

https://dspace.org/

Soweto in exile: the publication history of Joyce Sikakane’s A Window on Soweto

Sikakana, Mbali

2018

https://hdl.handle.net/10539/27655

Sikakana, Mbali Khanyisile (2018) Soweto in exile : the publication history of Joyce Sikakane's 'A window on Soweto", University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, https://hdl.handle.net/10539/27655

Downloaded from a DSpace repository. https://dspace.org/

Soweto in Exile: The Publication History of Joyce Sikakane's *A Window on Soweto*

By

Mbali Sikakana

(Student Number: 1809400)

Supervisor: Professor Isabel Hofmeyr

A research report submitted to the Faculty of Humanities, School of Literature, Language and Media in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of M.A. Publishing Studies at the University of the Witwatersrand.

March 2018

Declaration

I declare that this research report is my own unaided work. It is submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in Publishing (by Coursework and Research Report) in the Department of Publishing Studies, School of Literature, Language and Media, University of the Witwatersrand. It has not been submitted for any other degree or examination at any other university or institution.

Mbali Sikakana

March 2018

Abstract

Soweto in Exile: The Publication History of Joyce Sikakane's A Window on Soweto

This research report examines the autobiographical work of Joyce Sikakane-Rankin (nee Sikakane), *A Window on Soweto*, and its publishing by the International Defence and Aid Fund (IDAF) in London in 1977. The autobiography is located as emanating from a sense of community, being about Soweto, its plight and her place in it, and appealing to international communities. The study follows the publishing process from manuscript procurement to reprint and translations, detailing planning and editorial, promotions and printing. My argument is that the book was a significant and game-changing publication for the IDAF at the time, in terms of its relative success as regards sales and cultural impact as well as its departure from the organisation's regular output which avoided subjectivity. The study details the derivation of this subjectivity from Joyce Sikakane's own extraordinary life experiences which included detention and exile and provides a view of the impact of this subjectivity on the publishing process.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank my supporters in this project, first of all the subject of this research, Mrs Joyce Sikakane-Rankin, whose trust, candour and contacts were invaluable in enriching the outcome. Secondly, I would like to thank my family for their various contributions to my well-being during the course of my study. Thirdly, I would like to thank Ms Vatiswa Ntshanga for her encouragement and persistent generosity.

To the academic staff at the University of the Witwatersrand, thank you. Colleen Dawson, thanks for believing I could take this leap. Professor Isabel Hofmeyr, thank you for believing in my skills as a researcher and helping me refine my writing.

Mbali Sikakana

Table of Contents

Chapter 1 3

Introduction 3

Global Anti-Apartheid Movement: Britain 4

Non-profit, Oppositional Publishing as Context for IDAF 6

1976 Student Uprisings 9

Joyce Sikakane – Intellectual Biography 11

- Independence 12
- Solidarity 13
- Imprisonment 14

Methods 15

Chapter 2 17

A Window on Soweto: The Prepublication Process 17

- General Background 17
- The Biography of the Manuscript 18
- Operations at the IDAF 21
- Planning and Editorial 24
- Promotions 27
- Printing 29
- Conclusion 30

Chapter 3 31

Publication of *A Window on Soweto* 31

- Immediate Reception 32
- Sales 32
- Rights and Translations 39
- Reprint 40
- Reviews 43
- Truth and Reconciliation Commission 46
- Conclusion 46

Chapter 4 48

The Writer and Community 48

Writing as Distress Signal for Community across Communities 49

The Question of Ambiguous Privilege 56

Chapter 5 62
Conclusion 62
Reference List 65
Primary Sources 65
Interviews 68
Secondary Sources 68

Chapter 1

Introduction

The purpose of this research is to analyse the publishing process of the book *A Window on Soweto* written by Joyce Sikakane (now Joyce Sikakane-Rankin) and published by the International Defence and Aid Fund of Southern Africa (IDAF) in 1977 from their headquarters in London.

In an interview with Sarita Ranchod looking at pioneering women in journalism, Joyce Sikakane-Rankin says, 'I wrote a book called *Window on Soweto* recounting my experiences of growing up in Soweto, working in newspapers and my experiences of prison and exile'.[1] She goes on to say that the book's proceeds 'went to pay the legal fees of political prisoners' – a key clause for the IDAF as an organisation. Dorothy Driver described the book as 'skillfully interweaving personal narrative (including family history) with historical and sociological accounts'.[2] On the content, Driver expands further saying that the book is an important account of 'the systemic dangers and insults faced by black professional women.'[3]

Joyce Sikakane-Rankin is an apartheid-era journalist, writer, poet, documentary filmmaker and struggle veteran. She was the first woman journalist at *The World* and the first black woman journalist at the *Rand Daily Mail*.[4] Her poetry was published in *Anti-Apartheid News*[5] and she completed documentary projects while in exile such as a 'documentary on Samora Machel with a Canadian filmmaker and a documentary about Zimbabwe on the occasion of 10 years of independence, called Zimbabwe – The New Struggle'.[6] In 1969 she was arrested as part of the 'Trial of 22' with others such as Winnie Madikizela-Mandela[7] and Shantie Naidoo[8] whereafter she was imprisoned for two years, 18 months of these in solitary confinement.[9]

---

[1] Sarita Ranchod, 'Herstories Celebrating Pioneering Women in South African Journalism', *Rhodes Journalism Review* 4, (2004): 69.
[2] Dorothy Driver, 'Joyce Sikhakhane, Working on The Mail', in *Women Writing Africa: The Southern Region*. ed. Margaret Daymond (Johannesburg: Wits University Press, 2003), 348.
[3] Ibid., 348.
[4] South African Democracy Education Trust, *The Road to Democracy: South Africans Telling Their Stories Volume 1, 1950 – 1970* (Johannesburg: South African Democracy Education Trust, 2008).
[5] Louise Crane, *Ms Africa: Profiles of Modern African Women* (New York: J.B. Lippincott Company, 1973)
[6] Ranchod, 'Herstories Celebrating Pioneering Women in South African Journalism', 69.
[7] Luli Callinicos, 'Testimonies and Transitions: Women Negotiating the Rural and Urban in the Mid-20th Century', in *Women in South African History: Basusíimbokodo, Bawelímilambo/ They Remove Boulders and Cross Rivers.* ed. Nomboniso Gasa (Cape Town: HSRC Press, 2007):177.
[8] Driver, 'Joyce Sikhakhane, Working on the Mail'.
[9] Ranchod, 'Herstories Celebrating Pioneering Women in South African Journalism'.

The research looks at the life of Joyce Sikakane, the author, first in South Africa and then in exile in Lusaka. The project will discuss the publishing process of the book and its release as well as the subsequent life of the book. The research offers an intellectual biography of the author drawing on interviews with the author and through interpretations of the text, in order to better understand her in relation to the work. Drawing on the IDAF archive, the publishing process for the book is also tracked including how key historical figures such as Ruth First aided its publishing. Therefore, the book is located within the context of books published by the Fund around the same time and contextualised against historical events. The thesis will explore how the author wrote the book as a warning about, or precursor to the Soweto Student uprisings of 1976, which she tried to anticipate through the text.

The objective of this study is to illuminate an area of study of South Africa's literary and political history as it relates to publishing that has not been studied in depth: publishing about South Africa by a black South African woman outside the country during apartheid. Very little has also been studied with regards to the IDAF's publishing and this research adds this theme of exile publishing as a way of extending broader understandings of the histories of South African publishing. It is offered as well that the publishing of the book is of historical significance due to the circumstances of its publishing, the time period and the opportunity for further scholarship presented. This is also the first research on the publishing of this book in South Africa.

In pursuing these themes, this thesis embeds them in a number of different scholarly fields. These are: the historical resistance against apartheid from Britain and other parts of Europe, non-profit publishing as a vehicle for political ideals and aims, the 1976 Soweto uprising as expressed in literature, followed by an intellectual biography of Sikakane.

In the following chapters, I set out to provide a view of the journey of *A Window on Soweto*'s prepublication process by providing a general background of the circumstances of publication, a biography of the manuscript which includes its procurement by the IDAF, a view of general operations at the IDAF at the time and then planning and editorial, promotions and printing of the manuscript. Secondly, I demonstrate the progress of its publication and subsequent life as a text by examining its immediate reception, sales, rights and translations, reprint, reviews and its role in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. Lastly, I analyse the text by locating it within the relationship between writer and community and then discussing the use it makes of writing as a distress signal as well as its position on the question of ambiguous privilege.

Global Anti-Apartheid Movement: Britain

The extensive scholarship on the Anti-Apartheid Movement (AAM) has pivoted around the following major themes:

1. Geopolitical shifts: The dominance of the Cold War during the entire period of its existence,[10] the shift in norms where ideas of racial equality in western societies became normalised after the success of the US civil rights movement[11] and the successful decolonisation of several African countries starting in the 1960's,[12] making overt racism unacceptable and emboldening the UN per the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.[13]
2. Developments within the groupings which were identified as its key constituencies such as trade unions, churches, students and local authorities.[14] These groups included diverse social bases and ideological orientations which became part of a post-war era of a new transnational political culture comprised of other solidarity movements such as student, green, peace, women's movements conceptualised as the 'new social movements' and suggesting a global civil society.[15]
3. Interrogations of the ideological stances and priorities of the movement as well as critiques of consultative bias. Genevieve Klein suggests 'that while political prisoner and human rights campaigns proved highly successful in attracting support for the anti-apartheid struggle, this support became centred on the ANC as the primary South African liberation movement.'[16] The preference for economic withdrawal and sanctions over 'constructive engagement' – a type of reform strategy[17] as well as the myriad of other strategies employed such as sports boycotts. Internal conflicts such as the perception of the sanctioning of armed struggle also fall within this theme.
4. The political artistic output of members and organisations of the AAM movement as well as ANC members exiled abroad in London. This includes such groupings as the Mayibuye Cultural Ensemble and the Amandla Cultural Ensemble. *Poets to the People* - a poetry anthology edited by Barry Feinberg and including the likes of Wally Serote, Dennis Brutus and Oswald Mtshali and staged at the Mermaid Theatre in London - was 'one of the central impetuses for the gradual integration of culture into the organised activities of the ANC in exile'.[18] Gilbert goes on to say that 'culture was actively recruited to promote the anti-

[10] Christabel Gurney, 'The 1970s: The Anti-Apartheid Movement's Difficult Decade', *Journal of Southern African Studies* 35, no.2, (2009).
[11] Adrian Guelke, *Rethinking the Rise and Fall of Apartheid* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005).
[12] E.S. Reddy, 'Apartheid and the International Community', *Issue: A Journal of Opinion* 4, no. 3 (1974).
[13] Genevieve Klein, 'The British Anti-Apartheid Movement and Political Prisoner Campaigns, 1973-1980', *Journal of Southern African Studies* 35, no. 2, (2009).
[14] Gurney, 'The 1970s: The Anti-Apartheid Movement's Difficult Decade'.
[15] Håkan Thörn, 'Solidarity Across Borders: The Transnational Anti-Apartheid Movement', *Voluntas: International Journal of Voluntary and Nonprofit Organizations* 17, no. 4 (2006): 286.
[16] Klein, 'The British Anti-Apartheid Movement and Political Prisoner Campaigns, 1973-1980', 456.
[17] Hilary Sapire, 'Liberation Movements, Exile, and International Solidarity: An Introduction', *Journal of Southern African Studies* 35, no. 2 (2009); 272.

apartheid struggle internationally'. Hilary Sapire notes that the extensive reach of the anti-apartheid movement was significantly aided by the process of cultural globalisation, harnessing global consumer and popular culture to garner mass audiences by the 1980's.[19]

My work locates itself within all of these themes which bear on my key concerns, namely the political affiliation of the author, the book itself and the context for publishing. However, the fourth theme is especially pertinent and this section consequently hones in on it, demonstrating how my work relates to and extends this research.

A Window on Soweto represents the autobiographical voice of a black South African woman within this cultural output of the AAM, and within what is described as the 'difficult decade' for the AAM, where it was unclear how 'the development of worker militancy and student rebellion, and the growth of independent trade unions and the black consciousness movement would impact on the development of the struggle within South Africa and the role of the ANC'.[20] Published by IDAF a year after the student uprisings of 1976, the book appeared in the context of a muted British response to the massacre of schoolchildren. Christabel Gurney notes that 'the reaction in Britain to the Soweto shootings was more muted than to Sharpeville or the township insurrections of the mid-1980s'.[21] Gurney locates this response as follows: 'As children in the South African townships defied bullets and teargas, Britain was preoccupied with threats of cuts in public expenditure and record post-war unemployment. But it was also because the AAM was in organisational disarray.'[22]

Non-profit, Oppositional Publishing as Context for IDAF

My research is centred on the structural and ideological basis for the oppositional publishing that produced *A Window on Soweto*. The IDAF was structured around three clauses or bases of operation: 1) ensuring that every person standing trial in South Africa for opposing the apartheid government would receive the best possible legal defence in the hopes of ensuring a fair trial 2) ensuring that dependents of those standing trial, imprisoned, banished, house arrested, banned or hanged received assistance 3) researching information to produce objective, factual information about South Africa and publicise the evils of apartheid, 'which became critical as the South African government expanded its propaganda campaign'.[23] The last unit came later in its founding and undergirded the

---

[18] Shirli Gilbert, 'Singing against Apartheid: ANC Cultural Groups and the International Anti-Apartheid Struggle', *Journal of Southern African Studies* 33, no. 2 (2007): 424.
[19] Sapire, 'Liberation Movements, Exile, and International Solidarity: An Introduction'.
[20] Gurney, 'The 1970s: The Anti-Apartheid Movement's Difficult Decade', 472.
[21] Ibid., 481.
[22] Ibid, 481.
[23] Rica Hodgson, *Foot Soldier for Freedom: A Life in South Africa's Liberation Movement* (Johannesburg: Picador Africa, 2010), 147.

need for publishing as part of the assault on the apartheid government. The ideological basis for the organisation is reflected in the member base of the AAM as well as the main early funders of the IDAF being Christian Action which included Christians, Quakers and pacifists[24] much like the anti-slavery movement in Britain.

To trace the development of the aims of the IDAF is to trace the most notable historical upheavals and disturbances of apartheid-era South Africa. While travelling in the north of England by train in December of 1956, Canon Collins (IDAF founder) heard of the arrest of hundreds of South Africans charged with high treason. He pledged and wired all of the available funds of predecessor and IDAF sister organisation Christian Action, for legal defence.[25] This began a campaign-orientated and focused defence fund organising effort still under Christian Action called the 'Christian Action Treason Trial Fund'[26] that culminated in a 'legally distinct British Defence and Aid Fund for Southern Africa'.[27] With the fund operations taken over, this became the Clause I unit of the IDAF. The welfare operations, or Clause II, began with help for the families of the victims of the Sharpeville massacre in March of 1960, these funds had been procured through the prolonged press on Sharpeville generating international donations for both the Treason Trial and 'welfare and other initiatives inside South Africa'.[28] Clause III began in the 'late 1960's'[29] under former South African Labour MP Alex Hepple and his wife who used the services of volunteer housewives to collect clippings of apartheid realities from publications. From this beginning, came a 'tightly edited bi-monthly'[30] called *Focus* from successor Alan Brooks and then in time this was supplemented by the publishing of books. Hugh Lewin, who ran Clause III operations from 1972, was able to introduce a photo library – John Seymour, whose photographs appear in *A Window on Soweto*, contributed a calendar that made what is described as a 'fairly handsome profit'[31] for the IDAF. The evolution of Clause III follows the trend described by Janet Nyeko, who argues that most publishing programmes in non-profit organisations start as a section of the documentation department, being likely comprised of good journalists, who are nonetheless not trained to deal with authors and may 'tend towards a liking for the dramatic and brevity'.[32] She adds that documentalists don't tend to concern themselves with the appearance of books, which tends to mean that the grey literature produced is as good as a published research report.[33] Given that the delineation of information duties between the IDAF and AAM (the main

[24] Denis Herbstein, *White Lies: Canon Collins and the Secret War against Apartheid*. (Oxford: James Currey Publishers, 2004).
[25] Ibid., 27.
[26] Hodgson, *Foot Soldier for Freedom*, 144.
[27] Herbstein, *White Lies*, 36.
[28] Ibid., 44.
[29] Ibid.,193.
[30] Ibid., 194.
[31] Ibid., 194.
[32] Janet Nyeko, *The ABC of Book Publishing: A Training Manual for NGOs in Africa* (Kampala: Janyeko Publishing Centre, 1999), 20.
[33] Ibid., 20

vehicle for public campaigns) meant that the former produced information and the latter propaganda sometimes using the IDAF's information, any greyness in the aesthetics of the material can be explained on the IDAF's part by intent and purpose.[34] In the year of the publishing of *A Window on Soweto*, the Research and Information Department within Clause III operations consisted of a core staff of Jan Marsh focused on South Africa (writer background and editor of the manuscript), Margaret Ling focused on Zimbabwe/Namibia (a secretarial background in the AAM), Jim Corrigall (journalism background) and Jeremy Brickhill (Zimbabwean liberation struggle background).[35] Each clause had its own staff complement and distinct reporting responsibilities on their activities to the founder and Board.

William K. Carroll and R. S. Ratner talk about oppositional cultures moving 'beyond the initial phase of social-movement formation' and 'the challenge of maintaining and elaborating that culture as a vibrant lifeworld, in the face of both colonising and marginalising moves by capital and the state'.[36] In my work, *A Window on Soweto* is located as providing the opportunity for a means for the IDAF of creating this 'vibrant lifeworld' for those outside of the limits of the apartheid state but still under the marginalising moves of capital in their own territories and their own states. This particular approach was also followed by independent publishing in former communist states such as Poland. The Polish Independent Publishing Movement was borne out of the totalitarian regime that had the state ban literature through a censorship office. The movement circumvented this with an independent literary magazine that published officially banned works then started publishing commissioned works. Włodzimierz Bolecki notes that this was also contextualised within 'a broad social movement, and its greatest strength was practical support from the majority of the Polish people'.[37] A central tenet of this independent publishing, besides publishing those in opposition to the regime, was agility. Though authors were offered a book of worse material quality, a smaller number of copies and a lower fee, the independent publishers acted quickly, books were published within several months.[38] Writers were also able to avoid the editing services of the censor and agree to 'improvements' over 'humiliating conversations with officials'. Grzegorz Boguta states that 'as in other East European countries, unofficial publishing companies played a major role in bringing about the downfall of the communist system'.[39] The IDAF therefore was acting within the tradition and practices of other oppositional

---

[34] Herbstein, *White Lies*, 195.
[35] Report on Clause III Work 1977/1978 for the International Defence and Aid Fund Annual Conference in London, held 5-7 May 1978, Page 7, MC31, Box 3482, Historical Papers, UWC Robben Island Mayibuye Archives.
[36] William K. Carroll and R. S. and Ratner, 'Sustaining Oppositional Cultures in 'Post-Socialist' Times: A Comparative Study of Three Social Movement Organisations', *Sociology* 35, no. 3 (2001): 606.
[37] Włodzimierz Bolecki, 'The Totalitarian Urge vs. Literature: The Origins and Achievements of the Polish Independent Publishing Movement', *Canadian Slavonic Papers / Revue Canadienne des Slavistes* 39, no. ½ (1997): 59.
[38] Ibid., 60.
[39] Grzegorz Boguta, 'From the Surveillance of the Secret Police to the "Free Market": Publishing in Poland Today', *Agni*, no. 31/32 (1990): 50.

publishing movements.

Jochen Hoffman in analysing the magazines of non-profit organisations found that not only are non-profit organisations positioned within 'the triangle of civil society, politics, and economy', but also that those tasked with communicative activities tended to be paid employees and not volunteers and that because employees receive payment for their services, 'the medium of money automatically begins to intervene'.[40] In the case of the IDAF, Hodgson[41] who headed the welfare division recounts that she and Phyllis Altman who headed up legal services were extremely cautious about volunteers for security reasons and wary of using any in the first place. In exceptional circumstances, only those known personally from South Africa and trusted implicitly were accepted. Salaried staff were carefully vetted and recommended within the AAM. Jan Marsh, editor of *A Window on Soweto* once remarked that IDAF founder Canon Collins, who 'disliked straight all-round pay rises',[42] 'traded on the fact that most of us were doing it for our beliefs'.[43]

1976 Student Uprisings

Much of the literature on the 1976 Soweto student uprisings emphasizes the mapping of events and players prior to the unrest,[44] the events of the day on the 16 June[45] and the result and impact thereof, including issues of memory.[46]

My research considers the uprising from the vantage point of exile and explores the possibility that *A Window on Soweto* attempted to 'predict' the event. Gurney notes that 'even before the uprising, news had reached the AAM that high school students were being picked up by the security police

---

[40] Jochen Hoffman, 'In the Triangle of Civil Society, Politics, and Economy: Positioning Magazines of Nonprofit Organizations', *Voluntas: International Journal of Voluntary and Nonprofit Organizations* 22, no. 1 (2011): 100.
[41] Hodgson, *Foot Soldier for Freedom*
[42] Denis Herbstein, *White Lies*, 196.
[43] Ibid., 196.
[44] David M. Sibeko, 'From Sharpeville to Soweto', The Black Scholar, South Africa: The Liberation Movement 9, no. 5 (1978).
Nozipho J. Diseko, 'The Origins and Development of the South African Student's Movement (SASM): 1968-1976', *Journal of Southern African Studies* 18, no. 1 (1992).
Clive Glaser, ''We Must Infiltrate the Tsotsis': School Politics and Youth Gangs in Soweto, 1968-1976', *Journal of Southern African Studies* 24, no. 2 (1998).
[45] Saths Cooper, 'Political Violence in South Africa: The Role of Youth', *Issue: A Journal of Opinion* 22, no. 2 (1994).
Ali Khangela Hlongwane, 'The Mapping of the June 16 1976 Soweto Student Uprisings Routes: Past Recollections and Present Reconstruction(s)', *Journal of African Cultural Studies* 19, no. 1 (2007).
[46] Helena Pohlandt-McCormick, 'Controlling Woman: Winnie Mandela and the 1976 Soweto Uprising', *The International Journal of African Historical Studies* 33, no. 3 (2000).
Gary Baines, 'The Master Narrative of South Africa's Liberation Struggle: Remembering and Forgetting June 16, 1976', *The International Journal of African Historical Studies* 40, no. 2 (2007).

because they were discussing military training and that far more had been detained than was reported in the press'.[47]

To locate *A Window on Soweto* as creative history within these events, I turn to Aubrey Mokadi who has mapped both non-fiction and fiction representations of the student uprisings. The non-fictional accounts consist of 'formal, academic and White liberal histories', 'official history' of the government' and journalistic reports, while the fictional accounts are represented as an analysis of the novels, *The Children of Soweto* by Mbulelo Mzamane, *Amandla* by Miriam Tlali, *A Ride on the Whirlwind* by Sipho Sepamla and *To Every Birth Its Blood* by Mongane Serote.[48] While *A Window on Soweto* employs some journalistic elements and is not a novel, it is nonetheless a form of life writing which is often compared to novels, as in the biographical novel or fictional biography.[49] Like *Mhudi* by Sol Plaatjie and *Chaka* by Thomas Mofolo, the novels share 'the objective of recording and preserving history';[50] they share the prominence of traditional values – a by-product of the black consciousness movement,[51] and are 'rooted in their own contemporary milieu while the past is invoked as inspiration'.[52] They also share an emphasis on the delineation of heroes and villains on opposite moral sides regardless of race, depicted in the continuous use of 'us' and 'them', the police as a disruptive force to 'communal life and values', the community as hero, the anti-hero and individual heroes.

A Window on Soweto shares in all of these themes. The community is seen as one, producing many heroes and anti-heroes who are glimpsed in black 'traitor' police and complicit officials. There is room also to see the conflict in *A Window on Soweto* between traditional values and the contemporary Sowetan milieu in which it is set, especially when juxtaposed against the difficult socio-economic conditions of the time.

A Window on Soweto puts a spotlight on 'education in Soweto'. There appears a section of the same name that serves to illuminate the challenges faced by school-going children in the township. Joyce Sikakane highlights the policy aims of Bantu Education and its psychological effects, its inexplicable links to the Soweto community at large 'where the population is being reduced and family life discouraged',[53] the segregation of education by ethnic group, the hurdles to education caused by the enforcement of other laws like pass laws, the cost of school as enforced specifically and unfairly on the families of black students, shortage of teachers and overcrowding and the extra years in the

[47] Gurney, 'The 1970s: The Anti-Apartheid Movement's Difficult Decade', 480.
[48] Aubrey Mokadi, *Narrative as Creative History: The 1976 Soweto Uprising as Depicted in Black South African Novels* (Randburg: Sedibeng Publishing House, 2003), 49.
[49] Ina Schabert, 'Fictional Biography, Factual Biography, and their Contaminations', *Biography* 5, no. 1 (1982).
[50] Mokadi, *Narrative as Creative History*, 103.
[51] Ibid., 106.
[52] Ibid., 106.
[53] Joyce Sikakane, *A Window on Soweto* (London: IDAF, 1977), 39.

schooling system imposed by the law on black pupils, amongst other serious issues. This picture clearly depicts a ticking time-bomb that any native engagement with community life would be able to anticipate.

Joyce Sikakane – Intellectual Biography

Part of this project focuses on Sikakane's biography and the research will take account of theorizations of biography. Harold Nicolson notes the popularity of biography wanes during eras of faith but in the succeeding eras of doubt, speculation and scepticism, interest in human behaviour increases.[54] Margaretta Jolly contextualises life-writing within an era in late modernity that has 'spotlit' intimate relations where families, feelings and love lives have been opened to public politics.[55] Evelyn J. Hinz suggests that conflict is indigenous to life-writing and that the more correct comparison to it is not in fact prose but the drama genre.[56] In terms of categorisation of biographies, Arnold Rampersad is unconvinced by the concept of 'intellectual biography' and finds this to be a contradiction in terms, explaining that biography is 'life-writing' and intelligence is but one guiding force in a person's life along with appetite, chance and luck.[57]

Betty Franklin and Lucy Townsend outline the relational ethics of acting as biographer to a woman as not just about listening to stories but also about 'voice, repetitions, omissions, conflicts and contradictions' in a continuous and mutual flow of narrative research; or a mutually constructed biography that does not assume the researcher to be the neutral 'knower'.[58] Amia Lieblich adds the dimension that biography writing about a woman should include an understanding of 'the inner world and life of the woman - her personality, her traits and motives, her strengths and weaknesses, her pathology and her resilience'.[59] Susan Ware highlights the importance of this work by stating that 'biography played a vibrant and significant part in the growth of women's history as a well-respected and popular field within the historical profession'.[60]

Joyce Sikakane was born in 1943 to a prominent ANC family in Soweto. She started her initial schooling in 1950 at a primary school run by the Anglican Church parish of the Reverend Trevor

---

[54] Harold Nicolson, 'The Practice of Biography', *The American Scholar* 23, no. 2 (1954).
[55] Margaretta Jolly, 'Introduction: Life Writing as Intimate Publics', *Biography* 34, no. 1 (2011).
[56] Evelyn J. Hinz, 'A Speculative Introduction: Life-Writing as Drama', *Mosaic: An Interdisciplinary Critical Journal* 20, no. 4 (1987).
[57] Arnold Rampersad, 'Design and Truth in Biography', *South Central Review* 9, no. 2 (1992).
[58] Betty Franklin and Lucy Townsend, 'Relational Ethics in Writing a Woman's Life', *Journal of Thought* 30, no. 1 (1995).
[59] Lieblich, Amia. 'Writing Biography as a Relationship', *Nashim: A Journal of Jewish Women's Studies & Gender Issues*, no. 7 (2004): 206.
[60] Susan Ware, 'Writing Women's Lives: One Historian's Perspective', *The Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 40, no. 3 (2010): 413.

Huddleston and then finished her primary schooling at a private Roman Catholic school in Durban. Her high school years were spent at boarding school at Inanda Seminary, also in Kwa-Zulu Natal, punctuated by a stint at Orlando High School in Soweto in 1961. She matriculated at Inanda in 1963. She entered the world of work without furthering her studies, beginning her career at *The World* where she worked for two and a half years, later leaving because of the paper's sensationalist slant towards black stories. Soon after the birth of her first child in 1966, she was employed initially as a freelancer and then permanently by *The Rand Daily Mail*. On the 12 May 1969, a short while after getting engaged to Scottish doctor Kenneth Rankin, she was detained by apartheid police and was put on trial and then re-trial for terrorism over a period of seventeen months, only to be released on 14 September 1970 to face life as a banned person. In July of 1973, she went into exile, leaving her son and seven month old daughter behind.

In analysing her life, I have drawn out several major themes: Independence as expressed through her schooling – which escaped for the most part, the ravages of Bantu Education, relationships and work as well as solidarity. Imprisonment both metaphorically and physically constitutes another important theme.

Independence

Sikakane attended boarding school at Inanda Seminary from 1959 to 1960 and then again from 1962 to 1963. The school is cited in *A Window on Soweto* as an important formative experience. As a key educational institution, Inanda Seminary has been studied by historians and educators who have stressed a range of themes such as the origins of the school as a colonial instrument that enforced a cultural hierarchy and entrenched patriarchy,[61] the exclusive experience of students of self-actualisation and a cosmopolitan environment,[62] the school's and women's organisations in the surrounding area of Inanda's politics of purity and respectability[63] and its ability to act as a haven for secret and overt political activity amongst staff and girls.[64]

---

[61] Agnes A. Wood, *Shine Where You Are: A Centenary History of Inanda Seminary, 1859-1969* (Alice: Lovedale, 1972).
Meghan Healy-Clancy, *A World of Their Own: A History of South African Women's Education* (Scottsville: UKZN Press, 2013).
[62] Jane Castle, 'Strategies against Oppression: A Case Study of the Background, Upbringing and Education of Black Managers in Affirmative Action Programmes in South Africa', *British Journal of Sociology of Education* 17, no. 4 (1996).
Healy-Clancy, *A World of Their Own*.
[63] Wood, *Shine Where You Are*.
Deborah Mindry, 'Nongovernmental Organizations, "Grassroots," and the Politics of Virtue', *Signs* 26, no. 4 (2001).
[64] Khosi Mpanza, 'Schooled for Success', *Agenda: Empowering Women for Gender Equity* 21, (1994).
Castle, 'Strategies against Oppression: A Case Study of the Background, Upbringing and Education of Black Managers in Affirmative Action Programmes in South Africa'.
South African Democracy Education Trust, *The Road to Democracy*.

Relevant for the purposes of this project are the politics of purity and gendered work as well as the enforcement of a cultural hierarchy through the medium of the English language and other British cultural markers. Lewis (2005) argues that with colonial mythmaking, the body of a black woman 'is scripted negatively - as unreliable, sexually hyper-developed, untrustworthy, excessive, irrational, immoral and so on'.[65] Conceptions of independence, then, require a negotiation of such forces including what concessions modernity provides. My work locates Joyce Sikakane's independent conscience within this societal context.

Ultimately, I seek to understand her independence through her initial exposure through distance from her family and insulation from the full grip of apartheid at boarding school and then leading on from that her idiosyncratic choices of types of family and work. She became an unwed mother with children from two different relationships and entered a field – journalism – that her parents felt was for drunkards, fearing she would end up a prostitute.[66]

Solidarity

Solidarity in the life of Joyce Sikakane can be found in different guises. First is racial solidarity, where 'linked fate is positively associated with black solidarity' and where blacks who live in a majority White area show more black solidarity.[67] In an artificially skewed context where the minority became majority through political and institutional will and brutal force, permeating all aspects of life, Joyce Sikakane grew up within the black resistance and political solidarity movement of the ANC. Her grandfather was Chaplain of the ANC in Natal.[68]

Political solidarity then becomes intertwined but not entirely explained by racial solidarity in a multi-racial context of solidarity such as that within the ANC. Sally Sholz defines political solidarity as 'a relation between humans against an injustice that is human in origin' as was apartheid.[69] She argues further that 'political solidarity requires a decision-making model that acknowledges differences in social and epistemological privilege while also seeking to understand the situation of oppression or injustice and acknowledging "multiple, overlapping, and at times contradictory knowledge claims"'.[70] Decision-making, therefore is not necessarily democratic because of 'unequal commitments to solidaristic aims and because of a variety of methods for enacting solidaristic commitments'.[71] The ANC is often described as a broad church in which differently politically-inclined members find a

---

[65] Desiree Lewis, 'Against the Grain: Black Women and Sexuality', *Agenda: Empowering Women for Gender Equity* No. 63 African Feminisms Volume 2, no. 2 (2005):12.
[66] Ranchod, 'Herstories Celebrating Pioneering Women in South African Journalism', 69.
[67] William T. Hoston, 'Black Solidarity and Racial Context: An Exploration of the Role of Black Solidarity in U.S. Cities', *Journal of Black Studies* 39, no. 5 (2009): 719.
[68] South African Democracy Education Trust, *The Road to Democracy*.
[69] Sally J. Sholz, 'Political Solidarity and the More-Than-Human World', *Ethics and the Environment* 18, no. 2 (2013): 81.
[70] Ibid., 82.
[71] Ibid., 82.

home, but in the author's case, this meant working even outside the confines of the organisation such as with individuals such as Steve Biko.

A Window on Soweto presented an ode to Soweto and the struggles of the people there in the 1970's, including the author's own children who remained behind in Soweto while she was in exile at the time of writing of the book. Community solidarity emerges as a key theme. Much of this solidarity within the greater community is demonstrated in the text. More subtle is gender solidarity that nonetheless renders itself visible from the first page as the focus of a very young girl performing domestic duties at the crack of dawn becomes the symbol of apartheid's cruelty and clipping of the wings of black girls and women. Joyce Sikakane speaking to Sarita Ranchod makes it clear that although she broke the gender and or/colour line at her first employers as a journalist, she remained mindful of how her male colleagues who were respectful to her, 'did not look after their families' and she kept a portion of their wages to give to their wives, the Monday after pay-day.[72] These men would take their portion for the weekend and hand over the rest to Joyce Sikakane. In her own journalism she wrote about forced removals, the families of political prisoners and the lives of Winnie Madikizela-Mandela and Albertina Sisulu.

Imprisonment

Imprisonment is a theme in *A Window on Soweto* in several ways, culminating in Joyce Sikakane's physical imprisonment. Paul Gready states the "crucible of incarceration with its textures of violence, pain and suffering seems universally to demand 'factually insistent narratives' and that South African prison writers 'testify to the truthfulness of their accounts".[73] This is unsurprising because at the time of apartheid the government presented itself as the arbiter of truth. The power then, according to Gready, resides in not only contesting a lie but also in constructing an oppositional 'power of writing', beginning to repair the damage done by lawless violence and surviving oppression to advocate a more just vision of society.[74]

In the case of the book's subject matter, Soweto, Deborah Mary Hart compares its place in literature to Sophiatown, Alexandra and the Johannesburg inner city slums. In contrast to the other places Soweto is consistently described as a 'violent, alienating place in which everyday living is warped and human needs denied' and seen to epitomise 'controlled, isolated, monotonous black urban living'.[75] Ranchod reveals Joyce Sikakane as saying that sometimes 'walking to the train in the morning, one would have to jump over corpses' and that 'crime was very bad at that time and murder rates were high'.[76]

---

[72] Ranchod, 'Herstories Celebrating Pioneering Women in South African Journalism', 69.
[73] Paul Gready, 'Autobiography and the 'Power of Writing': Political Prison Writing in the Apartheid Era', *Journal of Southern African Studies* 19, no. 3 (1993): 490.
[74] Ibid., 493.
[75] Deborah Mary Hart, *South African Literature and Johannesburg's Urban Townships* (Johannesburg: University of the Witwatersrand, 1984, 109).

Exile could also be read as a form of imprisonment, though it reveals itself only in the location for the writing of the book. When looking at the site of the writing of *A Window on Soweto*, the ANC camp in Lusaka, Hugh Macmillan notes that not much is written or revealed by subjects about their time there and he notes a reticence even in anthologies where many people who lived there are interviewed, the focus being on South Africa and the political activity there, or the subject's life before and after exile in Lusaka.[77] Roger G. Thomas proffers that exiles 'do not necessarily write overtly about the exile experience; it is for the literary critic or even the psychiatrist to decide the extent to which they may do so at a deeper, less overt level'.[78] Macmillan further makes the important point that despite the liberation and civil wars around Zambia in the 1970's and 1980's, Zambia was 'an island of relative peace, stability and non-racialism'.[79] Macmillan shares further illuminating details such as that, the exile camp was steeped in a culture of the moderate approach of Oliver Tambo and unlike other liberation movements in Zambia, they were based in town and not far-flung areas outside Lusaka.[80]

Methods

Along with the theorists who provided the framework discussed in the literature review in the previous section, my analysis of *A Window on Soweto* and the role in its publishing of its publisher, the IDAF is heavily influenced by the ground-breaking work done by Denis Herbstein in chronicling the organisation as a whole, contextualising its aims and the various tensions that existed over the decades of its existence both internally and with other stakeholders and interests. His historical analysis brought into view various players such as Jan Marsh who edited the manuscript and located them within a team and a movement. Herbstein's careful, concentrated effort at highlighting the conflicting views and loyalties of the times as well as the shifting priorities for funds, made it clear that the organisation itself would exist as a 'personality' to be understood, rather than a fully predictable corporate structure. My evaluations were therefore rooted in establishing what stages of evolution Joyce Sikakane and her book found themselves in, in the organisation's growth. Herbstein does not mention *A Window on Soweto*, but notes that the overall bestseller of the publishing unit was Nelson Mandela's *The Struggle is My Life*, a collection of his speeches and other writings at that time,

---

[76] Ranchod, 'Herstories Celebrating Pioneering Women in South African Journalism', 69.
[77] Hugh Macmillan, 'The African National Congress of South Africa in Zambia: The Culture of Exile and the Changing Relationship with Home, 1964-1990', *Journal of Southern African Studies* 35, no. 2 (2009).
[78] Roger G. Thomas, 'Exile, Dictatorship and the Creative Writer in Africa: A Selective Annotated Bibliography', *Third World Quarterly* 9, no. 1 (1987): 274.
[79] Macmillan, 'The African National Congress of South Africa in Zambia: The Culture of Exile and the Changing Relationship with Home, 1964-1990', 307.
[80] Ibid., 315.

pegging sales at over 50,000,[81] a useful note for the purposes of my study that gave me a point of reference.

This led me to the IDAF archives at the University of the Western Cape in Cape Town, where I focused my search on all Clause III documentation covering the period from a year before the publication of *A Window on Soweto* – in order to establish evidence of the procurement process for the manuscript - until 1990 when the last of the stock of the second printing was distributed. This archival source laid some groundwork because it could establish actual sales, translations and team correspondence on various aspects of the book as documented in official reporting. Another important aspect was the ability to inspect the ways in which Clause III evaluated the performance of their published materials both individually and as competitors with one another contributing to the overall performance of the unit.

Lastly, I conducted three semi-structured interviews with Joyce Sikakane, the first was to catalogue her life events 'before Lusaka' and the other two were to interrogate life in Lusaka when her life took a dramatic turn and the conditions for the writing of the book were laid. These interviews were conducted with a small digital recorder in her home in Pretoria and transcribed. Here, she reflected on her life with regards to the book, giving more meaning to certain events and memories than to others and are therefore incomplete and provisional in terms of laying out a full personal and writing life. Each interview was on average twenty minutes long and came to just over an hour in total. The second interview was with Jan Marsh who resides in London. This interview was conducted by email and consisted of structured questions which she answered at length, focusing more on her role as a member of the publishing team and her interactions with Joyce Sikakane which led to their friendship.

[81] Herbstein, *White Lies*, 194.

Chapter 2

A Window on Soweto: The Prepublication Process

The chapter is concerned with the labour and experiences employed by both author and publisher to bring *A Window on Soweto* to the point of publication. To this end, it surveys the political positioning of the IDAF as a publisher and anti-apartheid organisation, locating the text within the three primary departments or clauses of the IDAF: legal support for political prisoners, banned people and exiles; financial support for their dependents; and the dissemination of research and factual accounts about South Africa and the conditions of the oppressed masses. These are referred to as Clause I, II and III respectively. Thereafter, the chapter provides a biography of the manuscript as recounted by the author and editor. The capacity and operational developments of the publisher by the time of receiving the manuscript are also explored, which are significant because IDAF publishing had in the preceding years kicked into higher gear, becoming independent from sister organisation Christian Action in operations and making key changes to strategic outputs. Lastly, the planning and editorial work once the manuscript was received is detailed along with promotions and printing.

General Background

The publishing of *A Window on Soweto* represented a confluence of mutually beneficial interests for both author and publisher. First, Joyce Sikakane was a political activist who could write first-hand about the repressions going on in South Africa and the publisher was well-placed to use this book to inform a reading public that was deliberately being kept ignorant by apartheid censorship laws, but who was also part of an international community that could form part of resistance efforts. The book fitted snugly into the primary aims of the IDAF which were to:

> support the relief of political detainees in South Africa, Namibia and [then] Southern Rhodesia, and their families. These aims were specified in Clauses 1 and 2 of IDAF's constitution. IDAF's Clause 3 stated a third aim: 'to keep the conscience of the world alive' to political oppression in the Southern African region, Clause 3 was implemented chiefly through a publishing programme of factual information in bulletins, pamphlets, books, photo exhibitions and events.[82]

Also significant is the location of the information that was sought:

[82] Jan Marsh, e-mail message to author, 4 November 4, 2017.

> By 1975 the significance of the (mainly African) townships in SA was clear from the location of many aspects of political repression from unequal health and educational services through forced removals to deaths in detention. But the areas themselves were not well known to the outside world, and published information was scarce. Many Europeans were hearing about Soweto for the first time from the Western media; many believed the name was an African one, devised for a shanty-town, rather than the South-West Townships acronym.[83]

For the first time, a resident of one of the locations under the spotlight was able to share a first-hand view with the IDAF in the form of a manuscript:

> *A Window on Soweto* in its original form therefore offered an opportunity for IDAF to publish a factual and first-hand account of the largest township area. The text was conceived as a sociological study of a topic where information from other sources such as newspapers was generally anecdotal. It therefore offered a good fit with IDAF's aims in Clause 3. It also offered a text by a South African author with direct knowledge of the conditions described.[84]

Secondly, *A Window on Soweto* represented a departure for the IDAF from their usual publication style. The book is part life-writing, part sociological writing.

> Generally, IDAF did not publish externally submitted manuscripts in unedited form; each had to conform to IDAF standards of 'objective' or at least non-polemical, evidence-based material. Many texts were anonymously 'in-house'. So, typically, a manuscript would be treated as a proposal on the subject, to be developed in cooperation with the author.[85]

The Biography of the Manuscript

Through *A Window on Soweto*, we experience the extraordinary life of a young woman who has packed a full life into few years. At the end of the book, Joyce Sikakane is 30 years old. During that time she has lived and had her childhood shaped within the ANC political elite; has become politically radicalised as a teenager at Inanda Secondary school and then been exposed to PAC politics through a brief stint at Orlando High School; has worked as a journalist for *The World* and *The Rand Daily Mail* while using her work as a vehicle for political activism; has had two children; has been engaged twice – once to a black doctor who expresses disinterest in using his medical skills and status to organise for better healthcare for the community culminating in her throwing the engagement ring in his face, and then again to a Scottish doctor whom she meets as he is already doing this work and begins a relationship with him in defiance of the Immorality Act; has been

[83] Ibid.
[84] Ibid.
[85] Ibid.

detained by the apartheid government for terrorism for almost two years and has experienced life in Soweto as a banned person unable to work.

In the last three pages of *A Window on Soweto* in the section 'Into Exile', Joyce reveals that she left the country in July of 1973 under fear of a clampdown by the apartheid regime and fled to Zambia.[86] The account then jumps to the time of publishing with an update on pass laws in South Africa from March 1977, a mere three months before the book's publishing in late June 1977. Very little is revealed of the intervening years, which is understandable given the dangers that such revelations could have posed to her person, family, associates and the anti-apartheid struggle and movement of the ANC at the time.

In an interview, Joyce recounted[87] that her flight was orchestrated by the ANC and her journey first led her to Swaziland with the help of a comrade sent by the ANC by the name of Lola Goddeffrey. She was smuggled to the border hiding in a compartment of the petrol tank of a truck. Once safely in Swaziland, Lola explained to Joyce that being a banned journalist, the newspapers would soon catch wind of her absence and since the apartheid police roamed freely in Swaziland, it was best not to stay. She was taken to a photographer who took her passport photo and this photo was inserted in someone else's passport in order to cross over into Mozambique. In a pickup van they travelled over bumpy roads until she was escorted onto a plane to Frankfurt. In Frankfurt, she connected onto another plane to what was then East Berlin. There she was introduced by Tony Seedat to Moses Mabhida, an ANC leader who put to her the choice of either continuing to a journalism school or going into armed training and conflict with Umkhonto weSizwe (MK), the armed military wing of the ANC. Having been persuaded by him to do the former, Joyce started journalism school. She recounts a merging of her two worlds, Soweto and Berlin, when scared to have missed her stop with no knowledge of the language; she jumped off the train onto the platform, as she used to do in her formative years in Soweto. She remembers a man throwing his hat onto the platform, presumably out of panic for her safety. She didn't last long at the journalism school because the lecturer 'fell in love with her'. Given her revolutionary intent, her 'mind was not into falling in love', so she asked to leave and told her superiors instead that the schoolwork was repetitive and unrewarding given that she had already been a journalist for some years. She insisted on joining the MK.

In that spirit, Joyce left for Zambia by way of Tanzania to begin that transition. However, events intervened. In Zambia, Joyce lived on a farm with a family where she was disguised as a domestic worker and nanny while she awaited news on where she would go for training. The farm was used as a thoroughfare for ANC leaders to get to meetings, allowing her to meet some of them. At the same time a Scottish doctor, with whom Joyce had become engaged while in South Africa before her

[86] Sikakane, *A Window on Soweto*, 79.
[87] Joyce Sikakane-Rankin, interviewed in person by the author in Pretoria, 5 and 6 October, 2017.

detention in May 1969[88], was in Lusaka working as an orthopaedic surgeon at the university teaching hospital. It had been two years since she had released him from this obligation and more than four since they had seen each other in person.[89] Having received press cuttings from his family about her escape in the British press, he approached the ANC headquarters in Lusaka for help in locating her. He spoke to Chris Hani and Simon Makana, who along with Thabo Mbeki were in charge of her welfare in Lusaka. Simon Makana, speaking under instructions from Oliver Tambo, came to her and said that she was to meet Dr Kenneth Rankin. Joyce was reluctant given the time that had passed and her new military ambitions and responsibilities as a mother, including a seven year old son and seven month old daughter left in Soweto at the time of fleeing.[90] Through a mutual friend of Joyce and Kenneth whom they'd met in South Africa, a nun named Kate Wilson, a meeting was facilitated at the farm where she was staying. Kenneth reiterated his proposal and after initially being torn between that proposal and military training, she was persuaded by her caregivers into a philosophy of the ANC she came to know and describes as the phrase: The struggle is long. This means that victory would not be secured overnight and in the meantime, comrades were encouraged to live lives as full as possible under the circumstances of the struggle.

In the time before marrying, Joyce moved from the farm she was staying at and lived with the Masemola family and upon marrying moved into the house where Kenneth was living. This is when the burning desire to write a book on Soweto was ignited, perhaps because of her thwarted ambitions as a freedom fighter. Joyce had the time to write being unemployed at the time as well as the freedom from domestic chores that house-help provided. Waking up at six to allow for fresh thoughts and to get out of bed before the harsh Lusaka sun was too overwhelming, she showered and wrote. The story was important to her in the sense of it being a premonition:

> Well, first thing that made me feel it was important was that I had this intuition that something horrible is going to happen in South Africa and you know indeed it happened. We had the student uprisings in South Africa so I felt that the oppression of the students in South Africa would explode. The students will do something about it. So I thought well let me just write about what being in Soweto meant, that's why it's called *A Window on Soweto*, and of course the uprisings did happen, and … the proceeds of the book helped families of political prisoners to be able to get lawyers for … those who were arrested and detained so I felt it did something important.[91]

Without a library she could go to, Joyce wrote much of the manuscript from memory, relying on her journalistic knowledge. She kept up with happenings in Soweto from press clippings provided by the

[88] Sikakane*, A Window on Soweto*, 59. (1977)
[89] Ibid., 79.
[90] Ibid., 79.
[91] Joyce Sikakane-Rankin, interviewed in person by the author in Pretoria, 5and 6 October, 2017.

ANC in what was a solitary project. At the end of it, Joyce discussed the manuscript with Ruth First who then read and loved it. While in Lusaka, First, in 1975 passed on the manuscript to Jan Marsh, an editorial employee at the IDAF who then became the editor of the manuscript.

Joyce pegs the exact timeframe for the writing and handing over of the manuscript to the birth of her third child, Kenneth Samora Rankin in 1975. The manuscript was written while she was pregnant over the course of less than six months. In 1974, Kenneth and Joyce left Zambia for Britain. Joyce at this point was a stateless person and the trip was in part to secure her citizenship documentation through her marriage to Kenneth and also to meet her in-laws.

Joyce remembers that while in Great Britain, through the help of IDAF fact papers, more up-to-date information was added to the text. Jan Marsh recalls that the manuscript was received in an incomplete state which was usual as manuscripts were 'generally shaped and polished during the editorial process, which might involve several readers and advisers[92]'. This was because, as the texts were published under the IDAF imprint rather than as the personal work of individual authors, editing was used 'to safeguard the authors from personal attacks by political critics who might find a factual error to be used to discredit both author and IDAF[93]'. She describes this work that had to be done as follows:

> […] a good deal of the editorial process took place when Joyce Sikakane-Rankin was in Scotland. I worked from the Research Dept. in Finchley. Following the initial assessment, Joyce Sikakane-Rankin undertook a great deal of revision and expansion of the text, in collaboration with myself. Other IDAF colleagues in Newgate St read the text and commented: – IDAF director Phyllis Altman, who approved every publication personally; Barry Feinberg, IDAF designer, who supervised the design, illustrations and cover; Al Cook, IDAF publications person. Another colleague who indirectly assisted with the book was Shantie Naidoo, based in the Research Dept., who had been Joyce Sikakane-Rankin's friend and comrade in SA, whose knowledge of the era and events described in *A Window on Soweto* was valued assistance during the editing.

Operations at the IDAF

A few new developments had occurred in the IDAF's publishing before the publishing of *A Window on Soweto* in June 1977. Books were published for the first time in paperback with 'attractive covers, illustrations etc' in the financial year[94] 1975/1976. Noted was the ease of storage and display this brought in libraries and bookshops which justified the increased cost of the format over and above aesthetics.

---

[92] Jan Marsh, e-mail message to author, 4 November 4, 2017.
[93] Ibid.
[94] The financial year ran from 1 April – 31 March overlapping years.

Editor of *A Window of Soweto* and employed at the IDAF between 1973 and 1979, Jan Marsh, explains this shift thus:

> At the outset of the IDAF publishing process (before my employment) all publications were physically quite light bulletins, newsletters, reports, pamphlets – usually in A4 or A5 format folded and stapled. Many were circulated on a limited basis and through meetings. When the publishing programme expanded in the early 1970s, the pamphlet form imposed limitations on distribution as even political and community bookshops are unable to stock and display stapled unbound items, and therefore requested publications with a spine. Not all IDAF publications were of a length to justify or facilitate this type of book binding, but *A Window on Soweto* was. Publication in book form thus assisted distribution and sales.[95]

In addition, major retailers such as W.H. Smith and Foyles had begun carrying IDAF publications while sales outside of the UK constituted 45% of the total sold. In April 1975, the IDAF set up a photographic library of Southern Africa which was designed to be essential to their publications programme in addition to being valuable for campaigns.[96] The IDAF Publications Department officially took over from Christian Action in July 1975.[97] The financial year 1976/1977 was thus the first full year of publishing since the IDAF had taken over its publishing operations from sister organisation, Christian Action Publications, boasting six full-time employees, doubled circulation and a 400% increase in income.[98] The IDAF had also increased its print-runs in the years 1974-1976 from 5,000 to 10,000 copy print-runs.[99] This is significant because it provided capacity and more efficient processes by the time of publishing of *A Window on Soweto*.

Jan Marsh explains the general publishing aim was:

> To write and commission texts on aspects of oppression that were deemed important and illuminating. A good deal of the factual material on which such texts were based was collected by and in IDAF's highly professional Research Dept., located at the time in Finchley, North London. The production and distribution Dept. was located at Newgate St, in the City. Many IDAF publications were 'in-house' throughout; others were commissioned from outside authors, who worked in cooperation with the Research Dept. to produce a final text with input from the design/publishing Dept. before printing by a commercial firm.

---

[95] Jan Marsh, e-mail message to author, 4 November 4, 2017.
[96] Report on Clause III Work 1975/1976 for the International Defence and Aid Fund Annual Conference in Amsterdam, held 7-9 May 1976, Page 1, MCH31, Box 3482, Historical Papers, UWC Robben Island Mayibuye Archives.
[97] IDAF Publications Department Third Quarterly Report on Distribution, 1 July – 29 July, 1978, MCH31, Box 3804, Historical Papers, UWC Robben Island Mayibuye Archives.
[98] Report on Clause III Work 1976/77, MCH31, Box 3804, Historical Papers, UWC Robben Island Mayibuye Archives.
[99] Report on Clause III Work 1977/78 for the International Defence and Aid Fund Annual Conference in London, held 5-7 May 1978, MCH31, Box 3482, Historical Papers, UWC Robben Island Mayibuye Archives.

> Publicity and distribution were then handled from Newgate St. *A Window on Soweto* fell into the latter category, with an outside author.[100]

The first major paperbacks from the Fund were as follows: *For Their Triumphs and Their Tears* (Hilda Bernstein, 1975) which focused on women under apartheid, *Divide and Rule: South Africa's Bantustans* (Barbara Rogers, 1976), *Forbidden Pastures: Education under Apartheid* (Freda Troup, 1976). This represented a topical and timely list that could be described as foundational for *A Window on Soweto*, which touches on all of these subjects. In fact in the Report on Clause III Work 1976/77, *Forbidden Pastures: Education under Apartheid* is described as follows:

> This was officially published shortly after the last conference and, in view of the schools protests against Bantu Education which culminated in the demonstration of 16 June in Soweto, it proved a timely publication. The first impression of 5000 copies sold out within the year and a reprint has been ordered.[101]

In the words of Diana Collins' (wife of IDAF founder Canon John Collins), the 1976 Soweto Uprising had a profound effect on operations at the Fund at the Clause I and Clause II levels:

> In South Africa, 1976 saw the uprising by school-children in Soweto and elsewhere. There were deaths and injuries owing to indiscriminate and brutal shootings by police. Once again demands on IDAFSA increased dramatically and there was a further exodus of refugees, often at a very young age. The Fund was able to assist those injured and the families of those wounded and killed. It was also able to help some of the refugees.[102]

It is reasonable, then to have expected a response from Clause III that adequately deals with the events and their varying elements thoroughly.

The improved promotions that contributed to improved sales are described thus for the year 1976/1977:

> Clause III increasing experience in promotion has led to unprecedented publicity and prestige for IDAF from news reports, features, reviews and other free coverage. This applies to radio and television, as well as to newspapers and journals, in many countries.[103]

There was therefore already a presence for the IDAF's publishing outputs in the popular media.

---

[100] Jan Marsh, e-mail message to author, 4 November 4, 2017.
[101] Report on Clause III Work 1976/77, Page 1, MCH31, Box 3804, Historical Papers, UWC Robben Island Mayibuye Archives.
[102] Typescript of a Personal Account by Mrs Diana Collins Describing the History of the IDAF and its Contribution to the Struggle for Liberation in Southern Africa – August 1986, MCH31, Box 3404, Historical Papers, UWC Robben Island Mayibuye Archives.
[103] Report on Clause III Work 1976/77, Page 4, MCH31, Box 3804, Historical Papers, UWC Robben Island Mayibuye Archives.

Planning and Editorial

In the IDAF Annual Conference of 1976, Report on Clause III Work 1975/1976, the first murmurings of the planned publication of *A Window on Soweto* are found. In it, the work is described as *SOWETO* by Joyce Sikakane and is proposed to be fully illustrated and 'serve to highlight the plight of urban Africans generally'.[104] The minutes of a meeting on 3 August 1976 report that Joyce was 'revising the text'[105]. By 2 September 1976, Alan Brooks, Director of Research, was to see the text in the coming week. At this point, the text was described as *Study of Soweto.*[106] In the reports and proposals to be carried forward to the Clause III general meeting held on 17 March 1977, the title is once more changed to *(Story of Soweto) South Africa's Largest Ghetto* (brackets in the original) with the following update:

> This text is now complete and is to be sent to printer 17/18 March. Cover, illustrations, notes etc to follow. Delivery expected fourth week in April; copies available for Annual Conference. Publication date and promotion to be agreed – provisionally fixed for third week May.[107]

The text represented a departure for the organization which saw itself as publishing factual material to counter apartheid propaganda. Joyce's text by contrast was in part an autobiographical account. The author was initially reluctant to include subjective material, as described by Jan Marsh:

> Joyce Sikakane-Rankin was initially reluctant to add subjective elements to what she had planned as an objective sociological survey of Soweto. In retrospect, I imagine she felt pressurized into making this alteration. This would probably not have been the case with a non-political publisher, but at the same time a general publisher would have found a sociological account of Soweto too dry. First-person narratives are always more engaging.[108]

Jan Marsh describes her approach to editing the manuscript as involving the following: copy-editing the text to eliminate repetitions, fill lacunae, correct facts if necessary, smooth out the grammar but maintain the authorial voice. The last was not universal IDAF practice, which normally aimed at a wholly impersonal, 'academic' style.[109]

---

[104] Report on Clause III Work 1975/1976 for the International Defence and Aid Fund Annual Conference in Amsterdam, 7-9 May 1976, Page 2, MCH31, Box 3482, Historical Papers, UWC Robben Island Mayibuye Archives.
[105] Minutes of Meeting of Clause III Staff at Newgate Street, 3 August 1976, MCH31, Box 3669, Historical Papers, UWC Robben Island Mayibuye Archives.
[106] Minutes of Meeting of Clause III Staff at Defa, 2 September 1976, MCH31, Box 3669, Historical Papers, UWC Robben Island Mayibuye Archives.
[107] Reports and Agreed Proposals to go Forward to Clause III General Meeting, 17 March 1977, Page 2, MCH31, Box 3669, Historical Papers, UWC Robben Island Mayibuye Archives.
[108] Jan Marsh, e-mail message to author, 4 November 4, 2017.
[109] Ibid.

The general structural re-shaping was influenced by two significant elements[110]:

1. An increased emphasis on Joyce Sikakane's personal experience, as an authenticating aspect of the history and quality of life in Soweto. This was deemed important in relation to potential political criticism of the book, e.g. that it was a pejoratively negative account of the area.
2. The impact of the 1976 Uprisings during the production of the book.

The latter:

> […] brought political repression, massacres, detention, torture and trials to the forefront of the Soweto news. At the same time, Winnie Mandela also featured largely in reporting about South Africa, being perceived by the media as spokesperson for the ANC. In this context, Joyce Sikakane-Rankin's personal experience added immense weight to the subject, detailing some of the history of resistance and the specific nature of repression, which demonstrated the whole background to the uprising that some media reports saw only as student protests against Afrikaans.[111]

The tensions between these orientations emerged in the exchange between Jan Marsh and a reviewer who submitted comments in the form of a reader's report. On 18 March 1977, Jan Marsh sent a letter to a reader for comment on 'a typescript of a fairly finished but not final draft'.[112] Some three weeks later, the reader responded with a report on 'Joyce's pamphlet' with suggestions on cuts, corrections and amendments.[113] This reviewer is concerned about IDAF reporting deadlines and has an intimate knowledge of the timing of conferences and agenda points thereof and so is likely to be an internal reader, even though the letter address is Dernatawney House, Ireland. Marsh ventures that it may have been Louise Asmal, wife of Kader Asmal, ANC activist and Vice-President of IDAF in Ireland[114], who were then living in exile in Dublin.

In the report s/he comments on the writing itself:

> Joyce's writing is all that you say of it in your letter of 18 March 1977. It's absorbing, authentic and very moving. There are a few places where she makes libellous statements or broad generalisations; a few sentences are unclear, but otherwise I agree that it would be presumptuous to tamper with her style.

---

[110] Ibid.
[111] Ibid.
[112] Ibid.
[113] Correspondence from a Reader in Ireland to Jan Marsh, 11 April 1977, Referring to a Letter Jan Marsh Sent on 18 March 1977, MCH31, Box 3669, Historical Papers, UWC Robben Island Mayibuye Archives.
[114] Minutes of the Sixteenth Annual Conference of the International Defence and Aid Fund for Southern Africa held on 4-6 May, 1979 in Oslo, MCH31, Box 3482, Historical Papers, UWC Robben Island Mayibuye Archives.

The reader pushes back on Jan Marsh's editorial decisions:

> I also think that the material you've written is excellent, but in my opinion it cancels out Joyce's narrative. One loses the thread completely and it becomes disconcerting to read. We're trying to do two contradictory things – publish a piece of autobiographical writing which is emotive, interspersed with accurate factual information which cannot be faulted and I don't think that it works.

S/he suggests large cuts in the text and stipulate what they see to be the purpose of the text:

> This won't break the thread of the story and leave the piece as a personal story of a young girl growing up in Soweto.
>
> My feelings are borne out by the final part of the pamphlet where Joyce describes her arrest, detention and trial etc. This is brilliant and the whole thing picks up tremendously.

It is significant that this is what most draws the reader because the final part of the pamphlet was not in the original draft manuscript, as Jan Marsh explains:

> When the IDAF desire to extend the narrative to include Joyce Sikakane Rankin's experience of detention took place, it became clear that she could not easily write this, so we used an interview technique, with me prompting what I hoped were relatively gentle questions and Joyce Sikakane-Rankin responding verbally. The recorded spoken account was then edited as if written and preserved a very direct element of Joyce Sikakane-Rankin's voice. I don't recall what proportion of the verbal version reached the published text. But I remember a lot of tears as Joyce Sikakane-Rankin re-lived her experiences of detention.

The reader identifies a departure in the IDAF's style of material:

> Although you say in your letter this isn't a great departure on your part, I feel it is. A life story can't really be written to our specifications in the way a factual pamphlet can be. And it's so important that I would rather wait than rush to have it ready for Conference.

The reader is likely here to be referring to the IDAF Annual Conference held in May of each year. The struggle for balance experienced by Jan Marsh between what is factual and what is lived experience was not misplaced. In the report for Clause III work at the 1976 International Defence and Aid Annual Conference held in Amsterdam, the Fund's research and information resources are described as part of the process of establishing the Fund as an international centre for research and information regarding Southern Africa, with requests varying from specific information; general comment and advice and access to press files over and above the publications produced.[115]

Their target market for IDAF material was also broad while having specific aims:

> All IDAF publications were aimed at general audience, but in practice reached mainly or indeed only those already opposed to the apartheid regimes in southern Africa. They were especially useful for solidarity and funding sources in the Western world, by providing information on the injustices of the oppressive policies and practices. By offering factual material, IDAF publications were also useful to the liberation movements when these wished to explain the reasons for resistance.[116]

This may have contributed to the difficulty in finding a balance to the narrative in *A Window on Soweto*.

Promotions

By the 21 April 1977 Clause III meeting[117], plans for the book were now solid, including a cover selected by Barry Feinberg, Graphic Designer/Production[118]. As the report on a meeting indicated:

> Joyce Sikakane's book is to be entitled A Window on Soweto and Barry showed the photograph which is to be used for the cover. The Africa Centre are anxious to promote the book with a press conference in June, the first anniversary of the Soweto disturbances. Barry is to follow up the possibility of such a conference being held during the first few days of June, not to coincide precisely with the anniversary, but rather as a lead-in to the various events taking place at that time.

Jan Marsh reveals the cover was not universally liked:

> The image selected and used was not universally liked within IDAF, but in publishing, responsibility for the cover rests with the designer and marketing depts., so authors and editors are not often involved, and so it was. The new title followed the chosen image, which looks a bit like looking through a window into a shack. This was not visually apt to Soweto itself, but metaphorically can be seen as conveying a verbal view of the township. IDAF covers typically employed a single colour; in this case the dark brown hue was chosen by the designer.[119]

---

[115] Report on Clause III Work 1975/1976 for the International Defence and Aid Fund Annual Conference in Amsterdam, held 7-9 May 1976, MCH31, Box 3482, Historical Papers, UWC Robben Island Mayibuye Archives.
[116] Jan Marsh, e-mail message to author, 4 November 4, 2017.
[117] Minutes of Clause III Meeting at Newgate Street, 21 April 1977, Page 1, MCH31, Box 3669, Historical Papers, UWC Robben Island Mayibuye Archives.
[118] Report on Clause III Work 1976/77, Page 7, MCH31, Box 3804, Historical Papers, UWC Robben Island Mayibuye Archives.
[119] Jan Marsh, e-mail message to author, 4 November 4, 2017.

Three days later at the Working Committee[120] summarised the following:

> A Window on Soweto: publication is scheduled for 9 June, with a press conference at the Africa Centre. 10,000 copies have been ordered. Under forthcoming publications

The release was scheduled to coincide with *The Uprising of 1976* slide sets which were slated for release on 1 June 1977 and consisted of five strips of film, slide covers, instructions for self-assembly, and the accompanying text in duplicated form.

At the Clause III meeting held at Newgate on 24 April 1977[121] plans for the press were discussed, to be spear-headed by Garth Strachan, Publications/Promotion[122]:

> 16 JUNE – 1ST ANNIVERSARY OF SOWETO: Garth will book a quarter-page in The Times on 16 June for an IDAF insertion. DEFA will draft a preliminary text and Rica will draft a section appealing for funds. Rica reported that there will be a Memorial Service at St. Paul's Cathedral on that date, led by Canon Collins

There was also discussion of a press conference as well as other details about the launch itinerary:

> WINDOW ON SOWETO – There is to be a Press Conference at 12.30 on 9 June at the Africa Centre to launch this book. Joyce Sikakane will be at IDAF for two days prior to the Conference and one day afterwards so that interviews can be arranged. The draft press release was circulated and Phyllis is to suggest amendments. Pauline Webb has been invited to speak on the platform and it was proposed to invite Ken Morgan (NUJ General Secretary).

Despite these plans, Joyce Sikakane does not recall ever doing a press conference for *A Window on Soweto.*[123]

When comparing advertising spending on *A Window on Soweto* with the Fund's 'previous bestseller' *For Their Triumphs and Their Tears*, the following positive conclusions were drawn:

> It may further be noted that the earlier book's sales were boosted by an advertising campaign which eventually cost in the region of GBP 2,000; such expenditure has been replaced in the present instance by an effective campaign of promotion, the advertising bill so far being only GBP 50. In addition, the number of 500+ complimentaries used in advance promotion for For their Triumphs was cut to 269.[124]

---

[120] Summary of Clause III Working Meeting, 24 May 1977, Page 1, MCH31, Box 3669, Historical Papers, UWC Robben Island Mayibuye Archives.
[121] Minutes of Clause III Meeting at Newgate Street, 26 May 1977, Page 1 and 2, MCH31, Box 3669, Historical Papers, UWC Robben Island Mayibuye Archives.
[122] Report on Clause III Work 1976/77, Page 7, MCH31, Box 3804, Historical Papers, UWC Robben Island Mayibuye Archives.
[123] Joyce Sikakane-Rankin, interviewed in person by the author in Pretoria, 5 and 6 October, 2017.

It is also worth noting that *A Window on Soweto* was the second book title to have a print-run of 10,000 copies after *For Their Triumphs and Their Tears*. This communicates a belief in its appeal despite the cost-cutting.

An entry in the third quarter of 1977's *Africa Today* under 'Publications', describes *A Window on Soweto* as a 'moving new title from International Defence and Aid'. The entry, with publication only being a few days before the period of the journal, gives an address for the IDAF in London, presumably for orders, suggests that the book should be available at IDAFSA North America and lists a price of $2. The section ends: 'When ordering items listed in this section or offered by our advertisers, please mention Africa Today.'[125] This forms part of the IDAF's efforts to promote the book.

Printing

Between 8[126] and 15 June 1977, AG Bishop & Sons Ltd Printers delivered 10,000 advertising leaflets for *A Window on Soweto* with the following specifications:

> 10,000 copies leaflet "A Window on Soweto"
>
> 8 ¼ x 5 7/8 " printed two colours one side and one colour on reverse on white cartridge

By 30 June 1977[127], printing of the book *A Window on Soweto* was underway under the following specifications:

> 10,110 copies Booklet "The Story of Soweto"
>
> A5 size – 80 pages text, printed in black on white wove plus 8 pages art section printed in black on white m/c coated. Folded and thread sewn in sections with 4 page cover printed in black and brown only on white board and varnished overall on outside. @ 58p per copy

The leaflets were invoiced and delivered on the same day. The book would have become available on the 30 June 1977.

Conclusion

---

[124] 2nd Quarterly Report Distribution for IDAF Publications Department, 2 April – 1 July 1977, Page 2, MCH31, Box 3804, Historical Papers, UWC Robben Island Mayibuye Archives.
[125] Africa Today, 'Publications', *Africa Today* 24, no. 3 (1977): 103.
[126] AG Bishop & Sons Ltd Printers Delivery Note 5286, 8 June 1977, MCH31, Box 3755, Historical Papers, UWC Robben Island Mayibuye Archives.
AG Bishop & Sons Ltd Printers Delivery Note 5334, 15 June 1977, MCH31, Box 3755, Historical Papers, UWC Robben Island Mayibuye Archives.
[127] AG Bishop & Sons Ltd Printers Invoice 12506, 30 June 1977, Order Number 9227, MCH31, Box 3755, Historical Papers, UWC Robben Island Mayibuye Archives.

This chapter has set out the circumstances behind Joyce's writing of *A Window on Soweto* which included a thwarted attempt at being a militant fighter and a pregnancy with her third child. At the same time Ruth First was able to connect the manuscript to the right person at the IDAF and the IDAF had professionalised operations in such a way that they could publish a book of its nature and it could find its audience. Through the tension between the entirely factual and autobiographical that was presented by the spectre of the IDAF's previous outputs, a unique outcome was established through editing and a variety of contributing perspectives that allow the book to be both. Where it was difficult to write, an interview style was adopted to give the book the thrilling honesty about apartheid brutality that set it apart at the time. Though promotional efforts were reduced in comparison to prior releases, the first print-run equalled that of the IDAF's previous bestseller, evidencing the IDAF's belief in the appeal of the work.

Chapter 3

Publication of *A Window on Soweto*

This chapter asserts that *A Window on Soweto* was a significant and influential work of the IDAF and explains the reasons for this assertion. The reasons can be evidenced pragmatically by its immediate reception, sales, the sale of rights and translations and reprinting as detailed in the first sections of this chapter as well as in the words of its editor, Jan Marsh:

> Public response to *A Window on Soweto* was extremely positive. I believe it is one of the few titles to have had commercial sales, and to have made an immediate impact on its readership. It remains the IDAF publication which I am most proud to have edited and assisted. […] virtually all other IDAF publications failed to impact on the general public, and many were hardly noted even by sympathetic audiences. So *A Window* was a notable success in these terms.[128]

Secondly, its figurative significance can be evidenced by the particular slant taken by reviews, which tend to see its contribution as being a timely, complicating voice about life in Soweto; as providing a humanising voice depicting a regime's repressions and horrors; as forming part of growing canon of literary writing about Soweto as a place, as establishing Joyce Sikakane as a literary voice amongst other African women writers and as evidence of transformational and effective political writing.

Thirdly, the book directly had significance for its very cause in that it impacted the lives of those affected by detentions in South Africa, especially after the Soweto Uprisings of 1976, in helping to provide funding. It was able to combine the efforts of all three IDAF clauses. Jan Marsh describes it as aiding in:

> IDAF's primary role in funding political trials and detainees' dependants, which were ratcheted up during 1976-7; [and] IDAF Clause 3, which had simultaneous aims of chronicling the Uprising.[129]

Through donated sales made through and attributed to the Anti-Apartheid Movement (AAM), the book funded international resistance. In the era of democracy, it became a legal document, a testament for the author in the only public attempt at a reckoning for the apartheid government, the Truth and

[128] Jan Marsh, e-mail message to author, 4 November 4, 2017.
[129] Ibid.

Reconciliation Commission (TRC), where she gave her testimony. While during the apartheid era the book was used to rally support and funds as part of Clause III outputs, it could now seek to convict the perpetrators of the crimes through her testimony. The testimony was given in particular to give voice to women's stories of incarceration and torture, an often overlooked aspect of the struggle.

Immediate Reception

The book was published 'towards the end of the quarter' ending 2 July 1977[130] and sold 1,093 copies in a few days (taking into account the printer's invoice date of 30 June 1977). A further 465 were distributed via sales by the Anti-Apartheid Movement (AAM) – the AAM benefitted from the funds of sale and not the IDAF - and in complimentary copies. At the 13 July 1977 Clause III meeting[131], Garth Strachan, Publications/Promotion, could report the following on the success of the Soweto slides released with *A Window on Soweto*:

> Garth reported, stressing in particular the effectiveness of the Soweto Exhibition in obtaining interest and support for our work. Garth is to circulate a written report, but recommend that the Exhibition should be displayed at all such events, wherever possible, and that arrangements should be made well in advance.

He also noted the success of the book itself as well as the treatment of errors going forward given that errors were present in the text:

> WINDOW ON SOWETO – Garth reported on the success of this publication in terms of sales and of coverage for the book and IDAF in the various media. With regard to errors in the text, Jan stated that future policy will be that no publication date is announced until printed copies have been received back at DEFA, so that they can be properly checked. With Jimmie now on staff, there should be greater opportunities for proofreading.

DEFA was a team in the Clause III unit that was dedicated to research and information. Jan Marsh was in charge of the research on South Africa. The other team was referred to as the Publications Department and focused on Design, Production and Audiovisual; Sales, Distribution and Accounts; Press and Promotions; the distribution and translations of *Focus* and the Audio-visual library. Both teams had secretarial services as well.[132]

---

[130] 2nd Quarterly Report Distribution for IDAF Publications Department, 2 April – 1 July 1977, Page 1, MCH31, Box 3804, Historical Papers, UWC Robben Island Mayibuye Archives.
[131] Minutes of Clause III Meeting at Newgate Street, 13 July 1977, MCH31, Box 3669, Historical Papers, UWC Robben Island Mayibuye Archives.
[132] Report on Clause III Work 1977/78 for the International Defence and Aid Fund Annual Conference in London, held 5-7 May 1978, MCH31, Box 3482, Historical Papers, UWC Robben Island Mayibuye Archives.

Sales

Figure 1.1 ***Sales figures and statistics per quarter for A Window on Soweto***

	2 April - 1 July '77 Q1	**2 July - 30 Sept '77 Q2**	**1 Oct - 31 Dec '77 Q3**	**1 Jan - 31 Mar '78 Q4**	**Total**	**Average**
A Window on Soweto (£)	1 093	1 525	715	978	**4 311**	**1 078**
Total Sales (£)	8 692	4 306	7 334	9 044	**29 376**	**7 344**
% sales	13%	35%	10%	11%	**15%**	**15%**

	1 Apr - 30 June '78 Q5	**1 July 29 Sept '78 Q6**	**30 Sept - 29 Dec '78 Q7**	**1 Jan - 31 Mar '79 Q8**	**Total**	**Average**
	781	331	483	769	**2 364**	**591**
	12 620	9 142	15 595	21 450	**58 807**	**14 702**
	6%	4%	3%	4%	**4%**	**4%**

	1 Apr - 30 June '79 Q9	**1 July - 30 Sept '79 Q10**	**1 Oct - 31 Dec '79 Q11**	**Total**	**Average**	**Grand Total**
	396	166	250	**812**	**271**	**7 487**
	5 973	7 838	6 228	**20 039**	**6 680**	**108 222**
	7%	2%	4%	**4%**	**4%**	**7%**

The figure above displays the sales statistics for *A Window on Soweto* for the first eleven quarters of its publication: its individual sales are delineated in quarterly distribution reports compiled by the IDAF publications department.

From these reports, it is clear that for the first four quarters, sales for the book accounted for 15% of all sales of publications with an average of 1,078 copies sold per quarter. The first quarter saw a large number of single orders received for *A Window on Soweto* lowering the average number of books per

order for the quarter compared to the previous quarter.[133] Generally orders were in units of one or two specifically because of, *A Window on Soweto*, decreasing the metric for the department overall but also perhaps indicating a stronger thrust of demand for the book from individuals. By the second quarter of its release *A Window on Soweto* was still the only major publication published for the year along with the Soweto photo slides, whereas by that time in 1976, four major publications had been published plus a photokit and three fact papers. This meant overall sales were down for the Fund even with strong sales of *A Window on Soweto*. This was also attributed to minimal advertising as compared to the previous year.[134] In the book's third quarter of release, two more items were published, including *Zimbabwe: the Facts*[135], introducing competition for sales for *A Window on Soweto*, which may account for a dip before a recovery somewhat in the fourth quarter where no further publications are made.[136]

In reporting back on the book shortly after the end of this fourth quarter of release at the International Defence and Aid Annual Conference of 1978[137], Clause III staff reported the following:

> A Window on Soweto by Joyce Sikakane, published as a paperback in June 1977, to coincide with the first anniversary of the Soweto uprising. This gives a factual and personal account of living conditions in South Africa's largest black township and provides important background information contributing towards an understanding of the 1976 events. This publication has received considerable attention from the media, resulting in the distribution of more than 5000 copies to the 31st of March.

The figure of 'more than 5,000 copies' sold seems to contradict the amount of 4,311 copies sold per Figure 1.1. However, as can be seen per Figure 1.2, distribution includes complimentary copies over and above those sold. These complimentaries were given to liberation movements/campaigns and also provided aid to AAM in the form of donated books' proceeds for publications sold by them through their own channels. At this point per Figure 1.2, the books distributed stood at 5,242.

At the same conference, it emerged that while the story of Soweto was selling in book form, its visual version in the form of the slide set was doing just as well. The Soweto slide sets that became available in June of 1977 along with *A Window on Soweto*, sold 181 sets in 34 countries (8 of these African), 80% outside Great Britain, 65% non-English speaking. The Soweto Exhibition was displayed in

---

[133] 2nd Quarterly Report Distribution for IDAF Publications Department, 2 April – 1 July 1977, MCH31, Box 3804, Historical Papers, UWC Robben Island Mayibuye Archives.
[134] 3rd Quarterly Report Distribution for IDAF Publications Department, 2 July – 30 September 1977, MCH31, Box 3804, Historical Papers, UWC Robben Island Mayibuye Archives.
[135] 4th Quarterly Report Distribution for IDAF Publications Department, 1 October – 31 December 1977, MCH31, Box 3804, Historical Papers, UWC Robben Island Mayibuye Archives.
[136] 1st Quarterly Report Distribution for IDAF Publications Department, 1 January – 31 March 1978, MCH31, Box 3804, Historical Papers, UWC Robben Island Mayibuye Archives.
[137] Report on Clause III Work 1977/78 for the International Defence and Aid Fund Annual Conference in London, held 5-7 May 1978, MCH31, Box 3482, Historical Papers, UWC Robben Island Mayibuye Archives.

Geneva, New York, Lisbon, Oslo and London. (See Figure 1.3 for the distribution of sales for IDAF publications between UK and Outside the UK). It is also reported that Clause III supplied the media research information and visual assistance to produce the following: *Scenes from Soweto* a stage presentation by playwright Steve Wilmer, *Sounds from Soweto* a musical entertainment directed by Black Theatre Workshop. Additionally, it is noted in the following year, the following publications may be added to their list: *Youth and Students* by Nkosazana Dlamini, 'an extended version of the speech made to the 1977 conference, covering the black students and youth movement in the 1970s' and *The Whirlwind Before the Storm* by former[138] Head of Research, Alan Brooks, 'a full analytical account of the causes, events and implications of the 1976 disturbances throughout South Africa and is scheduled for publication later this year'[139].

As a backlist item, *A Window on Soweto* roughly halved in average sales in quarter five through eight, and then again in quarter nine through eleven, holding steady at 4% of all sales during this period. During this time, by early 1979, a blanket ban on all IDAF publications was affected in South Africa. Print-runs for publications were now 30,000.[140] For instance, *This is Apartheid*: *A Pictorial Introduction to Apartheid* of 34 pages had a print-run of 30, 330 copies for its first print-run in 1978 with a further 31,440 reprinted in 1979.[141] The success of this publication may have acted as a valuable insight and a precursor as Jan Marsh recounts it:

> I believe the Publications programme wound down in the 1980s, in favour of photographic and film material.[142]

The print-run was not uniform, for instance, *Nelson Mandela: The Struggle is My Life*, a collection of Nelson Mandela's speeches and political writings, was published with a print-run of 20,075 in 1978[143], double the print-run of *A Window on Soweto*.

Figure 1.2 Other distributions per quarter for A Window on Soweto

[138] Minutes of the Fourteenth Annual Conference of the International Defence and Aid Fund for Southern Africa, held on 6-8 May 1977 in Geneva, Page 17, MCH31, Box 3482, Historical Papers, UWC Robben Island Mayibuye Archives.
[139] Report on Clause III Work 1976/77, MCH31, Box 3804, Historical Papers, UWC Robben Island Mayibuye Archives.
[140] Minutes of the Sixteenth Annual Conference of the International Defence and Aid Fund for Southern Africa, held on 4-6 May 1979 in Oslo, MCH31, Box 3482, Historical Papers, UWC Robben Island Mayibuye Archives.
[141] Record of Distribution, 1973-1981, MC31, Box 3804, Historical Papers, UWC Robben Island Mayibuye Archives.
[142] Jan Marsh, e-mail message to author, 4 November 2017.
[143] Record of Distribution, 1973-1981, MC31, Box 3804, Historical Papers, UWC Robben Island Mayibuye Archives.

	2 April - 1 July '77 Q1	2 July - 30 Sept '77 Q2	1Oct - 31 Dec '77 Q3	1 Jan - 31 Mar '78 Q4	Total	Average
Other Distributions for *A Window on Soweto* (£)	465	165	89	212	**931**	**233**
Total Other Distributions (£)	1 794	2 044	2 838	3 938	**10 614**	**2 654**
% distributions	26%	8%	3%	5%	**9%**	**9%**
Total Distributions for *A Window on Soweto* (£)	1 558	1 690	804	1 190	**5 242**	**1 311**
Total AAM Sales (£)	1 173	1 816	838	2 797	**6 624**	**1 656**
% AAM Sales in Total Other Distributions	65%	89%	30%	71%	**62%**	**62%**

	1 Apr - 30 June '78	1 July 29 Sept '78	30 Sept - 29 Dec '78	1 Jan - 31 Mar '79	Total	Average
	Q5	**Q6**	**Q7**	**Q8**		
	133	152	149	39	**473**	**118**
	10 143	6 433	3 303	2 879	**22 758**	**5 690**
	1%	2%	5%	1%	**2%**	**2%**
	914	483	632	808	**2 837**	**709**
	2 157	1 880	1 279	452	**5 768**	**1 442**
	21%	29%	39%	16%	**25%**	**25%**

	1 Apr - 30 June '79	1 July - 30 Sept '79	1 Oct - 31 Dec '79	Total	Average	Grand Total

Q9	Q10	Q11			
69	41	27	**137**	**46**	**1 541**
3 184	4 527	2 283	**9 994**	**3 331**	**43 366**
2%	1%	1%	**1%**	**1%**	**4%**
465	207	277	**949**	**316**	**9 028**
661	662	174	**1 497**	**499**	**13 889**
21%	15%	8%	**15%**	**15%**	**32%**

The figure above displays the 'other distribution channel' statistics for *A Window on Soweto* for the eleven quarters since publication where its individual sales are delineated in quarterly distribution reports compiled by the IDAF publications department. 'Other distribution channels' refer to sales made and monies kept by AAM for funding as well as complimentaries.

In the above figure, total distribution figures for the book stand at 5,242 after the first four quarters of publication and 9,028 at the end of the eleventh quarter. When taken against the 10,110 copies printed in the initial print-run, the remaining copies would be 1,082 going into January of 1980. Of the 9,028 copies distributed, 1,541 were what are described as complimentary copies during the period. These complimentaries consist in part of actual sales made by AAM, where proceeds were treated as aid. For instance, in the Annual Distribution Report for 1978[144], the IDAF Publication's Department boasts of nearly doubling aid to AAM through an increase in sales for them from £4,866 in 1977 to £8,113 in 1978. In the figure, the proportion of complimetaries that constituted sales through AAM sees a sharp decline during the period. The proportion goes from an average of 62% in the first four quarters, to 25% in the next four quarters to 15% in the remaining quarters. The book's proceeds of sale could be said to have contributed most to AAM in the first four quarters of its release and steadily much less as a backlist item. The balance would have gone to liberation movements/campaigns.

Figure 1.3 ***Geographic spread of sales of IDAF publications per quarter***

[144] Annual Report on Distribution for the IDAF Publications Department, 1978, MCH31, Box 3804, Historical Papers, UWC Robben Island Mayibuye Archives.

	2 April - 1 July '77 Q1	2 July - 30 Sept '77 Q2	1Oct - 31 Dec '77 Q3	1 Jan - 31 Mar '78 Q4	Total	Average
Total Sales (£)	8 692	4 306	7 334	9 044	**29 376**	**7 344**
Outside UK (£)	6 788	2 743	5 813	6 796	**22 140**	**5 535**
Total	8 692	4 306	7 334	9 044	**29 376**	**7 344**
%	78%	64%	79%	75%	**75%**	**75%**
English-Speaking (£)						
Non-English Speaking (£)						
% Non-English						

1 Apr - 30 June '78 Q5	1 July 29 Sept '78 Q6	30 Sept - 29 Dec '78 Q7	1 Jan - 31 Mar '79 Q8	Total	Average
12 620	9 142	15 595	21 450	**58 807**	**14 702**
9 082	5 208	6 844	9 515	**30 649**	**7 662**
12 620	9 142	15 595	21 450	**58 807**	**14 702**
72%	57%	44%	44%	**52%**	**52%**
8 040	4 112	5 743	5 689	**23 584**	**5 896**
1 042	1 096	1 101	3 826	**7 065**	**1 766**
11%	21%	16%	40%	**23%**	**23%**

1 Apr - 30 June '79	1 July - 30 Sept '79	1 Oct - 31 Dec '79	Total	Average	Grand Total

Q9	Q10	Q11			
5 973	7 838	6 228	**20 039**	**6 680**	**108 222**
4 524	5 392	3 175	**13 091**	**4 364**	**65 880**
5 973	7 838	6 228	**20 039**	**6 680**	**108 222**
76%	69%	51%	**65%**	**65%**	**61%**
3 884	1 351	2 363	**7 598**	**2 533**	**31 182**
640	4 041	812	**5 493**	**1 831**	**12 558**
14%	75%	26%	**42%**	**42%**	**19%**

The figure above displays the total geographic spread for IDAF publications for the eleven quarters covering publication of *A Window on Soweto* where its individual sales are delineated in quarterly distribution reports compiled by the IDAF publications department.

In the first four quarters of the publication of *A Window on Soweto*, the sales outside of the UK are not split into English-speaking countries and Non-English speaking countries per the quarterly reports. The quarterly reports provide this information for the remaining quarters. In the first four quarters, sales outside of the UK average 75% of all sales. This dips to 52% in the next four quarters and rises to 65% in the remaining quarters. This would be a reliable trend for *A Window on Soweto* as this was the strategy of the publications department – internationalisation with efforts particularly directed outside of Britain.[145] Looking at non-English-speaking, the first four quarters are modest but almost double in the remaining quarters. Though sales could be made of English versions to non-English speaking countries, the sales therein were also sometimes influenced by translations. The higher trend towards non-English speaking countries in the last three quarters can be partially attributed to the Dutch translation of *THIS IS APARTHEID.*[146] A reliable trend for *A Window on Soweto* would then be only tentative based on overall trends as influenced by translations of significant works from time to time. By the first quarter of 1979, reports showed a rough disaggregation of sales per country or region which included: Britain, France, United States, Southern Africa (including Tanzania), Netherlands, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Switzerland, Africa (the rest), EIRE – the Gaelic name for Ireland, Sweden, Norway, South America, Other (including FRG – then West Germany, Denmark, Italy, Japan, Papua New Guinea).[147]

Rights and Translations

[145] Report on Clause III Work 1976/77, MCH31, Box 3804, Historical Papers, UWC Robben Island Mayibuye Archives.
[146] Third Quarterly Report Distribution for IDAF Publications Department, 1/7/79 – 30/9/79, MCH31, Box 3804, Historical Papers, UWC Robben Island Mayibuye Archives.
[147] First Quarterly Report Distribution for IDAF Publications Department, 1/1/79 – 31/3/79, MCH31, Box 3804, Historical Papers, UWC Robben Island Mayibuye Archives.

In the report for Clause III work for the year 1976/1977 – ending in March of 1977 before the publishing of *A Window on Soweto* – the following is noted: 'In future all our publications will be copyrighted, in order to retain full IDAF control over them, and translation rights reserved.'[148]The book was therefore duly copyrighted to the IDAF with the following notice appearing on the copyright page:

> © INTERNATIONAL DEFENCE AND AID FUND
>
> This book is copyright under the Berne Convention. All rights are reserved. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study, research, criticism or review as permitted under the Copyright Act, 1956, no part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, electronic, electrical, chemical, mechanical, optical, photo-copying, recording or otherwise without the prior permission of the copyright owner. Enquiries should be addressed to the publishers.

The author is therefore, not asserted as the copyright holder.

Rights to publish *A Window on Soweto* in Norwegian were bought by publisher, J.W. Cappelens, one of the oldest publishing houses in Norway. This was announced in May 1978 at the International Defence and Aid Annual Conference in London.[149] The first international rights were therefore sold less than a year after publication. The translated version was called *Vindu Mot Soweto.* The royalty statement received by the IDAF from J.W. Cappelens Forlag on 1 January 1979 details the following: that their stocks as at 31 December 1978 stood at 2,244 with copies sold in the last year standing at 963. This put the Norwegian print-run at 3,207. Each copy attracted royalties at kr 2.950 (0.28 GBP)[150] and total royalties were kr 2,840.85 (265.05 GBP). From this kr 2,688.55 (250.84 GBP) had already been paid in advance and so only kr 152.30 (14.21 GBP) was outstanding for payment at this date.[151]

Later in the same year, in November 1979, the IDAF Publications Department received word that *A Window on Soweto* was being serialised in the Japanese Anti-Apartheid Movement bulletin.[152]

Reprint

The first quarterly report of 1980 on distribution calls attention to the following:

---

[148] Report on Clause III Work 1976/77, MCH31, Box 3804, Historical Papers, UWC Robben Island Mayibuye Archives.
[149] Report on Clause III Work 1977/78 for the International Defence and Aid Fund Annual Conference in London, held 5-7 May 1978, MC31, Box 3482, Historical Papers, UWC Robben Island Mayibuye Archives.
[150] End-of-day price 08/11/2017 derived from Six Financial Information, https://www.six-financial-information.com/en/home/global-data-services/market-data.html (accessed 8 November, 2017)
[151] Cappelens Forlag A/S Statement of Sales and Royalties No 012781, 01.01.79, MCH31, Box 3755, Historical Papers, UWC Robben Island Mayibuye Archives.
[152] Minutes of Clause III (R.I.P) General Meeting 104 Newgate Street, 8 November 1979, MCH31, Box 3669, Historical Papers, UWC Robben Island Mayibuye Archives.

> Particular attention is drawn to the fact that the SATIS book and A Window on Soweto are nearly out of print.[153]

This concern was not without merit. Though the book had fallen off the individual tracking list of titles, it appears twice under 'Large Orders' with 24 copies ordered by New Zealand Defence and Aid and 15 by TWP Birmingham. By the end of June 1980, it had been discussed and agreed that the book be reprinted with minimal textual alterations.[154] In July, it was back 'under consideration'[155] and by September, it was awaiting a decision for 're-reading'[156]. The 23 October 1980 Clause III meeting concluded the following:

> Window on Soweto – being reprinted incorporating minor typographical and grammatical changes. New cover price GBP1. Available early 1981.[157]

A week later, the print-run had been set at 4,000 copies soon to be followed by *Soweto Picture Book* in June of 1981[158]. By 4 December 1980, the matter was decided and awaiting copies.[159]

At 31 December 1980, 5,171 copies were ordered from AG Bishop & Sons Ltd Printers for £ 3,464 with the following specifications:

> 5000 copies booklet "A window on Soweto"
>
> A5 size, 80 pages text printed in black on white wove – plus 8 page art section printed in black on machine coated paper. Folded and thread sewn in sections, with 4-page cover printed in dark brown and light brown outside and black on page 3 on white board varnished outside.
>
> 5171 copies in all @ 67p each.[160]

The only slight difference from the first printing was the specifications for the cover. In the 1977 printing, the cover was 'printed in black and brown only on white board and varnished overall on outside' while the 1980 cover was 'printed in dark brown and light brown outside on white board

---

[153] First Quarterly Report Distribution for IDAF Publications Department, 1/1/80 – 31/3/80, MCH31, Box 3669, Historical Papers, UWC Robben Island Mayibuye Archives.
[154] Minutes Clause III RIP Meeting, 26.6.80, MCH31, Box 3669, Historical Papers, UWC Robben Island Mayibuye Archives.
[155] Minutes Clause III Meeting, 31.7.80, MCH31, Box 3669, Historical Papers, UWC Robben Island Mayibuye Archives.
[156] Clause III Meeting, 11 September 1980, MCH31, Box 3669, Historical Papers, UWC Robben Island Mayibuye Archives.
[157] Clause III Meeting, 23 October, 1980, MCH31, Box 3669, Historical Papers, UWC Robben Island Mayibuye Archives.
[158] Clause III General Meeting, 30 October 1980, MCH31, Box 3669, Historical Papers, UWC Robben Island Mayibuye Archives.
[159] Clause III General Meeting, 4 December 1980, MCH31, Box 3669, Historical Papers, UWC Robben Island Mayibuye Archives.
[160] AG Bishop & Sons Ltd Printers Invoice 8802, 31 December 1980, Order Number 9033, MCH31, Box 3755, Historical Papers, UWC Robben Island Mayibuye Archives.

varnished outside'. The effect of this change would be to lighten the cover from its darker predecessor.

A survey of stock, with print and distribution histories of books, fact papers and photographic exhibitions as at 31 December 1985 shows that the IDAF Publications Department expected the second edition to sell out in 1990[161], ten years after it was published. *A Window on Soweto* was still appearing in the IDAF Southern Africa distribution list for the year 1989/1990[162] with the following description:

> A Window on Soweto by Joyce Sikakane – Joyce Sikakane was born and brought up in the Orlando district of Soweto. This, her first book, gives her personal account of living in South Africa's largest township from her childhood, through her years as a journalist on the World and Rand Daily Mail newspapers, up to her detention for seventeen months under the Terrorism Act. When later she was served with a banning order she decided to leave South Africa in 1973, and has been living in exile ever since.
>
> 1977 $2.95 81/4 x 5 3/4 "
>
> 80pp. illustrated
>
> ISBN 0 904759 17 2

Curiously, this catalogue refers to the first edition of the book, years after it went out of print and the book is priced in US dollars, possibly for that market. It does, however, demonstrate that the book was very much still considered one of the IDAF's flagship publications, twelve years after its publication.

According to a 1990 Stock Report[163] for *A Window on Soweto* that details the progress in sales of the reprinted copies, the pattern is as follows:

> 31 December 1988 – 470 copies remaining
>
> 8 November 1989 – 200 copies remaining
>
> 23 March 1990 – 100 copies remaining
>
> 26 March 1990 – 0 copies remaining

[161] Survey of Stock, with Print and Distribution Histories of Books, Fact Papers and Photographic Exhibitions, MCH31, Box 3804, Historical Papers, UWC Robben Island Mayibuye Archives.
[162] International Defence & Aid Fund for Southern Africa Distribution List, Printed by Red Sea Press Inc. 89/90, MCH31, Box 3782, Historical Papers, UWC Robben Island Mayibuye Archives.
[163] Stock Report for CAT D016 Title: A Window on Soweto Published June 1977, 1990, MCH31, Box 3755, Historical Papers, UWC Robben Island Mayibuye Archives.

Written in, is a new quantity of 1,000 copies. This was unlikely to have come to anything as the IDAF was soon after this date closed down. In an April 1991 report prepared by Barry Feinberg and Peter Dobson on preserving some functions of the IDAF Publications Department, the IDAF's closure is pegged for the end of June 1991 with 'political funding becoming increasingly difficult to obtain'. The report includes the following about preserving publishing:

> With the political changes taking place in South Africa, it is clear that the political centre of gravity is inside South Africa and that the bulk of political publishing will be taking place there. We can see no future for a specialised organisation publishing books and producing movies from London.[164]

Reviews

The book was widely reviewed in the foreign press. This was not always done directly. At times, reviews of *A Window on Soweto* were embedded within reviews of other related work, whether by geographic location of the narrative, nationality of the author, or political content and purpose. Some reviews employ these links as a means to a comparative review that directly reviews the work against other works in a way that provides a wider perspective on South Africa. These reviews tend to focus either on the content and series of events in the text or on the emotive aspects that are linked with the writing style. For example the stylistic leaning, the choice of language and imagery or the voice of the work is discussed or the surprising and brutal reality of the apartheid regime becomes more in focus. In that sense, the book is recognised as life-writing but also as encyclopaedic with the intent to pass on information.

The spirit of these reviews is perhaps best captured in a comment on the book which appeared on the endpapers/catalogue page of the IDAF book, *For Their Triumphs and Their Tears* by Hilda Bernstein[165]:

"She should be widely read for this is not just an analysis of Soweto but a critique of the theory of apartheid."— THE TIMES

This excerpt underlines the book's purpose, to present an argument that contradicts apartheid at its foundational level.

In a largely academic review[166] in January 1978 for *African Affairs,* Lucy Mair juxtaposes the book against two others by South Africans, *Race and Suicide in South Africa* (1976) by Fatima Meer and

---

[164] Report on Preserving Some Functions of the IDAF Publications Department, Prepared by Peter Dobson and Barry Feinberg, April 1991, MCH31, Box 3700, Historical Papers, UWC Robben Island Mayibuye Archives.
[165] Endpapers of *For Their Triumphs And Their Tears* by Hilda Bernstein Showing Praise for Other IDAF Titles, Hilda and Rusty Bernstein Papers, 1931-2006, A3299, University of the Witwatersrand.
[166] Lucy Mair, 'Review', *African Affairs* 77, no. 306 (1978).

The Pity of it All by Leo Kuper (1977). In the first two books, she finds a common thread of suicide. The suicides of South Africans of every race are traced by Fatima Meer to test accepted conclusions about class and social integration, while Joyce Sikakane speaks of her time in prison and her knowledge of unconvincing stories emanating from police custody of suicides by those detained. The review of *A Window on Soweto*, therefore focuses not only on Joyce Sikakane's life and version of events, but on what outsiders, Westerners especially, might learn from her story that contradicts the official narrative of the apartheid state. In that sense the title of the book is taken quite literally as a glimpse into a world and context the reader has no access to.

An example of this glimpsing is in Mair's highlighting of Joyce's contrast of the lives of blue collar and white collar workers in Soweto. Joyce is seen to be dispelling the myth of upward mobility for black people in white collar jobs by highlighting the reality of how apartheid legislation strictly limited private trading and made credit difficult to obtain. The realities of overcrowded schools, ill-trained teachers and late start-times are highlighted as issues over and above the use of Afrikaans as a medium of instruction, one narrative that tended to swallow the entire narrative surrounding the 16 June 1976 Student Uprisings. In her telling of the circumstances of Joyce's arrest and detention, the reviewer lists the incidences she herself found to be irreconcilable with a democratic state but is tentative in concluding whether the South African apartheid government can be seen to be inefficient or deliberately malicious. In this the reviewer may be unconvinced but draws a parallel between the government and the communist regimes it 'seems to dread'.

A *Window on Soweto* also appeared as a featured review[167] in the *Friends Journal*, an American Quaker magazine, in February 1978. In this review which reflected the social justice concerns of the publication, the reviewer pays particular attention to the account of Soweto life being 'first-hand', 'up-to-date' and 'intimate', evidence of the success of the title in encapsulating the book. Joyce's account is also described as 'factual', 'remarkably restrained', 'thoroughly human', 'moving'. The review highlights the use of photography in giving weight to the words in the text. The reviewer describes the book as a valuable documentary that deserves wide circulation around the world and calls attention particularly to the benefit it may have for readers in the United States more conscious of what the reviewer describes as the 'apartheid' in that country and hopes for the reader to be conscientised into doing something about that state of affairs.

In September 1981, Femi Ojo-Ade in his review and exploration of writings about Steve Biko (*No. 46 - Steve Biko* by Hilda Bernstein; *Steve Biko - I Write What I Like* edited by Aelred Stubbs; *Biko* by Donald Woods) some months after the second edition of *A Window on Soweto* was released locates his analysis as follows:

---

[167] M. C. Morris, 'Book Review', *Friends Journal: Quaker Thought and Life Today* 24, no. 3 (1978): 21.

> Soweto is the symbol of black degradation and one needs to read Joyce Sikakane, A Window on Soweto (London, International Defence and Aid Fund, 1977), to have a total picture of the horror of that life. Soweto is a matchbox, a prison, with dimly-lit streets, except for the roads leading to police stations, liquor stores, and Johannesburg. Death is a constant, and corpses litter the streets. Soweto was 'a bastard child born out of circumstances following the dispossession of the African people and the discovery of gold in the Witwatersrand...born out of white greed and racism' (Sikakane, p. 8). Soweto, called 'so-where-to' by its inmates, is now the symbol of Black Consciousness.[168]

In this way, *A Window on Soweto* becomes a part of the canon of Soweto literature in general in that Joyce becomes an authoritative and emotive voice of the conditions endured by its inhabitants.

In her 1988 article, *Bibliography of Twelve African Women Writers*, Brenda Berrian locates *A Window on Soweto* along a trajectory of acclaimed black autobiographical women's writing - Ellen Kuzwayo, *Call Me Woman*; Winnie Mandela, *A Part of My Soul Went with Him*; Joyce Sikakane, *A Window on Soweto.*[169] This suggests that the book may have taken some time to cement Joyce Sikakane's name within the genre, more than a decade after it was first released. Mbulelo Mzamane[170] in his chronology of autobiographical writing in English by black women, places Joyce Sikakane, second in the genre to Noni Jabavu (*Drawn in Colour: African Contrast* (1960) and *The Ochre People: Scenes from South African Life* (1963)) with *A Window on Soweto,* stipulating clearly that the author was already known as a journalist and poet before this work.

As late as 1999, Randall in her review of Marjorie Agosín's *A Map of Hope: Women's Writing on Human Rights: An International Literary Anthology* highlighted *A Window on Soweto* as 'starkly magnificently successful' in the following terms:

> To be successful, writing about the repression of human rights - about imprisonment, torture, fear of death - must give us details. It is in the smallest of details - ordinary sights and smells, observations and feelings - that we begin to understand that this could happen to anyone, to those we love, to us.[171]

For an example of this, she excerpts page 112 of *A Window on Soweto,* where Joyce details the conditions of her detention and her state of mind, describing each unnerving development and change

---

[168] Femi Ojo-Ade, 'Review: Stephen Biko: Black Consciousness, Black Struggle, Black Survival', *The Journal of Modern African Studies* 19, no. 3 (1981): 543.
[169] Brenda F. Berrian, 'An Update: Bibliography of Twelve African Women Writers', *Research in African Literatures* 13, no. 2 (1988): 207.
[170] Mbulelo Mvizikhungo Mzamane, 'Review: Cultivating a People's Voice in the Criticism of South African Literature', *Research in African Literatures* 22, no. 4 (1991): 132.
[171] Margaret Randall, 'Review: Presences and Absences', *The Women's Review of Books* 17, no. 1 (1999): 15.

in environment with an instinct for the intimidation tactics employed by the police officers, such as practicing boxing on punching bags near to her.

Randall describes it thus:

> Fear moves on this page, perhaps more consummately than it would had the policemen been practicing on the victim. Along with Sikakane, the reader wonders when the blows will strike her body. The image of the promised blows plus the accompanying uncertainty become more terrible than blows already struck.

Here in bringing forth the effectiveness of the device for the purposes of advancing human rights, the reviewer also brings forth its effectiveness for literature.

Truth and Reconciliation Commission

On 29 July 1997, day two of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Human Rights Violations Women's Hearing, Joyce Sikakane-Rankin gave her testimony and focused on the inhumane treatment of women in prisons. She breaks her testimony with the following:

> At this point I would like to submit to the Truth and Reconciliation Committee the book Window on Soweto which I wrote in 1975 and was published in 1977 by the International Defence and Aid. In this book I graphically describe detention, interrogation, trials and banning orders which I went through. I have given the Commissioners the extracts of that, you know, of that book, but I must bring to the attention of the Commissioners that the spiralling coil of the needling urges of torture by mind breaking was at its peak.[172]

Here the book acts as documentary proof of her ordeal in these proceedings and she presents it as evidence. It is significant that this was during the Women's Hearing, where the focus was on the treatment of women dissidents by the apartheid state, especially during interrogation and detention. The text therefore in that context had a feminist purpose in addition to the general purpose of social justice, amplifying the voices of black women who were doubly marginalised for their race and gender.

Conclusion

A Window on Soweto was released at a time when the international community was starved of detailed information about Soweto by apartheid government censorship but at the same time was aware of the enormity of the horrors through the massacre of schoolchildren in 1976. Its immediate positive reception can be contextualised by this as well as the strong initial sales. The first-hand account of a black woman and a Sowetan resonated within the scramble for this information into territories outside

[172] Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC). Human Rights Violations: Women's Hearing. Testimony of Joyce Sikhakhane Ranken (sic). Day 2, 29 July 1997.

of Britain, some of them non-English speaking such as Norway and Japan. At the same time, the work competed against titles of vastly different composition as print-runs started to climb steadily within the IDAF. It was therefore, conceptualised and published within the midpoint of a learning curve for the IDAF. The book was also a predecessor to other works and IDAF processes which were able to eclipse it in some ways over time, due to perceived changing global political trends and the organisational response thereto. Reviews of *A Window on Soweto* reflect its importance as a provider of key insights into life in Soweto and South Africa as a whole when viewed against other South African works of that time as well as Joyce Sikakane's historical significance as an author. Her bravery and belief in this text as a worthy testimony at the TRC proceedings in terms of providing important revelations about the treatment of women prisoners in detention allows for a reading of its purpose as also being feminist.

Chapter 4

The Writer and Community

As the discussion in Chapter 2 indicated, *Window on Soweto* was shaped by an editorial process that in the end sought to meld the factual tradition of IDAF genres with the personal experience of the author. This particular textual layering may in part account for the fact that *Window on Soweto* has largely been overlooked in accounts of black women's writing which tend to focus on questions of personal experience. However the text shares many features with these traditions. This chapter consequently begins by briefly locating the text in these traditions before examining two key features, namely its construction of community and its tracing of the ambiguous privileges of Sikakane's family and its political milieu. Comparisons to writing about black communities in the United States are raised.

Barabara-Anne Boswell[173], in surveying black women's literary output during apartheid, notes that when Bessie Head's *When Rain Clouds Gather* was published in 1968, it was the first full-length novel by a black South African woman. It is also significant that she did this while in exile in Botswana. Speaking of Lauretta Ngcobo, the next black woman to publish under apartheid with *Cross of Gold* (1976), but from England, Boswell notes the similarity; that Ngcobo could also write her novels 'only once she had left South Africa'. The chronology then progresses, but *A Window on Soweto* is not mentioned, even though it was published the very next year under similar circumstances, with Sikakane, like Ngcobo, fearing political persecution as a writer/agitator, and also passing through Swaziland, Tanzania and Zambia, before settling, ultimately, for a long period in Europe. Here, these writers were forcibly exiled from their communities. Charlottle Bruner in noting this phenomenon contextualises it thus: 'Some writers forced into exile, like Amelia Blossom House, write now from the United States, but many others have officially "disappeared."'[174]Here, she notes a white South African woman writer, Amelia Blossom House, politically exiled from South Africa. She is aware of Joyce Sikakane as a journalist and her exile in Britain but makes no mention of *A Window on Soweto*.

[173] Barbara-Anne Boswell, *Black South African Women Writers: Narrating the Self, Narrating the Nation* (College Park: University of Maryland, 2010)
[174] Charlotte H. Bruner, '"There Is No Time in South Africa Now for Fairy Stories": Three Women Authors from the IWP', *World Literature Today* 61, no. 3 (1987).

The omission of Joyce Sikakane's work is understandable given the exclusion of Black women from South African literary canons during the apartheid period as well as a dearth of output due to apartheid repressive laws. Even where there were texts, 'their works remained unknown and unexamined, considered unworthy of analysis or artistic merit'.[175] Black women writers especially were not expected to gain prominence, their writing understandably being focused and strategic for specific aims.

Sarah Nuttall[176], in examining autobiographies covering a similar time period as *A Window on Soweto*, focuses on Ellen Kuzwayo's *Call Me Woman* (1985), Sindiwe Magona's *To My Children's Children* (1990) and Phyllis Ntantala's *A Life's Mosaic* (1992). She concludes with three distinct points:

1) That black South African women writers up until that point had generally written for foreign audiences.
2) That it is not the imagination that is stressed as escape, but a social knowledge that creates a useful reading and an imparting of political consciousness.
3) That black women, rather than emphasize their own self-constructions, focus on an autonomous self in friction with a racist state.

Carol Boyce Davies draws a direct link between Sikakane's *A Window on Soweto* and Khuzwayo's *Call Me Woman*, stating that they 'utilize the same "autobiographical prerogative" to document history and detail the individual and group experience'.[177] She then links both works to Noni Jabavu's *Drawn in Colour* (1960) as texts in the same tradition: 'committed politically to a presentation of the maintenance of community life in the face of one of the most vicious examples of inhumanity in the world'.[178] Nuttall's work overlaps well with these observations. The first point indicates an expectation by black women writers of the time, of policing and silencing by state machinery at home, and a possibly more open reception elsewhere. This element is evident in *A Window on Soweto*, which can be read as written as a distress signal or an SOS from one community to another. The second point reminds us that the focus and strategic intent of this writing was generally for the greater good of their communities, an element which is evident in *A Window on Soweto*. The book aims to give a portrait of both the writer and Soweto as home. The third point is relevant for the last section of this chapter, where the autonomous self or even family lineage is posited as in friction with the state. This understanding is overlaid with a knowledge that such friction came from everywhere and was at times also produced through assimilative practices.

Writing as Distress Signal for Community across Communities

[175] Boswell, Narrating the Self, Narrating the Nation, 59.
[176] Sarah Nuttall, 'Reading in the Lives and Writing of Black South African Woman', *Journal of South African Studies* 20, no. 1 (1994).
[177] Carole Boyce Davies, 'Finding Some Space: South African Women Writers', *Ufahamu: A Journal of African Studies* 15, no. 1-2 (1986): 123.
[178] Davies, 'Finding Some Space: South African Women Writers', 124.

Joyce Sikakane, as a Soweto native who writes from exile, acts as an interpreter of her society for communities abroad. To this end, there are several ways that this understanding announces itself within the text. *A Window on Soweto* is 80 pages long. Crammed into those 80 pages are 35 sections each on average one or two pages. Of these 35 sections, the majority cover Soweto directly as affected by apartheid laws and the socio-economic realities emerging from this circumstance, with Joyce Sikakane's own experiences sometimes featuring obliquely, through her observations from her journalism career or through tangential anecdotes about her personal life. Can Themba, also a journalist, in *The Will to Die* (1972), groups his work into three sections: 'Stories', 'Reports Johannesburg 1956-7' and 'Endings'. The sections are clearly demarcated by purpose, the second of which is journalistic observations. Sikakane's approach is different. She intersperses her experiences and history into the sociological analysis. Her experiences only feature to the extent that a point can be made that further illuminates the overall message of a particular section. For instance, the section titled 'Registering for Work' begins with an extract of Section 10 of the Pass Laws and then segues into her own experience of applying for a pass for the first time. The only passages that deal almost exclusively with her experience are the sections about her family history and detention: My Grandfather, My Father and Mother, My Schooldays, Detention, Interrogation, In Nylstroom Prison, On Trial and Re-trial.

In a cinematic opening, Soweto as a whole is personified through scenes typical to a Sowetan home. The reader is invited to 'imagine' the familial and domestic lives of what Joyce Sikakane describes as the 'inmates' of Soweto. In this family scene, only the figure of the little girl is drawn into sharp focus in describing the morning routine:

> A figure of a girl, usually from the six to ten-year-olds, emerges from the sleeping spot. The girl is on tip-toe gently holding a chamber pot lest it spill on someone's feet or the floor. Near the door she carefully puts it on the floor, opens the door, picks up the pot and puts it down on the ground and quickly shuts the door. She picks up the pot and rushes to empty it in the lavatory. Once outside drops of urine falling on the ground do not call for retribution.[179]

Through using the perspective of its youngest and most vulnerable family member, this passage is revealing in how it details the familial structures, roles, responsibilities and economic conditions of the family. The girl is not described as between the ages of six and ten years old, but is described as being 'from that group', suggesting that there are several girls and young women in the house ranging in age. 'Sleeping spot' is a loaded term and does not allow the reader the envisioning of a bedroom, but rather of cramped make-shift sleeping quarters. This is further illustrated by the fact that she may spill the urine on the feet of those sleeping around her. The building of suspense between her being

[179] Sikakana, *A Window on Soweto*, 5.

able to open the door without a spill and her rushing once outside to finish the task, also creates the familiar tensions—reward and punishment—that often accompany familial relations. The focus on the innocence of the young girl and the weight of her responsibilities is a poignant metaphor that sets up the tone for the rest of the text. The book is quite clearly not for Sowetans, who would be familiar with the conditions and the negotiations that were being made to keep families together, but for those outside of Soweto and more specifically South Africa, for whom such scenes would be foreign, more so for being written with tenderness and intimate knowledge of the human lives of those in question.

The tension between the autobiographical and what are community interests maintains itself throughout the text. To this end, the text employs a call and response style. In typical call and response interactions, a speaker's statements (‘calls’) are punctuated by responses from the listeners. The response therefore would echo more loudly than the speaker’s initial statements and serve to reiterate or amplify it. In the text, Joyce Sikakane’s personal experiences and history as described by her are the call, the community concerns which take up the bulk of the text and in which she shares, are the response that amplifies her experiences into a greater community. The response anchors her experience in a concrete universe and reality. Sikakane provides an exploded view of the issues as they pertain to the community, focusing on how the entire community is able to be affected. An exploded view of an object shows the relationship or order of assembly of various parts. *A Window on Soweto’s* sections are arranged in such a way as to provide insights into the relationships between the dilemmas that township life presented to Sowetans.

‘Life in Soweto’, the opening section, gives an overall picture of the conditions, focusing on Soweto as a labour camp and the challenges presented by racist spatial and transport infrastructure planning, the nervous condition presented by carrying a pass book as well as the irony of segregation that begins and ends each day with traffic by the black majority to and from ‘the white town’. The following section ‘Housing in Soweto’ provides drawings of the plan and elevation of a standard four-roomed house in Soweto with estimated dimensions for each room. The section also provides a spatial overview of the township giving its number of locations as 26, covering 85 square kilometres and including 108,766 houses. Where the preceding section opened with an early morning scene from one of these houses, here Joyce Sikakane gives the bird’s eye view of the community. The relationship between racist spatial and transport infrastructure planning is brought into sharper focus and understood to be connected to white tourists who are ‘brought in’ to admire the apartheid government’s buffer zone settlement, Dube Township, situated in the ‘heart of the slum’ and comprised of educated, affluent black people. The section ends with Sikakane’s condemnation of hostel life, another component of Soweto housing, as an unnatural and impractical segregation of the genders, and the stifling of intellectual and creative life. The proceeding sections, like this one, explain in detail the reasons for the general quality of life explained in the opening section, ‘Life in

Soweto', and the interconnectedness between these components of life. In the section 'The Insecurity of Apartheid', she ties in these relationships more explicitly by recounting a story from her journalism days about elderly people marrying in order to avoid repatriation alone to the so-called Homelands and away from the only communities they knew. The repatriation was unavoidable but if one could get married then one would not face the ordeal on one's own. The repatriation was arbitrary according to the ethnicity indicated by their surname:

> Terrified of being repatriated alone to strange places, these aged persons arranged marriages of future companionship. The cruelty of the "repatriation scheme" was that the government regarded the urban African aged as "superfluous appendages" no longer useful to serve the white man in the City. I wrote the story pointing out the facts behind these sudden marriages of men and women of 70 to 100 and the fact that the newly-weds would spend their honeymoons and life forever after in the desolate Bantustans. When I read the newspaper in the afternoon, it had only a group picture and caption of the "Happy Newly-weds." I felt angry and disgusted.[180]

Later in the section, she shares that around this time, her parents had decided to divorce. The decision was agonising not just for its emotional impact but also because of such threats of repatriation for her mother. For a long time the couple had used judicial separation to avoid each member of the family being assigned to single-sex hostels. Given her previous detailing and rejection of hostel life at an existential level, the passage carries a particular resonance and poignancy. In this sense, her life is removed from being individual and idiosyncratic and shown to be policed into a mould that is discernible and remarkably consistent with the experiences of many other people in the same place. Given that the consistency is enforced for the deterioration of people en masse, the device is effective and evokes dread.

There is also a tension of space between how much the writer shares directly about herself and how much she couches this within a more generalised Soweto narrative. David Westley in 'A Select Bibliography of South African Autobiography' describes the book as: 'More a description of Soweto itself, the author mentions relatively little of her own life'.[181] To this end, Davies infers in her analysis of South African women writers that: 'the overwhelming viciousness of apartheid on the people allows little space for the individual experience'.[182]

In the section, 'Medical Services', Sikakane begins as follows:

---

[180] Sikakana, *A Window on Soweto*, 45.
[181] David Westley, 'A Select Bibliography of South African Autobiography', *Biography* 17, no. 3 (1994): 280.
[182] Davies, 'Finding Some Space: South African Women Writers', 124.

> While pregnant I attended ante-natal care at a local clinic where each pregnant woman is only examined once – on her very first visit – by a doctor. Only women with serious medical complications get examined more than once.[183]

The sentence, before it is even finished, has moved over to the plural, right from 'where each...' The next paragraph discusses the extent of healthcare in the community and then names the cause for failure:

> The only maternity hospital for African women in the whole of Johannesburg is at Baragwanath. It is reserved for pregnant women who work as domestic servants and who live in the domestic quarters of the white residential areas or in the single-sex hostels. This is done for two reasons, first the apartheid regime would not tolerate the birth of black babies in white areas, although by accident some babies decide to come before time, and thus born at a white man's premises. Secondly, it is done so as to record babies who are not supposed to qualify for the Section 10 permit because their mothers in the hostels do not qualify, babies who have to be sent to the homelands as soon as their mothers get discharged.[184]

The passage takes on a defiant tone when addressing the motives and actions of the apartheid government. At the same time, the sense of community described pertains to African women as a whole, with no regard to class or social standing. This makes it clear that she is not only concerned for the welfare of those whose fortunes match hers, professionally or otherwise, Soweto is one community.

The next sentence:

> When my contractions started one of my brothers ran a distance of almost two miles to a local clinic to call a midwife.[185]

She returns to the frame of the pregnant woman and the narrative stretches to recount her difficulty in securing transport to the hospital. This account makes the point about scarce transport and midwives that cost women their lives and those of their new-born babies. There is no jubilation at all at childbirth, and, as if self-conscious of this deviation to the personal, the paragraph ends with Soweto:

> In Soweto, it is common for mothers to die while giving birth and to give birth to stillborn babies because the midwife and jeep are too late to call. The midwives work under tremendous pressure. Besides those two-to four-roomed crowded houses are not hygienic as places of delivery, neither are they equipped with emergency units.[186]

---

[183] Sikakana, *A Window on Soweto*, 46.
[184] Ibid., 47.
[185] Ibid., 47.

The next five paragraphs engage, at first, at a wholly factual level (price of treatment, salaries of black doctors, malnutrition statistics and so on), and then shift again as the reader is taken into her confidence about the true nature of medical care in Soweto, its appearances and its realities:

> Visitors invariably leave with an impression of a large busy progressive hospital coping admirably with an intolerable work load and giving the Africans a surprisingly good service. It is only by working in this hospital and experiencing over a long time its difficulties that a true appreciation of its achievements and failings can be seen.

Here she hints at her insider knowledge and also cautions the reader to distrust accounts that may report a facade, something that is pivotal to reaching across a divide. Here, she also projects a balance in terms of drawing conclusions, which can better engender trust.

Yet, at the same time, she does acknowledge the potential of Baragwanath and reveals her husband as a primary source for her balanced view:

> My husband Ken spent ten months working there fulltime and thus obtained an intimate working knowledge of it. In his words Baragwanath can truly be described as a phenomenon.

It is not made clear why he would describe it as such. However, as if to clarify, thereafter, Sikakane provides a brief history of the hospital grounded in its origins during World War II as a tuberculosis hospital for troops being repatriated, the technical proficiency of staff across specialised medical disciplines, the conditions created by overcrowding, and the shortage of staff to service the needs of the community. Speaking about Ken, Sikakane is back to the direct, possessive nouns and a personal story.

After a balance of information on Baragwanath hospital from various sources, objective, anecdotal, subjective, she concludes:

> High standards are thus mandatory as befits a teaching hospital. But it remains inadequate in terms of the population it is supposed to serve.

The flow creates an urgent, nervous tension in these chapters (other chapters, a handful, deal specifically with her family history, early life and arrest and detention) that conveys that there is not enough time to spare in this text on the personal if it is not in service to the cause of Soweto as a whole.

Section headings settle on minutiae such as ‘Food and Drink’, ‘Children’s Games’, ‘Child Care’, but on closer inspection, seek to address serious structural issues better evoked by more recognisably

---

[186] Ibid., 48.

pragmatic topics, such as ‘Credit’, ‘Crime’, ‘Pass Laws’ and ‘The Economic Aspect’. The former tend to be dispensed with as peculiarities to a specific locale that does not speak to the difficulties others elsewhere are facing. The ‘minutiae’ then serve to create on the whole a holistic portrait of a community whose everyday human needs, relatable also to other people in their humanness, are impinged on.

For instance, the section headed ‘Food and Drink’ begins thus:

> How does a Soweto dweller eat? Unscrupulous trading is rife in Soweto. Customers are overcharged as much as 50% for food items. In a recent investigation by the milk board it was found that customers are overcharged as much as 33% for a litre of milk. This comes as no surprise because the traders are forced to make quick profits since their businesses are not in a favourable competitive market, they do not get mortgages, and have very little chance of investing money in the completely white dominated economy with all its apartheid curbs.[187]

The section is immediately centred on the township economy in Soweto: how black stakeholders in the value chain are disincentivised by laws from pursuing ethical business practices, even if this acts against their own community members. Still, the author commiserates with the unscrupulous sellers, understanding them to be acting against unfavourable systematic odds. She then goes on to detail the impact of this on the disposable income of already exploited and poor working-class masses. How the average person anywhere understands food and drink as part of their daily routine may seem trivial, but in Soweto these issues illuminate how apartheid is all-pervasive. Here there is no personal narrative included by the author.

The section ‘Children’s Games’ ends as follows, after describing humble group street games:

> Many Soweto children spend their lives in the streets. Schooling is not compulsory for Africans in South Africa, nor is it free as it is for whites. Many children never reach the classroom at all and of those who do a high proportion drop out before they have completed a primary course.[188]

With this passage, Sikakane evokes a future for the children. While the present has them innocently playing games, the streets become a home, inviting consequences that arrive as a direct result of government policies. This image is eerie and counterintuitive. Again, the personal narrative is absent.

In the instance of ‘Child Care’:

[187] Ibid., 34.
[188] Ibid., 39.

> Imagine at the crack of dawn the African women, many with two or three children in tow, one of which may be carried on the back, leaving for their work in the city. Food for the day may be carried on their backs or on a free arm. Should there be a granny in the area, or a jobless woman, such women are forced to look after their neighbours' children because of the shortage of nursery schools. This baby care is done illegally and there is a grave shortage of grannies because such "superfluous appendages" are not allowed by law to live in Soweto.[189]

Again, the author presents a shadow economy that operates away from the eyes of the law, but allows for mothers to seek care and also support their offspring. The imagery of grandmothers as 'illegal' or 'superfluous' is particularly powerful for its revelation of a denial of multi-generational maternal care for children in Soweto, which must be 'stolen'. The denial of that experience becomes another example of apartheid's suppression of emotional development in young children, and how their interiorities and the structures of their families are compromised. The women are not specific women but every-women whose experiences speak for the women in the township as a whole. This creates a motion and constancy to their movements that makes the risk seem all the more dangerous, putting their lives in constant peril.

The personal narrative emerges in the second paragraph with the author as a young child:

> I remember as a toddler we dreaded being shunted from house to house because of the shortage of grannies. When there were no grannies available, our mothers were forced to leave us locked alone in a room. They would remove anything dangerous, leaving us with a plate of mealie pap, a mug of water and a chamber pot.

The desperation and normalised deprivation is clear from this passage and the generational spectrum—running from toddler, to working adult to grandparent—all caught up in the web of the state, is effective. The imagery of a toddler locked up like a hound with the barest essentials remains jarring.

The Question of Ambiguous Privilege

In her memoir *Negroland*, Margo Jefferson outlines the complex internal dynamics of African American society, focusing especially on those who have some privilege, but face the broader disabilities of a racist society. *Window on Soweto* could be described in much the same terms.

[189] Ibid., 35.

Jefferson discusses how a class of African-Americans have been able to entrench privilege for their children and have survived as a small, elite group until the present day, having lived through slavery, the American Civil War, the Reconstruction period, Jim Crow and the Civil Rights Era:

> Privilege is provisional. Privilege can be denied, withheld, offered grudgingly and summarily withdrawn. Entitlement is impervious to the kinds of verbs that modify privilege. Our people have had to work, scrape for privilege, gobble it down when those who would snatch it away weren't looking. Keep a close watch.[190]

This privilege is relative, since it often means citizen rights effected by the accumulation of various types of capital, while, at the same time, being from a class considered non-citizens. One of the narrative threads in *A Window on Soweto* is a tracing of the effect of the apartheid regime on the relative privilege and access enjoyed by the Sikakane family.

This lineage begins with Joyce Sikakane's grandfather, the Rev Absolum Mbulawa Sikakane, Chaplain of the ANC in then Natal, in the section entitled 'My Grandfather'. Born to a polygamous family in Maphumulo, Kwa-Zulu Natal, 'not later than 1890', he was encouraged by his mother to become educated and enrolled at the Lutheran Mission School in the district. He was then taken by the minister in charge of the mission school to Johannesburg, and when he was transferred there, it took a few years before he was ordained a reverend.

In his stipulations for a wife, the reverend is remembered to have had the following requirements:

> He was determined to marry an urban woman who could cook European-style meals, and in his own words "prepare a salad". He wanted a wife who could read and write, dressed neatly and knew how to look after the home of a minister.[191]

Quickly, the reader learns the limits of relative privilege for black people under apartheid, as well as the fact that this state of affairs was uncertain and a constant moving target:

> While in the parish, my grandfather bought two plots of land in Alexandra Township. He was preparing to build a house where he could retire. As the political situation moved to a truly racially segregated society, my grandfather's plans failed to materialise.[192]

He responded from the pulpit:

---

[190] Margo Jefferson, *Negroland* (New York City: Vintage Books, 2015), 37.
[191] Sikakane, *A Window on Soweto*, 16.
[192] Ibid.,16.

> He attributed to racial hatred and greed the plans to move African landowners from property they had bought with money they had earned by "sweating blood".[193]

He was eventually forced to yield:

> By this time, the Nationalist government was in power, and the writing was on the wall for African property owners. My grandfather sold his land in Alexandra Township and bought land in Clermont Township, Durban, an area which was many miles distant from the white city, and had not featured as a "blackspot" threatened with removal, like Sophiatown and Alexandra Township.[194]

In the section entitled 'My Father and Mother', Sikakane opens by describing her father thus:

> My father is what I could describe as a typical schooled "Joburgher" at heart. From infancy, his world was that of a cosmopolitan nature.[195]
>
> In the city streets he played hide-and-seek in the backyards of Indian, Chinese, Coloured or white premises. Children of this community enjoyed attending the various national festivals, like the Chinese Dragon celebration, the Indian Divali and Christmas.[196]

Again, the hand of apartheid is swift in arriving in the text to disrupt the narrative:

> He was enrolled for secondary education at a boarding school in Roodepoort, run by the Lutheran Church. Years later when the Nationalists took power, this school was immediately shut down because it was located in an Afrikaans stronghold.[197]

Sikakane notes this kind of 'dodging of a bullet'—the bullet being apartheid laws—several times in the text. She explains, for instance, that she was born at a private hospital in a white residential area and that when 'the apartheid regime took power this hospital had to be closed because black babies could not be born in a white area'[198]. Can Themba in *The Will to Die* also notes Bridgeman Memorial Hospital as a landmark and 'known, strangely, for bringing illegitimate Non-European children into

---

[193] Ibid., 17.
[194] Ibid., 18.
[195] Ibid., 21.
[196] Ibid., 22.
[197] Ibid., 22.
[198] Ibid., 23.

the world'.[199] Given the contrast she provides in relating how the average experience in Soweto is that of giving birth in crowded, unhygienic homes, the significance of this privilege is clear and recalls Jefferson's idea of how the privilege of black people manifests in racist, white supremacist societies: that each had to 'gobble it down when those who would snatch it away weren't looking'.

Sikakane demonstrates her knowledge of the currency of this privilege several times when surveying her lineage. For instance, in this passage about her mother:

> Her mother came from Swaziland, where she was related to the royal family. My mother spoke of Prince Makhosini, the present prime minister of Swaziland, as having lived with her family while attending school in Newcastle. The Nxumalo family to which my family belonged is known to have direct connections with the Swazi royal family.[200]

Like in Jefferson's memoir, and as with Sikakane's grandfather, this privilege reproduced itself in who was marriageable. Thus, Joyce Sikakane's mother was a schoolteacher and her parents met at a tennis tournament. By the time of her parents' divorce, he is a lecturer at Wits University and before that is employed at the Institute of Race Relations.

The overall theme of lineage is cemented in the following passage:

> My parents named me Joyce, and my grandfather added the Zulu name Nomafa, which means "inheritance". When flattering myself, I am inclined to believe that he named me thus, so that I should continue with the political struggle he was involved in with the African National Congress, fighting against white domination.[201]

There is also the thread of being part of a story of the larger lineage of the ANC, introducing her proximity to the political elites of the day:

> One event which is always cemented in my mind is the day in 1958 when I helped my grandfather prepare dinner for the Natal ANC members who were in the treason trial. They were to meet at my grandfather's home before flying to Pretoria for the Treason Trial. I shook hands with Chief Luthuli, who was then ANC national president, Mr M. B. Yengwa, Natal ANC secretary, and Dorothy Nyembe, the woman now serving 15 years in gaol in South Africa. They were all so dignified and unperturbed at having to go and face trial which could

[199] Can Themba, *The Will to Die* (London: Heinemann Educational Books, 1972), 3.
[200] Sikakane, *A Window on Soweto*, 22.
[201] Ibid., 23.

> have cost their lives. They lifted the clenched fist salute and the thumbs-up as they sang "Nkosi sikekela i Africa" (the African national anthem) before they left my grandfather's home.[202]

This event occurs in the same year that she finishes primary school. Throughout her life she experiences the ever tightening grip of apartheid laws on the most important aspects of her intellectual life. This starts at the very beginning of her schooling, in contrast to her father and grandfather, as the net closes in:

> When I started schooling in 1950, the apartheid regime which took office in 1948 was already legislating its new policy and moving towards its implementation.[203]
>
> I was then a pupil at a primary school run by the Anglican Church, and that famous priest Trevor Huddleston was in charge of the parish whose school I attended.[204]

This school rather than acquiesce to the apartheid government with regards to Bantu Education, and responding to a call from the ANC, closed down and Sikakane's parents sent her to a private Roman Catholic school in Durban which 'because of a possible loophole in the legal interpretation of the Bantu Education Act, could delay introducing the new racial syllabus'.[205] This loophole could only be relied upon for a year and Joyce Sikakane had a year's taste of Bantu Education. She was then sent to boarding school: 'My parents had to work harder and deprive themselves of essentials to afford the boarding school fees.'[206] This school was Inanda Seminary. This is the school where she becomes politically active in a way that intersected with her on-going political education from her grandfather:

> While in boarding school in 1960, I received news of my grandfather's detention under the State of Emergency. The husband of one of our teachers, Mrs E. Yengwa, had also been detained. It was the same M.B. Yengwa who had been acquitted at the treason trial. Mrs Yengwa took it upon herself to explain to us what the State of Emergency meant, and that African people would not be intimidated by jails in the fight for freedom.

After completing her high schooling, Sikakane and her classmates were opposed to attending so-called Tribal Colleges and instead elected to work: she herself chose journalism. In this instance, not

---

[202] Ibid., 41.
[203] Ibid., 40.
[204] Ibid., 41.
[205] Ibid., 41.
[206] Ibid., 42.

having had another way to dodge the system's constraints, she opted out of further education. Sikakane worked initially for the *World* and then the *Rand Daily Mail* in Johannesburg.

Loren Kruger[207] argues that 'black aspirations to modernity have to be understood in terms of the appropriation of European, American and African-American urban cultures alongside the reassessment of indigenous traditions' and that in the particular case of urban Africans, particularly those in Sophiatown, they experienced 'synthesized influences from Europe, America and what might be called African America, as well as South Africa, into a culture that was as cosmopolitan, urbane, and postcolonial as the apartheid system would allow'. This allowance was ever shifting. The link between Jefferson's *Negroland* and Sikakane's *A Window on Soweto* is found not only in descriptions of the nature of the lives of this strand of black society, in an effort to discuss race, but in the fact that for black South Africans, the culture of black Americans was also influential in urban locales like Soweto.

In the quest to be recognised as human and to be seen to emerge from a community of other humans, the writer calls on other communities elsewhere to see this humanity. *A Window on Soweto* achieves these aims by employing a call and response style that immerses the reader in order to not only provide factual information, but to also offer a view of the quotidian against the racist underbelly and architecture of life in Soweto. In addition to this, the quest for education, property and social assimilation in the changing political order is also expressed by the writer as an assertion of humanity, self-actualisation and the pursuit of a creative and intellectual life. This is done with some knowledge of these other communities' standards, priorities and sensibilities; and in the end, this ambiguous privilege also serves as an object of pride against the continued disenfranchising powers of the apartheid state.

[207] Loren Kruger, 'The Drama of Country and City: Tribalization, Urbanization and Theatre under Apartheid', *Journal of Southern African Studies* 23, no. 4 (1997): 566.

Chapter 5

Conclusion

‘People asked questions, I remember one which was quite interesting, a question from one woman who had read the book and she said to me: "Why did I get married?" because she thought from what she has read, I was a feminist. And actually, feminism hadn't struck me then and I said "Well, I'm sorry; I don't understand your question". So she didn't come back or insist or explain what feminism is about. I only learnt about feminism years later.’ – Joyce Sikakane-Rankin recounting a meeting of the anti-apartheid movement in London after the publishing of *A Window on Soweto*[208]

My study has presented the motivations, intellectual biography and writing process of the author of *A Window on Soweto*, the publishing process at the IDAF for the book as well as provided a literary analysis of the text that contextualises it within writing by black South Africans, especially women, at the time.

Chapter one, which introduces the author, Joyce Sikakane and the core areas that I advance in this research, also sketches the goals and theoretical frameworks that guide my reading of *A Window on Soweto*. In it, I seek to broadly understand the geo-political considerations of historically locating the text, through exploring the role of the Anti-Apartheid Movement in Britain as well as the IDAF’s publishing wing as a derivative of those combined anti-apartheid efforts. I also explored the impact of the 1976 Soweto Uprisings in literature and at the IDAF as another locus point in history with which to locate the text, not only because the book was published a year after the massacre, but because it was written before it as a precursor for the events. This then led into a psychological survey of the author, given biographical details within the public record juxtaposed against sources that can illuminate further the author’s views on independence, solidarity and imprisonment, all pertinent themes within her life story. It is noted that very little first-hand information is known about the ANC exile camp in Lusaka.

In chapter two, I further define the position of the text in relation to the IDAF, specifically within the sectioning of the organisation into Clause I, II and III. The book is seen to have straddled all three clauses in that it provided for the welfare of political prisoners through legal aid (I), their families through welfare (II) and also provided a conscientising voice to target readers of the IDAF abroad (III). The text is revealed by interviews with Jan Marsh, the book’s editor, to have been timely, given

[208] Sikakane (2017)

the uprisings and the need for the IDAF to disseminate reliable information as well as presenting a further challenge: it was a departure from the attempt at completely factual material that the IDAF was known and proud to be known for because of the book's autobiographical elements. Through this chapter, the biography of the manuscript in the words of the author is presented as an overlay of the personal and intellectual biography of the author. Sikakane provides a detailed overview of her life in Lusaka, which includes the writing of *A Window on Soweto*. Details such as her pregnancy at the time of the writing and her thwarted attempts at joining the MK that preceded the writing make for an understanding of a fraught process when also seen against the fact that two of her children had been left behind in Soweto while she herself was 'stateless'. The newly acquired organisational structure and operational capacities of the IDAF are posited to have been advantageous to the book with it benefitting from improved organisational wisdoms and systems. This is then explored though the planning and editorial, promotions and printing processes for the book. The processes of textual composition are highlighted such as the recording of an emotional Sikakane answering questions about her detention in order for these parts of the book to be included as transcribed, edited versions of her speech.

Where chapter two details the pre-publication of *A Window on Soweto*, chapter three analyses its publication and post-publication. This is achieved through a presentation and analysis of its immediate reception, lifetime sales, the sale of rights and translations, its reprint, reviews and its presentation as evidence at the TRC proceedings. The publishing success of the book evidenced by the numbers sold in Britain and abroad is presented as a reason that it was a significant text for the IDAF, despite growing sophistication within the organisational processes that meant that it was competing with texts with higher and higher print-runs and of varying formats as time went on and it became a backlist title. The book's significance is also argued because of the number - it was not usual to get many reviews in the mainstream press - and slant of reviews which positioned it as significant, contextualising against other works, highlighting the dearth of reliable information or acknowledging its impact and power as a document of human rights abuses. It was also cemented as a legal document in a historic process specifically in a hearing at the TRC designed to facilitate the inclusion of the marginalised stories of women in interrogation and detention. This is in sync with Sikakane's history of concern for the plight of other women along with herself.

In chapter four, a literary analysis of *A Window on Soweto* is proffered that introduces the concept of the writer and community in relation to the text. This is then extended to be an understanding of the book as acting as a distress signal or a bridge between Soweto and places elsewhere where its plight might be heard. The call and response style employed by the book is analysed because of the tension of space that occurs in the text between what is autobiographical and what could be understood to be factual about Soweto or black life in South Africa, a tension seen earlier in the editing. This is important because her aims are acknowledged as focused and strategic, similarly to those of the

IDAF, so such tensions had to co-exist. Within these aims is also the weaving of a family and personal history which is presented as in opposition to the apartheid regime by virtue of its striving for a full life within the continued diminishing of these possibilities over generations – an ambiguous privilege that is traced from the institution of the mission school to active membership and involvement in the ANC.

Reference List

Primary Sources

Mayibuye Archive – University of the Western Cape

1st Quarterly Report Distribution for IDAF Publications Department, 1 January – 31 March 1978, MCH31, Box 3804, Historical Papers, UWC Robben Island Mayibuye Archives.

2nd Quarterly Report Distribution for IDAF Publications Department, 2 April – 1 July 1977, MCH31, Box 3804, Historical Papers, UWC Robben Island Mayibuye Archives.

3rd Quarterly Report Distribution for IDAF Publications Department, 2 July – 30 September 1977, MCH31, Box 3804, Historical Papers, UWC Robben Island Mayibuye Archives.

4th Quarterly Report Distribution for IDAF Publications Department, 1 October – 31 December 1977, MCH31, Box 3804, Historical Papers, UWC Robben Island Mayibuye Archives.

AG Bishop & Sons Ltd Printers Delivery Note 5286, 8 June 1977, MCH31, Box 3755, Historical Papers, UWC Robben Island Mayibuye Archives.

AG Bishop & Sons Ltd Printers Delivery Note 5334, 15 June 1977, MCH31, Box 3755, Historical Papers, UWC Robben Island Mayibuye Archives.

AG Bishop & Sons Ltd Printers Invoice 12506, 30 June 1977, Order Number 9227, MCH31, Box 3755, Historical Papers, UWC Robben Island Mayibuye Archives.

AG Bishop & Sons Ltd Printers Invoice 8802, 31 December 1980, Order Number 9033, MCH31, Box 3755, Historical Papers, UWC Robben Island Mayibuye Archives.

Annual Report on Distribution for the IDAF Publications Department, 1978, MCH31, Box 3804, Historical Papers, UWC Robben Island Mayibuye Archives.

Cappelens Forlag A/S Statement of Sales and Royalties No 012781, 01.01.79, MCH31, Box 3755, Historical Papers, UWC Robben Island Mayibuye Archives.

Clause III General Meeting, 30 October 1980, MCH31, Box 3669, Historical Papers, UWC Robben Island Mayibuye Archives.

Clause III General Meeting, 4 December 1980, MCH31, Box 3669, Historical Papers, UWC Robben Island Mayibuye Archives.

Clause III Meeting, 11 September 1980, MCH31, Box 3669, Historical Papers, UWC Robben Island Mayibuye Archives.

Clause III Meeting, 23 October, 1980, MCH31, Box 3669, Historical Papers, UWC Robben Island Mayibuye Archives.

Correspondence from a Reader in Ireland to Jan Marsh, 11 April 1977, Referring to a Letter Jan Marsh Sent on 18 March 1977, MCH31, Box 3669, Historical Papers, UWC Robben Island Mayibuye Archives.

First Quarterly Report Distribution for IDAF Publications Department, 1/1/79 – 31/3/79, MCH31, Box 3804, Historical Papers, UWC Robben Island Mayibuye Archives.

First Quarterly Report Distribution for IDAF Publications Department, 1/1/80 – 31/3/80, MCH31, Box 3669, Historical Papers, UWC Robben Island Mayibuye Archives.

IDAF Publications Department Third Quarterly Report on Distribution, 1 July – 29 July, 1978, MCH31, Box 3804, Historical Papers, UWC Robben Island Mayibuye Archives.

International Defence & Aid Fund for Southern Africa Distribution List, Printed by Red Sea Press Inc. 89/90, MCH31, Box 3782, Historical Papers, UWC Robben Island Mayibuye Archives.

Minutes Clause III Meeting, 31.7.80, MCH31, Box 3669, Historical Papers, UWC Robben Island Mayibuye Archives.

Minutes of Clause III Meeting at Newgate Street, 21 April 1977, Page 1, MCH31, Box 3669, Historical Papers, UWC Robben Island Mayibuye Archives.

Minutes of Clause III Meeting at Newgate Street, 26 May 1977, Page 1 and 2, MCH31, Box 3669, Historical Papers, UWC Robben Island Mayibuye Archives.

Minutes of Clause III Meeting at Newgate Street, 13 July 1977, MCH31, Box 3669, Historical Papers, UWC Robben Island Mayibuye Archives.

Minutes of Clause III (R.I.P) General Meeting 104 Newgate Street, 8 November 1979, MCH31, Box 3669, Historical Papers, UWC Robben Island Mayibuye Archives.

Minutes Clause III RIP Meeting, 26.6.80, MCH31, Box 3669, Historical Papers, UWC Robben Island Mayibuye Archives.

Minutes of Meeting of Clause III Staff at Defa, 2 September 1976, MCH31, Box 3669, Historical Papers, UWC Robben Island Mayibuye Archives.

Minutes of Meeting of Clause III Staff at Newgate Street, 3 August 1976, MCH31, Box 3669, Historical Papers, UWC Robben Island Mayibuye Archives.

Minutes of the Fourteenth Annual Conference of the International Defence and Aid Fund for Southern Africa, held on 6-8 May 1977 in Geneva, Page 17, MCH31, Box 3482, Historical Papers, UWC Robben Island Mayibuye Archives.

Minutes of the Sixteenth Annual Conference of the International Defence and Aid Fund for Southern Africa, held on 4-6 May 1979 in Oslo, MCH31, Box 3482, Historical Papers, UWC Robben Island Mayibuye Archives.

Record of Distribution, 1973-1981, MC31, Box 3804, Historical Papers, UWC Robben Island Mayibuye Archives.

Report on Clause III Work 1975/1976 for the International Defence and Aid Fund Annual Conference in Amsterdam, held 7-9 May 1976, Page 1, MCH31, Box 3482, Historical Papers, UWC Robben Island Mayibuye Archives.

Report on Clause III Work 1976/77, MCH31, Box 3804, Historical Papers, UWC Robben Island Mayibuye Archives.

Report on Clause III Work 1977/78 for the International Defence and Aid Fund Annual Conference in London, held 5-7 May 1978, MCH31, Box 3482, Historical Papers, UWC Robben Island Mayibuye Archives.

Report on Preserving Some Functions of the IDAF Publications Department, Prepared by Peter Dobson and Barry Feinberg, April 1991, MCH31, Box 3700, Historical Papers, UWC Robben Island Mayibuye Archives.

Reports and Agreed Proposals to go Forward to Clause III General Meeting, 17 March 1977, Page 2, MCH31, Box 3669, Historical Papers, UWC Robben Island Mayibuye Archives.

Stock Report for CAT D016 Title: A Window on Soweto Published June 1977, 1990, MCH31, Box 3755, Historical Papers, UWC Robben Island Mayibuye Archives.

Summary of Clause III Working Meeting, 24 May 1977, Page 1, MCH31, Box 3669, Historical Papers, UWC Robben Island Mayibuye Archives.

Survey of Stock, with Print and Distribution Histories of Books, Fact Papers and Photographic Exhibitions, MCH31, Box 3804, Historical Papers, UWC Robben Island Mayibuye Archives.

Third Quarterly Report Distribution for IDAF Publications Department, 1/7/79 – 30/9/79, MCH31, Box 3804, Historical Papers, UWC Robben Island Mayibuye Archives.

Typescript of a Personal Account by Mrs Diana Collins Describing the History of the IDAF and its Contribution to the Struggle for Liberation in Southern Africa – August 1986, MCH31, Box 3404, Historical Papers, UWC Robben Island Mayibuye Archives.

Historical Papers Research Archive Collection - University of the Witwatersrand

Endpapers of *For Their Triumphs And Their Tears* by Hilda Bernstein Showing Praise for Other IDAF Titles, Hilda and Rusty Bernstein Papers, 1931-2006, A3299, University of the Witwatersrand.

Other

Hodgson, Rica. *Foot Soldier for Freedom: A Life in South Africa's Liberation Movement*. Johannesburg: Picador Africa, 2010.

Nyeko, Janet. *The ABC of Book Publishing: A Training Manual for NGOs in Africa*. Kampala: Janyeko Publishing Centre, 1999.

Herbstein, Denis. *White Lies: Canon Collins and the Secret War against Apartheid*. Oxford: James Currey Publishers, 2004.

Jefferson, Margo. *Negroland*. New York City: Vintage Books, 2015.

South African Democracy Education Trust, *The Road to Democracy: South Africans Telling Their Stories Volume 1, 1950 – 1970*. Johannesburg: South African Democracy Education Trust, 2008.

Themba, Can. *The Will to Die*. London: Heinemann Educational Books, 1972.

Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC). Human Rights Violations: Women's Hearing. Joyce Sikhakhane Ranken (sic). Day 2, 29 July 1997.
http://www.justice.gov.za/trc/special%5Cwomen/ranken.htm

(accessed 6 December , 2017)

Interviews

Sikakane-Rankin, Joyce. 2017. Interviewed by author in person. Pretoria, 5 and 6 October.

Marsh, Jan. 2017. Interviewed by author via email. Johannesburg, contacted 5 October, response received 4 November.

Secondary Sources

Africa Today. 'Publications'. *Africa Today* 24, no. 3 (1977): 100-106.

Baines, Gary. 'The Master Narrative of South Africa's Liberation Struggle: Remembering and Forgetting June 16, 1976'. *The International Journal of African Historical Studies* 40, no. 2 (2007): 283-302.

Berrian, Brenda F. 'An Update: Bibliography of Twelve African Women Writers'. *Research in African Literatures* 13, no. 2 (1988): 206-231.

Boguta, Grzegorz. 'From the Surveillance of the Secret Police to the "Free Market": Publishing in Poland Today'. *Agni*, no. 31/32 (1990): 50-52.

Bolecki, Włodzimierz. 'The Totalitarian Urge vs. Literature: The Origins and Achievements of the Polish Independent Publishing Movement'. *Canadian Slavonic Papers / Revue Canadienne des Slavistes* 39, no. ½ (1997): 47-62.

Boswell, Barbara-Anne. *Black South African Women Writers: Narrating the Self, Narrating the Nation*. College Park: University of Maryland, 2010.

Bruner, Charlotte H. '"There Is No Time in South Africa Now for Fairy Stories": Three Women Authors from the IWP'. *World Literature Today* 61, no. 3 (1987): 410-414.

Callinicos, Luli. 'Testimonies and Transitions: Women Negotiating the Rural and Urban in the Mid-20th Century'. In *Women in South African History: Basusíimbokodo, Bawelímilambo/ They Remove Boulders and Cross Rivers,* edited by Nomboniso Gasa, 169-184. Cape Town: HSRC Press, 2007.

Carroll, William K. and R. S. Ratner. 'Sustaining Oppositional Cultures in 'Post-Socialist' Times: A Comparative Study of Three Social Movement Organisations'. *Sociology* 35, no. 3 (2001): 605-629.

Castle, Jane. 'Strategies against Oppression: A Case Study of the Background, Upbringing and Education of Black Managers in Affirmative Action Programmes in South Africa'. *British Journal of Sociology of Education* 17, no. 4 (1996): 389-413.

Cooper, Saths. 'Political Violence in South Africa: The Role of Youth'. *Issue: A Journal of Opinion* 22, no. 2 (1994): 27-29.

Crane, Louise. *Ms Africa: Profiles of Modern African Women*. New York: J.B. Lippincott Company, 1973.

Davies, Carole Boyce. 'Finding Some Space: South African Women Writers'. *Ufahamu: A Journal of African Studies* 15, no. 1-2 (1986): 121-136.

Diseko, Nozipho J. 'The Origins and Development of the South African Student's Movement (SASM): 1968-1976'. *Journal of Southern African Studies* 18, no. 1 (1992): 40-62.

Driver, Dorothy. 'Joyce Sikhakhane, Working on The Mail'. In *Women Writing Africa: The Southern Region*, edited by Margaret Daymond, 348-354. Johannesburg: Wits University Press, 2003.

Franklin, Betty and Lucy Townsend, 'Relational Ethics in Writing a Woman's Life'. *Journal of Thought* 30, no. 1 (1995): 71.83.

Gilbert, Shirli. 'Singing Against Apartheid: ANC Cultural Groups and the International Anti-Apartheid Struggle'. *Journal of Southern African Studies* 33, no. 2 (2007): 421-441.

Glaser, Clive. ''We Must Infiltrate the Tsotsis': School Politics and Youth Gangs in Soweto, 1968-1976'. *Journal of Southern African Studies* 24, no. 2 (1998):301-323.

Gready, Paul. 'Autobiography and the 'Power of Writing': Political Prison Writing in the Apartheid Era'. *Journal of Southern African Studies* 19, no. 3 (1993): 489-523.

Guelke, Adrian. *Rethinking the Rise and Fall of Apartheid*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005.

Gurney, Christabel. 'The 1970s: The Anti-Apartheid Movement's Difficult Decade'. *Journal of Southern African Studies* 35, no.2, (2009): 471-487.

Hart, Deborah Mary. *South African Literature and Johannesburg's Urban Townships.* Johannesburg: University of the Witwatersrand, 1984.

Healy-Clancy, Meghan. *A World of their Own: A History of South African Women's Education*. Scottsville: UKZN Press, 2013.

Hinz, Evelyn J. 'A Speculative Introduction: Life-Writing as Drama'. *Mosaic: An Interdisciplinary Critical Journal* 20, no. 4 (1987):v-xii.

Hlongwane, Ali Khangela. 'The Mapping of the June 16 1976 Soweto Student Uprisings Routes: Past Recollections and Present Reconstruction(s)'. *Journal of African Cultural Studies* 19, no. 1 (2007): 7:36.

Hoffman, Jochen. 'In the Triangle of Civil Society, Politics, and Economy: Positioning Magazines of Nonprofit Organizations'. *Voluntas: International Journal of Voluntary and Nonprofit Organizations* 22, no. 1 (2011): 93-111.

Hoston, William T. 'Black Solidarity and Racial Context: An Exploration of the Role of Black Solidarity in U.S. Cities'. *Journal of Black Studies* 39, no. 5 (2009): 719-731.

Jolly, Margaretta. 'Introduction: Life Writing as Intimate Publics'. *Biography* 34, no. 1 (2011): v-xi.

Klein, Genevieve. 'The British Anti-Apartheid Movement and Political Prisoner Campaigns, 1973-1980'. *Journal of Southern African Studies* 35, no. 2, (2009): 455-470.

Kruger, Loren. 'The Drama of Country and City: Tribalization, Urbanization and Theatre under Apartheid'. *Journal of Southern African Studies* 23, no. 4 (1997): 565-584.

Lewis, Desiree. 'Against the Grain: Black Women and Sexuality'. *Agenda: Empowering Women for Gender Equity* No. 63 African Feminisms Volume 2, no. 2 (2005):11-24.

Lieblich, Amia. 'Writing Biography as a Relationship'. *Nashim: A Journal of Jewish Women's Studies & Gender Issues*, no. 7 (2004): 206-211

Macmillan, Hugh. 'The African National Congress of South Africa in Zambia: The Culture of Exile and the Changing Relationship with Home, 1964-1990'. *Journal of Southern African Studies* 35, no. 2 (2009): 303-329.

Mair, Lucy. 'Review', *African Affairs* 77, no. 306 (1978): 134-136.

Mindry, Deborah. 'Nongovernmental Organizations, "Grassroots," and the Politics of Virtue', *Signs* 26, no. 4 (2001): 1187-1211.

Mokadi, Aubrey. *Narrative as Creative History: The 1976 Soweto Uprising as Depicted in Black South African Novels.* Randburg: Sedibeng Publishing House, 2003.

Morris, M. C. ‘Book Review’. *Friends Journal: Quaker Life and Thought Today* 24, no. 3 (1978): 21.

Mpanza, Khosi. ‘Schooled for Success’. *Agenda: Empowering Women for Gender Equity* 21, (1994):43-46.

Mzamane, Mbulelo Mvizikhungo. ‘Review: Cultivating a People's Voice in the Criticism of South African Literature’. *Research in African Literatures* 22, no. 4 (1991): 117-133.

Nicolson, Harold. ‘The Practice of Biography’. *The American Scholar* 23, no. 2 (1954): 151-161.

Nuttall, Sarah. ‘Reading in the Lives and Writing of Black South African Woman’, *Journal of South African Studies* 20, no. 1 (1994): 85-98.

Ojo-Ade, Femi. ‘Review: Stephen Biko: Black Consciousness, Black Struggle, Black Survival’. *The Journal of Modern African Studies* 19, no. 3 (1981): 539-546.

Pohlandt-McCormick, Helena. ‘Controlling Woman: Winnie Mandela and the 1976 Soweto Uprising’. *The International Journal of African Historical Studies* 33, no. 3 (2000): 585-614.

Rampersad, Arnold. ‘Design and Truth in Biography’. *South Central Review* 9, no. 2 (1992): 1-18.

Ranchod, Sarita. ‘Herstories Celebrating Pioneering Women in South African Journalism’. *Rhodes Journalism Review* 4, (2004): 68-71.

Randall, Margaret. ‘Review: Presences and Absences’. *The Women's Review of Books* 17, no. 1 (1999): 15-16.

Reddy, E.S. ‘Apartheid and the International Community’. *Issue: A Journal of Opinion* 4, no. 3 (1974): 19-24.

Sapire, Hilary. ‘Liberation Movements, Exile, and International Solidarity: An Introduction’. *Journal of Southern African Studies* 35, no. 2 (2009); 271-286.

Schabert, Ina. ‘Fictional Biography, Factual Biography, and their Contaminations’. *Biography* 5, no. 1 (1982): 1-16.

Sholz, Sally J. ‘Political Solidarity and the More-Than-Human World’. *Ethics and the Environment* 18, no. 2 (2013): 81-99.

Sibeko, David M. ‘From Sharpeville to Soweto’. *The Black Scholar, South Africa: The Liberation Movement* 9, no. 5 (1978): 13-20.

Thomas, Roger G. ‘Exile, Dictatorship and the Creative Writer in Africa: A Selective Annotated Bibliography’. *Third World Quarterly* 9, no. 1 (1987): 271-296.

Thörn, Håkan. ‘Solidarity Across Borders: The Transnational Anti-Apartheid Movement’. *Voluntas: International Journal of Voluntary and Nonprofit Organizations* 17, no. 4 (2006): 285-301.

Ware, Susan. ‘Writing Women's Lives: One Historian's Perspective’. *The Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 40, no. 3 (2010): 413-435.

Westley, David. ‘A Select Bibliography of South African Autobiography’. *Biography* 17, no. 3 (1994): 268-280.

Wood, Agnes A. *Shine Where You Are: A Centenary History of Inanda Seminary, 1859-1969*. Alice: Lovedale, 1972.