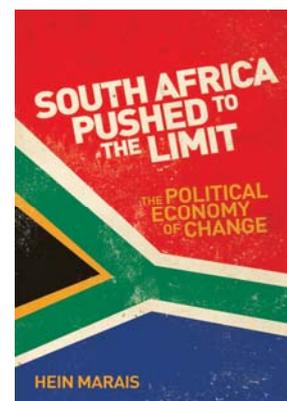


SOUTH AFRICA PUSHED TO THE LIMIT

The political economy of change

By **HEIN MARAIS**



Praise for Hein Marais' latest book

- **"An extraordinary achievement.** *This is, by a considerable margin, the best book yet on the political economy of South Africa. Marais combines an unrivalled knowledge of the literature with a prose style that is accessible, moving and witty. I know of very few authors who can discuss such complex issues while telling a story and engaging the reader.*"
 - John Sender, Emeritus Professor of Economics, School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, and Fellow of Wolfson College, University of Cambridge.
- **"SOUTH AFRICA PUSHED TO THE LIMIT will become a classic.** *I doubt whether anyone can match Marais' grasp of where South Africa is at today.*"
 - Bill Freund, Professor of Economic History, University of KwaZulu-Natal; author of *THE MAKING OF CONTEMPORARY AFRICA*.
- **"Combining powerful analysis with a wealth of documentation, SOUTH AFRICA PUSHED TO THE LIMIT provides by far the best overview of political, economic and social change in post-apartheid South Africa. Essential reading for anyone trying to understand one of the great social experiments of our time."**
 - Gillian Hart, Professor of Geography and Chair of Development Studies at the University of California at Berkeley; author of *DISABLING GLOBALIZATION: Places of power in post-apartheid South Africa*.

South Africa's democratic government has worked hard at improving the lives of the black majority, yet close to half the population lives in poverty, jobs are scarce, and the country is more unequal than ever. For millions, the colour of a person's skin still decides their destiny. In its wide-ranging, incisive and provocative analysis, *South Africa Pushed to the Limit* shows that although the legacies of apartheid and colonialism weigh heavy, many of the strategic choices made since the early 1990s have compounded those handicaps. The big winners of the transition, Marais demonstrates, have been the country's conglomerates, especially those active in the finance sector. The basic structure of Africa's biggest economy, however, remains largely intact and continues to serve a gilded minority, which now accommodates sections of the new political elite. The government, meanwhile, has squandered crucial leverage in a series of errors and miscalculations – at huge detriment to efforts to reduce poverty and inequality. The book explains why those choices were made, where they went awry, and why South Africa's vaunted formations of the left – old and new – have failed to prevent or alter them.

Building on his acclaimed book *Limits to Change*, Marais examines South Africa's most pressing issues – from the real reasons behind President Jacob Zuma's rise and the purging of his predecessor, Thabo Mbeki, and how the African National Congress replenishes its power, to piercing analyses of the country's continuing AIDS crisis, its economic path, the changes wrought in the world of work, and the unfolding struggles over belonging and identity. *South Africa Pushed to the Limit* presents a riveting, benchmark analysis of the incomplete journey beyond apartheid.

SOUTH AFRICA PUSHED TO THE LIMIT
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ESSENTIAL READING FOR:

- * Analysts and researchers
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- * Activists
- * Political and business journalists
- * Students and academics in the fields of sociology, politics, African studies, economics, development studies, public health, and history

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Writer **HEIN MARAIS** is widely regarded as one of the most trenchant and provocative analysts of South Africa today.

David Welsh (Emeritus Professor at the University of Cape Town) has called him "probably the **most intelligent and articulate author** who writes about South Africa in a Marxist paradigm". His previous book, *South Africa: Limits to Change – The political economy of transition* (published in two editions) won wide acclaim in South Africa and abroad. It was praised as "**a masterpiece**" (Sean Jacobs, Assistant Professor at the New School, NYC) and deemed "**essential reading**" (Gillian Hart, Professor in Geography, University of California) for "**break[ing] new ground** both in its analysis and in its discussions of the options available to the South African left" (Adam Habib, Deputy Vice Chancellor, University of Johannesburg). *South Africa: Limits to Change* has been used in teaching curricula at all South Africa's major universities and at universities around the world.

As a writer and journalist, MARAIS has won admiration for his informed and incisive analyses of South Africa's transition, his ability to upend convenient wisdoms, and his engaging style of writing. Since the early 1990s, when he was deputy editor of *Work in Progress* magazine, his numerous essays and articles have been published widely in South Africa and abroad.

Marais has also written two benchmark studies on South Africa's AIDS epidemic (*To the Edge: AIDS policy in South Africa*, and *Buckling: The impact of AIDS*), served as senior producer on SABC Radio's *AM LIVE*, and is a former chief writer for the Joint UN Programme on AIDS.

His latest book, *South Africa Pushed to the Limit*, presents arguably the most comprehensive and bracing account yet of how far South Africa has progressed in its unfinished journey beyond apartheid, and where it seems headed.

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