



Twentieth-Century South Africa

The twentieth century has brought considerable political, social and economic change for South Africa. While many would choose to focus only on the issues of race, segregation and apartheid, this book tries to capture another facet: its drive towards modernisation and industrialisation. While considering the achievements and failures of that drive, as well as how it related to ethnic and racial policymaking, Bill Freund makes the economic data come alive by highlighting people and places. He proposes that South Africa in the twentieth century can actually be understood as a nascent developmental state, with economic development acting as a key motivating factor. As a unique history of South Africa in the twentieth century, this will appeal to anyone interested in a new interpretation of modern South African economic development or those in development studies searching for striking historical examples.

BILL FREUND is Professor Emeritus of Built Environment and Development Studies at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, and Visiting Professor at the University of the Witwatersrand. His previous books include *The African Worker* (Cambridge University Press, 1988), *The African City: A History* (Cambridge University Press, 2007) and *The Making of Contemporary Africa* (2016).

Twentieth-Century South Africa

A Developmental History

BILL FREUND

University of KwaZulu-Natal



CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

Cambridge University Press
 978-1-108-42740-1 — Twentieth-Century South Africa
 Bill Freund
 Frontmatter
[More Information](#)

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

University Printing House, Cambridge CB2 8BS, United Kingdom
 One Liberty Plaza, 20th Floor, New York, NY 10006, USA
 477 Williamstown Road, Port Melbourne, VIC 3207, Australia
 314–321, 3rd Floor, Plot 3, Splendor Forum, Jasola District Centre,
 New Delhi – 110025, India
 79 Anson Road, #06–04/06, Singapore 079906

Cambridge University Press is part of the University of Cambridge.

It furthers the University's mission by disseminating knowledge in the pursuit of education, learning, and research at the highest international levels of excellence.

www.cambridge.org
 Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9781108427401
 DOI: 10.1017/9781108604222

© Bill Freund 2019

This publication is in copyright. Subject to statutory exception and to the provisions of relevant collective licensing agreements, no reproduction of any part may take place without the written permission of Cambridge University Press.

First published 2019

Printed and bound in Great Britain by Clays Ltd, Elcograf S.p.A.

A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Names: Freund, Bill, author.

Title: Twentieth-century South Africa : a developmental history / Bill Freund.

Description: New York : Cambridge University Press, 2018. | Includes bibliographical references and index.

Identifiers: LCCN 2018015238 | ISBN 9781108427401 (alk. paper)

Subjects: LCSH: Economic development – South Africa. | South Africa – Economic conditions – 1991– | South Africa – Economic policy.

Classification: LCC HC905 .F748 2018 | DDC 330.96807–dc23

LC record available at <https://lcn.loc.gov/2018015238>

ISBN 978-1-108-42740-1 Hardback

ISBN 978-1-108-44615-0 Paperback

Cambridge University Press has no responsibility for the persistence or accuracy of URLs for external or third-party internet websites referred to in this publication and does not guarantee that any content on such websites is, or will remain, accurate or appropriate.

Contents

<i>List of Figures and Maps</i>	<i>page</i> vi
<i>List of Tables</i>	vii
<i>Acknowledgements</i>	viii
1 White-run South Africa as a Developmental State: An Interpretive Economic History of Twentieth-Century South Africa	1
2 The Conflicted Foundations of Industrial Policy	19
3 Industrial Development in South Africa up to the Second World War: Some Figures and Some Business History	40
4 A (Near) Developmental State Forms, 1939–48	62
5 The Impact of Apartheid, 1948–73	82
6 The Parastatals ISCOR and SASOL	103
7 Key Institutions: The IDC, the CSIR, the HSRC	122
8 The Company Towns of the Vaal Triangle	139
9 Energy and the Natural Environment	171
10 Developmentalism Dismantled	191
Conclusion	214
<i>Bibliography</i>	222
<i>Index</i>	245

Figures and Maps

Figures	
4.1 Portrait of H.J. van der Bijl	<i>page 67</i>
7.1 Archival Notes about Foreign Loans	124
10.1 South African and ISCOR Crude Liquid Steel Production, 1967–89 (millions of tons per annum)	211
Maps	
8.1 The Vaal Triangle	143
8.2 Blueprint for White Sasolburg	145
8.3 Blueprint for Sasolburg Town	146

Tables

3.1 Numbers of Workers in Private Industry with the Percentage of those Workers who are Considered White	<i>page</i> 41
3.2 Workers in South African Railways and Harbours (with White Percentage)	42
3.3 Size of other Workforces in the First Thirty Years of the Union of South Africa	43
3.4 Money Values for the South African Economy	44
3.5 Gold Sales in ‘000 Pounds	45
3.6 Industrial Output in Value by Sectors (in percentage)	46
5.1 Selected Years: Balance of Trade (sums are in ‘000 £s)	91
5.2 Development of Manufacturing	96
6.1 Employment at ISCOR by Race	105
6.2 ISCOR Turnover Rates (1971)	106
7.1 IDC Investments up to 1965	126
8.1 Vaal Triangle Towns: Officially Registered White and Black Population Totals Compared	142
10.1 Number of ISCOR Workers	212

Acknowledgements

I have tried my best to respond to the very useful critical remarks provided by Cambridge University Press's anonymous readers in creating a final version of this book. Over a good ten years, I have made use of a variety of friends and colleagues in thinking about and collecting material on this subject matter. The first paper I can remember writing towards this end was probably for an international conference organised by Monash University, irresistibly held in the town where my father was born, the Tuscan Renaissance city of Prato, Italy.

However, I would give pride of place to the Corporate Strategy and Industrial Development (CSID) MA programme at the University of the Witwatersrand's School of Economics and Business Sciences. There I found for a time an intellectual home that correlated with my own ideas and interests in the material I cover here. My role in the school was partly organised by my friend Nicolas Pons-Vignon, but the director, Seeraj Mohamed, was a very welcoming and supportive figure in every way. Through the CSID MA I participated for several years in the African Programme on Rethinking Development Economics (APORDE), which supported postgraduate students from South Africa and elsewhere with an impressive array of guest speakers focused on development issues. Here too I was stimulated as well as honoured to be a participant. I finally need to thank Ben Fine of the School of Oriental and African Studies, who was an inspirational figure and frequent visitor to the programme. Ben's work on the mineral and energy complex in South Africa was co-authored by Zav Rustomjee, who also made an important unpublished paper of his own available to me. Their landmark book is currently being updated and should appear in a new edition. I could hardly have written this book without their platform existing. Amongst the teachers in the programme were Samantha Ashman, Sue Lewis, Lotta Takala-Greenish, Rex McKenzie and my old student and friend Firoz

Acknowledgements

ix

Khan of Stellenbosch University. Nimrod Zalk, an associate from the Department of Trade and Industry, kindly gave me an almost complete version of his London doctoral thesis. All these people formed a community of intense commitment and interest to the development project in South Africa which was exciting to join.

One area that is touched on in this book is the Industrial Development Corporation (IDC). I am very grateful to them for access to their library (the Infocentre) and files. For his assistance, I would also like to thank Jorge Maia, head of research and also Raymond Majozi, the Records Department Support Services manager. An IDC official and former student, Nnzeni Netshitomboni, now working on his PhD on the history of the organisation under my supervision, has been a great colleague and host at this important institution. On the history of the Centre for Scientific and Industrial Research, I profited from conversation with Professor David Walwyn of the University of Pretoria.

Some parts of this book depend on research in the National Archives in Pretoria where I found a helpful staff. In Pretoria I enjoyed the hospitality of, and many great discussions with, Rasigan Maharajh. At home I have made use of our library at the University of KwaZulu-Natal and occasionally at the Killie Campbell Africana Library special collection. The National Research Foundation made funds available for travel to Gauteng. On visits to Johannesburg, I made use of the Wits library system. In particular, I have consulted several documents kept at the Cullen Library of the University of the Witwatersrand, with its very friendly and knowledgeable staff. An important part of this was the material about planners active in the formation of the parastatal towns. Here I enjoyed the invaluable help of Professor Alan Mabin, who had himself interviewed Roy Kantorowich long ago and knew much about his story. Indeed, Alan must know as much or more than anyone about urban planning and urban history in South Africa; he also pointed me in the direction of a son of Vanderbijlpark, Professor Mark Oranje of the Town and Regional Planning Department of the University of Pretoria, who returned to his home town with me on a memorable visit. Victor Munnik is not a Vaal Triangle native but he is the author of a great University of the Witwatersrand sociology thesis on Steel Valley and ecological problems there. I learnt a lot from meeting him and reading his thesis. I am also indebted to Steve Sparks of the University of Johannesburg and his thesis on Sasolburg, from which I learnt so much. I am waiting for Steve to turn this University of Michigan thesis into

a published work which should attract considerable attention. Eddie Webster indicated in conversation that his first book, *Cast in a Racial Mould*, and allied research was actually partially set in the Vaal Triangle and thus of particular value to me to rediscover. Frank Sokolic produced my clarity-enhancing maps.

I spent a month as a guest of the Institute of Social and Economic Research at Rhodes University and Professor Robert van Niekerk, the director, was not only a very pleasant host but also the author of an Oxford thesis of which I made use. This work made me think about the attempt to create a national health system in the 1940s and I also must thank Simonne Horwitz of the University of Saskatchewan for giving me access to her then unpublished Canadian thesis on Baragwanath Hospital. I also found at Rhodes the papers of Douglas Smit, Smuts' Minister of Native Affairs, who had much to do with the creation of a homeland textile industry in the Eastern Cape and was a key figure in the old United Party. Dr Johan Fourie hosted me at a seminar at Stellenbosch University and Professor Anne Mager, for whose excellent Economic History programme at the University of Cape Town (UCT) I served as external examiner for some years, made a big contribution to this book by pointing me towards the unpublished UCT Andrew Marquard thesis on energy policy. In general, this project has been a great chance to meet and learn from a wide and very impressive range of South African intellectuals. Amongst the seminars I have addressed with reference to my expanding ideas on the old South Africa and its development trajectory, I should note a new impressive Iranian/German friend, Kaveh Yazdani, who spent a couple of post-doctoral years at the University of the Witwatersrand. My paper for his workshop was actually the basis of the first chapter of this book.