



Lie on your wounds: The prison correspondence of Robert Mangaliso Sobukwe

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Product Details

Format: Digital download
 ISBN: 9781776142415
 Published: 1st Jan 2019
 Publisher: Wits University Press
 Dimensions: 592 pages

Description

Robert Sobukwe, the founder and first leader of the Pan Africanist Congress (PAC), was silenced throughout his life, a condition which has been extended into the post-apartheid present. This book, comprising approximately 300 letters, provides access to his words via the single most poignant resource of Sobukwe's own voice that exists: his prison letters. Not only do the letters evince Sobukwe's storytelling abilities, they convey the complexity of a man who defied easy categorisation. More than this: they are testimony both to the desolate conditions of his imprisonment and to Sobukwe's unbending commitment to the cause of African liberation. Although jailed for nine years, including a six-year period of near complete solitary confinement on Robben Island, Sobukwe was better known during rather than after apartheid. Given his antagonistic views to both white liberalism and the African National Congress (ANC) it is unsurprising that he has been subjected to a 'consensus of forgetting'. With the changing political climate of recent years, the decline of the ANC's hegemonic hold on power, the re-emergence of Black Consciousness and Africanist political discourse and the growth of student protests, Sobukwe is being looked to as a leader once again.

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Address at Fort Hare College Delivered by Mr Sobukwe, October 21, 1949

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