

**KRUGER IN CRISIS:
AN ANALYSIS OF THE TELEGRAMS
OF 1900**

by

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Abstract

S.J.P. Kruger, four times president of the Zuid-Afrikaansche Republiek (ZAR), played a central role in the Afrikaners' struggle for independence both in the 19th and 20th centuries. His significance as a leader also becomes apparent when considering the plethora of literature written on him both during his lifetime and after. Not only is his own life story intertwined with the history and development of the ZAR and rise of Afrikanerdom, but as a leading figure he was also subject to much criticism. This was particularly evident in the years leading up to and during the South African War (1899-1902) when the ZAR forces clashed with Britain. Against this dualistic background a stereotypical and binary portrayal of Kruger emerged. Some of these have been perpetuated into the literature of the 21st century. However, despite the array of works published on Kruger, it remains remarkable why his involvement in the South African War has not received extensive scrutiny, principally his "behind-the-scenes" contribution. It is to this prominent event in the life of Kruger that this study turns with particular reference to the year 1900 which has been identified as a so-called "crisis period". Using the War telegrams dispatched by Kruger during the said period, this study endeavours to not only investigate Kruger's War-time contribution and motives, but also to reassess his character in the context hereof. Although much of the evidence suggests that the Kruger persona is somewhat entrenched, the War telegrams however point to additional representations of Kruger and call thus for further reappraisal.

Keywords: S.J.P. Kruger / Paul Kruger; South African War/Anglo-Boer War; Telegrams/telegraph; South African History; South African Republic/Zuid-Afrikaansche Republiek; Leyds Archive/Leyds Archief; 1900.

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ABBREVIATIONS:

EFF - Economic Freedom Fighters

OFS - Orange Free State

TAD - Transvaal Archive Depot (Transvaalse Argiefbewaarplek)

ZAR - Zuid-Afrikaansche Republiek (South African Republic)

ZASM / NZASM - Nederlandsche-Zuid-Afrikaansche-Spoorwegmaatschappij

GLOSSARY:

Afrikaner	<i>Afrikaner</i> in this context mainly refers to the Dutch, and later Afrikaans-speaking white populations of Southern Africa, who were descendents of the original German, Dutch and French Huguenot settlers at the Cape. In a broader sense the name <i>Afrikaner</i> was also given to Dutch-speaking farmers and citizens who were also called <i>Boers</i> . ¹
Burgher/Boer	A citizen of a Boer Republic and can also in time of war refer to a Boer 'soldier' on commando. ²
Landdrost	Dutch word for a Magistrate. In the South African historical context a "landdrost" refers to the "chief administrator of a district or a magistrate". A magistrate in this regard is a "civil officer or lay judge who administers the law". ³
South African War	The Anglo Boer War (1899-1902), Second War of Independence or Anglo-Boer War or Boer War has recently been referred to as the South African War. The reason for the name change can be ascribed to the issue of representation. The previous names given to the War mainly emphasised Boer and British participation and as a result, excluded other racial and ethnic groups who also partook in the War. Consequently, it was argued that a more inclusive name had to be generated for the War, hence it being referred to as the "South African War" at present. Some authors do however argue that the name "South African War" brings about other interpretative issues as well. In the remainder of this thesis the name South African War will be used. ⁴

¹ See F. Pretorius, *Historical Dictionary of the Anglo-Boer War*, Scarecrow Press, Lanham, 2009, p. 2 and B.J. Barker, *A Concise Dictionary of the Boer War*, Francolin Publishers, Cape Town, 1999, pp. 27-28, 36.

² B.J. Barker, *A Concise Dictionary of the Boer War*, p. 40.

³ See for example, *South African Concise Oxford Dictionary*, edited by the Dictionary Unit for South African English, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2002, pp. 650, 698.

⁴ See F. Pretorius, *Kommandolewe tydens die Anglo-Boereoorlog 1899-1902*, p. 15; B.J. Barker, *A Concise Dictionary of the Boer War*, pp. 8-9 and C.P. Jooste, *Machadodorp tot en met dorpsstigting in 1904, MA-verhandeling*, University of Pretoria, 2008, p. ii, footnote 4.

Transvaal	The name <i>Transvaal</i> refers to a geographical location given to the area between the Vaal River and the Limpopo River in Southern Africa from the turn of the previous century. ⁵
Uitlander	In Dutch the word <i>Uitlander</i> means ‘foreigner’ and refers to the foreigners and fortune seekers who came to the ZAR, from other parts of Southern Africa and further abroad, after the discovery of gold on the Witwatersrand in 1886. ⁶
Volksraad	The <i>Volksraad</i> or “council of the people” refers to the body that essentially governed the ZAR and functioned as the state’s parliament. ⁷
Volk	A Dutch word which refers to “a people”. ⁸

⁵ See N. Worden, *A Concise Dictionary of South African History*, Francolin Publishers, Cape Town, p. 152.

⁶ See N. Worden, *A Concise Dictionary of South African History*, p. 156 and F. Pretorius, *Historical Dictionary of the Anglo-Boer War*, p. 463.

⁷ See F. Pretorius, *Historical Dictionary of the Anglo-Boer War*, p. 480 and B.J. Barker, *A Concise Dictionary of the Boer War*, p. 121.

⁸ See for example, *South African Concise Oxford Dictionary*, edited by the Dictionary Unit for South African English, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2002, p. 1316.

CHAPTER 1

1.1 Introduction: “A to-be-toppled” Kruger

On Monday the 6th of April 2015 Naledi Shange from *News24* reported that “The Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF)⁹ ...claimed responsibility for the defacing of Paul Kruger’s statue in Pretoria”.¹⁰ Kruger now blotched with lime green paint and awaiting his “to-be-toppled” trial resembles much of what happened over a century ago as the Kruger regime faced the possibility of being “ousted” by Britain on the brink of the South African War (1899 to 1902). At the time, however, Kruger was draped in his green presidential sash and stood as an epitome of Republican leadership. A section of his people clung to this particular concept of Kruger as a *Vader des Volks* (Father of the nation) while other factions from both within and outside of the country would today side with the EFF’s “topple-mentality”. The action of defacing Kruger in the 21st century ironically points to his lasting legacy and historical impact, thereby emphasising that Kruger still remains relevant, albeit contentiously so.

As was evident in the Paul Kruger statue debacle,¹¹ perceptions and representations of Paul Kruger have varied considerably over the span of the last century and a quarter. A large percentage of these opposing opinions have also, arguably, found their origins in the clash between Boer and Brit¹² towards the end of the 19th century. Consequently the majority of these early perceptions take on a particularly binary character consisting primarily of pro-Brit or pro-Boer views. Such biased portrayals were in addition also inflamed by War-time propaganda and found a foothold in the perceptions and recollections of the general public for generations.

A multitude of historical works, as well as other genres of literature, have been generated on Kruger. Yet despite the plethora of literature available, it remains puzzling why State President Kruger’s involvement in the South African War fought between 1899 and 1902 or his, so to speak, “behind the scenes” endeavours, have thus far not received extensive

⁹ A political party founded by Julius Malema in 2013 in South Africa.

¹⁰ N. Shange, ‘EFF claims responsibility for defacing Paul Kruger statue’, <<http://www.news24.com/SouthAfrica/News/EFF-claims-responsibility-for-Paul-Kruger-defacing-20150406>>, 2015-04-06. Access: 2015-06-13.

¹¹ A. Khoza, ‘Paul Kruger statue in Pretoria vandalised again’, <<http://www.news24.com/SouthAfrica/News/Paul-Kruger-statue-in-Pretoria-vandalised-again-20150411>>, 2015-04-11. Accessed: 2015-06-13 and A. Mitchley, ‘EFF members allegedly throw stones at Kruger statue’, <<http://citizen.co.za/361794/eff-members-allegedly-throw-stones-at-kruger-statue/>>13.4.2015. Accessed: 2015-06-13.

¹² The reference made here to “Boer and Brit” refers throughout the study to the Boers of Dutch and other descent who has established independent Republics in the interior of southern Africa in the mid-19th century and the British who had colonized the Cape and later Natal from the just after the turn of the 19th century.

attention. This is surprising given that Kruger played a key role in both the outbreak as well as the first phase of the War. It appears as if only a few publications have, in part, addressed Kruger's role. A work of note in this regard is the author W.L. von Ranke Scholtz's MA-thesis entitled "Die betrekkinge tussen die Zuid-Afrikaansche Republiek (ZAR) en die Oranje-Vrijstaat (OVS) 1899-1902" (The relations between the ZAR and the Orange Free State (OFS) 1899-1902), completed at the former "Randse Afrikaanse Universiteit".¹³ In his thesis von Ranke Scholtz focuses on Kruger's participation and contribution to the War, as he endeavours to investigate the relations between the two presidents throughout the period by analysing their War correspondence. Through this process Kruger's War-time actions and responsibilities are highlighted. Two other works that bear reference here is historian O.J.O. Ferreira's publication on Kruger entitled *Kruger in Lourenço Marques: President S.J.P. Kruger se verblyf in Mosambiek, Sept. - Okt. 1900*¹⁴ as well as the archivist J.H. Breytenbach's series of publications on the War entitled, *Geskiedenis van die Tweede Vryheidsoorlog 1899-1902*.¹⁵ These publications also include reference to Kruger's role in the War and in some instances point to his behind the scene actions. Other publications that focus on Kruger, whether directly or indirectly, during different periods within the War, are more common.¹⁶

A general analysis primarily focusing on Kruger's War-time participation and contribution has as yet not been produced. This might be ascribed to numerous reasons including the more dominant focus on the War activity, the so-called "drum-and-trumpet literature"; Kruger's absence from the epicentre of the War; as well as the lack of detailed primary material.¹⁷ This observation can perhaps also be ascribed to the necessities and circumstances of War itself, as the commandant-general usually takes centre stage. The president therefore, one can argue, only functions in an auxiliary capacity as his undertakings are rendered less "crucial". Nevertheless, given the lacuna in the literature and the importance of this "period of crisis" for Kruger as President of the ZAR, this episode warrants further investigation. It is thus the intention of this thesis to not only address this

¹³ This University is at present called the University of Johannesburg.

¹⁴ O.J.O. Ferreira, *Kruger in Lourenço Marques: President S.J.P. Kruger se verblyf in Mosambiek, Sept. - Okt. 1900*, Biededell Uitgewers, 2008.

¹⁵ See for example, J.H. Breytenbach, *Geskiedenis van die Tweede Vryheidsoorlog 1899-1902*, Deel IV, Staatsdrukker, Pretoria, 1977.

¹⁶ In general War histories mostly snippets of information on Kruger is provided. See for example J.A. Hobson, *The War in South Africa. Its Causes and Effects*, James Nisbet & Co., Limited, London, 1900; A.C. Doyle, *The Great Boer War*, Smith, Elder, & Co., London, 1900; T. Pakenham, *The Boer War*, Jonathan Bull Publishers, Johannesburg, 1993, and the like.

¹⁷ Until present no record of Kruger's personal War-time experience has been found and therefore his actions, experiences and perceptions have mainly been derived from other primary and secondary sources. This observation in addition also underlines the value of the telegrams in this regard.

“period of crisis” pertaining to Paul Kruger, but by using hitherto relatively underutilised sources in the form of the War telegrams, to investigate Kruger’s “behind the scene” contribution and motives and also to reassess his character in the context hereof.

This dissertation makes use of a selection of Kruger’s telegrams despatched from May 1900 to September 1900, the period generally referred to as his “crisis period”. The telegrams included reflect on a diverse array of Kruger’s disposition of this time. Given the parameters of a Masters’ study and in light of the extensive volume of Kruger’s telegraphical correspondence, the selection of telegrams utilised for this study comes from the Leyds Archief [Archives]. This archive is regarded as one of the most comprehensive and representative collections on President Kruger. Dr Willem Johannes Leyds (1859-1940) the compiler of this archive was a former state attorney (1884-1888), state secretary (1888-1898) and also an envoy of the ZAR in Europe during the South African War (1899-1902). As the trustee of all official documentation (of the ZAR) from the War period and before, he endeavoured to compile an archive of these documents so as to preserve them for posterity.¹⁸ Consequently, the W.J. Leyds Archive was completed in 1925 and donated to the Union government in 1930.¹⁹

For the most part the telegrams that have been used in this study have been quoted in “translated English”.²⁰ Only in a few select places has the original Dutch been included so as to reflect on the original tone which is not always apparent in the translated English versions. Some of the telegrams were not signed by Kruger and in such a case an assistant [for example the private secretary like H.C. Bredell or the state attorney J.C. Smuts] was requested to write and send off the telegram whilst the President dictated his message. As regards the methodology, besides historical approaches, postmodern literary analysis has also been applied to the text. This includes in particular a scrutiny of the text for symbolic

¹⁸ See E.C. Papenfus, *Inventaris Van Die Leyds-Argief*, Transvaalse Argiefbewaarpark, Pretoria, 1994, p.vi-vii. The first Leyds inventory was compiled by D.W. Krüger in 1935 whereafter Papenfus updated the inventory which lead to the publication of the inventory in 1994. According to the Executive Council Resolution of 14 July 1900 Leyds was requested to manage all State property and assets in Europe. After Pretoria was abandoned by the end of May 1900, all the necessary documentation was also transported and sent overseas so as to protect government resources. Some of these documents came to be incorporated into the W.J. Leyds Archief [Archive].

¹⁹ E.C. Papenfus, *Inventaris Van Die Leyds-Argief*, pp. v-vi.

²⁰ The translations have been done by J. Picard and S. Mills respectively. These translated telegrams make the study accessible to a broader readership. The Kruger telegrams are currently being translated for publication. For consistency and brevity, footnote reference details indicate the volume, part and where available the page references. Correspondence details and date are in the text.

meanings and hidden assumptions much like J. Tosh suggests when referring to the post-modernist term “deconstructionism”:

The kind of textual analysis in which the immediate or ‘surface’ meaning is set aside in favour of the less obvious...²¹

Consequently, as part of the postmodern tradition according to H. Kellner, language forms an important part of the constructing of historical knowledge. He suggests that scholars and writers of history create meaning precisely from the “scattered, and profoundly meaningless debris we find around us”.²² As a result, part of the process of the construction of historical knowledge is the necessity to contemplate the past and to reconstruct meaning through “feeling” and “reverie”.²³ In this sense, he argues, the importance lies in what is “taken” from the sources or language used in the source rather than to merely focus on what has been more noticeably “given”. This trading of the obvious for the hidden meanings in language adds a “literary dimension” which he argues “invades the very act of reason itself”.²⁴ It is thus the between-the-line readings and hidden meanings in the text that will be of importance to this study.

1.2 Kruger and literature

For over a century a vast amount of literature has been generated on Paul Kruger. The scope of this literature has been appraised by both scholars D.W. Krüger and P.C. Coetzee and they draw similar conclusions: “oor Paul Kruger (is) ontsaglik veel gepubliseer”²⁵ (almost infinite [literature] has been published on Paul Kruger) and “die literatuur oor president Kruger is byna onoorsienbaar” (the literature written on Paul Kruger is infinite).²⁶ This observation can partly be attributed to Kruger’s historical importance as President of the Boer republic, the ZAR; as advocate and defender of the ZAR’s independence; and moreover, as father or defender and catalyst in the rise of Afrikaner nationalism over the course of the 19th and 20th centuries. Kruger was also involved in a broader international

²¹ J. Tosh, *The Pursuit of History*, Routledge, Britain, 2010, p. 196.

²² H. Kellner, “Language and historical representation”, p. 134, in K. Jenkins (ed.), *The Postmodern History Reader*, Routledge, London, 1997.

²³ H. Kellner, “Language and historical representation”, p. 137, in K. Jenkins (ed.), *The Postmodern History Reader*, Routledge, London, 1997.

²⁴ H. Kellner, “Language and historical representation”, p. 137, in K. Jenkins (ed.), *The Postmodern History Reader*, Routledge, London, 1997.

²⁵ D.W. Krüger, *Paul Kruger*, Deel II, p. 305, in P. de Klerk, *Die Geskiedskrywing oor Paul Kruger*, MA-verhandeling, Potchefstroomse Universiteit vir Christelike Hoër Onderwys, Februarie 1969, p. 3.

²⁶ P.C. Coetzee, ‘n Paar boeke oor president Kruger, *Historiesestudies*, Oktober-Desember 1943 in P. de Klerk, *Die Geskiedskrywing oor Paul Kruger*, p. 3.

arena during his presidency and this in turn also augmented his popular contemporary stature. This literature review presents an outline of a selection of the literature that has been generated on Kruger, both during his life time as well as thereafter. The selection has further been limited to that written in English, Afrikaans and Dutch. The aim, however is not to discuss each source in detail, but rather to give a brief overview of some of the topics which have been written on regarding Paul Kruger and how he has been portrayed.

As literature does not stand in isolation from its author or context,²⁷ important factors to consider in this regard are the individual bias, and more importantly, the particular way the writer was influenced by his or her time and circumstances.²⁸ This becomes clearly apparent in the works written on Kruger as they differ in purpose, accuracy and objectivity. This is also particularly true of the works produced shortly before and during the South African War where the authors' perceptions and interpretations of Kruger were influenced and construed along the lines of their own political alliances with either Boer or Brit. According to the scholar P. de Klerk another aspect influencing the earlier works produced on Kruger is the limitation brought about by access to source material as certain primary sources were not yet available to the authors. This was, arguably, either due to access or archival restrictions. To a large extent therefore "second-hand" information published in newspapers or in books, for example, was utilised.²⁹ The use of an array of archival material, as regards Kruger, could therefore only benefit later historians. As a result, the increase in the availability of diverse source material, coupled with the development of the historical discipline in South Africa,³⁰ further enhanced the academic nature of the literature written on Kruger. This is evident in the work produced during the latter part of the 20th century and into the 21st century. In order to appraise this extensive range of published work, this literature review is divided into two main categories, namely, biographical literature on Kruger followed by a section on literature associated with Kruger's rule.

²⁷ See for example R.J. Shafer (ed.), *A guide to historical method*, The Dorsey Press, Illinois, 1974, pp. 169-170.

²⁸ P. de Klerk, *Die Geskiedskrywing oor Paul Kruger*, p. 6.

²⁹ P. de Klerk, *Die Geskiedskrywing oor Paul Kruger*, p. 9.

³⁰ See, for example, N. Worden, *A Concise Dictionary of South African History*, Francolin Publishers, Cape Town, 1998, pp. 73-75 and for additional reading see K. W. Smith, *The Changing Past: trends in South African historical writing*, Southern Book Publishers, Johannesburg, 1988.

1.2.1 Biographical literature

According to the British historian J. Tosh, biographies written in the Middle Ages and later Renaissance periods were especially written with an ‘informative’ aim as opposed to later biographies which were either commemorative, celebrative or wholly pragmatic in nature.³¹ The biographies written on Kruger emulate this dual format and differ in terms of their main focus. Consequently, a number of biographies on Kruger are thus highly selective in scope, for example a specific period or aspect of his life is the focus, while others appear to celebrate or even idealise him. However, the majority of biographies written on Kruger conform to the “traditional” biography model where the “totality” of the subject’s life is discussed and tend to follow the so-called “cradle to grave” scenario. The biographies selected for this section are also all published monographs.

The first biographies on Kruger appeared during the end of the 19th century while he was still alive. This phenomenon can most likely be attributed to Kruger’s political standing at the time as he was not only President of the ZAR but also at the height of his political career. The Pro-Boer propagandist R. Statham’s original English publication *Paul Kruger and his times*³² was one of the first biographies written on Kruger and was published in the late 1890s. A Dutch translation was also published entitled *Paul Kruger en zijn tijd*.³³ The Cape born novelist J.F. van Oordt’s biography on Kruger also appeared in the same year. This was followed by the Canadian journalist F.A. McKenzie’s *Paul Kruger, His Life Story* and the writer W. Brouwer’s *Paul Kruger* both published in 1899.

Statham’s work portrays Kruger in a favourable manner and ranks him as one of the most prominent men of his era.³⁴ It discusses general aspects of Kruger’s life, from his birth to 1899. The biography begins with a short introduction on the history of the Cape and the Kruger lineage to orientate the reader and also, to stress that Kruger came from a well-known family with a “high” social standing.³⁵ This is not surprising as Statham, as a pro-Boer, most probably limited this biographical work on Kruger to his aim of furthering the Boer cause. He also most likely intended to contradict “faulty perceptions” of the ZAR people abroad, particularly in London where he resided at the time.³⁶ According to De Klerk

³¹ J. Tosh, *The Pursuit of History*, p. 88.

³² F.R. Statham, *Paul Kruger and his times*, T.F. Unwin, London, 1898.

³³ F.R. Statham, *Paul Kruger en zijn tijd*, L.J. Veen, Amsterdam, [n.d.]1910.

³⁴ F.R. Statham, *Paul Kruger and his times*, pp. 1-3. Also see P. de Klerk, *Die Geskiedskrywing oor Paul Kruger*, p. 45.

³⁵ F.R. Statham, *Paul Kruger and his times*, pp. 3-11.

³⁶ P. de Klerk, *Die Geskiedskrywing oor Paul Kruger*, pp. 45, 47.

the biography becomes an “apologetic”³⁷ account rather than a balanced account of Kruger’s life. Taking Statham’s background into consideration, his motives most likely overshadowed his aim to be entirely “objective”, but he is regarded as having written from a relatively rational perspective.³⁸ Brouwer’s biography on Kruger is similar to Statham’s in terms of the themes discussed. Furthermore, Brouwer also describes Kruger in positive, if not heroic terms by, for example, referring to Kruger as “zoo groote man” (an esteemed man) and points to his main concern as being the “welzijn van het vaderland” (welfare of the fatherland).³⁹ Brouwer’s biography can be described as an informative account written mainly for the youth whereby Kruger’s life story is underlined and thus a favourable portrayal of Kruger is expected.⁴⁰ Although Brouwer’s work is similar to Statham, he does not adhere to a chronological discussion of events, but rather adopts a more conversational thematic style.

F.A. Mckenzie’s shorter biographical work on Kruger differs to some extent from the preceding biographies as he strives to provide a more “authentic” portrayal of Kruger. This is done through the process of incorporating firsthand accounts as well as contemporary sources in constructing his work.⁴¹ Mckenzie’s depiction of Kruger is nevertheless predictable as his portrayal of Kruger appears to be stereotypical and sometimes negative - which is not surprising if one considers the circumstances and events taking place during 1899 in the ZAR. He consequently sketches Kruger as “primitive man” and refers to his “comical” appearance in the following manner:

He makes an easy subject for ridicule. His uncouth appearance, his odd attempts at state and show of dignity, his old-fashioned dress, his strange prejudices, are the subjects of many a laugh throughout South Africa.⁴²

The firsthand accounts are in particular rather biased as they were predominantly sourced from the Uitlander (foreigner) and pro-British factions and thus influenced his writing and perceptions. Mckenzie did, arguably, in hindsight, capture an “authentic” Kruger as he was viewed, by particular sections or generally perceived, by the turn of the century. He does however not produce an objective work as it is based on essentially biased or tainted

³⁷ P. de Klerk, *Die Geskiedskrywing oor Paul Kruger* p. 48.

³⁸ P. de Klerk, *Die Geskiedskrywing oor Paul Kruger* p. 47.

³⁹ W. Brouwer, *Paul Kruger*, L.J. Veen, Amsterdam, 1899, p. 11.

⁴⁰ W. Brouwer wrote a series of biographies on renowned historical figures with the aim of educating and inspiring the youth. See W. Brouwer, *Paul Kruger*, Preface, p. viii and P. de Klerk, *Die Geskiedskrywing oor Paul Kruger*, p. 87.

⁴¹ F.A. Mckenzie, *Paul Kruger: His Life Story*, London, James Bowden, 1899, Foreword, p. 3.

⁴² F.A. Mckenzie, *Paul Kruger: His Life Story*, p. 18.

information.⁴³ The biography covers some of the key events in Kruger's life and also devotes a chapter to Kruger's relations with the black population,⁴⁴ an aspect generally not touched on by other authors.

One of the most popular biographies on Kruger was produced by J.F. van Oordt⁴⁵ entitled *Paul Kruger en de Opkomst van de Zuid-Afrikaansche Republiek* (Paul Kruger and the Rise of the ZAR). His book is mainly two-fold in aim. First he sets out to present a traditional biography on Kruger and then secondly, familiarises the reader with Kruger's context by also including a history of the ZAR. De Klerk is however of the opinion that van Oordt recognised the lack of a written "Transvaal history" at the time and his inclusion of this history was done to purposefully raise an awareness of the Afrikaner's history as a people as was also done with his previous works of fiction.⁴⁶ Similarly to De Klerk's reasoning, van Oordt also indicated that at the time minimal knowledge about the President had been written down and therefore a written record would be of great value in both instances as Kruger's life history coincides with that of the ZAR. Van Oordt writes from a mainly ZAR perspective and consequently his account is also intrinsically patriotic and one-sided.⁴⁷

In terms of the content of van Oordt's volume many of the same aspects of Kruger's life that are included in other contemporary biographies appear. His discussions are however more detailed and this is also evident in view of the size of the publication itself running to more than 900 pages. In addition, van Oordt made use of both primary and secondary source material which makes his work particularly relevant. Moreover, it is evident that van Oordt personally interviewed President Kruger in this regard and that he also had access to a range of "official documentation" which further underlines the value of his work as a contemporary source.⁴⁸ The chapters alternate between South African history and individual discussion points on Kruger. Van Oordt's aim to integrate the two histories - Kruger's biography and the history of the ZAR - did nonetheless have the implication that the one history "takes" from the other as the focus shifts between the two main themes. Consequently, Van Oordt's "biography" comes across as somewhat incomplete. Kruger is essentially presented in positive terms and van Oordt distinctly perceives Kruger as an exceptional yet "odd" leader (if compared to other European statesmen) - but nonetheless

⁴³ P. de Klerk, *Die Geskiedskrywing oor Paul Kruger*, p. 75.

⁴⁴ P. de Klerk, *Die Geskiedskrywing oor Paul Kruger* p. 75.

⁴⁵ W.J. de Kock & D.W. Krüger (reds.), *Suid-Afrikaanse Biografiese Woordeboek*, II, Tafelberg Uitgewers Bpk., Kaapstad, 1972, pp. 813-815.

⁴⁶ W.J. de Kock & D.W. Krüger (reds.), *Suid-Afrikaanse Biografiese Woordeboek*, II, p. 814.

⁴⁷ J.F. van Oordt, *Paul Kruger en de Opkomst van der Zuid-Afrikaansche Republiek*, HAUM, Amsterdam, 1898, pp. 1-7.

⁴⁸ W.J. de Kock & D.W. Krüger (reds.), *Suid-Afrikaanse Biografiese Woordeboek*, II, p. 814.

is presented as a true patriot. He refers to Kruger as a devoted defender of the ZAR's independence when he indicated that: "[s]trijden zal die Leeuw; zich verdedigen tot aan zijn laatsten druppel bloed zal hij" (the lion will fight; he will continue to defend until the last drop of blood is spilt).⁴⁹

In 1902 *Gedenkschriften* (Memoirs) van Paul Kruger as dictated to H.C. Bredell⁵⁰ and Piet Grobler,⁵¹ was published.⁵² Various translations of the autobiography have been published, the latest published in 1986, 82 years after Kruger's death.⁵³ This again points to the man's persistent relevance. Over the years a significant number of flaws have been pointed out in terms of Kruger's "autobiographical" account of his life and times. Errors can possibly be ascribed to Kruger's old age or the prospect that subsequent events might have distorted his recollections of the actual proceedings. The autobiography, different to the biography, is the recollections of a living person of his or her own life and thus can be of considerable value in disclosing the subject's own views on events, perceptions and evaluations of themselves. As a historical source, the autobiography cannot however be labelled as reliable, due to its inherent subjective nature. Its worth is thus mainly its dependence on the subject's means to reconstruct their own history. Moreover, according to De Klerk, it is important to remember that Kruger did not write up his autobiography himself but merely dictated his thoughts and reminiscences. Consequently, his own style and tone will possibly not be reflected as strongly in this autobiographical work. The implication hereof is whether

⁴⁹ J.F. van Oordt, *Paul Kruger en de Opkomst van der Zuid-Afrikaansche Republiek*, pp. 814-815.

⁵⁰ H.C. Bredell was the chief of Police in the Z.A.R. as well as President S.J.P. Kruger's Private Secretary during the later period of the South African War when Kruger was residing in Europe. See D.W. Krüger & C.J. Beyers (eds.), *Dictionary of South African Biography*, III, Tafelberg-Uitgewers Ltd., Cape Town, 1977, pp. 102-3.

⁵¹ P.G.W. (Piet) Grobler was family of the President. He was a clerk and also held the position of Deputy-Secretary of Foreign Affairs in the Z.A.R. He, on request of Kruger, accompanied the president to Europe but returned to the ZAR in 1902. See D.W. Krüger & C.J. Beyers (eds.), *Dictionary of South African Biography*, III, p. 357.

⁵² The full title for the monograph is *Gedenkschriften van Paul Kruger, gedigteerd aan H.C. Bredell en Piet Grobler*.

⁵³ The German translation is entitled *Im Kampf um Südafrika, Lebenserinnerungen des Präsidenten Paul Kruger*, München, Lehmanns [Lehmann?], 1902 and *Lebenserinnerungen des Präsidenten Paul Krüger: von ihm selbst erzählt / Paul Krüger, von ihm selbst erzählt nach Aufzeichnungen von H.C. Bredell und Piet Grobler, herausgegeben von A. Schowalter*. The first English translation was published in London, entitled *The Memoirs of Paul Kruger; four times president of the South African Republic, told by himself; edited by A. Schowalter*, T. Fisher Unwin, 1902. The second English Translation of 1986 is entitled *The Memoirs of Paul Kruger: Two volumes published as one*, Scripta Africana, Johannesburg. The Afrikaans translation is entitled *Gedenkskrifte van Paul Kruger; in Afrikaans oorgesit deur Jeanette M. Lange met medewerking van J. Ploeger*, Van Schaik, Pretoria, 1947. See P. de Klerk, *Die Geskiedskrywing oor Paul Kruger*, p. 31, footnote 32 for more published translations.

Kruger's autobiography can thus be as telling of him as expected.⁵⁴ It nonetheless still remains a "go-to" source for a range of information on Kruger.

In terms of scope, the autobiography discusses all the major events in Kruger's life up until 1901 in a mainly chronological fashion. Some "events" are given priority over others and are thus described in more detail.⁵⁵ Kruger also "speaks" in the third person and this is a peculiar feature of his autobiography and can possibly be attributed to his strong Calvinistic faith. As a devout Christian he believed in shunning "self praise", as he thought that praise could only be given to his Creator. Secondly, because he believed his ordained calling was as a representative of his people, it forced him to eliminate the 'I' - the selfish individual and instead to aspire to be the true voice of the people ("volk").⁵⁶ The aim therefore was mainly to distance himself (Kruger) from his own life so that his actions would speak for themselves and be understood against the background of his calling as a leader rather than a mere individual. Consequently, the autobiography is also written against this background and emphasises Kruger's development and importance as leader of the ZAR.

After Kruger's death a shorter biography on his life appeared in 1904. The work is entitled *Van Schaapwachter tot President. Het Leven van Paul Kruger* (From Shepherd to President, The Life of Paul Kruger) was also written by van Oordt, but published under his pseudonym D'Arbez. Three editions were published, the first edition in 1904, the second in 1914 and the third in 1916. An Afrikaans translation was also produced by church minister P.J. Viljoen⁵⁷ and published in 1925 entitled *Die lewe van Paul Kruger* (The life of Paul Kruger).⁵⁸ Van Oordt's study included Kruger's entire life with an additional chapter on Kruger's last years in Europe. Van Oordt again describes Kruger in very heroic terms and places special emphasis on his functionality as a leader and as an example for future generations of Afrikaners.⁵⁹ Similarly to his initial publication entitled *Paul Kruger en de Opkomst van der Zuid-Afrikaansche Republiek* a more positive stance is taken overall in terms of the ZAR and Kruger. This is echoed in his depiction of Kruger as being "without faults" and moreover in stressing his piousness.⁶⁰ Van Oordt also included a unique chapter

⁵⁴ P. de Klerk, *Die Geskiedskrywing oor Paul Kruger*, pp. 33, 36-37.

⁵⁵ For example, Kruger's youth and hunting experiences are related in great detail here and yet very limited information is given on his personal or family life.

⁵⁶ P. de Klerk, *Die Geskiedskrywing oor Paul Kruger*, pp. 33-34.

⁵⁷ C.J. Beyers & J.L. Basson (eds.), *Dictionary for South African Biography*, V, Human Sciences Research Council, Pretoria, 1987, pp. 845-846.

⁵⁸ P. de Klerk, *Die Geskiedskrywing oor Paul Kruger*, pp. 87-88.

⁵⁹ D'Arbez (pseudo.), *Van Schaapwachter tot President. Het Leven van Paul Kruger*, J.H. De Bussy, Amsterdam, 1916, pp. 1-5, 14. Also see P.J. Viljoen, *Die lewe van Paul Kruger*, J.H. De Bussy, Pretoria, 1925, p. xi.

⁶⁰ D'Arbez (pseudo.), *Van Schaapwachter tot President. Het Leven van Paul Kruger*, pp. 5, 7.

called “Krugeriana”. This consists mainly of various anecdotes and reminiscences of the President as told mainly by burghers.⁶¹ The inclusion of this chapter in particular gives this short biography additional value as Van Oordt was able to include different views and memories of Kruger as an individual.

In the Netherlands a short biography on President Kruger entitled, *Paul Kruger korte Levensschets: 1825 -10 October -1925* (Paul Kruger short life-story: 1825 -10 October-1925) was also published. Written by J.E. van Beijnum, a former Dutch teacher in the ZAR, the aim of the biography was fundamentally commemorative.⁶² Van Beijnum also highlights the didactic value of this work in much the same way as Van Oordt: “En toch, deze geschiedenis is zoo mooi en leerzaam voor onze jeugd en voor ons volk” (And yet, this history is so striking and informative for our youth and our people).⁶³ As the nature of the biography is commemorative, it is understandable that he also subsequently sketches Kruger more positively and refers to him as being patriotic.⁶⁴ In addition to the abovementioned, the later biography by the scholar J.I. Rademeyer, *Paul Kruger* (1962), was also indicative of this trend. However, Rademeyer does not describe Kruger in such heroic terms as Van Oordt, but rather contextualises Kruger with the objective of presenting both his faults and achievements, as he is of the opinion that a great deal of misrepresentation of the Kruger *persona* already exist.⁶⁵

From the 1920s we see a gradual change in South African historiography and especially Afrikaner historiography. This followed partly as a result of the establishment of the first South African universities which resulted in the promotion of so-called “academic writing”.⁶⁶ Consequently this type of writing gradually began to replace previous styles as European influences, for example, slowly began to surface in South African historiography.⁶⁷

Subsequently, in 1925 J.P. la Grange Lombard, former Boer commandant, journalist and member of the Volksraad,⁶⁸ also published his monograph entitled, *Paul Kruger die Volksman* (Paul Kruger the Statesman). According to De Klerk, Lombard was requested to

⁶¹ See P.J. Viljoen, *Die lewe van Paul Kruger*, pp. 137-144.

⁶² See title page, *Paul Kruger Korte Levensschets: 1825 – 10 October -1925*, H.J. Breijer, Arnhem, 1925 and the prologue on p. 3.

⁶³ J.E. van Beijnum, *Paul Kruger Korte Levensschets*, p. 5.

⁶⁴ J.E. van Beijnum, *Paul Kruger Korte Levensschets*, p. 5.

⁶⁵ J.I. Rademeyer, *Paul Kruger*, Afrikaanse Pers-Boekhandel, Johannesburg, 1962, See Voorwoord (Prologue).

⁶⁶ F.A. van Jaarsveld, *Afrikanergeschiedskrwyng: Verlede, Hede en Toekoms*, Lex Patria, Pretoria, 1992, p. 197.

⁶⁷ K. Smith, *The Changing Past*, p. 69.

⁶⁸ D.W. Krüger & C.J. Beyers (reds.), *Suid-Afrikaanse Biografiese Woordeboek*, III, Tafelberg, Kaapstad, 1977, pp. 548-549.

write this biography by the Academy of Arts and Science as a commemoration of the President with the forthcoming centenary celebration of his birth.⁶⁹ Like the previous biographies, Lombard focuses on similar aspects of Kruger's personality and life, though he appears to place more emphasis on Kruger's role as a leader and his patriotism. Moreover he perceived Kruger as the "characterisation" of a "volksideaal" (a people's aspirations) as he represented and established all that was "noble" and honourable of the present and future Afrikaner people.⁷⁰ Apart from the general biographical aspects Lombard discussed, he also included two additional chapters entitled "En Nou?" (And Now?) and "Kruger in die omgang" (The public Kruger). The first focuses mainly on the legacy of the South African War with specific reference to Boer and Brit relations. Initially this chapter seems incongruous with the rest of the biography. However, Kruger still emerges as the central "theme" in this chapter and forms part of the basis of Lombard's reasoning. In this chapter Lombard urges and expresses the hope that the Afrikaners will not lose sight of their ideals as a people and that they will be able to promote and improve their relations with other groups in South Africa.⁷¹ In the last chapter, the Kruger "stamboom" (lineage) is presented and his character and public image is illustrated through the incorporation of anecdotes of his life resulting in what some regard as a more "authentic" portrayal of Kruger.⁷²

During the same year another biographical work on Paul Kruger was published. This was but one of the pro-Boer journalist F.V. Engelenburg's many works written on President Paul Kruger and takes on the form of a very short biography.⁷³ This features more specific aspects of Kruger's life, as is indicated on the cover of the book: *'n Onbekende Paul Kruger, sy bedrywigheid as: boerende boer, briewe-skrywer, gelowige, finansier, veldkornet, jagter, commandant, koors-lyer, staats-burger* (The Unknown Paul Kruger, his activities as: farming farmer, letter-writer, believer, financier, field cornet, hunter, commandant, fever-victim and citizen of the state). Various new aspects of Kruger's personality are described here whereas others overlap with previous biographies. Engelenburg exposed particularly peculiar aspects of Kruger's life which did not necessarily correspond with the more honourable portrayal of Kruger. Not only are Kruger's financial troubles discussed, but his

⁶⁹ P.C. Schoonees, *Die prosa van die Tweede Afrikaanse taalbeweging*, p. 566, in P. de Klerk, *Die Geskiedskrywing oor Paul Kruger*, p. 49. Also see the title page of the publication in this regard.

⁷⁰ J.P. La Grange Lombard, *Paul Kruger. Die Volksman*, J.L. van Schaik, Pretoria, 1925, p. 219.

⁷¹ J.P. La Grange Lombard, *Paul Kruger: Die Volksman*, pp. 216-220.

⁷² J.P. La Grange Lombard, *Paul Kruger: Die Volksman*, pp. 221- 241.

⁷³ W.J. de Kock (red.), *Suid-Afrikaanse Biografiese Woordeboek*, I, Tafelberg-Uitgewers Bpk., Kaapstad, 1968, pp. 288-290.

strong demeanour is diminished by describing him as a “koors-lyer” (fever sufferer).⁷⁴ However by purposefully downplaying the heroic aspects of Kruger, Engelenburg was more successful in reconstructing a picture of the actual man by stressing his humanity rather than portraying him only as a heroic figure as Kruger was generally perceived. This is not surprising as he was a “gewaardeerde raadgewer en metgesel van Kruger” (an esteemed adviser and companion of Kruger)⁷⁵ and thus knew Kruger personally. He consequently construes Kruger as the “Hamlet” in the South African “historical drama”, as Kruger in his opinion stood out above the rest of his contemporaries in such a manner that he totally overshadowed the parts played by the other “characters”.⁷⁶

In 1936 The Pace of the Ox – The Life of Paul Kruger was published written by the female writer and journalist, Majorie Juta. The aim of this biography, the first by a woman, was summarised as follows:

... this book is not an attempt to outline a future; it is merely to contribute a simple picture of a man with much greatness in his soul, whose history carries with it the childhood of his nation.⁷⁷

From the onset of the biography Juta sets out to illustrate the environment which produced and shaped Kruger. She therefore stresses the importance of understanding Kruger in context. She does not contribute any new information about Kruger, rather the scope of the biography correlates with most other lengthier biographies. Juta’s work does however have a fictional style,⁷⁸ different to the general historical biography, which enables her to reconstruct Kruger’s life to such a degree that Kruger is not only revisited but also relived.⁷⁹ Her biographical work has also been categorised as a “vie romancée” or better known as a “moderne biografie” (modern biography) where the life in question is portrayed in a romanticised fashion.⁸⁰ Although Juta does not, as mentioned, provide new information on Kruger, she does include aspects of his life that other lengthier biographies either omit or gloss over. Firstly she includes more references to Kruger’s wife, Gezina Kruger, and his personal life; secondly she also stresses the importance of Kruger’s appreciation of nature

⁷⁴ F.V. Engelenburg, *’n Onbekende Kruger*, Volkstem, Pretoria, 1925, pp. 7-10, 13-14.

⁷⁵ W.J. de Kock (red.), *Suid-Afrikaanse Biografiese Woordeboek*, I, pp. 288-290.

⁷⁶ F.V. Engelenburg, *’n Onbekende Kruger*, p. 3.

⁷⁷ M. Juta, *The Pace of the Ox*. P. xi (Introduction); See P. de Klerk, *Die Geskiedskrywing oor Paul Kruger*, p. 54.

⁷⁸ M. Juta, *The Pace of the Ox the life of Paul Kruger*, Constable & Co., London, 1937, p. ix.

⁷⁹ See P. de Klerk, *Die Geskiedskrywing oor Paul Kruger*, pp. 25, 55.

⁸⁰ See P. de Klerk, *Die Geskiedskrywing oor Paul Kruger*, pp. 53-54, see footnote no. 143.

and his apparent involvement in the establishment of the conservation area which came to be known as the Kruger National Park in the northern territories of South Africa.⁸¹

Hereafter, the South African lawyer and writer M. Nathan⁸² also published a biographical work on Kruger in 1941. He analyses Kruger against the background of his times and culture and argues that the main source of criticism against Kruger can be traced back to a “difference in context” as pointed out in the concluding chapter of his monograph.⁸³ He explains this by pointing to the environment within which Kruger grew up, an environment devoid of steady European influence.⁸⁴ Nathan seems more sympathetic towards Kruger’s perceptions and behaviour and also remarks that Kruger has largely been misunderstood and consequently, generally misrepresented.⁸⁵ Nathan’s work is however not apologetic and, where deemed necessary, he questions Kruger’s policies.⁸⁶ Nathan initially sketches Kruger as “rough and ready” but comes to the conclusion that he amounts to more than his positive attributes because ultimately he was “the builder of a nation.”⁸⁷ Kruger’s true significance is consequently portrayed in the following manner:

The vision of Paul Kruger that abides is that of a rough, rugged, resolute, daring, dominant figure, like Ajax defying the lightning. He may be compared to a giant crag, with its base rooted in the ancient rock, its sides scarred and weathered by many a storm, yet rearing its head to the skies through the ages to come.⁸⁸

In 1944 University rector of Potchefstroom University of Christian Education (PUCHO) and ministry candidate, F. Postma⁸⁹ published a biography entitled *Paul Kruger: die Christen - Volksman en - Staatsman* (Paul Kruger: the Christian, Leader of the People and Statesman) as part of a larger series of publications.⁹⁰ His biographical work differs from the mainstream biographies due to its underlying “theological” character. In his work he draws similarities between the Bible figure Moses and Kruger and makes use of these to illustrate and emphasise Kruger’s good qualities and leadership capabilities and thus

⁸¹ See for example M. Juta, *The Pace of the Ox the life of Paul Kruger*, pp. 88-89 and pp. 304-307.

⁸² W.J. de Kock & D.W. Krüger (reds)., *Suid-Afrikaanse Biografiese Woordeboek*, II, pp. 521-522

⁸³ P. de Klerk, *Die Geskiedskrywing oor Paul Kruger*, p. 60; M. Nathan, *Paul Kruger: His Life and Times*, Knox Publishing Company, Durban, 1941, Preface and pp. 478-479.

⁸⁴ M. Nathan, *Paul Kruger: His Life and Times*, Preface and pp. 479-481.

⁸⁵ M. Nathan, *Paul Kruger: His Life and Times*, pp. 477, 482-483.

⁸⁶ M. Nathan, *Paul Kruger: His Life and Times*, pp. 479 and 485. Also see See P. de Klerk, *Die Geskiedskrywing oor Paul Kruger*, pp. 58, 60.

⁸⁷ M. Nathan, *Paul Kruger. His Life and Times*, p. 481.

⁸⁸ M. Nathan, *Paul Kruger. His Life and Times*, p. 490.

⁸⁹ W.J. de Kock (red.), *Suid-Afrikaanse Biografiese Woordeboek*, I, pp. 662-663.

⁹⁰ F. Postma, *Paul Kruger: Die Christen, -Volksman en - Staatsman*, Pro Ecclesia, Stellenbosch, 1944, see title page.

mainly portrays him in a favourable light.⁹¹ This is also indicated in the introduction where Postma points to the aim of the biography as being “authentic” but also “inspiring” and that it “mirrors” commemorative literature.⁹² Special emphasis is placed on Kruger’s Christian faith and leadership and how these influenced his life. Each chapter is subsequently structured around a main theme associated with one of the qualities. Postma’s work is also mainly a commentary on Kruger’s life rather than a traditional biography.⁹³ Interestingly he also includes a chapter on Kruger’s relations with the black communities, a subject, as mentioned, that is not generally discussed. He also underlines Kruger’s importance in spreading “civilisation” among the “heathen” in this regard.⁹⁴ In addition, Kruger is also depicted as the “guiding light for Afrikanerdom” and is seen as the personification of the struggle of the Afrikaners. According to Postma Kruger thus represented the idea and fostered the expectation of true liberation for Afrikaners as a people.⁹⁵ Against this background, his portrayal and interpretation of Kruger appears to be innately biased and restricted but still appears successful in terms of its instructive aim.

In 1945 a biography on three diverse contemporaries was published by the French-born writer Stuart Cloete entitled *Against These Three*.⁹⁶ The biography was a simultaneous work on Paul Kruger, the imperialist and entrepreneur Cecil John Rhodes, and Lobengula, the last King of the Matabele. Instead of portraying the individuals separately, Cloete made use of an intertwined comparative analysis.⁹⁷ This type of representation enabled Cloete to accentuate the different contexts within which each of these men functioned, but whose interests overlapped. Cloete’s work succeeded in using this alternative approach and it appears to contribute to a better understanding of the dynamics between these contemporary leaders. Because the focus is on the three figures and less on individual personalities, this is not an in-depth biography of Kruger.

Ten years later in 1955 *Paul Kruger van die Wieg tot die Graf* (Paul Kruger from the Cradle to the Grave) was published by Professor C.J. Uys.⁹⁸ In this biography the author set out to debunk the myths regarding Kruger’s place of birth. By investigating an extensive paper

⁹¹ F. Postma, *Paul Kruger: Die Christen, -Volksman en - Staatsman*, pp. 3-4.

⁹² F. Postma, *Paul Kruger: Die Christen, -Volksman en - Staatsman*, p. 3.

⁹³ Also see P. de Klerk, *Die Geskiedskrywing oor Paul Kruger*, p. 81.

⁹⁴ F. Postma, *Paul Kruger: Die Christen, -Volksman en - Staatsman*, p. 42.

⁹⁵ F. Postma, *Paul Kruger. Die Christen, - Volksman en - Staatsman*, p. 5.

⁹⁶ The full title of the monograph is, *Against These Three. A Biography of Paul Kruger, Cecil Rhodes and Lobengula Last King of the Matabele*, Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston, 1945.

⁹⁷ S. Cloete, *Against These Three*, pp. 1-4.

⁹⁸ C.J. Uys was a professor in history and also head of department at the University College of the Orange Free State, currently referred to as the University of the Free State. See C.J. Beyers & J.L. Basson(eds.), *Dictionary for South African Biography*, V, p. 786.

trail of official documents, Uys was able to gain considerable information regarding the Kruger family lineage, an untraveled avenue without much previous academic enquiry. Furthermore, Uys indicated that his research raised new concerns regarding Kruger's date of birth and other claims made about the Kruger *persona*. *Van die Wieg tot die Graf* is therefore only a partial biography as only certain aspects of Kruger's life are investigated and discussed. His work promotes further investigation and also arguably points to important gaps in current knowledge.⁹⁹

The scholar and renowned professor, D.W. Krüger, also produced a work of a so-called "scientific nature" on Kruger. His two-part biography was published in 1961 and 1963 respectively. Krüger stands as one of the first trained historians to write a biography on President Kruger. His two monographs were also republished as a single volume in 2009.¹⁰⁰ It is not surprising therefore that his work is based on extensive archival research and takes on a more objective portrayal of Kruger.¹⁰¹ Krüger further endeavours to present a vivid record of Kruger's life and therefore describes, motivates and places all events surrounding Kruger in context. As a result, a detailed history of Kruger is given whilst a simultaneous history of the ZAR and broader Southern Africa is also presented. The 2009 publication consists of 27 chapters and discusses Kruger's life mainly in a chronological fashion. To a large extent Krüger was able to let the sources speak and his thorough research coupled with proper contextualisation enables the reader to gain a more indepth understanding of Kruger. This is evident in his portrayal of Kruger as both humane and heroic. In this case Krüger was fairly successful in his attempt in restructuring a life, whilst subscribing to historical method and criteria. President Kruger is described as follows in the 2009 prologue:

Geleidelik skep die geskiedskrywer uit daardie dikwels onvolledige en soms onbetroubare geskrif, sowel as uit ander bronne, 'n beeld van 'n man, broos en menslik, maar tegelyk groot en met die vlam van onverganklikheid in sy hart. (The historian gradually establishes an image, though frequently from incomplete and occasionally untrustworthy documentation as well as other sources, of a man, fragile and humane, but simultaneously great with the flame of immortality burning in his heart)¹⁰²

⁹⁹ C.J. Uys, *Paul Kruger: Van die Wieg tot die Graf*, A.A. Balkema, Kaapstad, 1955, pp. 3-5.

¹⁰⁰ D.W. Krüger, *Paul Kruger 'n biografie*, Praag, 2009.

¹⁰¹ P. de Klerk, *Die Geskiedskrywing oor Paul Kruger*, pp. 61-62.

¹⁰² D.W. Krüger, *Paul Kruger 'n biografie*, Proloog (Prologue).

In the mid 1970s *President Paul Kruger: a biography* was written by the South African artist and writer J. Meintjies.¹⁰³ Much time had passed since the first biography had been written on Paul Kruger and “academic writing” had been favoured for the past 20 years as was evident with D.W. Krüger’s biography. According to Meintjies, Kruger had been used as a pawn by the pro-Boer and anti-British campaigners. He claims that these writers had been fuelled by their own ambitions and thus lost sight of Kruger’s personality. He argues that by viewing Kruger from a “prefabricated” lens, less and less of Kruger’s true nature was visible.¹⁰⁴ The scope of Meintjies biography is characteristic of a lengthier biography and thus features discussions on a whole range of relevant aspects. Meintjies was able to carry across the essence of Kruger and describes him as follows:

As a personality he was more familiar to South Africa and the outside world than even Queen Victoria was. Such a man created many legends and total fabrications, but what is significant is that at his bier stood not only the peasant, the poor and the defeated, but also the poet and intellectual. Paul Kruger was hardly a person any longer but a concept.¹⁰⁵

In 1976, the second volume of *The Republican Presidents* was published. Both volumes were written by Doreen Lamb, a lay historian. The volumes featured biographies on various Republican presidents of both the Orange Free State and the ZAR. A short biography on President Kruger was published as part of the second volume.¹⁰⁶ The biography covers the life of Kruger from his birth to his death in 1904 and appears to be more concerned with basic factual reference-type information than personal inferences or critical appraisal.¹⁰⁷

Although the biographical literature on Kruger differs in terms of aim and scope, it appears as though the majority of the biographical authors portray Kruger in a more favourable manner. Emphasis is mostly placed on his leadership as well as his historical importance. In this sense he is portrayed as a mobilising force, defender of his people (“volk”) and inspiring figure for posterity. This is particularly true of commemorative biographies published after Kruger’s death in 1904. As the historical field developed, more academically orientated biographies appeared. Though from time to time critical, they nevertheless mostly conform to the abovementioned “positive portrayal” paradigm.

¹⁰³ P. Joyce, *A Concise Dictionary of South African Biography*, Francolin Publishers, Cape Town, 1999, p. 174.

¹⁰⁴ J. Meintjies, *President Paul Kruger: a biography*, Cassell, London, 1974, p. vii-ix (Preface).

¹⁰⁵ J. Meintjies, *President Paul Kruger: a biography*, p. 3.

¹⁰⁶ D. Lamb, *The Republican Presidents II*, Perskor Publishers, Johannesburg, 1976, pp. 65-101.

¹⁰⁷ M.C.E. van Schoor (red.), *The Republican Presidents II*, Preface.

1.2.2 ZAR literature

In addition to the biographical literature, an array of literature on other aspects of Kruger's life and governance has appeared. Broadly speaking, this does not only include "recognised" historical literature but also fiction such as plays and novels. These works attest to the significance and topical nature of Kruger as an individual. Some of the fiction written on the Kruger persona include, for example, *Die banneling-die lyfwag* (The outcast-the guardian) and *Die groot gryse* (The great precocious [grey] one) both written by the South African writer Anna. M. Louw; *Ohm Krüger* (Uncle Krüger) by the German dramatist J. Barckhausen and *Die lamp op die staander* (The lamp on the stand) a sketch book done by J.P.J. Coetzee. Dramas from the South African journalist D.C. Postma entitled *Oom Paul* (Uncle Paul) and *Die president* (The president) by above mentioned South African journalist Majorie Juta and H. Mortlake and lastly the Afrikaans writer and poet N.P. van Wyk Louw's *Paul Kruger breek die pad oop* (Paul Kruger breaks opens the path).¹⁰⁸

Kruger cannot be detached from the history of the ZAR because of his major contribution to the rise, development and unification of the Boer and later Afrikaner nation. Therefore no general history of the ZAR can be written without the inclusion of Kruger. Because of this link, most works written on the ZAR, whether political, economic, social or religious history, do at some point include or refer to Kruger. The remainder of the selection of literature in this section explores Kruger alongside a broader spectrum of events, both nationally and internationally, where Kruger forms part of the primary focus of the publication. A thematic discussion will be followed.

A range of works on Kruger and state-related matters has appeared. The first theme associated with Kruger's rule therefore concerns politics. In 1900, the South African Vigilance Committee published a paper entitled *Paul Kruger and the Transvaal Judiciary: His violations of the constitution, and his Destruction of the independence of the High Court of the Transvaal*. The paper discusses certain occurrences where Kruger and the Volksraad limited or interfered with the legal responsibilities of the High Court.¹⁰⁹ By doing so, the Constitution was threatened and a lawless state was said to be the end result if Kruger was enabled to dismiss the highest authority in the Republic. The Committee was of the opinion that Kruger was overstepping a boundary and that his conduct was

¹⁰⁸ P. de Klerk, *Die Geskiedskrywing oor Paul Kruger*, pp. 94-116.

¹⁰⁹ *Vigilance Papers No. 3., Paul Kruger and the Transvaal Judiciary: His violations of the Constitution, and his Destruction of the independence of the High Court of the Transvaal*, The South African Vigilance Committee, Cape Town, 1900, pp. 4-5.

responsible for the violation of the liberties of the people and the Constitution. Overall Kruger is portrayed negatively and from the Committee's point of view, Kruger's actions "convert[ed] the Republic into an uncivilised and barbarous country".¹¹⁰ These actions on his part in their opinion could only be "expected from a despot".¹¹¹

In 1925 a source publication was published by the Suid-Afrikaanse Akademie vir Taal, Lettere en Kuns (South African Academy for Language, Literature and Art)¹¹² entitled *Paul Kruger's Amptelike Briewe 1851-1877*. The publication was done in association with Dr. S.P. Engelbrecht and was published as a commemorative work, celebrating the centenary of Kruger's birth.¹¹³ The correspondence published reflects on his formative years as politician in the sense that his exposure to and involvement in politics, and other government matters, is focused on. The publication therefore mainly points to Kruger's pre-presidential responsibilities and concerns as he is viewed through his own writing. This type of publication is also thus particularly valuable as the sources themselves are left to speak without any added or distorted interpretations. A brief section under the subtitle "Voorberig" (Prologue) provides background information on Kruger in order to reconcile the published letters and respective time periods with Kruger's life span.¹¹⁴ The letters were not translated but kept in the original Dutch language with footnotes where additional explanation was needed.

Die Staatsopvattinge van Paul Kruger (The Political Philosophy of Paul Kruger), written by F.P. Smit, was published in 1951. According to Smit, Kruger's political philosophy consisted mainly of three principles: the Christian principle, the Republican principle and political independence.¹¹⁵ Smit's main sources were Van Oordt and where relevant, official publications were also utilised. Ultimately, Smit argues that the political philosophy of Kruger can be traced back to his religious convictions: he believed that God would guide the Republic in much the same way He had guided Israel. Apart from his religious stance, he also held that the "enfranchised" people should govern and lastly that political independence should ensue. De Klerk published a paper on much the same topic in 2006.

¹¹⁰ Vigilance Papers No. 3., *Paul Kruger and the Transvaal Judiciary*, p. 14.

¹¹¹ Vigilance Papers No. 3., *Paul Kruger and the Transvaal Judiciary*, p. 14.

¹¹² The 'Suid-Afrikaanse Akademie vir Taal, Lettere en Kuns' – today called the 'Suid-Afrikaanse Akademie vir Wetenskap en Kuns' (South African Academy for Sciences and Art), is an organisation established to promote the Afrikaans language and the application thereof across various disciplinary fields. Visit the organisation's homepage at: 'Tuis', <<http://www.akademie.co.za>>, 2015. Access: 2015-08-06.

¹¹³ S.P. Engelbrecht (red.), *Paul Kruger's Amptelike Briewe 1851-1877*, Volkstem, Pretoria, 1925, p. 3.

¹¹⁴ S.P. Engelbrecht (red.), *Paul Kruger's Amptelike Briewe 1851-1877*, pp. 5 -12.

¹¹⁵ F. P. Smit, *Die Staatsopvattinge van Paul Kruger*, J.L. van Schaik, Pretoria, 1951, p. 189.

In *Die politieke beskouinge van Paul Kruger-interpretasies oor 'n tydperk van 125 jaar* (The political views of Paul Kruger over a period of 125 years), De Klerk gives an overview of literature concerned with the political views of Kruger over the past century and a quarter. According to De Klerk much research still needs to be done regarding this as the bulk of the sources used by researchers were selective and consequently interpretations appear to be limited.¹¹⁶ Furthermore, De Klerk mentions that Kruger's political views are tied up within prevailing ideologies and as a result he is diversely labelled as a "dictator", "democrat" or as "anti-progressive".¹¹⁷ In addition to his 2006 publication, his 1969 MA-thesis entitled "Die Geskiedskrywing oor Paul Kruger",¹¹⁸ also ties in with this topic. In his work a very extensive analysis is provided on countless genres of works generated on Paul Kruger. As his work provides solid appraisals of the literature on Paul Kruger, it has been of great value to this discussion.

In 1961 the historian J.S. Marais's work entitled *The Fall of Kruger's Republic* was published by Oxford University Press. Marais's main argument rests on the hypothesis that the discovery of gold in the ZAR can be seen as the chief "culprit" or "instigator" of the South African War. In essence he argues that the discovery of gold transformed and also infiltrated all levels of the ZAR state as well as its local population. The gold discovery brought with it a wave of change and a great mass of responsibility which the ZAR and its pastoral society were not prepared for. As a result of their lack of training in the ways of a gold bearing modernised and industrialised society, the ZAR's administration proved to be overwhelmed, making them all the more protective and suspicious. Since the discovery transformed the ZAR both on the in- and outside, the government was forced to consider and manage aspects of life and economy that were largely foreign to them. This is especially evident in the granting of State concessions which in some cases did not materialise or left the state with enormous debt.¹¹⁹ The origins of the War can therefore, he argues, all be traced back to the discovery of gold as the wider "playing field" that introduced various new players, all with different and foreign ambitions and thus a clash was inevitable.¹²⁰ Although Marais's monograph is not a work on Kruger *per se*, his assessment

¹¹⁶ P. de Klerk, *Die politieke beskouinge van Paul Kruger-interpretasies oor 'n tydperk van 125 jaar. Tydskrif vir Geesteswetenskappe* 46(2), Junie 2006, pp. 171-180.

¹¹⁷ P. de Klerk, *Die politieke beskouinge van Paul Kruger-interpretasies oor 'n tydperk van 125 jaar*, p.173.

¹¹⁸ P. de Klerk, *Die Geskiedskrywing oor Paul Kruger*, MA-verhandeling, Potchefstroomse Universiteit vir Christelike Hoër Onderwys, Februarie 1969.

¹¹⁹ The lack of proper administration of public works in the ZAR and other related issues see for example J.S. Marais, *The Fall of Kruger's Republic*, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1961, pp. 18-22.

¹²⁰ Marais specifically includes a chapter on J. Chamberlain and also Milner in this regard in order to lay bare their involvement and motives regarding the ZAR and Southern Africa. See Chapters IV and VII.

of the economic and political climate in the Republic since the discovery of gold up to the outbreak of War in 1899, unmasking Kruger's own share in the situation the ZAR found itself in at the time. Marais therefore sheds new light on the "political Kruger" as well as his motives and involvement in the management of the ZAR - as the period concerned falls within the period of Kruger's presidencies. Marais further evaluates Kruger against the background of his times thereby sketching a more realistic image of Kruger. He also includes a subsection where a brief discussion is given on Kruger's life, character and beliefs.¹²¹ He acknowledges the importance of Kruger as a historical figure and consequently describes him as follows:

...the claim that he was the greatest Afrikaner of them all does not today appear preposterous. The impressiveness of the personality is no longer in doubt: the dauntless courage, iron will and keen intelligence. But while Kruger stood out among his fellow Boers in character and ability, they recognized him as one of themselves. Therein lay his strength...¹²²

In addition, he remarks critically that in Kruger's later years he was seen as "somewhat repulsive in his bulk, his features and his mannerisms"¹²³ and that Kruger could mainly be seen as an "anachronism" due to his "religiousness".¹²⁴

The year 1970 marked the date of publication of C.T. Gordon's monograph entitled *The Growth of Boer Opposition to Kruger, 1890-1895*. Gordon's aim is to investigate how the opposition against Kruger, mainly in the *Volksraad*, emerged¹²⁵ and what were the main issues around which opposition, as he terms it, crystallised.¹²⁶ Over time and in particular the period of 1890-1895, this process gave rise to the emerging Progressive Party. Gordon made use of a range of sources including, both primary and secondary, which consisted of archival collections, English and Dutch newspapers and various other monographs on the ZAR. More interesting however is the imagery of Kruger that emerges from these sources. Gordon for example points to Kruger being "progressive" in some of his reasoning and policies. He sheds light on Kruger's treatment and inclusion of, for example, other

¹²¹ J.S. Marais, *The Fall of Kruger's Republic*, pp. 5-14.

¹²² J.S. Marais, *The Fall of Kruger's Republic*, p. 6.

¹²³ J.S. Marais, *The Fall of Kruger's Republic*, p. 6.

¹²⁴ J.S. Marais, *The Fall of Kruger's Republic*, p. 7.

¹²⁵ The last four chapters of the work discuss the growth of the Progressive Party and also feature a chapter on the influence of Commandant-General P.J. Joubert as affiliate of the Party. See C.T. Gordon, *The Growth of Boer Opposition to Kruger, 1890-1895*, Oxford University Press, Cape Town, 1970, Contents page.

¹²⁶ These issues are discussed in the first five chapters of the work where nine main issues are identified.

religious groups as well as his sometimes liberal beliefs regarding the rights of black communities in and around the ZAR.¹²⁷ His use of the *Volksraadnotules* (Minutes of the Volksraad) also enabled him to appraise Kruger's politics and subsequent reasoning "firsthand" as he read through their endless debates. As a result, an even more intriguing image of Kruger surfaced in his work. Gordon's own interpretation of Kruger is however more objective and he comes to the conclusion that there is more to Kruger than meets the eye and that generally held perceptions of Kruger should be re-evaluated.¹²⁸ In Gordon's work Kruger is for example depicted on occasion as uncompromising:

In one thing certainly, Kruger was entirely inflexible, and that was in his determination to preserve the Afrikaner and republican character of the State, and in his opposition to all that threatened to weaken or undermine this he was indeed 'unbending in the highest degree'. Preservation of the independence of the State he regarded as a sacred duty, neglect of which would bring down upon him the curse of God.¹²⁹

In Professor F.A. van Jaarsveld's 1982 publication, *Paul Kruger: Die Simbool van 'n Volk*, he reiterates the view held by Krüger and Postma regarding the positive portrayal of Kruger as an advocate of Afrikaner nationalism. He uses as his sources articles published in popular periodicals, such as *Huisgenoot*, of the 1940s and 1950s. Most of the articles were published as commemoration contributions in memory of President Kruger as celebrated on the 10th of October annually. More importantly is Van Jaarsveld's use of both local and international newspapers to underline this fervent positive appraisal of Kruger as a "volks" (peoples) icon. Kruger's popularity under the Boers becomes evident in this work as Van Jaarsveld indicates that already in 1877 Kruger is described as the Republic's "Garibaldi", "Nimrod", "Moses", "Cromwell" and "Stonewell Jackson", to list a few.¹³⁰

Relations between Boer and Briton have been a central point of discussion since The Great Trek in 1836. It is therefore not surprising that Kruger was also associated with these relations as the relationship between the ZAR and Britain deteriorated severely during Kruger's years as President. The second theme concerning literature associated with

¹²⁷ See for example, C.T. Gordon, *The Growth of Boer Opposition to Kruger, 1890-1895*, pp. 21-22, 24-26.

¹²⁸ C.T. Gordon, *The Growth of Boer Opposition to Kruger, 1890-1895*, p. 278.

¹²⁹ C.T. Gordon, *The Growth of Boer Opposition to Kruger, 1890-1895*, p. 21. See footnote 76 on p. 176 for original source: *Press*, 7 Dec 1892. Also see F. Postma, *Paul Kruger: Die Christen, - Volksman en - Staatsman* pp. 29-31.

¹³⁰ F.A. van Jaarsveld, *Paul Kruger: Simbool van 'n volk*, Cum-Boeke, Roodepoort, 1982, Preface and p. 62-3. Also see pp. 41 and 43.

Kruger's rule, will thus focus on Kruger and the British. *Oom Paul's People*, written by the "veteran correspondent"¹³¹ H.C. Hillegas, was published in 1899. The main narrative centres on the troubled relations between the British and Boers and also includes a brief history of the country. Hillegas is of the opinion that many distorted perceptions of the Boer people exist which were largely unfounded. He thus sets out to disprove some of these perceptions by sharing his firsthand experiences of the Boer people during his visit to the ZAR. Hillegas includes two separate chapters on Kruger: in chapter five a short biography of Kruger is given and chapter six includes an interview Hillegas had with Kruger on various aspects concerning the Transvaal, Britain and the Americas.¹³² Although he portrays the people of the South African Republic in a more favourable light, his impression of Kruger seems at times somewhat ambiguous.¹³³ He refers to Kruger's appearance for example as being out of place and odd, yet he is of the opinion that Kruger was one of the "greatest diplomatist[s]" [sic] South Africa has produced.¹³⁴ He also points to a comment made by W.E. Gladstone, who similarly referred to Kruger as the "shrewdest politician on the continent of Africa".¹³⁵ In concluding his chapter written on Kruger, he indicates:

As head of the earth's weakest nation he has for more than a decade defied its strongest power to take his country from him. That should be sufficient honour for any man.¹³⁶

E.H. Tönsing's 1947 M.A. thesis, completed at the University of Pretoria, "Die Eerste Fase van die Stryd tussen Kruger en Milner" (The first Phase of the Strife between Kruger and Milner), focuses on the Boer-Briton relationship with special reference to the period shortly before the outbreak of the South African War. Tönsing is of the opinion that the struggle was essentially one of ideology: Afrikaner nationalism versus British imperialism. Therefore, by the time Kruger and Milner were locking horns, the relations between Boer and Briton were already exacerbated. Thus on both sides boundaries were over-stepped which eventually led to the War.¹³⁷ Another work concerning Boer-Briton relations is *Paul Kruger and his share in the Raid: Some Thoughts for the Pro-Boer and an Appeal*,

¹³¹ F.R. van Hartesveldt, *The Boer War Historiography and Annotated Bibliography*, Westport CT and London, Greenwood Press, 2000, p.118.

¹³² H.C. Hillegas, *Oom Paul's People. A narrative of the British-Boer troubles in South Africa, with a history of the Boers, the country, and its institutions*, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1899, p. ix (Preface).

¹³³ H.C. Hillegas, *Oom Paul's People*, p. 135.

¹³⁴ H.C. Hillegas, *Oom Paul's People*, p. 111; 135.

¹³⁵ H.C. Hillegas, *Oom Paul's People*, p. 134.

¹³⁶ H.C. Hillegas, *Oom Paul's People*, p. 135.

¹³⁷ E.H. Tönsing, *Die Eerste Fase van die Stryd tussen Kruger en Milner*, M.A. - verhandeling, U.P. 1947, p. 1.

published by the Vigilance Committee. Here a particular negative stance towards Kruger is taken. The author who takes on a pseudo name “Veritatis Quæsitör” (to seek the truth) further accuses the Pro-Boer activists of lengthening the War and causing more bloodshed on both sides of the War as a result of their “foolishness”. His accusations are based on points which *inter alia* involve the violation of two Conventions (1881 and 1884) which determined and defined the relations between the ZAR and Britain. He further appeals to all “English men”, and people who believe in a just cause, to help end the War.¹³⁸ The aim of this monograph is to propagate an “anti-Boer attitude” which aligns with the objective of the Cape Town based Committee.¹³⁹

The last theme associated with Kruger’s rule concerns the period after he left Pretoria. This includes his stay in Lourenço Marques as well as Europe where he died. One example is *Paul Kruger’s Tocht* (Paul Kruger’s Journey) edited by B. Waszklewicz van Schilfgaard in collaboration with Ds. H.D. van Broekhuizen of the ZAR, which was published in 1900.¹⁴⁰ Paul Kruger’s public appearances, speeches, and subsequent travels are discussed in detail.¹⁴¹ In 1941 the *Laaste lewensjare en heengaan van President Kruger* (Last years and passing of President Kruger) by Dr. C. Beyers was published. Although Beyers considers much of the same information as Waszklewicz, he also includes the resulting movements and arrangements made by the ZAR government with the approach of Lord Roberts to Pretoria. His scope is therefore broader. Moreover, Beyers includes a range of letters Kruger wrote to family and other officials of the Republic at this time to personalise the account.¹⁴²

O.J.O. Ferreira also wrote substantially on Paul Kruger’s stay in Lourenço Marques. Ferreira’s 2005 article *Paul Kruger in Mosambiek, September - Oktober 1900* is mainly aimed at correcting existing assumptions regarding the treatment of Kruger by the Portuguese authorities and also to inform readers of this particular period in Kruger’s life – a period that has not, according to Ferreira, been extensively investigated. His findings are based on extensive archival research and sheds light on aspects such as Kruger’s sojourn

¹³⁸ Veritatis Quæsitör, *Paul Kruger and his share in the Raid*, George Pulman & Sons Limited, London, (Written between 1899 and 1902), pp. 1-7.

¹³⁹ V. Bickford-Smith *et al.* (eds.), *Cape Town in the Twentieth Century*, D. Philip Publishers, Claremont, 1999, p. 18.

¹⁴⁰ H.D. van Broekhuizen & B. Waszklewicz van Schilfgaard, (eds.), *Paul Kruger’s Tocht. Getrouwe beschrijving van Oom Paul’s bezoek aan Frankrijk, de Rijnprovincie en Nederland, opgeluisterd door illustration naar momentphotographieën*, A. Abrahams, The Hague, 1900.

¹⁴¹ Information on his arrival at Marseille harbour and his anticipated journey to Paris is for example described in the finest of detail in the first few pages of the publication. See H.D. van Broekhuizen & B. Waszklewicz van Schilfgaard, (eds.), *Paul Kruger’s Tocht*, pp. 10-20.

¹⁴² C. Beyers, *Laaste lewensjare en heengaan van President Kruger*, in *Argief-jaarboek vir Suid-Afrikaanse Geskiedenis*, 4(1), 1941, pp. 24-25, 25-65.

out of Pretoria and his stay at Machadodorp and Waterval-Onder; his subsequent journey to Nelspruit and the assistance of the Portuguese Authorities in providing him a safe-haven in Lourenço Marques; his boarding of the Gelderland and his stay in Europe.¹⁴³ Ferreira also published a monograph in 2008 entitled *Kruger in Lourenço Marques: President S.J.P. Kruger se verblyf in Mosambiek, Sept. - Okt. 1900*¹⁴⁴ (Kruger in Lourenço Marques: President S.J.P. Kruger's sojourn in Mozambique Sept.- Oct. 1900), which deals with similar issues.¹⁴⁵

In addition to the aforementioned, more recent research done by the historian J.S. Bergh illuminates revealing aspects of the Kruger persona as seen through the eyes of Judge Kotzé. The article entitled *A perspective on State President S.J.P. Kruger: Chief Justice J.G. Kotzé's Biographical Memoirs and Reminiscences*,¹⁴⁶ aims to provide an extensive discussion on his views of Kruger which also include both positive and negative observations.¹⁴⁷ Bergh is further of the opinion that Kotzé viewed Kruger from a very different perspective because of fundamental differences between Kruger and himself. These differences in perception or opinion can largely be attributed to a difference in environment and education.¹⁴⁸ Bergh's article focuses on

...three aspects of Kotzé's comments pertaining to Kruger, namely his description of the role played by Kruger in the various phases of the history of the South African Republic; his negative evaluation of Kruger's reminiscences or *Gedenkschriften*; and thirdly, his close analysis of Kruger's character.¹⁴⁹

Two other articles published by Bergh, *S.J.P. Kruger and the Transvaal Hardliners on Race Policies and Practices in the Early 1870s* and *S.J.P. Kruger in the Dock, 1872* also reveal fresh perspectives on Kruger and discuss issues which have as yet not been part of

¹⁴³ O.J.O. Ferreira, Paul Kruger in Mosambiek, September-Oktober 1900, *Historia*, 50(2), November 2005, pp. 85-116.

¹⁴⁴ O.J.O. Ferreira, *Kruger in Lourenço Marques: President S.J.P. Kruger se verblyf in Mosambiek, Sept. - Okt. 1900*, Binedell Uitgewers, 2008.

¹⁴⁵ O.J.O. Ferreira, *Kruger in Lourenço Marques*, pp. 5-6.

¹⁴⁶ J.S. Bergh, A perspective on State President S.J.P. Kruger: Chief Justice J.G. Kotzé's Biographical Memoirs and Reminiscences, *Historia*, 58(1), May 2013, pp. 106-121.

¹⁴⁷ J.S. Bergh, A perspective on State President S.J.P. Kruger: Chief Justice J.G. Kotzé's Biographical Memoirs and Reminiscences, *Historia*, 58(1), May 2013, pp. 118-119.

¹⁴⁸ J.S. Bergh, A perspective on State President S.J.P. Kruger: Chief Justice J.G. Kotzé's Biographical Memoirs and Reminiscences, *Historia* 58(1), May 2013, p. 107.

¹⁴⁹ J.S. Bergh, A perspective on State President S.J.P. Kruger: Chief Justice J.G. Kotzé's Biographical Memoirs and Reminiscences, *Historia*, 58(1), May 2013, p. 107.

mainstream studies on Kruger.¹⁵⁰ The first mentioned article is largely concerned with the race relations between the Boers and the African populations in the ZAR. The relations were especially impacted on by the changing economic and political circumstances and special attention is given to Kruger's particular role and behaviour in terms of race relations within the given period.¹⁵¹

The second article was published in 2011 and discusses the "judicial investigation" of 1872 regarding Kruger's relations with African and other communities.¹⁵² During 1871 the Commission on African Labour investigated similar issues which resulted in substantial criticism against Kruger. The Commission's findings did however not exonerate Kruger, but rather fuelled criticism.¹⁵³ Subsequently, due to additional and rising criticism, further investigation was required in 1872. Bergh therefore aims to indicate the origin and scope of the criticism against Kruger and how Kruger was able to free himself of all allegations.¹⁵⁴ His most recent publication was published in 2014 and is entitled "S.J.P. Kruger and landownership in the Transvaal". Bergh's work aims to illustrate how Kruger was able to acquire such vast extents of land in the Transvaal and moreover points to Kruger's entrepreneurial side in this respect.¹⁵⁵

As indicated, a multitude of works have been published on Paul Kruger both of a biographical and other nature. Not unlike the biographical literature, the selection discussed here appears to portray Kruger in a more positive manner and is essentially commemorative and celebratory. The observation is also made that the biographies written and published during, and close to, the middle and latter part of the 20th century tend to strive towards and probably present a more balanced picture of Kruger. In addition to biographical literature, the sheer volume and sundry nature of the other published literature calls attention to and confirms Kruger's importance as a historical figure in the late 19th and early 20th century history of South(ern) Africa. Topics that have been written on in conjunction with Kruger include, but are not limited to, state and politics, Boer-Brit relations, War as well as Kruger's intervention plight and residing aboard. More recent publications on Kruger appear to focus on the complexity of his character and address novel aspects in

¹⁵⁰ J.S. Bergh, S.J.P. Kruger and the Transvaal Hardliners on Race Policies and Practices in the Early 1870s, *South African Historical Journal*, 58(1), 2007, pp. 142-173 and J.S. Bergh, S.J.P. Kruger in the Dock, 1872, *South African Historical Journal*, 63(1), 2011, pp. 1-19.

¹⁵¹ J.S. Bergh, S.J.P. Kruger and the Transvaal Hardliners on Race Policies and Practices in the Early 1870s, *South African Historical Journal*, 58(1), 2007, pp. 143-144.

¹⁵² J.S. Bergh, S.J.P. Kruger in the Dock, 1872, *South African Historical Journal* 63(1), 2011, p. 1.

¹⁵³ J.S. Bergh, S.J.P. Kruger in the Dock, 1872, *South African Historical Journal* 63(1), 2011, p. 4.

¹⁵⁴ J.S. Bergh, S.J.P. Kruger in the Dock, 1872, *South African Historical Journal* 63(1), 2011, pp. 4-19.

¹⁵⁵ J.S. Bergh, S.J.P. Kruger and landownership in the Transvaal, *Historia*, 59(2), November 2014, pp. 69-78.

this regard. In essence it appears that Kruger embodies a significant period in our history and will continue to do so.

1.2.3. Generalisations

There are very few, if any texts written on South African history in the late 19th and 20th centuries that do not make reference to Kruger. Many of these may only be a one pager or even a one-liner, but reflect on an either positive or negative portrayal of the President, while some even appear ambivalent. Those that make reference to positive portrayals of Kruger include the following: J.F. Van Oordt's work entitled *Paul Kruger en de Opkomst der Zuid-Afrikaansche Republiek*¹⁵⁶ as well as W. Brouwer 's work written on the President entitled *Paul Kruger*.¹⁵⁷ Other biographies that fall within this scope are D'Arbez (pseudo.), *Van Schaapwachter tot President. Het Leven van Paul Kruger*,¹⁵⁸ the Kruger biography of J.E. van Beijnum entitled *Paul Kruger Korte Levensschets: 1825 -10 October -1925*,¹⁵⁹ the writer and journalist F.A. Engelenburg's short biography entitled '*n Onbekende Kruger*'¹⁶⁰ as well as the War veteran J.P. La Grange Lombard's publication entitled *Paul Kruger Die Volksman*¹⁶¹ and the publication entitled *Paul Kruger. Die Christen- Volksman en - Staatsman*¹⁶² written by F. Postma. Other sources which point to a positive one or two-line depiction of Kruger are for example the journalist and editor F.J. Dormer's publication entitled *Vengeance as a policy in Afrikanderland: a plea for a new departure*,¹⁶³ as well as the writer A.M. Mann's work entitled *The Boer in Peace and War*¹⁶⁴. F.A. van Jaarsveld's work entitled *Paul Kruger: Simbool van 'n volk*¹⁶⁵ are also included here as well as J.S Marais's publication written on the origins of the South Africa War entitled *The Fall of*

¹⁵⁶ J.F. van Oordt, *Paul Kruger en de Opkomst van der Zuid-Afrikaansche Republiek*, HAUM, Amsterdam, 1898.

¹⁵⁷ W. Brouwer, *Paul Kruger*, L.J. Veen, Amsterdam, 1899.

¹⁵⁸ D'Arbez (pseudo.), *Van Schaapwachter tot President, Het Leven van Paul Kruger*, J.H. De Bussy, Amsterdam, 1916.

¹⁵⁹ J.E. van Beijnum, *Paul Kruger Korte Levensschets: 1825 - 10 October - 1925*, H.J. Breijer, Arnhem, 1925.

¹⁶⁰ F.V. Engelenburg, '*n Onbekende Kruger*, Volkstem, Pretoria, 1925.

¹⁶¹ J.P. La Grange Lombard, *Paul Kruger. Die Volksman*, J.L. van Schaik, Pretoria, 1925.

¹⁶² F. Postma, *Paul Kruger: Die Christen, -Volksman en - Staatsman*, Pro Ecclesia, Stellenbosch, 1944.

¹⁶³ F. J. Dormer, *Vengeance as a policy in Afrikanderland: a plea for a new departure*, J. Nisbet, London, 1901.

¹⁶⁴ A.M. Mann, *The Boer in Peace and War*, John Long, London, 1900.

¹⁶⁵ F.A. van Jaarsveld, *Paul Kruger: Simbool van 'n volk*, Cum-Boeke, Roodepoort, 1982.

*Kruger's Republic*¹⁶⁶. Lastly H. Giliomee's biography written on the Afrikaners entitled *Die Afrikaners: 'n Biografie*,¹⁶⁷ is also included.

The sources that appear to be ambivalent as they point to both portrayals of Kruger are for example the work written by J.A. Hobson entitled *The War in South Africa Its Causes and Effects*¹⁶⁸ as well as Hobson's contemporaries' works entitled *Oom Paul's People*¹⁶⁹ by H.C. Hillegas and F. A. Mckenzie's biography entitled *Paul Kruger: His Life Story*.¹⁷⁰ The work written by M. Nathan entitled *Paul Kruger. His Life and Times*¹⁷¹ as well as C.T. Gordon's publication entitled *The Growth of Boer Opposition to Kruger, 1890-1895*¹⁷² point to Kruger in an ambivalent manner. This is similar to the views held by the historians C. van Onselen¹⁷³ and B. Nasson¹⁷⁴ both of whom call for a reappraisal of the Kruger persona.

Publications that reflect more negatively on Kruger include the following works: S.M. Gluckstein, *Queen or President? An Indictment of Paul Kruger*¹⁷⁵ as well as the publication of the South African Vigilance Committee entitled *Paul Kruger and the Transvaal Judiciary: His violations of the Constitution, and his Destruction of the independence of the High Court of the Transvaal*.¹⁷⁶ The renowned writer A.C. Doyle's publication on his experiences in the War entitled *The Great Boer War* and the collection of correspondence of Lord Alfred Milner published in *The Milner Papers. South Africa 1897-1899* are also included here. Furthermore, the ZAR official, E.J.P. Jorissen's publication on his experiences in the ZAR entitled, *Transvaalsche Herinneringen 1876-1896*¹⁷⁷ and lastly the historian R. Ross's

¹⁶⁶ J.S. Marais, *The Fall of Kruger's Republic*, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1961.

¹⁶⁷ H. Giliomee, *Die Afrikaners: 'n Biografie*, Tafelberg, Kaapstad, 2004.

¹⁶⁸ J.A. Hobson, *The War in South Africa Its Causes and Effects*, J. Nisbet, London, 1900.

¹⁶⁹ H.C. Hillegas, *Oom Paul's People. A narrative of the British-Boer troubles in South Africa, with a history of the Boers, the country, and its institutions*, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1899.

¹⁷⁰ F.A. Mckenzie, *Paul Kruger: His Life Story*, London, James Bowden, 1899.

¹⁷¹ M. Nathan, *Paul Kruger: His Life and Times*, Knox Publishing Company, Durban, 1941.

¹⁷² C.T. Gordon, *The Growth of Boer Opposition to Kruger, 1890-1895*, Oxford University Press, Cape Town, 1970.

¹⁷³ C. van Onselen, The Modernization of the Zuid-Afrikaansche Republiek: F.E.T. Krause, J.C. Smuts, and the Struggle for the Johannesburg Public Prosecutor's Office, 1898-1899, *Law and History Review*, 21(3), 2003, p. 487.

¹⁷⁴ B. Nasson, *The War for South Africa*, Tafelberg, Cape Town, 2010.

¹⁷⁵ S.M. Gluckstein, *Queen or President? An Indictment of Paul Kruger*, Grant Richards, London, 1900.

¹⁷⁶ Vigilance Papers No. 3., *Paul Kruger and the Transvaal Judiciary: His violations of the Constitution, and his Destruction of the independence of the High Court of the Transvaal*, The South African Vigilance Committee, Cape Town, 1900.

¹⁷⁷ E.J.P. Jorissen, *Transvaalsche Herinneringen 1876-1896*, J.H. de Bussy, Amsterdam, 1897.

general history of South Africa entitled, *A Concise History of South Africa* are additional works of importance here.¹⁷⁸

While some of these sources have been discussed in the main body of the literature review, the additional literature that reflects on Kruger will be alluded to in the conclusion. This will be done in order to appraise the contribution of the telegrams as regards broadly endorsed portrayals of the Kruger persona.

The next chapter will present a brief outline of biographical information on Paul Kruger. The discussion stretches from the period of Kruger's birth (1825) up to the Jameson Raid by the end of 1895. The period following the Jameson Raid is the focus of chapter 3, where Kruger is placed in the context of War. It provides a brief outline of the preamble to and declaration of War whereafter the key developments during the first 12 months of the War will be discussed. Emphasis is placed on the months of May to September 1900, which can be seen as Kruger's so-called "crisis period". In chapter 4 a brief history of the development and utilisation of the telegraph is discussed in order to underline its use as a historical source. In addition to the aforementioned the chapter also addresses Kruger's "behind-the-scenes" participation and contribution to the War and investigates his War-time persona through the analysis of a selection of mainly militaristic War telegrams sent during this so-called "crisis" period. Chapter 5 comprises of a second telegraphical analysis however, the selection of Kruger telegrams discussed here is less militaristic. The penultimate chapter will focus on depictions of Kruger as reflected in broad spectrum literature and juxtaposition these with what has been reflected through the lens of his War telegrams. Thereafter a final conclusion will follow.

¹⁷⁸ R. Ross, *A Concise History of South Africa*, Cambridge, United Kingdom, Cambridge University Press, 1999.

CHAPTER 2

Background on Kruger up to 1895

Paul Kruger was elected President of the ZAR for four successive terms. During his two-decade rule (1883-1904) the ZAR experienced a period characterised by profound change. Subsequently from the onset Kruger was faced with many obstacles which complicated and prolonged the establishment of the ZAR as a leading power in Southern Africa. Although Kruger was not at all times the most popular among his people, his knowledge of their joint history, shared experience and uncompromising spirit enabled him to win continued support. He was at once conservative and surprisingly progressive in his outlook. One exception is however his faith – he stood firm in his religious beliefs. For his time, and despite his circumstances, he has been regarded by many as a leading mind even though almost illiterate when compared to international literacy standards. The intricacy of his character and actions bear witness to his impact and importance in the history of late 19th-century South Africa.

As indicated, as background to the focus of the study an introductory biographical sketch of Kruger will be presented in this chapter. The purpose hereof is twofold, namely, to provide the reader with a historical context and secondly to emphasise the importance of Kruger as a key role-player in the history of Southern Africa. This discussion will cover the period from Kruger's birth up to 1895. For the purposes of this chapter the historian D.W. Krüger's republished monograph entitled *Paul Kruger - 'n biografie*, is heavily relied on as this remains one of the standard and most acclaimed texts on the subject.

2.1 From Bulhoek to Waterval

Kruger was born on the 10th of October 1825 on the farm Bulhoek in the current province of the Western Cape and was officially baptised Stephanus Johannes Paulus Kruger on the 19th of March 1826 in Cradock.¹⁷⁹ Kruger was one of Elsie Francina Steyn and Casper Jan Hendrik Kruger's seven children and he grew up as a farmer's son. It was not

¹⁷⁹ Although there have been disputes regarding Kruger's date and place of birth, historians have come to agree that the date is indeed as mentioned above, the 10th of October 1825. In terms of his place of birth, in his *Memoirs* Kruger himself only mentions where he grew up and does not indicate whether this was the same farm where he was born. Despite Prof. C.J. Uys's claims that Kruger was in actual fact born on the farm Vaalbank, D.W. Krüger is of the opinion that an exact locality was not specified. What is however clear, is that Kruger was born in the Brakrivier ward. Krüger further asserts that his research as well as information provided by the Kruger family, verified this and pointed to him being born on the farm Bulhoek. See D.W. Krüger, *Paul Kruger 'n biografie*, Praag, 2009, footnote no. 11, p. 21; C.J. Uys, *Paul Kruger: Van die Wieg tot die Graf*, A. A. Balkema, Kaapstad, 1955, pp. 6, 9 and S.J.P. Kruger, *The Memoirs of Paul Kruger: Two volumes published as one*, Scripta Africana, Johannesburg, 1986, p. 1.

uncommon for Boer families like the Krugers to own large numbers of livestock which were spread over a vast terrain. Consequently, herding his father's herds was only one of Kruger's many responsibilities as a young boy.¹⁸⁰ Although brief, Kruger received some form of elementary school education, however the majority of his teaching was done by his parents.¹⁸¹ Religious education was even more important and greatly influenced Kruger's upbringing. The Kruger family educated their offspring in the ways of Calvinism and their religion played a vital role in their everyday life. In this regard Krüger mentions that the religious teachings of the Bible and related literature¹⁸² available to the Trekboers, although limited, formed the foundation of their approach to and understanding of life.¹⁸³ God was at the centre of their entire existence.¹⁸⁴

When Kruger was still a young boy his mother passed away at the age of 27. This must have been a great loss to the family,¹⁸⁵ but there is however no evidence to suggest that her death impacted Kruger in a negative way. Death was part of the cycle of life and was an inevitability the farmers witnessed and experienced on a daily basis. After her death, Casper's children lived on their grandfather's farm until Casper Kruger remarried in 1834. Shortly hereafter the Kruger family continued their trek-lifestyle and journeyed north in search of new pastures. After crossing the British colonial boundary they moved into so-called "unoccupied" territory. The Kruger's settled for a short period in the southern Free State. It was here where they became acquainted with the Potgieter-trek.¹⁸⁶ Although the Krugers left the Colony for different reasons than most of the Trek participants,¹⁸⁷ they found resonance in the Trekkers' sense of independence and consequently joined the Great Trek¹⁸⁸ under the leadership of Potgieter.¹⁸⁹ The Voortrekkers' ideologies also slowly

¹⁸⁰ S.J.P. Kruger, *Memoirs of Paul Kruger: Two volumes published as one*, p. 1.

¹⁸¹ D.W. Krüger, *Paul Kruger 'n biografie*, p. 24; S.J.P. Kruger, *Memoirs of Paul Kruger: Two volumes published as one*, p. 5.

¹⁸² For further explanation see D.W. Krüger, *Paul Kruger 'n biografie*, p. 22.

¹⁸³ D.W. Krüger, *Paul Kruger 'n biografie*, pp. 22-24.

¹⁸⁴ D.W. Krüger, *Paul Kruger 'n biografie* pp. 23, 25.

¹⁸⁵ D.W. Krüger, *Paul Kruger 'n biografie*, p. 21.

¹⁸⁶ The 'Potgietertrek' refers to the trekboers (migrant farmers or nomadic pastoralists) and families who partook in the Trek under the leadership of A.H. Potgieter, a trekboer from the Colesberg area in the Cape Colony, a respected leader during the Great Trek. See N. Worden, *A Concise Dictionary of South African History*, Francolin Publishers, Cape Town, 1998, pp. 123-124.

¹⁸⁷ The Krugers were not part of the Great Trek movement out of the Cape Colony at this time. Their motives for trekking northward were based on the demand for new pastures as the numbers of their livestock grew and was not economically or politically motivated. See D.W. Krüger, *Paul Kruger 'n biografie*, p. 26.

¹⁸⁸ The term 'Great Trek' broadly refers to the migration of trekboers (migrant farmers) from the Cape Colony in the 1830s to trek further north into the interior of Southern Africa. See N. Worden, *A Concise Dictionary of South African History*, pp. 69-70.

¹⁸⁹ D.W. Krüger, *Paul Kruger 'n biografie*, p. 26 and J.S. Marais, *The Fall of Kruger's Republic*, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1961, p. 5.

cultivated a sense of political awareness among the Krugers, paving the way for their strong political influence later on. The Voortrekker lifestyle characterised by danger and rough-and-readiness had a profound influence on Kruger and it fostered a sense of survival and determination in him. This harsh environment apparently produced daring men who were able to defend and flee when necessary and Kruger was part of this brood - the so-called frontier mentality.¹⁹⁰

During the Great Trek Kruger witnessed a number of African attacks on the Voortrekkers. The first two attacks he experienced left a lasting impression on him. According to Krüger, Kruger mentioned that these attacks had been so violent that the memories thereof will forever be “gegrafeer” (engraved) in his mind.¹⁹¹ In October 1836 Kruger endured his first encounter when the *impis* of Silkaats [Mzilikazi]¹⁹² assaulted their laager (encampment).¹⁹³ Although he was not able to help defend their laager with arms at such a young age, he assisted with the distribution and loading of the guns. The second attack he witnessed was ordered by Dingaan¹⁹⁴ in 1837. A small Voortrekker laager had fallen victim to Dingaan’s *impis* and the attack was brutal. Kruger relates that he formed part of the party who was sent to revenge the killings. In both cases the shock and horror experienced on the part of Kruger was apparently overwhelming.¹⁹⁵ Having both experienced and witnessed battle Kruger hereafter took part in his first military expedition under Potgieter at the age of fourteen.¹⁹⁶ During the same year he also had the opportunity to shoot his first lion, an experience that was especially amusing as Kruger gave the bystanders a terrible fright.¹⁹⁷

After the Krugers moved into the newly annexed territory of the Transvaal (1852)¹⁹⁸ they settled at Potchefstroom.¹⁹⁹ Here Casper Kruger played a significant role in the politics of

¹⁹⁰ H. Giliomee, *Die Afrikaners: 'n Biografie*, Tafelberg, Kaapstad, 2004, pp. 150-153.

¹⁹¹ D.W. Krüger, *Paul Kruger 'n biografie*, pp. 27-28 and J. Meintjies, *President Paul Kruger: a biography*, Cassell, London, 1974, p. 11.

¹⁹² Silkaats [1790-1868], also known as Mzilikazi, was a Zulu warrior and founder of the Ndebele clan of Southern Africa. See B.J. Barker, *A Concise Dictionary of the Boer War*, Francolin Publishers, Cape Town, 1999, pp. 192-193.

¹⁹³ D.W. Krüger, *Paul Kruger 'n biografie*, p. 27.

¹⁹⁴ Dingaan [±1795-1840] was the half brother of the renowned Zulu chief Shaka and paramount chief of the Zulus. See J. Heale, *They Made This Land*, AD Donker, Johannesburg, 1981, pp. 74-76.

¹⁹⁵ Kruger related some of his memories to J. Forsyth Ingram, F.R.G.S. in 1893. See D.W. Krüger, *Paul Kruger 'n biografie*, pp. 27-29 and footnote 19.

¹⁹⁶ D.W. Krüger, *Paul Kruger 'n biografie*, pp. 29-30.

¹⁹⁷ S.J.P. Kruger, *Memoirs of Paul Kruger: Two volumes published as one*, p. 9.

¹⁹⁸ The Transvaal refers to the area in Southern Africa between the Vaal and Limpopo rivers in the north. This area later became known as the ZAR. See N. Worden, *A Concise Dictionary of South African History*, pp. 152-153.

¹⁹⁹ A village established by the Trekkers.

the new Trekker Republic.²⁰⁰ Not only was he chosen as a member of the “Volksraad” (Council) but he was also a member and later chairman of the “Adjunk-Raad” (Vice Council).²⁰¹ The Krugers stay in Potchefstroom was however short-lived. Soon Casper Kruger pushed further into the interior and finally settled permanently north of the Magaliesberg on the farm Zoutpansdrif. The Krugers’ trekker-lifestyle now came to an end. During the Great Trek period Kruger was significantly influenced by the trekker leaders as well as his family’s developing political consciousness and leadership. It appears as if their involvement in politics paved the way for Kruger’s interest and later participation in ZAR politics.²⁰² It was during this time that Kruger celebrated his sixteenth birthday and qualified to become a “burgher”²⁰³ (citizen) of the Republic and was also allowed to choose a suitable portion of land. Kruger’s eye fell on a piece of land situated south of the modern-day Rustenburg in the Magaliesberg region namely the farm Waterkloof.²⁰⁴ These accomplishments marked the beginning of Kruger’s journey as an independent young adult.

Following Kruger’s settlement on Waterkloof, he occupied himself with farming and hunting activities. Establishing a farm was no easy task and when times were especially tough he would resort to hunting for subsistence. Judging from his close and almost deadly encounters with many species of large mammals such as lion, rhino, elephant and buffalo, he had to have been a fairly good shot.²⁰⁵ In his *Memoirs* he relates some of his most brave and memorable hunting encounters²⁰⁶ which once more emphasises his daring, fearless and adventurous spirit. Life on the farm was still lonely and Kruger’s courtship with another Trekker girl, Maria du Plessis, commenced.²⁰⁷ Their courting did not last very long as the two seemed eager to tie the knot and married in 1842 when Kruger was 17 years old.²⁰⁸ Kruger was soon promoted to assistant field-cornet,²⁰⁹ and was gradually increasing his involvement in state matters. The incentive to negotiate the boundaries between the

²⁰⁰ The Voortrekker leaders agreed on the 16th October 1840 that the Natal region, northern Free State as well as regions annexed in the Transvaal will forthwith be unified into a trekker republic. A Volksraad was established and functioned as the supreme authority of the Republic. Pietermaritzburg functioned as the capital and both Potchefstroom and Pietermaritzburg functioned as administrative head quarters. See D.W. Krüger, *Paul Kruger ‘n biografie*, p. 31.

²⁰¹ D.W. Krüger, *Paul Kruger ‘n biografie*, pp. 31-32 and J. Meintjies, *President Paul Kruger. A Biography*, p.16.

²⁰² D.W. Krüger, *Paul Kruger ‘n biografie*, p. 32.

²⁰³ In this context, a burgher refers to a citizen of the Republic. See B.J. Barker, *A Concise Dictionary of the Boer War*, p. 40.

²⁰⁴ D.W. Krüger, *Paul Kruger ‘n biografie*, p. 32.

²⁰⁵ D.W. Krüger, *Paul Kruger ‘n biografie*, pp. 34-37.

²⁰⁶ S.J.P. Kruger, *The Memoirs of Paul Kruger: Two volumes published as one*, pp. 10-17.

²⁰⁷ J.P. La Grange Lombard, *Paul Kruger. Die Volksman*, p. 29.

²⁰⁸ D.W. Krüger, *Paul Kruger ‘n biografie*, p. 40.

²⁰⁹ J. Meintjies, *President Paul Kruger. A Biography*, p. 21.

Trekkers and the Portuguese and to safeguard territory further away from the British sphere of influence led to the Trekkers sending a delegation to the Portuguese at Delagoa Bay.²¹⁰ The result hereof was further exploration and the founding of the small village of Ohrigstad on the eastern border of the Republic. Kruger was also given a farm, Zwartkop, in this region and began farming there straight away. During their stay Kruger had a terrible hunting accident and as a result thereof he lost his left thumb. In addition to this accident, life was complicated by endemic diseases which consequently made farming impossible.²¹¹ By the end of 1845 the Krugers, now consisting of Maria and their first child, moved back to their farm Waterkloof. The new year brought especially bad tidings as Maria and their child passed away in January 1846.²¹² This was a tough time for Kruger but he soon found a new wife, Gezina Susanna Frederika Wilhelmina du Plessis²¹³ and they got married in 1847.²¹⁴ Their marriage produced sixteen children, but sadly Kruger and Gezina outlived most of them.²¹⁵

By the end of 1847 the Trekker settlement was faced with additional challenges which fired up widespread discontent. Not only did Britain pose as a new threat to the Trekkers' independence as their sister "Republic", the Free State, was annexed, and internal schisms also put increased pressure on local relations which in turn undermined unity. A call was made for the re-evaluation of the "Republic's" authority structure and the need for a central government was expressed.²¹⁶ Amid this crisis Kruger's political involvement increased. He was a staunch believer in maintaining law and order and also consequently established himself openly as an advocate thereof. In his capacity as assistant field-cornet he wrote a range of petitions to the Volksraad in this regard, stressing the importance of upholding their authority and seeing through their decisions.²¹⁷ Despite the turbulent climate in the "Republic", Britain at last acknowledged the independence of the Republic by signing the Sand Rivier Convention of 17 January 1852.²¹⁸ Kruger was also part of this particular

²¹⁰ A delegation was sent to the Portuguese territory to facilitate diplomatic relations between the Trekkers and the Portuguese Colony as well as the Dutch settled there. See D.W. Krüger, *Paul Kruger 'n biografie*, p. 41.

²¹¹ J. Meintjies, *President Paul Kruger. A Biography*, p. 21.

²¹² The cause of the deaths is thought to be malaria. See D.W. Krüger, *Paul Kruger 'n biografie*, p. 44.

²¹³ She was Maria's cousin, also du Plessis. See D.W. Krüger, *Paul Kruger 'n biografie*, p. 44.

²¹⁴ S.J.P. Kruger, *The Memoirs of Paul Kruger: Two volumes published as one*, p. 6.

²¹⁵ D.W. Krüger, *Paul Kruger 'n biografie*, p. 44 and see J. Meintjies, *President Paul Kruger. A Biography*, p. 22.

²¹⁶ J.P. La Grange Lombard, *Paul Kruger. Die Volksman*, p. 45 and D.W. Krüger, *Paul Kruger 'n biografie*, p. 46.

²¹⁷ D.W. Krüger, *Paul Kruger 'n biografie*, pp. 46-47.

²¹⁸ D.W. Krüger, *Paul Kruger 'n biografie*, pp. 48-49.

delegation and thus played a part in securing their independence.²¹⁹ From this point onwards Kruger's public participation gradually increased and with it, his stature.

The ZAR experienced a great deal of internal disorder following the deaths of the two prominent Trekker leaders, A.H. Potgieter²²⁰ and A.W.J Pretorius,²²¹ in 1852 and 1853 respectively.²²² The lack of strong leadership inevitably steered the Volksraad's decision in the direction of alleged nepotism and M.W. Pretorius²²³ was chosen as the first president of the ZAR on 6 January 1857.²²⁴ In the interim a committee was chosen to design and propose a new constitution for the ZAR, of which Kruger was also a member. The proceedings were however interrupted by *inter alia* a range of military expeditions and the Constitution was only accepted three years later in 1858.²²⁵ By then the ZAR was rooted in a central authority and governed by a set of legislation and yet despite these measures, internal disunity was still far from eradicated. Moreover, Pretorius's ambitions for unifying the ZAR and OFS in one Afrikaner Republic, only added to further discontent. To complicate matters the two districts, Lydenburg and Soutpansberg, refused to acknowledge the newly accepted Constitution and in their attempts to secure their own goals only undermined cohesion. Pretorius's first attempt at unification therefore failed miserably but this surprisingly only fired his ambitions further. Without Kruger, now a Commandant, stepping in at this time, it has been argued that war might have ensued between the ZAR and its sister Republic.²²⁶

The period following the initial unification attempt was characterised by internal upheaval, conflict with several black communities and at times a state of total anarchy. During this period Kruger played a leading role in the establishment of law and order in the Republic - an objective undermined by the selfish conduct of those opposed to the Constitution and in some cases the President himself. As a consequence of his firm belief in the authority of the Constitution and his dealings in accordance thereof, he was promoted to Commandant-General in 1864.²²⁷ This promotion enabled Kruger to utilise government resources and in

²¹⁹ J. Meintjies, *President Paul Kruger. A Biography*, p. 27.

²²⁰ See footnote 186, p. 32.

²²¹ A.W.J. Pretorius was one of the prominent leaders of the Great Trek. See N. Worden, *A Concise Dictionary of South African History*, p.124.

²²² D.W. Krüger, *Paul Kruger 'n biografie*, p. 52.

²²³ The Great Trek leader A.W.J. Pretorius's son, see J. Meintjies, *President Paul Kruger. A Biography*, p. 33.

²²⁴ D.W. Krüger, *Paul Kruger 'n biografie*, p. 55.

²²⁵ D.W. Krüger, *Paul Kruger 'n biografie*, p. 53.

²²⁶ Kruger was sent to negotiate with OFS president Boshoff as an attempt to refrain from starting a civil war. D.W. Krüger, *Paul Kruger 'n biografie*, p. 59.

²²⁷ Kruger's position was only formally and legally acknowledged during the election in May 1864 when he was elected as Commandant-General. Prior to this he also acted in this capacity for some

time enabled him to subdue the onslaught of the Boer “rebels”, ending the last phase of the so-called “Civil War” in the Republic. Kruger’s actions reaffirmed his leadership and military capabilities²²⁸ however it did not ensure him wide support as he had been greatly criticised for his part in the spilling of “brethren” blood.²²⁹

On a personal level Kruger’s rank demanded a great deal of his attention and with constant upheaval in the Republic, his successive expeditions left no time for his own farming. As a result he often found himself in a weak financial position. The Government compensated him for his military services by granting him land²³⁰ which did not lighten his burden. Without funds, physical labour and proper management, the farms could not support him and his family. Moreover, Kruger’s debtors soon called in his loans and his situation became more problematic. Although Kruger turned to the government for support in this regard, the matter was not resolved until much later.²³¹

In addition to his financial crisis, Kruger also experienced troubles at a religious level. According to Krüger, shortly after the passing of the two Trekker leaders, Kruger became increasingly spiritually troubled. His struggle with his faith and beliefs was a consequence, and in a way, a manifestation of his concern for the prevailing sense of uncertainty in the new Republic. This struggle was apparently of such an extent that he left his farm and went to the mountains for a few days to clear his head. Awaiting his return, Gezina became all the more concerned and a search party was sent out to find him. They found him in a terrible state.²³² This incident has thought to have impacted Kruger in a profound manner. It has been claimed that he underwent a complete and intense spiritual awakening during this time which was evident in his newly acquired religious commitment.²³³

Kruger’s dedication to and passion for his religion was even more noticeable in his participation in the establishment of the Reformed (Gereformeerde) Church. Despite ever-increasing resistance to the establishment of such a separatist church, Kruger and a group

time as he was elected as Commandant-General during the ‘civil war’ period but not formally accepted. See D.W. Krüger, *Paul Kruger ‘n biografie*, pp. 73, 78; J.P. La Grange Lombard, *Paul Kruger. Die Volksman*, p. 79.

²²⁸ Kruger’s actions spoke louder than words and after his election the then current commandant-general of the Lydenburg district, voluntarily stepped down as he recognised his own incapability.

²²⁹ Battle at Krokodilrivier on 5 January 1864. The State forces under Kruger’s command won this decisive battle with a mere 9 casualties. The rebel forces lost 45 men. See D.W. Krüger, *Paul Kruger ‘n biografie*, pp. 77-78.

²³⁰ Kruger was awarded a range of farms for his services rendered. Although he owned many farms, at the time of his death in 1904, he was still the owner of his first two farms Waterkloof and Boekenhoutfontein. See D.W. Krüger, *Paul Kruger ‘n biografie*, pp. 84-90.

²³¹ F.V. Engelenburg, *‘n Onbekende Kruger*, Volkstem, Pretoria, 1925, pp. 11-15.

²³² J.I. Rademeyer, *Paul Kruger*, Afrikaanse Pers-Boekhandel, Johannesburg, 1962, p. 20.

²³³ D.W. Krüger, *Paul Kruger ‘n biografie*, p. 56.

of believers broke away from the State Church (Hervormde Kerk) and established the first Reformed Church in Southern Africa in the area of modern-day Rustenburg.²³⁴ Even though this institution undermined religious unity in the Republic and had dire consequences for its followers in certain instances, it nonetheless points to a group of risk-taking and committed individuals – one of which was Kruger.

After the so-called “Civil War” the Republic experienced a period of divided support and distrust and as mentioned, this also influenced Kruger’s popularity, competency and support. Yet there was no dispute on the subject of his military ability. Kruger’s goal of establishing law and order in the Republic was hereafter also extended to the black communities in and around its borders.²³⁵ Although conflict with the Black communities in the Republic flared up from time to time, the Orange Free State in contrast hereto had been experiencing prolonged attacks from the Basotho.²³⁶ Their attempts at resisting black people had been futile and as a last resort their plea fell on their sister Republic and its reputable Commandant-General, Paul Kruger.²³⁷ The initial rallying of commandos in the ZAR had been very poor and in an attempt to gather sufficient numbers of burghers, a joint war was declared against Mosjesj [Moshesh]²³⁸ and martial law instated on the 20th of July 1865.²³⁹ Kruger’s command experienced much success in the opening phase of the conflict but received a hard blow in September when the Basotho penetrated the laager, leaving casualties in their wake. Hereafter Kruger pursued the chiefs but sadly their efforts were fruitless and the commandos returned home.²⁴⁰ This military episode was an enormous setback for Kruger and to make matters worse, on his return home he was faced with more farming troubles.²⁴¹

His luck did not turn soon for he was involved in a serious accident with his donkey cart and subsequently broke his knee. His injury kept him from active duty for a length of time and his circumstances forced him to administer his State affairs from home.²⁴² During this time there were clashes with black people in the Republic, but as fewer and fewer of the

²³⁴ D.W. Krüger, *Paul Kruger ‘n biografie*, pp. 64-68.

²³⁵ D.W. Krüger, *Paul Kruger ‘n biografie*, p. 91.

²³⁶ J.P. La Grange Lombard, *Paul Kruger. Die Volksman*, p. 85.

²³⁷ D.W. Krüger, *Paul Kruger ‘n biografie*, pp. 93-94.

²³⁸ Mosjesj, also known as Moshesh or Moshoehoe, etc., was part of the Bamokoteli people of Southern Africa and founder of the Basotho tribe. See J. Heale, *They Made This Land*, pp. 198-202.

²³⁹ D.W. Krüger, *Paul Kruger ‘n biografie*, p. 94 and S.J.P. Kruger, *The Memoirs of Paul Kruger: Two volumes published as one*, pp. 59-60.

²⁴⁰ J.P. La Grange Lombard, *Paul Kruger. Die Volksman*, pp. 85-89.

²⁴¹ D.W. Krüger, *Paul Kruger ‘n biografie*, p. 95 and J. Meintjies, *President Paul Kruger. A Biography*, p. 63.

²⁴² S.J.P. Kruger, *The Memoirs of Paul Kruger: Two volumes published as one*, p. 61.

burghers honoured their civil obligation of military service, the numbers of the military force and their fighting power was severely undermined and the towns threatened could not be properly defended.²⁴³ At that point in time Kruger was fighting a losing battle against both the civilians and the State. It appears as if Kruger had to rely on himself to a greater extent, without much external assistance.²⁴⁴

Apart from Kruger's military and defence responsibilities, he was also personally involved in the demarcation of the border between the ZAR and Natal²⁴⁵ as well as the south western border.²⁴⁶ The disputes on the south western border did however not, as was the case in Natal, come to a favourable close and the Republic lost a fair amount of proclaimed territory to the chiefs including the districts Christiana, Bloemhof and a section of Potchefstroom.²⁴⁷ As a result of President Pretorius's actions and due to the lack of expertise of the officials in this regard, the Pretorius government lost a great deal of support. Moreover, their blunder and policies cost them Kruger's support and he consequently voted against Pretorius in the next presidential election of 1869.²⁴⁸ The aptitude of the President after this blunder became a serious concern for the people. The next president would have to be knowledgeable in such matters and educated in accordance with international standards. Both the burghers and officials recognised their inability to fill such a position and the search for a new president outside the ZAR began.²⁴⁹ The candidacy fell on Thomas François Burgers, an educated man and practising religious minister from the Cape Colony.²⁵⁰ Although his liberal and religious ideas differed significantly from those of the ZAR conservatives,²⁵¹ he was nonetheless the man they sought after and his promising candidacy won them over. He was inaugurated as State President on 1 July 1872.²⁵² Kruger, very much opposed to the idea of allowing a man with such religious convictions to

²⁴³ See for example D.W. Krüger, *Paul Kruger 'n biografie*, pp. 94, 95, 99, 100 and 101 etc.

²⁴⁴ See for example F.V. Engelenburg, *'n Onbekende Kruger*, p. 35.

²⁴⁵ The border between the ZAR and Natal was established in February 1870. See D.W. Krüger, *Paul Kruger 'n biografie*, p. 105.

²⁴⁶ The first diamond discovery in the ZAR was in 1867 and the south western border disputes were central to this discovery which involved British immigrants, black chiefs who, according to Kruger, laid claim to the land falsely and complicated the matter. See D.W. Krüger, *Paul Kruger 'n biografie*, p. 94 and S.J.P. Kruger, *The Memoirs of Paul Kruger: Two volumes published as one*, pp. 59-60.

²⁴⁷ D.W. Krüger, *Paul Kruger 'n biografie*, pp. 105-106. According to Kruger however, the district of Christiana was given back to the ZAR after they petitioned against lieutenant-general Keate's verdict. See S.J.P. Kruger, *The Memoirs of Paul Kruger: Two volumes published as one*, pp. 67-68.

²⁴⁸ D.W. Krüger, *Paul Kruger 'n biografie*, p. 106.

²⁴⁹ D.W. Krüger, *Paul Kruger 'n biografie*, p. 107 and J. Meintjies, *President Paul Kruger. A Biography*, p. 68.

²⁵⁰ J.P. La Grange Lombard, *Paul Kruger. Die Volksman*, p. 94.

²⁵¹ S.J.P. Kruger, *The Memoirs of Paul Kruger: Two volumes published as one*, p. 69.

²⁵² D.W. Krüger, *Paul Kruger 'n biografie*, pp. 109, 110

be president, did however at the inauguration of President Burgers assure him of his loyal support as Commandant-General at the time.²⁵³

In the period after Burgers's election Kruger's family experienced an extensive time of illness and he had to ask for permission to obtain leave to support his family in this regard.²⁵⁴ According to Krüger, Kruger went through an especially demoralising time and coupled with his lack of faith in the current President, he consequently decided to relinquish his title and requested the Volksraad for an honourable discharge.²⁵⁵ Kruger did not expect to return to officialdom soon but was shortly thereafter instated as the non-official member of the Executive Council in November 1874.²⁵⁶

President Burger's rule was characterised by foreign ideas and a greater emphasis was placed on progress. Although Burgers was able to lift the State out of its initial financial difficulties, his continuous propagation of concepts alien and in contrast to the beliefs of the people ultimately cost him support.²⁵⁷ As a result, a percentage of the population was even willing to leave the ZAR in search of a new "promised land".²⁵⁸ Even more surprising was that Kruger was amongst them. His religious convictions did in the end get the better of him and he strongly condemned the Trek which, despite his pleas, commenced in May 1875.²⁵⁹

2.2 From Commandant to President

By 1877 preparations were slowly being made for the next presidential election as Burgers was serving his last year of his five-year term in office. Regardless of his diminishing popularity Kruger still continued to support him. In a letter addressed to a fellow Boer, P. J. Joubert, Kruger ardently expressed his fears for and possible detrimental consequences if another president should be elected – one with even less knowledge of the ZAR people and with larger unrealistic goals.²⁶⁰ What Kruger did however not anticipate was that he would be requested to stand as a potential candidate against Burgers himself and,

²⁵³D.W. Krüger, *Paul Kruger 'n biografie*, p. 112; F.A. van Jaarsveld, *Paul Kruger. Simbool van 'n volk*, p. 52 and J.P. La Grange Lombard, *Paul Kruger. Die Volksman*, p. 95.

²⁵⁴ F.V. Engelenburg, *'n Onbekende Kruger*, p. 9.

²⁵⁵D.W. Krüger, *Paul Kruger 'n biografie*, p. 113 and F.A. van Jaarsveld, *Paul Kruger. Simbool van 'n volk*, p. 47.

²⁵⁶D.W. Krüger, *Paul Kruger 'n biografie*, p. 116 and J. Meintjies, *President Paul Kruger. A Biography*, p. 74.

²⁵⁷ F.A. van Jaarsveld, *Paul Kruger. Simbool van 'n volk*, pp. 47, 52.

²⁵⁸ This movement out of the ZAR is better known as the Dorstlandtrek. See J. Meintjies, *President Paul Kruger. A Biography*, p. 73.

²⁵⁹ D.W. Krüger, *Paul Kruger 'n biografie*, pp. 114-115.

²⁶⁰ D.W. Krüger, *Paul Kruger 'n biografie*, pp. 122-123.

moreover, he proved to be an excellent candidate despite the criticism²⁶¹ against his candidature. As the tension heightened between the candidates, the ZAR anticipated the arrival of Lord Theophilus Shepstone from Natal.²⁶² He was sent under the guise of friendly deliberations regarding the establishment of a federation of Southern Africa as well as the consideration of the treatment of and relationship with the black people within ZAR borders. His objectives were however more sinister as he was secretly instructed to take possession of the ZAR.²⁶³

From the commencement of his visit Kruger was suspicious²⁶⁴ of his objectives and even abruptly ended the deliberations on the third day. The issue of federation was still to be discussed and the Volksraad consequently convened. The majority voted against federation as did Kruger. He was of the opinion that federation equalled the loss of their independence and therefore strongly opposed it. When the decision reached Shepstone, he in turn notified the ZAR government of his own primary objectives and despite reforms, protesting and calls for international intervention, the ZAR was annexed on the 12th of April 1877.²⁶⁵ Prior to the annexation Kruger was also elected as vice-president, a measure put in place as part of Burger's reform program.²⁶⁶ By now President Burgers only stood in the shadow of Kruger who in the passing weeks relentlessly fought for the independence of the Republic.

As a result of Kruger's commitment to the cause, the Volksraad sent him, State Attorney E.J.P. Jorissen and State Secretary W.E. Bok to Europe to protest against the annexation.²⁶⁷ Their deputation was however not successful and the annexation could not be undone.²⁶⁸ Despite this, Kruger also gained the opportunity to interact with the Colonial authorities and to experience British diplomacy firsthand, which would assist him in his dealings with Britain in future. In addition to England, he also visited other European

²⁶¹The criticism against Kruger largely centred on the assumption that he represented backwardness and that Burgers' enlightened policies and goals were too progressive for Kruger and that he would in all likelihood not be able to fill such a position. According to D.W. Krüger the Transvaal newspaper *De Volksstem* was especially opposed to Kruger's candidature whereas *De Patriot* from the Cape encouraged Kruger's election as a means to get rid of president Burgers. See D.W. Krüger, *Paul Kruger 'n biografie*, p. 125.

²⁶² J. Meintjies, *President Paul Kruger. A Biography*, p. 80.

²⁶³ S.J.P. Kruger, *The Memoirs of Paul Kruger: Two volumes published as one*, p. 72; J. Meintjies, *President Paul Kruger. A Biography*, pp. 80-83 and J.S. Marais, *The Fall of Kruger's Republic*, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1961, p. 5.

²⁶⁴ J.P. La Grange Lombard, *Paul Kruger. Die Volksman*, p. 101.

²⁶⁵ See D.W. Krüger, *Paul Kruger 'n biografie*, p. 132.

²⁶⁶ See D.W. Krüger, *Paul Kruger 'n biografie*, p. 132.

²⁶⁷ See D.W. Krüger, *Paul Kruger 'n biografie*, p. 136 and 142 and see J. Meintjies, *President Paul Kruger. A Biography*, p. 83.

²⁶⁸ See D.W. Krüger, *Paul Kruger 'n biografie*, pp. 148-149 and S.J.P. Kruger, *The Memoirs of Paul Kruger: Two volumes published as one*, pp. 83-84.

countries, where he was positively received.²⁶⁹ Kruger's European visit thus only added to his arsenal. It increased his international popularity and moreover provided him with a broader comprehension of world politics. The months following the arrival of the deputation back in the ZAR were characterised by dissatisfaction and suspicion. Kruger's aim was however clear – he had to secure the independence of the Republic. This objective materialised on the 4th of April 1878, on the farm Doornfontein when the majority of the burghers voted against the British annexation.²⁷⁰ As a result, a second deputation was sent to London but this was also to no avail.²⁷¹

After a range of deliberations failed to change the British officials' stance towards the annexation, a widespread anti-annexation movement began, advocating the ZAR's cause from north to south.²⁷² Repeated requests to the British fell on deaf ears and the gathering of the burghers at Wonderfontein²⁷³ and Kleinfontein²⁷⁴ culminated in the Paardekraal gathering of the 8th of December 1880,²⁷⁵ where the mobilisation of the burghers became a reality.²⁷⁶ During this meeting Kruger was also chosen as the representative of his people by bestowing on him the title of vice-president.²⁷⁷ Through this action they willingly turned to Kruger for assistance and acknowledged his value in securing and advocating their cause. In addition, P.J. Joubert and M.W. Pretorius were also chosen to govern alongside Kruger, the so-called Triumvirate.²⁷⁸ Hereafter a proclamation was printed and published in Potchefstroom²⁷⁹ which informed the British of the burghers' non-violent takeover.²⁸⁰ As a consequence of the growing tension in Potchefstroom, the first clash ensued, marking the beginning of the First Anglo Boer War (1880-1881). In the months following the incident, the new government invaded and took control of various towns in the ZAR without any protest on the part of the inhabitants. This action in itself demonstrated their welcoming attitude towards the old regime. The cause was however not yet won and only ended in the

²⁶⁹ See D.W. Krüger, *Paul Kruger 'n biografie*, pp. 149-151 and J. Meintjies, *President Paul Kruger. A Biography*, pp. 90-93.

²⁷⁰ J.P. La Grange Lombard, *Paul Kruger. Die Volksman*, p. 110; D.W. Krüger, *Paul Kruger 'n biografie*, pp. 163-164.

²⁷¹ D.W. Krüger, *Paul Kruger 'n biografie*, pp. 173-174.

²⁷² D.W. Krüger, *Paul Kruger 'n biografie*, p. 196.

²⁷³ S.J.P. Kruger, *The Memoirs of Paul Kruger: Two volumes published as one*, p. 86.

²⁷⁴ S.J.P. Kruger, *The Memoirs of Paul Kruger: Two volumes published as one*, p. 87

²⁷⁵ D.W. Krüger, *Paul Kruger 'n biografie*, p. 209 and S.J.P. Kruger, *The Memoirs of Paul Kruger: Two volumes published as one*, p. 98.

²⁷⁶ D.W. Krüger, *Paul Kruger 'n biografie*, p. 215.

²⁷⁷ J.P. La Grange Lombard, *Paul Kruger. Die Volksman*, p.128 and D.W. Krüger, *Paul Kruger 'n biografie*, p. 211.

²⁷⁸ D.W. Krüger, *Paul Kruger 'n biografie*, pp. 214, 219 and S.J.P. Kruger, *The Memoirs of Paul Kruger: Two volumes published as one*, p. 98.

²⁷⁹ D.W. Krüger, *Paul Kruger 'n biografie*, p. 215.

²⁸⁰ J. Meintjies, *President Paul Kruger: a biography*, Cassell, London, 1974, p. 69.

decisive clash of Majuba hill on the 27th of February 1881 and peace was obtained through the Convention of Pretoria of 1881.²⁸¹ During the War Kruger was mainly stationed at Heidelberg where the “government” was positioned. In his *Memoirs* he also relates that he visited and “exhort[ed] and encourage[ed] the burghers”²⁸² on the different fronts. The writer J. Meintjies for example mentions the following regarding Kruger’s War-time responsibilities:

Kruger’s capacity for work was becoming legendary also. One can only wonder if he had a moment’s rest during the war, for having assumed the reins of government, he was involved with a multitude of tasks, domestic and military; he conducted a huge correspondence, made personal appearances, controlled restless tribes, dealt with crime, treason, armament, postal delivery, and so on. He visited commandos at Potchefstroom, in the Drakensberg, at Standerton and Rustenburg, making rousing speeches in which he exhorted the burghers.²⁸³

It appears therefore that Kruger played a key role in the War and focused his attention on the morale of the burghers. Moreover, the War had driven many of the Afrikaner people closer together, providing them with a common enemy. It can be argued that his unity gave birth to a newly found patriotism and celebration of all that was “Afrikaner”.²⁸⁴

Following the War, Kruger played a prominent role as vice-president and due to his many official responsibilities, he permanently moved to Pretoria.²⁸⁵ Although the Triumvirate in essence governed the country, it soon became apparent that the country’s position necessitated the establishment of a new order. Consequently, after the Republic’s internal situation stabilised, the Volksraad agreed to a presidential election in January 1883. Both prominent leaders, Kruger and Commandant-General P.J. Joubert stood as presidential candidates in this election.²⁸⁶ Despite Joubert’s popularity, Kruger’s tenacity, loyalty and overall leadership in the preceding years won him the presidency and he was inaugurated as President for the first time on the 9th of May 1883.²⁸⁷ Kruger’s election proved his ability to lead confidently and with purpose. Moreover, his determination would later assist him in keeping “his” country afloat.

²⁸¹ J. Meintjies, *President Paul Kruger: a biography*, p. 140 and D.W. Krüger, *Paul Kruger ‘n biografie*, pp. 321-322.

²⁸² S.J.P. Kruger, *The Memoirs of Paul Kruger: Two volumes published as one*, p. 100.

²⁸³ J. Meintjies, *President Paul Kruger: a biography*, p. 111.

²⁸⁴ H. Giliomee, *The Afrikaners: Biography of a People*, Tafelberg, Cape Town, 2003, p. 231.

²⁸⁵ D.W. Krüger, *Paul Kruger ‘n biografie*, p. 259.

²⁸⁶ S.J.P. Kruger, *The Memoirs of Paul Kruger: Two volumes published as one*, p. 109.

²⁸⁷ D.W. Krüger, *Paul Kruger ‘n biografie*, p. 277.

Prior to his election as President, in the years following the First Boer War, Kruger particularly stressed the importance of education and the necessity for concessions as a means to develop the ZAR's industries and economy.²⁸⁸ After his presidential election his campaign continued along these lines. The weak financial situation in the ZAR was however one of the first and foremost problems the new government faced.²⁸⁹ In addition to these objectives, Kruger was determined to regain the independence of the ZAR. He intended to call for the revision of the Convention of Pretoria (1881), hoping that the British would grant the abolition of the British suzerainty over the Republic. After securing an audience with the Colonial Secretary Lord Derby in London, a deputation which included him left for London on 10 October 1883.²⁹⁰ In London deliberations ensued and although Lord Derby sympathised with the ZAR's situation, he was not eager to award them full independence. Kruger's lethal determination coupled with his willingness to negotiate steered the deliberations in the right direction and after territorial issues regarding the western border of the ZAR were settled, the Convention of London was signed on 27th of February 1884.²⁹¹ This accomplishment marked one of Kruger's most significant political victories during his presidency and without a doubt assured him continual support in the long run. This deputation also visited other European countries and judging by their extravagant receptions, the ZAR's international standing had increased considerably.²⁹² Moreover, the ZAR leadership made use of their European visit to establish good relations between the ZAR and other European countries as a means to gain financial support for the building of a railway line to Delagoa Bay.²⁹³

Now that the independence of the Republic had been secured, Kruger's next aim was to actualise one of president Burgers's treasured objectives, namely to construct the ZAR's own railway.²⁹⁴ For Kruger this was an essential developmental step since the ZAR would benefit both financially and geographically from its construction. The extension of the railway to the east could also possibly secure the ZAR its own harbour and hence enhance economic independence. In the years following the initial debate regarding the realisation of the railway, Kruger had been severely criticised.²⁹⁵ It was characteristic of him to support

²⁸⁸ D.W. Krüger, *Paul Kruger 'n biografie*, pp. 259-260, 265-268; J. Meintjies, *President Paul Kruger. A Biography*, p. 127.

²⁸⁹ D.W. Krüger, *Paul Kruger 'n biografie*, p. 283

²⁹⁰ D.W. Krüger, *Paul Kruger 'n biografie*, p. 307.

²⁹¹ D'Arbez (pseudo.), *Van Schaapwachter tot President, Het Leven van Paul Kruger*, J.H. De Bussy, Amsterdam, 1916, p. 97; D.W. Krüger, *Paul Kruger 'n biografie*, p. 322 and S.J.P. Kruger, *The Memoirs of Paul Kruger: Two volumes published as one*, p. 114.

²⁹² J. Meintjies, *President Paul Kruger. A Biography*, pp. 141-143.

²⁹³ S.J.P. Kruger, *The Memoirs of Paul Kruger: Two volumes published as one*, p. 114.

²⁹⁴ J. Meintjies, *President Paul Kruger. A Biography*, p. 138.

²⁹⁵ S.J.P. Kruger, *The Memoirs of Paul Kruger: Two volumes published as one*, p. 115.

and even promote progressive policies in cases where he believed it was in the best interest of the Republic. On the other hand, his old-fashioned beliefs coupled with his suspicious nature lead people to generally perceive him as more conservative. He was not easily influenced and he would, despite much opposition, doggedly persist in his policies and beliefs. As mentioned, he saw the necessity for proper education and in line with this policy he realized the importance of competent and educated officials. As a consequence hereof the Dutch lawyer Dr. W.J. Leyds was appointed as State Attorney in 1884.²⁹⁶ Although his employment was beneficial to the ZAR, the short-sighted burghers leaned more towards nepotism and criticised Kruger for his lack of support in this regard.²⁹⁷

The next crisis of Kruger's presidency was however imminent. Ill-advised by the Superintendent of Education S.J. du Toit, Kruger found himself in an awkward position when he issued a proclamation concerning the possible inclusion of areas on the western border of the ZAR in September 1884. This is also known as the "Western border dispute" between the Republic of Gosen, Black chiefs, Britain and the ZAR.²⁹⁸ To the dismay of the British, Kruger's proclamation violated one of the core stipulations of the newly signed London Convention and Du Toit's "irresponsible" actions coupled with Kruger's support in this regard, nearly led to armed British intervention. Kruger was however forced to withdraw the proclamation in order to demonstrate his adherence to their London agreement.²⁹⁹ Regardless of their ability to avoid further confrontation, these actions nonetheless contributed to tension and mutual distrust between the two countries – a situation that would occur repeatedly throughout Kruger's tenure as president.

The discovery of gold on the Witwatersrand in 1886 was one of the major challenges of Kruger's political career.³⁰⁰ As the mining industry grew, the number of fortune seekers who settled themselves in the ZAR increased and soon seemingly threatened the "morals" and way of life of the Boer populations.³⁰¹ However amidst these challenges the country was experiencing a period of recovery and stability³⁰² - a process the mining elements

²⁹⁶ D.W. Krüger, *Paul Kruger 'n biografie*, pp. 350-351 and L.E. van Niekerk, *Kruger se Regterhand. 'n Biografie van dr. W.J. Leyds*, J.L. van Schaik, Pretoria, 1985, pp. 16-19.

²⁹⁷ See S.J.P. Kruger, *The Memoirs of Paul Kruger: Two volumes published as one*, p. 134 and J. Meintjies, *President Paul Kruger. A Biography*, p. 147.

²⁹⁸ D.W. Krüger, *Paul Kruger 'n biografie*, pp. 356-358.

²⁹⁹ D.W. Krüger, *Paul Kruger 'n biografie*, pp. 359-363.

³⁰⁰ A.M. Grundlingh, "Die voorspel tot die Tweede Anglo-Boereoorlog, 1881-1889", in T. Cameron & S.B. Spies (reds.), *Nuwe geskiedenis van Suid-Afrika in woord en beeld*, Human & Rousseau, Kaapstad, 1986, p. 184.

³⁰¹ D.W. Krüger, *Paul Kruger 'n biografie*, p. 380, also see H. Giliomee, *The Afrikaners: Biography of a People*, p. 236.

³⁰² See A.M. Grundlingh, "Die voorspel tot die Tweede Anglo-Boereoorlog, 1881-1889", p. 184.

contributed significantly towards. Recognising that the mines had their part to play in the ZAR's economy, the Uitlanders (foreigners) had to be handled with care. On their part the Uitlanders also contributed to an increasingly hostile climate. As their plight continued, the ZAR government eventually implemented reforms, though limited, to secure the continuation of their "symbiotic" relationship.³⁰³ The continual complaints from the Uitlanders, also influenced the relations between the Rand and the ZAR government negatively and henceforth their relationship was characterised by caution and in some cases mutual inflexibility.³⁰⁴ During this period Kruger was also re-elected as president in May 1888.³⁰⁵

From the 1890s onward Kruger's problems increased both in number and severity.³⁰⁶ Not only did he lose the incorporation of Swaziland to Britain, and thereby failed to secure a harbour for the ZAR at Kosi Bay,³⁰⁷ but it is said that he also became more "authoritarian" in his ways.³⁰⁸ His railway policy also lost him much support as he doggedly defended his claims for its construction even though it seemed unlikely at the time to materialise. Kruger's ultimate goal was to free the Republic from total isolation and therefore propagated the actualization of this railway policy fervently.³⁰⁹ He did however manage to gain support from President F.W. Reitz of the OFS with regard to the construction of and duties associated with the railway line and consequently also signed a "treaty of peace and amity"³¹⁰ securing beneficial terms for both parties.³¹¹ This agreement with the OFS paved the way for future collaboration which was a positive strategic move by Kruger.

³⁰³ See S.J.P. Kruger, *The Memoirs of Paul Kruger: Two volumes published as one*, pp. 116-117 and p. 127-128.

³⁰⁴ D.W. Krüger, *Paul Kruger 'n biografie*, pp. 395-396.

³⁰⁵ D'Arbez (pseudo.), *Van Schaapwachter tot President*, p. 107 and S.J.P. Kruger, *The Memoirs of Paul Kruger: Two volumes published as one*, p. 123.

³⁰⁶ D.W. Krüger, *Paul Kruger 'n biografie*, p. 396 and see J. Meintjies, *President Paul Kruger. A Biography*, p. 166.

³⁰⁷ The Swaziland deliberations between the ZAR and Britain continued until 1895. From the onset of negotiations in 1888, Kruger was not able to secure the terms he wanted. Although the ZAR gained a protectorate over their "portion" of Swaziland in December 1894, the British did not keep to their agreement. In an attempt to block ZAR expansion eastwards, Britain also annexed the land included in the ZAR protectorate whereby their agreement was annulled. See D.W. Krüger, *Paul Kruger 'n biografie*, pp. 410-412; 415-416; 418-421.

³⁰⁸ S.J.P. Kruger, *The Memoirs of Paul Kruger: Two volumes published as one*, p. 134.

³⁰⁹ D.W. Krüger, *Paul Kruger 'n biografie*, pp. 406-407.

³¹⁰ J. Meintjies, *President Paul Kruger. A Biography*, p. 160.

³¹¹ S.J.P. Kruger, *The Memoirs of Paul Kruger: Two volumes published as one*, p. 127; D.W. Krüger, *Paul Kruger 'n biografie*, p. 407-408 and J. Meintjies, *President Paul Kruger. A Biography*, pp. 159-160.

The next presidential election was held in 1893 and Kruger was inaugurated for the third time as President of the ZAR on the 12th of May 1893.³¹² His victory was sadly not as triumphant, as Joubert lost to Kruger by a small amount of votes.³¹³ More importantly, the election results pointed to growing opposition to Kruger both locally and in a foreign context.³¹⁴ The railway line was still his main priority and he was able to actualise his goal on the 2nd of November 1894, with the completion of the Pretoria-Delagoa Bay line.³¹⁵ To Kruger the railway line marked a somewhat personal victory and moreover freed the ZAR from further isolation thereby contributing to the independence of the Republic.³¹⁶ The railway connections from the ZAR to Cape Town, Delagoa Bay and Durban were all completed by 1895³¹⁷ and the ZAR benefitted significantly in this regard. With the aim of securing maximum profit on the section of line, it was inevitable that a tariff war would ensue.³¹⁸ As the Cape tried to decrease its tariffs due to competition, it made use of ox wagon transport from the Vaal River up north by gaining access through the river drifts. Kruger retaliated and the ZAR decided to close their drifts for all traffic.³¹⁹ This measure on the part of the ZAR made the Republic very unpopular and Kruger was harshly criticised by both friend and foe. He was however forced to reopen the drifts after he experienced external pressure from Britain, by means of an issued ultimatum, and the crisis was brought to an end.³²⁰ This blunder nonetheless severely damaged his relations with the Afrikaner people of the Cape and the Free State and cost Kruger significant support.³²¹ Following the drift crisis the ZAR became increasingly sceptical of the Cape Colony's agenda, anticipating the possibility of further British interference in the internal and other affairs of the ZAR. This in turn made Kruger more watchful of Cape and British politicians.³²²

In 1895 the Prime Minister of the Cape Colony and mining entrepreneur Cecil John Rhodes began to overtly interfere in the domestic affairs of the ZAR. In his endeavour to bring the Republic to a fall, so as to incorporate all of Southern Africa under the British flag, he used both his political and financial resources to infiltrate rank and file in this regard.³²³ Supported

³¹² D'Arbez (pseudo.), *Van Schaapwachter tot President*, p. 112; J. Meintjies, *President Paul Kruger. A Biography*, p. 172.

³¹³ S.J.P. Kruger, *The Memoirs of Paul Kruger: Two volumes published as one*, p. 137.

³¹⁴ D.W. Krüger, *Paul Kruger 'n biografie*, pp. 422, 433.

³¹⁵ D.W. Krüger, *Paul Kruger 'n biografie*, p. 428.

³¹⁶ Also see D.W. Krüger, *Paul Kruger 'n biografie*, p. 428.

³¹⁷ D.W. Krüger, *Paul Kruger 'n biografie*, p. 437.

³¹⁸ S.J.P. Kruger, *The Memoirs of Paul Kruger: Two volumes published as one*, p. 144.

³¹⁹ J. Meintjies, *President Paul Kruger. A Biography*, pp. 181-182.

³²⁰ D'Arbez (pseudo.), *Van Schaapwachter tot President*, pp. 115-6; S.J.P. Kruger, *The Memoirs of Paul Kruger: Two volumes published as one*, p. 145 and J. Meintjies, *President Paul Kruger. A Biography*, p. 182.

³²¹ D.W. Krüger, *Paul Kruger 'n biografie*, pp. 437-439.

³²² See for example J. Meintjies, *President Paul Kruger: a biography*, p. 185.

³²³ D.W. Krüger, *Paul Kruger 'n biografie*, p. 440.

in his endeavours³²⁴ by the Minister of Colonies, Joseph Chamberlain, and coupled with the unpopularity of Kruger at that time, Rhodes had to act as fast as possible. His plan was to leverage the Uitlander “cause” to his advantage by means of instigating further dissatisfaction.³²⁵ This would enable him to rally the Uitlanders together, under the pretence of protest, with the aim of ousting the Kruger government.³²⁶ These objectives lead to the Jameson Raid in December 1895.³²⁷ The Raid was however unsuccessful as the ZAR’s forces were able to apprehend all the participants.³²⁸ Rhodes’s involvement in the debacle essentially ended his political participation in Southern Africa. Another of the consequences of the Raid that was not anticipated by the British, was the possibility that the Raid would establish and restore a sense of unity among the citizens and Afrikaners if the operation failed. Despite the ZAR’s success in avoiding a possible hostile takeover, the camaraderie among the aggravated burghers was even more surprising as the rallying of the commandos was almost instantaneous.³²⁹ Also Kruger’s own conduct concerning the incarceration and execution of the Raid rebels reflected not only his, so to speak, “kind-heartedness”³³⁰ as some sources signify, but also point to his shrewd character as the historian B. Nasson indicates: “For his part, Kruger was adroit”.³³¹ Meintjies is of a similar opinion referring to Kruger as both “crafty and humane” in this regard.³³² In dealing with the rebels in a “magnanimous” manner he, firstly, salvaged the already trampled name of the ZAR from additional criticism both in Southern Africa as well as overseas and moreover secured for himself and the ZAR a justified “defensive” position. The consequences of the Jameson Raid proved that Kruger was someone to be reckoned with as his so-called “simple” demeanour did not predict his statesmanship and sometimes unforeseen cunning nature. It appears that Kruger was unpredictable. Meintjies reiterates this point as follows:

He had entered a new phase of popularity, was calm, collected and absolutely sure of himself. A cat-and-mouse game, when not at a disadvantage, appealed to the politician in him and also to his sense of humour. Raiders and Reformers who had never bothered to take a long, slow look at Kruger were

³²⁴ D.W. Krüger, *Paul Kruger 'n biografie*, p. 446 and S.J.P. Kruger, *The Memoirs of Paul Kruger: Two volumes published as one*, pp. 145-147.

³²⁵ D.W. Krüger, *Paul Kruger 'n biografie*, p. 440.

³²⁶ D.W. Krüger, *Paul Kruger 'n biografie*, p. 445.

³²⁷ T.L. Crosby, *Joseph Chamberlain: A Most Radical Imperialist*, I.B. Tauris, London, 2011, p. 134.

³²⁸ S.J.P. Kruger, *The Memoirs of Paul Kruger: Two volumes published as one*, pp. 150-151 and J. Meintjies, *President Paul Kruger: a biography*, p. 189.

³²⁹ J. Meintjies, *President Paul Kruger: a biography*, p. 189.

³³⁰ D.W. Krüger, *Paul Kruger 'n biografie*, pp. 454-455.

³³¹ B. Nasson, *The War for South Africa. The Anglo-Boer War 1899-1902*, Tafelberg, Cape Town, 2010, p. 51.

³³² J. Meintjies, *President Paul Kruger: a biography*, p. 191.

now, in fear of their lives, inclined to look too carefully and to interpret more than was there.³³³

This incident further complicated the relations between Kruger and the Uitlanders in the ZAR on the one hand and Britain on the other.³³⁴ Following the Jameson Raid Kruger and his government became a symbol of the liberation of the “Afrikaner” in Southern Africa. Increasing support was gained from the Cape as Rhodes’s actions lost him support from the Afrikaners.³³⁵ Internationally, even the German Emperor sent a congratulatory telegram to Kruger in this regard, complimenting him on his success in preventing the invasion of Jameson.³³⁶ The possibility of German intervention in Southern Africa was an even greater concern for the British. The battle for a South African Federation under the British flag was still on the horizon and Chamberlain continued to rally his “forces” as he persisted in plotting and scheming against Kruger and the ZAR government.³³⁷ This crucial period in the history of the ZAR was summarised by Kruger in his own words as follows: “Thus ended the first act of the drama of which the last act had just been finished on the bloodstained plains of South Africa”.³³⁸ This signified the importance of the Raid and its eventual outcome. Meintjies aptly claims that: “He knew that he was not only standing in history but making it...”³³⁹

2.3 In sum

Kruger’s life did not begin any differently to that of the ordinary Boer and yet as time passed his character, beliefs and environment moulded him into a highly respected man and leader of a people as he moved up in the ranks. It appears that the environment he grew up in nurtured certain fundamental qualities which later on contributed to his popularity and in some cases to his detriment. It also rings true that Kruger was a peculiar person both in appearance and in opinion. His life history is however interwoven with that of the ZAR and as he matured so did his statesmanship. Moreover his patriotism dragged him, a countryman, beyond the borders of Southern Africa to knock on the door of the world’s most powerful empire and he did not flinch nor was he intimidated. He was indeed a different “breed”. Kruger is mainly a context-based personality and without this his accomplishments and importance fades. To comprehend him, one must as Meintjies

³³³ J. Meintjies, *President Paul Kruger: a biography*, p. 191.

³³⁴ D.W. Krüger, *Paul Kruger ‘n biografie*, p. 455.

³³⁵ D.W. Krüger, *Paul Kruger ‘n biografie*, p. 460.

³³⁶ J. Meintjies, *President Paul Kruger: a biography*, pp. 193-194.

³³⁷ S.J.P. Kruger, *The Memoirs of Paul Kruger: Two volumes published as one*, p. 155.

³³⁸ S.J.P. Kruger, *The Memoirs of Paul Kruger: Two volumes published as one*, p. 154.

³³⁹ J. Meintjies, *President Paul Kruger: a biography*, p. 169.

indicates “accept his total personal unselfishness, dedication to land and people, and above all his prostration before the beauty, the wrath, the power, the will and the purpose of God in which he believed utterly”.³⁴⁰

³⁴⁰ J. Meintjies, *President Paul Kruger: a biography*, p. 170.

CHAPTER 3

The South African War and Kruger's Crisis

In this chapter the prelude, outbreak and development of the South African War (1899-1902) will be discussed. The aim is not to analyse and discuss all the developments in this regard but rather to provide a succinct picture of the period in question. Kruger will be contextualised and viewed in light of these determining historical events. The first part of the discussion will therefore centre on the causes and prelude to the War whereafter the key developments in the War will be considered with specific reference to Kruger's so-called War-time "crisis". This section will be concerned with the period of May 1899 to September 1900 in particular. Before the road to War is discussed, it is however necessary to briefly point to the importance of the War.

The South African War at the turn of the 20th century has been referred to as a principally "miscalculated" War.³⁴¹ Both Boer and Brit underestimated their opponents in some or other regard and the envisaged War that was originally anticipated, instead, evolved into a total and prolonged War.³⁴² As Nasson points out in his recent study of the War, although it took place over a century ago, it still "...has a fixed place in modern historical memory" since the War was "at the time, ... the most absorbing military drama on the world stage".³⁴³ The War was of particular interest due to Britain's direct involvement (being the strongest international power at the time). More importantly, it was a War "dominated" by "white races" (British and Boers) and not fought against so-called "subordinates" (in this case Africans) as had happened in the rest of Africa during the period for the 'scramble for Africa'. Interest in the War globally can in turn be ascribed to the ZAR's boldness to take on a power such as Britain in their attempt to withstand British Imperialism. The act of defiance in itself therefore spurred interest. Moreover, equipped with modern technology,³⁴⁴ such as the telegraph, the news from the battlefield was brought to the doorstep of a significantly larger audience and from the onset the War surpassed national boundaries.

It is therefore not surprising that a vast range of literature, both internationally and locally, written from various perspectives has been generated on the South African War. Although contemporary writers initially adhered to the military course of the War, singular battles,

³⁴¹ B. Nasson, *The War for South Africa. The Anglo-Boer War 1899-1902*, Tafelberg, Cape Town, 2010, p. 16.

³⁴² B. Nasson, *The War for South Africa. The Anglo-Boer War 1899-1902*, pp. 16-17.

³⁴³ B. Nasson, *The War for South Africa. The Anglo-Boer War 1899-1902*, Preface, p. 11.

³⁴⁴ Modern technology was used in the South African War such as modern fire arms, electric power, railway and aerial observation. See B. Nasson, *The War for South Africa. The Anglo-Boer War 1899-1902*, p. 17.

persons of interest or broad general histories of the War, later writers and also historians moved away from these perspectives with the aim of gaining new insights into the War. Subsequently more specialised histories and literature emerged as the complex nature of the War was investigated. Therefore more recent studies have included research done on topics such as the use of communication and other technology in the War, art, medicine as well as machinery, to name but a few and the field continues to expand.³⁴⁵ The scope of the literature and histories generated on the South African War are numerous. Bill Nasson asserts: “We may not know yet how many ways there are of skinning a cat, but it is quite probably the same number of ways there are of writing a single-author history of the South African War.”³⁴⁶

The legacy of the War also emphasises its historical importance. This is not only true of the South African context but also of global contexts. The War consequently manifested itself in the form of street and suburb names, as these were named after War-time personalities and the like. Therefore it is not unexpected that other aspects of the War are also found in diverse sectors such as song, language and in some cases even sport.³⁴⁷ Two examples in this regard are firstly, the “Kop” – a grand stand or position Liverpool soccer fans crowd into, signifying the Battle of Spioenkop that took place in the War and secondly the Germans and Russians also identified strongly with the cause of the ZAR and sung of the Boers’ patriotism and Republican struggle against Britain in the First World War.³⁴⁸ Despite the distance between the present and this historical drama, the South African War has made its mark and will continue to dominate the historical scene of the late 19th century in South African history.

3.1 December 1895 to October 1899

The debate regarding the origins of the South African War is ongoing. Some historians maintain that the causes of the War lie in certain key developments that occurred throughout the 19th century and contributed to the weakening of the relationship between the ZAR and Britain. As Pretorius has indicated, this process eventually resulted in a clash between British imperialism and Afrikaner nationalism by the end of the century.³⁴⁹ Various interpretations consisting of a range of factors have been considered by historians over the

³⁴⁵ See for example B. Nasson, *The War for South Africa. The Anglo-Boer War 1899-1902*, p. 15 and F. Pretorius, *Kommandolewe tydens die Anglo-Boereoorlog 1899-1902*, Human & Rousseau, Kaapstad, 1991, pp. 15-18.

³⁴⁶ B. Nasson, *The War for South Africa. The Anglo-Boer War 1899-1902*, p. 15.

³⁴⁷ B. Nasson, *The War for South Africa. The Anglo-Boer War 1899-1902*, pp. 13-14.

³⁴⁸ B. Nasson, *The War for South Africa. The Anglo-Boer War 1899-1902*, p. 13.

³⁴⁹ F. Pretorius, *Die Anglo-Boereoorlog 1899-1902*, Struik, Kaapstad, 1998, p. 7.

past century.³⁵⁰ The complexity of the underlying factors appears to be central in recent investigation.

In their quest to explain the origins of the War historians have considered the part played by certain key personalities as well as personal ambitions held by persons like Milner, Chamberlain as well as State President Kruger. According to Nasson however the causes of the War cannot merely be ascribed to “individual motivations or peevish personalities” as this would imply that mere “effects” are being substituted as causes.³⁵¹ Other scholars have argued that the franchise question and the neglect on the part of the Kruger regime to react timeously to the Uitlanders’ requests resulted in war. Additional hypotheses regarding the causes of the War have been tied to economic factors and mainly capitalism.³⁵² Generally these interpretations focus on the interaction between capitalism, labour, economic and societal progression as well as personal gain in explaining why the mining industry and its giants would possibly oust the Kruger government and push for war. Although many more hypotheses have been developed, no single factor or cause has been identified thus pointing historians in the direction of an interwoven and multi-faceted causality. Nasson reiterated this view as he emphasised a “balanced causality”:

How far was the 1899 clash of arms determined by more gravitational or underlying forces, and how crucial was the immediate preoccupations of politicians and officials?³⁵³

Perhaps this type of reasoning would answer why, in some scholars’ opinion, Britain resorted to pressurise the ZAR to such an extent that the Kruger government had to act with “retaliation”, in order to defend what was theirs.

This appears to ring true if one considers British ambitions and policy in Southern Africa and in particular regarding the ZAR. The historian I. Smith asserts in his seminal work on the origins of the South African War³⁵⁴ that politicians such as Chamberlain and Rhodes had considered British supremacy and the expansion of the Empire by the late 1880s as a

³⁵⁰ See for example, A.M. Grundlingh, “Die voorspel tot die Tweede Anglo-Boereoorlog, 1881-1889”, in T. Cameron & S.B. Spies (reds.), *Nuwe geskiedenis van Suid-Afrika in woord en beeld*, Human & Rousseau, Kaapstad, 1986, pp. 197-199.

³⁵¹ B. Nasson, *The War for South Africa. The Anglo-Boer War 1899-1902*, p. 35; A.M. Grundlingh, “Die voorspel tot die Tweede Anglo-Boereoorlog, 1881-1889”, in T. Cameron & S.B. Spies (reds.), *Nuwe geskiedenis van Suid-Afrika in woord en beeld*, Human & Rousseau, Kaapstad, 1986, p. 198.

³⁵² A.M. Grundlingh, “Die voorspel tot die Tweede Anglo-Boereoorlog, 1881-1889”, in T. Cameron & S.B. Spies (reds.), *Nuwe geskiedenis van Suid-Afrika*, pp. 198-199; B. Nasson, *The War for South Africa. The Anglo-Boer War 1899-1902*, pp. 38-40.

³⁵³ B. Nasson, *The War for South Africa. The Anglo-Boer War 1899-1902*, p. 40.

³⁵⁴ I. R. Smith, *The origins of the South African War 1899-1902*, Longman, Harlow, 1996.

“bread and butter question”.³⁵⁵ The inclusion of certain key states abroad, it appears, was essential in sustaining Britain’s economy. Consequently, after the discovery of gold on the Witwatersrand in 1886, the ZAR proved to be a suitable candidate. However, as the history of this region had shown in the previous chapter,³⁵⁶ the relationship between Britain and the ZAR or Boers in particular, was one formed on the basis of conflict and by 1886 the ZAR had only just gained its independence two years earlier from British rule. The Republic was not up for the taking. Ironically that which made the ZAR one of the wealthiest states in the world, also contributed over time to its eventual downfall. Kruger reflected on the discovery of gold in his *Memoirs* as follows:

The rich gold-fields of the Witwatersrand were discovered and brought about a complete revolution in the financial aspect of the affairs of the Republic...As I have already said, gold and the embittered feelings which were the outcome of the first annexation are the causes of the present misery in South Africa. It will presently be seen that, of the two causes, the gold-fields assumed the greater importance. It is quite certain that, had no gold been found in the Transvaal, there would have been no war.³⁵⁷

Kruger further remarked that the dire consequence of the discovery of gold was also accurately pin-pointed by Commandant-General P.J.Joubert. On his informing of the discovery he commented: “Instead of rejoicing” he said, “you would do better to weep; for this gold will cause our country to be soaked in blood”.³⁵⁸ The discovery of gold on the Rand brought about unfamiliar circumstances and problems. This was also evident in the issues the Uitlanders voiced during their stay in Johannesburg. These issues later became politicised and in time gave Rhodes and Chamberlain the opportunity to meddle in the internal affairs of the ZAR. This was clearly demonstrated by the execution of the Jameson Raid in 1895. Rhodes’s ambitions in this regard became apparent after a co-conspirator asked him what the intention behind the approaching revolution was. Rhodes replied:

You may well ask. Here I am, with all the money a man could possibly want, Prime Minister of the Cape, a Privy Councillor – why should I run all these risks? Well...I don’t want to annex the Transvaal, but I want to see it a friendly member of a Community of South African States...I have tried to do a deal with old man

³⁵⁵ I. R. Smith, *The origins of the South African War 1899-1902*, p. 73.

³⁵⁶ By this time the ZAR had lost their independence to Britain (1877), defeated Britain in the First Anglo Boer War (1881) and finally regained their independence in 1884.

³⁵⁷ S.J.P. Kruger, *The Memoirs of Paul Kruger: Two volumes published as one*, Scripta Africana, Johannesburg, 1986, p. 116.

³⁵⁸ S.J.P. Kruger, *The Memoirs of Paul Kruger: Two volumes published as one*, p. 116.

Kruger and I failed. I never shall bring him into line...What I want to do is to lay the foundations of a united South Africa. I want men to associate my name with it after I have gone, and I know that I haven't much time.³⁵⁹

Smith thus asserts that the Jameson Raid was mainly executed in order to create a situation of stalemate in the ZAR. This, he reasoned, would have given Rhodes the chance to make use of his "backing" from Britain to intervene in ZAR politics. A total replacement or ousting of the ZAR government was subsequently not envisaged.³⁶⁰ Chamberlain on the other hand had different motives. His chief objective was to annex the ZAR and establish it as a British colony.³⁶¹ His ambitions were similar to that of Sir Henry Loch the previous High Commissioner, who in his attempt to annex the ZAR was to make use of the Uitlander "grievances" to gain a strong foothold in the ZAR.³⁶² However, after the Jameson Raid, Chamberlain was at the head of British operations to incorporate the ZAR and he consequently positioned his associates accordingly. It has to be mentioned that he also had the support of other high-up officials in the newly elected government under British Prime Minister Lord Salisbury. Lord Selborne is one such example. He was the son-in-law of the Prime Minister and also the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of the Colonial Office and he sided with Chamberlain in his aspirations to secure the ZAR and its riches for British coffers. Smith also points out that his influence would likely have been central to the implementation of the colonial policy in Southern Africa and the ZAR.³⁶³

As the Jameson Raid only confirmed Kruger's suspicions that the ZAR's independence was at stake, Chamberlain had to act timeously. Therefore following the Jameson Raid Chamberlain continued to pressurise the ZAR to yield to British demands in order to secure a better position for the Uitlanders and "having once taken up the question of Uitlander grievances, Chamberlain and the British government never thereafter let them go".³⁶⁴ Kruger referred to Chamberlain's continual bombardment as "his uninterrupted series of dispatches".³⁶⁵ In order to reach an agreement regarding the position of the Uitlanders and the question of the franchise, Chamberlain invited State President Kruger to London. Kruger's attitude was not forthcoming as he related:

³⁵⁹ I. R. Smith, *The origins of the South African War 1899-1902*, p. 85.

³⁶⁰ I. R. Smith, *The origins of the South African War 1899-1902*, p. 88.

³⁶¹ I. R. Smith, *The origins of the South African War 1899-1902*, p. 88.

³⁶² See J.H. Breytenbach, *Die Tweede Vryheidsoorlog*, Deel I, Nasionale Pers Beperk, Kaapstad, 1948, pp. 2-14.

³⁶³ I. R. Smith, *The origins of the South African War 1899-1902*, pp. 122-124.

³⁶⁴ I. R. Smith, *The origins of the South African War 1899-1902*, p. 111.

³⁶⁵ S.J.P. Kruger, *The Memoirs of Paul Kruger: Two volumes published as one*, p. 157.

His [Chamberlain] first step was to invite me to England to confer on Transvaal matters, while he began by declaring that he was not prepared to discuss Article 4³⁶⁶ of the London Convention...One would really think, to judge from this invitation, that it was the Republic and not England that had to make amends...

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After Kruger specified under which terms he would visit England, which mainly included discussing the London Convention, Chamberlain refused and the invitation was withdrawn.³⁶⁸ To the ZAR the journey would therefore have been futile. Kruger, remarked: "Where, then would have been the sense of undertaking that troublesome journey?"³⁶⁹ Chamberlain's failure to lure Kruger to England made him all the more desperate to manipulate affairs in Southern Africa. This was also apparent in his plan to make use of the Ndebele uprising in Rhodesia as a guise to ship and strengthen British troops at the Cape.³⁷⁰ The High Commissioner of the Cape, Sir Hercules Robinson, was unfortunately opposed to this and warned Chamberlain that his haste might lead to a less favourable outcome - even though the "option" of going to War with the ZAR was already considered in the first months of 1896. He thus instructed Chamberlain to "sit still and wait patiently".³⁷¹ A friend of the Republic had already remarked, in this case, forebodingly, by June 1895 that Chamberlain's appointment as Secretary of State for the Colonies will be "...iets wat vir die Suid-Afrikaanse Republiek onheil spel"³⁷² (something that would bring great peril to the ZAR) and thus pointed to his sinister objectives.

During the next few years before the outbreak of the War, the ZAR and Britain were in constant communication in order to settle the Uitlander grievances along so-called diplomatic lines. By this time the main grievance discussed, apart from the dynamite concessions, was the Uitlander franchise. Coupled with this, Chamberlain made use of the London Convention's detested Article 4, as mentioned above, to further pressurise the ZAR to give in to its demands. According to President M.T. Steyn of the OFS, the climate in

³⁶⁶ Article 4 forms part essentially of the London Convention of 1884 and "placed restrictions on the foreign relations of the South African Republic". This Article consequently had serious implications regarding the suzerainty and independence of the ZAR. See for example J. Grobler, "Joseph Chamberlain's Reputation in South Africa" in Cawood, I & Upton, C, (eds.), *Joseph Chamberlain International Statesman, National leader, Local Icon*, Palgrave Macmillan, United Kingdom, 2016, p. 51.

³⁶⁷ S.J.P. Kruger, *The Memoirs of Paul Kruger: Two volumes published as one*, p. 155.

³⁶⁸ See for example A.M. Grundlingh, "Die voorspel tot die Tweede Anglo-Boereoorlog, 1881-1889", in T. Cameron & S.B. Spies (reds.), *Nuwe geskiedenis van Suid-Afrika*, p.193.

³⁶⁹ S.J.P. Kruger, *The Memoirs of Paul Kruger: Two volumes published as one*, p. 156.

³⁷⁰ I. R. Smith, *The origins of the South African War 1899-1902*, p. 116.

³⁷¹ I. R. Smith, *The origins of the South African War 1899-1902*, p. 117.

³⁷² J.H. Breytenbach, *Die Tweede Vryheidsoorlog*, Deel I, p.15.

Southern Africa and more specifically in the ZAR, necessitated cautious conduct to prevent a clash. President Steyn indicated that Kruger's attitude and understanding of this situation mirrored his as he indicated:

President Kruger erkende dat het zoveel mogelijk te doen wat in ons vermoogen was om geen aanleiding te geven die verdere botsingen teweeg kon brengen³⁷³ (President Kruger acknowledged that it was necessary to do as much as possible within their ability to steer away from causing additional conflict).

President Kruger also ran his own initiatives in this regard, as he endeavoured to gain support for the lowering of the period of residence needed to obtain the franchise for the Uitlanders. It appears therefore that Kruger was open to making certain changes in the ZAR. According to the President, his efforts to concede was seen as a threat to Chamberlain's plans to "instigate" dissatisfaction and therefore made Britain all the more demanding.³⁷⁴ Moreover a new phase of hostility came with the commissioning of Alfred Milner, seen by Kruger as chiefly strategic with him remarking that his appointment was done to "driv[e] matters in South Africa to the extremes".³⁷⁵ President Steyn was also of a similar opinion.³⁷⁶

Milner was indeed the man who would push matters in Southern Africa to the "extreme" under the leadership of Chamberlain. The historian T.L. Crosby - writer of a biography on Chamberlain - described Milner's character as "...cut in the Chamberlain mould. Intelligent, forceful, a committed imperialist, he was a dynamic counterpart to his London chief".³⁷⁷ Milner was also on his part quite committed to the cause as he had indicated to Chamberlain that he desired to "devote the best years of my [his] life to the Imperial interests of [his] country".³⁷⁸

The year 1898 witnessed the re-election of Kruger as president of the ZAR³⁷⁹ and he stood stronger than ever. As a result, Milner and Chamberlain had to do everything in their power to exploit the present situation in the ZAR - however "peacefully". Therefore, Milner endeavoured to use the Republic's internal disputes or any other developments which could

³⁷³ N.J. van der Merwe, *Marthinus Theunis Steyn, 'n Lewensbeskrywing*, Deel I, Nasionale Pers, Kaapstad, 1921, p.135.

³⁷⁴ S.J.P. Kruger, *The Memoirs of Paul Kruger: Two volumes published as one*, p. 171.

³⁷⁵ S.J.P. Kruger, *The Memoirs of Paul Kruger: Two volumes published as one*, p. 162.

³⁷⁶ N.J. van der Merwe, *Marthinus Theunis Steyn, 'n Lewensbeskrywing*, Deel I, p. 150.

³⁷⁷ T.L. Crosby, *Joseph Chamberlain: A Most Radical Imperialist*, I.B. Tauris, London, 2011, p.142. Also see I. R. Smith, *The origins of the South African War 1899-1902*, pp. 147, 149.

³⁷⁸ Milner to Chamberlain, 3 February 1897, JC 10/9/1 in I. R. Smith, *The origins of the South African War 1899-1902*, p. 147.

³⁷⁹ S.J.P. Kruger, *The Memoirs of Paul Kruger: Two volumes published as one*, p. 169 and see I.R. Smith, *The origins of the South African War 1899-1902*, pp. 177-178.

shed a negative light on the ZAR, to his advantage. This was the case with a few occurrences of which I believe three were of more importance. The first was the incident in Johannesburg where false affidavits were submitted to the British Agent regarding the treatment of the Coloureds (resident in Johannesburg) by the police during a raid to verify and check for the individual's passes. This was followed by the renowned Edgar-incident where a British Uitlander was shot dead³⁸⁰ after assaulting another man.³⁸¹ The third were the subsequent petitions sent by the Uitlanders to Queen Victoria (1819-1901) to intervene on their behalf. Not only did the English press have a field day reporting on these episodes, but this also consequently influenced British public opinion in England gaining more support for their imperial policies.³⁸² Moreover press representations were often unfounded and this, in turn, lead to an extremely negative perception of the ZAR. These developments benefitted Britain increasingly in their plight for confrontation and the situation continued to deteriorate in South Africa as Kruger observed: "It was evident to all that a crisis was at hand which, if not carefully treated, could end only in catastrophe".³⁸³

Milner on the other hand became more impatient as the year 1898 passed. He asserted that Britain's passive policy had to be revised and that their use of the London Convention as a basis to possibly intervene in the ZAR might not be enough to succeed.³⁸⁴ In a private letter written to Chamberlain he explained that "[t]here are no way[s] out of the political troubles in South Africa except reform in the Transvaal or war".³⁸⁵ Chamberlain was nevertheless still in favour of a passive policy and explained to Milner that a more "forward" policy can only be put in place once they have reason to believe that the ZAR is "... in the wrong on some serious question before we can interfere".³⁸⁶ Milner was adamant to change policy despite Chamberlain's firmness on this subject. This therefore lead to his travelling to England at the end of 1898. Here Milner commenced his structured anti-Boer campaign and won officials and influential persons over to support and propagate this attitude. Back

³⁸⁰ A British subject (Uitlander), Thomas Jackson Edgar, resident in Johannesburg assaulted another man which lead to this man's death a few days later. On the night in question a police man followed Edgar to his home to arrest him for attempted murder, as they saw the state the beaten man was in. After Edgar did not open the door for the police man, he broke it down whereafter he was struck with an object (some say a pipe or a stick). Apparently the police man responded with fire and killed Edgar. A trial ensued and the police man was, some believed wrongfully, acquitted. See S.J.P. Kruger, *The Memoirs of Paul Kruger: Two volumes published as one*, pp. 169-170; J.H. Breytenbach, *Die Tweede Vryheidsoorlog*, Deel I, p. 239.

³⁸¹ B. Farwell, *The Great Boer War*, Wordsworth Editions Limited, 1999, p. 31.

³⁸² S.J.P. Kruger, *The Memoirs of Paul Kruger: Two volumes published as one*, pp. 169-171.

³⁸³ S.J.P. Kruger, *The Memoirs of Paul Kruger: Two volumes published as one*, p. 170.

³⁸⁴ I. R. Smith, *The origins of the South African War 1899-1902*, p. 186.

³⁸⁵ I. R. Smith, *The origins of the South African War 1899-1902*, p. 185; J.H. Breytenbach, *Die Tweede Vryheidsoorlog*, Deel I, p. 235.

³⁸⁶ I. R. Smith, *The origins of the South African War 1899-1902*, p. 189. Also see J.H. Breytenbach, *Die Tweede Vryheidsoorlog*, Deel I, pp. 227-228.

in South Africa his campaign was also extended through his administrative correspondence. This was purely strategic. Milner appears to have purposefully depicted the conditions in the ZAR as unfavourable. His renowned “Helote”-dispatch of 4 May 1899 to Chamberlain is one such an example. In this dispatch Milner indicated that the British Uitlanders in the ZAR had been treated like “slaves” and are “oppressed” and that British intervention was a “matter of urgency”.³⁸⁷ These insinuations on the part of Milner provoked havoc, and sketched the milieu in which Kruger had to operate. By July 1899 Kruger was still not regarded as much of a threat and for some war seemed less than likely to occur. According to A. Porter, Rhodes “pooh-poohed”³⁸⁸ this probability and commented:

I should feel alarmed if the Czar were moving on Peking or the French on the Niger territories or Fashoda, but when I am told that President Kruger is causing trouble, I cannot really think about it. It is too ridiculous. If you tell me the natives of Samoa are giving anxiety to H.M. Government, then I will discuss the proposition that the Transvaal is a danger to our Empire.³⁸⁹

At this time President Steyn, who in 1897 had signed a treaty which *inter alia* stipulated that the OFS would support the ZAR in war,³⁹⁰ became more concerned and feared that war would ensue if the ZAR did not consider implementing reforms or at least concede to certain British demands. He did not only fear for the sake of the ZAR, but also for his own people and did not consider war lightly.³⁹¹ In his capacity as President and advised by his trusted political friends in the Cape Colony, Steyn invited Kruger and Milner to a conference in Bloemfontein on the 31st of May 1899 to settle “the business” altogether. Milner and Kruger could not see eye to eye and the conference was ended on the 5th of June 1899 to no effect. Steyn, now troubled by the unsuccessful deliberations, spoke to Milner privately only to realize from his remarks that Britain’s aim was not only to intervene on the part of the British Uitlanders, but that they were merely exploiting the situation to get control of the ZAR. After he realized this, he informed Kruger.³⁹² Although both presidents were almost certain that Britain was scheming behind their backs, Kruger was still willing to concede – a necessary measure according to Steyn. In order to refrain from aggravating the situation additional

³⁸⁷ A.M. Grundlingh, “Die voorspel tot die Tweede Anglo-Boereoorlog, 1881-1889”, in T. Cameron & S.B. Spies (reds.), *Nuwe geskiedenis van Suid-Afrika*, p. 194.

³⁸⁸ A. Porter, *The South African War and the Historians*, *African Affairs*, 99, 2000, p. 634.

³⁸⁹ Sir Lewis Mitchell, *The Life of the Rt Hon. Cecil John Rhodes 1853-1902*, (Edward Arnold, London, 1910), Vol. II, p. 257 in A. Porter, *The South African War and the Historians*, *African Affairs*, 99, 2000, p. 634.

³⁹⁰ D.W. Krüger, *Paul Kruger 'n biografie*, Praag, 2009, pp. 506-507.

³⁹¹ See for example B. Farwell, *The Great Boer War*, p. 38.

³⁹² See for example B. Farwell, *The Great Boer War*, p. 34 and N.J. van der Merwe, *Marthinus Theunis Steyn, 'n Lewensbeskrywing*, Deel I, pp. 189-191.

reforms were implemented in the ZAR. However to Chamberlain, who now firmly supported Milner and pushed for war, the reforms were unsatisfactory and a joint commission was proposed to investigate the reforms and situation in the ZAR.³⁹³ On this point Kruger did not compromise but in light of the circumstances, he was willing to concede to Milner's requests of a five-year franchise qualification.³⁹⁴ This would be done if Britain adhered to their stipulated conditions which included the annulment of the so-called British suzerainty over the ZAR.³⁹⁵ The British government on their part did not agree to these terms. Steyn, who was still hoping for a peaceful settlement, therefore urged the ZAR to accept the British government's previous request for the establishment of a joint commission of investigation and negotiations were re-opened. But this was also to no avail.³⁹⁶ Both states were past compromising as is also evident by Britain's lack of a timely reply to the ZAR's proposal.

Kruger believed that war was inevitable and informed Steyn of the ultimatum which he intended to send to Britain to bring all to a head. The urgency of their situation, as Kruger saw it, was indicated in a telegram sent to Steyn, emphasising the need for immediate action as Britain was delaying a reply strategically: "Onze opinie is, Engeland wil ons op sleeptouw houden, om al zijn troepen hier te krijgen"³⁹⁷ (Our opinion is that England wants us to trail behind, so as to get all their troops here). Consequently, on the 27th of September 1899 President Steyn addressed the OFS Volksraad regarding the situation in the ZAR and their responsibilities towards their sister state if war should ensue. Fortunately the majority supported the ZAR's plight in this regard.³⁹⁸ On the same day he also sent a dispatch to the High Commissioner in his capacity as President and again made known to him that he would continue to undertake the role of mediator between Britain and the ZAR so that a peaceful settlement could be achieved.³⁹⁹ By the end of September the Kruger government had grown impatient with Steyn as his delays and appeals had achieved nothing.⁴⁰⁰ On the 30th of September 1899 Kruger thus telegraphed Steyn the following:

Ik bid u toch het gevaar van verder uitstel in te zien...Vrede schijnt mij geheel buiten kwestie en dus moet de gehele positie van krijgsoogpunt beschouwd worden. Van dat oogpunt is het onze plicht met de meeste

³⁹³ N.J. van der Merwe, *Marthinus Theunis Steyn, 'n Lewensbeskrywing*, Deel I, p. 232.

³⁹⁴ See T. Pakenham, *The Boer War*, Jonathan Bull Publishers, Johannesburg, 1993, pp. 47-48.

³⁹⁵ See, B. Farwell, *The Great Boer War*, p. 36 and N.J. van der Merwe, *Marthinus Theunis Steyn, 'n Lewensbeskrywing*, Deel I, pp. 233-234.

³⁹⁶ N.J. van der Merwe, *Marthinus Theunis Steyn, 'n Lewensbeskrywing*, Deel I, pp. 235- 244.

³⁹⁷ N.J. van der Merwe, *Marthinus Theunis Steyn, 'n Lewensbeskrywing*, Deel I, p. 249.

³⁹⁸ C. Nordbruch, *Vir Vryheid en Reg. Buitelanders aan Boerekant tydens die Anglo-Boereoorlog 1899-1902*, Kontak-Uitgewers, Pretoria, 2000, pp. 15-16.

³⁹⁹ N.J. van der Merwe, *Marthinus Theunis Steyn, 'n Lewensbeskrywing*, Deel I, pp. 258-262.

⁴⁰⁰ T. Pakenham, *The Boer War*, p. 55.

spoed te handelen...⁴⁰¹ (I urge you to see the danger in further delay... To me peace seems improbable and therefore the position has to be considered from a military point of view. From this point of view, it is our duty to act with extreme urgency).

In the meantime Britain was delaying matters to win time and its response regarding the joint Commission had still not reached the ZAR by the end of September.⁴⁰² Moreover, Steyn stubbornly insisted to continue to wait, in faith, for an answer to his dispatch of 30 September 1899 sent to the High Commissioner. Milner's response reached President Steyn on the 7th of October 1899. Steyn's hope for continued deliberations and compromise ended with Milner's response and as he, Steyn, felt that he had exhausted all avenues, he gave the green light to Kruger - the ultimatum was not to be delayed any further.⁴⁰³ The ultimatum was sent to the British government on the 9th of October 1899 at 5 p.m. and they were given 48 hours to notify the ZAR and OFS of their decision.⁴⁰⁴ After the British did not concede to the terms stipulated by the ZAR and the time had lapsed, war was declared on the 11th of October 1899.⁴⁰⁵

3.2 October 1899 to May 1900

The next section focuses on the military course of the War for the period October 1899 up to September 1900. The aim of this section is two-fold. Firstly significant developments during this period in the War will be discussed in order to provide background information for this study. Secondly, it focuses attention on Kruger's "crisis" period during the months of May to September 1900.

By the time the South African War commenced, the majority of British troops were still making their way to South African shores. The ZAR was thus placed in a more favourable position and the initiative rested largely with them. The majority of the ZAR and OFS burgher forces were concentrated in pockets close to the Natal border, the so-called Eastern front. The main onslaught would be here as the concentration of British troops was the highest in Natal. Their position was thus strategically chosen to curb the infiltration of the larger British troops into the Republics.⁴⁰⁶ The other fronts were the Northern, Western and Southern

⁴⁰¹ N.J. van der Merwe, *Marthinus Theunis Steyn, 'n Lewensbeskrywing*, Deel I, p. 262.

⁴⁰² N.J. van der Merwe, *Marthinus Theunis Steyn, 'n Lewensbeskrywing*, Deel I, p. 265.

⁴⁰³ N.J. van der Merwe, *Marthinus Theunis Steyn, 'n Lewensbeskrywing*, Deel I, p. 270.

⁴⁰⁴ T. Pakenham, *The Boer War*, p. 54.

⁴⁰⁵ P. Trew, *The Boer War Generals*, Jonathan Ball Publishers, Johannesburg, 1999, pp. v, 140.

⁴⁰⁶ F. Pretorius, *Die Anglo-Boereoorlog 1899-1902*, p. 14.

which were protected by smaller numbers of commandos as the British threat at these points was less.

Initially British strategy was to penetrate the Republics via the main railway line from the Cape as this arguably assured them more fixed communications and provisions. This strategy was for the time being pushed aside when news came of the British forces trapped at Ladysmith - a consequence of the opening battles in the War at Talana (20 October 1899), Elandsplaagte (21 October 1899) and battle in the vicinity of Modderspruit and Nicholsonsnek (30 October 1899) during the month of October 1899.⁴⁰⁷ This was when the ZAR and OFS forces enjoyed a few successes, though very slight in some cases, which led the British to flee back into their territory.⁴⁰⁸ With the enemy cut off and barricaded at Ladysmith the four month siege of Ladysmith began. Positions around and south of Ladysmith were also taken by the Republican forces, with the hope of curtailing the invasion of additional British troops and to fend off the relief of Ladysmith.⁴⁰⁹

On the Western and Southern fronts the Republican forces aimed to push back British forces and cut off key railway connections and towns and by November 1899 both Mafeking and Kimberley were encircled.⁴¹⁰ Although seeming victories, in reality the encirclement of these towns wasted valuable time and resources as the Republicans were not eager to capture the towns but only to keep the British at bay. Consequently, the three sieges paralysed the Boer offensive whilst British troops were pouring onto the southern shores. In their attempt to seemingly “starve out” the British at these points into surrender, they not only lost their mobility but also concentrated their forces here making them logical targets for the pending British advance. Moreover, as the skirmishing fluctuated, so did the burghers’ morale and militancy, resulting in significant numbers of burghers leaving the fronts as no “real fighting” commenced. It is thus plain why the sieges and the siege of Ladysmith in particular, has been referred to as “one of the most serious Boer tactical errors of the war”.⁴¹¹

In the meantime, General Sir Redvers Henry Buller, the Commander-in-Chief of the British army in South Africa, was making his way to Natal.⁴¹² His immediate objective was to relieve the towns of Ladysmith and Kimberley.⁴¹³ He was assisted in his endeavours by General

⁴⁰⁷ F. Pretorius, *Die Anglo-Boereoorlog 1899-1902*, pp. 14, 16 and 17.

⁴⁰⁸ B. Nasson, *The War for South Africa. The Anglo-Boer War 1899-1902*, pp. 105-106.

⁴⁰⁹ B. Nasson, *The War for South Africa. The Anglo-Boer War 1899-1902*, p. 108 ; T. Pakenham, *The Boer War*, pp. 81-85.

⁴¹⁰ See F. Pretorius, *Die Anglo-Boereoorlog 1899-1902*, pp. 14-15.

⁴¹¹ B. Nasson, *The War for South Africa. The Anglo-Boer War 1899-1902*, p. 109.

⁴¹² P. Trew, *The Boer War Generals*, Jonathan Ball, Johannesburg, 1999, pp. 21-22.

⁴¹³ P. Trew, *The Boer War Generals*, p. 21.

Methuen, Lieutenant-General J.P.D. French and Lieutenant-General Sir William Gatacre. On the 15th of December 1899, Buller finally decided to close in on the burgher laagers at Colenso and the first attempt to relieve Ladysmith ensued, yet without success. A few days prior to Buller's failed attempt, Methuen and also Gatacre clashed with the Boer forces on the Western and Southern fronts as they made their way north and towards Kimberley.⁴¹⁴ Methuen was able to successively drive the burghers from their positions in the south-west however he was horribly surprised at Modderivier on the 10th and 11th of December when the burghers ensued their attack from trenches in the ground, directly in front of his troops. In the confusion a large number of casualties occurred on the British side. In addition to the aforementioned, a clash also ensued under Gatacre's command at Stormberg on the 10th of December 1899 which resulted in a definite triumph on the Boer side. During this week the British troops experienced heavy losses on all fronts and consequently the week of the 10th to the 15th of December 1899 became known as "Black Week".⁴¹⁵

In order to further the British cause in South Africa and to strengthen their military position, Lord Roberts (1832-1914) was appointed as Commander-in-Chief of the British army and replaced Buller in January 1900, who was then stationed at Natal. Roberts was a different man altogether and his skill was underestimated by the Boers. His objective was to stick to the original British strategy: to infiltrate the OFS and ZAR by making use of the railway line from the Cape northwards.⁴¹⁶ As the Republican forces neglected to sufficiently defend and occupy the areas on the Western front bordering the Cape Colony, Roberts endeavoured to break through here. Not only did Roberts have the skill but he also had the numbers. By January 1900 Roberts's force alone numbered 50 000 men.⁴¹⁷

In Natal attempts had been made to relieve Ladysmith in December 1899 and in the first months of 1900, but without success.⁴¹⁸ Roberts therefore, like Buller, endeavoured to relieve Ladysmith and also Kimberley. Different to Buller, he did not make use of frontal attacks but rather attempted to encircle the enemy, whereafter a surprise attack would seemingly be delivered. This tactic ensured Roberts much success.⁴¹⁹ As the Republicans did not envisage his strategy, they played right into his hands. Whilst keeping them (Boers)

⁴¹⁴ P. Trew, *The Boer War Generals*, p. 21.

⁴¹⁵ T. Pakenham, *The Boer War*, p. 136; F. Pretorius, *Die Anglo-Boereoorlog 1899-1902*, pp. 17, 20-21.

⁴¹⁶ P. Trew, *The Boer War Generals*, p. 55.

⁴¹⁷ F. Pretorius, *Die Anglo-Boereoorlog 1899-1902*, p. 21.

⁴¹⁸ The second attempt culminated in the Battle of Spioenkop (16 January 1900-24 January 1900) and the third followed on the 5th and 7th of February 1900 see F. Pretorius, *Die Anglo-Boereoorlog 1899-1902*, p. 17.

⁴¹⁹ F. Pretorius, *Die Anglo-Boereoorlog 1899-1902*, p. 21.

preoccupied with a portion of Robert's force in their vicinity, General French, also under Roberts's command, was on his way to relieve Kimberley. Consequently on the 15th of February 1900 General French relieved Kimberley without engaging in any battle of note.⁴²⁰ Also, Cronje, who was by now almost completely encircled by French, had to retire eastward when he realised his mistake. The British troops, eager to capture the fleeing Cronje, soon caught up with him and on the 18th of February 1900 a clash at Paardeberg ensued.⁴²¹ This battle culminated in the surrender of Cronje and his men, an estimate of 4000 burghers, on the 27th of February 1900.⁴²² This was a particular hard blow for the ZAR government. Not only did the British outsmart and outnumber them but Cronje surrendered on the Boer's celebrated Majuba Day - the day the Boers defeated the British during the First Boer War of 1880-1881. To complicate matters further Buller, positioned on the Eastern front in Natal, soon occupied key positions which enabled him to relieve the town of Ladysmith on the 28th of February 1900.⁴²³ Within two days the tables turned significantly. The protection and defence of the Republics was now more crucial than ever as the Republic's forces retired northward, thereby leaving Roberts to resume his march towards Bloemfontein.

Although the Republican forces attempted to halt Roberts's march, their endeavours were futile as the British numbers were overwhelming. What is more, the threat of being encircled by British troops was even greater as the Republican commandos were scattered over the interior, retiring towards their capitals. By 13 March 1900 Roberts captured Bloemfontein, the capital of the OFS and his next objective was to capture Pretoria - Kruger's capital. During this time the Boers neglected to make use of the opportunity to cut off Roberts's supply lines from the south whereby additional stress could be put on the British army. Instead they launched fruitless attacks on large British forces. From this point onwards the movement of the Republican forces was characterised by defensive attacks followed by swift withdrawal. Additional shock was experienced by the ZAR after news came of Commandant-General Joubert's death on the 27th of March 1900. This was a particular hard blow for Kruger. In his place General L. Botha was appointed as Acting Commandant-General.⁴²⁴ There was however no time to lose as Roberts, despite General C. de Wet's attempts to drive the British from Bloemfontein, soon commenced his march in the beginning of May 1900 and reached Kroonstad by the 12th of May 1900.⁴²⁵

⁴²⁰ F. Pretorius, *Die Anglo-Boereoorlog 1899-1902*, p. 21

⁴²¹ B. Nasson, *The War for South Africa. The Anglo-Boer War 1899-1902*, pp. 173-175.

⁴²² F. Pretorius, *Die Anglo-Boereoorlog 1899-1902*, p. 22.

⁴²³ B. Nasson, *The War for South Africa. The Anglo-Boer War 1899-1902*, p. 166.

⁴²⁴ F. Pretorius, *Die Anglo-Boereoorlog 1899-1902*, p. 24.

⁴²⁵ F. Pretorius, *Die Anglo-Boereoorlog 1899-1902*, p. 25.

Roberts's quick advance was not anticipated by the Boer leaders and by the time he reached Kroonstad, the danger of his infiltration into the ZAR became imminent. The ZAR forces were consequently called up to defend the Republic's border, with the hope that their presence could somehow stall the British advance. Even though the ZAR forces positioned themselves along the Vaal River as heavily as they could, the British troops under the command of General French, were nonetheless able to gain access to an unprotected drift and crossed the Vaal River on the 24th of May 1900. According to the historian J.H. Breytenbach this mishap occurred due to miscommunication on the one hand and the lack of speed and timeous response on the other.⁴²⁶ Hereafter the chief aim of the commandos was to delay further infiltration into the Republic to enable the ZAR government to secure, evacuate and distribute resources in Johannesburg, Pretoria and the like. It was in the face of this imminent onslaught when it was resolved that Pretoria would not be defended and that the ZAR government would retire eastward to Machadodorp, a small town in the eastern territory of the Republic. This initiated what can be regarded as a period of crises – the focus of this particular study.

3.3 May 1900 to September 1900

The period May to September of 1900 was a particularly troublesome time for both the President and the Republic. It is this crisis period that will be analysed in the next chapter through the lens of the telegram.

In order to avoid a catastrophic clash on the Vaal, Commandant-General Louis Botha instructed the ZAR forces to fall back in the direction of Klipriviersberg, south of Johannesburg.⁴²⁷ To steer clear of another unsuccessful attempt at halting the British, Botha called for a Council of War to be held on the 24th of May 1900 at Vereeniging for the forces who served under him.⁴²⁸ Not only did the present situation necessitate the re-evaluation of military strategy, but more importantly, the meeting was required to put measures in place to keep the burghers on commando from deserting the cause and consequently a proclamation was issued by the ZAR government to this effect.⁴²⁹ During the next few days

⁴²⁶ See for example J.H. Breytenbach, *Die Geskiedenis van die Tweede Vryheidsoorlog in Suid-Afrika, 1899-1902*, Deel V, pp. 519-520.

⁴²⁷ See Trew, *The Boer War Generals*, p. 72 and J.H. Breytenbach, *Die Geskiedenis van die Tweede Vryheidsoorlog in Suid-Afrika, 1899-1902*, Deel V, Staatsdrukker, Pretoria, 1983, p. 522.

⁴²⁸ P.G. Cloete, *Die Anglo-Boereoorlog 'n Chronologie (plus Die Kaarte)*, P.G. Cloete, Klerksdorp, 2010, p. 152.

⁴²⁹ J.H. Breytenbach, *Die Geskiedenis van die Tweede Vryheidsoorlog in Suid-Afrika, 1899-1902*, Deel V, p. 523.

the ZAR forces were to establish positions at Klipriviersberg, Gatsrand as well as Suikerboschrand in order to safeguard Johannesburg situated at their rear.⁴³⁰ Their biggest challenge was however to see to it that the positions would be occupied by strong commandos by the time a clash would ensue. Generals De la Rey, Du Toit and Oosthuizen were for example still at various westward positions at the time, far from the positions Botha had instructed them to defend. Botha's fear was that they would not be able to make it in time to defend their positions by the 27th of May 1900 at the latest.

Meanwhile the British forces under Genl. French and Hamilton continued into the interior with the aim of encircling Johannesburg from the west and Roberts on the eastern side as his arrival was anticipated after he finally crossed the Vaal River on the 27th of May 1900.⁴³¹ Since the Boers had already fallen back to their new positions, he was not met with much resistance and continued in the direction of Johannesburg.⁴³² On the Western front, French reached the Klip River at Vanwyksrus, to the south west of Johannesburg, on the 28th of May 1900.⁴³³ The ZAR forces were positioned ahead of them on both eastern and western koppies. As soon as the first brigade cleared the river the battle ensued.⁴³⁴ Although the positions were firmly held by the ZAR burghers on the 28th of May 1900, Genl. French and Genl. Hamilton outsmarted the Boer forces and consequently broke through the ZAR line. Genl. French was to enclose the western positions of the burghers at Doornkop⁴³⁵ (Doringkop) while Genl. Hamilton kept the burghers distracted with a frontal onslaught.⁴³⁶ The burghers on the western koppies, under the command of, among others, Genl. De la Rey and Oosthuizen, did not anticipate French's crafty manoeuvre and were soon bombarded. Not able to stand their ground they fled eastward to avoid being cut off. By this time the burghers on the eastern koppies had also withdrawn their forces in the direction of Johannesburg.⁴³⁷ While the commandos retired, Roberts set out to capture and occupy the

⁴³⁰ J.H. Breytenbach, *Die Geskiedenis van die Tweede Vryheidsoorlog in Suid-Afrika, 1899-1902*, Deel V, pp. 519, 521-523.

⁴³¹ P. Trew, *The Boer War Generals*, p. 72.

⁴³² J.H. Breytenbach, *Die Geskiedenis van die Tweede Vryheidsoorlog in Suid-Afrika, 1899-1902*, Deel V, p. 523.

⁴³³ P.G. Cloete, *Die Anglo-Boereoorlog 'n Chronologie*, p. 152.

⁴³⁴ J.H. Breytenbach, *Die Geskiedenis van die Tweede Vryheidsoorlog in Suid-Afrika, 1899-1902*, Deel V, p. 529.

⁴³⁵ See for example B. Farwell, *The Great Boer War*, p. 266 and B. Nasson, *The War for South Africa. The Anglo-Boer War 1899-1902*, pp. 195-196.

⁴³⁶ J.H. Breytenbach, *Die Geskiedenis van die Tweede Vryheidsoorlog in Suid-Afrika, 1899-1902*, Deel V, p. 530.

⁴³⁷ See B. Farwell, *The Great Boer War*, p. 266 and J.H. Breytenbach, *Die Geskiedenis van die Tweede Vryheidsoorlog in Suid-Afrika, 1899-1902*, Deel V, pp. 532-533.

railway junction at Elandsfontein and Germiston.⁴³⁸ As he was supported by such a large force, he only experienced short bursts of resistance.

The advancing British forces also contributed to a state of further demoralisation amongst the burghers and large amounts of the commandos disintegrated as a consequence of deserters leaving for their farms and families. The widespread demoralisation on the part of the burghers also influenced the generals. Their own willingness to fight and the probability of success was also influenced by the absence of eager and supportive burghers on commando. Inevitably demoralisation also penetrated the highest of ranks in the ZAR and consequently even the hardest of generals were ready to consider peace.⁴³⁹ The present reality was that the British would reach the capital of the ZAR, Pretoria, in the next few days. As Pretoria was believed to be the beacon of “Afrikanderdom”, the possibility of its capture only endorsed additional demoralisation. As mentioned, to protect the ZAR government, its headquarters had been moved eastward and were established at Machadodorp by the 29th of May 1900. On the same day President Kruger had to bid his family goodbye and leave for Machadodorp to avoid being captured.⁴⁴⁰

As the commandos retreated in the direction of Johannesburg, the regrouping of ZAR commandos took place between the 30th of May and the beginning of June 1900. On the 30th of May 1900 some sporadic attacks⁴⁴¹ were initiated but no decisive stances were made and the burghers in the vicinity of Johannesburg soon retreated from their positions behind “mine heaps and brick walls” and retired to the north.⁴⁴² Johannesburg was thus left undefended and consequently Lord Roberts took possession of the town on the 31st of May 1900.⁴⁴³ The ZAR were however allowed to evacuate their burghers as well as other supplies and ammunition prior to the takeover, as agreed upon by both parties. In return the ZAR forces would see to it that no further looting or destruction took place in Johannesburg by their own forces and burghers.⁴⁴⁴

⁴³⁸ J.H. Breytenbach, *Die Geskiedenis van die Tweede Vryheidsoorlog in Suid-Afrika, 1899-1902*, Deel V, p. 533. Also see P.G. Cloete, *Die Anglo-Boereoorlog 'n Chronologie*, p. 154.

⁴³⁹ See D.W. Krüger, *Paul Kruger 'n biografie*, p. 547.

⁴⁴⁰ See D.W. Krüger, *Paul Kruger 'n biografie*, p. 546.

⁴⁴¹ J. H. Breytenbach, *Die Geskiedenis van die Tweede Vryheidsoorlog in Suid-Afrika, 1899-1902*, Deel V, p. 543.

⁴⁴² B. Nasson, *The War for South Africa. The Anglo-Boer War 1899-1902*, p. 196.

⁴⁴³ O.J.O. Ferreira, Paul Kruger in Mosambiek, September - Oktober 1900, *Historia*, 50(2), November 2005, p. 86.

⁴⁴⁴ B. Nasson, *The War for South Africa. The Anglo-Boer War 1899-1902*, p. 196.

Nasson mentions that in hindsight the armistice had been a tactical mistake on the part of Lord Roberts, as his actions in this regard gave the ZAR forces time to convene and organise themselves anew. He proposes that the answer might lie in Lord Roberts's endeavour to perhaps bring the War to a "sensible and humane"⁴⁴⁵ end by avoiding further bloodshed. This train of thought can possibly be attributed to his assumption that the War would be brought to an end with the fall of Pretoria, which was not the case.⁴⁴⁶ According to State Attorney Jan Smuts, present in Pretoria after the government departed, the atmosphere in Pretoria was "foul and treacherous" and the Boer officers therefore agreed to "abandon the place to the enemy as soon as possible".⁴⁴⁷ On the 1st of June 1900 deliberations were held⁴⁴⁸ in Pretoria and a peace proposal was sent to Kruger that same evening.⁴⁴⁹ Although Kruger was aware of the Generals' concerns and depressed mood,⁴⁵⁰ there is no doubt that the proposal was nevertheless a great disappointment for him, as he truly believed that his forces would endure the struggle. Kruger did nonetheless acknowledge the critical nature of their situation by the end of May 1900 and requested President Steyn to come to Machadodorp to discuss the urgent state of affairs. Steyn could however not meet with Kruger. After a Council of War was held, the ZAR generals decided to continue the struggle.⁴⁵¹

On the 3rd of June 1900 Roberts continued from Johannesburg to Pretoria. In order to capture Pretoria he made use of his renowned encircling tactic. Consequently General Hamilton was sent to continue westward around Pretoria whereas General French was sent to damage the northern lines. Roberts was to launch a frontal attack whilst General Gordon's cavalry brigade secured the area east of Pretoria as Roberts's main aim was to destroy the Delagoa Bay line.⁴⁵² On the 3rd of June 1900 the first clashes ensued where burghers under command of General S. du Toit, reinforced by General Potgieter, faced the British forces under French. The burghers stood their ground and only retired during the night from their positions. The clash between the Boers at Sesmylspruit and Roberts only

⁴⁴⁵ B. Nasson, *The War for South Africa. The Anglo-Boer War 1899-1902*, p. 198.

⁴⁴⁶ B. Nasson, *The War for South Africa. The Anglo-Boer War 1899-1902*, p. 198.

⁴⁴⁷ W.K. Hancock & J. van der Poel, *Selections from the Smuts Papers*, pp. 540, 543-544 in J.H. Breytenbach, *Die Geskiedenis van die Tweede Vryheidsoorlog in Suid-Afrika, 1899-1902*, Deel V, p. 542.

⁴⁴⁸ B. Farwell, *The Great Boer War*, p. 293.

⁴⁴⁹ J. H. Breytenbach, *Die Geskiedenis van die Tweede Vryheidsoorlog in Suid-Afrika, 1899-1902*, Deel V, p. 538.

⁴⁵⁰ See TA, W.J. Leyds Archief, Volume 579, Deel 1, pp. 243-7. Also see J. H. Breytenbach, *Die Geskiedenis van die Tweede Vryheidsoorlog in Suid-Afrika, 1899-1902*, Deel V, pp. 538-9.

⁴⁵¹ J. H. Breytenbach, *Die Geskiedenis van die Tweede Vryheidsoorlog in Suid-Afrika, 1899-1902*, Deel V, pp. 540-541.

⁴⁵² B. Nasson, *The War for South Africa. The Anglo-Boer War 1899-1902*, p. 206.

took place on the 4th of June 1900. The main objective of “defending Pretoria” was to win time for the officials and burghers who were evacuating vital assets from Pretoria.⁴⁵³ Once again the Boers defended their positions fiercely and neither Roberts nor General Gordon, made much progress. Although French managed to launch a surprise attack on the burghers’ right flank,⁴⁵⁴ startling the burghers, the Boers’ defence was for the most part successful. Moreover, because Gordon was kept at bay, he was not able to destroy his intended target, the eastern railway line.⁴⁵⁵ Failure to do so left the line intact and gave the burghers a definite escape route. The afternoon Roberts sent word to Acting Commandant-General L. Botha, demanding the surrender of Pretoria. Botha in turn requested an armistice, but Roberts did not permit it. At this point however all the most vital resources were removed out of Pretoria when Roberts occupied on the 5th of June 1900.⁴⁵⁶

After the annexation of Pretoria took place, the War was far from over. Both Republics were still adamant to continue with the battle and apart from the British occupation of the major towns, the smaller and remote towns were not as yet under their control. Therefore Roberts set out to occupy the same as a means to also drive out the remaining Boer forces. In the OFS, commandos under General De Wet attempted to seize supplies from the trains carrying British supplies. Their success became a constant nuisance to Roberts and soon De Wet became a “wanted man”. Roberts’s preoccupation with De Wet’s capture, lead to the neglect of the other British fronts.⁴⁵⁷ This also benefitted the Boers, particularly in the ZAR, as they re-organised and positioned their commandos. In an effort to wrap up the War Roberts issued a few noteworthy proclamations during this time to deter the burghers from joining the regrouping commandos and to negatively affect the Republican War effort.

Botha was positioned outside Pretoria where the battle of Diamond Hill commenced on the 11th of June 1900.⁴⁵⁸ As Botha’s commando was no match for the numbers of the enemy, he had to retreat further east and the British advance thus continued alongside the eastern railway line. Middelburg was captured on the 26/27 July 1900⁴⁵⁹ and the advance was

⁴⁵³ J. H. Breytenbach, *Die Geskiedenis van die Tweede Vryheidsoorlog in Suid-Afrika, 1899-1902*, Deel V, pp. 543-545.

⁴⁵⁴ J. H. Breytenbach, *Die Geskiedenis van die Tweede Vryheidsoorlog in Suid-Afrika, 1899-1902*, Deel V, p. 546.

⁴⁵⁵ J. H. Breytenbach, *Die Geskiedenis van die Tweede Vryheidsoorlog in Suid-Afrika, 1899-1902*, Deel V, p. 546.

⁴⁵⁶ C. Nordbruch, *Vir Vryheid en Reg. Buitelanders aan Boerekant tydens die Anglo-Boereoorlog 1899-1902*, p. 56.

⁴⁵⁷ F. Pretorius, *Die Anglo-Boereoorlog 1899-1902*, pp. 26-28.

⁴⁵⁸ P. Trew, *The Boer War Generals*, p. 76.

⁴⁵⁹ O.J.O, Ferreira, Paul Kruger in Mosambiek, September - Oktober 1900, *Historia*, 50(2), November 2005, p. 90; C. Nordbruch, *Vir Vryheid en Reg. Buitelanders aan Boerekant tydens die Anglo-Boereoorlog 1899-1902*, p. 57.

resumed by 15th of August 1900. The Natal forces under General Buller, now in the eastern territories of the Republic, also joined the occupying force and the British troops were substantially strengthened in this area. Thereafter, the last so-called “set piece battle phase” took place at Bergendal under the command of Botha from the 21st to 27th of August 1900. Although the burghers made a good stance, they had to withdraw to avoid capture by an overwhelming British force and retired in the direction of Lydenburg by the end of August 1900.⁴⁶⁰

During this critical period in the War, it was resolved that Kruger, who was of advanced age and less mobile, was to be sent overseas as propagator of the Republican cause with the hope of gaining European intervention. Kruger was not only the President of the ZAR but he also embodied the struggle of his people. When perceived from this point of view, his presence in Europe would be the most conducive. The resolution for him to go to Europe was taken on the 28th of August 1900.⁴⁶¹ Kruger, who by this time was stationed at Waterval-Onder due to the more favourable climate and his deteriorating health, had to soon retire further east to Nelspruit where the new headquarters of the ZAR government were positioned. Kruger’s journey via the Pretoria-Delagoa Bay railway line to Lourenço Marques, a coastal town in Portuguese territory, commenced on the 11th of September 1900⁴⁶² and he soon had to bid his country and beloved family goodbye. Kruger eventually died in exile on the 14th of July 1904.⁴⁶³

Kruger’s planned departure was done on a “need-to-know” basis. However as soon as this news reached Roberts, he issued a proclamation whereby he stated that the War was in essence over. His forces reached the border of the ZAR by the closing days of October and annexed the ZAR as a British colony.⁴⁶⁴ However, as far as the Boers were concerned War was far from over as the Republican cause gained more momentum. Despite Roberts’s effort to split the forces of the two Republics, he thus ultimately failed as the Republics were committed to the continuation of the War. Nasson consequently indicates that the War that

⁴⁶⁰ See for example O.J.O, Ferreira, Paul Kruger in Mosambiek, September - Oktober 1900, *Historia*, 50(2), November 2005, p. 90.

⁴⁶¹ F. Pretorius, *Die Anglo-Boereoorlog 1899-1902*, p. 28.

⁴⁶² O.J.O, Ferreira, Paul Kruger in Mosambiek, September - Oktober 1900, *Historia*, 50(2), November 2005, p. 94 and B. Nasson, *The War for South Africa. The Anglo-Boer War 1899-1902*, p. 209.

⁴⁶³ D’Arbez (pseudo.), *Van Schaapwachter tot President, Het Leven van Paul Kruger*, J.H. De Bussy, Amsterdam, 1916, p. 137; B. Nasson, *The War for South Africa. The Anglo-Boer War 1899-1902*, p. 209.

⁴⁶⁴ B. Nasson, *The War for South Africa. The Anglo-Boer War 1899-1902*, pp. 209-211.

followed was a “fully pan-nationalist guerrilla struggle”⁴⁶⁵ where the Republican forces mobilised themselves in small bands, attacking only when needed.⁴⁶⁶

The period of May to September 1900 was Kruger’s last few months in the Republic. Not only did the successes on the battlefield decrease within this time but Roberts’s advance towards Pretoria also progressed and Kruger’s capital came under real threat. Moreover, by the end of May 1900, they had reached his doorstep. Kruger, who had much faith in the soundness of their cause, must have been devastated that the British forces had made it this far. Moreover, he stood as the victor of the first clash between Britain and the ZAR, in the First Anglo Boer War (1880-1881), and losing the present War to Britain would be seemingly worse. As a renowned military leader, he must have experienced every victory and loss intensely, identifying with the war circumstances he knew so well from years of experience. From February 1900 onwards, Kruger endured a sequence of bad events and although he stood as a leader and beacon, there were times when this period of “crisis” must have appeared overwhelming.

⁴⁶⁵ B. Nasson, *The War for South Africa. The Anglo-Boer War 1899-1902*, p. 213.

⁴⁶⁶ F. Pretorius, *Die Anglo-Boereoorlog 1899-1902*, p. 29.

CHAPTER 4

Kruger's telegrams

The works generated on President Kruger, as mentioned in chapter 1, are numerous and a similar inference can be made as was evident in chapter 3 regarding published literature on the South African War. As Kruger and the South African War are closely linked, the one inseparable from the other, it is curious why Kruger's role in the War has been somewhat downplayed. Although a few published biographical works written on Kruger point to his involvement and "behind-the-scenes" endeavours in the South African War, as is also evident in his *Memoirs*, his auxiliary role has not been a central topic in South African War literature. This section will investigate what has been written on Kruger as regards the South African War and whether key texts have in any way pointed to Kruger's supplementary role in the War. For the purposes of this study only a selection of key published works written on the South African War will be used as part of this survey. The aim is not to discuss each source in detail, but rather to produce a synopsis of the observations made from a preliminary perusal of the literature. Moreover as the focus of the study is concerned with Kruger's crisis period - May 1900 to September 1900 - this period will form the basis and point of departure. In order to understand the telegram as a source and the function thereof in war, a brief discussion on the telegram's utilisation will be discussed before returning to an in depth and rather lengthy analysis of Kruger's telegrams. This chapter which is the crux of the study is therefore much lengthier due to its focus and the inclusion of translated quotes and telegrams to illustrate the perception portrayed of Kruger.

4.1 The Telegraph and War

The "idea of using magnetism and electricity for a signalling system" was identified by the middle of the 18th century.⁴⁶⁷ Although various devices were tested, the first noteworthy signalling system was apparently developed in France and was widely utilised for civilian and communication purposes by the time of the French Revolution (1789). The semaphore enabled civilians and armies alike to "act all over the vastness of France with one mind".⁴⁶⁸ The pre-electric telegraph set in motion a global "communication craze" and within a few years the semaphore was replaced by the more advanced first electrical telegraph.

⁴⁶⁷ B. Winston, *Media Technology and Society. A History: From the Telegraph to the Internet*, Routledge, London, 1998, p. 21.

⁴⁶⁸ B. Winston, *Media Technology and Society. A History: From the Telegraph to the Internet*, p. 21.

As is well known, the first practicable electrical telegraph was developed by S.F.B. Morse and by 1837 the “Morse” telegraph and code were in the process of being patented. The device was revolutionary. The sender transmitted the impulses (codes) by means of “notched sticks” being “pulled across” the electrical contact area. Consequently, the impulse travels via wire and reaches the device at the receiving end. Here the electrical current deflects the marker of the device and subsequently makes a mark (a dot and/or line) on a slim piece of paper. The dots and lines are known as Morse code and can subsequently be interpreted as letters and numbers.⁴⁶⁹ In May 1844 the first “Morse message” was sent via “railway wire” from Washington to Baltimore. The message ironically read, “What hath God wrought”.⁴⁷⁰

The success and global implementation of the electrical telegraph can largely be contributed to its adaptability. The telegraph wire network quickly extended as the application of the telegraph as this communication method spread to other sectors. Despite the initial implementation of the telegraph as a signalling method in the form of dispatches for the railways,⁴⁷¹ it also brought about a transformation in the minds of people regarding the dependability of communication on transport. In this sense, as J.W. Carey mentions, “the telegraph freed communication from the constraints of geography”.⁴⁷² Communication could thus take place along any path the wire could travel. Applied more broadly, the telegraph also altered business and social relations as face-to-face communication became unnecessary. In addition, the telegraph also brought about a change in literary styles. Carey argues that the implementation of the telegraph as a tool to distribute news mainly resulted in generating a new literary style “stripped of the local, the regional and colloquial”⁴⁷³ in order to create a universal and objective representation and thus became standardised.⁴⁷⁴ Moreover, the utilisation of the telegraph was expensive and as the correspondent was not able to transmit the message himself, his literary craft had to be exceptionally clear and thought through.⁴⁷⁵ One of the most profound consequences of the implementation of the telegraph was thus its standardisation effect. The use of the telegraph enabled the

⁴⁶⁹ B. Winston, *Media Technology and Society. A History: From the Telegraph to the Internet*, p. 26.

⁴⁷⁰ B. Winston, *Media Technology and Society. A History: From the Telegraph to the Internet*, p. 24.

⁴⁷¹ According to J.W. Carey, this type of utilisation of the telegraph occurred by 1844 in England and five years later in the United States. See J.W. Carey, ‘Technology and Ideology: The Case of the Telegraph’, James W. Carey, *Communication as Culture: Essays on Media and Society*, Revised Edition, Routledge, New York, 2009, p. 165..

⁴⁷² J.W. Carey, ‘Technology and Ideology: The Case of the Telegraph’, p. 3

⁴⁷³ J.W. Carey, ‘Technology and Ideology: The Case of the Telegraph’, p. 8.

⁴⁷⁴ J.W. Carey, ‘Technology and Ideology: The Case of the Telegraph’, pp. 3-4, 8.

⁴⁷⁵ J.W. Carey, ‘Technology and Ideology: The Case of the Telegraph’, p. 8.

standardisation of commodities, prices and time, creating an interconnected 19th century world.⁴⁷⁶

The use of the telegraph was also extended to warfare. The ability of the telegraph to communicate over long distances enabled a military leader to “command and control” from wherever he might be situated. Previously as I. Lebow indicates, warfare necessitated the leader to lead the soldiers into battle - not only because of his rank but also because of his knowledge on the battlefield. The telegraph eradicated this necessity as knowledge, strategy and other military actions could be communicated via the wire. The importance of the telegraph as military tool is neatly illustrated by Captain E.D. Peek in 1911:

In the old days a commander-in-chief placed himself, if he could, on a hill where he could see the whole battle-field. Now, with battles extending for miles both in width and depth, he can himself see but a small portion of the battle-field; he is best placed in some quiet, sheltered spot, where he can calmly digest and act on the information sent him by others. This spot will be the nerve centre of the battle, to which all information comes and from which all directing orders issue, and should, if possible, remain constant throughout the battle.⁴⁷⁷

Consequently, during the 19th century the telegraph was utilised in multiple wars. The British first applied telegraph technology in the Crimean War of 1857. Shortly thereafter Italy followed and the most popular known military deployment of the telegraph was during the American Civil War (1861-1865).⁴⁷⁸ In addition to making use of the established telegraph lines, “telegraph trains” were also used to lay and maintain additional lines to connect military operations during the Civil War. The trains were equipped for this purpose to ensure a continuous flow of communication.⁴⁷⁹ The advantages of the telegraph as military tool likewise reached Prussia and by 1876, Major C.F.C. Beresford, a British military tactician, asserted that “no extended operations can be carried on without the telegraph”. Moreover, in his opinion, the telegraph is as central to military operations as “nerves are to a living body”.⁴⁸⁰ Not only did the telegraph enable the commanders to exert a fair amount of control over the armies thousands of miles away, but also assisted them in terms of

⁴⁷⁶ J.W. Carey, ‘Technology and Ideology: The Case of the Telegraph’, pp. 14-19.

⁴⁷⁷ E.D. Peek, “The Necessity and Use of Electronical Communications on the Battlefield”, *Journal of the Military Service Institution of the United States*, 49, December 1911 in I. Lebow, *Information highways and byways: from the telegraph to the 21st century*, IEEE Press, New York, 1995, p. 25.

⁴⁷⁸ I. Lebow, *Information highways and byways: from the telegraph to the 21st century*, p. 25.

⁴⁷⁹ I. Lebow, *Information highways and byways: from the telegraph to the 21st century*, p. 26.

⁴⁸⁰ I. Lebow, *Information highways and byways: from the telegraph to the 21st century*, p. 27.

strategy and the placing of the troops as they had the advantage of a “birds-eye-view” of the operational area at the “nerve centre” or headquarters. The strategy could be sharpened as more communications were received from the front lines.⁴⁸¹

Telegrams have also been utilised as primary sources by historians and other writers, exclusively or in conjunction with other sources. A range of international studies underline the importance of the use of telegrams as primary source material. These include *Threats, assurances, and the last chance for peace: the lessons of Mao's Korean War Telegrams* written by T.J. Christensen (1992); *Telegram! Modern History as Told Through More Than 400 Witty, Poignant, and Revealing Telegrams* by L. Rosenkrantz (2003); *Origins of the Cold War. The Novikov, Kennan, and Roberts 'Long Telegrams' of 1946* edited by K.M. Jensen (1993); *Mr. Lincoln's T-mails. How Abraham Lincoln Used the Telegraph to win the Civil War* written by T. Wheeler (2006) and lastly *Nationalism by Telegrams: Political Writings and Anti-Colonial Resistance in Sudan, 1920-1924* written by E. Vezzadini (2013).

In the work by Christensen for example, Mao's Korean War telegrams are used in order to analyse and better understand what the “Chinese side was thinking”.⁴⁸² Moreover, it enabled him to derive and eventually come to a more informed conclusion regarding Mao's War strategies and the subsequent reaction thereto by the United States. In a similar manner, T. Wheeler utilised the telegrams sent by President Lincoln during the American Civil War. He is of the opinion that the telegraph, a then new technology, enabled Lincoln to expand his leadership over the military field and subsequently placed him in an advantageous position to mobilise the troops and to ultimately win the War.⁴⁸³ In both these examples the telegrams were utilised in such a manner as to shed light on the technology as well as the use and implications thereof by a “leading” personality. Wheeler captured the importance, but mainly also the uniqueness of war telegrams as a source into the personae of President Lincoln as follows:

In his telegrams, however, the president was often reacting in real time to an external stimulus. Frequently the stimulus was a telegram he had just read. “I have seen your despatch” was a typical beginning of so many Lincoln telegrams. It is this almost instantaneous reaction, as opposed to

⁴⁸¹ I. Lebow, *Information highways and byways: from the telegraph to the 21st century*, p. 26.

⁴⁸² T. J. Christensen, “Threats, Assurances, and the Last Chance for Peace: The Lessons of Mao's Korean War Telegrams”, *International Security*, 17(1), (Summer, 1992), p. 127

⁴⁸³ T. Wheeler, *Mr. Lincoln's T-mails. The untold story of how Abraham Lincoln used the telegraph to win the Civil War*, HarperCollins Publishers, New York, 2006, pp. xv, xvi, 2.

well thought out, stand-alone set pieces, that provide the most up close and personal insight into Abraham Lincoln...They record the unstructured Lincoln, reacting with what was in front of his mind. It is in these messages that the distant historical figure of Abraham Lincoln comes to life.⁴⁸⁴

The significance of the utilisation of official records, such as the war telegram, is further illustrated by Léopold Delisle:

They make it possible for us to understand the play of institutions, to learn about the king's plans, the means he made use of, the ministers who served him, the obstacles he met with, the results he achieved.⁴⁸⁵

In Wheeler's study on President Lincoln, he claims that, "His thoughts by day and anxiety by night fed upon the intelligence which the telegraph brought".⁴⁸⁶ It is this omnipresence of the telegram, its pivotal place in war, which will be applied to President Kruger.

4.2 Kruger's War telegrams

The telegraph was employed in a similar manner as those described above during the South African War of 1899-1902. Not only did the telegraph enable relatively instant communication between the generals and the governments, but it also provided an elaborate communication network linking the "capitals, headquarters and different fronts".⁴⁸⁷ By 1899 the intricate telegraph network of the two Boer Republics consisted of 215 telegraph offices.⁴⁸⁸ The administration of the telegraph networks was done by the ZAR and OFS State Telegraph Departments⁴⁸⁹, the Railway Telegraph Departments and lastly

⁴⁸⁴ T. Wheeler, *Mr. Lincoln's T-Mails. How Abraham Lincoln Used the Telegraph to Win the Civil War*, Introduction, p. xx.

⁴⁸⁵ G.J. Garraghan, *A Guide to Historical Method*, Fordham University Press, Chicago, 1946, p. 114. Quoted from L. Delisle, *Catalogue des actes de Philippe Auguste*, Paris, 1856.

⁴⁸⁶ T. Wheeler, *Mr. Lincoln's T-mails. The untold story of how Abraham Lincoln used the telegraph to win the Civil War*, p. 11.

⁴⁸⁷ T.D. Potgieter, "Nineteenth Century Technological Development and its influence on the Anglo-Boer War, 1899-1902", *Journal for Contemporary History*, 25(1), June 2000, p. 122.

⁴⁸⁸ T.D. Potgieter, "Nineteenth Century Technological Development and its influence on the Anglo-Boer War, 1899-1902", *Journal for Contemporary History*, 25(1), June 2000, p. 122.

⁴⁸⁹ For detailed information on the development and implementation of the OFS telegraph network see F.W. Gericke, *Die Ontwikkeling van Pos- en Telegraafwese in die Oranje-Vrystaat 1854-1886*, MA-verhandeling, Universiteit van die Oranje Vrystaat, Bloemfontein, 1968 in *Argiefjaarboek vir Suid-Afrikaanse Geskiedenis*, 34 (2), Die Staatsdrukker, Pretoria, 1976, pp. 273-382.

the Military Field Departments. In order to facilitate continuous communication during the War, the laagers of the Boers were situated close to telegraph offices.⁴⁹⁰ This strategic move would enable intelligence and other communications to reach the Boer generals in a timeous manner and to also facilitate sending back information in an unimpeded way.

The telegraph within the South African War can be used to shed light on the development of strategy and why particular decisions were taken at particular times. However, it is the contention of this study that they can also be used to reflect on personality traits and in so doing offer another medium to assess Kruger, particularly in this time of crisis. As President of the ZAR, Kruger played a crucial role in the coordination of the War effort and once removed from Pretoria made particular use of telegraph technology to communicate his insights and commands across the Boer Republics. It is the contention of this study that in this situation, Kruger's War telegrams can possibly illuminate elements of his persona in a hitherto untapped and unique manner. Although the telegrams are not the only primary source providing information on this period, they appear pivotal as the most viable and efficient means of communication at this particular time. During the time of crisis, May 1900 to September 1900, the President had left the official capital of the ZAR and relocated three times before leaving the country. Although some letters were sent and intermittent newspaper articles appeared during the winter of 1900, the telegrams were the method of communication most used by Kruger. On the one hand war circumstances as well as the advancing British occupation made the dissemination of information challenging, and on the other, the relative immediacy of the telegram made it a preferred means of communication.

The telegraph enabled a steady flow of information between the Boer generals on the front and the Government headquarters where President Kruger was situated. Not only was the President able to communicate within the ZAR but he was also connected via wire with President Steyn of the OFS. As a result the telegraph provided Kruger with the aforementioned "birds-eye-view" of the War as he had the advantage of being "interconnected". Consequently, Kruger was thus intimately acquainted with every move made on the various fronts. The central role of the telegrams, in Kruger's War-time responsibilities is clearly apparent in his *Memoirs*:

I had a different work before me, which kept me employed day and night. All looked to me for advice, hints and consolation. Daily I sent off telegrams to all

⁴⁹⁰ F. Pretorius, *The A-Z of the Anglo-Boer War*, Scarecrow Press, Lanham, 2010, p. 97.

the commandos...These labours fully occupied the mornings from eight to twelve and the evenings from two to four or five o'clock. I went to bed at eight, only to get up again at eleven to go through the telegrams that had come to my hand. I rose once more at two, to inspect any dispatched that had arrived in the meantime. In the later stage of the war...my sleep was interrupted regularly three times every night, ...in order that I might deal with the telegrams without delay.⁴⁹¹

This also clearly underlines the extensive utilisation of the telegraph in the War and what a crucial communication method it was. In the light of this it is therefore plausible that because of the ongoing communications between the various fronts and the government, that the War telegrams can provide extensive information on the inner dynamics of the War. But, more importantly, in the context of this study, they reflect on the correspondents during the crisis period in 1900.

“A British Officer” is furthermore of the opinion that the telegrams written in a wartime environment are “written on the field of battle with haste and imperfect knowledge of the facts and are the product of brains too overwrought for sound judgement”.⁴⁹² Although this statement is relevant as war circumstances are fundamentally different, it is however precisely this character of the War telegrams - and in particular Kruger’s outgoing telegrams – that are telling. Not only are they telling in terms of Kruger’s contribution to the War but can also possibly shed light on his persona.

Similarly to Lincoln’s own telegrams, Kruger’s War telegrams as a source are also unique in the sense that his reply, formulation and writing process is different to that of for example him writing or dictating a letter. Although one would be able to communicate similar information with either letter or telegram, the War necessitated the use of the telegraph, mostly because of its almost instantaneous delivery, which also greatly assisted the “urgency factor” in war.

Because of the urgency associated with war-time responses, the telegram was mostly written with some form of “hurriedness” and without the ability to alter or later revise. It was instant and absolute. As a result the unique war-time environment creates a peculiar written

⁴⁹¹ S.J.P. Kruger, *The Memoirs of Paul Kruger: Two volumes published as one*, Scripta Africana, Johannesburg, 1896, p. 192.

⁴⁹² A British Officer (pseudo.), “The Literature of the South African War, 1899-1901”, *The American Historical Review* 12(2), 1907, p. 299.

source. Not only is there no means of altering the text or content but the urgency thereof also reflects what the writer thought or instructed at a particular moment in time. To some extent the telegram's so-called "off the top of the head" (in other words as you speak, you reply) nature, possibly different to other sources when taking the extreme urgency of war in to consideration, are able to shed an unusual light on its writer. In addition, the war-environment itself, also plays a role. This becomes evident when considering the content of Kruger's War telegrams as the correspondence is mainly war orientated. The telegram is thus also valuable as it projects Kruger from a mainly military and war-time perspective. As a result, the telegrams provide an interesting lens through which Kruger can be observed.

For the first seven months of the South African War President Kruger was stationed in Pretoria with the remnants of the administration. By the end of May 1900 he was stationed at Machadodorp followed by Waterval-Onder and Nelspruit. In September 1900 his sojourn then commenced via train to Komatipoort and on to Lourenço Marques in Portuguese East Africa before he left for Europe. The actual period Kruger thus "actively" served the ZAR in the War was less than a year - a short period in comparison to its total 2 ½ year duration. Consequently seen from this point of view it can be argued that Kruger's contribution and involvement in the War was of lesser significance. As is evident from the literature review, the general picture of Kruger reflected in literature written on the War has been that of a more marginal figure. His "contribution" to the War has furthermore mostly been restricted to the period leading up to the War where he played a central role. Reference to Kruger's involvement, for the remainder of the War, has further been limited to established chronology and developments in the War. The more personal and dynamic role he played in the War has however not been extensively focused on.

A preliminary perusal of key texts written on the South African War specifically indicated that Kruger did feature as a key player in the War, but mention of his "personal" endeavours have been chiefly understated. Within the period of 20 May 1900 to 11 September 1900, Kruger's crisis period, reference made to him has centred on a few key developments. These include *inter alia*: Kruger's departure from Pretoria to the new government headquarters at Machadodorp; his role in voicing the concerns of the ZAR generals and the consideration of potential peace; his moving to Waterval-Onder; the resolution of the Executive Councils to send Kruger overseas to secure possible intervention; his departure to the newly established ZAR headquarters at Nelspruit and lastly his journey by train to Komatipoort and on to Lourenço Marques, the capital of the Portuguese colony of Mozambique. In addition to the aforementioned general historical developments and events, a handful of sources have - some only subtly - pointed to Kruger's active and

personal involvement. The inclusion and reference to this, in itself, points to the essential role he played “behind-the-scenes”. These endeavours are reflected and become more apparent in Kruger’s telegraphic correspondence during the War as some of the South African War literature has pointed to.

The historian A. Wessles has for example underlined Kruger’s contribution to the War in terms of his advisory role when it came to the execution of military operations. This is found in his chapter entitled “Afrikaners at War” in the South African War literature compilation edited by J. Gooch entitled, *The Boer War: direction, experience and image*. Wessles pointed to Kruger’s role as advisor and consultant in the following manner:

At least until 5 June 1900, the ZAR’s President Paul Kruger can in a sense be regarded as the real leader of both the Boer Republics. He had immense influence, and on more than one occasion sent military instructions or suggestions to [Commandant-General] Joubert at the front.⁴⁹³

Nasson also makes reference to Kruger’s military role in the War. In his 2010 publication he refers to Kruger as: “Rarely one to keep out of the way, Kruger again urged that the Boer forces stand on the defensive. [General] Cronje heard him out respectfully but had sense enough to discount presidential pleas”.⁴⁹⁴ F. Pretorius, the renowned historian on the South African War, also briefly refers to the active role Kruger played in the War in his publication on the experiences of the burghers on commando during the War - in essence a social history - entitled, *Kommandolewe tydens die Anglo-Boereoorlog, 1899-1902*. He relates the following regarding one of Kruger’s requests to the Commandant-General:

Op 8 Januarie 1900 het Botha sy offisiere van ‘n telegram van pres. Kruger aan die Kommandant-generaal verwittig waarin hy hom opdrag gegee het om eenvoudig alle verlof op te skort vanweë die ernstige militêre situasie.⁴⁹⁵ (On the 8th of January 1900 a telegram was received by Botha and his officers from pres. Kruger addressed to the Commandant-General, where he is requested simply to suspend all leave due to the serious military situation).

⁴⁹³ J. Gooch (ed.), *The Boer War: direction, experience, and image*, Routledge, New York, 2013, p. 79.

⁴⁹⁴ B. Nasson, *The War for South Africa. The Anglo-Boer War 1899-1902*, Tafelberg, Cape Town, 2010 p. 166.

⁴⁹⁵ See F. Pretorius, *Kommandolewe tydens die Anglo-Boereoorlog 1899-1902*, Human & Rousseau, Kaapstad, 1999, p. 220.

These examples reflect on what is evident in the volumes of telegrams Kruger sent during the South African War. In his capacity as president of the ZAR he occupied a leadership position which necessitated his guidance. However as mentioned in chapter 2, Kruger was also an excellent military leader and occupied the position of Commandant-General before he was elected president. His knowledge of warfare and the landscape of South Africa and the ZAR were an asset to military command. His role as advisor was thus valuable, especially his inclination to support more strategic military operations. In his telegraphic correspondence a range of themes can be identified. For the purposes of this chapter a selection of the telegrams relating to military operations will be discussed. Three main themes have been identified in this regard, namely: Kruger the commander; Kruger the strategist; and lastly Kruger the logistician. It will thus be endeavoured to illustrate how Kruger functioned in these capacities as reflected through the lens of his War telegrams.

4.2.1 Kruger the commander

As mentioned previously, Kruger had prior military experience which made his take on developments in the War a welcome and sometimes essential perspective. As a result Kruger was in regular communication with the generals as well as other government officials. The majority of these communications appear to have been done via the telegraph. The content of his telegrams range from, and are not limited to, the communication of general military instructions, giving advice as well as communicating the current state of affairs. On the 23rd of May 1900, Kruger for example sent a telegram to General⁴⁹⁶ (Genl.) L. Meyer, who was stationed near Charlestown. His instruction regarding military matters reads as follows:

Regarding your telegram of today regarding your wire discussion with the Commandant[-]General and the urgent necessity to have an officer of your authority and competence here in order to bring into order and arrange the positions from Gatsrand up to Pretoria, the Government agrees with the Commandant[-]General that Your Honour should please come as soon as possible and assign your post to A[cting]g Assistant General C. Botha.⁴⁹⁷

Kruger's telegraphic assistance also included the coordination and management of the commandos, especially when reinforcements were needed. This is illustrated in Kruger's

⁴⁹⁶ The title (or rank) "Acting Assistant General" carries the same weight as that of "General", consequently, in order to avoid confusion, the more generally accepted ranks/titles have been used as far as possible. In the case of the telegram's textual content, if reference was made to a specific rank or title, the original title was kept as is, though of course in translated format.

⁴⁹⁷ Transvaal Archive Depot, Pretoria (TAD), W.J. Leyds Archief, Volume 725, Deel F, No. 104, n.p.

telegram sent to General S.F. Oosthuizen and General J.H. de la Rey on the 27th of May 1900, when he requested the following:

Fighting is taking place today between the burghers and the enemy about three-quarters of an hour to the other side of Van Wijksrust at Van Staden's farm. You will therefore see the necessity of proceeding at once to the battlefield. Do not delay. Van Wijk says the troops are worn out and the burghers are fighting well.⁴⁹⁸

On the same day Kruger also sent in a separate telegram to Genl. J.H. de la Rey to the same effect, whereby the urgency of the situation is underlined, instructing him as follows:

I implore you to leave immediately for Bank station or perhaps even better for Randfontein station. Matters are critical enemy is already at Gatsrand and we cannot delay for an instant...⁴⁹⁹

A telegram from Kruger to a Commandant (unknown) at Lydenburg, sent on the 27th of August 1900, we see his role is more significant in the timeous provision of burgher reinforcements. His telegram reads as follows:

Express. According to a report received from Comdt Gen. [Commandant-General] at one point some of the enemy are moving towards Dullstroom. You must therefore, with all possible speed, call up all the available horsemen from the town and the whole district to advance to Dullstroom to assist our burghers there. Lose no time and travel by day and night otherwise the enemy will get there first.⁵⁰⁰

It is important to mention that Kruger had a vantage point where he was stationed - at the government headquarters - as he received various telegrams and other information from right across the battlefield. This enabled him to have a "birds-eye-view" of the developments in the War which in turn equipped him to advise more effectively and moreover to send out reinforcements timeously. Tom Wheeler, author of *Mr. Lincoln's T-Mails*, came to a similar conclusion regarding President Lincoln's utilisation of telegraph technology during the Civil War. His observation is as follows:

Through his consistent review of the telegraph traffic in and out of the war department, he gained an insight in to the attitudes of his armies and the thinking

⁴⁹⁸ TAD, W.J. Leyds Archief, Volume 726, Deel B, No. 283, n.p.

⁴⁹⁹ TAD, W.J. Leyds Archief, Volume 726, Deel B, No. 320, n.p.

⁵⁰⁰ TAD, W.J. Leyds Archief, Volume 731, Deel E, n.p.

of his generals. By interjecting himself into those activities, whether invited or not, Lincoln maintained his virtual presence in the headquarters of his generals...By far preponderance of the messages received were not addressed to the president. Reviewing each of the incoming messages “down to the raisins”, however, gave Lincoln a timely depth of awareness across a broad scope of activity. It was perhaps his greatest application of electronic messages.⁵⁰¹

Kruger also endeavoured to gain information regarding the positions, numbers and strength of the enemy timeously, so that the burghers in the respective areas would be kept up to date regarding the enemy’s positions. Kruger’s advantageous position was thus in a way mainly enabled by telegraphic technology. Without it, the orders and other crucial information would not have reached him and the ZAR in time. On the 22nd of May 1900 Kruger, for example, sent a telegram to the Landdrost (Magistrate) at Parys requesting him to

...Send scouts to find out their strength and movements and keep Vecht Gen. B.J. Viljoen at P[ot]c[hef]stroom and Gen. [S.W.] Burger M.E.C. Vereeniging and me informed.⁵⁰²

Kruger sent telegrams with similar instructions on the 31st of May 1900. His request to the Landdrosts at Carolina and Ermelo was as follows:

Please be on your guard and send out spies constantly ahead in the direction of Natal border in order to ascertain as far as possible the enemy movement. Constantly report here.⁵⁰³

In addition, his telegram to the Landdrost at Kaapschehoop read as follows:

Please give strict instruction to your guards [at the] Swaziland border to accurately monitor movement [of the] enemy and to constantly report to me here. If they do not punctually adhere to their duties they must be strictly punished according to law.⁵⁰⁴

⁵⁰¹ T. Wheeler, *Mr. Lincoln’s T-Mails. How Abraham Lincoln Used the Telegraph to Win the Civil War*, pp. 111-112.

⁵⁰² TAD, W.J. Leyds Archief, Volume 579, Deel 1, p. 72; Volume 725, Deel E, No. 591, n.p.

⁵⁰³ TAD, W.J. Leyds Archief, Volume 579, Deel 1, p. 212.

⁵⁰⁴ TAD, W.J. Leyds Archief, Volume 579, Deel 1, p. 214.

Kruger's vigilance to send out guards and spies soon paid off as the Special Commissioner of Swaziland informed him that British troops had been observed which could be a possible threat to the ZAR commandos. Kruger's military knowledge as reflected here thus played a key role in the War. His years of experience trained his eye and mind in respect of warfare. Moreover, the vigilance of the Boers and their distrust of others was a mindset most Boers apparently propagated.⁵⁰⁵ This mindset appears to have also added to his arsenal, one can argue, as a telegraphic commander who "warns", in a sense, from the "sidelines" as he sees areas of caution or possibly even flaws. The above War telegrams thus corroborate the portrayal of Kruger as a knowledgeable military leader.

His instruction to the Landdrost of Barberton on the 6th of June 1900 was to

[C]all up all the national service men in town already this night to move out to the Swazi border direction Mbabane, to stop the enemy and to ascertain where they are...⁵⁰⁶

As mentioned, Kruger deemed it essential to be accurately informed and as a result he would, as is apparent in the telegrams, sometimes bombard a general, or the like, with enquiries regarding the present situation on or near to the battlefield. Such an example is the telegram Kruger sent to Commandant L. Meyer on the 26th of May 1900, which reads as follows:

Your telegram of today regarding inspection positions troops that Acting Commandant-General [L.] Botha says are advancing along the Vaal River en route to Suikerboschrand. Are they on this side or on the other side of the Vaal River? And are our Horse Commandos still ahead to stop them? And where are the troops that according to the report from Acting Commandant General [L.] Botha were advancing to Gatsrand? Have you spoken to Acting Commandant General Botha this evening? Are there some people to arrange the Gatsrand positions and which officer has been entrusted with this task?...⁵⁰⁷

A similar telegram largely consisting of a range of enquiries was sent on the 27th of June 1900 by Kruger to the Landdrost of Standerton. He enquired as follows:

⁵⁰⁵ See for example quote regarding the "attributes" of the Boers in E. van Heyningen, "Fools rush in": Writing a history of the concentration camps of the South African War, *Historia*, 55(2), November 2010, p. 14.

⁵⁰⁶ TAD, W.J. Leyds Archief, Volume 579, Deel 1, p. 416.

⁵⁰⁷ TAD, W.J. Leyds Archief, Volume 579, Deel 1, pp. 165-6, Volume 726, Deel A, No. 900, n.p.

Are our Commando people that are called up ahead of the enemy so that they can stop it on its advance to Greylingstad or where they are. I hear that there was a battle yesterday at the latter town. Is that so and what was the result? Has the railway bridge at Standerton been destroyed and the railway line from there to Greylingstad especially at Waterval...⁵⁰⁸

Commandant-General L. Botha also received a telegram to this effect on the 19th of July 1900. Kruger requested Botha to bring him up to speed:

It is not clear to me from your report on Monday's action which of the positions which you took from the enemy you have held and which you have had to surrender so that they are now in the possession of the enemy again. I would be pleased to have a full report from you.⁵⁰⁹

Kruger was thus in regular communication with the generals and officials. Not only did he ask to be brought up to speed but he also, as it appears from these telegrams, functioned as an important link in the chain of command. This is another example of how the War telegrams corroborate the portrayal of Kruger as a good military leader. However, he was not only on the receiving end of information but also provided it. This is evident in the telegrams Kruger sent to Steyn which can be described as summarised "updates". An excerpt from the telegram sent to Steyn by Kruger on the 12th of July 1900 reveals this:

Since Saturday there have been heavy battles along an extended line from Pretoria to near to Springs. Saturday the vanguard of the enemy was defeated with heavy losses half way between these two places and where the losses of the enemy according to the reports of their ambulance approximately 200 killed and wounded. The aim of the enemy was apparently to break through to Middelburg but the enemy was driven back 8 miles and nearly lost his guns. Sunday and Monday the battle continued without any change taking place in the situation. In these battles 13 of our burghers were killed and 15 wounded a considerable proportion through the naval guns of the enemy. The battle is still continuing and our burghers fought with exceptional valour...⁵¹⁰

Another was sent the next day updating Steyn on the latest developments:

There has been no change in the situation here yesterday and today. The enemy has moved in at two points from the direction of Bapsfontein, one in the

⁵⁰⁸ TAD, W.J. Leyds Archief, Volume 579, Deel 5, p. 1064; Volume 727, Deel H, n.p.

⁵⁰⁹ TAD, W.J. Leyds Archief, Volume 729, Deel A, n.p.

⁵¹⁰ TAD, W.J. Leyds Archief, Volume 728, Deel G, n.p.

direction of Gert Malan's farm in the direction of Bronkhorstspuit and the other in the direction of Hendrik Neethling's farm in the direction of Balmoral. Our burghers are still in their positions. It appears that part of this enemy force belongs to [Gen. Sir Redvers Henry] Buller. Our burghers from the northern districts are joining up very well; no further reports received from Gen. [J.H.] de la Rey. A report has been received from Vecht General Piet Viljoen to say that he has blown up the bridge over Witpoortsdrift. That bridge is in the vicinity of Waterval's bridge.⁵¹¹

In a handful of the aforementioned telegrams⁵¹² Kruger's particular patriotic streak is emphasised especially when considering his convictions with regard to the speedy execution of duties as well as being a patriotic burgher of the ZAR. His use of words illustrates this well as he expects speedy reactions: "dadelijk op te rukken" (proceed at once), "Verzuim toch niet" (cannot delay for an instant), "Trek zonder verzuim dag en nacht door..." (Proceed without delay day and night). Besides his requests to the generals to react timeously, his disdain for those who on the other hand did not deem the cause to be worthy nor executed their duties, underlines one of Kruger's fundamental characteristics namely his patriotism. Those who fought with the same vigour he spoke of as "burghers [who] fought with exceptional valour" however on the other end of the continuum the deserters and those who slacked in their duties were to be "strictly punished according to law". From these examples the militaristic Kruger is corroborated and the general depiction of him as such is confirmed.

In addition to the abovementioned roles, Kruger also played an advisory role as reflected in his telegraphic correspondence. On the 31st of May 1900, Kruger informed General C. Botha via telegram of a possible plan if the burghers found themselves in a situation where retiring would be inevitable. Kruger advises as follows:

...they will have to slowly trek in the direction of Ermelo, the people on foot and the wagons ahead, while the horse commandos as we have already done, will form the rear guard and in this way fight footstep to footstep while helping one another the one not leaving the other...⁵¹³

⁵¹¹ TAD, W.J. Leyds Archief, Volume 728, Deel G, n.p.

⁵¹² See for example the following telegrams: Kruger to J.H. de la Rey, 27 May 1900, TAD, W.J. Leyds Archief, Volume 726, Deel B, No. 283, n.p. and Kruger to Acting Commandant, 27 August 1900, TAD, W.J. Leyds Archief, Volume 731, Deel E, n.p.

⁵¹³ TAD, W.J. Leyds Archief, Volume 726, Deel C, n.p.

His advice could at times take on the form of a precaution. For example he warns General S.F. Oosthuizen in May 1900⁵¹⁴ that his fast retirement was not beneficial as this exposed the other commandos:

If you withdraw so rapidly Gen. [S.P.] du Toit will be in danger, so be cautious and wait until he joins you and do your best to stop the enemy...⁵¹⁵

To ensure that his advice was followed, he adds that he has also informed the other general [Genl. du Toit] in this regard and thus created a situation of mutual responsibility to ensure that his orders would be acted on by adding: "I have instructed him to join you".⁵¹⁶ This move on the part of Kruger again emphasises his "soldierly shrewdness" which most probably can be ascribed to his prior experience.

Kruger's advice was not limited to any rank as his telegraphic correspondence also indicates. His advice was on many occasions also sent to the Commandant-General if he deemed it to be of a pertinent nature. His telegram sent to Commandant-General L. Botha on the 14 June 1900 is such an example. Kruger suggested as follows:

I am well acquainted with your plans in general, and it gave me great satisfaction to note that the small groups of burghers under you are still fighting so courageously, but I would like it to be considered whether it would not be advisable to put General [H.R.] Lemmer at the head of the commandos who have to attack the enemy from the rear in the direction of Krugersdorp, since that expedition is of very great importance and needs to be conducted with great circumspection.⁵¹⁷

Similar advice was given to Commandant-General L. Botha on the 1st of July 1900 at Balmoral. Kruger suggested the following:

...It would be good to if possible attack the enemy now from here in the rear as [C.R.] de Wet has done when the main force of [Field Marshall Lord F.S.] Roberts was advancing here but this is merely a suggestion for if you could speedily raise a commando to mobilize the western and north western burghers it would be good.⁵¹⁸

⁵¹⁴ The telegram was placed under the dates 21 and 22 May 1900.

⁵¹⁵ TAD, W.J. Leyds Archief, Volume 579, Deel 1, p. 69.

⁵¹⁶ TAD, W.J. Leyds Archief, Volume 579, Deel 1, p. 69.

⁵¹⁷ TAD, W.J. Leyds Archief, Volume 727, Deel A, n.p.

⁵¹⁸ TAD, W.J. Leyds Archief, Volume 579, Deel 6, pp. 1171-2.

Another telegram was sent to L. Botha on the 14th of June 1900 where Kruger advised as follows:

I thank the Lord for the report from Gen. [J.H.] de la Rey. Nevertheless, bearing in mind what a prisoner told Commandant Malan, I would like to make a suggestion to you that you get more people from the Pretoria commando to join you and in consultation with Vecht General Viljoen from that side, move strongly on the enemy here in order to prevent them from hampering Gen. de la Rey and his march. However, I will leave the matter in your hands so that you can act according to circumstances.⁵¹⁹

General C. Botha was also advised by Kruger on the 19th of July 1900, as follows:

You must order the commandos to concentrate as far as possible on one suitable point and then try to put the enemy to rout and destroy the railway line.⁵²⁰

In addition to the above Kruger also made suggestions regarding the formulation and correct wording of correspondence so as to avoid any ambiguous instructions or interpretations. This was the case when he wired Commandant-General L. Botha on the 31st of August 1900 advising him to

...reply as follows. Begins I must once again insist that the Reverend Postma or any other minister of religion be sent back to his residence...Ends. I cordially request you to send such a t[ele]g[r]am to Roberts and not to delay in so doing...⁵²¹

In a telegram addressed to a different recipient but sent on the same day Kruger advised the Commissioner at Barberton the following:

...It would be a good thing if you could send a few report riders to the pass (rooihoogte) to find out whether our people are there and then let me know.⁵²²

The next few phrases as taken from Kruger's War telegrams above do not only corroborate the portrayal of Kruger as a militarist but this portrayal is also augmented. The phrases as quoted: "It would be a good thing"; "I will leave the matter in your hands so that you can act

⁵¹⁹ TAD, W.J. Leyds Archief, Volume 727, Deel A, n.p.

⁵²⁰ TAD, W.J. Leyds Archief, Volume 729, Deel A, n.p.

⁵²¹ TAD, W.J. Leyds Archief, Volume 730, Deel G, n.p.

⁵²² TAD, W.J. Leyds Archief, Volume 731, Deel I, n.p.

according to circumstances” and “but this is merely a suggestion” highlights a more approachable Kruger rather than the patriotic and ardent man constantly associated with militaristic commands and a hunger for victory. His decision to leave certain decisions for the Generals to make or to make suggestions, signifies that he was not as dictator-like as some would make out. It is thus apparent here that he is prepared to collaborate and moreover shows respect for the rank of the Generals in a time of War, particularly on the battlefield where he is not present to make decisions. Evidently he did not simply react authoritatively in all situations even though his position did give him the right to intervene.

Although Kruger assisted the generals and officials in a more compliant fashion, this was not the case when a lack of patriotism was apparent as has been mentioned. His contempt for those burghers who laid down their weapons or deserted their commandos is also noticeable in his telegraphic correspondence, even more so after the British forces infiltrated the ZAR. This was a period where as much as possible was done to rally together the ZAR forces to withstand the British advance. On the 21st of May 1900, Kruger for example telegraphed General S.F. Oosthuizen and Generals De la Rey and S.F. du Toit in this regard:

The Reverend Coetzee informed me confidentially that there is a rumour that some burghers are planning to down arms at the enemy and even attempt to persuade others to do likewise. This would be high treason and when the allegation is true the guilty parties must be court martialled and punished by death.⁵²³

One such example is the telegram sent on the 21st of May 1900 to the Landdrost (magistrate) at Wolmaransstad which read as follows:

I hear from General [S.F.] Oosthuizen that people are sitting at home in your district. Why do you not punish them. I order you to have them all called up and have them arrested upon refusal and punished severely. Otherwise, if you do not do this, I will punish you. Report speedily. People who refuse to defend their country any longer and therefore wish to surrender to the enemy are guilty of high treason and will be shot to death.⁵²⁴

In a telegram sent to the same Landdrost on the 28th of May 1900, Kruger gave him instruction to inform the deserters and those who laid down their weapons that

⁵²³ TAD, W.J. Leyds Archief, Volume 579, Deel 1, p. 40; Volume 725, Deel D, n.p.

⁵²⁴ TAD, W.J. Leyds Archief, Volume 579, Deel 1, p. 52; Volume 725, Deel D, No. 548, n.p.

...their property will be confiscated and in addition they will incur criminal penalties if they lay down their weapons or do not go up, because it is very necessary...⁵²⁵

The vice-president of the ZAR, S.W. Burger, received a telegram from Kruger along the same lines on the 24th of June 1900. In this telegram Kruger expressed his concern for the numbers of burghers who had abandoned the cause due to one official's conduct and also indicates what should be done in the case of the official and deserters. He indicated to Burger:

I have been informed that through the influence and advice of Landdrost [A.G.] Kleynhans of M[arthinus] W[essel] Stroom so many burghers in that district are laying down their arms and it surprises me that the officers have not arrested the aforesaid Landdrost for his actions are treason against the State. See if you cannot in the care of a faithful burgher send him a letter and inviting him to one or other farm in this way arrest him and send him here under guard even [if] it was in handcuffs. Those of the burghers who have voluntarily laid down their arms must be punished by requisitioning their cattle for the use of the Commandos. In addition these must be arrested and brought before Court Martial and punished...⁵²⁶

The government and also Kruger's hostility towards those who aided and abetted the deserters was also evident in his telegrams. From Kruger's use of words it is clear that those who were deserters, "hensoppers" or who chose to be neutral were regarded as cowards. Their decision to not fight for the cause, according to Kruger, should be 'awarded' with the most extreme of punishment which included death. In his telegrams he gives instructions to the effect that the deserters should be "court martialed" and "punished by death" – a negative association is thus made with deserters and cowards throughout his War-time correspondence. It is a theme that underlines yet again his patriotism but also his fervent belief in the execution of law and order. If you do not abide you need to be punished. In the telegram above, sent on the 24th of June 1900 to S.W. Burger, it also appears as though once you had been labelled as a "deserter" or the like and you have been "stripped" of your "honour" and do not deserve fair treatment. This is illustrated in the abovementioned telegram where Kruger gives advice on how to "arrest" or "trap" a guilty burgher. His crafty

⁵²⁵ TAD, W.J. Leyds Archief, Volume 726, Deel B, n.p.

⁵²⁶ TAD, W.J. Leyds Archief, Volume 579, Deel 5, pp. 976-9; Volume 727, Deel F, n.p.

scheme and seemingly dishonourable method put forward to achieve this illustrates that “fair play” did not apply to deserters or those undermining the cause.

Kruger also communicated the government’s resolution regarding deserters and “hensoppers” to General C. Botha on the 21st of July 1900 informing him that

...The Government has resolved that only those burghers who have made themselves guilty “and have been reported by officers will go to trial” but that all officers who have been induced by force or forced by others and have laid down their arms and are now willing to once again take up arms, will not be prosecuted further and shall join their commandos.⁵²⁷

Kruger’s telegrams within this period thus point to his continual involvement in the War, even though he was stationed at more than one location. His contribution concerning the communication of general orders, advice given as well as the sharing of information becomes all the more apparent. In addition, his aversion towards deserters and their lack of patriotism is noteworthy and the perception of Kruger as a patriotic and military leader is also hereby emphasised.

4.2.2 Kruger the strategist

In addition to assisting with the execution and passing on of military orders and operations, Kruger was also able to provide the ZAR generals and officials with sound “strategic advice”. This was on the one hand due to his prior military experience and on the other as a consequence of his current informative “telegraphic” position. His strategic advice was also not limited to that of military strategy, but extended beyond this and included various other aspects in the War. His role as military strategist is for example evident in the telegram he sent to Commandant L. Meyer positioned at Charlestown on the 20th of May 1900 when he urged the Commandant to place a Maxim gun on the hill of Majuba as this would enable the burghers to “fire all around it”.⁵²⁸ After Meyer did not heed to Kruger’s request, he repeated his telegraphic request on the same day and indicated that the defence of Majuba was imperative so as to “prevent [them] (the enemy) to reach Laingsnek by rail”.⁵²⁹ Repeating requests appears to be the order of the day when Kruger did not receive sufficient responses or if his orders were not executed or adhered to. This inference only

⁵²⁷ TAD, W.J. Leyds Archief, Volume 727, Deel B, n.p.

⁵²⁸ TAD, W.J. Leyds Archief, Volume 578, Deel 5, pp. 1318-20; Volume 725, Deel C, n.p.

⁵²⁹ TAD, W.J. Leyds Archief, Volume 578, Deel 5, pp. 1327-8; Volume 725, Deel C, No. 111, n.p.

underlines his preciseness and attention to the smallest of detail where strategy is concerned.

In a different telegram addressed to Commandant-General L. Botha, Kruger stressed the importance of their strategy when an attack is imminent: “It is essential that the enemy be attacked on the march by horsemen and that we do not wait until he reaches the people on foot in their positions”.⁵³⁰

On the 11th of June 1900 a similar telegram was sent to General C. Botha where Kruger informed him as follows:

See to it that the pass on the Rusthoek farm on your right hand is also well occupied otherwise if the enemy gets through there they could shoot at you from the rear and if the pass is also occupied then they will not be able to descend on this side of the Klip River.⁵³¹

The next day, the 12th of June 1900, another telegram reached C. Botha with requests from Kruger, however consisting of essentially tactical advice:

...I have already signalled to Heidelberg whether one cannot get dynamite detonators and send those then to you. Would it not be possible to fire and demolish the railway and especially the large bridge across the Vaal River with Long Tom or to destroy these by means of placing shells of Long Toms at the bridges and on the railway line, and then detonate those by means of an electric charge.⁵³²

More advice was sent by Kruger to Commandant-General L. Botha on the 20th of June 1900 regarding the strategic occupation of key positions. Kruger’s message was as follows:

I see from the telegram of Acting assistant General [D.J.] Joubert signalled over last evening that he has not yet taken the ridges at Graskop. This must be done forthwith for these are very good ridges. Occupying these ridges must happen immediately before the enemy takes the possession of them. The men on foot can take up the positions near to the team at the backmost train so that if they must willingly retreat, they can be easily transported with the backmost train...⁵³³

⁵³⁰ TAD, W.J. Leyds Archief, Volume 579, Deel 1, pp. 155-9; Volume 726, Deel A, No. 787, n.p.

⁵³¹ TAD, W.J. Leyds Archief, Volume 579, Deel 2, pp. 540-1.

⁵³² TAD, W.J. Leyds Archief, Volume 579, Deel 3, pp. 567-8.

⁵³³ TAD, W.J. Leyds Archief, Volume 579, Deel 4, pp. 882-4; Volume 727, Deel D, n.p.

During the course of the same day another telegram from Kruger reached General Joubert along the same lines. In this telegram Kruger informed him the following:

Your telegram yesterday regarding the enemy movements. Both points must be countered but especially the one point of the enemy coming down along the railway line. Occupy the ridge at Graskop forthwith for there are very good gorges. This must be done immediately before the enemy occupies these itself. Men on foot can take up the positions to the railway line at the last train so that if they unwillingly have to retreat, they can easily be transported with the backmost train.⁵³⁴

He also sent a telegram on the 21st of June 1900 to Commandant-General L. Botha, warning him of the probable presence of British troops near Heidelberg and moreover reminding him of the strategic positions to possibly occupy at Greylingstad where there are “nice ridges to out flank them”.⁵³⁵ The next day another telegram concerning tactical operations reached L. Botha from Kruger. In his telegram he asked L. Botha:

Would it not be a good idea to put another Long Tom on a truck like the other one that is with you at present, so that you can fire at the enemy with two Long Toms? Positions are being prepared here so that if the Long Toms eventually have to retreat to this position they could be put in position immediately.⁵³⁶

The value of launching a more coordinated attack when the enemy is vulnerable was evident in Kruger’s telegram sent to a Commandant [unknown] positioned at Bethal. Kruger instructed him as follows:

Adhere to the order of the Acting Commandant General and ensure that you attack the enemy on the move for where this has happened up to now our people have always been victorious...⁵³⁷

In his telegram sent to Commandant-General L. Botha on the 4th of July 1900, Kruger’s advisory and authoritative position is more prominently underlined, especially where military and other tactical aspects are concerned. His message to L. Botha reads as follows:

...I have received your telegram of today regarding your tactical plan and am in agreement with you that you should so orchestrate it so that General [J.H.]

⁵³⁴ TAD, W.J. Leyds Archief, Volume 579, Deel 4, pp. 880-1; Volume 727, Deel D, n.p.

⁵³⁵ TAD, W.J. Leyds Archief, Volume 727, Deel E, n.p.

⁵³⁶ TAD, W.J. Leyds Archief, Volume 727, Deel E, n.p.

⁵³⁷ TAD, W.J. Leyds Archief, Volume 728, Deel B, n.p.

de la Rey will also be supported by it but that you should not for the time being attack the strong points of the enemy. There are two points that require priority, namely to support General [J.H.] de la Rey and to cut down [General Sir Redvers] Buller...⁵³⁸

Kruger's military skill was also apparent in an indirect manner in his telegraphic correspondence. On occasion Kruger's insights or remarks would steer a general or commander in the right direction after he had indicated what position or move, on their part, might end in possible failure or a problematic outcome. The depiction of him as a military leader and good strategist is thus continually underlined. In his telegram sent to General B. Viljoen on the 30th of August 1900 Kruger remarked as follows:

...I am expecting the foot soldiers there to be effective because it will not be possible for them to be encircled by horsemen and so they will be able to hold their positions well.⁵³⁹

As with the previous section, it is evident through Kruger's War telegrams that he played a significant role in the War and that his military and leadership experience enabled him to assist the forces in the field by providing them with strategic positions and advice. Through the lens of these telegrams Kruger's militarist side is underlined as is his astute yet patriotically aligned nature.

4.2.3 Kruger the logistician

Apart from the abovementioned roles, Kruger also functioned as a coordinator and manager of provisions and other logistical aspects of the War. This included the coordination and distribution of provisions; the management of burghers, forces and reinforcements, as well as the management of natural and other government resources including minerals and monies. In essence Kruger functioned as one of the prime coordinators of the War and his "behind-the-scenes" contribution becomes increasingly apparent in this telegraphic correspondence within this period. By the time the British troops' invasion of Johannesburg was imminent it became all the more crucial to move and distribute provisions so as to avoid their falling into enemy hands. This is also evident in Kruger's telegrams within this period of so-called "crisis". Not only was it necessary to commandeer the remainder of the provisions but also to safeguard, circulate and transport what was left to the commandos and storage facilities via secure routes. Within this critical

⁵³⁸ TAD, W.J. Leyds Archief, Volume 729, Deel 6, pp. 1295-6; Volume 728, Deel D, n.p.

⁵³⁹ TAD, W.J. Leyds Archief, Volume 731, Deel H, n.p.

period Kruger managed to advise and oversee as much as possible and the content of the telegrams are interpreted against this background.

This role is evidently reflected in the telegram sent on the 21st of May 1900 to Commandant-General L. Botha:

Your telegram today regarding advance enemy to Heilbron. Has Your Honour no Commando to send to stop the enemy. It would be good to send everything that has to be transported by rail timeously to Vereeniging. I refer to those goods which cannot be transported by draught animals and those which you don't absolutely need at your commando. However, You will know best what to do.⁵⁴⁰

In a telegram sent on the same day Kruger informed F.E.T. Krause, Commandant of Johannesburg, that he corresponded with the mining engineer who should soon provide sufficient labour and digging implements for the said commando:

The A[cting] State Mining Engineer has promised to send over 1000 natives to Klip River this morning to help Major Erasmus to make ditches and trenches. Please see that this happens and that they are duly supplied with picks and spades. Urgent.⁵⁴¹

On the 26th of May 1900 in a telegram to Commandant-General L. Botha, Kruger communicated the following suggestions relating to the transport and distribution of provisions:

...Would it not be a good idea to have the trains on the Volksrust line return to Pretoria as well as the other goods, fodder, etc., not required on Commando. It would however be good to first of all distribute the ammunition amongst the burghers as much as they need and to send the other to the outer districts such as Ermelo. In any case I think that the foregoing goods that are not needed at the Commando also must come through to Pretoria by train. You will however know best what to do. I am only giving you these directions as suggestions...⁵⁴²

⁵⁴⁰ TAD, W.J. Leyds Archief, Volume 579, Deel I, p. 36; Volume 725, Deel D, n.p.

⁵⁴¹ TAD, W.J. Leyds Archief, Volume 579, Deel 1, p. 39; Volume 725, Deel D, n.p.

⁵⁴² TAD, W.J. Leyds Archief, Volume 579, Deel 1, pp. 155-9; Volume 726, Deel A, No. 787, n.p.

A telegram relating to the topic of the circulation of goods was forwarded by Kruger from the Commandant-General L. Botha to the Landdrost of Heidelberg on the 27th of May 1900. Botha's orders were as follows: "I understand that there is still a lot of fodder at Heidelberg. This must also be sent to Volksrust for the commandos there...". Kruger, in addition, informed the Landdrost that any additional feed could also be "afgecommandeerd" (commandeered) from the citizens.⁵⁴³ During the course of the day a telegram was also sent by Kruger to Dr. F.E.T. Krause, Commandant of Johannesburg to the following effect:

The Government commands you to commandeer as fast as possible all feed, provisions and articles required for the commandos as well as boots and clothing, coats and blankets, saddles, bridles and horses and send them to Middelburg, even from private people, where there are considerable quantities. Divide food for one month among the people and transport all the rest.⁵⁴⁴

The purchase, coordination and distribution of provisions such as wheat, maize, sugar, coffee, clothing and horses as illustrated in the previous telegram, encompass the majority of Kruger's telegraphic correspondence where provisions are concerned. He for example sent a telegram to General D.J. Joubert on the 18th of June 1900 instructing him to

...establish a commission as detectives that must go around to send all horses, cattle, etc. in the direction the enemy is moving to safe places, taking the usable horses for Commando service. Horses, at the most two for those to be fed at home, to be sent to commando with the first available opportunity to be given them in order that the enemy does not get hold of the horses.⁵⁴⁵

On the 29th of June 1900, in a telegram sent to Commandant-General L. Botha, Kruger informed him of the whereabouts of more government owned horses and cattle in the Waterberg district in the northern part of the ZAR. In the telegram he suggested to Botha:

...It would be advisable to have the horses and livestock removed by a patrol of armed burghers, whether or not my Secretary is with you. In a few days time I hope to send you another 50 or 60 horses. Please reply quickly...⁵⁴⁶

⁵⁴³ TAD, W.J. Leyds Archief, Volume 726, Deel B, n.p.

⁵⁴⁴ TAD, W.J. Leyds Archief, Volume 579, Deel 1, p. 172; Volume 726, Deel B, No. 28, n.p.

⁵⁴⁵ TAD, W.J. Leyds Archief, Volume 579, Deel 4, p. 780; Volume 727, Deel C, n.p.

⁵⁴⁶ TAD, W.J. Leyds Archief, Volume 727, Deel 1, n.p.

In addition Kruger also sent a telegram to Commandant Schroëder on the 19th of June 1900 regarding the provision of clothing to the burghers on foot. Not only did Kruger request him to commandeer clothing but also informed the Commandant how to go about obtaining the goods:

Commandeer all the most essential garments for the infantry under receipt. The shopkeepers can send the receipts here...The same rule must apply to the purchase of livestock and other provisions from burghers...⁵⁴⁷

Commandant-General L. Botha was also regularly informed by Kruger of the status of the ZAR's provisions. This is illustrated in his telegram sent to L. Botha on the 24th of June 1900:

Have appointed Frans Kock who has this morning left for Middelburg in order to, with the assistance of assistants in each district, purchase all maize and other wheat as much as possible and send to the commandos. Will exhort the Commissariat here to send more flour. As a result of the blowing up of the railway line despatch of flour was delayed. For the rest flour and other provisions must be commandeered from the farms.⁵⁴⁸

On the 4th of July 1900 Kruger sent a telegram in answer to General D.J. Erasmus which read as follows:

Your telegram regarding clothing and food for your commando. The Government does its best to provide the commandos with clothing and food but it regrets that several times so many clothes and much food remains at various places instead of having taken the same along as still happened recently at Laingsnek. As far as the mill is concerned you should rather work with the mills at Middelburg as here and elsewhere within reach no mills are available. I request that you should transport all the fodder, grain and all cattle which may be in the direction of the enemy away to a safer place and the food, grain that cannot be transported must be burned so that the enemy does not get hold of it. Hard cash I do not have. Further, you must confiscate the cattle, grain and fodder of the burghers in your district who have voluntarily laid down their arms for the benefit of the State...⁵⁴⁹

⁵⁴⁷ TAD, W.J. Leyds Archief, Volume 727, Deel D, n.p.

⁵⁴⁸ TAD, W.J. Leyds Archief, Volume 727, Deel F, n.p.

⁵⁴⁹ TAD, W.J. Leyds Archief, Volume 579, Deel 6, pp. 1289-92; Volume 728, Deel D, n.p.

As the government was not always able to provide the demands of the commandos, their only option was to send those products and goods that was currently available, as is reflected in the telegram above. Consequently Kruger also had to communicate the lack or scarcity of products to the Generals and officials. On the 6th of July 1900 Kruger informed the Landdrost at Piet Retief of the provision situation and moreover provided him with seemingly helpful advice:

...Although flour is scarce we can send you coffee and sugar and rice and some clothing. Send wagons to Machadodorp immediately to fetch the goods as we cannot obtain wagons here...I have also received a firm report that food in Pretoria is very scarce for one pays up to £5 per bag of maize. We also bake bread with the maize here with corn flour and a little sugar and it meets the requirements well.⁵⁵⁰

Furthermore Kruger also sent a telegram to the Landdrost of Ermelo on the 6th of August 1900 informing him that it was difficult to obtain weapons but that

...In the meantime we will attempt to get (some) here. If you send the wagons here they can bring some of the maize in stock from there. If there are no bags maize must be loaded in tarpaulins (buck-sails). Wagons are wanted for sending ammunition...⁵⁵¹

A similar request was sent to Landdrost of Piet Retief on the 11th of August 1900 concerning maize provisions and the utilisation of buck-sails. Kruger instructed him as follows:

...You can get more provisions but send the wagons to transport it filled with maize. If you have no bags then the maize has to be loaded in buck-sails.⁵⁵²

The securing of provisions was also essential by this time as is evident in the telegram Kruger sent to General T. Smuts on the 13th of August 1900 where Kruger requested him to

...use all your time and means to transport in maize, fodder, slaughter cattle still on farms. Here already great lack of these articles. Commandeer all available wagons and oxen where available for that purpose.⁵⁵³

⁵⁵⁰ TAD, W.J. Leyds Archief, Volume 728, Deel E, n.p.

⁵⁵¹ TAD, W.J. Leyds Archief, Volume 730, Deel A, n.p.

⁵⁵² TAD, W.J. Leyds Archief, Volume 730, Deel E, n.p.

⁵⁵³ TAD, W.J. Leyds Archief, Volume 730, Deel E, n.p.

Moreover, in order to provide for the commandos in many instances it became necessary to “commandeer by receipt” or by force goods for the ZAR forces, as is evident in a range of telegrams sent by Kruger. On the 14th of July 1900 Kruger for example sent a telegram to Commandant G. Smuts where he *inter alia* instructed him as follows:

...From those burghers who are refusing to accept State notes the goods or cattle must be commandeered under receipt. We are giving one quarter in hard cash and three quarters in notes.⁵⁵⁴

On the 25th of July Kruger’s telegraphic instructions in this regard to the Landdrosts of Carolina and Bethal read as follows:

Have all the maize whether purchased for Government or not, be transported without delay to Machadodorp, only leaving behind what is necessary for maintenance of families. To this end means of transport must be hired even at high prices and on refusal means of transport must be commandeered by force.⁵⁵⁵

Kruger’s telegraphic correspondence further indicated that he corresponded with the State Printers and the Provisions Committee on the 30th and 31st of May 1900 respectively. In his telegrams addressed to the Director of the State Printers and the Committee, he intimated the necessity to possibly move a printing press to Machadodorp and to establish a bakery at Middelburg. Excerpts from these telegrams read as follows:

I deem [it] necessary that you come to Machadodorp without fail with one of your printing presses and equipment where our Government seat will be established in order to publish the necessary proclamations⁵⁵⁶

and

As it may become necessary to close the bakery at Pretoria, it is most desirable to make provision immediately in conjunction with the Landdrost [in] Middelburg to establish a bakery there.⁵⁵⁷

⁵⁵⁴ TAD, W.J. Leyds Archief, Volume 728, Deel H, n.p.

⁵⁵⁵ TAD, W.J. Leyds Archief, Volume 729, Deel D, n.p.

⁵⁵⁶ TAD, W.J. Leyds Archief, Volume 579, Deel 1, p. 181.

⁵⁵⁷ TAD, W.J. Leyds Archief, Volume 726, Deel C, n.p.

The request to move the bakery was however abandoned.⁵⁵⁸ Later on another request was sent by Kruger on the 27th of August 1900 to the State Secretary and the Military Commissioner where he requested that the State Printer had to be moved to Waterval-Onder and “all goods that are not urgently required...as well as the ammunition⁵⁵⁹ to Nelspruit, the location where the ZAR Government’s headquarters would soon be.

To further assist the government operations in the vicinity of Machadodorp and elsewhere Kruger also informed the Generals and officials of medical services and where the same could be found or when they could be expected to tend to the fallen burghers. In his telegram sent on the 13th of June 1900 to the Landdrost at Middelburg he informed him as follows:

This morning a Russian Ambulance unit left for the front to render medical assistance. I have made arrangements with Dr Engel [at] Waterval Boven for the nursing of the seriously wounded at a hospital at Waterval Boven or Waterval Onder... If there are such cases they must be sent there and advance notice of this must always be given to Dr Engel so that he can receive them...⁵⁶⁰

Officials and generals were furthermore instructed to damage or destroy implements and provisions when necessary. This was mainly done so that their provisions and products could not be utilised by the enemy. Instructions such as this was for example given by Kruger on the 13th and 15th of June 1900. Kruger sent telegrams to two Landdrosts in this regard whereby he requested them to: “Issue order to personnel ZASM to render all engines and wagons unusable to the enemy as they deem best and to bury the removed components. Advise me if this order has been accede to”⁵⁶¹ and “You must also see to it that all railway wagons are rendered unfit for use, by removing the axle caps or in some other way and report to me”.⁵⁶² Similar requests were given regarding the destruction of the mines and mining equipment in May 1900. On the 25th of May 1900 Kruger sent the following instructions to Commandant-General L. Botha:

The Government appreciates fully the weight of your argument concerning the demolition of the coal mine. It is however compelled to keep to its already stated viewpoint and instruction. Coal has been declared to be contraband by

⁵⁵⁸ See for example, TAD, Leyds Archief, Volume 726, Deel C, n.p: State President S.J.P, Kruger to the Provisions Commissioner, 1 June 1900.

⁵⁵⁹ TAD, W.J. Leyds Archief, Volume 731, Deel E, n.p.

⁵⁶⁰ TAD, W.J. Leyds Archief, Volume 579, Deel 3, pp. 595-6.

⁵⁶¹ TAD, W.J. Leyds Archief, Volume 727, Deel A, n.p.

⁵⁶² TAD, W.J. Leyds Archief, Volume 727, Deel B, n.p.

the enemy itself; the lack of coal is also hampering the enemy to such an extent that the price of coal in England is at present more than 31 shillings per ton. It is not from a wish to destroy that this demolition takes place as well as it is not from a wish to destroy that we demolish our own valuable railways and bridges. The private party will have to be satisfied with an eventual claim for damages...The necessities of war justify and compel us to act in this manner...⁵⁶³

On the same day another telegram concerning the mines also reached L. Botha where Kruger intimated that:

As a result of correspondence between you and S. Marks the Government has decided that all the coal already excavated at the Vereeniging mine must be commandeered by you and immediately sent to the mines at Johannesburg where there is a great need. As this coal mine is the largest and the best in South Africa the Government is therefore instructing you when the danger becomes imminent that the enemy will cross the river and procure possession of the mine, that you must issue instruction that the machinery of the mine be destroyed...In case of danger you must also have all horses, maize and other articles of value for our Commandos transported.⁵⁶⁴

The next day the order to destroy all the machinery was abandoned and instead L. Botha was to carry away only "components of that machinery".⁵⁶⁵

In addition to the coordination of the abovementioned provisions Kruger also played a role in the management and distribution of ammunition and other associated tasks. An excerpt from a telegram sent to the Military Commission on the 12th of June 1900 supports this observation. Kruger sent the following to Neethling:

If there are detonators and fuel at your place, please send a sufficient quantity with the greatest speed by horse cart or wagon to Assistant Commandant General Chris Botha at Standerton or elsewhere for the purposes of blowing up the railway line and bridges and that the transport take place day and night because the articles are urgently required there. Ask the Station Master at your place perhaps he can help you get dynamite, etc...⁵⁶⁶

⁵⁶³ TAD, W.J. Leyds Archief, Volume 579, Deel 1, pp. 121-2; Volume 726, Deel A, No. 693, n.p.

⁵⁶⁴ TAD, W.J. Leyds Archief, Volume 579, Deel 1, pp. 113-4; Volume 726, Deel A, No. 242, n.p.

⁵⁶⁵ TAD, W.J. Leyds Archief, Volume 726, Deel A, No. 437, n.p.

⁵⁶⁶ TAD, W.J. Leyds Archief, Volume 579, Deel 3, pp. 571-2.

A telegram reached the Landdrost at Middelburg on the 13th of June 1900 from Kruger requesting that

A trolley with eight mules is being sent by rail at the earliest opportunity to transport dynamite to tr. Keep dynamite in readiness, will advise you when the trolley leaves.⁵⁶⁷

Even the smallest and almost seemingly irrelevant parts had to be coordinated and distributed as is evident in Kruger's telegram sent to L. Botha on the 25th of June 1900. It read as follows:

Please ask Major Wolmarans how many bolts are required for the platform for a Long Tom. Let him give you the numbers and the length etc. We have telegraphed to Lorenzo [sic] Marques for 140 beams 20 foot in length by 9 foot 3 inches...⁵⁶⁸

Kruger informed Assisting Commandant-General C. Botha on the 1st of July 1900 the following:

Besides 11 cases of dynamite, fuses and detonators sent to you earlier from Machadodorp, yesterday again 10 cases containing detonators and fuses were despatched from Belfast. Have instructed to send another ten or so cases of detonators and fuses.⁵⁶⁹

On the 26th of July 1900 the State Secretary F.W. Reitz received a telegram from Kruger regarding the supplying and safe transportation of ammunition. Kruger requested him to:

Deal in consultation with General [L.] Meyer, Mr. Burger, so that instructions can be given immediately to Military Commissioner to send tomorrow at the first opportunity if need be by special train, the ammunition requested by General [J.H. de la] Rey, namely 1000 rifles with as many cartridges as possible (smokeless). Adriaan Rothman will inform you where the wagons are to transport the ammunition and Commissioner Neethling will know which road will be the safest to follow. Ask him to clearly indicate this from one place to another on paper. I think that the road below Steenkampsberg along until the Cobalt mines will be best.⁵⁷⁰

⁵⁶⁷ TAD, W.J. Leyds Archief, Volume 579, Deel 3, p. 603.

⁵⁶⁸ TAD, W.J. Leyds Archief, Volume 579, Deel 5, p. 100; Volume 727, Deel G, n.p.

⁵⁶⁹ TAD, W.J. Leyds Archief, Volume 579, Deel 5, p. 1156.

⁵⁷⁰ TAD, W.J. Leyds Archief, Volume 729, Deel D, n.p.

On the same day Kruger sent news to General L. Meyer, suggesting to him as follows:

With a view to contingencies I think that it would be most necessary that a gun be sent if possible a large Maxim with crew and ammunition to the Commandant of the Guard at Komatipoort.⁵⁷¹

The next day, following Kruger's suggestion on the 26th, he instructed Meyer to: "Have one of the small Maxims be made ready immediately to be sent to Komatipoort."⁵⁷² In addition another plea from Kruger reached the Mining engineer at Avoca on the 29th of August 1900 regarding the safeguarding of Komatipoort. Kruger instructed him to send all the willing and armed burghers via the train "as reinforcements to guard the bridge".⁵⁷³ In a telegram sent by Kruger to S.W. Burger at Lydenburg on the 29th of August 1900 he requested him to send "... all provisions and ammunition ... away with the utmost speed". As the British were adamantly pushing further north in order to drive out the ZAR forces in this vicinity, Kruger also added that they should "...[B]e careful on your return journey since W[aterval] Onder is likely to be in enemy hands tomorrow".⁵⁷⁴

Kruger also played a role in the safe-guarding and management of the ZAR's natural and financial resources. As the threat of the British invasion into the ZAR became real, additional precautionary measures were taken in order to avoid resources falling into British hands. Moreover, the situation in the ZAR necessitated the correct management of Government funds in the providing and the buying of sufficient provisions before the British reached Pretoria. Therefore as is evident in Kruger's telegrams sent during this crisis period, the safe-guarding of the ZAR's coal, gold and money was essential. On the 27th of May 1900 Kruger for example sent a telegram to the Mining Engineer which read as follows:

Send immediately all your gold both reduced as well as unreduced to the Mint here. If necessary give the workers in the reduction works a few days' holiday, or otherwise, if you agree, retain sufficient unreduced ore to keep on the go for a few days and which can also, if matters become more serious, be sent here. In any case you must send up all the reduced gold immediately. If matters improve and become better then the unreduced gold can be sent back later.⁵⁷⁵

⁵⁷¹ TAD, W.J. Leyds Archief, Volume 729, Deel D, n.p.

⁵⁷² TAD, W.J. Leyds Archief, Volume 729, Deel E, n.p.

⁵⁷³ TAD, W.J. Leyds Archief, Volume 731, Deel G, n.p.

⁵⁷⁴ TAD, W.J. Leyds Archief, Volume 731, Deel G, n.p.

⁵⁷⁵ TAD, W.J. Leyds Archief, Volume 726, Deel B, No. 295, n.p.

Other requests regarding money and gold were also made on the 30th of May 1900. Kruger's telegrams to the Treasurer General and State Attorney J.C. Smuts respectively, read as follows:

I request that you come here immediately with all the gold and the money. Telegraph the time of your departure to me and reply to this.⁵⁷⁶

and

The Government deems it necessary that immediately all the available minted money from all banks except the Netherlands Bank and the National Bank be commandeered even if they would threaten to close their doors. A special train must be arranged to bring over the money under the supervision of the Treasurer General's office.⁵⁷⁷

The utilisation of government funds and the problems associated with it is also apparent in Kruger's telegraphic correspondence. On the 30th of May 1900 Kruger sent the following message via telegram to the Proviand [Provisions] Commission:

A permit is granted to Ackerman of Lorencio [sic] Marques to export £5000 in gold coins for the purchase of goods for the Government.⁵⁷⁸

Although the instruction was clear the execution thereof was not always as simple as is illustrated in a different telegram sent by Kruger to the Landdrost at Marthinus Wessel Stroom during the course of the next day. Kruger notified him as follows:

I was informed that the bank at your side is refusing to accept cheques drawn against the amount of money deposited in the Bank for the purchase of provisions by the Landdrost at Vrijheid to the amount of one thousand pounds st[erlin]g. You are therefore ordered to obtain the money by force and to hand it to the Ac[ctin]g Ass[istan]t General Chris Botha and to employ it for the benefit of the Commandos, if necessary.⁵⁷⁹

A similar matter was also firmly dealt with by Kruger in his telegram to the Landdrost at Ermelo, sent on the 6th of July 1900. Here he informed the Landdrost that the

⁵⁷⁶ TAD, W.J. Leyds Archief, Volume 579, Deel 1, p. 176.

⁵⁷⁷ TAD, W.J. Leyds Archief, Volume 579, Deel 1, p. 182.

⁵⁷⁸ TAD, W.J. Leyds Archief, Volume 579, Deel 1, p. 191.

⁵⁷⁹ TAD, W.J. Leyds Archief, Volume 726, Deel C, n.p.

Special Commissioner of Swaziland informs me that a Government cheque to the value of six thousand pounds was offered to the National Bank to be deposited there and against which the Special Commissioner was intending to draw for the payment of salaries of the officials and police in Swaziland, but the Bank informed him that the Bank would only accept the cheque for collection. Such action I regard as high treason. The amount of the cheque must therefore if need be removed from the Bank by force.⁵⁸⁰

The distribution and pay-out of money was also done in a meticulous fashion and the amount was in some cases clearly specified. In a telegram sent on the 15th of June 1900 it appears that Kruger informed Steyn how the money he requested will be sent through. The telegram reads as follows:

Your Honour's telegram of today refers. I can send Your Honour £6000 say six thousand pounds in cash. The balance I can make up in State notes. Tomorrow I will send Your Honour the first consignment of £50 000, if possible. Which way is the safest? The money that I will send you tomorrow, is calculated as follows: £6000 cash. 400 State notes at £1 each, 200 do. at £5 each, 100 do. at £10 each and 250 do. at £50 each and together making up an amount of £20 000 say twenty thousand pounds...⁵⁸¹

Where money was needed for commandos or officials Kruger also stepped in, making sure that they would be well provided for. The telegram he sent to the State Secretary F.W. Reitz on the 1st of July 1900 illustrates this observation:

Since the Heidelberg Commando will probably be cut off from the Commissariat I have a mind to grant that commando £1200, viz £300 in hard cash and £900 in government notes if possible. As far as possible, give them £5 and £1 notes. Please get the money ready so that it can be handed over to V.C. Meyer on his arrival.⁵⁸²

Also on the 29th of August 1900 Kruger sent a telegram to the Mining engineer at Avoca informing him *inter alia* that "...The money requested to work the mine will be sent to you with De Villiers. Please send all the refined gold here without delay".⁵⁸³

⁵⁸⁰ TAD, W.J. Leyds Archief, Volume 579, Deel 2, pp. 411-2.

⁵⁸¹ TAD, W.J. Leyds Archief, Volume 579, Deel 4, pp. 743-4; Volume 727, Deel B, n.p.

⁵⁸² TAD, W.J. Leyds Archief, Volume 728, Deel A, n.p.

⁵⁸³ TAD, W.J. Leyds Archief, Volume 731, Deel G, n.p.

In addition to the abovementioned, Kruger also had a part to play in the communications regarding the ZAR's coal supply. In a telegram sent by Kruger to Steinnitz, Kruger requested him to gather coal in order to build up reserves for the country. The telegram reads as follows:

I am afraid that if the enemy manages to penetrate into Middelburg that we will be then without coal and that the railway will then no longer be able to function. I therefore think that it is essential that now, while there is still time, a good supply of coal must be collected at Waterval Onder so that we will always still have that supply if we can no longer reach the coal mines. Reply s.v.p. [sic].⁵⁸⁴

Another telegram was sent by Kruger on the 26th of July 1900 to the "Resident Vrederegter" where Kruger *inter alia* also requested him to "If there is coal at the mine, it must be hastily sent on before the enemy gets close".⁵⁸⁵

As has been illustrated, Kruger's vantage point also played a significant role here as this enabled him to be constantly informed regarding all aspects and operations taking place at any time during the War. As a result, he was able to play an important role in the managing and coordination of a surprising number of different types of provisions. His involvement as pointed out extended beyond the logistics of provisions, as he ensured the safe keeping of even money, gold and coal. In this chapter Kruger's "behind-the-scenes" endeavours are particularly emphasised. It also points to his willingness to be of assistance and further augments the portrayal of Kruger as a patriotic leader, even though at times as he lead from "behind-the-scenes". In addition to his portrayal as military leader, Kruger's involvement in the distribution of provisions as well as his concern for the wellbeing and safety of the burghers in War points to a different side of Kruger as empathetic and also of that of a true "volks vader" (father of the nation) as he directs and advises his generals.

⁵⁸⁴ TAD, W.J. Leyds Archief, Volume 579, Deel 3, pp. 562-3.

⁵⁸⁵ TAD, W.J. Leyds Archief, Volume 729, Deel D, n.p.

CHAPTER 5

A gentler Kruger?

Kruger's War-time telegraphic correspondence does not only focus on strategic military aspects of the War, but also reflects on other contributions he made which reveal a gentler side of Kruger's character. This portrayal is in stark contrast to the nationalistic and arrogant man he is oftentimes portrayed as. In this chapter the War telegrams with a less "militaristic" orientation will be focused on whilst it will endeavour to illustrate how Kruger is portrayed through the lens of these telegrams. Kruger's correspondence in this regard has been categorised into the following two broad themes namely: Kruger's religious encouragement and humanity and Kruger and the question of peace.

5.1 Kruger: religious and empathy

As indicated in chapter 2 Kruger's life was steeped in deep religious convictions – both in terms of his upbringing and his own personal commitment. Kruger was renowned as a man of remarkable faith and his upbringing centred on Christian beliefs which were also extended to the battlefield.

In his monograph, entitled *The Great Anglo Boer War*, the military historian B. Farwell alludes to this strong religious conviction, by relating the following: "Kruger sent a telegram, which was read aloud, adjuring them to fight on in the name of the Lord".⁵⁸⁶ In another work on the South African War written by state archivist and historian J. H. Breytenbach, Farwell's observation is reiterated. According to Breytenbach, Kruger often sent specific telegrams of encouragement during the War, with a religious overtone, to the Commandant-Generals with the instruction that they had to be read out aloud to the burghers. One particular telegram he referred to was sent on the 29th of May 1900, just days before Pretoria was invaded.⁵⁸⁷ This telegram also serves as an example of what some of Kruger's telegrams of encouragement entailed and how lengthy they were even though telegrams were supposed to communicate information fast and concisely - particularly in a time of war. It reads:

Your telegram re yesterday's battle and (read: I) am very thankful to see that you and your burghers fought so gallantly for our just cause. I am also very thankful to learn that so few from our side were killed and wounded among so many thousands, but I regret that you did not mention in the same telegram

⁵⁸⁶ B. Farwell, *The great Boer War*, Ware, Wordsworth Editions, 1999, p. 289.

⁵⁸⁷ J.H. Breytenbach, *Die Geskiedenis van die Tweede Vryheidsoorlog in Suid-Afrika 1899-1902*, Deel V, Staatsdrukker, Pretoria, 1983, p. 536.

how many on the enemy's side were killed and wounded, even if it was only an estimate. Brother, stand fast and fight in the name of the Lord. Those who truly believe in Christ and fight in His name and fall by the sword become a sacrifice on the altar to the glory of the everlasting church. See that we understand this matter. A point in time is coming when Christians will be chastened and tried, just as gold is tempered by the fire and this is the legitimate battle; those who persevere to gain the throne; but those who turn aside from the faith and fall into unbelief immediately become cowardly and turn their backs on the enemy and cause havoc for themselves as well as for the country. Brother, do not waver and read this out to the officers and burghers so that they do not waver but trust in the Lord. Nothing happens unless the Lord allows it to, because He holds everything in his hand. Victory and the sword are in his hand. The Beast has obtained the power to persecute the Christians in both the outward and the inward calling, and he gives the victory to those who persevere in him and believe in him and the Beast which has obtained the power will advance swiftly until the Lord says "so far and no farther" and then matters will swiftly be reversed. It is my firm belief on the basis of God's word that the day of mercy is not far off. The Lord always comes unexpectedly and suddenly, as when Israel wanted to leave and Pharaoh did not want to allow this, all the first born died suddenly and Israel was able to depart. When Korah, Nathan (read: Dathan) and Ab[i]ram were constantly rebellious towards Moses the Lord came unexpectedly and rent the earth so that it swallowed them. When Christ was crucified the enemy boasted and thought that they were now wholly victorious and all the children of the Lord mourned. Then God came unexpectedly on the third day and the Lord rose from the dead and the children of God were comforted and strengthened. And it is the same God and so He will also descend rapidly from the glorious church state at a point in time to save his children. He is still the same God who when the tempest and the waves of the sea were raging, unexpectedly stilled the storm and the wind. Therefore let us not grumble against his governance but still persevere and humble ourselves in the dust before his countenance and He will come and grant us deliverance and salvation. Read this to the officers and burghers wherever there is an opportunity.⁵⁸⁸

⁵⁸⁸ See J.H. Breytenbach, *Die Geskiedenis van die Tweede Vryheidsoorlog in Suid-Afrika 1899-1902*, Deel V, Staatsdrukker, Pretoria, 1983, pp. 536-537.

As is evident in the example above, one of the most distinguishing characteristics of most of Kruger's telegrams is their almost overbearing religious tone. For the most part, Kruger's religious steadfastness was thus also extended to his messages of encouragement for the burghers in the time of war as well as his advice regarding the continuation (or not) thereof.

His primary aim for the inclusion of religious texts, imagery and other references in his telegraphic correspondence was thus integral to his frame of reference. It appears to be mostly for the sake of encouragement and on occasion also reproach. As his faith was his anchor, it was very apparent during difficult times as this kept him positive. It is probable that he wanted to share this sentiment with the burghers, hoping that his encouraging spiritual words would keep them determined to persist in the battle. Moreover, as a considerable percentage of the burghers on commando were also Christians, Kruger's messages would have found resonance and possibly have provided them with a renewed sense of determinism and justification.⁵⁸⁹ Pretorius also points to this in his work on the South African War claiming that a high proportion of the burghers on commando did indeed appear to have been religiously-orientated and indicates that some of the influential individuals shared the same religious convictions as Kruger.⁵⁹⁰ In this sense it is all the more plausible that Kruger's messages found resonance with at least some if not most of the burghers and generals.

Given that Kruger also occasionally preached in the Nederduitse Kerk,⁵⁹¹ he also "spoke" from a position of "authority" and his concerns or messages were thus deemed authoritative. The mere observation that Kruger sent messages of encouragement - be this religious or not - unveils a "gentler" more empathetic side of his character. His concern for and support given by means of these messages underlines his humaneness and also endorses the portrayal of Kruger as the "father of the nation" who both encourages and advises. This contradicts the literature that generally portrays him as rather more obdurate and impersonal. In for example Milner's words he was described as a "snuffy mendacious savage,"⁵⁹² the exact opposite of an encouraging or caring president. The renowned author J.A. Hobson also sketched Kruger as an "old seventeenth-century countryman" with "belated politics and stern Old Testament direction".⁵⁹³ Although the reference made to Kruger's religious beliefs is in this instance in essence to criticise him, it does nevertheless

⁵⁸⁹ According to See J.S. Marais, Kruger made use of the Bible not only as part of his "statecraft" but also to influence or move both burgher and the Volksraad. See J.S. Marais, *The Fall of Kruger's Republic*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1961, p. 8.

⁵⁹⁰ F. Pretorius, *Kommandolewe tydens die Anglo-Boereoorlog, 1899-1902*, Human & Rousseau, Kaapstad, 1999, pp. 192-193, 198-99.

⁵⁹¹ J.S. Marais, *The Fall of Kruger's Republic*, p. 7.

⁵⁹² H. Giliomee, *Die Afrikaners: 'n biografie*, Tafelberg, Kaapstad, 2004, p. 204.

⁵⁹³ J.A. Hobson, *The war in South Africa: its causes and effects*, J. Nisbet, London, p. 25.

underline the importance religion played in Kruger's life. In addition, Hobson's observation regarding Kruger's firm beliefs rings true when considering the content of many of his telegraphic messages. What follows are quoted excerpts from telegrams or in some cases complete telegrams sent by Kruger within the period concerned illustrating this gentler religious demeanour.

On the 20th of May 1900, almost a week before Kruger and the ZAR government left Pretoria due to the fast-approaching British troops, Kruger sent a telegram of encouragement to General J.H. de la Rey who was one of the War's most renowned and hardiest of Generals.⁵⁹⁴ Thus if Kruger was of the opinion that De la Rey needed encouragement, this could have been a definite indication that the Boer offensive was in trouble. An excerpt from this telegram reads as follows:

...remain steadfast however bad things may be for the Lord will give succour in His time. Do read my address to the Volksraad out to the burghers and officers several times so that they can hear and see how just our cause is and how unfairly England deals with us. From that you will see how the Beast has procured the power to persecute the Christians so that we can become humble and each one for himself confess his sins before the Lord. As soon as this humiliation of the people occurs the Lord will say up so far and no further and peace will be there. I stand firm in this belief and remain full of hope and expect the Lord's succour soon.⁵⁹⁵

This telegram reflects in essence a few of the religious beliefs of Kruger which is evident in other telegraphic correspondence. The first belief that is apparent is that God will provide the burghers with support and deliverance at the appropriate time. An analogy which later would equate them with God's chosen people.

The second is that Kruger wanted to justify their position in a manner that appeared to be "righteous". If the cause of the War was not clear, burghers would not be motivated to continue in the struggle. Moreover making use of religious concepts, the War appeared to be fundamentally or religiously "sound" or justified. This in turn was intended to make the burghers "question less and do more". As in the case of the telegram of 29 May quoted

⁵⁹⁴ F. Pretorius points out that the renowned Scottish writer A.C. Doyle had sketched the General in quite flattering terms and saw him as "a bold fighter and master tactician, who...usually fell like a thunderbolt on the moving British columns and scored signal successes, but who, after a victory, was the soul of chivalry towards his defeated opponents". Quoted from J. Meintjies, *De la Rey: Lion of the West*, p. 30, Hugh Keartland Publishers, Johannesburg, 1966 in F. Pretorius, *Historical dictionary of the Anglo-Boer War*, Scarecrow Press, Lanham, 2009, p. 116.

⁵⁹⁵ Transvaal Archive Depot, Pretoria (TAD), W.J. Leyds Archief, Volume 578, Deel 5, pp. 1329-32; Volume 725, Deel C, No. 144, n.p.

above, Kruger used imagery from the book of Revelation to fuel this encouragement. Consequently, Britain is construed as being the “Beast” that is persecuting the Christians, the Boers. By referring to the two opponents in such a manner, Kruger in a way claims God and his grace and support for the Republics and in a sense thus emphasises that their cause is more “just” and religiously founded if not sanctified. This rationale is questionable, however what is of relevance here is Kruger’s adamant religious beliefs.

The third conviction of Kruger in this telegram is that the burghers must be “humble” and submit themselves so that they will be on the right footing with God so that God can witness their humility and be gracious towards them in war and in death. Again, the religious encouragement is evident.

The mere sending of telegrams to encourage the burghers is in itself a considerate and caring gesture on the part of Kruger. They were most likely intended to give the burghers a sense of common purpose and equipped them with their faith in this time of War. What is also evident in the forthcoming excerpts from other telegrams in this chapter is that in the majority of the telegrams with a religious component, an underlying theme of light and darkness or right or wrong is ever present. This is illustrated through the choice of words particularly with reference to the British and Boers in negative and positive terms respectively. The British are consequently portrayed as “the Beast” and as those who “persecute the Christians” whilst they serve as an example to the Boers of how to “drift” away from God. Hence, the Boers are zealously implored by Kruger to keep the faith and to “humble” themselves in order to receive “peace” and “hope” from God.

Similar telegrams, to the abovementioned, were sent by Kruger on the 1st and 2nd of June 1900 to C.E. Fourie and General C. Botha respectively. From the end of May 1900 the Boer morale was at an all-time low as an increasing number of burghers deserted the cause. In order to keep up the fighting spirit of the Boers, Kruger’s encouragement in this period proved to be essential. The telegram of the 1st read as follows:

I say to you again that the Lord’s blessing rests on obedience to our supervisors. Have you not seen how through obedience a large number of the enemy are defeated by a small number of our people. But if there is discord amongst a large force of our people then they still flee before the enemy. Do not weaken in the faith but fight in the name of the Lord and He will in His time help us and give us the victory. Note that we are now living at a point in time that God has given the Beast the power to persecute Christians and that we are in this way purified in our faith and tested as gold in the fire so that we persist in obedience and to fight in the faith. Those who remain obedient and fight in the name of the

Lord to them God will say “up to here and no further”. I firmly believe that the time of mercy is not far off. Read this out to your fellow officers and burghers where you have the opportunity to do so.⁵⁹⁶

In a shorter telegram sent to General C. Botha sent on the 2nd of June 1900, Kruger’s encouragement is also evident:

Brothers, do keep up your courage (our) entire country is arising and leaving their families behind as was done in the Orange Free State. And these burghers are full of courage to fight for our country to the end. These reports I am receiving from everywhere. God will aid us.⁵⁹⁷

It can be observed that Kruger encourages and in some cases “reproaches” to encourage as is seen in the first telegram: “I say to you again that the Lord’s blessing rests on obedience to our supervisors” and he then continues to give them an example to validate his statement to indicate the negative consequences of disobedience: “no victory or mercy”. In addition, the link between obedience and victory is made clear in this telegram. It appears that Kruger interpreted the lack of faith as a consequence of less victories on the battlefield. This is also then why he, in the majority of his telegrams, points to the importance of the burghers’ faith in God and the cause in order to attain victory both on a spiritual level as well as in battle. The underlying theme of light and darkness or righteousness versus wickedness is yet again evident. The words Kruger uses to portray the positive outcome of fighting in the name of the Lord and being obedient such as “blessing”, “victory”, “mercy” is in stark contrast to the negative words he associates with disobedience, a lack of faith and the enemy such as “discord”, “weaken”, “Beast”, “persecute”. This persistent juxtapositioning of negative and positive references as regards Britain and the ZAR as “wicked” or “righteous” respectively, in a sense becomes Kruger’s obsession, if not his reality.

Kruger also referred to positive outcomes in his telegrams to give the burghers a renewed sense of purpose and instigate hope. For example, when he mentions in the first telegram that even though the Beast has been given the power to persecute the Christians and that they are “in this way purified in our faith and tested as gold in the fire”, that God, who is on their side, will deliver them from the hands of the enemy when He sees fit. He also indicates that he believes that God will not hold out on them for much longer. This pattern is also seen in the second telegram where he mentioned that the burghers are fighting with

⁵⁹⁶ TAD, W.J. Leyds Archief, Volume 579, Deel 2, pp. 275-81.

⁵⁹⁷ TAD, W.J. Leyds Archief, Volume 726, Deel D, n.p.; Volume 579, Deel 2, p. 303.

courage in the ZAR and that the numbers are again increasing and so God will also “aid” them. Kruger thus concludes on a more positive note in both these telegrams. His motivation in this regard could have been to counter the dire circumstances of the War by sharing and spreading positive news, hope and reassurance.

Kruger’s religious encouragement also reached the Commandant-General L. Botha at Balmoral on the 19th of June 1900. In this telegram Kruger underlines the correlation between the burghers’ faith and victory in “battle”. It can be argued that this reference could perhaps be on a realistic and a spiritual level. Nonetheless, Kruger stresses the importance of true faith and obedience and that if these are present it will assist them in their struggle. His message is effectively communicated also through the utilisation of words such as: “persist”, “trust”, “fight” and “miracle” which all have been used to align with a positive outcome. His encouragement, as in the case of some of the previous quoted telegrams, has an element of admonishment. The view of Kruger as a concerned “parent” who provides council for the good of his children comes to the fore when considering his method of encouragement. The idea of a “volks vader” is more obviously apparent here. An excerpt of this telegram reads as follows:

...Further I trust that my brothers will not be unheard but that they should persist and trust in the Lord and fight in His name as victory does not depend on superior forces but on the will of the Lord. I am convinced that he who fights in His name will be victorious as nothing can happen if He does not will it. The Lord purifies Christendom to test who will stand up in His name and who will not. The Lord knows His time and in His own time He will turn matters around and tell the Beast up to here and no further. The Lord will not relinquish His work once started and it was He who gave us the miracle to make us independent...⁵⁹⁸

Kruger moreover saw to it that his messages reached the majority of the burghers on commando. He was thus concerned about both the command as well as the lower ranks and saw all of them as in need of encouragement. This was essential within this specific period during the War where an increasing number of burghers abandoned the cause. It also points to his strategically-motivated use of the telegraph as a means to encourage and to unite across a vast terrain. An example of this was his message sent to the Landdrost of Standerton on the 25th of June 1900:

⁵⁹⁸ TAD, W.J. Leyds Archief, Volume 727, Deel D, n.p.

...I am also sending you a copy of my telegram of encouragement and have the same read out to all the burghers of Waterval Ward. Read out 1 Timothy 4 verse one where the Lord says and also has predicted that in the last times some will renounce the faith to believe in the Lord and will turn to seductive spirits. Do not fail in your faith because of this for the faith of the people of Christ purified for those who remain standing upright and who will enter a glorious state of the church of a thousand years here upon earth. Let this telegram also be read out by the men called up to all the burghers...⁵⁹⁹

Moreover, it appears that Kruger is warning the burghers that in hardship people tend to turn away from God and consequently their motives become sinister as he refers to “seductive spirits”. In order to counter this, the only answer is to “remain standing upright” so that they will be awarded with glory. The sinister motives, evils and hardships are therefore contrasted with the light that is associated with the “state of glory” and honour that will be bestowed upon them if they persist in the “good” fight. Consequently, the image of darkness and light, good and evil is reiterated. In a different telegram sent to both Commandant-General L. Botha and General C. Botha on the 18th of August 1900 Kruger asked the generals to also encourage the burghers on commando. This again signifies that it was important for him to be able to penetrate all the levels of command so that everyone would be motivated and inspired. In his telegram he asks:

...Keep up courage and encourage them that they must keep up the courage and trust in the Lord. Let them remark that when the Lord rejects a nation then he makes its sword blunt, but see, our sword is still sharp. See how our people ([General J.H. de] la Rey and Liebenberg) are doing good work. They have again killed hundreds of the enemy while very few of ours have fallen in battle. The great force of Roberts is now here before us but we are ready to attempt to defeat him with God’s help...See the Lord is testing His people and will not permit the suffering to go further than we can bear for all is in God’s word and the history that the time of mercy is not far removed...⁶⁰⁰

Even President Steyn from the Free State was encouraged by Kruger from time to time. He received a telegram along similar lines on the 1st of July 1900:

Let us remark the government of the Lord that he still blesses our weapons many times. Where ten fall on our side, hundred die on their side. So that there

⁵⁹⁹ TAD, W.J. Leyds Archief, Volume 727, Deel G, n.p.

⁶⁰⁰ TAD, W.J. Leyds Archief, Volume 731, Deel A, n.p.

can be no doubt that the Lord is with us but that the Lord purifies us to test whoever firmly believes in God and whoever does not. It is clear that the enemy is being destroyed in the words of David as raked by the fire ...We have no reason to grumble that the Lord is punishing us in order to purify us. Nothing can happen without His will. He is our Commander in Chief...⁶⁰¹

It is apparent that amidst this crisis period Kruger appears to be able to stay positive. This is also apparent in the telegram above where Kruger indicated that they should not “grumble” as God is with them and through War and circumstance they are thus purified. This is one theme that is ever-present in Kruger’s messages of encouragement: the premise that God is testing them by means of War and that they should repent when necessary and continue to fight the “good” fight in the name of the Lord. Apart from God’s testing them, Kruger also indicates how faithful God has been in the telegram sent to President Steyn as well as the previous telegram sent on the 18th of August 1900. He illustrates this by making reference to God’s grace in battle and points to this as their “sword” was “still sharp”; that God “blesses” their “weapons” and that the enemy was “raked by the fire” as, according to Kruger, the small number of ZAR casualties indicated.

Kruger’s faith in God and belief that God would deliver them from the “Beast” is further made apparent in his mention of a measure or percentage of time given to the Beast to persecute the Christians before God would step in. This is also why, to Kruger, the “good fight” within the hardship appears to be so important. This is because deliverance could come at any minute. This belief is also illustrated in the following telegram of encouragement sent on the 14th June 1900:

...I am convinced that the Lord has given the Beast the power to test the Christians in order to see who will stand firm in the faith and who will not and that when the measure of the Beast has been filled the Lord will then say up to here and no further for He is the Commander in Chief of all and nothing can happen without His will, and the sword and the victory are only in His hand and He gives the victory to those who stand firm in the faith and fight in His name.⁶⁰²

His encouragement continued. On the 18th of August 1900 Kruger sent a telegram to General C. Botha to remind him to:

⁶⁰¹ TAD, W.J. Leyds Archief, Volume 728, Deel A, n.p.

⁶⁰² TAD, W.J. Leyds Archief, Volume 727, Deel A, n.p.

...Keep up courage and encourage them that they must keep up the courage and trust in the Lord...See, the Lord is testing His people and will not permit the suffering to go further than we can bear for all is in His hands. Nothing can happen without his permitting it...⁶⁰³

In addition to the abovementioned, Kruger's encouragement also included references made to Bible texts and specific verses applicable to the current situation. Given Kruger's background this purposeful inclusion would have been genuine but one could also argue it was strategic. Not only did Bible texts give authority to his statements but also in some cases could invoke a sense of spiritual urgency and obedience. In his telegram sent to the Landdrost of Standerton and Commandant Boshoff on the 2nd of July 1900 this becomes apparent:

...Do not lose courage because of our burghers there want to lay down arms. The Apostle has predicted this to us. See Timothy, four verse one, but there will be a time that some shall depart from the faith and that these things shall be. See also Revelation 14 verses 9 and 10. And a third angel followed Him saying with loud voice: If any man worship the Beast and his image and received his mark in his forehead or on his hand, the same shall drink of the wrath of God which has been poured unmixed in the ...⁶⁰⁴ wrath and he shall be punished with fire and sulphur before the Holy Angels and before the Lamb. No, no brothers, do not lose faith and in so doing fall away from the Lord but remain faithful and fight in the faith of the Lord, and He will surely be with us.⁶⁰⁵

On the 25th of June 1900 the theme of "renouncing" faith was addressed by Kruger in his telegram sent to the Landdrost of Standerton. He does however clearly point to the consequences thereof in the telegram above. The "aid" given by God and positive association made in the case of being faithful, is austere contrasted with the words defining the implications of being unfaithful. Kruger points to these terrifying consequences as "drink of the wrath of God" and "punished with fire". He thus warns the burghers, in this instance, that living without faith has extremely dire consequences religiously as well as in War.

Two occasions where Kruger's role of encouragement is particularly evident is in the telegraphic discussions [also referred to as circular dispatches] he had with the generals and officers on the 20th of June 1900 and 24th of July 1900 respectively. A telegraphic

⁶⁰³ TAD, W.J. Leyds Archief, Volume 731, Deel A, n.p.

⁶⁰⁴ Original text could not be deciphered.

⁶⁰⁵ TAD, W.J. Leyds Archief, Volume 579, Deel 6, pp. 1264-7.

discussion was similar to the sending of general telegrams however the flow of the messages from all the correspondents was more in a “discussion-format” and could be received without much delay as the line was kept open. It also allowed for more extensive discussion as the lines are kept open in order to deliver messages timeously. In this case, the length of these discussions could be much longer. Given the chance, as will be witnessed in the discussion below, Kruger did not hesitate to make use of this opportunity to encourage at length. The content of the message in addition, points to Kruger’s ability to communicate well and voice his concerns effectively as a leader. Moreover, encouragement from the President would be essential during a time such as this when the forces of the ZAR were falling apart. This is apparent in the telegraphic discussion⁶⁰⁶ between Kruger and the Commandant-General, generals and officers on the 20th of June 1900. As has been evident in the previous excerpts from telegrams, Kruger makes use of certain “standard” religious beliefs and phrases as part of his messages of encouragement.

In the first section of this telegraphic discussion Kruger presses the officers and generals to not fail in their faith in God and to not lose courage to fight in His name as nothing happens without the will of God. Therefore, he also subsequently comes to the inference that even victory in battle is in God’s hand and without faith they will not be victorious - a belief that was observed in his previous telegrams. This section reads as follows:

Flinch not and fall not into unbelief, for the time is at hand when God’s people shall be tried in the fire. And the Beast shall have power to persecute Christ, and those who fall from faith and their Church will know Him not, nor shall they be allowed to enter the Kingdom of Heaven. But those who are true to the faith and fight in the name of the Lord, wearing their glorious crown of victory, they shall be received in the church of a thousand years and enter into glory everlasting. Brothers, I beseech you abandon not your faith, but hold fast by it, and so go forth and fight in the name of the Lord. Look well into your hearts. If cowardice hiding there whispers to you, Fly, you are blasphemers, for listening to the Tempter you deny your God, your faith is dead. Believe as you would be saved that nothing happens here below without the will of God. Victory and the sword are in His hands and He gives both to those who fight in His name.⁶⁰⁷

A further analysis shows how negative his portrayal and inferences are if you “flinch” from fighting. The words used to refer to those who might consider withdrawing from War

⁶⁰⁶ Only Kruger’s telegraphic correspondence as part of this telegraphic discussion is related here. Also for the purposes of this study this telegraphic discussion will be divided into sections in order to make analysis possible.

⁶⁰⁷ TAD, W.J. Leyds Archief, Volume 579, Deel 4, pp. 357-72 ; Volume 727, Deel D, n.p.

namely, “tried in fire”, “blasphemers”, “cowardice” and “dead” are all associated with doom. These words of “doom” are starkly contrasted with the portrayal of those who continue to fight (literally) in the name of God: “true”, “glorious crown of victory” and “glory everlasting”.

In the second section of this telegraphic discussion an urgency is felt as Kruger adamantly reminds the officers of the deliverance, power and faithfulness of God in the past. By relating certain examples of God stepping in to people’s circumstance, he is not only qualifying what he said in the previous section, but through the mention of these examples he is also effectively encouraging in an especially troubling time. The second section of Kruger’s message is as follows:

Is not our God the same God Who lead Israel under the power of His miracles out of the land of Pharaoh? Did He not lead them safely through the Red Sea? Did He not hide them in the thick cloud which was darkness to the enemy, but light to His children; for the column of cloud was built upon the word of the Lord, and, if we trust Him as they trusted Him, it shall be our guide also through the darkness, leading our feet safely to the Light. But he who ceases to believe the word of the Lord shall perish in the dark prison of his unbelief. Is not our God the same God Who made water flow from a rock, refreshing all Israel? Was He not the Father of those three youths who chose death rather than deny Him? He is the same God Who guarded Daniel in the lion’s den. The lions harmed him not, but when the King commanded that Daniel’s persecutors should be thrown into the den, the lions devoured them. Is He not the same God Who walked upon the waves of the sea, when He commanded Peter to come to Him, did not Peter, in his faith, obey? But, when the strength of his faith left him and he became afraid of the water, he sank, and the Lord took his hand and saved him and admonished him for want of faith. Is He not our Lord to-day [sic], the same Lord Who, when the storm raged, laid silence upon the waves? Is He not the same Lord our Saviour Who said to His children, “Fear not, be strong of heart, I will not forsake you, for you believe in My Father and in Me. And He prophesied war and judgements of war that we might not be affrighted; for these things must be.⁶⁰⁸

Kruger further qualifies his statements made above by also pointing to God as Saviour in order to place more emphasis on God’s power to save as well as His grace towards those who are faithful. As soon as faith is however lost, God will not lead those who are

⁶⁰⁸ TAD, W.J. Leyds Archief, Volume 579, Deel 4, pp. 357-72; Volume 727, Deel D, n.p.

unbelievers to the “light” but they will rather experience the “dark prison of unbelief” and like Peter on the water will sink because of their lack of faith in God. Here too the unbeliever is doomed and sketched negatively by Kruger as opposed to the believer whom will be lead “safely to the light”.

Kruger further selected very specific examples as part of his message of encouragement, as illustrated in for example his reference made to Gideon in battle. By using these examples, he could most probably encourage the burghers more effectively in the context of their current circumstance. In addition Kruger made use of words relating to battle and war for example, “telling them to fight the good fight” and “strengthened them in battle” to carry his message across more compellingly. He shared the following with the officers and burghers:

Is not our Saviour the same Saviour Who took upon Himself death and Who rose the third day, remembering for forty days longer among mankind although the world saw Him not? But they saw Him when He ascended into Heaven before their eyes, telling them to fight the good fight and He would come again. And this same God our Lord and Saviour, Who has brought us here from our distant home and given us our liberty and performed miracles on our behalf, dare we doubt that He Who commenced this work will finish it? No, what He raised up He will not allow to fall to the ground. I repeat, He is the same God Who helped Gideon and his three hundred warriors, Who led and strengthened them in battle in Whose Hand lies every victory. Dear brothers, dear brothers, I beseech you, lose not your faith.⁶⁰⁹

In the next section Kruger recedes from solely religious talk and aligns his message with the ZAR’s current circumstances in the War. Not only does he admonish them but he also reminds the officers and generals that there is strength in unity; that they must persevere whatever the cost and not be easily distracted by bad news or twisted truths. He elaborates on the point of unity and selfishness which he is of the opinion leads to “confusion” and has a “bad” outcome. The selfish behaviour of the burghers is in contrast with the “soldier”-like characteristics Kruger wishes them to exhibit which is to be “courageous”, “firm”, “obedient”, “loyal”. Moreover, he continues further by sharing his belief that God is on their side which he overtly indicates as follows: ‘But the Lord says, “This people shall exist”’. Also, as will be evident, Kruger refers to God as their “Commander-in-Chief”, which is another war-like association. Following these remarks, he concludes with a final call on the

⁶⁰⁹ TAD, W.J. Leyds Archief, Volume 579, Deel 4, pp. 357-72 and Volume 727, Deel D, n.p.

officers and generals to always be faithful, which appears to be an earnest request as he speaks of them as “Dear brothers”. Kruger ends off his discussion with two instructions. Firstly, to read the applicable Bible verse he mentioned and also to read out this message to all the burghers on commando. The last section reads as follows:

Depend each one upon himself and fight in the name of the Lord. I am told that every one wishes to go to his own district, in order to fight these. That will cause confusion, and the result will be bad or at least without value. Let everybody fight where he happens to be, under whatever officer he finds himself, be courageous, firm, obedient and loyal, for that means victory. Observe the reports of our Commission from Europe. Observe the proclamation of Lord Roberts in the Orange Free State, and you will see that it is nothing but a decoy-bird. According to Psalm 83, the enemies of old said that the people shall not exist in Christ’s Kingdoms. Salisbury and Chamberlain stand convicted by their own words “They shall not exist”. But the Lord says, “This people shall exist”, and Christ is our Commander-in-Chief, Who leads us with His word. Dear brothers, once more I pray you, let us not fall from faith, but follow His commands. He often leads his children through the barren desert, where it seems as if they could never get through. But if we will only trust Him, I assure you He will be our guide. He who trusts in God’s guidance is under the protection of the King of Kings and safe through the darkest night. His word is truth everlasting. See Psalm 92.

Let this be read to all officers and burghers, for our present suffering are nothing compared with everlasting glory. Let us obey our Saviour.⁶¹⁰

The second telegraphic discussion of 24 July 1900 correlates with aspects mentioned in the previous telegraphic discussion. Kruger for example first refers to the disheartening spirit amid the burghers and calls it the “spirit of unbelief”.⁶¹¹ He goes further and refers to the effect of this “disheartening spirit” and defines its effect or consequence similar to that of a “roaring lion” walking about which causes destruction wherever it goes. The reference made to the lion, in addition, can also be seen as reference made to the devil and his

⁶¹⁰ TAD, W.J. Leyds Archief, Volume 579, Deel 4, pp. 357-72 and Volume 727, Deel D, n.p.

⁶¹¹ At this time the Republic was experiencing a particular troublesome time as a lot of the burghers have already deserted the cause and moreover, the ZAR forces had been pushed further eastward and were constantly retiring in the face of the British advance.

harmful tendencies.⁶¹² It is therefore all the more understanding why Kruger, would advise against this and encourage them to not lose heart. The excerpt reads as follows:

I see by your report and many other reports that the spirit of unbelief walketh about like a roaring lion seeking to make our men lose heart.⁶¹³

Following this warning Kruger then underlined the importance of attacking the enemy when the opportunity exists. In addition to hopefully causing more enemy casualties, this also stands as inspiration to the other burghers on commando instead of propagating more misfortune:

Brothers, you must understand, when you let the enemy pass you and you begin to hesitate whether you shall attack him or not, you drive the others who still remain behind; in the whole country, wherever they hear this, to hesitate and doubt in their turn; but, when you do your duty and attack him wherever he shows himself, then you inspire our men who remain on the farms in the Republic and who hear this with courage to help in the fighting, though they and we are too but few.⁶¹⁴

As mentioned before Kruger believed that victory was a case of faith, a belief that is reiterated in the next quoted sentence and numerous times elsewhere:

For the victory is not in the hand of the greater force, but in the hand of the Lord, and the Lord gives it to them who fight in His name, however few they may be.⁶¹⁵

Kruger then continues with the idea of victory but also links his religious talk to that of actual “victories” in the War, where in his opinion, God has been on their side time and again as has been indicated in previous telegrams. The implication of him mentioning this appears that Kruger wants the burghers to acknowledge that they have had “God given” victories. By doing so, he is not only uplifting their spirits but he is also emphasising the need for them to seek an almighty God who performs miracles in the midst of War. He relates:

Listen to the words of the Lord: “When He forsakes the people, He blunts its sword and does not bless it”; and see, we are convinced of that, that the Lord has not blunted our sword, but, on the contrary, has blessed it wonderfully

⁶¹² See for example the Bible verse 1 Peter, chapter 5 verse 8 where the Devil is likened to a roaring lion.

⁶¹³ TAD, W.J. Leyds Archief, Volume 734, p. 70; S.J.P. Kruger, *Memoirs*, Volume II, pp. 467-71.

⁶¹⁴ TAD, W.J. Leyds Archief, Volume 734, p. 70; S.J.P. Kruger, *Memoirs*, Volume II, pp. 467-71.

⁶¹⁵ TAD, W.J. Leyds Archief, Volume 734, p. 70; S.J.P. Kruger, *Memoirs*, Volume II, pp. 467-71.

against the enemy. Wherever the enemy attacks us and fires thousands and thousands of shots at the few of us, our few shots hit many more men than do his of ours. Is it not the spirit of unbelief that hovers through the air, to bring us to doubt and thus to make us guilty before the Lord and to let us doubt that all is within the power of the Lord? And has it not yet become evident to you that, as I said in my former sentence, we live in a time when we are being tried by faith?⁶¹⁶

In the next section of the telegraphic discussion Kruger continues with quotations from the Bible which he selected from various books, a few of which he tends to make particular use of (see for example Timothy, Revelation, Matthew and Psalms). He does this, it appears, to not only encourage the burghers but to additionally emphasise his own faith as he seems to be leading by example, thereby hoping that his faith would give the burghers hope and strengthen their faith both in the Lord and in the cause. By making use of biblical verses he underlines God's character and grace given to those who trust in Him, making Kruger's appeals to the burghers all the more "religiously" justified and significant in this time of War. Kruger continues:

He who stands firm in the Lord can say, with the Apostle Paul and Timothy: "Be not discouraged when you see blasphemers, for some must fall away". And the Lord Jesus Himself says, in Matthew XXIV., That there shall be wars and rumours of wars: "But see that ye be not troubled, for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet". Remember 1 Peter V. verses 7 and 8: "Casting all your care upon Him; for He careth for you". And verse 8: "But be sober, be vigilant against the Devil, whom resist steadfast in the faith, for he walketh about like a raging lion seeking whom he may devour". Then see in Matthew, when the Evil Spirit took the Lord Jesus into a high mountain and said, "All these things I will give Thee, if Thou wilt fall down and worship me". Then the Lord Jesus said, "Get thee hence, Satan; thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve". Brothers, mark me, that is the good fight, to win the crown. And he who cannot fight the good fight shall not win the crown. For then he falls and is joined with the evil spirit of the air, who flies with his great force over the earth. And so he receives the mark of the Beast in the forehead and will drink with the Beast of the wine of the wrath of God. Read Revelation XIV. Verses 9, 10, 12 and 13. Note, in particular, verse 12, which says: "Here is the patience of the saints; here are they that keep the commandments of God and

⁶¹⁶ TAD, W.J. Leyds Archief, Volume 734, p. 70; S.J.P. Kruger, *Memoirs*, Volume II, pp. 467-71.

the faith of the Lord Jesus.” No, no my brothers: let him who has grown fainthearted fly to the Lord and remain faithful to Him. And by your faithful acts you will convert thousands more to the faith, so that they may fight for the liberty which the Lord has given us. He who says that he believes in the faith of the Lord Jesus and His works and goes with the Evil Spirit, that man’s faith is a dead faith, for the Lord says: “Show me thy faith thy works”. And see the promise of the Lord in Psalm 108, where He says that they who fight through God shall do so valiantly and the Lord will deliver them and tread down their enemies. Keep courage therefore, you God-fearing band; the Lord will display His strength to your weakness.⁶¹⁷

In this excerpt of the telegram it is again made clear how negative Kruger portrays those who stray from the faith. In this instance he describes these individuals as not winning the “crown” [possibly of glory]; who are associated with the “evil spirit of the air”; and who carries the “mark of the Beast”. Those who follow the evil spirits, in his opinion will ultimately taste the “wrath of God” if they have a “dead faith”. On the other hand, if you continue to seek God, in his opinion, you will be awarded the “crown” and your good actions will “convert thousands more” which will bring about “deliverance” and also liberty. If done in this way God will “tread down” your “enemies”. If you are faithful, God will keep you safe and make you prosper.

Hereafter Kruger’s encouragement shifts from a religious tone to a context the burghers could relate to namely war. In this next section he mentions the American War of Independence as part of encouraging the burghers. Not only is this fitting because of the context, but also because both the ZAR and Americans had a common enemy namely the British. There is therefore a clear parallel. The use of the American War is also effective in terms of encouragement as the Americans defeated the British - an outcome Kruger and the burghers were hoping for. The section reads as follows:

Also I will call your attention to the history of the American War of Independence, where they had to fight against hundreds and thousands, and although their number was at length reduced to less than 2,000 men, yet they conquered and the Lord gave them back their liberty. Now each of you knows as I do how unjust and godless the war is, as we were willing to yield almost everything, if we could only keep our liberty and our independence.⁶¹⁸

⁶¹⁷ TAD, W.J. Leyds Archief, Volume 734, p. 70; S.J.P. Kruger, *Memoirs*, Volume II, pp. 467-71.

⁶¹⁸ TAD, W.J. Leyds Archief, Volume 734, p. 70; S.J.P. Kruger, *Memoirs*, Volume II, pp. 467-71.

The next section of Kruger's telegraphic discussion centres on justifying the legitimacy of the ZAR's cause as well as their independence. Not only should this be acknowledged but they are also correct in believing that their independence is a gift from God and He would see to their victory. Moreover Kruger refers to "Israel" (God's chosen people) as the "valiant fighter". As already mentioned, this too can be seen as a parallel as Kruger regarded his people as God's chosen people, much like Israel, to live and rule in the ZAR. As H. Giliomee indicates, this is a sentiment which perpetuates into the century as an element in the rise of Afrikaner nationalism.⁶¹⁹ The use of the word "fighter" is also telling in the sense that the burghers themselves were the fighters against the "evil spirit", which one could assume was Britain. The last section reads as follows:

See Psalm 83, how the evil spirit of the air said that the valiant fighter named Israel must not exist, and the Lord says, "He shall exist". And see in our declaration, which we sent to Salisbury, that we only wished to keep our independence. Then the same spirit answered that this nation must not exist, or, to use his own words: "I will not permit your nation to continue to be a nation". Dear brothers, through God's Word I am sure of this, that the victory is ours. But let us remain true and fight in the name of the Lord, on the strength of His promise, and I request the officers to read and re-read this notice to the burghers.⁶²⁰

The sheer length of these telegraphic discussion contradicts the perception that telegrams were always brief and in staccato format. The length of Kruger's messages alone illustrate the observation that he was a concerned leader and that encouragement played a central part in his role and contribution during the War. Given that they are so extensive, the message to the recipients had to have been carefully thought out, which in addition points to Kruger's character. In taking time to word a message such as this he had to have deemed it urgent which thereby again emphasises a more considerate temperament.

Of the extensive telegrams sent to the Commandant-General [L. Botha] on the 7th of July 1900 a similar contention can be made. Here Kruger again asks the burghers to confide and trust in God so as to not lose faith or be discouraged by the circumstances of War. In order to further encourage he in addition reminds the burghers of God's favour and the blessings they have received in the War, thereby indicating that God has been faithful. He illustrates this as follows:

⁶¹⁹ H. Giliomee, *Die Afrikaners: 'n Biografie*, Tafelberg, Kaapstad, 2004, pp. 188-9 and also see pp. 125-6. Some dispute does however exist regarding the origin of concept of "a chosen people".

⁶²⁰ TAD, W.J. Leyds Archief, Volume 734, p. 70; S.J.P. Kruger, *Memoirs*, Volume II, pp. 467-71.

Officers and burghers, place all your faith in the Lord. He is our highest General, Who turns all hearts whithersoever. He will, and He says, “This danger is Mine,” and the final victory is also in His hand. Now follow our fight from the beginning until to-day[sic]; see if the Lord does not still stand on our side with miracles, see how He has blessed our arms, so that as a rule so few men fall on our side and so many on the enemy’s that, in spite of the great multitude of troops and guns opposed to us and the thousands of shots fired at us, the enemy’s arms have not been blessed. Brothers, we must have become unbelievers and lost sight of God’s authority, if we doubt that He is on our side. The enemy has until now flooded our country with his vastly superior forces, which we have not been able to repel on every side; he has not done so by force of arms, so that there is no doubt but that an end will come to this flood and that the victory will be ours. So do not flinch in the faith and do not be alarmed because some of us fall away.⁶²¹

His message of encouragement is then supplemented with a Bible verse from the apostle Paul: “The Apostle Paul has already said this before me in 1 Timothy.”

In this case it can be inferred that Kruger alternates his message by on the one hand encouragement through his own religious beliefs or biblical texts almost “speaking from the pulpit” and on the other hand makes use of military-command vocabulary in order to convey his message as a militarist more clearly. This would resonate with both the religious and military contexts of the men on commando. He did however not shy away from reprimanding them or in essence “frightening” them into submission. This he does very effectively in the next section of the telegram where he equates the desertion and neutrality on the burghers’ part with going against God and Scripture. To Kruger it appears that laying down arms is the same as being unfaithful and disloyal towards God. To him your actions, “thy works” have to correlate with your faith and therefore there is no place for those who are dishonest and cowardly in God’s or Kruger’s “kingdom”. In addition, even more dramatic effect is achieved when he speaks of the “Beast” – an association made frequently - and God’s “wrath”. The message is soon concluded with Kruger’s hope that they will repent and keep faith. Kruger indicates:

But look at the matter thus: some of our burghers, who, overpowered by the enemy, were obliged to lay down their arms, I excuse, if they join again at the first opportunity, in order to go on fighting; but, when others go so far as to lay

⁶²¹ TAD, W. J. Leyds Archive, Volume 728, Deel F, n.p. [Under date 8 July 1900].

down their arms and take the oath of neutrality and not return, then that according to Scriptures, is a falling away from God, though, to be sure, such men will say, even as the Beast that they believe in the Lord. But the Lord says, “Show Me thy faith by thy works”. And, when they then perform the works of the Beast, in order to betray their brothers, then they assume a faith which is dead. See Revelation XIV 9, 10: “If any man worship the Beast and his image, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God”, and so on. Brothers, any of you who may perhaps have gone so far, turn back and humble yourselves before the Lord; He will forgive you; and then fight bravely in His name. Read this telegram to the officers and burghers at every opportunity.⁶²²

A gentler side to Kruger was also apparent in his telegrams sent to Landdrost Kroep and General S.P. du Toit on the 21st of May 1900. In these telegrams Kruger reprimanded them for their abuse of alcohol but does so in a surprisingly restrained fashion. As a Christian and a Dopper [member of the Gereformeerde Kerk and Calvinist Reformed in orientation], Kruger himself did not drink and believed drinking to be associated with all wickedness as will be illustrated in the telegrams below. This conviction is illustrated through his use of words, for example “straffen” (punish) and also the conviction that a father’s sins would be transferred to his descendants. In summary, drunkenness thus equated or leads to “eternal damnation”. Instead of making his case against drinking, despite his strong convictions, he opts to rather remind these burghers of their faith and so reproached them in a moderate and more religiously orientated manner. He also possibly does this so as not to alienate them. The telegrams to these burghers are very similar.

To Landdrost Kroep Kruger sent the following on the 21st of My 1900:

Confidential and strictly personal

Brother, it has come to my ears that you have taken to drink...Do consider the Lord said to those who consorted with drunkards... The Lord also says that He is a jealous God and will visit the iniquity of the fathers on the children, even to the third generation. Just think of the misery anyone who does such things is plunging his descendants into. Brother, are you waiting for this poison. It is better to obey the Lord because then even if he falls by the sword his soul will be preserved but if he is disobedient to the Lord and runs after drink his soul and body will be destroyed. Fall down before the Lord so that transgression does not overtake you and ask the Lord for strength so that He

⁶²² TAD, W.J. Leyds Archief, Volume 728, Deel F, n.p. [Under date 8 July 1900].

will preserve you from it. If you have any drink in your possession, pour it all out onto the ground.⁶²³

The telegram sent to S.P. du Toit reads as follows:

Confidential

It has come to my ears that you are succumbing to alcohol. Please remember the Lord says to those who walk with drunkards and call out to Him do you think that I am your equal, says the Lord. I will put it to you once and I will punish you. Further the Lord says, I am a jealous God who will visit the sins of the fathers onto the children to the third generation. Think therefore, how those who do not lower their descendants. Brother, beware of those who poison. It is better to obey the Lord for then even if the sword comes down, his soul is saved but he who disobeys the Lord and runs after alcoholic drinks his soul and body will descend into Hell. Fall down before God so that the sin does not catch hold of you and ask the Lord for strength so that He will protect you against it. If you have drinks in your possession please throw these all out onto the ground.⁶²⁴

On the same day Kruger sent another telegram to General S.P. du Toit regarding his excessive consumption of alcohol⁶²⁵ and Du Toit's apparent refutation thereof. He telegraphed:

I have received your telegram in which you express your anger about the remarks I made about drinking. I thought you would always be thankful if I hear something to tell you about it [so] that you can strengthen yourself for it and if you are not alert in any way and can be tempted in any way by it, then to fall on your knees before God and ask him for strength, and if you are totally innocent you need not take it to heart but merely deny it.

An officer cannot be sufficiently vigilant for alcohol since otherwise he tempts many others if he sets them an example (to do this) as he should punish those who overindulge. Therefore, I have reminded you out of love not to fall into that trap.⁶²⁶

This telegram is particularly telling of Kruger. The phrase where he replied, "Therefore I have reminded you out of love not to fall into that trap" signifies that he was indeed a

⁶²³ TAD, W.J. Leyds Archief, Volume 579, Deel 1, pp. 47-8.

⁶²⁴ TAD, W.J. Leyds Archief, Volume 579, Deel 1, pp. 45-6; Volume 725, Deel D, n.p.

⁶²⁵ TAD, W.J. Leyds Archief, Volume 579, Deel 1, pp. 45-6; Volume 725, Deel D, n.p.

⁶²⁶ TAD, W.J. Leyds Archief, Volume 579, Deel 1, pp. 60-1; Volume 725, Deel D, No. 761, n.p.

compassionate person and that he was also involved on a personal level with the burghers during the War. His intentions, even in the case of reprimanding, prove to be moderate and were done in a humane, unoffensive and diplomatic way. This portrayal of Kruger as caring and considerate contradicts the general portrayal of him as impersonal and dictatorial.

Kruger's considerate character is also reflected in other telegrams. One such example is the telegram sent to General S.P. du Toit on the 22nd of May 1900. In this telegram the tension between Du Toit and General De la Rey⁶²⁷ becomes apparent. However amid the conflict and blame Kruger tries to still keep all the parties happy and united which underlines Kruger's diplomatic nature. As is evident in this telegram Kruger very delicately reprimands Du Toit by addressing his selfish behaviour and yet he nonetheless indicates that his regard for the General is still of the highest. Consequently, Kruger's accommodating persona is all the more apparent and the very personal relationship he had with the generals in the field. The telegram reads as follows:

I have received your t[ele]g[ra]m in which you express your dissatisfaction that you were halted by general [J.H.] de la Rey. I am sorry, brother, that you blame me while I attempt to remove the blame from you all the more as you have said yourself that the matter must be investigated as you did not wish to remain under suspicion. I have given instruction to General de la Rey for the investigation under the view that in this way blame would soon be removed from you by way of a closer examination. I can give you assurance that I have a high regard for you and your work and that I have good intentions vis-à-vis you. I trust that your love for your people and your land will weigh heavier than personal considerations and that you despite having been blocked will do your utmost to promote our great cause and will encourage the burghers.⁶²⁸

Here too Kruger includes words such as: "sorry", "remove the blame", "high regard" and "good intentions" which indicates that he also treated the generals with respect and as is evident, he appears genuinely willing to maintain their "best" interests. Moreover from Kruger's side it also sheds light on his willingness to cooperate and to play a part in the relationship and dealings between the various generals. He was however still of the opinion

⁶²⁷ See J.H. Breytenbach's publication for more information on the tensions between General De la Rey and General S. P. du Toit on the western front entitled *Die Geskiedenis van die Tweede Vryheidsoorlog in Suid-Afrika, 1899-1902*, Deel V, pp. 496-497.

⁶²⁸ TAD, W.J. Leyds Archief, Volume 579, Deel 1, p. 73; Volume 725, Deel E, No. 723, n.p.

that quarrels are of less importance than national independence, a message put quite plainly in the concluding sentences of the above telegram.

The range of telegrams discussed points in most respects to a more considerate and empathetic Kruger. In the cases where he did reprimand it was also done in a respectful and considerate manner. One can argue that traces can be observed of a “fundamentalist”⁶²⁹ Kruger, as he construes the War as a spiritual war and more importantly “claims” God for the Republics. This type of “fundamentalism” has also been underlined by H. Giliomee in his publication entitled *Die Afrikaners: ‘n Biografie*.⁶³⁰ In this sense his justifications and objectives will need further investigation. His contribution to the War in this regard underlines his commitment to his country and its people and emphasises the portrayal of him as both a caring and reproaching “volks vader”. This would evidently contribute to the later perception of Kruger as a father of the Afrikaner nation.

5.2 Kruger: peace and/or war

When the question of peace arose towards the end of May 1900, Kruger’s nationalistic and patriotic character takes an interesting turn. This is also evident in his telegraphic correspondence. Knowing him to be a fervent Republican who would defend the independence of the ZAR at all costs his actions, or rather reactions, in this critical period for the ZAR are particularly telling. It is a short period of a mere two days where Kruger has a complete turnabout in strategy and has to come to terms with the inevitable, but also speak to his men in this regard.

When the majority of the ZAR generals were of the opinion that they were fighting a losing battle and strongly considered peace, Kruger was surprisingly understanding of their position. Instead of reprimanding or encouraging the Generals to continue, Kruger was planning, in conjunction with them, the plausible path to peace. This is in stark contrast to the common portrayal of Kruger as an aggressive War administrator. The circumstance in the War at the time could possibly explain why Kruger would react in this manner and consider peace. Firstly the situation the ZAR forces found themselves in was, by the end of May 1900, a mounting concern. Not only were burghers abandoning the cause, but the size of the British army’s presence in the country grew on an almost daily basis. The plausible rate of success for the ZAR forces seemed low. Given that Johannesburg was already taken

⁶²⁹ This term originates from the Fundamentalism movement where in religious context the Bible is understood and interpreted in a very literal fashion and strictly adhered to.

⁶³⁰ Kruger’s literal interpretation of the Bible is referred to by H. Giliomee. See for example p. 177.

by the British by June 1900 and that Pretoria was next in line, the struggle for independence appeared to be lost when their capital, or also called the beacon of “Afrikanerdom”, would soon fall.

Secondly, this could be ascribed to Kruger’s own mindset at the time. External factors such as his departure from Pretoria in the face of the British advance; his leaving his wife and family behind; and lastly, also his own medical condition and old age, could have influenced his objectives. In addition, it is not to say that the widespread demoralisation of the War did not reach or affect Kruger. He was not immune to the War and its consequences on his people and he conceivably found this all very stressful. Another probable explanation could be that Kruger was submitting to their suggestion of peace as a means or tactic to make the Generals consider the true implications of their proposal. By doing so he was possibly hopeful that if they saw him give up the struggle as the leader of their “volk” (people), they would possibly “retaliate” and experience a renewed “need” to continue the struggle. Whatever the reason was for his actions, it is nonetheless noteworthy to observe how fast the change came about as is evident in his telegraphic correspondence. Moreover, against this background it also points to a different side of the Kruger persona. This considerate and empathetic position sheds a different light on his character, particularly in this last phase of the War.

On the 30th of May 1900 Kruger sent a telegram to President M.T. Steyn wherein he reaffirms that the ZAR forces are still continuing the struggle until the end. It reads as follows: “...the situation requires that you move to Machadodorp without delay from which point we intend to fight to the end.”⁶³¹

A telegram reached General Uys on the 30th of May 1900 with a similar confirmation from Kruger. The excerpt indicates the following:

Re communication [Gen. Sir] Redvers Buller. Do not negotiate with those people. Have fought the enemy with great success and was still busy with them on that side of Elandsfontein yesterday. It has been generally decided to continue the fight wherever it is possible to attack the enemy...⁶³²

On the 30th of May 1900 it appears as though Kruger was still full of hope for the cause of the Republics. In the telegram sent to his wife and State Attorney J.C. Smuts on the same

⁶³¹ TAD, W.J. Leyds Archief, Volume 579, Deel 1, p. 179.

⁶³² TAD, W.J. Leyds Archief, Volume 726, Deel C, n.p.

day he reaffirms their will to continue the fight and indicates that they are leaving for Machadodorp “where we intend fighting to the end”.⁶³³

The following day, on the 31st of May 1900, the sudden change in Kruger’s messages occurs signalling the difficulties which would lie ahead. To President Steyn he confidentially sent the following:

Strictly secret

It appears from the report of our officers that our burghers, except for a very small portion, are unwilling to continue the struggle and have left for home. It is therefore urgently necessary that Your Honour come here immediately for consultations as to what we must do; there is no time to be lost. Our officers are unanimously of the view that it is hopeless to continue the struggle in this way. At Johannesburg and environs there is an overwhelming force of the enemy present of sixty thousand men that has to be fought against by 500 men while the enemy could at any moment advance upon Pretoria.

We have received confidential report from our Consul at Lourenço Marques that a force of the enemy is advancing from Kosi Bay to take over the Eastern Line. It is possible for the enemy as is probably its plan to advance through Swaziland in the direction of Komatipoort. In addition report has been received from our officers at Laingsnek that the positions there have been abandoned. A large part of burghers there is also unwilling to continue the struggle. The way through Standerton would therefore open to the enemy and they are also advancing on Wakkerstroom. When the enemy takes possession of [the] telegraph line at Standerton communication between us will be totally cut off therefore it is necessary that Your Honour reply immediately and come here also so that we can consult concerning our protest.⁶³⁴

From the above it was clear that the ZAR forces were experiencing a real crisis. A sudden change took place considering Kruger’s telegraphic messages sent prior to this “period of crisis”. His avid religious encouragement stands in contrast to his yielding-like character in this instance. It is evident that through all his “preaching”, he himself was not entirely convinced and could thus not muster much hope to continue the War. His slogans of “fighting in the name of the Lord” and to “stand firm” because “deliverance” would come soon proves to have evaporated into thin air. His defiant nature is still subtly evident as

⁶³³ TAD, W.J. Leyds Archief, Volume 579, Deel 1, p. 180.

⁶³⁴ TAD, W.J. Leyds Archief, Volume 579, Deel I, pp. 243-7.

illuminated in his proposal of accepting “peace in protest” as mentioned earlier, yet the “beacon of Afrikanderdom” stands just about “faithless” amidst his people’s decision. However, in the next telegram an increasing dose of defiance is observed in Kruger’s “tone” which again signifies the precariousness of his character in this time. This inference is also emphasised by Kruger’s use of words such as “overwhelming force” in the previous as well as in the next telegram [both sent to Steyn on the 31st of May 1900] as he earlier on pointed out that the War will not be won by superior forces but by faith in God, as He is their “Commander in Chief”. Again Kruger seems “indecisive” as his convictions and actions do not line up. His telegram sent to President Steyn on the same day reads:

I have further consulted the officers and instructed them after having consulted their men, to immediately hold a council of war and if they decide there that it is advisable to end the struggle in that case give notice to Roberts of our intention to lay down our arms but that he should in that case authorise an armistice of a reasonable period in order that we can notify all officers here as well in the Free State so that fighting in general can be stopped. In this way we will also get time to after consultation with you draw up our protest. I wish to make it expressly clear to Your Honour that it is not our view to ask for peace but only that we have been forced by the overwhelming superiority in forces to voluntarily lay down our arms. We have made an arrangement of holding a cable discussion with our officers tonight as soon as we have received your view concerning this plan.⁶³⁵

Consequently what we observe is that Kruger is on the one hand giving in to the requests and reasoning of the generals on the battlefield, but on the other hand mentions that they will not go down without a fight. He indicates that even if they lay down their arms voluntarily and ask for an armistice they will still protest against the treatment they received from Britain. Here we see the nationalist Kruger coming to the fore again, the leader and defender of their independence. However given that he sent this telegram to President Steyn and is simultaneously encouraging negotiations with Steyn, he in a way aligns himself with the Generals. Overall he appears to be slightly ambivalent perhaps reflecting on the dualism between heart and head.

In the telegraphic discussion Kruger had with his Generals on the 31st of May 1900, while stationed at the government headquarters in Machadodorp, the possibility of peace is still evident. In the background however Kruger informs the Generals of the logistics regarding

⁶³⁵ TAD, W.J. Leyds Archief, Volume 579, Deel I, pp. 250-1.

a settlement and the alliance with the OFS as their first priority particularly in light of the OFS dogged continuation of the struggle. As Kruger was not in the field himself it was necessary for him to have a plan of action so that if it boiled down to securing peace that the generals, collective or individually, did nothing to harm this process. The relevant excerpts are as follows:

S.J.P. Kruger: ...And as we have agreed with president Steyn to continue the struggle to the end. Therefore even if we would be forced to abandon Pretoria and retreat to here. Therefore we cannot give up the struggle without consulting President Steyn...Nothing is to be expected from the enemy and it would be treason towards the Free State before we have had an agreement with them. When you are retreating while fighting into this direction we can in the mean time consult with the Free State...

The proposal to Roberts must be as proposed by me to you. If you do not say that you are willing to lay down arms Roberts will not authorise an armistice. There should be no talk of making peace or negotiations towards peace as we would then lose all our rights. In addition, such a proposal cannot be made to Roberts before President Steyn has been apprised of it and agreed to it. That can now be done immediately because President Steyn is apparently at Braksvlei at a telegraph office...Please therefore instruct the telegraph department to arrange for a cable discussion at the place where you can all be found as soon as the reply has passed through his office.⁶³⁶

Although the question of peace was at this stage still a possibility, it is apparent that Kruger wanted to secure the best terms for the ZAR and that his allegiance with the OFS played a central role in his decision making. Moreover his concern for their allegiance as well as his duty towards his generals and burghers point to Kruger being an empathetic, honourable and also simultaneously patriotic personality. Nonetheless, an “ambivalent” Kruger is still observed. In the first paragraph of the discussion he adamantly indicates that their loyalties still lie towards President Steyn “as they have agreed to...continue the struggle to the end” and yet in the second paragraph he speaks of “lay[ing] down arms” and thereafter is of the opinion that there should be “no talk of peace” with Roberts. The uncertainty of the circumstance of War appears to also penetrate Kruger’s strong character and his words often appear indecisive.

⁶³⁶ TAD, W.J. Leyds Archief, Volume 739, Deel I, pp. 68-83.

After the ZAR generals were of the opinion that a council of war should be held to discuss their situation on the 1st and 2nd of June 1900. To Kruger's relief, one assumes, the ZAR generals decided to persist in their struggle against Britain. Consequently, Kruger was able to telegraph the good news to President Steyn on the 2nd of June 1900. Suddenly Kruger's tone changes back to the patriotic and enthusiastic leader he was perceived to be and it is almost as if the doubt there had been in the span of two days was forgotten. The message he received read:

Your Honour's telegram regarding the decision of your officers not to give up the fight. Your Honour will certainly have received the resolution of the War Council in term[s] of which the entire country has again been called up to resume the battle anew and the decisions to lay down arms has been totally revoked.⁶³⁷

5.3 Kruger: prisoners of war and Boer civilians

As War progressed, the prisoners of war as well as civilians - particularly women and children - became an even greater concern for the ZAR government. Kruger was also involved here and played a role in the management of the prisoners and civilians. On the 24th of May 1900 Kruger sent a telegram to Commandant-General L. Botha regarding a resolution the government awaited concerning the prisoners of war. Kruger asked him the following:

Have you already consulted your officers and burghers about the proposal to put the British prisoners of war across the line. Do not forget to do this immediately...⁶³⁸

Another request regarding the prisoners of war was sent by Kruger to the Landdrost of Pretoria. These requests on the part of Kruger illustrate that the prisoners of war were seen as a threat to the cause and that they had to be closely monitored and handled with caution. Kruger instructed the Landdrost in this regards as follows:

Regarding prisoners of war. Commandeer immediately still tonight of the reliable men on foot to guard prisoners of war at Waterval instead of using the colonists who have fled. Guards must be encouraged by yourself or reliable

⁶³⁷ TAD, W.J. Leyds Archief, Volume 579, Deel 2, p. 283; Volume 726, Deel D, n.p.

⁶³⁸ TAD, W.J. Leyds Archief, Volume 725, Deel G, No. 188, n.p.

person to stand their man. General [S.W.] Burger will tomorrow also bring along people for that purpose.⁶³⁹

A telegram from Kruger reached the Secretary of the Military Commission on the 21st of June 1900 informing the former of the prisoner of war situation and a plausible solution:

Your telegram regarding the eight hundred prisoners of war with you. I fear that it is too late to send them here as the enemy is already near Standerton. But if action is taken with the greatest of speed and they move through the day and night under supervision of strong guard then they could still get past via Greylingstad or Bethal. The five hundred already sent by you will arrive at Carolina tomorrow and have therefore made it. Regarding the prisoners of war from Waterval Boven we have only been able to transport nine hundred of them and we did not have enough time to load up a second train. The remaining were released upon the enemy's arrival at Pretoria. The Senior officers refused to embark saying that we could then rather shoot them dead. With those arriving at Carolina tomorrow and those from Natal the number will again be about 1500.⁶⁴⁰

Although Kruger was very adamant regarding the persecution of deserters, as seen previously, he did not show the same disdain for the prisoners even when they practically asked to be killed after not wanting to embark as mentioned in the telegram above. This shows that he responded to them in a cautious yet empathetic manner and adhered to strict military code as he did not endorse such killings. In addition, his mention that they should "move through the day and night" and "with the greatest of speed" and "under supervision of strong guard" further underlines the necessity but also urgency that is associated with the prisoner of war "threat". This apparent "threat" appears to stand in direct contrast to that of the treatment of the prisoners as the ZAR. According to Kruger they were treated fairly. Also after news had been received that monetary support from the British was to be received for the prisoners of war, Kruger sent a telegram in this regard to the "Kommissie Bewaking Krijggevanges" (Commission for guarding prisoners of war) on the 30th of June 1900 and informed them regarding this particular situation. His caution yet compassion for the prisoners is again underlined in the next telegram as he does not prohibit them from receiving monetary support but forbade any direct contact with "outsiders". In this telegram he indicates:

⁶³⁹ TAD, W.J. Leyds Archief, Volume 726, Deel C, n.p.; Volume 579, Deel 2, p. 269.

⁶⁴⁰ TAD, W.J. Leyds Archief, Volume 579, Deel 4, pp. 820-1; Volume 727, Deel E, n.p.

Be informed that a man named Robbs, bookkeeper to the English Consul, is on his way by rail to deliver £600 to the Commission charged with guarding prisoners of war, to be used for the prisoners of war. This person has been forbidden to cross our borders and he must hand over the money at Komatipoort. If he gets through he must in no circumstances be allowed to make contact with the prisoners of war.⁶⁴¹

Kruger's role as coordinator was further extended to the safety of civilians and the provision of shelter and the like. On the 21st of July 1900 Kruger, for example, sent a telegram to Commandant-General L. Botha informing him of the shelter that had been established for women and children at Barberton. He notified him that

You can send all the wives of policemen and also other women with families to Barberton where there is room for about 400 families. Please give me timely notice as to how many households and children are being sent there so that their reception there can be arranged. At Belfast there is room for about 40 households.⁶⁴²

On the 22nd of July 1900 a similar telegram was sent by Kruger to the Landdrost at Middelburg informing him that

...let the families come directly to Barberton, unless any have family at Belfast and can be accommodated there. An order has already been given that the families of the police should come to Barberton.⁶⁴³

Another telegram relating to civilians was sent to Van der Poel on 28 July 1900 whom the President notified and intervened in the situation to such an extent that he even asked that wagons must be given to the civilians as shelter:

The burghers at Komatipoort are without accommodation. Can you provide this by sparing any wagons or have you an opportunity to come and speak to me in person about the matter.⁶⁴⁴

Different to the other military orders or requests made, Kruger also informs Van der Poel that he may personally (face to face) come and see the President to discuss the issue of wagons needed in Komatipoort. Not only does this indicate to what extent Kruger was

⁶⁴¹ TAD, W.J. Leyds Archief, Volume 727, Deel I, n.p.

⁶⁴² TAD, W.J. Leyds Archief, Volume 729, Deel B, n.p.

⁶⁴³ TAD, W.J. Leyds Archief, Volume 729, Deel B, n.p.

⁶⁴⁴ TAD, W.J. Leyds Archief, Volume 729, Deel E, n.p.

involved in the War but it also points to how much he cared for this people and that no aspect of the War was too insignificant for him to address.

In addition to providing shelter, supplies for the women and children were also of particular concern. Kruger wired to L. Botha on the 5th of August 1900 in this regard, suggesting *inter alia* the following:

Further, if there is still an opportunity, would it not be a good idea to point out to Robberts [sic] that when sending out families they were only allowed to take with them [sufficient] for two to three days while some stated that they had enough still for some months. That this is unfair – to retain the foodstuffs of the families while allowing some to take with them as much as they were able to.⁶⁴⁵

On the 7th of August 1900 Kruger again voiced his concern for the women and children in the Waterberg district. In this instance it concerned their safety as some of them had been murdered by Linchwe (a Black chief), apparently upon instruction from the British. The excerpt from his telegram to General S. Burger further points to his father-like nature to protect his people as he indicates that the Commandant-General should “protest” regarding the following:

Please remind Commandant[-]General that he should protest most strongly to [Field Marshall Lord F.S.] Roberts against his and his officers’ actions. They sent a report to Linchwe telling him to launch an attack against us upon the women and children in Waterberg ... women and children have already been murdered.⁶⁴⁶

In a telegram sent to Commandant-General L. Botha on the 8th of August 1900 Kruger is responding to Sir Donald Currie, a British ship magnate and previous Boer sympathiser. In the telegram he indicated that the rumours of starving British prisoners of war was incorrect, and that they received the same treatment as the burghers on commando. This point made by Kruger underlines that he, and also the Republic, treated the prisoners of war with due consideration and provided them with the same provisions as the burghers. It appears that Kruger requested L. Botha to ask Currie to publish the telegram so as to inform the British public of the treatment of the Boer civilians at the hand of the British. This treatment was increasingly more negative than that of the prisoners of war. This endeavour of Kruger to draw the attention of the British public to that of the treatment of the women and children was apparently done for the sake of awareness. In this regard Kruger, in a similar way to

⁶⁴⁵ TAD, W.J. Leyds Archief, Volume 730, Deel A, n.p.

⁶⁴⁶ TAD, W.J. Leyds Archief, Volume 730, Deel B, n.p.

Emily Hobhouse, advocated for the humane and respectful treatment of the Boers and in particular the women and children who were most defenceless. An appeal to the British public and the Pro-Boers in Britain at the time was necessary to alter the perception of the Boers in general and in order to possibly gain or establish some form of intervention. This also points to Kruger's leadership and his caring nature when it came to those who were unprotected. K.O. Morgan from the University of Oxford underlines the significance of the public domain of the time:

London journalists invariably presented the Boers as primitive and backwards, isolated rural people. They were often described in animal terms as "herds" or "flocks", whose defeat by the superior civilization of the British was inevitable.⁶⁴⁷

The perception of the Boers was also central to the question of the concentration camps, its effects and implementation and consequently becomes all the more fundamental when large numbers of women and children were driven to these camps so as to limit their assistance given to the Boers. The historian A. Grundlingh is of the opinion that the issue of women and children is one of the most controversial facets of the South African War.⁶⁴⁸ Moreover, the concentration camps instilled or brought about, as Grundlingh indicates, Afrikaner unity and played a role in Afrikaner nationalism in the 20th century.⁶⁴⁹ Kruger's appeal to the British public ironically, is made to those same people who supported the idea of War initially. However, appealing to the British public and getting this type of information into the public domain nonetheless points to the extent to which Kruger was willing to assist his people. In this sense his caring character is unquestionably apparent through the lens of the War telegrams. The relevant excerpt from this particular telegram reads:

...The allegation that "they are starving" is not true at all. On different farms British troops burn houses, even beds, chase women and children away, take food and send them to us without food and notify again that several thousands (more) will still be sent...From a communication obtained by Genl. Grobler it appears that Linchwe is again encouraged to attack our people. In the Rustenburg district a few days ago the farm of Jan Lombaard has been

⁶⁴⁷ K.O. Morgan, "The Boer War and the Media (1899-1902)", *Twentieth Century British History*, 13(1), 2002, p. 5.

⁶⁴⁸ A. Grundlingh, "The Anglo-Boer War in 20th-century Afrikaner consciousness" in F. Pretorius (ed.), *Scorched Earth*, Human & Rousseau, Cape Town, 2001, p. 243.

⁶⁴⁹ A. Grundlingh, "The Anglo-Boer War in 20th-century Afrikaner consciousness" in F. Pretorius (ed.), *Scorched Earth*, p. 243.

attacked and two children killed. The government requested Sir Donald Currie as an honest person in a friendly manner to publish the telegram...⁶⁵⁰

Apart from the interpretations and perceptions that have been generated regarding Kruger's persona, his telegraphic correspondence unmasks him as being an encouraging and empathetic person who frequently made reference to "God's Word" in difficult times. The telegrams in both these sections have one thing in common which is that they either subtly or explicitly point to a gentler and caring Kruger. This becomes evident through the telegrams in the way he encourages but also reprimands. In addition, the telegrams also shed light on a humane side where he shows concern for women and children, as well as other people in need. A similar contention can be made of Kruger when addressing the possibility of peace in a critical phase of the War. He empathised with the generals and their situation, however as the telegrams have indicated, his nationalistic and patriotic streak does re-emerge much like G.D.J. Duvenhage has typified Kruger as "die kampvegter" (champion) of the Afrikaner.⁶⁵¹ The most important contention is that through the lens of these telegrams a different side of Kruger appears - one that is in stark contrast to the general portrayal of him as a Boer tyrant, cunning and inflexible in his ways.

⁶⁵⁰ TAD, W.J. Leyds Archief, Volume 730, Deel C, n.p.

⁶⁵¹ G.D.J. Duvenhage, *Imperialisme en Nasionalisme. Kerngeskiedenis van Suid-Afrika 1886-1948*, Mc Graw-Hill, Boekmaatskappy, 1978, p. 17.

CHAPTER 6:

Conclusion

6.1 The Kruger persona

Paul Kruger remains relevant as the recent and continual publications on him illustrate. Certain portrayals of Kruger have persisted as is evident in chapter 1 of this dissertation. These portrayals have varied over time due to historical context and the availability of source material. From the outset Kruger has been portrayed in a starkly dualistic or polarised way mostly attributable to ideological convictions or positions. These binary depictions in turn lead to stereotypical representations of Kruger being generated and entrenched. What this study set out to do was to appraise the various portrayals by looking at Kruger's telegraphical correspondence during a specific episode of his life namely, the so-called "crisis period".

As was made evident in chapter 4, the telegraph has been used as a form of communication for the state and by a range of prominent leaders internationally. In this analysis of Kruger we see that the telegram – although not always written in a conventional short and concise manner – also reflects on aspects of Kruger's personae. In some instances, these corroborate the negative portrayals of Kruger whereas on other occasions the positive depictions are endorsed. In addition, it is also apparent that these positive and negative depictions are, in some instances, augmented but in others are contradicted. It can thus be concluded that the telegrams within the crisis period do indeed add to the perspective on Kruger.

This Conclusion will include selected quotes from the literature discussed in chapter 1 as well as other general literature which portray particular views of Kruger and align them with extracts from the telegrams. This will vividly portray the contribution that this telegraphic material adds to our understanding of this enigmatic figure of the late 19th century.

Kruger has been depicted as essentially patriotic and as the defender of the ZAR's independence by a range of authors. J.A. Hobson is for example of the opinion that Kruger can be seen as the half-conscious recognition by the people that he is the true repository of the ancient Boer spirit and traditions, and that he will fight with all his mind and all his might for the independence of his country.⁶⁵²

⁶⁵² J.A. Hobson, *The War in South Africa Its Causes and Effects*, J. Nisbet, London, 1900, pp. 31.

Mackenzie, similar to Hobson, makes the following assertion: “For it is an article of faith among the rural Boers of to-day [sic] that the safety of their State is bound up with Paul Kruger.”⁶⁵³ The notion of Kruger “fighting” for and “defending” the interests of his people is central to his positive portrayal. As a result, Kruger has been associated with qualities such as patriotism, loyalty and utter persistence. J.F. van Oordt as well as J. E. van Beijnum reiterates this. Van Oordt for example pointed to Kruger as being willing to spill the last drop of blood to defend his country⁶⁵⁴, while Van Beijnum praised him as “een groot patriot” (great patriot).⁶⁵⁵ Kruger’s main concern was, as W. Brouwer underlines, the welfare of the ZAR state⁶⁵⁶ which was also an aspect of his personae emphasised by A.M. Mann⁶⁵⁷ and summarised by F.J. Dormer as follows:

Mr. Kruger as a domestic tyrant was not much to be dreaded; he was at all times perilously near the end of his tether. But Mr. Kruger as the champion of Republican independence and Afrikander nationality was, in the circumstances, scarcely less formidable than a first-class European Power.⁶⁵⁸

Almost seventy years later this portrayal of Kruger is still reiterated by C.T. Gordon as he pointed to Kruger’s unyielding determination when it came to the ZAR’s independence.⁶⁵⁹ In Kruger’s War telegrams this portrayal of him as patriotic is corroborated. This is seen not only in his telegrams of encouragement sent to the Generals, and in some instances to Landdrosts, urging them to keep on fighting but also in his firm reprimanding of the burghers to stay loyal to their country. In addition, Kruger’s management and timeous provision of burgher reinforcements and other supplies, also points to his utter loyalty to the cause and signifies patriotism. This depiction is further corroborated by Kruger’s choice of words and

⁶⁵³ F.A. Mckenzie, *Paul Kruger: His Life Story*, London, James Bowden, 1899, p. 11.

⁶⁵⁴ J.F. van Oordt, *Paul Kruger en de Opkomst van der Zuid-Afrikaansche Republiek*, HAUM, Amsterdam, 1898, pp. 814-815; J.E. van Beijnum, *Paul Kruger Korte Levensschets: 1825 - 10 October - 1925*, H.J. Breijer, Arnhem, 1925.

⁶⁵⁵ J.E. van Beijnum, *Paul Kruger Korte Levensschets: 1825-10 October -1925*, H.J. Breijer, Arnhem, p. 5.

⁶⁵⁶ W. Brouwer, *Paul Kruger*, L.J. Veen, Amsterdam, 1899, p. 73.

⁶⁵⁷ A.M. Mann, *The Boer in Peace and War*, John Long, London, 1900, p. 24.

⁶⁵⁸ F.J. Dormer, *Vengeance as a policy in Afrikanderland: a plea for a new departure*, James Nisbet & Co. Limited, London, 1901 Preface, pp. xxii-xxiii.

⁶⁵⁹ C.T. Gordon, *The Growth of Boer Opposition to Kruger, 1890-1895*, Oxford University Press, Cape Town, 1970, p. 21. See footnote 76 on p. 176 for original source: *Press*, 7 Dec 1892. Also see F. Postma, *Paul Kruger: Die Christen, -Volksman en - Staatsman*, Pro Ecclesia, Stellenbosch, 1944, pp. 29-31.

phrases used in his War telegrams as he instructed the commandos to “...remain steadfast...”⁶⁶⁰ and to “...remain obedient and fight in the name of the Lord...”.⁶⁶¹

In addition, his own patriotic streak is moreover observed in his response towards those who lack patriotism, on occasion bravery or desert the cause as he destined their lot to be death and defined their actions as “going against God”. Kruger’s telegram sent to the Landdrost (magistrate) at Wolmaransstad illustrates this observation as he labelled deserters as “guilty of high treason” and to be “shot to death”.⁶⁶² In one of his telegrams of encouragement the second observation is apparent. Here he warned that those who take up arms again will not be prosecuted but “...when others go so far as to lay down their arms and take the oath of neutrality and not return, then that according to Scriptures, is a falling away from God...”⁶⁶³ In both these instances Kruger’s extreme patriotism is underlined and is thus corroborated by the war telegrams.

Kruger’s piety has been referenced in both a positive and negative manner. Certain associations and perceptions generated in this regard have also been corroborated by the telegrams. Dr. E.J.P. Jorissen for example likened Kruger to a 16th century Protestant⁶⁶⁴ thus implying serious limitations in terms of Kruger’s beliefs and mentality thus portraying him in a somewhat demeaning way. Hobson’s observation ties in with Jorissen’s by stressing the implications of Kruger’s narrow-mindedness and mentions that Kruger was thus “depend[ent] upon the friends around him for all his knowledge of the larger world” and his understanding was thus subject to “danger of unfair selection and misrepresentation”.⁶⁶⁵ The idea that Kruger was a man out of his time with strange convictions was also reiterated by F.A. Mckenzie as he pointed to Kruger’s “archaic character” and described him as belonging to the days of Abraham.⁶⁶⁶ Much like Jorissen, Hobson in addition sketched Kruger, as have been indicated, as backward and old by referring to him on occasion as an “old seventeenth-century countryman” who was governing the ZAR with “belated politics and stern Old Testament direction”.⁶⁶⁷ This perception of Kruger is still apparent on the brink of the 21st century, when the historian R.

⁶⁶⁰ TAD, W.J. Leyds Archief, Volume 578, Deel 5, pp. 1329-32; Volume 725, Deel C, No. 144, n.p.

⁶⁶¹ TAD, W.J. Leyds Archief, Volume 579, Deel 2, pp. 275-81.

⁶⁶² TAD, W.J. Leyds Archief, Volume 579, Deel 1, p. 52; Volume 725, Deel D, No. 548, n.p.

⁶⁶³ TAD, W.J. Leyds Archief, Volume 728, Deel F, n.p. [Under date 8 July 1900]; S.J.P. Kruger, *Memoirs*, Volume II, London, 1902, pp. 465-6.

⁶⁶⁴ E.J.P. Jorissen, *Transvaalsche Herinneringen 1876-1896*, J.H. De Bussy, Amsterdam, 1897, pp. 16-17.

⁶⁶⁵ J.A. Hobson, *The War in South Africa. Its Causes and Effects*, p. 30.

⁶⁶⁶ F. A. Mackenzie, *Paul Kruger: His Life Story*, p. 7.

⁶⁶⁷ J.A. Hobson, *The War in South Africa. Its Causes and Effects*, p. 25.

Ross wrote that to the British and other outsiders Kruger must have “looked and sounded like a living fossil”.⁶⁶⁸

On the opposite side of Kruger’s piety continuum other authors have emphasised his religiousness in a more positive way. D’Arbez or rather Van Oordt, portrayed a more noble view of Kruger’s piety as he labelled Kruger as “an important man, a kind person and a true Christian”.⁶⁶⁹ J.P. la Grange Lombard in a similar fashion acknowledges Kruger’s piety.⁶⁷⁰ The President’s spirituality is however best summarised by J.S. Marais as he describes Kruger as “a devout believer, with a childlike faith”.⁶⁷¹ Much like the references made by Jorissen and Mckenzie, F.A. van Jaarsveld and F. Postma have likened Kruger to the Biblical figure Moses albeit in a positive manner whereby his faith and strong convictions have been highlighted.⁶⁷²

These depictions of Kruger as pious and archaic are reflected in his War telegrams both in a direct and indirect way. His telegrams of encouragement are particularly central here. The apparent domineering religious tone of these telegrams, as illustrated in chapter 5, firstly underlines this portrayal of him as being a pious man. Secondly, his choice and use of words further underscores his religious beliefs and in some cases points to a man with an archaic approach. One such example is Kruger’s use of the word “Beast”⁶⁷³ which on a symbolic level becomes synonymous with Britain and on a more spiritual level, the “enemy” or devil. His choice and use of words like these, appears to be “out of touch” and old much like the imagery and convictions that he communicates in these telegrams. This becomes even more apparent when considering that he sent off these telegrams in the beginning of the 20th century. In this sense at least, Kruger’s religious conceptions and communications do seem to correlate with that of early pulpit preachers or possibly even a stereotypical Abraham.

⁶⁶⁸ R. Ross, *A Concise History of South Africa*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1999, p. 68.

⁶⁶⁹ D’Arbez (pseudo.), *Van Schaapwachter tot President. Het Leven van Paul Kruger*, J.H. De Bussy, Amsterdam, 1916. p. 5. The original text is in Dutch and was therefore translated.

⁶⁷⁰ J.P. La Grange Lombard, *Paul Kruger. Die Volksman*, p. 223.

⁶⁷¹ J.S. Marais, *The Fall of Kruger’s Republic*, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1961, pp. 6-7.

⁶⁷² F. Postma, *Paul Kruger: Die Christen, -Volksman en - Staatsman*, pp. 3-4.

⁶⁷³ See for example TAD, W.J. Leyds Archief, Volume 578, Deel 5, pp. 1329-32; Volume 725, Deel C, No. 144, n.p.; TAD, W.J. Leyds Archief, Volume 579, Deel 2, pp. 275-81; TAD, W.J. Leyds Archief, Volume 727, Deel A, n.p.; TAD, W.J. Leyds Archief, Volume 727, Deel D, n.p.; TAD, W.J. Leyds Archief, Volume 579, Deel 6, pp. 1264-7.

Other depictions of Kruger have also been corroborated by his War telegrams which points to Kruger as a man of “physical endurance”, “readiness of resource” and “sagacity”⁶⁷⁴ as M. Nathan has described him. Kruger’s impeccable mind has also been highlighted by J.P. la Grange Lombard.⁶⁷⁵ Kruger’s War telegrams corroborate these portrayals. Firstly, Kruger’s own physical endurance becomes apparent as he time and again urges the burghers to stand firm and fight despite the many hardships they face whether it be a lack of provisions, being cut off or dealing with the news of deserters. This persistence and determination of Kruger was nurtured by his life circumstances as he was shaped by a world that “tolerated” constant war and many other physical hardships. His appeals to the burghers thus speaks of a man who has and is able to endure much.

Secondly, his contribution to the War is evident in the many telegrams sent to the various fronts to coordinate commandos, to give advice to generals and to manage the provisions sent to the various districts. This contribution and willingness to provide assistance points to Nathan’s coined term namely “readiness of resource”. This depiction in addition reflects on his leadership and points to a more selfless persona than normally perceived. Kruger’s taking charge of resources to assist is clearly reflected in the telegrams referring to the organisation of commodities ranging from fuel to detonators and monies to fodder.⁶⁷⁶

The third characteristic that the telegrams corroborate, is that of Kruger’s knowledge or sagacity. The telegrams prove that Kruger was a man of much insight and discernment whether it concerned aspects of a religious or military nature. In chapter 4 Kruger’s knowledge in terms of warfare is particularly evident. Not only does he possess knowledge of the vast terrain the War played itself out on, but he also proved to have knowledge of military skills and strategies. It is apparent that he was a man to be reckoned with. In chapter 5, Kruger’s knowledge of the Bible is also apparent - albeit presented in an archaic manner- and in addition to being well versed in the teachings of his faith, his mind consistently appears sharp. This is illustrated in all the Bible verses he quoted as was illustrated in the telegraphic discussion with the Generals on 24 July 1900.⁶⁷⁷ Another portrayal of Kruger which is corroborated by his War telegrams is him being an anachronism. This depiction has been alluded to by both J.S. Marais and R. Ross.⁶⁷⁸ On

⁶⁷⁴ M. Nathan, *Paul Kruger. His Life and Times*, Knox Publishing Company, Durban, 1941. p. 479.

⁶⁷⁵ J.P. La Grange Lombard, *Paul Kruger. Die Volksman*, p. 223.

⁶⁷⁶ TAD, W.J. Leyds Archief, Volume 579, Deel 3, pp. 571-2; TAD, W.J. Leyds Archief, Volume 728, Deel E, n.p.; TAD, W.J. Leyds Archief, Volume 730, Deel E, n.p.

⁶⁷⁷ TAD, W.J. Leyds Archief, Volume 734, p. 70; S.J.P. Kruger, *Memoirs*, Volume II, T.F. Unwin, 1902, pp. 467-71.

⁶⁷⁸ J.S. Marais, *The Fall of Kruger’s Republic*, p.7.

the one hand he is described as old and prejudiced, yet on the other skillful and patriotic. Consequently, Kruger can be seen as a man who is out of place, but who can almost also not be properly “contextualised”.

Having said that, these portrayals stand in contrast to Kruger being portrayed as dictatorial or, as Milner pointed out, a “savage”.⁶⁷⁹ Kruger has been presented in similar ways by S.M. Gluckstein who referred to Kruger’s “malignant despotism”.⁶⁸⁰ The War correspondent and renown writer A.C. Doyle in his monograph on the Boer War also made reference hereto indicating that “[c]ontinued rule for half a generation must turn a man into an autocrat”.⁶⁸¹ The depiction of Kruger as “savage” was also underlined by Joseph Chamberlain by referring to him as an “ignorant, dirty and obstinate man who has known how to feather his own nest”.⁶⁸² This image was further endorsed by John X Merriman who negatively characterised Kruger as a “takhaar” or a backveld Boer.⁶⁸³ Kruger’s War telegrams point to a different “Kruger” in this regard. They reveal a man who is patriotic but not to the extent of being a virtual dictator, a man who is loyal to the cause and assists in whichever way possible. Kruger’s “acts” as they are observed through the lens of his telegrams represent him as skilful and insightful and do not reflect any characteristic associated with that of a “savage”. Although his religious convictions, as mentioned previously, point to possible narrow-mindedness, this appears to be the only characteristic which can be associated with that of a “takhaar”.

The depiction of Kruger as strong willed, stubborn and inflexible is not augmented by his War telegrams. His leniency towards the generals and an accommodating spirit is reflected in the telegrams sent regarding the issue of possible peace where he did not stubbornly only seek victory, but instead opted to listen to his generals. Here he appears more altruistic rather than solely patriotic and was not obstinate as he is often portrayed. This observation is illustrated in his giving orders in a considerate manner and making use of words like “Please remind”⁶⁸⁴ or stating “...However, You will know best what to do”.⁶⁸⁵ Another depiction which is augmented by his War telegrams is the portrayal of Kruger as the “father of a nation”. Not only is this portrayal illustrated by his patriotism and being the defender of

⁶⁷⁹ H. Giliomee, *Die Afrikaners: 'n Biografie*, Tafelberg, Kaapstad, 2004, p. 204.

⁶⁸⁰ S.M. Gluckstein, *Queen or President? An Indictment of Paul Kruger*, Grant Richards, London, 1900, p. 176.

⁶⁸¹ A.C. Doyle, *The Great Boer War*, Smith, Elder, & Co., London, 1900, p. 22.

⁶⁸² H. Giliomee, *Die Afrikaners: 'n Biografie*, p. 188.

⁶⁸³ H. Giliomee, *Die Afrikaners: 'n Biografie*, p. 188. According to H.C. Hillegas, a “takhaar” refers to the rural and uncivilized Boer characterised as the “modern type of the old Voortrekker Boer...”. See H.C. Hillegas, *With The Boer Forces*, Methuen & Co., London, 1900, pp. 69-71.

⁶⁸⁴ TAD, W.J. Leyds Archief, Volume 730, Deel B, n.p.

⁶⁸⁵ TAD, W.J. Leyds Archief, Volume 579, Deel I, p. 36; Volume 725, Deel D, n.p.

his people, but it is further amplified by his considerate and caring nature. This is particularly evident in his telegrams sent during this period of War regarding the treatment and care for the women and children. Kruger pointed out that equal and fair treatment was not received and should be tended to.

In addition, his kind nature is observed through his giving of affirmation and addressing the Generals on a personal level. This is especially noticeable in his reprimanding of the abuse of alcohol and how discretely yet compassionate this is handled as he stated: "...Therefore, I have reminded you out of love not to fall into that trap..."⁶⁸⁶ and also when a General doubted Kruger's support and respect his telegram reassured: "...I can give you assurance that I have a high regard for you and your work and that I have good intentions vis-à-vis you..."⁶⁸⁷

6.2 Reflection

Kruger's War telegrams thus do not only point to his contribution to the War during this said "period of crisis", but also reflects on the general depictions of Kruger as patriotic and as the caring yet reproaching "father of a nation". These depictions pose questions regarding the more negative portrayals and opinions associated with Kruger as being sketched as "dictatorial", but do not disqualify them. Despite the binary portrayals, Kruger's War telegrams indicate that not only are there added depictions and interpretations of Kruger but that these portrayals are largely generated from specific historical contexts. More importantly, his telegrams prove to be an informative historical source for this particular period in the South African War as concerns Kruger's persona but also his state of mind as it fluctuates and correlates with the events in the War. The War telegrams in addition also give us a window into the leadership role and capabilities of Kruger and indicate how he participated in events he only observed through, so to speak, mere "dots and dashes". Consequently, as the title of this dissertation indicates Kruger becomes a man in "crisis", not merely because of his so-called crisis period, but also because his telegrams as a source call for and point toward a reappraisal of the Kruger persona and his legacy.

⁶⁸⁶ TAD, W.J. Leyds Archief, Volume 579, Deel 1, pp. 60-1; Volume 725, Deel D, No. 761, n.p.

⁶⁸⁷ TAD, W.J. Leyds Archief, Volume 579, Deel E, No. 723, n.p.

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