



## LJMU Research Online

**Feather, Daniel**

**Creating a 'deplorable impression': the Dryden Society's 1969 tour of South Africa and the making of End of the Dialogue**

<http://researchonline.ljmu.ac.uk/id/eprint/16893/>

### Article

**Citation** (please note it is advisable to refer to the publisher's version if you intend to cite from this work)

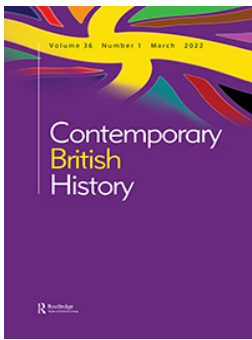
**Feather, Daniel (2022) Creating a 'deplorable impression': the Dryden Society's 1969 tour of South Africa and the making of End of the Dialogue. Contemporary British History. ISSN 1361-9462**

LJMU has developed **LJMU Research Online** for users to access the research output of the University more effectively. Copyright © and Moral Rights for the papers on this site are retained by the individual authors and/or other copyright owners. Users may download and/or print one copy of any article(s) in LJMU Research Online to facilitate their private study or for non-commercial research. You may not engage in further distribution of the material or use it for any profit-making activities or any commercial gain.

The version presented here may differ from the published version or from the version of the record. Please see the repository URL above for details on accessing the published version and note that access may require a subscription.

For more information please contact [researchonline@ljmu.ac.uk](mailto:researchonline@ljmu.ac.uk)

<http://researchonline.ljmu.ac.uk/>



## Creating a 'deplorable impression': the Dryden Society's 1969 tour of South Africa and the making of *End of the Dialogue*

Daniel J Feather

To cite this article: Daniel J Feather (2022): Creating a 'deplorable impression': the Dryden Society's 1969 tour of South Africa and the making of *End of the Dialogue*, Contemporary British History, DOI: [10.1080/13619462.2022.2076078](https://doi.org/10.1080/13619462.2022.2076078)

To link to this article: <https://doi.org/10.1080/13619462.2022.2076078>



© 2022 The Author(s). Published by Informa UK Limited, trading as Taylor & Francis Group.



Published online: 19 May 2022.



[Submit your article to this journal](#)



[View related articles](#)



[View Crossmark data](#)

# Creating a 'deplorable impression': the Dryden Society's 1969 tour of South Africa and the making of *End of the Dialogue*

Daniel J Feather 

Department of History, Liverpool John Moores University, Liverpool, UK

## ABSTRACT

In July 1969, the Dryden Society, a University of Cambridge performing arts group, arrived in South Africa for a three month tour. Prior to its departure from the United Kingdom, the group's decision to break the cultural boycott, imposed in response to apartheid, had already caused significant protest. This article discusses the nature of the campaign to stop the tour, as well as highlighting how the British government became involved. The article also demonstrates how, despite having no official support, the tour should be viewed within the prism of British cultural diplomacy, something the British representatives in South Africa were trying to expand at the time. Additionally, the article also draws attention to the ulterior motives of several members of the touring party, who used the tour as cover to clandestinely film the conditions in which South Africa's black majority lived on behalf of the Pan-Africanist Congress. This was later used to make the critically acclaimed documentary film *End of the Dialogue* (known in South Africa by its Zulu name of *Phela-ndaba*) which drew greater international attention to the plight of black South Africans living under apartheid.

## KEYWORDS

Apartheid; Cultural Boycott;  
Anti-Apartheid Activism;  
UK-South African Relations

## Introduction

On 27 September 1969, the Dryden Society, a University of Cambridge performing arts group, left South Africa to return to Britain, after touring the country for three months.<sup>1</sup> British Cultural Attaché Dennis Frean wrote in his report about the tour that 'the Dryden Society has now played itself out—to the relief of everyone, not least the players themselves'.<sup>2</sup> The group of 26 actors, directors, producers, and stagehands had faced a number of difficulties both before and during the tour. One member of the touring party, Anthony Waterhouse, died while attempting to climb Table Mountain, while another had to be re-patriated on medical grounds. The group had also faced attacks by left-wing student groups in both the United Kingdom (UK) and South Africa for refusing to follow the cultural boycott of the country advocated by anti-apartheid activists. However, it was the group's refusal to play to a predominantly white audience at the University of Fort Hare, a black only institution, which had angered Frean most as he believed it reflected badly on Britain's image amongst influential white South Africans.<sup>3</sup>

**CONTACT** Daniel J Feather  [D.J.Feather@ljmu.ac.uk](mailto:D.J.Feather@ljmu.ac.uk)  Liverpool John Moores University, Liverpool, UK

© 2022 The Author(s). Published by Informa UK Limited, trading as Taylor & Francis Group.

This is an Open Access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives License (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/>), which permits non-commercial re-use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited, and is not altered, transformed, or built upon in any way.

Britain was the largest overseas investor in South Africa, and there were extensive trade links between the two countries. South Africa's role as a supplier of key strategic minerals was particularly important for British industry,<sup>4</sup> while South African gold was considered vital to the Bank of England's management of sterling as an international currency.<sup>5</sup> In addition to these more tangible economic links, as the former colonial power there was also a strong cultural connection between Britain and South Africa, despite the latter becoming a republic and leaving the Commonwealth in 1961. This was facilitated by the presence of a sizeable British diaspora in South Africa who continued to look to the UK as the 'mother country'. These links were so strong that 30 years later British Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd stated that the UK maintained 'an historic and persistent interest' in South Africa.<sup>6</sup>

In an effort to protect these important interests, and maintain British influence, officials attempted to utilise these cultural relations through the work of the British Council. However, this was not an easy task as British officials faced criticism for continuing to engage with South Africa in this way owing to its racist domestic policies.<sup>7</sup> Performing arts were a particularly difficult area to support due to the strict rules put in place by the Musicians Union and Actors' Equity on their members concerning visits to South Africa. The cultural boycott advocated by the Anti-Apartheid Movement (AAM) was also a barrier to fully utilising cultural diplomacy in South Africa.<sup>8</sup> In this context, it became British government policy not to offer support for tours like that of the Dryden Society.<sup>9</sup> Indeed, due to the controversy the tour caused, British officials in South Africa were warned by their superiors in London to have nothing to do with the Dryden Society while it was in the country.<sup>10</sup>

There has been considerable growth in the scholarship on cultural diplomacy in recent years, owing much to Joseph Nye's work on soft power, which has helped bring cultural relations to the forefront of mainstream political discourse.<sup>11</sup> As Nicholas J. Cull explains, '[c]ultural diplomacy may be defined as an actor's attempt to manage the international environment through facilitating the export of an element of that actor's life, belief or art'.<sup>12</sup> In particular, this term is used to describe the use of sponsored visits, educational exchanges, and other forms of cultural contact to help meet foreign policy objectives, and improve a nation's 'soft power'. Cull argues that 'historically Cultural Diplomacy has meant a country's policy to facilitate the export of examples of its culture'.<sup>13</sup> Richard Arndt places even greater emphasis on the role of the state contending that 'cultural *diplomacy* can only be said to take place when formal diplomats, serving national governments, try to shape and channel this natural flows to advance national interests'.<sup>14</sup>

While the Dryden Society's tour had no official government involvement, this paper contends that it falls within the broader understanding of cultural diplomacy. Milton C. Cummings defines cultural diplomacy as 'the exchange of ideas, information, arts, and other aspects of culture among nations and their peoples to foster mutual understanding'.<sup>15</sup> Using this definition, cultural exchanges that are outside of official government channels can still be considered cultural diplomacy.<sup>16</sup> Even without official support, exchanges such as this can play a part in changing (both for better and worse) perceptions of a country where the visit is taking place. In fact, scholars and practitioners often argue that cultural diplomacy is more successful when not directed by government officials. Jan Melissen, for example, argues that if cultural diplomacy is 'too closely tied to

foreign policy objectives, it runs the risk of becoming counterproductive',<sup>17</sup> while former United States diplomat Cynthia P. Schneider emphasises the 'importance of an arm's-length relationship between a cultural presence and a government'.<sup>18</sup>

However, as this article demonstrates, this was clearly not the case with the Dryden Society's tour of South Africa. The lack of support the group received from experienced diplomats or officials proved a hindrance. Indeed, the Dryden Society also visited Lesotho as part of the tour; as this was an independent nation unaffected by the cultural boycott, the British Council was able to do 'much to help' them while they were there.<sup>19</sup> In contrast to Frea's report, Ian Watt, the High Commissioner to Lesotho, stated that he could not 'fault them for lack of tact or humility' while they toured the small landlocked nation.<sup>20</sup> Even allowing for the more controversial environment in South Africa, with the right support and guidance the tour could have made a positive impact to the cultural diplomacy British officials were trying to promote there at the time.

While there is a growing body of literature examining the use of cultural diplomacy in the second half of the twentieth century,<sup>21</sup> only very limited attempts have been made to analyse examples where contact of this nature has led to negative outcomes. The most obvious exception is the limited historiographical interest in academic scholarships provided to African states to allow students to undertake university study in the Eastern Bloc.<sup>22</sup> While these nations emphasised equality for all races, these studies highlight that the lived experiences of these visiting scholars in the countries were in stark contrast to the egalitarianism that communism supposedly represented. The scholars spoke of frequently receiving racist abuse from members of the public which damaged their perception of both the Eastern Bloc, and communism more broadly. This paper will similarly emphasise that cultural diplomacy can backfire and have a negative effect on official relations between the states engaging in it if the actors involved do not carefully consider the social, cultural, and political situation in which it is being deployed, nor necessarily share the attitudes of diplomatic officials. In such cases, arms-length distance from government can actually be damaging to, rather than supportive of, official agendas.

While Frea expressed relief that the British Council had been able to avoid any direct contact with the Dryden Society while it was in South Africa, he did claim that the tour had 'created a deplorable impression' of Britain.<sup>23</sup> As Frea's comment shows, the group did not necessarily act in a way which helped British policymakers in their efforts to enhance UK-South African relations through cultural interactions. In part, this was because of the narrow and racialised conception of diplomatic relations held by British officials, who were focused on cordial relations with a narrow section of South African society whose racial attitudes were repugnant to British diplomats working in other countries. Indeed, officials in the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO), and British representatives who worked with the Dryden Society in Lesotho, questioned the validity of Frea's comments and suggested he had adopted some of the more conservative attitudes prevalent amongst the ruling Afrikaner elite. There is some evidence that the Dryden Society had a more positive impact on Britain's image among young black students still marginalised in the official conception of the 'target' population for cultural diplomacy in 1969.<sup>24</sup>

The Dryden Society describes itself at 'one of the oldest and most prestigious performing arts societies at the University of Cambridge'.<sup>25</sup> The society is run entirely by students, and is headed by a committee elected by its members. Based at Trinity College, the society takes its name from John Dryden, who graduated from the college in 1654 and

went on to be poet laureate in 1668, a position he held for 20 years. Prince Charles, who attended Trinity College from 1967 to 1970, had a keen interest in acting and was an active member of the Dryden Society at the time. Other members of the Dryden Society also came from privileged backgrounds and had links to the British establishment. Charles Noel for example, who was the manager of the ill-fated tour, was the son of a senior officer in the British armed forces who had served as the military attaché to South Africa,<sup>26</sup> while many of the Dryden's former members have gone on to have successful careers in academia and the performing arts.<sup>27</sup> The history, character, and prestige of the Dryden Society fitted with the elite image of Britain that policymakers sought to promote to the world.

Nevertheless, the students who were involved in the tour were criticised for their behaviour, dress sense, and overall attitude by influential white South Africans.<sup>28</sup> The tour took place only a year after student and worker demonstrations had swept across Europe and North America in 1968, and while the Dryden Society members were hardly anti-capitalist radicals, they had adopted the fashion and elements of the more liberal outlook of the time. Their response to the white only audience at Fort Hare, which they had been told would be mixed, demonstrated that, despite their willingness to perform in South Africa, they were unafraid to speak out over the issue of apartheid.<sup>29</sup>

The tour caused considerable controversy before the Dryden Society had departed the UK, and was even discussed in parliament in response to claims that it was to receive official government support—something which was forcefully denied. The tour also attracted criticism while in South Africa, from both sides of the political spectrum. Left-wing student groups protested outside the Dryden Society's performances, based on a similar belief to their counterparts in the UK that its presence in South Africa helped legitimise apartheid. Conversely, the performers outraged their white audience, which included several prominent figures, when they refused to perform at Fort Hare.

British officials were also concerned that while they were in Lesotho two members of the touring party, Chris Curling and Antonia Caccia, had met Joseph S. P. Molefi, an exiled Pan Africanist Congress (PAC) member who was in the process of fighting extradition proceedings.<sup>30</sup> The PAC was formed in 1959 by a group of disgruntled African National Congress (ANC) activists, led by Robert Sobukwe, who believed that the organisation was increasingly falling under the control of communists. These 'Africanists' also resented the perceived influence of white and Indian activists over the ANC leadership. This rivalry played itself out over how the two organisations campaigned against the pass-laws, one of the most hated aspects of apartheid policy. These laws required Africans to carry a pass with them at all times which stipulated the areas they were allowed to be in which any white person could ask to see. In December 1959, the ANC announced that they were to hold nationwide anti-pass demonstrations on 31 March 1960. However, Sobukwe stole a march on the ANC when he called for PAC-led demonstrations to begin on Monday 21 March - 10 days prior to the ANC's chosen date for such protests.<sup>31</sup> At one of the demonstrations that followed, at the PAC stronghold of Sharpeville, the police opened fire on the protestors killing far in excess of 69 individuals (most while trying to flee) and injuring many more.<sup>32</sup> This incident drew greater international attention to events in South Africa and led to an increase in anti-apartheid protests in many other countries. In the clampdown that followed, Sobukwe and many other PAC leaders were jailed or forced into exile.

Unbeknown to the British officials, the students who protested against the tour, and most of the Dryden Society members, Chris Curling, Antonia Caccia and Simon Louvish had an ulterior motive in travelling to South Africa, and were actually working on behalf of the PAC. The Dryden Society tour provided a useful cover for filming the conditions in which the country's black majority were living.<sup>33</sup> This necessitated spending time in black townships which was illegal for a white person without a permit. This material was later used in a documentary film entitled *End of The Dialogue* (1970), which was produced with Nelson 'Nana' Mahomo, Vusumzi Make, and Rakhethla Tsehlana, members of the PAC in exile in London. *End of The Dialogue* was shown around the world and drew more attention to the evils of apartheid, much to the chagrin of the South African government.<sup>34</sup> This also shows that despite the many challenges the PAC faced in exile, including internal divisions and its rivalry with the ANC, it was still able to infiltrate an organised tour of South Africa, unbeknown to either the South African or the British authorities, and make an important contribution to the struggle against apartheid.<sup>35</sup>

## Background

In the late 1950s, British officials feared the impact of the National Party (NP) government's policies, which placed Afrikaner nationalism at the heart of the political agenda in South Africa, and threatened the UK's influence in the country. In this context, Raymond Butlin was appointed as cultural attaché at the British High Commission in 1958, a post with a remit to promote cultural links between the two countries through the British Council. Butlin's work grew exponentially after South Africa left the Commonwealth in 1961, as the British Council took over the scholarships previously provided by the Commonwealth Scholarship and Fellowship Plan.<sup>36</sup>

Nevertheless, while educational contact was maintained, it became very difficult to utilise performing arts tours owing to the efforts of anti-apartheid activists to implement a cultural boycott against South Africa. Father Trevor Huddleston first suggested the notion of a boycott of this nature in 1955.<sup>37</sup> Huddleston was a British priest working in South Africa at the time, and later went on to become AAM president. He contended that a cultural boycott would 'give White South Africans an opportunity of tasting the medicine they so freely give to their Black fellow-citizens—the medicine of deprivation and frustration'.<sup>38</sup> However, as Rob Nixon explains this was not a call for a total cultural boycott of South Africa as it was mainly designed 'to dissuade foreign artists from conniving at racially segregated performances'.<sup>39</sup> Britain's largest performing arts trade unions; the Musician's Union and Actors' Equity, responded to Huddleston's call by stipulating that tours undertaken by their members must include performances to black South Africans.<sup>40</sup>

The situation in South Africa continued to worsen however, and in the aftermath of the Sharpeville Massacre ANC President Albert Luthuli called for greater efforts to ostracise South Africa which included expanding the cultural boycott from 'a protest against racism in the arts' to 'an integral facet of a global campaign to rid South Africa of apartheid'.<sup>41</sup> Both Actors' Equity and the Musicians' Union tightened the restrictions on their members. From this point on it was stipulated that all tours must include performances in front of black or preferably mixed audiences, and that the venues used for these were the same as those used for performances to white audiences.<sup>42</sup> Due to the racist apartheid legislation

there were very few venues where performances could be delivered to both white and black audiences, whether separate or mixed. This made it very difficult for performing arts tours to take place in accordance with the unions' restrictions. Despite many requests for funding for performing arts tours, this aspect of British cultural diplomacy remained under-utilised in South Africa as British officials were wary about coming into conflict with these trade unions.

Nonetheless, artists continued to tour South Africa. In 1964, for example, the Cambridge Shakespeare group, a student ensemble from Cambridge University similar to the Dryden Society, toured the country.<sup>43</sup> John Stuttard, a member of the touring party, has since written about his experiences for *Shakespeare in Southern Africa*. Judging from Stuttard's recollection, and on press reports, the tour was a success.<sup>44</sup> While the British government did not provide any financial support, Stuttard claims that Lady Stephenson, the wife of the Ambassador Sir Hugh Stephenson, organised an after-show party following the group's final performance. The ambassador apparently 'thanked the cast for coming to South Africa, against the odds, and for keeping the lines of communication open during this very difficult time'.<sup>45</sup>

Not all performing arts tours ended so well however. In 1964 singers Dusty Springfield and Adam Faith visited South Africa respectively. Both artists were under the impression they would be permitted to perform in front of mixed audiences but discovered that this was not going to be permitted after they arrived. Undeterred, both artists attempted to press ahead with their planned performances and the authorities intervened. Springfield was forced to leave the country in December 1964,<sup>46</sup> and Faith was even temporarily jailed prior to his own expulsion on 9 January 1965.<sup>47</sup> These events led to an unsuccessful attempt by the fiercely anti-apartheid section of Actors' Equity to ban all performances in South Africa except those to unsegregated audiences.<sup>48</sup>

Despite South Africa's increasing international isolation by the mid-1960s, British policymakers saw John Vorster's accession to power after the assassination of Hendrik Verwoerd in September 1966 as a positive step in South Africa's relations with the wider world. Verwoerd was an ideological fanatic, often dubbed the architect of apartheid.<sup>49</sup> Vorster, despite his conservative, and anti-British background, proved far more pragmatic than his predecessor. He offered an olive branch to South Africans of British descent, many of whom were still wary of the Afrikaner nationalists, by delivering part of his first speech as prime minister in English.<sup>50</sup> It quickly became apparent that attracting English-speaking South Africans to the NP was an important policy objective of the Vorster administration.<sup>51</sup>

Many British officials were hopeful that Vorster's leadership would bring about positive changes in South Africa, particularly after he initiated moderate reforms to sport in the hope of having a multi-racial South African team take part in the 1968 Olympics.<sup>52</sup> Vorster allowed a New Zealand rugby team to tour South Africa which included Maori players, and supporters, who were granted 'honorary whites' status while in the country.<sup>53</sup> While this was still seeped in racist sentiment, it was a big change to the unwavering enforcement of segregation at all levels of society under Verwoerd. British officials based in South Africa felt these political moves, although moderate in nature, were genuine. British Ambassador Sir John Nicholls welcomed South Africa's sports reforms stating that while they must not be exaggerated, the changes did represent a 'small step forward' for the country.<sup>54</sup> In addition to this, Vorster attempted to normalise relations with other African nations in what became known as his 'outward' policy.<sup>55</sup>



Nicholls saw these moderate reforms as a sign that South Africa's attitude was changing, and believed the time was ripe to take advantage by re-doubling the British government's efforts in terms of cultural relations. On 8 January 1968, Nicholls sent two dispatches to Foreign Secretary George Brown regarding UK-South African cultural relations. The first dispatch warned against the decline of the English language in South Africa. Nicholls argued that English was a 'vehicle for cultural intercourse with Britain', and warned that if the decline of both the usage and quality of English in the country continued, it posed a great threat to UK-South African relations.<sup>56</sup> However, while Nicholls emphasised the practical policy implications, his dispatch alluded to a broader ideological consideration, simply that, at the time of writing, South Africa was part of the 'British world', both linguistically but also in terms of its culture. Nicholls clearly feared that the decline in the English language could threaten this, and potentially lead to South Africa continuing to drift from Britain's traditional sphere of influence.

In the second dispatch, Nicholls made a number of suggestions about how to combat the decline in English, which included an expansion of the British Council's work in the country, the appointment of additional staff, more educational support, and greater support for 'English theatre, opera, ballet, and music' tours of South Africa.<sup>57</sup> Nicholls was well aware of the difficulties in implementing such a policy, primarily because of budget cuts due to the precarious position of the UK economy at the time. However, Nicholls argued that performing arts was an area where contact could be greatly increased at a limited cost to the British government. Nicholls felt that, if Actors' Equity, and the Musicians Union, could be persuaded of the benefits of cultural contact with South Africa it would be 'a first step towards breaking the present deadlock', and lead to a greater role for British cultural diplomacy in the country.<sup>58</sup> Nicholls contended that the FCO should sponsor a playwright, or someone similar, to tour South Africa on a fact-finding mission. They could then report back to Actors' Equity and the Musicians Union on the situation in the country in the hope that they would modify their policy.<sup>59</sup> Nevertheless, there is little evidence that Nicholls' ideas ever went past the planning stages, and it appears that the 'fact-finding mission' never took place.<sup>60</sup>

The failure of Nicholls' dispatch to promote a change in policy meant British officials were hamstrung from supporting performing arts tours of South Africa. However, private citizens were still free to choose to undertake tours of this nature. In this context, the idea of a Dryden Society tour of South Africa was first brought to Butlin's attention in May 1967, when the society's then president, Mr Trewby, wrote to the British Council with a request to be put in touch with suitable contacts in South Africa to obtain opinions about the tour.<sup>61</sup> Butlin supplied him with a list of names, however, the planning went no further at this time.<sup>62</sup>

The context of UK-South African cultural relations was, however, about to change quite rapidly. On 28 August 1968 South African born coloured cricketer Basil D'Oliviera was omitted from the Marylebone Cricket Club (MCC) team which was set to tour South Africa over 1968–69, despite his excellent recent form.<sup>63</sup> As the literature on this incident has demonstrated, this was a politically motivated decision taken by the selectors who feared if D'Oliviera was selected the tour would be cancelled by the South African authorities.<sup>64</sup> D'Oliviera was eventually selected as a replacement for an injured player, however Vorster cancelled the tour in response to the selection of a coloured cricketer in the MCC touring party. This incident did much to diminish the claims that Vorster's moderate reforms were

a sign of progress. Instead, it became clear that these minor policy changes were simply window dressing implemented in an effort to reverse South Africa's international isolation. In fact, the opposite took place on 2 December 1968 when the UN General Assembly passed a motion calling on all member states 'to suspend cultural, educational, sporting, and other exchanges with the racist regime, and with organisations or institutions in South Africa which practice apartheid'.<sup>65</sup>

## Reaction to the tour

Despite the Dryden Society's initial failure to get the tour off the ground, concrete plans for a trip to South Africa came to light in early 1969, funded by the British University Society of Arts, a private organisation that had allegedly been supporting contact of this nature with Rhodesia and South Africa.<sup>66</sup> From the moment the Dryden Society's tour was announced it drew considerable criticism. In February 1969, 200 campaigners from the Cambridge University South Africa Committee marched on Trinity College in protest. Ambrose Reeves, who had been Bishop of Johannesburg until his expulsion in 1960 for his outspoken criticism of apartheid, and Dennis Brutus, a South African exile and former political prisoner on Robben Island, who campaigned for the isolation of South Africa from international sports, both addressed the protestors.<sup>67</sup> Brutus contended that 'players that come on the terms of apartheid, declare to the world that apartheid is okay, and reassure those South Africans with twinges of conscience'.<sup>68</sup>

There was fierce condemnation from a number of other student groups at Cambridge. The Trinity College Union, for example, called for the £1000 the society had been awarded from the college's funds to be immediately withdrawn, arguing that the tour would be a propaganda coup for Pretoria.<sup>69</sup> There were particular concerns that despite not taking part in the tour, Prince Charles' membership of the society would be used by South Africa for 'propaganda purposes'.<sup>70</sup> Leading members of the union wrote to *The Times* to make their opposition to the tour clear and call for the cultural boycott to be upheld.<sup>71</sup>

The Dryden Society maintained that engaging with South Africa should continue despite its abhorrent domestic policies, and it guaranteed to give an equal number of performances to white and black audiences.<sup>72</sup> Nevertheless, the Dryden Society's claim that the tour would bring a 'whiff of liberalism to South Africa' was dismissed by the University of Cambridge Newspaper *Varsity* as 'nonsense', with its editor stating 'there is no evidence that any amount of drama has liberalised the regime'.<sup>73</sup> The AAM also dismissed any potential liberalising influence and pleaded with the Dryden Society to cancel the tour as it would do

little, if anything, to arouse opposition to Apartheid; but it will be a rejection of the call by the African liberation movements for a boycott of South Africa, and it will give the South African government propaganda ammunition.<sup>74</sup>

John Kane-Berman, a white South African student studying at the University of Oxford, who had previously been president of the University of Witwatersrand (Wits) Student Representative Council, also spoke out against the tour, calling into question the Dryden Society's claims that they would be performing in front of a number of mixed audiences.<sup>75</sup> Kane-Berman contended that because the Group Areas Act prohibits racial mixing in 'any place of public entertainment' it was doubtful this would be possible. He pointed to

a recent investigation by the National Union of South African Students (NUSAS) that 'revealed that there was nowhere in the whole country where they would be able to legally stage public performances without excluding from them everybody who did not happen to be white'. For this reason, he concluded that by going through with the tour the Dryden Society would 'stand justly accused of complicity in the practice of apartheid'.<sup>76</sup> It should be noted that Kane-Berman was a political moderate, who regularly spoke out against attempts to ostracise South Africa.<sup>77</sup> His opposition of the tour is therefore particularly striking.

Behind the scenes however, other forces were at work. Antonia Caccia, a London Film School student, heard about the Dryden Society's tour from a friend studying at Cambridge. Caccia had previously worked in Rhodesia for Amnesty International, but had been deported by the authorities who disagreed with the work the organisation was doing with the country's political prisoners.<sup>78</sup> While in Rhodesia, she had made a number of contacts with imprisoned members of the Zimbabwe African National Union, who at the time had good relations with the PAC.

Upon her return to the UK, Caccia began working with a group of PAC members living in exile in London, most notably Nana Mahomo, Vusumzi Make, and Rakhletla Tsehlana. Despite playing an important role in establishing a PAC presence in exile, and securing financial support from trade unions in the US and Europe, Mahomo had become estranged from the PAC leadership after his suspension for allegedly misappropriating funds in August 1964. However, Tom Lodge contends that there was no 'evidence of venality' and instead it is likely that Mahomo sought to maintain his 'own independent sphere of operation' separate from the 'obvious reckless incompetence' of Potlako Leballo, who had assumed the leadership of the PAC in Robert Sobukwe's absence.<sup>79</sup> Nonetheless, despite this ostracised position Mahomo and his fellow exiles were able to maintain their work as they continued to receive support from various trade unions, most notably the American Federation of Labour and Congress of Industrial Organizations.<sup>80</sup>

In addition to publishing *Crisis and Change*, a magazine about southern Africa and the black liberation movements, the PAC exiles had been discussing a way to produce a film that would help demonstrate to the world the conditions in which South Africa's black population lived for some time.<sup>81</sup> Despite the near universal condemnation that followed the Sharpeville Massacre, the relative stability and economic success South Africa experienced for much of the 1960s led to a decrease in hostility over the course of the decade in western Europe and North America.<sup>82</sup> These changing perceptions were no doubt helped by the ever more creative forms of propaganda the South African government engaged in to try and present apartheid or 'separate development' as it had now been 're-branded', as beneficial to all South African citizens regardless of race.<sup>83</sup> Additionally, as Peter Davis argues, many cinematic portrayals of life in South Africa that were produced in the 1960s 'showed forms of partnership across the colour line' that 'bore little resemblance to reality'.<sup>84</sup> Mahomo later explained that he had found that people frequently did not believe his claims about apartheid, but he thought that 'if you present the public with something visual, something that their eyes can testify to, you are halfway home'.<sup>85</sup> This was the motivation behind Caccia's enrolment at London Film School, which was organised by Mahomo.<sup>86</sup> Caccia was selected for this as it was felt she was more likely to be able to travel to South Africa than any of the PAC's other associates.<sup>87</sup>

In early 1969 Caccia's friend at Cambridge, Gwydion Thomas, informed her and Mahomo that the Dryden Society was planning to undertake a tour of South Africa. Thomas arranged for Caccia and Mahomo to meet Chris Curling, who had recently won an award at the National Union of Students (NUS) annual drama festival for his directorship of *Krapp's Last Tape*, in which Thomas had starred. The production had been supported by the Dryden Society. As a result, Curling had already been approached by the Dryden Society's President Charles Noel with a request to be involved in the tour. Curling had responded that he would take part if he could direct *Othello*, motivated by the play's need for an inter-racial cast which he knew the South African government were highly unlikely to allow.<sup>88</sup> However, Noel turned this down and Curling became involved in the protests against the tour.<sup>89</sup>

Caccia and Mahomo persuaded Curling to see if they could use the tour to make a documentary for the liberation movement detailing the living conditions of black South Africans. Key to this plan was Curling going back to Noel and agreeing to direct a play on the tour. Then Curling would include, as actors, Caccia and Simon Louvish, a Scottish-Israeli student, who Caccia had met at the London Film School while producing a film about redundancies in the dock industry. Louvish had much more filmmaking experience than Caccia having previously worked as a cameraman while doing his military service in Israel during the Six Day War.<sup>90</sup> Meanwhile, Mohomo would raise funding from his contacts in the World Council of Churches to purchase a 16 mm camera, sound recorder, and film stock.<sup>91</sup>

Curling approached Noel who agreed to the inclusion of Caccia and Louvish on the tour and also to his request to direct *Marat/Sade*. Curling thought this 'was a suitable piece to do in South Africa at the time' owing to its overt political message and encouragement to challenge oppression.<sup>92</sup> Despite having no acting experience, both Caccia and Louvish would play minor roles in the *Marat/Sade*. They would also be responsible for filming parts of the tour, which acted as cover for the camera and sound equipment that the PAC exiles in London had raised £1000 to purchase for their trip. However, most of the time Louvish filmed the crew without any film in the camera, as Caccia and Louvish were desperately short of film stock for filming scenes for the anti-apartheid film.<sup>93</sup>

This plan was top secret, known only by Curling, Caccia, and Louvish. Publicly the Dryden Society continued to come under attack, particular after it emerged that Arjun Mathrani, an Indian member of the society, was unable to take part in the tour as a result of South Africa's apartheid policies.<sup>94</sup> Mathrani was not directly excluded by either the Dryden Society or the South African authorities, but decided not to take part in the tour to save himself, and the society, any potential embarrassment. This showed a willingness on the part of the Dryden Society to follow apartheid regulations and led to accusations of 'concealed discrimination'.<sup>95</sup>

Nevertheless, Noel continued to speak out against the protestors who he charged 'were trying to do everything they can to kill the tour'.<sup>96</sup> It should be noted that Noel had spent three years in South Africa while his father was the British military attaché, and this may have influenced his staunch opposition to ostracising the country.<sup>97</sup> Another unnamed student went further, alluding to the apparent far-left position of the protestors by stating 'they will be going through every devious plot in the little red book'.<sup>98</sup> Noel went on to claim that Mathrani, or 'the Indian student' as he described him, 'has himself denied the allegation'. Noel also claimed that 'a tour such as ours is the best possible contribution we can make to South Africa. We are not supporting apartheid, and a cultural and academic boycott will only increase your isolation'. Noel also claimed that any profits the tour made would go to good causes in South Africa.

The NUS, however, remained unmoved by these claims, and continued its campaign against the tour. The Dryden Society was barred from taking part in the organisation's annual drama festival with NUS President Elect Jack Straw contending that Mathrani's exclusion meant that the tour had 'all of the makings of a second D'Oliveira affair'.<sup>99</sup> These protests resulted in a number of Cambridge students choosing not to take part in the tour. This meant the society had to seek actors from elsewhere and around half of the members of the final touring party were not, in fact Cambridge students.<sup>100</sup>

The British government became involved when the Cambridge Fabian Society contacted Ben Whitaker, Labour Member of Parliament (MP) for Hampstead, after obtaining a Dryden Society memo claiming that '[o]n the organisational side, we are being helped by the British Cultural Attaché in South Africa'.<sup>101</sup> It should also be noted that when the prospect of the tour was first mentioned in the South African press in January 1968 it was claimed that the company was 'being helped in South Africa by the British Cultural Attaché'.<sup>102</sup> Noel had actually visited South Africa in early 1968, and had stayed with Butlin, the cultural attaché at the time, who was a family friend.<sup>103</sup>

Whitaker had recently submitted a written parliamentary question regarding cultural performances in South Africa. FCO Under-Secretary of State Maurice Foley responded by stating: 'assistance from public funds is not given for cultural performances before segregated audiences in South Africa'.<sup>104</sup> This was taken as a precedent for government policy towards South Africa in this field. Clearly concerned that this policy was not being followed in relation to the Dryden Society tour, Whitaker raised the issue with Foley.<sup>105</sup> FCO Under-Secretary of State William Whitlock (responding in Foley's absence) explained that, as was UK policy towards performances to segregated audiences, 'no funds for this tour are being provided by the British Council'. The society's members would, however, be free to seek guidance from the cultural attaché while they were in the country as this was the right of any British citizen.<sup>106</sup>

Whitlock's response was not considered adequate by several student groups across the UK: the NUS for the East Anglia region, for example, argued that because the British Council was publicly funded and would be providing advice, at no cost to the society, then it could be considered 'concealed support'.<sup>107</sup> This was seen as a 'fallacious' argument by Cosmo Stewart, Head of the FCO's Cultural Relations Department, who stated that 'normal consulate facilities are available' to any British person in South Africa and Dryden Society members were welcome to use them.<sup>108</sup> Nevertheless, left-wing Labour MP Frank Judd raised the issue on 24 July asking Foley

whether he will make a statement on the action he has taken concerning the decision of the British Council to put its facilities at the disposal of the Cambridge University Dryden Society during its forthcoming programme of performances before segregated audiences in the Republic of South Africa.<sup>109</sup>

Foley reiterated that 'there was no question of the British Council putting its facilities at the disposal of the Dryden Society during its tour of South Africa'. However, as with the private correspondence between Whitaker and Whitlock, Foley did state that if members of the society 'should turn to the cultural attaché there for advice they would be given it in the same way as advice would be given to any other British visitor approaching the Embassy'.<sup>110</sup>

The issue surrounding the British Council's association with the Dryden tour placed British officials in South Africa in a difficult position. In addition to the discussions in the House of Commons there was also press attention from *The Guardian*. Despite the fact that the tour did not receive any public funds, the cultural attaché had planned on hosting a formal reception for the society while it was in the country.<sup>111</sup> This was seen as fairly normal procedure for those who were, despite having no official support, effectively representing British performing arts in South Africa. Nevertheless, the British Council decided that, based on advice from the government, 'even the incidental form of entertainment' that was planned should be avoided.<sup>112</sup> Freen, who had only recently been appointed as cultural attaché, felt this put him in an awkward position 'particularly in view of the contact my predecessor had with the Society',<sup>113</sup> while Nicholls was particularly disappointed as he feared that giving the 'cold shoulder' to a reasonably high profile tour might reflect badly on Britain in South Africa, even to those of a 'liberal' persuasion.<sup>114</sup>

The AAM and various student groups continued their campaign against the tour, changing tactics to focus on undermining the society and making it as difficult as possible for them to undertake this, and other tours, as planned. For example, they brought the situation of Mathrani's omission to the attention of the Indian High Commission.<sup>115</sup> In response, the Indian Ministry of Education and Youth Services announced that it would not provide facilities for the Dryden Society when it visited the country the following summer.<sup>116</sup> The AAM also wrote to several playwrights who were known supporters of the cultural boycott against South Africa, providing a draft letter they could sign and send to Charles Noel emphasising their discontent at this breach.<sup>117</sup> The NUS and AAM also contacted the writers whose work was going to feature as part of the society's repertoire and requested that they withdrew permission for it to be used.<sup>118</sup>

It looked increasingly likely that the tour would be called off, particularly if Peter Weiss, the writer of *Marat/Sade*, refused permission for the play to be used in South Africa. However, in response to letters from the AAM and NUS, Weiss explained that the Dryden Society's 'officers' had visited him in June to make the request, and convinced him of the merits of allowing his work to be performed.<sup>119</sup> The nature of these 'officers' visit was, however, not as it seemed, and was actually undertaken by Caccia, Curling and Mohomo in an effort to ensure the tour could still go ahead to act as cover for their filming. The three individuals confided their true motives for travelling to South Africa to Weiss, who ultimately agreed to allow *Marat/Sade* to be performed.<sup>120</sup>

Nonetheless, another issue was about to jeopardise Caccia's plans. It became known that a member of the Communist Party of Great Britain (CPGB) had discovered that Caccia was taking part in the tour.<sup>121</sup> Caccia's presence on the tour would draw suspicion from the authorities if it was brought to their attention owing to her earlier deportation from Rhodesia and links to the PAC. Indeed, as part of her 'cover' she was travelling under the name Hunt, which conveniently could be justified as a stage name and as the direct translation into English of Caccia, which has Italian origins. The CPGB had considerable influence in the NUS at the time, indeed Jack Straw has discussed his own dealings with the party while involved in student politics.<sup>122</sup> Knowing that Caccia was in close contact to the PAC, this CPGB member informed the NUS leadership of her participation.<sup>123</sup>

This situation may also have been reflective of the PAC's rivalry with the ANC, particularly due to the latter's communist links. Mohomo and other leading PAC figures in the UK pleaded with Caccia not to go on the tour, fearing for her safety. However, when reflecting on this time Caccia remembers thinking 'this has been too much hassle, I've gone through too much, I'm bloody going'.<sup>124</sup> This was a very risky decision. Caccia was working closely with, and was financed by, the PAC. She, and to a lesser extent Curling and Louvish, were risking their liberty by making this film.<sup>125</sup> Caccia claims that after she left, Mohomo and other PAC members made it clear to the NUS that there would be serious consequences if Caccia's presence on the tour was leaked.<sup>126</sup>

## The tour

Noel continued to maintain that the tour would be good for South Africa and that 'no country should have any cultural boycott imposed on it'.<sup>127</sup> Nevertheless, student groups in South Africa had begun to engage in a more critical way with race relations and politics in the late-1960s. NUSAS had protested against apartheid policies from the early 1960s. The biggest example of such demonstrations came in August 1968 when several hundred, predominantly white students at the University of Cape Town, held sit-ins to protest the decision by the university to rescind a lectureship offered to black South African Archibald Mafeje, after pressure from the NP government.<sup>128</sup> Unsurprisingly therefore, the NUSUS reacted to the tour in a similar way to their counterparts in the UK. NUSAS President Duncan Innes was 'appalled' that the Dryden Society had agreed to play to segregated audiences at South African universities, and vowed that his organisation would boycott the tour.<sup>129</sup> Conversely, some NUSAS members were aware of the work Curling, Caccia, and Louvish were doing and helped them with their filming. Among them were Neville Colman and Glenys Lobban, who were later forced into exile.<sup>130</sup> In addition to this, the filmmakers were also helped by Strini Moodley and Steve Biko, leading figures in the Black Consciousness Movement who had recently formed the South African Student Organisation (SASO) a breakaway union for black South African students who resented the white domination of NUSAS.<sup>131</sup> Moodley was arrested for his activism in 1974 and served six years in Robben Island prison, while Biko was murdered by the South African authorities while in police custody in 1977.<sup>132</sup>

On top of drawing criticism from left-wing student groups, the society's performances also offended some of their more conservative white audiences. In addition to the *Marat/Sade* the society's repertoire included Shakespeare's *All's Well That Ends Well*. Jill Lewis, one of the actors on the tour, thought that *All's Well That Ends Well* was 'a very weak production', while the *Marat/Sade* had an intensity in its direction that regularly caused a stir when it was performed.<sup>133</sup> The play was performed slightly differently when it was delivered to an all-white audience with the actors playing the 'singers' going into the crowd during the play. Some of the revolutionary songs also had their lyrics adjusted slightly from 'they' to 'you' asking the audience directly 'why have you got the jobs, why have you got the power',<sup>134</sup> while the lyrics to one song which asked 'what's the point of a revolution without general copulation' caused great offence and often led to a number of people walking out of the performances.<sup>135</sup> With white only audiences the play ended with a threatening turn towards the audience before black out. With mixed or black

audiences the play stayed anchored in on-stage interactions. Lewis stated that this also made things uncomfortable with the families they stayed with who came to view the performances.<sup>136</sup>

The tour was also hampered by a number of incidents including Waterhouse's death while climbing Table Mountain, and the repatriation of another member of the touring party on medical grounds. After hearing about this Cosmo Stewart remarked sarcastically that 'I suppose this will be saluted by the President of the Cambridge Union and the Secretary of the NUS East Anglia as the judgment of God on the society'.<sup>137</sup> The biggest controversy, however, was the society's refusal to perform at Fort Hare as planned. The society's members came to this decision when they realised the audience, which they had expected to be mixed, was made up entirely of white South Africans. Harriet Walter, one of the actors, claimed that after discussions with black student leaders, who had congregated outside the venue, it was discovered they did not want the society to perform there under these circumstances. *The Rand Daily Mail* claimed that although the majority of the audience was white, there were some 'non-whites'. The paper also claimed that this was a result of the students choosing not to attend in line with the boycott endorsed by the NUSAS.<sup>138</sup>

Walter maintains that 'we didn't see any black faces in the audience' and after further consultation, the society decided that they could not, in good conscience, perform 'against the wishes of the entire student body' and the show would be cancelled.<sup>139</sup> The university's principal, Professor S. M. de Wett, announced the cancellation of the performance to the waiting audience, claiming that the Dryden Society had been intimidated by the Fort Hare students and that their leaders would be punished. Moments later Charles Noel rushed on to the stage to correct him, making it clear they had not been intimidated but, as they had come with the intention of performing to the students, were not willing to perform if they did not wish to attend.<sup>140</sup> According to Walter a female member of the audience proceeded to assault Noel with her handbag,<sup>141</sup> while Lewis remembers being spat on by another.<sup>142</sup>

Walter also claims that the black students outside the venue 'cheered our announcement and slow handclapped the audience as they left'.<sup>143</sup> After the cancellation of the performance de Wett gave the Dryden party 10 minutes to leave the campus or they would be physically removed by security. As the actors were leaving they were approached by a religious minister who gave them a map to a nearby ecumenical venue where he said many of the Fort Hare students would be happy to meet them. The society went to the venue and according to Lewis met a number of Fort Hare students who they talked to into the early hours of the morning and even performed extracts from *Marat/Sade* with.<sup>144</sup>

Frean was infuriated by the Dryden Society's behaviour at Fort Hare and during the tour more broadly. In a report about the tour he claimed that several high-profile South Africans had contacted him stating how angered they were by the society's decision to cancel the performance. The Director of the Performing Arts Council of the Orange Free State, for example, told Frean that the society was 'a deplorable advertisement for Britain'.<sup>145</sup> The Vice Chancellor at Wits (known for its more liberal nature compared to other South African institutions) described members of the society as 'very scruffy, casual and arrogant', a view apparently shared by the Wits students.<sup>146</sup> Although Frean went on to admit that the society may well have had good intentions, he argued that they did not have the 'judgment, tact and humility' for a tour of this kind.<sup>147</sup>



Many in the FCO felt that Frean's comments were too critical and demonstrated that he was out of touch with the attitudes and style of young people in the UK. As part of the tour, the Dryden Society also delivered a series of performances in Lesotho, the recently decolonised High Commission Territory. As Lesotho was an independent black African country that was not divided on racial lines, the group was able to receive official British support while in the country. The High Commissioner Ian Watt felt Frean's criticism of the Dryden Society was misplaced. While he admitted that the performances were 'under-rehearsed [sic] and indifferently managed', and the touring party's dress sense somewhat eclectic, he argued that their behaviour was perfectly acceptable and did 'not feel that the image of Britain in Lesotho was at all tarnished'.<sup>148</sup>

Harriet Walter's testimony in *The Observer* also contradicted the views put forward by Frean; she admitted that the group was slightly naive about South African society, yet when confronted with the difficult decision of whether or not to perform at Fort Hare, they had made the correct moral calculation.<sup>149</sup> Furthermore, John Macrae, an FCO official and future Head of the Cultural Relations Department, was critical of Frean in light of these two accounts; while he felt Walter's observations 'may be exaggerated' he 'was not inclined to accept Mr Frean's opinion at face value' as he had 'never saw any members of the Dryden Society' and instead relied on testimony from prominent white South Africans.<sup>150</sup> It should also be noted that Frean made no reference to the positive response Walter claims the society received from the black South African students upon cancelling the performance at Fort Hare, several of whom wrote to her after somehow managing to obtain the article she fronted, thanking her for drawing attention to their treatment.<sup>151</sup> Again, this emphasises that British officials in South Africa in the 1960s were far more concerned about maintaining links with the country's white minority than fostering contact with the black majority.

Despite Watt's positive account of the Dryden Society's visit to Lesotho, members of the touring party still caused some controversy while there, albeit of a very different nature to that which they caused when in South Africa. Shortly after the touring party left to return to South Africa, Watt was approached by the Head of Lesotho Special Branch who alleged that Curling and Caccia had met Joseph S. P. Molefi, a South African exile who had 'fallen foul of the Lesotho Government'.<sup>152</sup> Watt was concerned that news of this meeting might get back to the South African Bureau of State Security (BOSS) who had close contacts with their Lesotho counterparts.<sup>153</sup>

In light of this meeting, British officials in South Africa contacted Curling and requested he report to the embassy. Curling was questioned about the incident and was warned to be more careful, as by meeting individuals like Molefi he risked coming into conflict with the South African authorities.<sup>154</sup> Clearly, both the British and South African officials were unaware of the far more dangerous work the group was undertaking through their filming, or that they were regularly meeting anti-apartheid activists. Indeed, they had even been able to meet PAC President Robert Sobukwe while they were in Kimberly despite the fact he was meant to be under house arrest and a banning order.<sup>155</sup> The Lesotho Special Branch interviewed Molefi and confirmed a meeting had taken place, but they 'lost interest in the matter' after accepting Molefi's claim that Curling, Caccia, and two other unnamed members of the touring party had met him simply to 'bring general messages of goodwill from people in London and Johannesburg'.<sup>156</sup> The truth was,

however, that Curling and Caccia had actually interviewed Molefi as part of their secret filming activities, although as they were unable to conduct any more interviews they decided not to include it in the final cut of *End of the Dialogue*.<sup>157</sup>

After visiting Lesotho, the group returned to South Africa for several more performances at Wits' Great Hall. Again, they were faced with protests, including four Indian students who staged a walk out immediately before the society's performance of *Marat/Sade* began on 8 September.<sup>158</sup> Reviews in the *Rand Daily Mail* were generally positive, if unspectacular.<sup>159</sup> The review of the Dryden Society's performance of *Marat/Sade* is quite revealing, and requires greater attention. The theatre critic wrote a sympathetic review of the play, and the tour more broadly. The critic clearly felt the performers had tried their best under difficult circumstances but believed the 'hollowness to some shows' was because the society's members had 'lost their innocence' since first arriving in South Africa.<sup>160</sup> The critic was still impressed by the quality of the shows but contended that 'this hollowness turns what was originally a brilliant interpretation into one that was merely excellent'. They blamed the 'constant, if mild, intimidation of many students who felt the society was morally wrong to come here' for the slightly flat nature of the performances.<sup>161</sup>

The detailed review of the acting itself offered here is also quite poignant. The critic compared the Great Hall recital to an unofficial performance in front of a mixed audience they had witnessed six weeks earlier. The critic stated that in the earlier performance the actors 'relished their lines', and went in to detail to describe a violent sex scene that had been passionately delivered. In the more recent performance however the same scene lacked this passion and the critic went as far to claim that the actor in question 'seemed apprehensive that someone in the audience might stand up and choke him off for being lewd'.<sup>162</sup> Perhaps the Dryden Society's members were now more aware of the more conservative nature of white South African society and amended their performances accordingly.

Only a few days later, on 12 September, the society was faced with another problem as Peter Weiss, the writer of *Marat/Sade*, withdrew permission for the group to perform the play.<sup>163</sup> This led to the last minute cancellation of a performance at the Great Hall and saw 'hundreds of people turned away at the doors'.<sup>164</sup> In announcing the cancellation of the performance Anthony Kirwan, one of the actors, stated:

this is the latest blow in a series of unpleasant incidents since we left Britain. We have faced hostile criticism here and back home; we have been banned by the actors union Equity, Fort Hare students prevented us from playing and Nusas boycotted us.<sup>165</sup>

Weiss explained that he had initially given the society permission to perform the play on the 'condition that it was to be performed before integrated audiences' having being told by the AAM that this was not the case he felt 'morally bound to withdraw my permission'. Nevertheless, after the society explained that they would be performing *Marat/Sade* in front of several mixed audiences Weiss went back on his decision.<sup>166</sup> The group continued the tour, delivering renditions of *All's Well That Ends Well* before returning to the UK on 27 September. *The Telegraph* reported that their final performance was to 'a crowded audience of non-whites in the African township of Soweto'.<sup>167</sup> Reflecting on the tour, Noel stated 'it hasn't been an easy tour by any means but we're glad we came'.<sup>168</sup> However, according to several of the actors the final performance at Soweto was a raucous occasion. In contrast to the media reports, the society's members decided to perform the *Marat/Sade* rather than *All's Well That Ends Well*.<sup>169</sup> Lewis recalls

that the society were only given permission to perform the Shakespeare piece but agreed amongst themselves to perform the *Marat/Sade*. According to Caccia, at the end of the play when the characters call for 'revolution' the crowd went 'wild' and there was much cheering and chanting.<sup>170</sup>

Walter also tells a very different story to this rather sombre ending. Rather than seeing the performers demoralised in the aftermath of their experiences at Fort Hare, she contends that this was actually a defining moment for most of the group. From this point on, they felt more emboldened. After one performance a member of the group wrote 'please deport us' in lipstick on a mirror backstage as the group left.<sup>171</sup> Walter explained that this was 'a reinforcing statement' as the members would have preferred to be seen as 'heroic deportees' than stooges.<sup>172</sup> Caccia and Curling, however, while pleased that their time in South Africa had politicised some of the other members of the touring party were quite worried that this desire to make a protest could draw unwanted attention.<sup>173</sup> While not against making a stand Caccia frequently tried to encourage the other members to wait until they were out of South Africa, for fear such action might result in the discovery of the material they had filmed while in the country.<sup>174</sup>

When discussing these events many years later, Caccia, Curling, and Walter all contend that the breaking of the cultural boycott was a necessary evil to produce *End of the Dialogue* and draw attention to the inhuman treatment of South Africa's black majority by its white minority.<sup>175</sup> Walter, who was only 18 years old when she embarked on the tour, admits that she was very 'green' and was not politically engaged prior to travelling to South Africa. However, she contends that the tour 'totally unscrambled my brain and put it back together again in a different configuration'.<sup>176</sup> While she considered the tour an incredibly valuable experience, she went on to vote in favour of tougher restrictions on members' performances in South Africa in Actors' Equity ballots.<sup>177</sup> Nevertheless, she does admit that there is a tension in that 'the countries whose regimes one wants to criticise by means of a boycott are the same countries who deliberately cut their people off from international media or at least control access to it very tightly'.<sup>178</sup> While Walter admits that she could not have known this before she went, she feels the touring party was able to explain to ordinary South Africans that 'there was another world out there that disapproved of the system of government they lived under and that there was a campaign to end it'.

Walter was not alone in taking much from the tour. Lewis, who like Walter claims to have been apolitical before the tour, felt that it was an 'an absolutely pivotal changing that cracked me open'.<sup>179</sup> Lewis went on to have a career both as an academic, teaching literature and gender studies with a key focus on race, and also as an organiser of community projects including work on Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) in South Africa and nine other sub-Saharan African countries over 10 years.<sup>180</sup> She is also involved with Extinction Rebellion, Black Lives Matter in the Stix, and with an asylum-seeker/refugee support network.<sup>181</sup> She stated that since witnessing the 'indigestible inhumanity' of the apartheid system, she has always carried with her, particularly in her collaborations with people from the Global South, a keen awareness of the 'social and emotional wounding' that colonialism placed on the world and the continued legacies of that to this day.<sup>182</sup>

While Caccia already held strong political opinions and was aware of the conditions in the segregated states of southern Africa, she also noticed that the tour had a profound effect on other members of the touring party as 'they saw a lot more than most people going to South Africa'.<sup>183</sup> Simon Louvish stated that the tour was a 'great shock to the

system, life-changing, and most relevant to my historical past, having been brought up in Israel'.<sup>184</sup> Curling states that the tour had 'a profound effect on me and how I see the world' and after returning to the UK he felt that he 'knew South Africa better than I did my own country'.<sup>185</sup> Taken together, these testimonies suggest that cultural diplomacy may have important 'blow-back' impacts on its participants as much, if not more, than on the target audience.

## End of the dialogue

Upon their return to the UK, Curling, Caccia, and Louvish working alongside Mahoma, Make, and Tshlana, used the material collected to produce the film *End of the Dialogue*. The three PAC exiles were listed as the producers but no other contributors were mentioned by name to protect against potential reprisals from the South African authorities. The film was shown at cinemas throughout the UK and on the British Broadcasting Company (BBC) as part of the *Man Alive* documentary series in November 1970. This was followed by a discussion panel, which included individuals on both sides of the 'argument' about South Africa. Nana Mahoma agreed to take part while the South African embassy refused to send a representative.<sup>186</sup> South African Ambassador H.G. Luttig wrote to Baron Hill, Chairperson of the BBC's Board of Governors, to complain about the organisations decision to broadcast the film, claiming that it contained a 'number of blatant untruths'.<sup>187</sup>

Luttig also contended that the film was made by putting together material from a number of different sources and was 'not restricted or prohibited' suggesting that he was unaware that the filming had been undertaken by Curling, Caccia, and Louvish under the cover of the Dryden Society tour. Indeed, he went as far as to claim that 'the label of "secret" attached to this film is therefore obviously a publicity stunt designed to sell it'.<sup>188</sup> However, according to Louvish, this 'mistimed official protest from the South African embassy' helped promote the film, making it a 'cause celebre, screening all over the world, from the US to China and Russia'.<sup>189</sup> Indeed *The Guardian* noted that the film showed 'that black South Africans can still hoodwink the country's security police'.<sup>190</sup> In the same article Vus Make exclaimed that *End of the Dialogue* 'proved that the African can still do something ... it ended the feeling of stalemate and defeatist apathy'.<sup>191</sup> Excerpts from the film were also shown on US television as part of a CBS special entitled 'A Black View of South Africa'. This drew more attention to the plight of black South Africans under apartheid and led to Mahomo being awarded an Emmy Award.<sup>192</sup>

The closest the authorities came to finding out the true nature of the filming was by identifying the number plate of a tractor seen in one of the clips. This tractor in fact belonged to a relation of Charles Noel who lived in South Africa, and knew nothing about the film so was unable to help the authorities with their enquiries when they were questioned.<sup>193</sup> The South African government's failure to identify those who carried out the filming allowed Curling to return to the country to secretly film another fiercely anti-apartheid documentary, *Last Grave at Dimbaza*, which was released in 1974.

It was only in 2002 that the names of those involved in the filming of *End of the Dialogue* were added to the credits. That same year a special screening was organised at the London Film School, coinciding with a visit by Nelson Mandela to the UK. Members of the Dryden

Society's touring party were invited to the screening, several of whom were shocked to learn for the first time about the secret filming from Caccia's opening remarks. One of the Dryden 'alumni' in fact berated Caccia for putting the safety of the whole group at risk.<sup>194</sup>

## Conclusion

The Dryden Society's 1969 tour should be viewed as a part of British cultural diplomacy in South Africa. Despite the lack of official status or support, the touring party's actions and behaviour affected how the South African public viewed the UK. This is supported by the fact that the cultural attaché paid particular attention to the tour and how it was viewed by influential white South Africans. Moreover, the very fact of the close scrutiny under which relations between officials and the Dryden Society were placed, by government, parliamentary, and public actors in Britain and South Africa, is in itself evidence of the significance of the tour within the broader context of British relations with South Africa. The example of the Dryden Society tour also demonstrates that not all forms of British cultural diplomacy in South Africa worked in line with the wider objectives of the British government. Not only did it lead to demonstrations from left-wing student groups, but the touring party also offended the white audience at Fort Hare by their refusal to perform to a segregated audience. Nonetheless, the willingness of the Dryden Society to engage with black student demonstrators may have had a positive effect on perceptions of UK society, if not government, among these activists.

The case of the Dryden Society also tells us much about the attitudes of British officials in South Africa. Both the ambassador and cultural attaché clearly prioritised the views of influential white South Africans in their dealings with the country. Frean relied almost entirely on accounts from such figures in developing his own analysis of the Dryden Society's tour, while Nicholls was clearly concerned about how it would look to such figures that the embassy did not provide any formal entertainment to mark the tour. This contrasted with officials in London who placed cultural relations with South Africa in a broader context, and took domestic considerations into account. Indeed, the fact that officials in London made it clear that the embassy should avoid all contact with the touring party suggests that anti-apartheid activists in the UK could influence British policy towards such contact.

The actions of Caccia, Curling, and Louvish also nuance debates over cultural boycotts. On the one hand, these individuals did break the cultural boycott against South Africa which critics of the tour argued provided legitimacy to the racist state. Nevertheless, by using the tour as cover, and risking their own safety, the group were able to make a significant contribution to the anti-apartheid struggle. Indeed, their decision to go on the tour was taken with the PAC. The fact that the PAC was able to successfully infiltrate an organised tour of South Africa, without the detection of either the British or South African authorities, is itself impressive, particularly owing to the difficulties the organisation faced while in exile. Even more impressive, however, is that *End of the Dialogue*, which the PAC produced with the material collected on the tour, drew greater international attention to the cruelty and inhumanity of apartheid.

The effect the tour had on its participants is also quite profound and led to many of them becoming involved in further anti-apartheid activism in various forms, whether it was making another film in the case of Caccia, Curling, and Louvish, or becoming a supporter of further

restrictions against South Africa by Actors' Equity in the case of Walter. Clearly, therefore, this article supports the notion that cultural diplomacy is a two-way process, and can have just as much of an impact on the 'cultural representatives' as it can on those they engage with.

The controversy the Dryden Society's tour generated also suggests a shift in the attitude of anti-apartheid activists in the UK. Five years previously the Cambridge Shakespeare group had been able to undertake a similar tour of South Africa without receiving anywhere near the same level of criticism that was directed at the Dryden Society. This is a clear indication of the changing nature of activism in the UK. While the student and worker demonstrations of 1968 did not cause the same level of disruption in the UK as they did in mainland Europe, this did see a hardening of attitudes amongst young activists. These individuals focused their attention on 'causes' of international significance, with the racist regimes in southern Africa taking centre stage. In November 1969, less than two months after the end of the Dryden Society's tour, anti-apartheid activists used direct action in response to the South African rugby team's UK tour, forcing it to 'retreat behind barbed wire barricades and massed ranks of British police'.<sup>195</sup> The following year saw even more violent demonstrations as the Stop the Seventy Tour group campaigned vigorously against the prospect of a visiting South African cricket side, ultimately succeeding in their aim of forcing the cricketing authorities to cancel the tour.<sup>196</sup> While these were significantly bigger campaigns than the efforts to force the cancellation of the Dryden Society's visit, the fact that this relatively small tour by a group of amateur student actors was able to generate such controversy, even reaching the debating chamber in the House of Commons, was clearly a sign of things to come.

## Notes

1. Having arrived in South Africa in July, the group initially spent time rehearsing at the University of Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, using the Great Hall for several performances. They then travelled the country performing at a number of very different venues to a diverse range of audiences, from performances to whites-only audiences in upmarket venues, to recitals to black-only audiences in makeshift venues in townships and at the University of Fort Hare. The group also briefly visited Lesotho, the landlocked nation within South Africa's borders which had been granted independence from Britain three years earlier. For budgetary reasons the performers stayed with white families who volunteered to act as hosts.
2. UKNA, FCO/13/330, Freaan, Report on Visits to South Africa of the Dryden Society, July to September 1969, 26 September 1969.
3. Fort Hare's notable alumni includes many leading African nationalists such as Nelson Mandela, Oliva Tambo, Robert Sobukwe, Chris Hani and Govan Mbeki.
4. See Berridge, *Economic Power*, 65; Barber and Barratt, *South Africa's Foreign Policy*, 51.
5. Henshaw, "Britain, South Africa and the Sterling Area," 197–223.
6. Hurd cited in Barber, "An Historic and Persistent Interest," 723.
7. Fieldhouse, *Anti-Apartheid*, 108–110.
8. For more on the cultural boycott see Stevens, "Boycotts and Sanctions," 82–104; Toulson, "Culture is a Weapon," 25–79; Morgan, "Into the Struggle," 98–152; Nixon, *Harlem, Homelands and Hollywood*, 155–172. Thörn, *Anti-Apartheid*, 63; and Fieldhouse, *Anti-Apartheid*, 103.
9. House of Commons Debate (HC Deb) 21 April 1969 vol 782 c11w.
10. UKNA, BW/107/14, E.G. Halestrap, Director, British Council Africa South of the Sahara Department, 18 July 1969.
11. Nye, *Bound to Lead*, 32; and Nye, *Soft Power*.

12. Cull, *Public Diplomacy: Foundations for Global Engagement*, 5.
13. Cull, *Public Diplomacy: Lessons from the Past*, 19.
14. Arndt, *The First Resort of Kings*, xviii.
15. Cummings, *Cultural Diplomacy*, 1.
16. Goff, "Cultural Diplomacy," 31.
17. Melissen, "Between theory and Practice," 15.
18. Schneider, "Cultural Diplomacy," 194.
19. UKNA, FCO/13/330, Watt to William Wilson, Central and Southern Africa Department, 23 October 1969.
20. Ibid.
21. See Richmond, *Cultural Exchange and the Cold War*; Parks, *Hearts, Minds, Voices*; Cull, *The Cold War and the United States Information Agency*; Von Eschen, *Satchmo Blows Up the World*; Prevots, *Dance for Export*; Peterson McDaniel, *American–Soviet Cultural Diplomacy*; and Hixson, *Parting the Curtain*.
22. See Branch, "Political Traffic," 811–31; Katsakioris, "Burden or Allies?" 539–67; Kret, "We Unite with Knowledge," 239–56; Matusevich, "An Exotic Subversive," 57–81; and Matusevich, "Probing the Limits of Internationalism," 19–39.
23. UKNA, BW/107/15, The British Council, South Africa, Representatives Report, 1969–70.
24. After their refusal to perform at Fort Hare, the touring party met a number of the black students who had protested against the performance. According to Jill Lewis, this was a very convivial affair where students took turns to read extracts from *Marat/Sade*. Author Interview with Jill Lewis, 20 June 2021. Harriet Walter also received letters of thanks from one of the protesting students in response to an article she fronted in *The Observer* about the Fort Hare incident. Author interview with Harriet Walter, 2 February 2021.
25. The Dryden Society's Official Facebook Page, Available at <https://www.facebook.com/thedrydensociety> [Accessed December 8, 2020].
26. "Kill S.A. Tour' Cry students." *Rand Daily Mail*, 7 May 1969, 2.
27. Examples include, but are by no means limited to, Harriet Walter, who has had an acclaimed acting career, Chris Curling who is a successful producer and director, Barrie Paskins who became a prominent historian, and Jill Lewis who combined her work as an academic with leading roles on a number of educational and cross-cultural collaborations around the globe.
28. Many white South Africans were unimpressed by the Indian-style clothing many of the actors wore and, in particular, saw the male members of the group, with their longer hair, as effeminate. Author Interview with Jill Lewis, 20 June 2021.
29. "Students Boycott Play." *Rand Daily Mail*, 14 August 1969, 3.
30. UKNA, FCO/45/151, Watt to Nicholls, 5 August 1969. According to Nelson Mandela, Molefi played an important role in the organisation of the demonstrations against the Pass Laws in March 1960. See Mandela, *Long Walk to Freedom*, 280. It should also be noted here that Caccia's father Harold was a prominent civil servant and diplomat. He served as ambassador to Austria (1951–1954) and the United States (1956–1961) before becoming the Permanent Under-Secretary of State (1961–1965). Following this distinguished career, he was made a life peer under the title Baron Caccia.
31. Lodge, *Sharpeville*, 71.
32. Frankel, *An Ordinary Atrocity*, 150–56.
33. Author interview with Antonia Caccia, 22 February 2021; Author interview with Harriet Walter, 2 February 2021. Other actors did become aware of the activities or at least suspicious of what Caccia, Curling and Louvish were doing. Harriet Walter, who was not a University of Cambridge student, had been encouraged to audition by Curling, whom she was close to at the time. When she began to have doubts about the tour Curling admitted that he, Caccia and Louvish were using the tour as cover to undertake filming in South Africa. Walter went on to help with the filming and played an important role in posting some of the film back to the UK, and smuggling the rest through customs at Jan Smuts Airport, Johannesburg. Jill Lewis became aware of these activities halfway through the tour and briefly assisted by starting a friendly conversation with a South African police officer so Louvish could film them without suspicion. Anthony Kirwan

- questioned Caccia about the regular meetings she was having in almost every town they visited and even asked if she was a member of the African National Congress. Author Interview with Jill Lewis, 20 June 2021; Author Interview with Antonia Caccia, 25 June 2021.
34. More information about *End of the Dialogue*, including a list of the accolades the film has received can be found here <http://icarusfilms.com/if-log> [Accessed July 29, 2021] and here <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt6180082> [Accessed May 2, 2022]. *End of the Dialogue* has been mentioned in passing in Schaffer, "The Limits of "Liberal Imagination," 252 and Peterson, "Culture, Resistance and Representation," 181. However, this article is the first attempt to analyse the events surrounding its filming.
  35. For more on the PAC in exile see Kondlo, *In the Twilight of the Revolution*; Lissoni, "The South African Liberation Movements,"; Lodge, *Black African Politics Since 1945*, 295–320; Lodge, "The Pan-Africanist Congress," 104–124; and Plaatjie, "The PAC in Exile," 703–746.
  36. UKNA, BW/107/9, "British Council Executive Committee: Council Work in South Africa," 7 November 1961.
  37. Stevens, "Boycotts and Sanctions," 91.
  38. *Ibid.*
  39. Nixon, *Harlem, Homelands and Hollywood*, 157.
  40. Actors' Equity Association Archive, London, GSO1, File 1, The Colour Bar, 1965; Thörn, *Anti-Apartheid*, 63; and Stevens, "Boycotts and Sanctions," 89.
  41. Nixon, *Harlem, Homelands and Hollywood*, 158.
  42. "Non-Europeans in Theatres: Proposal to Equity," *The Guardian*, 29 March 1961, 1; and Thörn, *Anti-Apartheid*, 63.
  43. Stuttard, "The Cambridge Shakespeare Group," 81–90.
  44. Stuttard, "The Cambridge Shakespeare Group," 88; Lewis Sowden, "Love's Labour's Lost—As Good As Any," *Rand Daily Mail*, 3 August 1964, 8; and "Shakespeare Enthral Non-White Audience," *Rand Daily Mail*, 8 August 1964, 18.
  45. Stuttard, "The Cambridge Shakespeare Group," 89.
  46. "Miss Springfield Leaves—But Not Departed," *The Guardian*, 17 December 1965, 11.
  47. Stanley Uys, "Adam Faith Takes Off for Home," *The Observer*, 10 January 1965, 3.
  48. "Minister to See Actors' Union Over S. Africa," *The Guardian*, 13 January 1965, 20.
  49. See for example Kenney, *Architect of Apartheid*.
  50. UKNA, PREM/13/1211, Telegram Cape Town to FO, 13 September 1966.
  51. Geldenhuys, *The Diplomacy of Isolation*, 34.
  52. UKNA, FCO/25/709, Nicholls to FCO, 14 April 1967.
  53. This tour did not take place until 1970 but it was arranged in April 1968.
  54. UKNA, FCO/25/709, Nicholls to FCO, 17 March 1967.
  55. Geldenhuys, *The Diplomacy of Isolation*, 38. For a more detailed account of Vorster's attempts to forge relations with other African states see Pfister, *Apartheid South Africa*, 39–104; and Miller, *An African Volk*, 53.
  56. UKNA, FCO/13/30, Nicholls to Brown, 8 January 1968, (Dispatch One).
  57. UKNA, FCO/13/102, Nicholls to Brown, 8 January 1968, (Dispatch Two).
  58. *Ibid.*
  59. *Ibid.*
  60. There is no further mention of this in any of UKNA files relating to this topic.
  61. UKNA, FCO/13/330, Stewart to Peck, 18 July 1969.
  62. *Ibid.*
  63. At this time the MCC was the de-facto national English side. It should also be noted that coloured is not an offensive term in South Africa but refers to a specific ethnic group of mixed racial heritage.
  64. See Osborne, *Basil D'Oliveira*; and Murray, "Politics and Cricket," 667–84.
  65. United Nations General Assembly, 23rd Session, 1731st Plenary Meeting, "Resolution 2396: The policies of apartheid of the Government of South Africa" (A/7348), 2 December 1968. Available at <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/202567?ln=en> [Accessed June 28, 2021].
  66. UKNA, FCO/13/330, Whitaker to Foley, 12 May 1969.



67. Emily Chan, "Dissent: A Brief History of Student Protest and Demonstrations," *Varsity*, 9 November 2012. Available at <https://www.varsity.co.uk/features/5124> [Accessed June 7 2021].
68. *Ibid.*
69. Simon Hoggart, "Row Over Society's Trip to S. Africa," *The Guardian*, 4 February 1969, 5.
70. Michael Morden, "Cambridge Stage Row over Prince Charles," *The Telegraph*, 8 March 1969, 13.
71. Colin Galloway, "Tour of South Africa," *The Times*, 25 March 1969, 11.
72. UKNA, FCO/13/330, Stewart to Peck, 9 July 1969.
73. See note 69 above.
74. Bodleian Library (BL), Records of the Anti-Apartheid Movement, MSS/AAM/1460, AAM to Charles Noel, April 1969.
75. John Kane-Berman, "No Mixed Audiences," *The Times*, 1 April 1969, 9.
76. *Ibid.*
77. See Kane-Berman, "Robert Birley," 3–4.
78. Author Interview with Antonia Caccia, 22 February 2021; "Amnesty Worker Leaves Salisbury," *The Guardian*, 8 March 1966, 13.
79. Lodge, *Black African Politics Since 1945*, 307.
80. *Ibid.*
81. Author Interview with Antonia Caccia, 22 February 2021.
82. See Hyam and Henshaw, *The Lion and the Springbok*, 307–308; and Guelke, *Rethinking the rise and Fall of Apartheid*, 11.
83. These tactics have been discussed extensively by Ron Nixon in *Selling Apartheid*. They included the production of propaganda films, pamphlets and magazines downplaying the poverty and mistreatment of black South Africans, sponsored fact-finding visits for European and North American businesspersons which involved first class flights and stays in lavish hotels, and the promotion of black South African voices that were willing to parrot government lies about the benefits of separate development. See also Thörn, *Anti-Apartheid*, 101–105.
84. Davis, *In Darkest Hollywood*, 59.
85. Gabriel, "Let Their Eyes Testify," 98.
86. Author Interview with Antonia Caccia, 25 June 2021.
87. *Ibid.*
88. Author Interview with Chris Curling, 11 April 2021. One of Curling's tutors at Cambridge was black South African Anthropologist Archibald Mafeje, who was undertaking a PhD at the time. Curling credits Mafeje with awakening his interest in apartheid South Africa.
89. Email to author from Chris Curling, 20 July 2021. *Othello* was controversial in South Africa for this reason, see Singh, "Post-Colonial Criticism," 494–495.
90. Author Interview with Antonia Caccia, 22 February 2021; Author Interview with Chris Curling, 11 April 2021: Opening remarks by Antonia Caccia at the showing of *End of the Dialogue* at the Berlin Film Festival, February 2020.
91. Email to author from Chris Curling, 19 July 2021.
92. Author Interview with Chris Curling, 11 April 2021. For more on the politics of *Marat/Sade* see Beggs, "Revisiting 'Marat/Sade.'" 60–79.
93. See note 81 above.
94. Michael Morden, "Cambridge Stage Row Over Prince Charles," *The Telegraph*, 8 March 1969, 13. The student is referred to as Anfin Nathrani in "Student Drama Ban Over S. Africa Tour," *The Guardian*, 26 May 1968, 4, however based on additional research it is believed the former is correct as a student of that name was studying at Trinity College at the time, see "Success Stories of a Few Indians in America," *India Today*, 31 July 1980, Available at <https://www.indiatoday.in/magazine/cover-story/story/19800731-success-stories-of-a-fewindians-in-america-821293-2014-01-20> [Accessed January 29 2021]; "Arjun K. Mathrani," *Notable Names Database*, Available at <https://www.nndb.com/people/780/000171267> [Accessed January 29 2021]. I have contacted Mathrani but have received no response.
95. M. J. Swallow, "Letters to the Editor: Politics of Drama," *The Guardian*, 27 March 1969, 14.
96. "'Kill S.A. Tour' Cry students." *Rand Daily Mail*, 7 May 1969, 2. I have approached Noel with a request for an interview via another member of the touring party but he has not responded.

97. Stewart to Peck, 18 July 1969, FCO/13/330
98. "Kill S.A. Tour' Cry students," *Rand Daily Mail*, 7 May 1969, 2.
99. "Student Drama Ban over S. Africa Tour," *The Guardian*, 26 May 1969, 4.
100. Author interview with Harriet Walter, 2 February 2021; Author Interview with Antonia Caccia, 22 February 2021. This was partly why it was easy for Caccia, Louvish, and Walter to take part in the tour.
101. UKNA, FCO/13/330, Charles Noel, Dryden Society Memo, undated; Whitaker to Foley, 12 May 1969; BL, MSS/AAM/1460, Minutes of AAM Meeting, 21 April 1969.
102. Percy Baneshik, "British Group Wants to Tour South Africa," *Rand Daily Mail*, 4 January 1968, 6.
103. See note 61 above.
104. House of Commons Debate (HC Deb) 21 April 1969 vol 782 c11w.
105. See note 66 above.
106. UKNA, FCO/13/330, Whitlock to Whitaker, 30 May 1969.
107. UKNA, FCO/13/330, Cartledge, NUS Secretary the East Anglia region, to Whitlock, 24 June 1969.
108. UKNA, FCO/13/330, Stewart to Peck, 9 July 1969.
109. HC Deb 24 July 1969 vol 787 c468W.
110. Ibid.
111. UKNA, FCO/13/330, Duncan, FCO CRD, to Johnston, FCO, 19 August 1969.
112. UKNA, BW/107/14, E.G. Halestrap, Director, British Council Africa South of the Sahara Department, 18 July 1969.
113. UKNA, BW/107/14, Frean to Halestrap, 25 July 1969.
114. UKNA, FCO/13/330, Nicholls to Johnston, 29 July 1969.
115. BL, MSS/AAM/1460, Trevor Fisk, NUS President to Counsellor K. Darashah, Indian High Commission, London, 16 September 1969; de Keyser to Darahah, 6 August 1969.
116. 'SA Tour so India Won't Help', *Rand Daily Mail*, 23 September 1969, p1.
117. BL, MSS/AAM/1460, AAM Executive Secretary Ethel de Keyser to Hugh Anderson, 26 April 1969.
118. BL, MSS/AAM/1460, Jack Straw to Peter Weiss, 31 July 1969; de Keyser to Weiss, 7 August 1969; de Keyser to Jean Anouilh, 14 April 1969.
119. BL, MSS/AAM/1460, Weiss to de Keyser, 16 August 1969.
120. Author Interview with Antonia Caccia, 22 February 2021.
121. See note 81 above .
122. Straw, *Last Man Standing*, 64–65. I have approached Straw for comment regarding the NUS campaign against the Dryden Society tour. However, he has declined to be interviewed as he is too busy and claims to have little to no recollection of these events.
123. See note 81 above.
124. Ibid.
125. Email to Author from Chris Curling, 19 July 2021.
126. See note 81 above.
127. "Opposition but Drama Tour is Still on," *Rand Daily Mail*, 18 June 1969, 6.
128. See Brown, *The Road to Soweto*, 31–6; Plaut, "South African Student Protests," 199–205; and Saunders, "1968 and Apartheid," 136–41.
129. "Drama Tour Faces Boycott," *The Guardian*, 27 July 1969, 2.
130. Opening remarks by Antonia Caccia at the showing of *End of the Dialogue* at the Berlin Film Festival, February 2020. Author Interview with Chris Curling, 11 April 2021.
131. Author Interview with Chris Curling, 11 April 2021.
132. Desai and Vahed, *Colour, Class and Community*, 44.
133. Author Interview with Jill Lewis, 20 June 2021.
134. Ibid.
135. See note 86 above.
136. Author Interview with Jill Lewis, 20 June 2021.
137. UKNA, FCO/13/330, Stewart to Johnston, 5 September 1969.
138. "Students Boycott Play," *Rand Daily Mail*, 14 August 2014, 1969, 3.

139. Author interview with Harriet Walter, 2 February 2021; and Harriet Walter, "When White Met Black at Fort Hare," *The Observer*, 5 October 1969, 7.
140. Author interview with Harriet Walter, 2 February 2021; "Students Boycott Play," *Rand Daily Mail*, 14 August 2014, 1969, 3.
141. Author interview with Harriet Walter, 2 February 2021.
142. Author Interview with Jill Lewis, 20 June 2021.
143. Harriet Walter, "When White Met Black at Fort Hare," *The Observer*, 5 October 1969, 7.
144. Author Interview with Jill Lewis, 20 June 2021.
145. See note 2 above.
146. UKNA, FCO/13/330, Freaun, Report on Visits to South Africa of the Dryden Society, July to September 1969, 26 September 1969.
147. Ibid.
148. UKNA, FCO/13/330, Watt to William Wilson, Central and Southern Africa Department (CSAD), 23 October 1969.
149. See note 143 above.
150. UKNA, FCO/13/330, Macrae to Pugh, 17 October 1969.
151. Author interview with Harriet Walter, 2 February 2021.
152. UKNA, FCO/45/151, Watt to Nicholls, 5 August 1969.
153. Ibid.
154. Author Interview with Chris Curling, 11 April 2021.
155. Author Interview with Chris Curling, 11 April 2021; Author Interview with Antonia Caccia, 25 June 2021.
156. UKNA, FCO/45/151, Watt to Nicholls, 26 September 1969.
157. Author Interview with Antonia Caccia, 22 February 2021; Author Interview with Chris Curling, 11 April 2021; Author Interview with Chris Curling, 11 April 2021.
158. "Wits. Row over UK Drama Group," *Rand Daily Mail*, 9 September 1969, 1.
159. See for example Raeford Daniel, "Shakespeare Made Simple," *Rand Daily Mail*, 11 September 1969, 16.
160. B.M., "Dryden Players Apprehensive," *Rand Daily Mail*, 10 September 1969, 16.
161. Ibid.
162. Ibid.
163. "Why I Banned Play—Author," *Rand Daily Mail*, 13 September 1969, 2. This is slightly perplexing owing to Weiss' prior knowledge of the filmmakers' true motives for travelling to South Africa. This was discussed with Caccia who did not know why Weiss came to this decision, but assumed it must have been due to continued pressure from the AAM. Author Interview with Antonia Caccia, 25 June 2021. It could, however, be that Weiss was genuinely angered that *Marat/Sade* had been performed to white audiences as described by Lewis. Author Interview with Jill Lewis, 20 June 2021.
164. Roland Stanbridge, "An Authors Telegram Stops Play in the City," *Rand Daily Mail*, 12 September 1969, 1.
165. Roland Stanbridge, "An Authors Telegram Stops Play in the City," *Rand Daily Mail*, 12 September 1969, 1. It should be noted that this article lists Kirwan as the Dryden Society's president rather than Noel. However, based on most other reports, and the recollections of those interviewed, Noel was the president.
166. "Why I Banned Play—Author," *Rand Daily Mail*, 13 September 1969, 2.
167. "Society's Troubled Tour," *The Telegraph*, 28 September 1969, 2.
168. Ibid.
169. Author Interview with Jill Lewis, 20 June 2021; Author Interview with Antonia Caccia, 25 June 2021.
170. See note 86 above.
171. See note 143 above.
172. See note 141 above.
173. Author Interview with Antonia Caccia, 22 February 2021. Email to Author from Chris Curling, 19 July 2021.

174. See note 81 above.
175. Author interview with Harriet Walter, 2 February 2021; Author Interview with Antonia Caccia, 22 February 2021; Author Interview with Chris Curling, 11 April 2021.
176. See note 141 above.
177. Ibid.
178. Email to Author from Harriet Walter, 2 February 2021.
179. Author Interview with Jill Lewis, 20 June 2021.
180. See 'Jill Lewis', Salamander Trust, 12 April 2016 available at <https://salamandertrust.net/team-member/jill-lewis> [Accessed June 29, 2021]; 'Meet the Team', Protection: A Film About Men and Condoms in the Time of HIV and AIDS, available at [http://www.protectionthefilm.org/about/the\\_team](http://www.protectionthefilm.org/about/the_team) [Accessed June 29, 2021].
181. Author Interview with Jill Lewis, 20 June 2021.
182. Ibid.
183. See note 81 above.
184. Email to Author from Simon Louvish, 5 February 2021.
185. Author Interview with Chris Curling, 11 April 2021.
186. "Luttigation," *The Guardian*, 26 November 1970, 17.
187. South African Department of Foreign Affairs (SADFAA), BTS/1/20/3, Luttig to Hill, 20 November 1970.
188. SADFAA, BTS/1/20/3, Luttig to Hill, 20 November 1970.
189. Simon Louvish, 22 February 2020, <https://www.facebook.com/simonlouvish2> [Accessed February 5 2021].
190. Robert Chesshyre, "How Africans Filmed Life Under Vorster," *The Guardian*, 8 November 1970, 4.
191. Ibid.
192. Gabriel, "Let Their Eyes Testify," 103.
193. See note 81 above.
194. Ibid.
195. Nixon, "Apartheid on the Run," 68.
196. Murray, "The Sports Boycott and Cricket," 219–49.

## Acknowledgments

I would like to thank my colleagues at Liverpool John Moores University for their helpful comments on previous drafts of this article, in particular Chris Vaughan, Jan Ludvigsen, and Megan Armstrong. I would also like to thank Harriet Walter, Antonia Caccia, Chris Curling, and Jill Lewis for taking the time to talk to me about their recollections of the Dryden Society tour. Finally, I must also thank the anonymous peer reviewers whose comments helped improve this article considerably.

## Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).

## ORCID

Daniel J Feather  <http://orcid.org/0000-0001-5014-3091>

## Bibliography

Arndt, R. T. *The First Resort of Kings: American Cultural Diplomacy in the Twentieth Century*. Dulles, Va: Potomac Books, 2005.

- Barber, J., and J. Barratt. *South Africa's Foreign Policy: The Search for Status and Security, 1945 – 1988*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990.
- Barber, J. "'An Historic and Persistent Interest': Britain and South Africa." *International Affairs* 67, no. 4, October (1991): 723–738. doi:[10.2307/2622442](https://doi.org/10.2307/2622442).
- Beggs, A. "'Revisiting 'Marat/Sade': Philosophy in the Asylum, Asylum in the Theatre." *Modern Drama* 56, no. 1 (2013): 60–79. doi:[10.3138/md.2012-0492](https://doi.org/10.3138/md.2012-0492).
- Berman, J. K. "Robert Birley." *Sash: The Black Sash Magazine* 25, no. 3 (November, 1982): 3–4.
- Berridge, G. *Economic Power in Anglo-South African Diplomacy: Simonstown, Sharpeville and After*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 1981.
- Branch, D. "Political Traffic: Kenyan Students in Eastern and Central Europe, 1958–69." *Journal of Contemporary History* 53, no. 4 (2018): 811–831. doi:[10.1177/0022009418761194](https://doi.org/10.1177/0022009418761194).
- Brown, J. *The Road to Soweto: Resistance and the Uprising of 16 June 1976*. Woodbridge: James Curry, 2016.
- Cull, N. *The Cold War and the United States Information Agency: American Propaganda and Public Diplomacy, 1945–1989*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008.
- Cull, N. *Public Diplomacy: Lessons from the Past*. Los Angeles: Figueroa Press, 2009.
- Cull, N. *Public Diplomacy: Foundation for Global Engagement in the Digital Age*. Cambridge: Polity Press, 2019.
- Cummings, M. C. *Cultural Diplomacy and the United States Government: A Survey*. Washington DC: Center for Arts and Culture, 2003.
- Davis, P. *In Darkest Hollywood: Exploring the Jungles of Cinema's South Africa*. Athens: Ohio University Press, 1996.
- Desai, A., and G. Vahed. *Colour, Class and Community: The Natal Indian Congress, 1971-1994*. Johannesburg: Wits University Press, 2021.
- Fieldhouse, R. *Anti-Apartheid: A History of the Movement in Britain*. London: The Merlin Press, 2005.
- Frankel, P. *An Ordinary Atrocity: Sharpeville and Its Massacre*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001.
- Gabriel, T. H. "'Let Their Eyes Testify': An Interview with Nana Mahomo." *Ufhamu: A Journal of African Studies* 7, no. 1 (1976): 97–115. doi:[10.5070/F771017443](https://doi.org/10.5070/F771017443).
- Geldenhuys, D. *The Diplomacy of Isolation: South African Foreign Policy Making*. Johannesburg: Macmillan South Africa, 1984.
- Goff, P. "Cultural Diplomacy." In *Routledge Handbook of Public Diplomacy*, edited by N. Snow and N. Cull, 30–37. 2nd ed. Abingdon: Routledge, 2020.
- Henshaw, P. "Britain, South Africa and the Sterling Area: Gold Production, Capital Investment and Agricultural Markets, 1931-1961." *The Historical Journal* 39, no. 1 (1996): 197–223. doi:[10.1017/S0018246X00020732](https://doi.org/10.1017/S0018246X00020732).
- Hixson, W. L. *Parting the Curtain: Propaganda, Culture, and the Cold War, 1945-1961*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 1997.
- Katsakioris, C. "Burden or Allies? Third World Students and Internationalist Duty through Soviet Eyes." *Kritika* 18, no. 3 (2017): 539–567. doi:[10.1353/kri.2017.0035](https://doi.org/10.1353/kri.2017.0035).
- Kenney, H. *Architect of Apartheid: HF Verwoerd, an Appraisal*. Johannesburg: Johnathan Ball Publishers, 1980.
- Kondlo, K. *In the Twilight of the Revolution: The Pan Africanist Congress of Azania (South Africa) 1959-1994*. Basel: Basler Afrika Bibliographien, 2009.
- Kret, A. J. "'We Unite with Knowledge': The Peoples' Friendship University and Soviet Education for the Third World." *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East* 33, no. 2 (2013): 239–256. doi:[10.1215/1089201X-2322516](https://doi.org/10.1215/1089201X-2322516).
- Lissoni, A. "The South African Liberation Movement, c1945-1970." PhD diss., School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, 2008.
- Lodge, T. *Black African Politics Since 1945*. London: Longman, 1983.
- Lodge, T. "The Pan Africanist Congress 1959–1990." In *The Long March: The Story of the Struggle for Liberation in South Africa*, edited by I. Liebenberg, F. Lortan, B. Nel, and G. van Westhuizen, 104–124. Pretoria: Haum, 1994.
- Lodge, T. *Sharpeville: An Apartheid Massacre and Its Consequences*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011.

- Mandela, N. *Long Walk to Freedom*. London: Little Brown and Co., 1994.
- Matusevich, M. "An Exotic Subversive: Africa, Africans and the Soviet Everyday." *Race and Class* 49, no. 4 (2008): 57–81. doi:[10.1177/0306396808089288](https://doi.org/10.1177/0306396808089288).
- Matusevich, M. "Probing the Limits of Internationalism: African Students Confront Soviet Ritual." *Anthropology of East Europe Review* 27, no. 2 (2009): 19–39.
- McDaniel, C. P. *American–Soviet Cultural Diplomacy: The Bolshoi Ballet's American Premiere*. Lanham: Lexington Books, 2014.
- Melissen, J. "The New Public Diplomacy Between Theory and Practice." In *The New Public Diplomacy: Soft Power in International Relations*, edited by J. Melissen, 3–27. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005.
- Miller, J. *An African Volk: The Apartheid Regime and Its Search for Survival*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2016.
- Morgan, E. J. "Into the Struggle: Confronting Apartheid in the United States and South Africa." PhD diss., University of Colorado Boulder, 2009.
- Murray, B. "Politics and Cricket: The D'Oliveira Affair of 1968." *Journal of Southern African Studies* 27, no. 4 (2001): 667–684. doi:[10.1080/03057070120090673](https://doi.org/10.1080/03057070120090673).
- Murray, B. "The Sports Boycott and Cricket: The Cancellation of the 1970 South African Tour of England." *South African Historical Journal* 46, no. 1 (2002): 219–249. doi:[10.1080/02582470208671425](https://doi.org/10.1080/02582470208671425).
- Nixon, R. "Apartheid on the Run: The South African Sports Boycott." *Transition* 58, no. 58 (1992): 68–88. doi:[10.2307/2934968](https://doi.org/10.2307/2934968).
- Nixon, R. *Harlem, Homelands and Hollywood; South African Culture and the World Beyond*. Abingdon: Routledge, 1994.
- Nye, J. *Bound to Lead: The Changing Nature of American Power*. New York: Basic Books, 1990.
- Nye, J. *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics*. New York: Public Affairs, 2004.
- Osborne, P. *Basil D'Oliveira, Cricket and Conspiracy: The Untold Story*. London: Time Warner Books, 2005.
- Parks, J. *Hearts, Minds, Voices: US Cold War Public Diplomacy and the Formation of the Third World*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016.
- Peterson, B. "Culture, Resistance and Representation." In *The Road to Democracy in South Africa, [1970-1980]* Vol. 2, edited by The South African Democracy Education Trust, 161–185. Pretoria: University of South Africa Press, 2006.
- Pfister, R. *Apartheid South Africa and African States: From Pariah to Middle Power, 1961-1994*. London: Tauris Academic Studies, 2005.
- Plaatjie, T. K. "The PAC in Exile." In *The Road to Democracy in South Africa [1970-1980]* Vol. 2, edited by The South African Democracy Trust, 703–746. Pretoria: University of South Africa Press, 2006.
- Plaut, M. "South African Student Protests, 1968: Remembering the Mafeje Sit-in." *History Workshop Journal* 69, no. 1 (2010): 199–205. doi:[10.1093/hwj/dbp035](https://doi.org/10.1093/hwj/dbp035).
- Prevots, N. *Dance for Export, Cultural Diplomacy and the Cold War*. Middletown: Wesleyan University Press, 1998.
- Saunders, C. "'1968 and Apartheid: Race and Politics in South Africa.'" In *The Third World in the Global 1960s*, edited by S. Christiansen and Z. Scarlett, 136–141. New York: Berghahn Books, 2013.
- Schaffer, G. "The Limits of 'Liberal Imagination': Britain, Broadcasting and Apartheid South Africa, 1948-1994." *Past & Present* 240, no. 1, August (2018): 235–266. doi:[10.1093/pastj/gty005](https://doi.org/10.1093/pastj/gty005).
- Schneider, C. P. "Cultural Diplomacy: Hard to Define, but You'd Know It if You Saw It." *The Brown Journal of World Affairs* 13, no. 1 (2006): 191–203.
- Singh, J. "'Post-colonial Criticism.'" In *Shakespeare an Oxford Guide*, edited by S. Wells and L. C. Orlin, 492–500. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003.
- Stevens, S. "Boycotts and Sanctions against South Africa: An International History." PhD diss., Columbia University, 2016.
- Straw, J. *Last Man Standing: Memoirs of a Political Survivor*. London: Pan Books, 2012.
- Stuttard, J. "'The Cambridge Shakespeare Group in South Africa, July-August 1964: A Personal Recollection.'" *Shakespeare in Southern Africa* 28, (2016): 81–90. doi:[10.4314/sisa.v28i1.7](https://doi.org/10.4314/sisa.v28i1.7).

- Thörn, H. *Anti-Apartheid and the Engagement of a Global Civil Society*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006.
- Toulson, D. "Culture Is a Weapon: Popular Music, Protest and Opposition to Apartheid in Britain." PhD diss., University of Warwick, 2016.
- Von Eschen, P. *Satchmo Blows up the World*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2004.