



# **The Last Afrikaner Leaders: A Supreme Test of Power (Reconsiderations in Southern African History)**

*Hermann Giliomee*

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**The Last Afrikaner Leaders: A Supreme Test of Power (Reconsiderations in Southern African History)** Hermann Giliomee

Finalist for the Alan Paton Award

In his latest book, renowned historian Hermann Giliomee challenges the conventional wisdom on the downfall of white rule and the end of apartheid. Instead of impersonal forces, or the resourcefulness of an indomitable resistance movement, he emphasizes the role of Nationalist leaders and of their outspoken critic Frederick van Zyl Slabbert. What motivated each of the last Afrikaner leaders, from Verwoerd to de Klerk? How did each try to reconcile economic growth, white privilege, and security with the demands of an increasingly assertive black leadership and unexpected population figures?

In exploring each leader's background, reasoning, and personal foibles, Giliomee takes issue with the assumption that South Africa was inexorably heading for an ANC victory in 1994. He argues that historical accidents radically affected the course of politics.

Drawing on primary sources and personal interviews, Giliomee offers a fresh and stimulating political history that attempts not to condemn but to understand why the last Afrikaner leaders did what they did, and why their own policies ultimately failed them.

A 2014 CHOICE Outstanding Academic Title

Reconsiderations in Southern African History

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