “All that extraordinary work was done on physical indexing cards, with my father eventually doing the typing and laying the info out in a series of MS Word documents. After the publication of the thesis, the handwritten cards (stored in shoeboxes - usually Klinik Sandals) were recycled or used, likely, as fertilizer for the next vegetable garden. Given modern datasets, it's almost unbelievable today that this work was done manually. The ability to do this is better understood if you knew my parents: My Dad was a Karoo sheep farmer. He could count anything and had a “keep going until it's done” ability that was extraordinary. Also, do not underestimate the value of my mother's encyclopaedic memory. She simply knew each of those Rebels as if they were personal friends. And it's not that they were not computer literate. Mom bought her first Apple 2e in about 1984 - I recall proudly presenting an essay at varsity printed on a dot matrix printer. No tippex to be seen! Dad created an extraordinary family tree online through the My Heritage site. Their thinking on the Rebel Record was that it was only of real interest as a genealogy record. You'll note that in the last paragraph of the forward to the Rebel Record. I do know that they would have been fascinated by your research, and very happy to know that their work will help further researchers”.446

These records were compiled into a Microsoft Access datasheet listing the rebels, their information, activities, commandos, districts, whether they absconded, laid down arms, were executed, sent to Prisoner of War camps, and what their punishment was. This thesis exported these records into Microsoft Excel; however, many duplications existed. It was necessary to consult the Rebel Record series of books published by the Shearings alongside their dataset to eradicate duplications. These have kindly been made available by their daughters, Michelle and Eleanor. It was necessary to

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446 Personal correspondence, M. Shearing and E. Muller, 29 June 2021.
manually identify and correct the information to complete the analysis. The notes on each rebel varied, some with detailed descriptions of the individual, others with only their district recorded.

This dataset was combined with the records from the Anglo–Boer War Museum. This underwent tedious data cleaning to create usable columns in the dataset for effective data analysis. However, this does not limit this study, as manual checking provides a measure of robustness to the dataset and allows for the additional identification of possible problematic categories and classifications.

**APPENDIX 3D**

Due to the wide range of sources and methods used in this thesis, some reflection on how these different sources and methods contributed to the argument has been detailed below to outline the benefits and challenges of using more creative and complex evidence. Some of the sources included in this thesis were: statistical registers, census records, court transcripts, petition prayers and newspaper articles. This thesis demonstrates the benefits and value of using quantitative sources in providing a lens into historical events and the wealth of information they provide – especially in the case of Cape Rebels, where one is forced to rely on alternative sources of information to glean insights into understanding this group better. The statistical registers were able to offer district-level information, captured year-on-year from various departments.

These registers were the basis for capturing the scale of the agricultural recession experienced during the period prior to the outbreak of the war. Rainfall levels were recorded over a ten year period and verified the extreme drought conditions experienced prior to the war. The registers also captured annual outputs from various industries. Crop outputs were used to show how the drought and lack of draught animals had reduced yearly outputs for farmers in certain districts. The registers also helped to understand the impact that the rinderpest epidemic had on the economic sector. The cattle mortalities were captured, and a special report was commissioned and compiled by the Cape Government to address the epidemic. Both these records combined offered insights into what the actual losses experienced were, and were previous research had exaggerated figures. Education levels were also recorded through documenting who was able to read and write, just read, just write or neither. These records allowed the formal education levels of the districts to be analysed on average, and indicated how many people were able to vote or not. The ages of the population were recorded in increments. This information captured what proportion of the population was, on average, too young or too old to be a potential rebel. These figures were also cross-checked in the rebel record to see which age category was the largest of the rebels recorded in the database. The census records
were also able to cross-check much of the information given in the statistical registers in more detail and confirmed the data insights recorded in the more regularly compiled statistical registers.

Court transcripts and treason trial documentation offered a verbatim record of what was discussed, questioned, and concluded during court procedures. In these records, this thesis was able to distinguish the line of questioning utilised by the Military Courts during Martial Law. These records also recorded testimonies offered for or against the accused rebel, as well as witnesses. Names were signed on the back of the testimonies, often by fellow peers from their commando and who knew the accused in a personal capacity. These proceedings showed large variations in treatment, with some rebels being quickly charged with treason whilst other rebels were trialled over a period of multiple weeks. These variations and discrepancies offer helpful insights into the legal proceedings which judged and charged this group. This was helpful for this thesis as the rationale for their decisions could be better understood in some of the lengthier proceedings. Understanding the legal framework within which these individuals were charged was a crucial to understanding the complexity of the position they were in. Whilst the legal lens offered a clear delineation as to who was guilty or not guilty of being a rebel, the personal testimonies and understanding of the individuals showed that their choice to aid the Republican forces was not always understood to be an act of high treason. Rather, these records demonstrated that many were ignorant of the legal definition of their actions, and that they had not viewed their actions to have been in breach of their loyalty to the Cape Government.

One of the more creative sources of information was the use of petition prayers. These petition prayers recorded which session of parliament the petitions had been lodged with, the date of their record, the name of the person presenting, the names and description of the petitioners, the place of the petition, the prayer lodged, and the remarks (such as which Select Committee the petition was referred to). The petition prayers from 1896-1900 were analysed to provide insights into what the common grievances and requests were during the period of study for this thesis. These records were helpful in documenting the economic depression experienced, and the need for governmental intervention into individual settings. These records portray the personal experiences and needs of individuals willing to undergo the effort to lodge their concerns and offer insights into the growing disgruntlement with government in the Cape.

In all, this reflection on the manner in which these various sources have been used by this thesis demonstrates the contribution these records have made to the overall understanding and comprehensive research conducted. Each type of source offered a new way to understand the issues prevalent in the pre-war period and how these issues weighed upon citizens of the Cape Colony. These insights have contributed to a more nuanced and complex understanding that there was no
monocausal reason for why people mobilised. Instead, this research has shown that there were several underlying factors which were able to sway rebel mobilisation, and that the personal experiences of individuals in their respective districts were likely what influenced their final decision to join republican forces during the war.