

From the nineteenth century, however, anthropogenic factors have had a growing influence on climate and this is a key argument made in the final part of the book. Climatic changes can now be also attributed to global warming which is itself largely due to increasing greenhouse gas emissions – a by-product of industrialization. An exploding population has created concomitant demands for energy and other resources, leading to further development, deforestation and greater use of fossil fuels. Brooke suggests that much of our current political and economic concerns are a result of this, along with environmental degradation and the periodic outbreaks of epidemics such as the Ebola virus. These contemporary issues, however, are merely the continuation of a trend that has defined human history.

The tendency to make natural history the driving force behind human physiological and cultural evolution indicates a sense of predetermination against which “free will” advocates will instinctively rebel. This pre-determinism is prevalent throughout Brooke’s argument and it is something with which he engages. Admittedly it may sometimes make the reader uncomfortable however Brooke presents a wealth of evidence drawn from a variety of sources to substantiate his arguments and indicate what he sees as a high degree of correlation between environmental factors and human history. Despite the discomfort provoked, *Climate change and the course of Global History* is therefore a fascinating and compelling view of the interconnected history of humanity and the earth.

491 Days: Prison number 1323/69

(Johannesburg: Picador Africa, 2013, 251 pp., ISBN: 978-1-77010-330-6)

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491 Days is a harrowing insight into what Ahmed Kathrada in the foreword terms “the very coalface of the struggle” (xi). This book, by virtue of its nature, illuminates the difficulties faced by one of the struggle’s most prominent political widows: particularly in terms of being earmarked by security forces; ostracised by comrades in fear of retribution by association; and dealing with the anguish of children becoming political orphans. *491 Days* details the disturbing period which Winnie Madikizela-Mandela spent in detention

from 1969 to 1970. She was arrested at her Soweto home in the early hours of the morning in front of her young daughters under the Terrorism Act for promoting the aims of the African National Congress. The apartheid government used a legal quagmire to detain Madikizela-Mandela for a total of 491 days. On the recommendations of her legal advisor at that time, David Saggot, Madikizela-Mandela surreptitiously recorded her experiences, *inter alia* in solitary confinement. Her notes were returned to her by Saggot's widow in 2011, which saw *491 Days* come to fruition.

In the midst of an armed struggle against the National Party's apartheid system, the book details her personal, physical and psychological struggle within the confines of the penitentiary system. Some of the issues which the young Madikizela-Mandela enunciates include the uncertainty of the future, her failing health, as well as chronicling the tangible agony and deteriorating state of mind of someone in solitary confinement for an indefinite period.

491 Days is divided into two respective parts: Madikizela-Mandela's aforementioned clandestine journal, as well as correspondence by individuals affected by her imprisonment during this time. Part one is certainly the more structured part of the publication, following a relatively logical flow of a conventional journal. The chapters detail Madikizela-Mandela's accounts from her arrest to her second trial. Part two is void of chapters and includes a roughly linear collection of letters from that time, most undelivered due to political interference. This includes correspondence by Madikizela-Mandela, her husband at the time, Nelson Mandela, and their legal representatives, interspersed with some archival documents. The letters provide a relatively holistic impression of both Madikizela-Mandela and her family's attempt to deal with the difficulties associated with her imprisonment.

The strength of this book lies in the fact that both parts serve as primary sources for historians and reveal her first-hand account of imprisonment under the apartheid regime. More so, the greatest contribution of the book is that it gives a voice to the individuals who served as foot soldiers in fighting against an oppressive regime while the larger part of their leadership was imprisoned on Robben Island. Often, in celebrating the gargantuan moral and political victories of individuals such as Nelson Mandela, the contribution of others are overshadowed and relegated to the sidelines. *491 Days*, however, successfully provides immediate insight into the bowels of the apartheid government's prison system and highlights the ruthlessness of security police with potentially fatal consequences, both inside and outside of prison.

Another one of this book's strengths is that it was not written retrospectively, as is often the case with autobiographies, where memories have often been softened with age. *491 Days*, written during a period of great personal struggle for one woman, provides an unprecedented immediate insight into the mind of the oppressed at the mercy of the oppressor.

It is for this reason that it is exceedingly difficult to critique a book of this nature, as it shares a family's subjective response to great adversity. However, the format of the book is not elevated above criticism. The entries in *491 Days* are not always in strict chronological order, which can confuse the reader in instances. Furthermore, as a condition of Madikizela-Mandela's detention, she was not allowed to correspond with anyone, bar a handful of instances on special arrangement. As a result, there is a marked silence of Madikizela-Mandela's voice in the second part of the book, relating to letters written during this tumultuous time. However, the want thereof in this instance speaks volumes. As the reader acutely feels the absence of Madikizela-Mandela in reading part two of the book, so too is her absence deeply reflected in the notably anguished and anxious correspondence of Nelson Mandela. The lack of her voice brings the cruel conditions of her detention to the forefront. Remarkably, though, is that despite deep despair, the letters are indicative of the tenderness and intimacy which remained between Madikizela-Mandela and Mandela, despite both of them being imprisoned. While part one shows Madikizela-Mandela's anguish at her family structure's demise, part two shows Mandela exerting every possible effort to keep the family afloat amidst parental absence and the passing of family members.

491 Days could also have used the succinct introduction to greater efficiency to address some questions which may naturally arise with the more critical reader. One such an issue is how Madikizela-Mandela was able to keep a concealed journal while expressly being eviscerated of most human freedoms. Presumably she had an inside collaborator who supplied her with writing material with which to record her experiences. The nature of Madikizela-Mandela's imprisonment meant that she was subjected to rigorous searches before being placed in solitary confinement and was constantly under the watchful eye of prison warders. One can deduce that the prison warders would have received the knowledge that she continuously violated her prison conditions with great ire. Thus Madikizela-Mandela's allies within the prison system assisted her at a great personal risk of being discovered. Justifiably, Madikizela-Mandela would have omitted the manner in which she was able to keep the

journal at the time, in fear of incriminating her accomplices. However, *491 Days'* introduction could have shed more light on this aspect of the journal's origins. An acknowledgement to the individual/s and their efforts would have added a thought-provoking historical insight into collaborators within the prison system and ultimately given more depth to the origin, and perhaps limitations, of this source.

The aim of the book is detailed in its epilogue: that it should serve as a reminder to future generations of past horrors. Thus, equipped with this knowledge, future generations should ensure that South Africa does not ever regenerate to such levels again. *491 Days* succeeds in this, more effectively than retrospective publications. Madikizela-Mandela did future generations a great service by keeping a diary of her experiences while imprisoned. Her accounts relating to psychological manipulation, oppression and brutality by police, mistrust of the enemy and certain allies alike, the break-down of the nuclear family and personal difficulties create a great awareness with the reader in relation to incomprehensible personal strife in a draconian political milieu.

Madikizela-Mandela's contemporary contested legacy aside, *491 Days* tells the story of a political coming of age. It details the evolution of Madikizela-Mandela from being perceived as the nameless "Mandela's wife" (p. 237), to a woman of great resilience and fortitude who emerged stronger, both personally and politically, from being detained. *491 Days* will serve as a reminder to future generations of how the past atrocities of apartheid affected the individual – on the condition that they are willing to look.

Verwoerd: Só onthou ons hom (hersiene uitgawe)

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Die bundel, *Só onthou ons hom* het vir die eerste keer in 2001 by geleentheid van die 100ste herdenking van dr Hendrik French Verwoerd se geboortedag, 8 September 1901 verskyn (p. 11). Die 28 hoofstukke bestaan hoofsaaklik