

Chapter 1

Introduction

"The Child Is Also Wondering What Happened to the Father"

Methodology and Conceptualization Shift in Perspective

The research and writing of this book were shaped by three things. First, the silences in the literature on Soweto, in official accounts of the uprising and in the way in which the story of the uprising faded in and out of public memory despite its importance to collective individual memory, called for a shift in perspective toward the stories of the participants in the uprising. Second, the historical context and moment of history in which the research was conducted—a time of rapid political and social change—had consequences for historical memory and for individual and official identity and shaped how people told their story and mediated the past. Third, that historical context was shaped by violence—both physical and discursive—that formed memories over time. The voices of ordinary people that were excluded from official accounts and other evidence that made up the stories of the uprising were not always found in the conventional places, and that had consequences for the methodology and for the types of sources and the peculiar challenge of their analysis. The "archive" in which those sources were to be found—both oral and documentary—was itself defined by the rapidly changing context of the 1990s and bore the marks of the history of violence and of the history of contested relations of power.

In order to understand the nature of the multiple stories about a significant historical event such as the Soweto uprising of June 16, 1976, the conditions of their existence and creation, and the conflicts between them, it is necessary to understand how these stories come about, how they are shaped (by what and for what reason, for which goals). To me the most striking phenomenon of these multiple stories (official, theoretical, political, historical) was how they tended to diminish or discount the voices and actions (and memories and thoughts) of those individuals who were Soweto's historical protagonists and witnesses.

"You could see the whole of Soweto in those three children's faces," Sam Nzima (who took the photograph of Hector Pieterse and Mbuyisa Makhubu) remembered 18 years later,⁶⁷ no less than in any of the scholarly analyses or political or theoretical explanations of the experts. And it is therefore to the individual stories of these historical actors that this book shifts attention. The stories of the participants in the uprising are of great significance for the history of South Africa, because it is only through them that the multiple, contradictory, and sometimes uncomfortable truths of historical events such as this uprising come more clearly

into focus.

In the end there is no higher authority for explanations of why students acted as they did than the students themselves. Their explanations may not always be consistent, and they may have changed with time, but they are theirs. In order to write a fuller, deeper history of Soweto, it is necessary to attempt to shift the point of entry, first to include the voices and the stories of the participants in this historical event and then to present them before the background of some of those, particularly the official stories, that have sought to exclude them. The ongoing processes of searching for and attributing meanings, "inventing" traditions and "imagining" identity or community through history, must be grounded in the recent, lived experiences of the individual people who remember and tell them. Where the material gathered here is "new," as it is in those oral narratives that have not been recorded before, it will contribute to the historical record from where it may, in turn, serve as the stuff of the construction of historical memories, although this is not its primary purpose.⁶⁸ **90**

The task is not to simply retrieve untold stories, to add to the historical record, but to alter the point of entry, the ways in which I, as a historian, seek to understand the stories. The stories of individuals did not stand alone, nor did they remain static. They took shape in the passing of time and in the context of historical change. They were informed by political debates, historical analysis, later experiences, and the gradual creation and dissemination of collective memories and meanings of these events. Historians who, wittingly or unwittingly, applied methods of analysis and sources without fully recognizing perspective biases and assumptions have tended to replicate a certain understanding of this moment in history, an understanding that turns aside how it was seen and understood by its historical participants. We cannot see categories such as youth and children, for example, with children's eyes or understand them from a youthful worldview, having ourselves moved beyond that age. Maturity and adulthood are weighted concepts used by those who by virtue of their age claim it for themselves as somehow better than the imaginativeness and spiritedness of youth, better than its energy and lack of fear. In the South African context such hierarchies are further complicated by political sympathies and affiliations, status, generation, gender, and, above all, race. Any assessment of the political, cultural, and social actions of youth needs therefore to be made with caution and constant mindfulness of the age-related, racial, or political perspective biases that inform it. To dismiss the student organizations as inexperienced (and therefore ultimately ineffective) would be to oversimplify, when their adaptability to repeated brutal retribution and punishment spoke of a certainty of vision, a clarity of wrong and right, perseverance, and a will to fight.

Shifting the perspective also means not to oversimplify. There is no single, "better," or more truthful version of Soweto, but many versions. None of these

histories—individual, collective, official apartheid, or radical—were completely separate, and it is to the many ways in which the multiple stories have informed and confronted each other that this book speaks. Stereotypes can be the product of meanings assigned from either side of the political spectrum. They should not divert attention from uncomfortable differences and from the contradictory meanings of actions by the historical actors. For to show clearly how violence changed, even corrupted children, drawing them into its maelstrom inexorably, is not to condemn their cause or to diminish their accomplishments but to get a little closer to the painful truths that shaped those who lived then and remember now.

The shift in perspective I propose in this book therefore has important methodological consequences in terms of how it is accomplished. How exactly does one "get inside" the crowd, and what to do with the sometimes jarring and dissenting voices that one hears there? Shifting the point of view, the focus of the inquiry, away from the structures, processes, and policies of the state to the historical actors in the uprising, not simply to add their voices and their story to fill the gap that other versions of this story have left, required a more fundamental shift, a reconsideration of all sources for such voices, oral and documented. This shift also changed the analysis. It necessitated looking at sources differently to discover with what voices, exactly, student-participants spoke when they appeared before the court or a commission. How were those voices different from those in an interview? How have they changed over time, as the speaker, or writer, has grown older and has added layers of new experiences to the earlier ones? By what were the voices shaped (fear, difference in life stages, age, gender, status, race) and how much of them can be heard even in what at first seem to be co-opted statements by the "tainted" sources of the government. In terms of sources, this also meant taking into account the writers who did have a position on the inside (Mzamane 1982 and 1986, Hermer/Tholo 1980) and wrestling everywhere with the outside perspective bias in the writing, insights, and analysis of those scholars, like myself, who were white or otherwise detached from the historical experience of Soweto.

The *children* who were part of the uprising in 1976 were adults by the time this research was done. It was therefore not just the passage of time that changed or dimmed memories but the passage through different life stages, through changing personal developments and ages. However murky the boundaries between children, youth, adolescents, young adults, and adults are, the "children" of Soweto were "adults" when they spoke to me. Their stories, in sometimes different proportions, reflected their past and present identities: They were still part of that generation of the 1970s that shook the edifices of apartheid, and at the same time they were part of a different (age) generation, more mature and, in many cases, parents themselves.

Where this book considers government sources, as well as the central official **95**

narrative that the government created (in the form of the Cillie Report), the shift in conceptual perspective I propose in this book allowed me to read such documents against the grain to search for evidence, facts, and stories that the government was not able to co-opt or silence, or disappear—used in the transitive form as in the Argentinean sense.⁶⁹ The story of Reginald Mshudulu, who disappeared during the demonstrations in Cape Town (See Chapter 6, "The Disappeared"), for example, can thus be made to reappear. Like the image on photographic paper, it reemerged from its dismissal and silencing by the government as the chemicals of scrupulous gathering of evidence and the weaving of the story washed over it, fixing it by its inclusion in this narrative and analysis. All of this required not only the discovery of new sources, both oral and written, that had earlier been rendered silent or invisible but also their reading in new and different ways.

It is, however, not enough to say that government sources are filled with caricatures and oversimplifications—Premesh Lalu's "charge of bias."⁷⁰ Rather, the reasons why this is so needed to be analyzed. Beyond reading against the grain, this book therefore also considers how and with what purpose the government's institutions and assumptions functioned and within which relations of power the stories were constructed. With reference to Pam Scully's work, Lalu has cautioned that "reading against the grain, ...a tactic whereby the colonial archive is mined for subaltern agency,"⁷¹ is a method that cannot hope to retrieve the "subaltern consciousness, voice or agency," because the subaltern it captures or represents is not independent of the colonial will or of colonial relationships and conditions of domination and control. But a careful distinction must be made between the "colonial archive" and the "colonial text" (understood here as the texts and archives of apartheid). While the colonial "archive"—understood even in the broadest sense, as all places of construction and preservation of knowledge, not merely as the physical, material archive—may indeed exert control over inclusion and exclusion, destruction and elimination, it may also create spaces in which some documents of the subaltern may be preserved, especially those produced in the expectation of their continued freedom from colonial capture. The colonial "text," by virtue of its more deliberate shaping of evidence into a discourse serving its will, is more likely to completely appropriate such materials and voices. Voices, subaltern or other, captured by way of testimony in official investigations and commissions are more clearly shaped by the conditions of their production, although even there inconsistencies, disruptions, and small rebellions might provide evidence both of the bias of the colonial text and of the will of the subaltern to assert a voice, as the stories of the participants will show.

Shifting the angle, the focus, the strategic point of entry in terms of the methodology and the "units" of analysis away from the state and its structures, its politics and policies, to the historical actors, primarily schoolchildren and students,

produces a richer, more nuanced, and different history. But it is one that is also more messy and ambiguous, revealing of the deeper and contradictory damage done by excessive and violent authoritarian power and the sometimes paradoxical responses to it. For example, many children were caught up in the eruption of political activism. Many children were involved in violence as political activists, innocent bystanders, or passersby, detainees or victims of indescribable police brutality. But suggestions such as the one by Mamphela Ramphele (prominent *Black Consciousness* activist and partner of Steve Biko) that children, "particularly black children, were also victims of political movements which took advantage of their enthusiasm and dare-devil mentality to fight battles that adults were too scared to pursue"⁷² introduces a more complicated—and more disturbing—idea. The way this kind of argument, on its face, seems to echo the state's assertion that the schoolchildren were not historical actors in their own right, but driven by agitators and inciters, makes it particularly difficult to countenance. Taking this idea further and thereby challenging the very concept of the term *child*, Ramphele suggested also that "white children too were fighting in the apartheid war as conscripts, pitted against black children in the townships."⁷³ Such arguments point to important ways in which they are embedded in and determined by chronologically later discourses, such as that of the anticonscription campaign of the 1980s, in which they make more sense and are more palatable.

In a recent academic forum, I was rather vehemently cautioned that the violent encounter in which Soweto schoolchildren stoned a white administrator to death (See Chapter 6, "The Wounded") would not in fact have produced guilt or any need for personal explanation, embedded as it would have been in the discourse of a heroic liberation struggle in which such violent episodes were defined as legitimate. The necklacings of the 1980s were similarly "excused" or explained as grievous expressions of political violence, to be "deplored" but not necessarily to be used either to "pathologise individual members" of a crowd or political mass action.⁷⁴ But such a discourse of heroism emerged only after the events of the uprising, perhaps even *because* of it. Chronologically, it must be placed later in time and *separate from* the actual historical event/experience, even though the remembering and telling of the event came after the creation of the discourse. Whatever the implications of the influence of such a discourse, which need to be taken into consideration in the analysis of the story, this argument served as a striking reminder that all narratives need to be historicized themselves, placed in a temporal, spatial, and emotional context that distinguishes with care the time of the telling, the time of the event, and the time of the analysis as well as the passage of time filled with changing meanings and experiences that link them all.

One of the consequences of the shift in perspective is that it makes it more difficult to objectify, romanticize, or marginalize people's experiences. It also means that it is not enough to include African or youth voices otherwise unheard

or silenced, but that the possibility must be considered that the ways in which African youth understood what they were experiencing and witnessing do not readily fit adult, white, social-scientific, or even black categories. The shift acts not only on the methodology but also on the conceptualization, the theoretical approaches, and the categories of analysis. It entails pushing beyond inherited categories such as victim, perpetrator, and agitator and looking at how and why those are created, what purposes they serve, and how their use alters meanings. Individual voices of individuals allow one to get inside the crowd to discern the faces in the crowd. From this inside point of view one can try to acknowledge difference, individuality, initiative, thought, and emotions and to put into perspective those aspects of the groups' actions that were—always from an outsider point of view—portrayed as collective and therefore homogenized into one will.

Context of Change and Violence

The shift in perspective undertaken to find the stories of those who participated **100** in these events, of the historical actors themselves, was inspired also by South Africa's radical historiography and its methodology (van Onselen 1996, Bozzoli 1991, La Hausse 1990). History from below, oral interviews, life histories held all the promise of "capturing" the African voices, the stories that the official narratives sought to suppress and silence. From the beginning, it was clear to me that oral interviews—the stories of those who had not been heard before—would be an essential part of the history of Soweto if I wanted to create a space for those narratives that had been excluded both in the official versions of what had happened and in the few, but important, historical studies of the event. But the gathering of oral histories, interviews and life histories proved to be problematic, for reasons that I believe had to do with the historical context—the particular moment in time—in which I conducted research and with the peculiarities of my own autobiography. Seventeen years after the Soweto uprising (I began the research for this book in the early 1990s), oral-history research in South Africa was a project troubled with problems that can be attributed to the politics of the day (described above).

The rapid historical changes of the 1990s had immediate consequences for accomplishing oral interviews. (The demands of a lengthy life history interview were too much for many.) It had complex consequences also for content and meaning in the stories. Some historians have argued that South Africans have a "national obsession with settling the various accounts of different pasts."⁷⁵ But the work of the *Truth and Reconciliation Commission* and efforts to rewrite the history curriculum, as well as cultural projects such as recent theater productions at the Grahamstown arts festival, build on a strong tradition of collective and individual remembering. They also reveal an essential and vigorous sense of responsibility toward the past(s) and "the existence of an ethical relationship with memory, and of a will and a need to elaborate the process of mourning."⁷⁶ Finally,

they reveal an undeniable sense of fear. It is too soon to understand exactly how the passing of time, change in historiographies, and individual life histories will revise and reformulate historical memories.

Habits of distrust and caution that were the consequence of divisions in society, as well as habits of guardedness in an oppressive system, may inhibit the free flow especially of private memory. To what degree people are conscious of such inhibitions is unclear. But how much this was true was very apparent to me in the difficulties I encountered when first trying to find people who would tell me their story in the years prior to 1994, the first inclusive elections in postapartheid South Africa. Reminders of physical violence were everywhere, in a scar left by a bullet wound, in the evidence of bomb attacks, but the memory of traumatic events was most evident in people's caution in talking to me. (See Chapter 6, "Memory and Violence.")

It was particularly striking to see what happened when those inhibitions fell away, when they were replaced by openness and a sense of perspective and self-awareness, bordering on self-deprecation in the following case. Zakes Molotsi started to "operate here inside the country from '81, '82, '83," after training and a stint as chief of logistics in Tanzania and Angola. In 1980 he left for training in the Soviet Union and returned to "the Mozambican front in 1981."⁷⁷ Between 1981 and the time of his arrest and imprisonment on Robben Island in 1984, he moved in and out of the country frequently as his assignments demanded.

It is only the relative distance of time and the vindication that political changes have brought to his story that now tinges it with humor. He was captured at Piet Retief, a town in the eastern Transvaal, close to the Mozambican border. It was not the first time that he and several others had fallen into a police trap. At that time they had only barely talked their way out of the police station they had been taken to and quickly crossed the border back into Botswana. It was not long before his unit returned, via Botswana, Zambia, and Mozambique, to South Africa. On this particular mission they were quickly confronted by heavily armed police. After a shootout with them, he found himself separated from his companions and unable to see anything because of darkness and heavy mist. He decided to wait for the mist to clear before trying to make his move. Clearly, the police had had the same idea, and, laughing broadly, Zakes Molotsi recounted how dawn restored both his ability to see and be seen. The soldiers arrested him and tricked him into disclosing his identity, making it clear that they had been looking for him for a long time.⁷⁸

Narrators, at the time of the interview, are not the same people who took part in **105** the distant events of which they speak. Later experiences, additional knowledge (from other sources than personal lived experience of them), and changing meanings (reflecting later changes and interpretations) create processes of

personal and social interpretation and reinterpretation and lead to the unfolding of new meanings of lived experiences. Life histories with participants in the uprising therefore also permit insight into the way memory functions.

Narrators are not unaware of the passing of time or of the way chronologically newer experiences have shaped the way they tell the story now. Clearly distinguishing between their present and past self, narrators often amended their own memories as they caught themselves conflating certain events or meanings. For example, remembering her experience of the morning of June 16, Lilli Mokganyetsi said that "we, of course, *toyi-toyied*." The *toyi-toyi*, however, an energetic forward-motion African dance step done by large demonstrating groups, became part of the symbolic vocabulary of resistance only when the protest movement against apartheid was consolidated under the banner of the United Democratic Front (UDF) in the mid-1980s. In the interview, Lilli immediately conceded, "but we never knew of *toyi-toyi* then," and laughed at herself—clear and self-conscious evidence that the later experience and knowledge of the dance movement had found its way into the telling and remembering of her participation in the uprising. It seems here to be asserting the sense of solidarity that was beginning to emerge among the students.

Narrators may be less aware of how meaning was not always consciously articulated. It was often embedded in the way a narrative was shaped, in the way events were consciously or unconsciously juxtaposed so that they spoke directly to each other, enhancing what would have remained a lesser impact had each of them stood on their own, without any relationship to each other. Describing a student gathering that ended in confrontation with the police, Sam Mashaba spoke of how some of the students broke rank, thus heightening the danger to each one individually. It seemed no coincidence, then, that the "black sergeant" who promised him at first not to include the information about the weapon similarly broke ranks later, to betray one of his own. The meaning of this episode was underscored by the contrasting of the two languages and the implications of assumptions we make about the association of one with evil and the other with solidarity. Sam Mashaba had found himself cruelly misled by the way the black police sergeant had relied on the intimacy and solidarity implicit in his use of Venda. It was a juxtapositioning that Sam Mashaba deliberately placed in his narrative, by quoting the policeman-enemy in Afrikaans immediately before this.

Sources

This book has set itself the task of shifting the way we look at the stories of Soweto in order to go beyond the ideological interpretations or "official" (or meta-) narratives—be they those of the apartheid government or those of the resistance movements—to present the lived experiences of those who participated in the uprising. This shift is both methodological, in terms of the sources used (e.g., oral histories and documents produced by the participants), and

analytical/conceptual in the way it considers the individual participant—in addition to the known leading figures and the groups or institutions that represented some of the youth of Soweto—as a shaping, thinking, active force and agent in the uprising. In order to accomplish this shift, and to present the many inside, participant stories of the uprising, this book has interwoven five sets of sources: oral interviews, documentary sources (those created by students as well as those produced by government and other official institutions), and transcribed testimony (from the Cillie Commission and from the *Truth and Reconciliation Commission*). They are each marked by the way they were differently placed in time and in the context of their creation.

Oral

When I began my research in 1991, I started talking to South Africans who lived in Soweto and in other black communities in South Africa. I will never forget the long meandering afternoons in Steve Lebelo's office. Over countless cups of tea, and as other friends and colleagues wandered in and out—Santu Mofokeng, Steve Mokwena, Thomas Nkadimeng—slowly there emerged a picture of life in Soweto, then and now, that I would never otherwise have been privileged to see. Maanda Mulaudzi planted the thought in me that the uprising did not belong to Soweto alone, that its power and endurance were testimony to the little-understood connection between the cities and the countryside. Though I kept building on this and indeed did find documents and stories to bear him out, I fear I have done an inadequate job of following this valuable direction of thought, and I hope others will take this rewarding line of questions up in their own research.

In all, I conducted 25 interviews, most of them formal and recorded on tape over **110** several meetings, and a few of them informal. The continuous and critical conversation with my African colleagues at the African Studies Institute (later the Institute of Advanced Social Research) at the University of the Witwatersrand,⁷⁹ who had themselves experienced the historical events of the Soweto uprising, accompanied all of my explorations. At the time of the interviews, none of the people who worked with me wanted their anonymity preserved, being animated with a new sense of their place in history, by a sense of their own power. I choose to guard their identities because their stories are of a powerful intimacy and forthrightness. They have no need for real names to lend them authenticity or standing, and they will be done no harm by my preserving their privacy and identity in times that are still violent and still fraught with questions. Not enough time has passed.

Though the oral narratives of participants come from within the uprising, their voices were recorded many years later, during 1993, 1994, and 1995, removed in time. Narrators were in fact remembering, and their telling of the personal and individual experience of those days and events were *from memory*. They were, in other words, close in terms of the experience, more distant in terms of time and

all the other intervening factors that came with time: aging, experience (maturing), knowledge, and learning. These are the factors, among others, that have shaped the memories and thus their telling of the stories of the uprising as described in Chapter 4, "The Participants." By shifting the focus of historical analysis to the protagonists of the uprising, it becomes possible to understand how those other factors, such as age and generational ties, life stages, education, and social status, connected with each other through time and historical change to shape the way people experienced the uprising and the way they conferred meaning, historical and personal, on those experiences and events over time.

Documents

The stories of Soweto were difficult to find. Some of this no doubt had to do with the destruction of archives and the biases that affected the gathering and retaining of materials and that were inherent in the state archival system until 1994. Essentially a government structure, the state archives in Pretoria held predominantly materials generated by its own institutions, making no attempt at all to acquire any documents of African people, groups or institutions.⁸⁰ Because they were vulnerable to official sanction and to suppression of information about them, antiapartheid organizations tended to hide the documents they produced. Many were taken abroad and repatriated only after 1990.

My search for the proxy—documentary—voices of the young participants and witnesses of the uprising in pamphlets, posters, signs, letters, testimony, speeches, newsletters, and flyers took me to the archives. It was there, in the stacks of the Central (State) Archives Depot in Pretoria,⁸¹ that I had found the materials gathered by the Cillié Commission, the government-appointed commission of inquiry into the events of the Soweto uprising.

As a government commission, the officers of the Cillié Commission who were charged with the investigation of the events of Soweto had the power to command information from any and all government institutions as well as from most nongovernmental organizations, many of which no doubt pursued their own political and social agendas when they submitted their reports and memoranda to the Commission. Where simple requests or subpoenas failed, material was simply seized by South African Police officers who raided the offices of such organizations as the *South African Students' Organization (SASO)* and others. As a result, the evidence and the testimony of the Commission represents, from an official or government point of view, as complete a set of documents as were generated by the multiplicity of organizations and institutions that had anything to say or contribute to a report and opinion of the uprising.

It is important to distinguish between the Report, finally published by the Cillié **115** Commission in 1980, and the raw data on which the Report was based. This collection of evidence was one of the important sources for this book. While the

Report established the government's official rendition of the events of Soweto, discussed in Chapter 3, "Official Stories" and above, the evidence and testimony must and can be seen as separate. Without a doubt the hearings, which are a form of oral history despite the institutional setting of their production, excluded certain voices to privilege those of "experts" before those of participants and eyewitnesses. But even when Advocate *Percy Yutar*, leading most of the questions before the Commission, tried to discredit witnesses, especially and most blatantly those with obvious sympathies for the students' struggle, witnesses did push back and stood their ground. This raised important questions about the coercive nature of the Commission's setting and its effect on the testimony, with concrete implications for the verity of statements made under duress (such as those of *Murphy Morobe* and other student activists, whose original statements were obtained while they were already in detention), and for the frankness of others. However, completely dismissing these testimonies for the way the context of their production had contaminated them brings us again dangerously close to treating all of these speakers as victims, incapable and unwilling to speak their own truths.

The evidence gathered by the Commission to support its findings was extensive (10,000 pages of oral testimony alone) and included memoranda and other statements and reports from the government and its various institutions (such as the South African Police and the Bureau of State Security but also Child Welfare services); from nongovernmental organizations, including those that clearly opposed the government; and from individuals from all walks of life. Not all of these documents are tainted: Because the government amassed anything and everything it could in its search for evidence, confiscating entire household inventories and everything they found during the raid of SASO headquarters at the Lekton House, there is a lot of raw data that is not necessarily tarnished by the mere fact of its inclusion in government or police evidence rooms. A final body of "evidence" considered by the Commission were court cases that involved participants in the uprising.



**Inventory of items confiscated
by the police.**



**Police document:
inventory of
property seized
from Gwazela.**



**Police document:
inventory of
property seized
from Gwazela.**

By October of 1976 alone, following the conflicts in different parts of the country, 355 "adults (18 and over)" and 926 "adolescents (under 18 years)" —almost all of them black—had been convicted for offenses ranging from public violence to

"riotous assembly," from incitement to arson.⁸² A total of 2,915 cases had not yet been concluded, cases on charges of public violence, arson (and attempted arson), sabotage, perjury, theft (and malicious damage to property), and intimidation to strike, as well as charges made under the Riotous Assemblies Act. Again, a careful distinction must be made between actual (oral) testimony before the dock and evidence that prosecutors especially brought to the case to support their indictment. Ironically, it was these court cases that often proved to be true treasure troves of original documents by student activists and other people involved in the uprising, as the police obtained much of them in their brutal raids and submitted them to the courts.

Knowledge of the police methods and fear of reprisals from within the community—in which to be a "sellout" was the ultimate indictment—kept students from writing down or speaking of their own stories *at the time*. But the South African apartheid state also kept in its archives those materials that it had confiscated, during its numerous and devastating raids, from individuals and from organizations that opposed it. These collections—often preserved as "evidence" in cases against individual participants in the uprising—hid some of the texts that students themselves produced. Some of these were essentially private, never intended for the eyes of the police or other officials or even of the researcher.⁸³ Many are not explicitly political, although part of politically engaged lives. The government archives thus housed a richness of documents, often forgotten among case materials and evidence. Some of them were found not where one would think to look for them—in police files or among the evidence of the Cillie Commission or of trials directly associated with the uprising—but among the evidence supporting the *West Rand Bantu Administration Board* (WRAB) in its civil-court case (beginning in 1977) against the Santam insurance agency, through which the WRAB had insured itself against damages to its own properties.⁸⁴ Together with a body of other oral material from films, radio interviews, and newspaper stories, these documents and the oral histories do provide not only an inside view of the uprising but a sense of the textured and diverse experiences of its participants. They also, in their interaction and dialogue with the other documents I am about to present, give a sense of how the several versions of the events in Soweto were produced out of the stories, words, and documents of the participants.

Student Documents

When the pace of events threatened to overwhelm the students, many of whom were killed, arrested, or detained, and with police everywhere, the students wanted to explain themselves, and they did so. The students were well aware of the need to communicate their stories and their political agendas and to show a strong leadership if they wanted the community to continue to support them. They produced many documents that attested to this, among them notes for

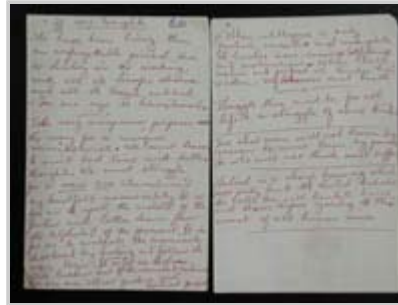
speeches, pamphlets, press releases, flyers, and newsletters. As the schools were closed, robbing student organizers not only of their vital constituency but also of the infrastructure of the classrooms, libraries, assembly halls, and playgrounds that had been so vital to their gatherings and meetings, it became imperative to find new gathering-places and new ways of communicating. Many were killed in those first six months of the uprising, many were detained, and many more fled into exile across the borders into Botswana and Lesotho. They were quickly replaced by others. Each new student leader imposed his mark on the organization while trying to continue the work that had been started by his predecessors.



**Trofomo Sono's
exercise book,
cover.**



**Trofomo Sono's
exercise book.**



"My Thoughts."

The documents produced by students in the year after June 16 reveal how **120** people, especially young people caught up in events that must at times have seemed overwhelming, thought of themselves. There was evidence that individuals and groups were in an ongoing process of defining themselves, especially in response to what they conceived of as attacks on their integrity. Young people identified themselves by their actions and by their differences from others and possibly from generations that came before them. They rejected the definitions imposed on them from the outside and by adults. They were different because of the particular historical context within which they emerged as a group.

Police Statements

The Cillié Commission files also housed many police statements. Like the testimony of police officers before the Commission, they indicated an agenda, and despite their apparent formality and what perhaps may even have been their original intent (under "normal" conditions) to set out the facts of an incident, they were not simply evidence, and quite certainly they were not uncompounded proof. In the South African case, because of the complicity of the police in the implementation of the racist order, such files were inherently tainted. They were, in this particular case of the uprising, further contaminated by their underlying purpose: to provide a record that would allow proof of the appropriateness, legitimacy, and justifiability of police action in the case of an official investigation of police conduct.

While the extent of the taint may have been novel, its existence certainly was

not. Documents are never innocent. Such documents reveal something of the efficiency with which their fierce biases combined with their claim to authoritativeness to produce powerful official statements. To ignore such sources would be, among other things, to ignore the main axiom of historical research: Use all sources possible but treat none uncritically. It would also mean that we would fail to see historical actors and witnesses standing their ground and contradicting, countering, and contesting the institutions that sought, not always successfully, to disempower them. Finally, it is these statements, from inside the belly of the beast, that allow some insight into how coercive thought structures and practices functioned. These too are voices of participants in the uprising—those on the other side of the political divide. Police statements, much like other sources produced by government officials, were constrained by their own experiential context, shaped by their own world view, and carried their own assumptions within them.

The language of the police statements everywhere reflected this and attested to prejudice, defensiveness, and racism. What happens, for example, when the *hond* (Afrikaans for dog) of the first official statement/report that Lieutenant Colonel Kleingeld wrote down on June 29, 1976, the dog that was set upon the demonstrators in front of Orlando High School, becomes a *hondjie* (Afrikaans diminutive: small dog, doggie) in his testimony two years later, under cross-examination by Advocate E. W. Wentzel in the state's case against Wilson Twala and ten other students of the SSRC? What prejudices and assumptions were embedded in Kleingeld's rendering of the shooting of Hector Pieterse at this time?

Wentzel: What was the most famous killing throughout the world on the 16th of June. What was the one who hit the headlines and the public all over the world?

Kleingeld: Ek weet watter een die meeste opgeblaas is. Dit was hierdie *Johnny Peters* [sic] omdat hy 13 jaar oud was [emphasis added]. [I know which one was most inflated. It was that Johnny Peters because he was 13 years old].

Wentzel: That is the picture that went all over the world, do you remember it. Can I show it to you Colonel. It was in all our papers I believe. It was in papers all over the world.

Kleingeld: Ja hulle het hom gebruik vir die meeste propaganda dit is korrek. [Yes, they used him for the most propaganda, that is right.]

Wentzel: Well Colonel by any standards, let's forget propaganda. To any civilized person this is an awful picture, whether it was justified or not, it is a dead boy of 13, isn't that right?

Kleingeld: U Edele ek het nie vir daardie 13 jarige seun gesê om op die toneel te wees nie. Ek het hom nie aangesê om my onder klippe te steek nie en op daardie terrein te beweeg nie. [Your Honor, I did not tell that 13-year-old boy to be on that scene. I did not tell him to throw stones at me and to move on that ground.]⁸⁵

Advocate Wentzel could barely conceal his outrage.

Although these police statements follow a certain pattern, they are not **125** simply form statements with numbers of dead or places of encounters but are instead prose reports on what happened. They were filled with many repetitions, sometimes within a single report, of certain stock phrases—for example, "*Dit was nou vir my duidelik dat die lede en veral die blankes se lewens in gevaar was*" (It was now clear to me that the officers', especially the whites', lives were in danger);⁸⁶ "*Oproermakers en klipgooiers was histeries en die polisie se lewens was in gevaar*" (Rioters and stone throwers were hysterical and the lives of the police were in danger).⁸⁷ Such phrases appeared again and again almost unchanged and were necessary to explain the use of firearms when no explicit order to fire was given by a commanding officer. But there was also much variety in these statements, in length, detail, account, description, and amount of opinion versus fact. This was also true for statements by civilians (i.e., nonpolice) that were taken by the police—often, I suspect, to build a case or provide evidence, supporting accounts, of events that might otherwise be seen as evidence of excessive police hostility or culpability in violent encounters. As prose narrative statements of witnesses to the uprising, they are also interesting in what they reveal about the official (state, police) discourse and in how they expose idiosyncrasies, nuance, inconsistencies with other accounts, descriptive detail, and, occasionally, glimpses of evidence. I am particularly interested in the relationship between language/form and content—for example, how the peculiarities of Afrikaans (e.g. diminutives) have a way of diminishing, demeaning, belittling things. Thus a *kannetjie traanrook* (a little can of tear gas) sounds much less threatening than a *traanrook granaat* (a tear-gas grenade). It is exactly the "epistemological horizons" of this particular set of eyewitness accounts that I am interested in problematizing.⁸⁸

Although police statements are marked by their pains to explain the necessity for their actions and to emphasize the urgency of the moment, collectively they are a source not only of detailed factual accounts of events but of impressions of the township convulsed with fear and violence.

The language was dispassionate. An example: On patrol two days after the uprising began, Major J. J. de Swardt had outfitted his two vehicles with

searchlights to dispel the menacing darkness. At around midnight his patrol was ordered to accompany a Chinese shop owner to the "Kliptown Meat Supply" in order to help the man clear the premises. They arrived only to find the store already broken into and being looted. The building had been entered through the roof and two police officers quickly determined that, though many had dispersed with the arrival of the police, several looters remained inside. Assistant Officer Smuts discovered several people hiding in the ceiling:

Hierdie mense is toe herhaaldelik gewaarsku om uit die plafon te klim, maar sonder enige reaksie. Ek het toe aan A/O Smuts gesê om aan die persone in die dak te sê dat hy sou skiet indien hulle nie uitklim nie. Hy het hulle toe gewaarsku, maar niemand het toe uitgeklim nie. Ek het toe twee skote gehoor, en drie Bantoes het uit die plafon geklim en is gearrester. Na 'n rukkie het ek nog vyf skote gehoor en agt Bantoes het uit die plafon geklim. Een van hulle het 'n ligte vleiswond aan die been gehad. Die plafon is deursoek en *die lyke van 2 Bantoemans is in die plafon gevind*. Dit was pikdonker in die plafon en geen lig was beskikbaar nie... Ek is van mening dat dit lewensgevaarlik sou wees vir enige persoon om dit in die donker plafon te waag, wetende dat hy aangeval sou kon word. Die waarskuwende skote was die enigste manier waarop die Bantoes vanuit die dak gekry kon word. [emphasis added]

These people were warned several times to climb out of the ceiling, but without any reaction. I then told A/O Smuts to tell the people in the roof that he would shoot if they did not climb out. He thus warned them, but no one then climbed out. I then heard two shots, and three Bantus climbed out of the ceiling and were arrested. After a while I heard another five shots and eight Bantus climbed out of the ceiling. One of them had a slight flesh wound on his leg. The ceiling was searched and *the bodies of two Bantu men were found in the ceiling*. It was pitch dark in the ceiling and there was no light available... I am of the opinion that it would have been life threatening for any person to dare to climb into the dark ceiling, knowing that he could be attacked. The warning shots were the only way the Bantus could be gotten out of the ceiling. [emphasis added]⁸⁹

The orders that police heard before they went into Soweto presaged what they were expected to confront. And the frequency with which individual policemen, black and white, described fearing for their lives⁹⁰ in the first confrontation with schoolchildren at Orlando West High School reflected, at the least, the uncertainty of the moments of confrontation and the difficulty of assessing their danger.

Police reports serve a purpose beyond simply documenting for the record what **130** police witnesses saw. They anticipate the questions that would clearly be asked of the police if those questions had not already been posed in the media, in the community, and in Parliament: Who were the leaders? Were they adults or

children? Did the police think their lives were in danger? Did the police provoke this attack by children? The statements answer to questions about police provocation and the appropriateness of police actions:

<p>Volgens my mening was ons lewe toe in uiterste gevaar... Ons het hierdie kinders geen rede gegee om ons aan te rand of om ons voertuie te beskadig nie.</p>	<p>In my opinion our lives were in extreme danger... We did not give these children any reason to attack us or to damage our vehicles.⁹¹</p>
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Despite the detached, clinical language that characterizes police statements, at least those made by African civilians to the police, a close reading of the statements reveals detail:

Swanepoel's references to the "old well-known communist pattern" were thrown into the descriptions almost as an unremarkable commonplace. Statements by white police personnel were as defensive as those of black police:

<p>Ek het besef dat ons in groot lewensgevaar verkeer het. Van die voorwerpe wat na ons geslinger was het ons voertuie en van die lede getref. Ons het teruggeval en skuiling gesoek agter die voertuie en in die bottelstoor. My vermoede was dat die skare ons wou vaskeer en doodmaak.</p>	<p>I realized our lives were in danger. The objects thrown at us were hitting our vehicles. We fell back and sought shelter behind the vehicles and the bottle store [liquor store]. My assumption was that the crowds wanted to corner us and kill us.⁹²</p>
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Transcribed Oral Testimonies—Cillié Commission

It is rare to find voices of participants recorded *at the time* of the historical **135** events. The documents historians most often find in the archives were usually compiled by those in authority, "consecrated to the official transcript," and are therefore rarely reflective of the subordinate group or of insurgent voices.⁹³ Where historians and other writers have included the voices of the historical actors, they have relied—as have I—more and more on oral histories and life stories, recorded much later. In the case of the Soweto uprising, however, a curious set of documents, fraught with the consequences of the circumstances of their creation, recorded some of the voices of those who participated in or witnessed the uprising at the time. These are the testimonies of student participants, already in detention, before the Cillié Commission and in court cases. They are undoubtedly extremely problematic sources for such voices, but they cannot be discounted, because to discount them would be to discount the struggle of the participants to assert, in the face of severe and threatening repercussions, and even in the smallest of ways, their own voices. How students and other participants in these historic events made themselves heard from behind the lies and from behind the text of their coerced statements forms the substance of the essay, "Winnie Mandela—Youth Leader?"

These kinds of sources remained behind in the archives, where they not only dominated the state's collections but also shaped the way the official story of Soweto was obtained. They are, upon careful reading and comparison to other sources, evidence of the mechanisms by which the state, through the Cillie Commission, sought to produce what it considered the true and factual story of what happened. These are testimonies that also make it possible to understand the mechanisms of coercion (through detention and torture), destruction (of records and people), and exclusion at work in the construction of the state's lies.

Testimony and statements, such as those of Sizane, Matlhare, Mokoena, and Matimba, heard by the Cillie Commission or extracted by the police, were deeply revealing of the government's efforts to shape their stories in a manner that would fit its agendas and of the mechanisms involved in those efforts. These testimonies therefore must be considered primarily as evidence of the methods that the state used to shape the discourse about Soweto to suit its own meanings, rather than as evidence of how these events were experienced by those who participated. However, despite the coercive context in which these testimonies were obtained and the malicious use they were to be put to, they too were the voices of the participants, fettered by violence and abuse but struggling to maintain authenticity and integrity.

"Voices" from 1976 and shortly thereafter are embedded in the past and shaped by the form and nature of their transcription and recording, in both the figurative and the literal sense. For the voices to survive 1976, they had to be recorded, written, documented; they speak to us either indirectly, through their documentation at the time, or directly, with time and change intervening, through the memories remembered now. The conditions of creation and existence of these voices shaped them. Those documented in 1976 or thereabouts may not have changed over time in and of themselves, although our view, interpretation, or understanding of them would have changed, but they are shaped by the manner of their recording, by their purpose at the time (they were always recorded, written, etc. for a reason, which shapes what they contain), by their form, and by their context.

Initially, historians tended to use oral history as a way to fill in facts and evidence, particularly in nonliterate societies, where there was no written record, or, within literate societies, in groups that had tended to be excluded from the written record; they tended to use oral history as a tool of excavation, completion, illustration, and diversification. But oral history has long since moved beyond such beginnings, and historians have long recognized that it provides us with meaning and nuance beyond fact.

Among the strangely persistent holdovers from the initial critique of oral history **140** is the ongoing debate about the "reliability" and "representativeness" of oral

history (Geiger 1990) and the preoccupation with the inaccuracy of memory and the potential for lies and omissions in oral history. Though somewhat different in underlying principle and consequence—one the result of time passing, context changing, etc., and the other more the result of deliberate, sometimes dubious purpose—both are seen as essentially undermining of the worth of oral history rather than as qualities characteristic of any evidentiary source, written or oral. Put somewhat more glibly by Luise White:

[H]istorians interpret, construct, and manipulate evidence... owning up to the fact that we always select our evidence is [the issue]... what is this evidence we are omitting? It consists of the writing and the observations of people who had as many interests, and audiences, as we ourselves do. They weren't cameras, neutrally recording events for posterity. Texts—oral or written—aren't transparent. We can't see through them to the past. What they wrote had already been selected, culled, and ordered for a very specific reading. These authors, or speakers, mediated the past as much as we will do. When historians take that mediated version and reinterpret it, it simply adds another layer of interpretation, but it does not distort something called "raw fact." Does this mean that historians simply pile lies on lies? Hardly. I'd like to suggest that in fact what we get isn't anything other than a kind of pure history, layer after layer of interpretation shaped by time and place.⁹⁴

Errors and even lies in the historical record, and in oral histories, are not new, nor have historians shied away from taking them seriously (Portelli 1991, Jean Allman 1990, Pohlandt-McCormick/Mouton 1999) as valuable evidence of or clues to something else.

There is a distinctive difference between testimonies freely given in an oral interview and testimony spoken before a commission or in other institutional settings, which often allowed "Africans to speak for themselves" as part of "a mode of colonial discipline."⁹⁵ I am not unaware of Luise White's criticism that, though perhaps somewhat less maliciously, oral historians too (like their colonial counterparts in native administration and rule) "harnessed ... African orality" to their needs, not least among them "the agendas of the professionalization of African history as an academic discipline," and mostly Western, American and European, at that. But African voices are not easily "harnessed" or unavoidably bent to our academic or personal purposes, and to make them such would be to deny our respondents agency and considerable power.⁹⁶ Commission and other institutional oral testimony may be marked by coercion, by the structures and practices of power, and by the habits of inclusion and exclusion in language, but testimonies given freely and understood respectfully can be powerfully constitutive of historical understanding.

Transcribed Oral Testimonies—Truth and Reconciliation Commission

Finally, a fifth body of testimonies was compiled during the Soweto Hearings of

the *Truth and Reconciliation Commission* in 1996. The presence and work of the TRC also changed my work. Most importantly the TRC created another set of oral testimonies, a new layer in time through which I could follow the changing memories of those who had spoken closer to 1976 and since then. *Murphy Morobe*, Sam Nzima, Sophie Thema, Nombulelo Elizabeth Makhubu, Dan Montsisi, Ellen Kuzwayo, Antoinette Sithole-Musi (Hector Pieterse's sister), Elliot Ndlovu ... these were all people who were witnesses to or participants in the uprising, who had spoken before, and who now eloquently spoke of these events again in a new setting deliberately designed to make these stories part of the public record.

The *Truth and Reconciliation Commission's* mandate was primarily to give voice **145** to those considered "victims" of human-rights violations, but to give them voice at the expense of the vast number of ordinary people who, while they may not have been immediately traumatized or seen their lives destroyed by one incident or institution, nevertheless carry with them the pain and the damage of the years of oppression and violence under apartheid.⁹⁷ How these Soweto testimonies resonated with older ones is also part of Chapter 3, "Official Stories."

The processes of societal remembering⁹⁸ take place at many levels—public and private, individual and collective. Usually they are gradual and changes in interpretation and meaning imperceptible. But there are "certain moments"⁹⁹ in time, such as that created by the hearings of the *Truth and Reconciliation Commission*, when the work of memory accelerates and becomes both more self-conscious and deliberate. As individuals stepped forward into this public forum to tell their story, the work of memory also became simultaneously more public (and official) and private.

The processes of societal remembering¹⁰⁰ took place at many levels—public and private, individual and collective. Usually they are gradual and changes in interpretation and meaning imperceptible. The "truth ... will, in the very nature of things, never be fully revealed," wrote Archbishop Desmond Tutu in the Foreword to the TRC Report.¹⁰¹ Nevertheless, in the search for clues to that truth, for authenticity among the multiplicity of accounts, both individual memory and institutional memory needed to be tapped. Susan Geiger suggests that "collective" memory (an illusive, changing concept whose constituent parts we recognize more easily than we do its definitive whole) is the consequence of the relationship between a widely shared social sense of an authentic past and the individual's process of remembering and storytelling—a creative act in itself.¹⁰² I would suggest that there are potentially many and competing historical actors and institutions that participate in the processes of creating a shared sense of what constitutes the authentic past. It is therefore important to investigate not simply the stories themselves but also those many historical actors and institutions—the archives prominent among them—that participate in the process. As individuals

stepped forward into the public forum of the TRC to tell their story, the work of memory became simultaneously more public (and official) and private, and with each voice, each document "a new piece of the jigsaw puzzle of our past settles into place."¹⁰³

Strengths and Weaknesses, or Memory and Violence

My description and analysis of the uprising is grounded in a rich documented and oral history, in which oral and written memories stand together, although they are not always easily woven together.¹⁰⁵ All of these sources are full of meaning if consulted critically and with caution. When the evidence from oral and written archives revealed confusion and contradictions as well as differences of chronology and points of fact, it was important to penetrate the connections between the two and to consider the source of the confusion and contradictions. Written documents cannot capture what was essentially the oral nature of the youth movement in Soweto. (The central government and its spokesmen also brought a distinctive textual and rhetorical arsenal to the debates of the day, but it was predominantly written.) A sense of how words were captured, overturned, revived, changed and revived, and placed in a new context, of how new forms of expression were created and meanings changed, is conveyed both by the language of rumor, of word of mouth, of slogans and pamphlets at the time and by the language of remembering in the present. Gestures of the body, emotions, and facial expressions get lost when the oral interview is first captured on tape. They are further obscured when the tape is transcribed, and the resulting text may become flat, more opaque, and one-dimensional. It is difficult, although not altogether impossible, to restore the gestures and the emotions—no more so, though, than from written documents. While a document in the archive may seem "singularly opaque," it took only the memory of one person to invoke a document's significance.¹⁰⁶

Sometimes documents can fill gaps in oral testimonies. For example, interviewees seldom remembered the slogans of the demonstrations. Maybe the slogans themselves were not very important. However, three full folders of photographs preserved a highly suggestive list of demonstration slogans. They reflect the influences of other writings, movements, and antecedent cultural forms, and they permit insight into their historical relevance and connection. For most young demonstrators at the time, resistance and political protest was a memory and experience of their parents. From the historical perspective, it is relevant that slogans were often reinvented by the young people and students and used in a radically new context, with changed significances, with simultaneously new allusions and old references, and sometimes with different meanings.

In this book, James Scott's separation of the "official story," the "public transcript" (what is said in the face of power), and the "hidden transcript" (what is

said behind its back) was very pertinent. I have followed his guidance by comparing "the hidden transcript of subordinate groups with the hidden transcript of the powerful and both transcripts with the public transcript they share."¹⁰⁷ The hidden transcript of the powerful was particularly difficult to get and often needed to be inferred from public statements, but there were some exceptions. The archivists of the state's Central Archives Depot guarded the *in camera* (closed) hearings of the Cillie Commission with utmost correctness. I was therefore grateful when Judge Cillie's wife—his own memory was already severely impaired by age and illness by the time I talked to him in 1995—gave permission for me to see his own copy of the transcripts (located in the library of Rand Afrikaanse Universiteit), which included the *in camera* testimony. In this way I was, for example, able to read the testimony of witnesses for the Bureau of State Security. I am also wary of the fact that the official discourse/transcript does at times somehow stand separately from the hidden transcript of the powerful, however derivative of this it might be. This is the question I raised earlier about how the work of the Cillie Commission was caught up in the storm of the reactions of a desperately challenged state. In addition, it is important to keep in mind how the official transcript was aimed at the public transcript (intent of the state) and responded to it (reactions and challenges by the people). The search for documents and sources was essentially in response to the effort to find out where exactly all of these "transcripts" were located. The hidden transcript was most often located in memory. It was therefore essentially oral (unless there were diaries or personal letters) and therefore accessible through interviews and life histories. It has also manifested itself in songs and poetry and other forms of cultural expression, although in this form it tended to become more public. As mentioned above, the hidden transcripts, such as private letters, were often ripped from their concealment by police raids. The public transcript and the official transcript were perhaps the most easily accessible and also the least mutable, because they were set down in history books, government reports, and newspaper stories.

Several questions remain:

- How does the separation into "official story," "public transcript," and "hidden transcript" echo or contradict the concepts of "individual" and "collective" memory.
- What is the nature of the relationship between "public" and "private" memory when there is a close coincidence of public and private experience; do they combine into something different? Do they fuse?
- Must I distinguish between the hidden transcript of the past, and the part of it which has been carried over into the present in memories?
- How do I take into account the things that change memory, or that make it subjective?

Some of these questions I have tried to answer in Chapter 6, "Memory and

Violence."

Experience, we know, is mediated by experience; for instance, the recollections of a struggle are transformed with victory.¹⁰⁸

Over time, memories pass through layers upon layers of experience and public and private thought and interpretation, and they are influenced by changing ideology and identity. In this way, all narratives changed with time. The public transcript was influenced by historiography. The hidden transcripts of subordinate groups were influenced not only by the historiography but also by their own later experiences, by the influence of the public transcript, by changing ideology and material circumstances. None of these boundaries are immutable, though, and it must be presumed that they all influenced each other over time. The possibility must also be allowed that there may be some things, some memories that remained unchanged. Change is an assumption that needs to be carefully tested. There may be memories that did not change, that were somehow preserved free of the influence of later experiences or thought, an idea I have pursued in the final chapter of this book, "Memory and Violence." There I explore what kind of information went into a memory—for example, the original perception of the event and the information supplied after the event (Kotre 1995, Schacter 1996)—so as either to blend into a single memory, which replaced what was originally present, or to remain unchanged.

The moment the uprising happened, the government (and its various institutions) started talking, started producing information—started, in fact, to produce the vocabulary, the meanings, and the interpretations of events. While the bias in these sorts of documents is so obvious as to tempt one to ignore them, to do so would be to play right into the hands of those who produced them, and analysis would remain at the level of taking them as a given, without analysis of their role, of their part in the structures, lived realities, and language that was apartheid at this time. They would remain unexamined and essentialized, and I would be avoiding the crucial question of why the government thought it necessary to change meanings, to create versions, to produce language, etc. This documentation, these official sources *must* be taken seriously, must be carefully analyzed for their power, for their meaning, for their evidence. They say much about how the events needed to be given a reality in language, a reality that was particular and specific to the needs of the state and its protagonists.

At a broader level, this book raises a set of questions about the other influences, **155** in addition to violence, on memory and, by extension, on the production of historical knowledge. While it is certain that many of these influences are interrelated, how they relate to each other is an open question. Some of these issues are specific to the history of the Soweto uprising or to South Africa, but many have important implications for the analysis of historical memory elsewhere.

The investigation of the stories of Soweto permits me to look at what happens to an event such as the uprising through the course of time and at what shapes collective and individual memory and, in the end, history (Amin 1995, Cohen 1997, White 2003). Historical memory is not static, nor is the pace of change uniform. At some level this book has had to grapple with the problems of constructing, researching, and writing history in a historical time of fast change, which moves this book beyond the richness of the stories of Soweto and the historical analysis of these events and onward to a theoretical consideration of how the passage of time and the experience of violence shape the way stories are remembered into history (i.e., by historians), and into collective and individual memory, and of how such events produce documents, testimonies, evidence, and ideas of the time.

Notes:

Note 67: Sam Zima, interview by Mark Gevisser, in *Life: The Observer Magazine*, 17 April 1994.

Note 68: See also Elizabeth Jelin and Susana G. Kaufman, "Layers of Memories: Twenty Years After in Argentina" (paper presented at the conference Legacies of Authoritarianism: Cultural Production, Collective Trauma, and Global Justice, University of Wisconsin-Madison, 3-5 April 1998), 1.

Note 69: See Feitlowitz, *Lexicon*.

Note 70: Premesh Lalu, "The Grammar of Domination and the Subjection of Agency: Colonial Texts and Modes of Evidence," in "Not Telling: Secrecy, Lies, and History," ed. Gary Minkley and Martin Legassick, special issue, *History and Theory* 39 (December 2000): 52.

Note 71: Lalu, "The Grammar of Domination and the Subjection of Agency," 68.

Note 72: Mamphela Ramphele, *Across Boundaries: The Journey of a South African Woman Leader* (New York: Feminist Press, 1995), 163. Although her commentary is really about the resurgence of township protest in the 1980s, Ramphele points to the "brutalising impact of violence on the children of South Africa, both as its victims and its perpetrators" as well as to the equally dehumanizing effect of police brutality and retaliatory violence (such as the "necklacing" of suspected police informers) by children. Rather than blaming the victim, Ramphele writes about the impact of oppression on children and the dangers inherent in protest politics and about strategies that further dehumanize those already caught up in a repressive system.

Note 73: Ramphele, *Across Boundaries*, 163.

Note 74: Don Foster, "Social Influence III: Crowds and Collective Violence," in *Social Psychology in South Africa*, ed. Don Foster and Joha Louw-Potgieter (Johannesburg: Lexicon, 1991), 466. The necklacings were also a consequence of the passage of time and an expression of the frustrations and contradictions of the continued existence and violent upholding of the apartheid system.

Note 75: Dan O'Meara, *Forty Lost Years: The Apartheid State and the Politics of the National Party, 1948-1994* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 1996), 7.

Note 76: Renate Siebert, "Don't Forget: Fragments of a Negative Tradition," in *Memory and Totalitarianism*, International Yearbook of Oral History and Life

Stories, vol. 1, ed. Luisa Passerini (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), 165.

Note 77: Zakes Molotsi, interview by Helena Pohlandt-McCormick, tape recording, Johannesburg, May 1995.

Note 78: This testimony reflected not only the relative ease (not discounting the risk or hardship) with which young people moved in and out of the country in anticipation of military training or other education but also the dedication to the internal struggle that many held fast to and that Molotsi identified as characteristic of their cohort: "[I]t was a generation that said no, it was a defiant group, very defiant. The older generation was saying there is nothing you can do, you can't change it, you just keep on praying. This generation it said no, enough is enough." Zakes Molotsi, interview by Helena Pohlandt-McCormick, tape recording, Johannesburg, May 1995.

Note 79: Among them Steve Lebelo, Santu Mofokeng, and Mimi Molotsi, my Sotho-language teacher.

Note 80: Ironically, the University of South Africa (UNISA), a tertiary institution founded by and for Afrikaner interests, has a much larger collection of African papers than does the Central Archives Depot of the state. As a correspondence university, it was through this institution that many Africans who, either living far removed from another university or being imprisoned for political reasons, worked toward and obtained their degrees. It was not unusual for grateful families of graduates from UNISA to donate the personal papers of such graduates to the library and archive at UNISA for safekeeping.

Note 81: In addition, many of my documents come from the Library and Archives of the University of South Africa (UNISA) and from the McCullen Library and Historical Papers Collection at the University of the Witwatersrand.

Note 82: SAIRR, *Survey* 1976, 144-45.

Note 83: Although I realize that these documents are now accessible, where the material seemed of too personal a nature I have chosen either to disguise the identities of the authors or not to use the document.

Note 84: The fact that the legal team of the West Rand Bantu Administration could have access to these documents from the security police is evidence again of the "collusion between some elements in the judicial system, [...] and the security police," as Archbishop Desmond Tutu, chairman of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, commented in his introduction to the first interim report of the Commission in 1996. It is also evidence of "an abuse of power and a lack of accountability" that, as I argue in the last chapter of this book, was part of the violent conduct of the apartheid government.

Note 85: Note also the tension inherent in Kleingeld's refusal to answer the questions put to him in English in anything other than Afrikaans. Central Archives Depot/Sentrale Argiefbewaarplek (hereafter, SAB), State Archives Service, Pretoria, *State v. Twala and Ten Others*, Supreme Court of South Africa (Transvaal Provincial Division, TPD), case K/P 281 (1978).

Note 86: Central Archives Depot / Sentrale Argiefbewaarplek (hereafter SAB), State Archives Service, Pretoria, K345 (Archives of the Commission of Inquiry into the Riots in Soweto and Elsewhere, 1976-1978), vol. 85, file 2/2/1/12/12, part 4 (South African Police, Memoranda and Evidence Submitted to Commission: Soweto), J. A. Kleingeld, statement, Johannesburg, 29 June 1976. Kleingeld was the white police officer in command during the first clash between demonstrating students and the police.

Note 87: K. S. Lekganyane (lieutenant, Krugersdorp), statement, 17 September

1976, SAB K345, vol. 86, file 2/2/1/12/12, part 5 (South African Police, Memoranda and Evidence Submitted to Commission: Soweto). Lekganyane was a black police lieutenant, commanding officer of Kagiso police station.

Note 88: My thanks to Keith Shear for his insight on this topic.

Note 89: My thanks to Keith Shear for his insight on this topic.

Note 90: Ntsiye April Mahasha (civilian), statement, SAB K345, vol. 86.

Note 91: Levy Joseph Mabatle (SAP, Bantu constable, 134670R), statement, 23 June 1976, SAB K345, vol. 86. See also, at SAB K345, vol. 86, the following: Justice Mamiane (SAP, Bantu constable, 155436W, canine unit), statement, undated; Thabishi Piet Bahula (SAP, Bantu constable, 158195F); C. F. J. Brand (SAP, lieutenant, 22603F).

Note 92: Petrus Hendrik Bosman (SAP, constable), statement, SAB K345, vol. 84, file 2/2/1/12/12, part 3.

Note 93: James Scott, *Domination and the Arts of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990), 87.

Note 94: Luise White, "Telling More: Lies, Secrets, and History," in "Not Telling: Secrecy, Lies, and History," ed. Gary Minkley and Martin Legassick, special issue, *History and Theory* 39 (December 2000): 21.

Note 95: Ibid., 12-13.

Note 96: Ibid., "Telling More," 12.

Note 97: Similar thoughts are being increasingly expressed in the emerging body of work on the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. See, for example, Steven Robins "Silence in my Father's House: Memory, Nationalism, and Narratives of the Body," in *Negotiating the Past: The Making of Memory in South Africa*, ed. Sarah Nuttall and Carli Coetzee (Cape Town: Oxford University Press, 1998), 121.

Note 98: I have borrowed the concept from Elizabeth Jelin and Susana G. Kaufman, "Layers of Memories: Twenty Years After in Argentina" (paper presented at the conference Legacies of Authoritarianism: Cultural Production, Collective Trauma, and Global Justice, University of Wisconsin-Madison, 3-5 April 1998), 1.

Note 99: See Patricia Davison, "Museums and the Reshaping of Memory," in *Negotiating the Past*, ed. Nuttall and Coetzee, 147.

Note 100: I have borrowed the concept from Jelin and Kaufman, "Layers of Memories: Twenty Years After in Argentina," 1.

Note 101: Tutu, chairperson's foreword, in TRC, *Report*, 1:4.

Note 102: Susan Geiger, introduction to *Tanu Women: Gender and Culture in the Making of Tanganyikan Nationalism, 1955-1965* (Portsmouth, N.H.: Heinemann, 1997).

Note 103: Tutu, chairperson's foreword, in TRC, *Report*, 1:4.

Note 104: A small number of these photographs as well as some documents from the State Archives were recently (2001) published for the first time, in Hopkins and Grange, *The Rocky Rioter Teargas Show*.

Note 105: Luisa Passerini, "A Memory for Women's History: Problems of Method

and Interpretation" (unpublished), 8-9.

Note 106: Passerini, "A Memory for Women's History," 9.

Note 107: Scott, *Domination and the Arts of Resistance*, 15. Burten and Carlen use the term "official discourse": See Frank Burton and Pat Carlen, *Official Discourse: On Discourse Analysis, Government Publications, Ideology and the State* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1979), chapter 4.

Note 108: White, "Telling More," 16.