

YEAR 11 HISTORY NOTES
SOUTH AFRICA

South Africa 1938–1976

Focus

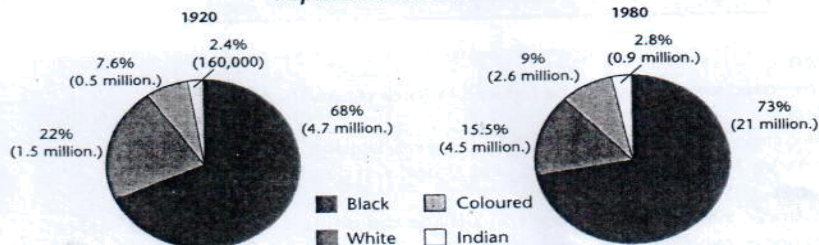
Why did attitudes to race relations in South Africa harden between 1938 and 1948?

Between 1948 and 1980 South Africa adopted a distinctive approach to race relations. In response to the multicultural make-up of the nation, the Government adopted a policy of Apartheid. This policy was condemned worldwide; however, the Government defended its policy on the basis of the uniqueness of the South African make-up. It is only since 1985 that a rapid transformation in race relations has occurred. South Africa now has a democratic structure with which it is facing the consequences of nearly a half century of apartheid policies.

Introduction

The South African population is made up of four main racial groups

Population of South Africa



Whites may be divided into two sub-groups: Afrikaners and those who are English-speaking. Many Whites feel threatened because they are greatly outnumbered by Blacks.

Afrikaners are descendants of Dutch immigrants.

- Most are members of the Dutch Reformed Church.
- Afrikaners dominated politics.
- They speak **Afrikaans**.

English-speaking Whites are mostly of British descent.

- In 1815 the Cape Province was taken over, or annexed, by Britain.
- With the discovery of gold and diamonds, British immigration increased rapidly after 1860.

The great majority of the population is Black. Over the centuries, Blacks migrated south from the equatorial regions of Africa.

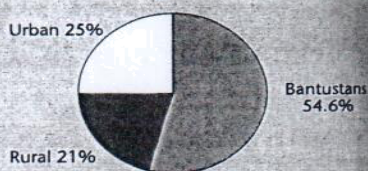
- They had settled in regions of the Cape, Transvaal and Natal before the arrival of Europeans in southern Africa.
- The Black population can be divided into major tribal groups. The **Bantu** consist of several 'nations'.

The Black Nations in South Africa

	%
Xhosa	28.5
Zulu	27
Tswana	11
South Sotho	10
North Sotho	7.5
Tsonga	5.0
Swazi	3.5
Ndebele	3.0
Venda	2.2
Other	2.0

- only 25% of African wage earners lived in Bantustans.

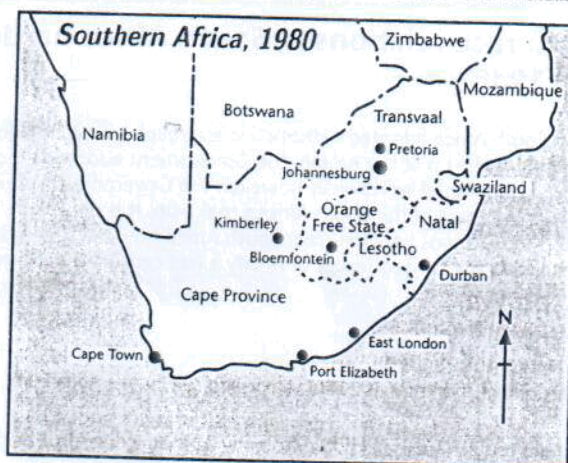
Distribution of Black population 1980, according to official registration



Intertribal conflict (*mfecane*) was common in the first half of the nineteenth century.

Coloureds are people of mixed descent. Most live in the Cape Province, and are descendants of mixed marriages or relationships. The San and Khoi, as original inhabitants of the Cape, are included in this group.

Most **Asians** are descendants of migrants from India. Indians came to Natal as **indentured labourers**. They signed contracts committing them to work on plantations for a set number of years. They worked their 'indenture period' on sugar plantations. When this period was over, they were offered passage back to India or permanent settlement. Many chose to remain in Natal.



The problem

If it could be stated simply, it would be reduced to three factors:

- **Political**
The Afrikaners desire baasskap (literally this means 'bossism'; in practice it means white supremacy). To achieve this a system of apartheid was developed.
- **Economic**
South African industry has depended on a cheap and plentiful supply of labour; hence the economic exploitation of non-whites.
- **Social**
Apartheid meant the segregation of races in all aspects of social life.

Chronology 1815–1919

- 1815 Cape Province annexed by Britain.
- 1834 Slavery abolished in all British colonies.
- 1835–1840 The **Great Trek**
 - A series of treks (migrations) as the Afrikaners attempted to move outside areas of British control.
 - They moved into the Transvaal and Orange Free State.
- 1843 Britain annexed Natal.
- 1856 A parliament was established in the Cape Colony.
- 1866 The independent Boer Republic of Transvaal was annexed by Britain.
 - The Boers went to war against Britain. The British withdrew from the Transvaal.
- 1868 Diamonds were discovered at Kimberly.
- 1886 Gold was discovered in the Transvaal.

In the following decades the use of African labour in the gold and diamond mines set the pattern for industrial relations between Europeans and Blacks which eventually resulted in the *Mines and Works Act 1911*.

1890	Cecil Rhodes became Prime Minister of the Cape Colony. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • He was determined to gain control of the Transvaal, because of the gold there. • Rhodes hoped to extend the British Empire from Cairo (Egypt) to the Cape.
1894	Natal Indian Congress formed. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Created to oppose discrimination against Indians.
1899–1902	The South African War

The South African War

- Fought between the British and Boer descendants in South Africa.
- The Boers feared British attempts to gain control of Transvaal.
- President Kruger of the Transvaal misinterpreted sympathy from Europe as support for the Boers.
- Fighting broke out in October 1899 with early Boer successes but by June 1900, Britain had occupied the Boer capital of Pretoria.
- The war was concluded by the Treaty of Vereeniging, 1902.

1906–1908	Revival of Afrikaner dominance in provincial politics.
1910	Union of South Africa Act <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Merged the four provinces into the Union of South Africa. • Established a bicameral (two-house) legislature. • In the Cape and Natal, voting rights were determined by property qualifications i.e. in order to vote a person had to own property of a certain value. • Non-Europeans were unable to vote in the Transvaal or the Orange Free State. • English and Dutch were the official languages (Afrikaans replaced Dutch in 1925).

In 1910 Louis Botha of the South African Party became Prime Minister. From then until the 1990s, every Prime Minister and most cabinet ministers were Afrikaners. This ensured their continued dominance of the political system.

1911	Mines and Works Act <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Established the principle of job reservation in the mines. • Skilled jobs were reserved for Whites. Native Labour Act <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prohibited strikes by Africans.
1912	African National Congress formed (see p. 112).
1913	Native Lands Act <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set aside 7% of land for African occupation. • Aimed at preventing Africans from renting farms or buying farms in European areas.
1914–1918	World War I <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most South Africans supported the British war effort. • Some Afrikaners opposed supporting the British. This included future Prime Minister James Hertzog.

YEAR 11 HISTORY WORKSHEET

SET 22-24

1916

Hertzog formed the National Party

1918

Broederbond created. This was an Afrikaner secret society established to maintain Afrikaner supremacy.

1922

Rand Riot

- White miners in the Rand mining area went on strike in response to mine owner tactics of employing Blacks and Coloureds.
- A general strike was called.
- Prime Minister **Jan Smuts** used the army to crush the strike.
- More than 230 people were killed.
- White English-speaking labour now swayed towards the race issue.

1923

Urban Areas Act

- Established segregated residential area in towns. Each race had their own suburbs and residential areas.

1924

Smuts lost the 1924 election to Hertzog and the National Party.

- This was partly due to the Government action in the Rand Riots.
- The National Party could outbid the South African Party on the race issue.

1924

Industrial Conciliation Act

- Introduced as part of Hertzog's 'civilised labour policy'.
- Prohibited Blacks forming trade unions.
- Established a 'colour bar' in the mines – Blacks were limited to unskilled jobs.

1927

Native Amendment Act

- Gave Government power to resettle Blacks in rural areas.

Immorality Act

- Unless they were married, Blacks and Europeans were prohibited from having sexual relationships.

1934

Hertzog and Smuts joined the National and South African Parties in the coalition, thus forming the *United Party*.

Some former members of the National Party objected. They formed the *Purified Nationalists*. Their leader was **Daniel Malan**.

1936

Representation of Natives Act

- Placed Blacks who lived in the Cape Province on a separate electoral roll.
- Blacks were to elect three white MPs to represent them.

Native Trust and Land Act 1936

- Land set aside for Black reserves was increased from 7% to 13%.
- Trust fund set up to purchase land.
- By 1963 less than 3% had been purchased.

By 1938 many of the key parts of apartheid were in place. The Malan Government, elected in 1948, would strengthen legislation already passed and widen its scope greatly.

Why did attitudes to race relations in South Africa harden between 1938 and 1948?

As in Europe, radical and militant groups emerged as a result of the Depression. In South Africa, these paramilitary groups included the Brown Shirts, Grey Shirts and the National Socialist Order.

One of the most influential groups was the **Ossewa Brandwag**, formed in 1938. The Ossewa adopted the racial policies of the Nazis. It attacked Hertzog and Smuts as Jewish supporters. It was responsible for acts of sabotage.

The **Broederbond** supported these extremist groups.

The Broederbond

- A secret organisation whose goal was the maintenance of white supremacy.
- Formed in 1918 as the League of Brothers.
- Opposed the coalition between Smuts and Hertzog.
- A nationalist group supporting Afrikaner ideas.
- Established a cell network throughout the National Party and Dutch Reformed Church.
- Its membership included future Prime Minister Hendrik Verwoerd.
- Its members influenced almost every aspect of political life in South Africa.

The strength of Afrikaner nationalism was obvious at the centennial celebrations of the Great Trek, which were held in December 1938 to commemorate the Zulu defeat at Blood River. Many Afrikaners 'trekked' in pilgrimage to the Voortrekker memorial at Pretoria. Dr Malan was given a rousing reception.



Afrikaner nationalists were committed to achieving an Afrikaner nation – a country controlled by and for Afrikaners.

Hertzog and Smuts had joined the Nationalist and South African Parties into the United Party, to concentrate on fighting the depression. They both moderated their policies. This left a gap for extremists.

The outbreak of World War II caused a serious problem for the Government. A split occurred between Smuts and Hertzog, because Hertzog had opposed entry into World War I. Now, in 1939, he again opposed the use of South African troops. Smuts wanted to support Britain, fearing German colonial ambitions in Southern Africa. Parliament voted 80 to 67 to support Britain, and Hertzog resigned.

330 000 South Africans served in the war. This included 120 000 Blacks. Blacks were unable to volunteer for combat duties. They saw different treatment of Maori and Indian troops in the North African campaign.

During the war, Nazi sympathisers attempted to undermine and weaken the Government. Smuts moved swiftly to crush these groups.

Political opposition to the United Party was divided during the war. Hertzog had temporarily joined the 'Purified National Party', but he quickly became unhappy with its anti-British policies.

N. Havenga formed the Afrikaner Party, which adopted a more moderate policy than the **'Purified' Nationalists**.

The Dominion Party and Labour Party supported the war effort.

In the post-war settlement, Smuts played a vital role in the establishment of the United Nations. This proved unpopular in South Africa, as the United Nations soon became a focal point for criticising South Africa's racial policies.

India's independence in 1947 led to criticism of the treatment of Indians in Natal. The Soviet Union participated in these attacks on South Africa.

This criticism led to many moderate Afrikaners supporting Dr Malan.

- India still kept its caste system.
- The Soviet Union retained military control of Eastern Europe.

The 1948 Election

The governing United Party faced post-war problems.

- Strikes occurred in the mining area of the Witwatersrand over wages.
- In some districts war-time rationing continued.
- Many whites felt threatened by the rapid increase in the Black population in the cities. By 1948 the Black urban population outnumbered the white urban population.
- Government links with the United Nations were unpopular.

The racial policies of the political parties.

United Party (Smuts)

- Based on the Fagan report.
- Proposed the economic integration but political segregation of South African society.
- Blacks living in urban areas seen as permanent residents rather than migrant workers.
- It further recommended the establishment of middle-class African townships.

National Party (Malan)

(the term 'purified' had been dropped)

- Based on apartheid.
- Provided a 'distinctive choice to the native question'.
- Apartheid promised the continued supremacy of Afrikaners.
- The policy was to segregate all racial groups, not just Africans.
- It proposed the *repatriation* of all Indians.
- The policy claimed the reserves were the natural home of the Bantu, and that they remained in urban areas only as long as their labour was required.

The results of the 1948 election

National	70
Afrikaner	9
United	74

Malan formed a coalition government with the Afrikaner Party. Smuts lost his seat but a seat was soon made available for him.

National supporters were overjoyed. They saw victory as a vote of support to carry out their racial policies. Wherever possible links with Britain were broken. Streets named after English towns, etc were renamed. Afrikaans was widely used in public office.

The English-speaking community was astonished by the result of the election. Until now they had shown little interest in politics. They were often accused of still regarding themselves as British rather than South African. They were effectively excluded from political power because of the election results.

The 1953 election result confirmed the trend of 1948. The United Party had hoped to regain the protest vote of 1948.

Results:	National*	94
	United	57
	Labour	4

*The Afrikaner Party had been absorbed into the National Party.

From 1948 the National Party had great control over South African politics. Opposition to it within parliament decreased with each election up until 1980.

Arguments used to justify apartheid

- Whites arrived first in South Africa.
- Different races and ethnic groups have a natural desire to live apart and independent of each other.
- The Bible (Psalm 105) justifies apartheid stating some people are born to rule.
- South Africa is a barrier against the further spread of Communism in Africa.
- The colour bar has always been part of the South African way of life.
- Africans in South Africa have the highest standard of living of all Africans south of the equator.
- The record of African countries on gaining independence was poor, eg civil wars, coup d'etats (takeovers) in Uganda, Zaire, Nigeria.
- Countries should resolve their own racial problems instead of criticising South Africa.

(These were frequently stated justifications of apartheid. They are not those of the author.)

Prime Ministers of South Africa

1910-1919	Louis Botha	1954-1958	Johannes Strijdom
1919-1924	Jan Smuts	1958-1966	Dr Hendrik Verwoerd
1924-1940	James Hertzog	1966-1978	B. John Vorster
1940-1948	Jan Smuts	1978-1984	Pieter Botha
1948-1954	Dr Daniel Malan		

(In the constitutional changes of 1984, P. Botha became President)

Apartheid in action

Social	Prohibition of Mixed Marriages Act
	Immorality Act
	Population Registration Act
	Natives Act
	Reservation of Separate Amenities Act
	Native Law Amendment Act
Political	Suppression of Communism Act
	Separate Registration of Voters Act
	Bantu Authorities Act
Labour	Native Labour Act
	Industrial Conciliation Act
Education	Bantu Education Act
	Extension of Universities Act

Residential	Group Areas Act
	Resettlement Act
	Bantu Law Amendment Act

This is not a rigid or exclusive classification of legislation. There was considerable overlap as some laws belonged in more than one category.