Derek Hook (ed.), *Lie on Your Wounds: The Prison Correspondence of Robert Mangaliso* (Johannesburg: Wits University Press, 2019), 565 pp., ISBN 9781776142408.

Derek Hook's useful and timely *Lie on Your Wounds: The Prison Correspondence of Robert Mangaliso Sobukwe* brings together in book form the letters of the Robert Sobukwe Papers, an archive currently held at the Wits Historical Research Papers in Johannesburg. Given that the papers were already fully digitised and have been publicly available and easily accessible for some time, it is relevant to ask what Hook's edited volume brings to the growing interest – both scholarly and popular – in Sobukwe that is new.[1]

The Robert Sobukwe Papers consist of a somewhat wider range of materials than Hook has included in his volume, comprising for example – perhaps of most interest to researchers – of a series of day-long interviews of Sobukwe conducted by his friend and biographer, the journalist Benjamin Pogrund, on the role of communism in 'African' politics as well as some draft papers and articles by Peter Hjul and Randolph Vigne (both prominent figures in the Liberal Party of South Africa and liberal opposition to apartheid generally) on the relationship between the Cape Town branch of the Pan Africanist Congress (PAC) and the Liberal Party (LPSA) in the 1960s. Other material that appears in the Papers but not in Hook's volume includes a large number of photographs, many of them taken either by Pogrund, Peter Magubane or Ralph Ndawo, and depicting Sobukwe and his family (including Pogrund and his wife and children), the events of 21 March 1960 leading up to the Sharpeville massacre, and Sobukwe on Robben Island during the 1960s.

But the focus of Hook's volume is the personal correspondence contained in the Papers. This comprises of Sobukwe's prison letters to his wife Veronica Sobukwe, Benjamin Pogrund, Sobukwe's particular friend, and Nell Marquard, a lecturer of English at Stellenbosch University and the wife of the eminent liberal intellectual, Leo Marquard, with whom Sobukwe exchanged many letters. One of the things that sets Hook's collection apart from other collections of prison letters is the fact that he has chosen to include not only Sobukwe letters to his friends but their replies to him.[2] Thus we gain insight not only into Sobukwe but also into the quality of his relationships with others. Here and there other figures in or on the periphery of the anti-apartheid struggle put in an appearance, not as correspondents but as characters in the letters between Sobukwe and his interlocutors and sometimes as figures who supported and aided Sobukwe and his family during his incarceration on Robben Island.

1 For an example of some of the scholarly interest, see the 2016 *Psychology in Society* special issue that took Sobukwe's life and ideas as its focus, edited by Hook and Grahame Hayes.

2 Robert D. Vassen's collection of Ahmed Kathrada's letters, for example, does not include the letters of Kathrada's correspondents. It is not clear whether this was a choice or whether such correspondence had not been persevered. Either way, the volume suffers for it. See R. D. Vassen (ed.), *Letters from Robben Island: A Selection of Ahmed Kathrada's Prison Correspondence, 1964-1989* (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 1999).

These are too numerous to detail fully here but they include some of the women of the Black Sash, such as Moira Henderson and Eulalie Stott, other figures in the liberal opposition to apartheid such as Helen Suzman, Jill and Ernie Wentzel, figures in the communist opposition to apartheid such as Norma Kitson (briefly Pogrund's lover), and members of the PAC such as Nana Mahoma and Zeph Mothopeng.

The letters establish, among other things, a deep connection between Sobukwe and the social and political circle of liberal opponents to apartheid. This connection unsettles received ideas about the relationship between members of different political formations – in this case the Liberal Party and the Pan Africanist Congress – during the liberation struggle, revealing a richer and more complex picture of affection and ally-ship than has previously been acknowledged. This connection presents an opportunity, in our increasingly polarised political landscape, for scholars, artists and intellectuals to think about how friendship complicates the much clearer political and ideological divisions with which we are familiar.

What then is new about Hook's contribution? Firstly, Hook has managed to get permission to make the love letters Sobukwe wrote to his wife published. In the digitised and physical collections, until recently, these were not readily available, and permission had to be sought from the Sobukwe family to view them. These are a wonderful addition to what is publicly available to researchers and other interested readers, allowing us to gain insight into aspects of Sobukwe's personality and inner life that are often lacking in our portraits of struggle figures.[3] In negotiating the publication of these letters, Hook has immeasurably enriched our knowledge of Sobukwe.

What will be most valuable for scholars and enthusiasts of Sobukwe and the period are Hook's detailed footnotes, which are crammed with useful information about Sobukwe, his circle of intimates, and both local and global events and personalities as well as Sobukwe's general milieu. For most readers it will also be a blessing that the handwriting of Sobukwe and his interlocutors has been so painstakingly (and accurately) deciphered by Hook and his assistants. Although some of the original letters are typed, a great many are in Sobukwe's almost indecipherable scrawl making then difficult and time consuming to read in the original.

My only criticism of Hook's otherwise excellent collection is the way in which he chooses to frame the letters in his introduction to the volume. My critique is not so much of what he says but of what he doesn't say. Rather than providing the reader with insight into the constitution of this archive – how and why it came to be, details that are essential to any critical apprehension of its contents – or what Carolyn Hamilton would call its 'backstory',[4] Hook worries instead about the intimacy between Sobukwe and his liberal friends. Any scholarly collection should ideally comment on the making of the archive it represents insofar as that is possible. An

3 In his critique of South African political biography Ciraj Rassool has pointed out how neglected these aspects of struggle figures lives often are, particularly when they are men. See C. Rassol, 'Rethinking Documentary History and South African Political Biography', *South African Review of Sociology*, 41, 1, 2010, 28-55.

4 See C. Hamilton, 'Backstory, Biography, and the Life of the James Stuart Archive', *History in Africa*, 38, 2011, 319-341.

introduction that flagged some of the issues in archive constitution and how they relate to how we read this archive would have been welcome. Nevertheless, the volume is a solid addition to the growing interest in and scholarship on Robert Sobukwe. And the work it does not do – a thinking through of the putting together of this particular archive – is a boon to younger scholars looking for a way in which to make their mark on existing scholarship.

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