The Impasse of Violence:
Writing necklacing into a history of liberation struggle in South Africa

Riedwaan Moosage

UNIVERSITY *of the*
WESTERN CAPE

Supervisors: Ms. Nicky Rousseau and
                    Professor Premesh Lalu
                    June 2010

A thesis submitted in fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Magister Artium in the Department of History, University of the Western Cape.

Plagiarism declaration

I, Riedwaan Moosage, certify that this Masters thesis is my own work. I understand what plagiarism is and I have used quotations and references to fully acknowledge the words and ideas of others.

Riedwaan Moosage
14 June 2010

Acknowledgements

Madeline Fullard, Mahmood Patel, Radim Hladik, Lynne Cupido, Quentin Williams, John Marlow who assisted with Afrikaans translations and my sister Nurshen Surtie for assisting with archival research. To those whose names I have not mentioned, my sincerest apologies but more so, my deepest gratitude.

To my 'family' who have "suffered my writing" (whilst tempted to footnote this, I borrow the phrasing from Premesh Lalu), I am most grateful for your understanding, your patience, your motivation, your compassion and your unwavering support. To Tsahai Negatu I say *amesege'nallo'*. Writing this thesis, however, would not have been possible without the support of my mother, Faeeza. Words fail in expressing my appreciation, my gratitude and all that I am able to say is *jazakallah khair* for everything…

Tyres are still burning. Tyres can burn for a very long time.

The smell of burning rubber fills the air.

But this time it is not mingled with the sickly stench of roasting human flesh.

Just pure wholesome rubber.

Zakes Mda, *Ways of Dying*, 199.

Contents

UNIVERSITY *of the*
WESTERN CAPE

Introduction
The spectre of necklacing

> It is ironic though isn't it? *History has swallowed the necklace*. In ten years time it will be a faint memory; in twenty it will be the subject of an MA dissertation at the University of the Western Cape (Luke Alfred, 1996). [1]

Necklacing - the practice of placing a petrol soaked tyre around the neck of an individual before setting it alight - was most pronounced during the mid 1980s in South Africa. During 1985-1989, South Africa experienced intense resistance to apartheid, largely led by the exiled African National Congress (ANC) and the United Democratic Front (UDF). The practice of necklacing was a form in which political violence was manifest and emerged predominantly in townships. Initially, those targeted were allegedly persons suspected of collaboration, either as spies or as functionaries of the apartheid state. Later however, the lines became blurred between those suspected of collaboration and the use of the practice in deflecting the motives of murders not politically motivated. [2] While the Eastern Cape was the epicentre of necklacing, the practice spread to other regions of South Africa. It is estimated that somewhere between 400 and 700 were killed in this way between 1985 and 1989. [3] Yet despite the significance of the practice of necklacing in the

---

[1] L. Alfred, 'A Story of Burning Flesh' in *New Contrast*, Vol.25, No. 2 (June 1997), 24. My emphasis. Alfred had written this memoir of sorts in early 1996 with specific emphasis on a necklace killing that he had witnessed in May 1986 through his binoculars. Whilst Alfred's "story" also concerns a dictionary that he was commissioned to compile of South African language in the mid 1980's and the decision by the publishers to omit the word 'necklace', his statement is "ironic" in relation to my project. It opens a myriad of possible interesting discussions that relate to why UWC was mentioned as the institutional site for research into necklacing.

[2] Amongst others, a case in point would be of the much publicised, "first white man that killed a black policeman by the 'necklace method'", George Henry Burt case. Burt had reportedly first shot Sgt Johannes Buti Ndimande numerous times thereby killing him (6th June 1986). Thereafter he went to a friend, Mr. Roger North, for assistance in covering up the murder by necklacing the body so as to make it appear as if the murder was a necklacing in the political violence sense. See for example, 'White man faces "necklace" charge' in *The Argus* (17 July 1986) as well as, 'White guilty of necklace murder in *Cape Times* (5 May 1987). Burt was found guilty and sentenced to death but was granted clemency by former State President F.W. de Klerk in 1989. See, 'Necklace case white won't hang' in *Sowetan* (29 May 1989).

[3] The statistics on the practice of necklacing are not accurate due to the difficulty in distinguishing between a burning and a necklacing as well as constraints on access to information as a result of media restrictions imposed by the apartheid state as will be discussed in Chapter One. In P. W Botha's 23 April 1986 parliamentary speech, he argued that 508 individuals had been necklaced since late 1984. See, 'PW speaks on Black on Black violence' in *The Sowetan* (24 April 1986). By 1988 it was reported that 392 individuals had been necklaced between 1984 and 1987. See, '392 died by necklace' in *Business Day* (16 June 1988). By January 1987 the Centre for Investigation into Revolutionary Activities, based at Rand Afrikaans University, reported that, "from January 1984 to August 1986, 348 were killed by the 'necklace' method while 20 were severely injured after escaping 'necklace' deaths. A total of 275 were killed through other

iconography of township revolt, it is relegated ambivalently as a spectre in historical accounts of the period.[4]

This thesis falls within the category of historical studies that is concerned with "a difficult legacy" of South Africa's liberation struggle, namely the practice of necklacing that 'accompanied' it.[5] My interest in the practice is limited to its emergence and politicising as it relates to the ANC, the UDF and the apartheid state. The ANC and the UDF overwhelmingly understood the practice as resistance, yet ambivalently so. The question guiding this thesis therefore asks: how is necklacing written into the narrative of struggle history? Here I refer to its (re)representation, its (re)characterisation, its (re)articulation in a wider discursive war of propaganda strategies that was waged through the interplay of an apartheid state discourse and what I consider to be an 'official' non-state discourse, that of the ANC and the UDF.[6]

---

burning methods, while 108 sustained serious injuries." See A. Baleta, '348 "necklace" deaths in two years – review' in *The Star* (14 January 1987). In Parliament on 21 August 1987 General Johan Coetzee, former Commissioner of the SA Police, stated that 286 individuals had been killed by the necklace method in 1986. See B. Stuart, '286 necklace deaths during 1986 terror escalation' in *The Citizen* (22 August 1987). By the 16 June 1988, it was reported that more 1100 individuals had been charged for necklace murders between 1984 and 1987. See, '1100 charged for necklacing' in *Cape Times* (16 June 1988). According to the South African Institute of Race Relations (SAIRR), 336 individuals were necklaced between 1984 and 1987. By 1990 it was reported that between 1984 and 1990, 428 individuals had been necklaced and between October 1989 and February 1990, 29 individuals had been necklaced. See, 'Less necklacing, but other ways of death by burning' in *E.P Herald* (2 July 1990). In the Eastern Cape alone it was reported that between 1985-6 133 individuals were necklaced. See I. R Lang, '"Necklace Murders": A Review of a Series of Cases Examined in a Port Elizabeth Mortuary' in *Medicine and Law*, Vol. 13 (1994), 507. See Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) *Report* (Cape Town, Jutas, 1998), Vol. 2, 388-89. These figures, based on the SAIRR statistics, are for the time frame 1984-1989. What is evident is that, based on the morgue report cited here, despite the discrepancies, the majority of necklace killings occurred in the Eastern Cape and that the majority of those necklaced were male.

[4] Whilst not a historical account in a conventional sense, I cannot help but think of the title of Mamphela Ramphele's book, *Laying Ghosts to Rest*. She argues that township revolts of the 1980's were "negative opposition" to apartheid rule. She cites Amilcar Cabral, Guinea-Bissau's liberation leader, who warned that the tolerance of liberation violence would spread into the post-colonial period, what he called "infections of violence". In something like a postapartheid present, the practice of necklacing , for Ramphele, is remembered only insofar as to argue that, "we are seeing some of the chickens of that wanton brutality coming home to roost in the growing use of extreme violence to settle disputes at many levels in our communities." Presumably, the spectre of necklacing is one ghost that cannot be laid to rest. See M. Ramphele, *Laying Ghosts to Rest: Dilemmas of the Transformation in South Africa* (Cape Town: NB Publishers, 2008), 132-133.

[5] Indeed, "a difficult legacy" is precisely the terms in which historian William Beinart has characterised the practice of necklacing, a point to which I return in chapter four of this thesis. See W. Beinart, *Twentieth Century South Africa* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 261.

[6] It is widely held that the ANC and the UDF had symbolic and active dominance during the 1980s. The ANC in particular emerged as the dominant liberation organisation based on its institutional capacity, its

Following Michel Foucault on the co-incidence of power/knowledge in the production of discourse,[7] the thesis is concerned with discourses of and in relation to necklacing. An analysis of discourse, as Lata Mani suggests, can focus on that which appears stable and persistent in the ordering of social reality; a focus on discourse can point to assumptions shared by those who claim to be opposed to each other or are conceptualised in this manner.[8] The concept of discourse, also "embodies the possibility of several simultaneous discourses" that engage with each other "in relations of dialogue and struggle."[9]

The discourses surrounding necklacing are constitutive of what I suggest be considered a 'politics of ownership'. The ANC and the UDF, in their separate submissions to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), argue that whilst their condemnation of practices such as necklacing was never publicised due to media restrictions and the government's aim of vilifying them, they did indeed condemn the practice. However, in condemning the practice, the ANC and UDF maintained that those who undertook such actions were not responsible for their actions; rather the structural violence of the apartheid system itself was to assume responsibility. In other words, the apartheid state was not just complicit but accomplice to the practice of neckacing insofar as a resistance discourse legitimated necklacing as a rational response to oppression/repression. The former apartheid government and its institutions (the South African Police and the South African Defence Force), in their separate submissions to the TRC, claim that, based on statements made specifically by prominent ANC leaders and officials in the mid 1980's, the practice was propagated, condoned and hence 'owned' by those major organs of the larger liberation movement.

---

alliances and its international credibility and legitimacy. Jeremy Seekings posits that, "While the ANC needed an integrative vehicle like the UDF to develop the capacity of the Charterist movement to sustain the revolt, the UDF needed the endorsement of the ANC to play this role…the UDF was transformed more clearly into a component of the ANC's strategy. Its role was to maintain political pressure on the government inside the country, discrediting it, chipping away at the margins of its support, and building support for the kind of transformation envisaged by the ANC." See J. Seekings, *The UDF: A History of the United Democratic Front in South Africa, 1983-1991* (Cape Town: David Philip, 2000), 292-294.

[7] See M. Foucault, *Discpline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, translated by A. Sheridan (London: Penguin Books, 1991), 27-28.

[8] L. Mani, 'The Production of an Official Discourse on *Sati* in early nineteenth-century Bengal' in Francis Barker et al. (eds.), *Europe and its Others Vol. 1* (Colchester: University of Essex Press, 1985), 108.

[9] L. Mani, 'The Production of an Official Discourse', 109.

I wish to argue that there is a difficulty in writing necklacing into the narrative of struggle history. This difficulty arises in relation to the ways in which the apartheid state assigned the emergence of the practice to the ANC and UDF and the way in which the liberation movement attempted to return it to its "authors".[10]

Writing about genealogical histories, Foucault posits that, "[e]mergence designates a place of confrontation but not as a closed field offering the spectacle of a struggle among equals."[11] Emergence therefore, according to Foucault, cannot be claimed by anyone because it always occurs in the "interstice": "In a sense, only a single drama is ever staged in this 'non-place', the endlessly repeated play of dominations."[12] He suggests further that, "[t]he isolation of different points of emergence does not conform to the successive configurations of an identical meaning; rather, they result from substitutions, displacements, disguised conquests, and systematic reversals." [13] Genealogy, as Wendy Brown reads Foucault, promises "dirty histories, histories of power and subjection, histories of bids for hegemony waged, won, or vanquished", it is the "endlessly repeated play of dominations." [14]
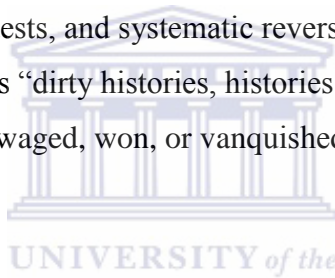
In justifying its recourse to violence, the ANC argued that the apartheid state was responsible for violent resistance as did the UDF in its call for "defensive violence". I show that the ANC and UDF produced an unclear position as to 'condemnation' of what can loosely be termed popular political violence. By popular political violence I mean the killing by methods such as necklacing (though not limited to this practice, as is shown with the lynching of Moegsien Abrahams in 1986 at a UDF rally) of individuals targeted as 'collaborators' – 'traitors'. Whilst the ANC attempted to clearly define those regarded as legitimate targets for its armed wing, *Umkhonto We Sizwe* (MK), it stammered to make clear its position regarding the killing by necklace of individuals by its mass support base. In this sense, I ask how this ambivalence was produced.

---

[10] See Chapter Four of this thesis.
[11] M. Foucault, 'Nietzsche, Genealogy, History' in D.F. Bouchard (ed.), *Language, Counter-Memory, Practice: Selected Essays and Interviews* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1977), 150.
[12] M. Foucault, 'Nietzsche, Genealogy, History', 150.
[13] M. Foucault, 'Nietzsche, Genealogy, History', 151.
[14] W. Brown, *Politics out of History* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001), 104.

The ANC had to politically justify its recourse to violence while at the same time secure its position as the holder of a moral high ground within a discursive war of propaganda strategies between the apartheid state and itself. Importantly, the practice was positioned by the ANC and UDF in a binary of resistance and oppression/repression. For the apartheid state, the practice of necklacing was not political violence. It was not acts of resistance and could never be rationalised. The practice represented, for the state, 'black-on-black' violence, a criminal activity, a form of barbarism and savagery. The state accused and believed that the ANC, in particular, supported, condoned and rationalised necklacing. These accusations were in relation to mixed responses to the rise of the practice as is evident by statements made by prominent ANC and UDF leaders about or in relation to the practice that is examined in Chapter Two. The official state discourse on necklacing saw the state mainly setting a discursive terrain fuelling ambivalence towards the practice on the part of the ANC and the UDF. As this thesis aims to underscore, traces of that ambivalence towards the legacy of necklacing are still visible in postapartheid (re)articulations of the liberation struggle. Before proceeding however, some ground clearing is necessary.
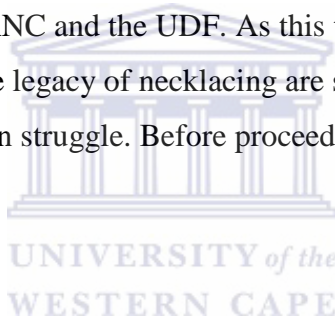
Ground clearing I

The practice of placing a petrol soaked tyre around the neck of an individual is not unique to South Africa. Despite the terms necklace and necklacing having gained such notoriety that the *Oxford English Dictionary* has an entry describing the gruesome practice as the label given in South Africa,[15] in other parts of the world the practice goes by names such as '*Pere Lebrun*' in Haiti,[16] as '*the article 320*' in Mali [17] and as '*Weet-ee*' (soaking with

---

[15] See C. Soanes and S. Hawker (eds.) *Compact Oxford English Dictionary* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 679.

[16] Here the practice was named after a Mr. Lebrun who was a motor car trader where tyres were bought. Similar to Winnie Mandela's infamous speech of inciting revolutionaries to use the necklace to achieve liberation (as discussed later), there are reports that posit Aristide as inciting '*Pere Lebrun*' as an effective method of dealing with political opponents. See A. Dupuy, *The Prophet and Power* (New York: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 2006). See also N. Nesbitt, 'Turning the Tide: The Problem of Popular Insurgency in Haitian Revolutionary Historiography' in *small axe*, No. 27 (October 2008) for an overview of the debate surrounding Aristide and the practice of '*Pere Lebrun*'. The South African, mainly Afrikaans press, also picked up on this. See for example F. Swart, 'Die donker kant van Aristide…sy teenstanders is glo volgens halssnoer-metodes tereggestel' in *Die Beeld* (22 October 1993) and 'Die demokrasie van die halsnoer' in *Die Afrikaaner* (29 September 1994). Both newspaper reports linked Aristide to Winnie Mandela and her infamous statement on the practice of necklacing as a means to liberation in South Africa.

petrol) in Nigeria.[18] There have been reports of the practice occurring in Mozambique where the practice is used as "punishment" for theft and what Zoe Wicomb has called "yet another transmutation of our export culture."[19] In writing about violence in Sri Lanka, E. Valentine Daniel makes reference to the killing of a boy who, after being beaten and stabbed, was thrown onto a tyre and set alight.[20]

In South Africa, according to journalists Greg Marinovich and Joao Silva, "necklacing", as a "warped symbol of liberation", was also known as "*shisanyama* or burnt meat, three cents, which was then the price of a box of matches, and finally, savagely, *Nando's* after a popular flame-grilled chicken franchise."[21] The terms necklace and necklacing, as shown in the following chapter, entered the South African lexicon through media reports from September 1985 onwards.

It is not clear where the terms necklacing and necklace originated in the sense of who was the first to use the terms.[22] According to Julie Frederikse, writing in 1987, "[t]he government, the police and the military [had] launched an hysterical media campaign to discredit anything to do with those denigrated as 'the comrades' or - another new word suddenly discovered by Pretoria – the 'necklace'", a few lines later, she refers to, "the 'necklace' – a township term…" [23] It appears that the naming of the practice, for Frederikse, is attributed to both the apartheid government and the township, telling of an

[17] I thank Paolo Israel for this reference and the translation. See J.J Mandel, 'Les retrecisseurs de sexe Chronique d'une rumeur sorciere' in *Cahiers D'etudes Africanes*, 189-190 (2008), 194.

[18] See J. Harnischfeger, 'The Bakassai Boys: Fighting Crime in Nigeria'in *Journal of Modern African Studies*, 41, 1 (2003), 23-49 and M.A Perouse de Montclos, 'Does Africa need the police?' trans. by Barbara Wilson in *Le Monde diplomatique* (September 1997). http://mondediplo.com/1997/09/afpol

[19] Z. Wicomb, 'Culture Beyond Color? A South African Dilemma' in *Transition*, No. 60 (1993), 31-32. See also 'Mozambique: Lynchings symptom of state failure', IRIN Africa – humanitarian news and analysis (9 April 2007). http://www.irinnews.org/Report.aspx?ReportId=71234

[20] E. Valentine Daniel, *Charred Lullabies: Chapters in an Anthropography of Violence* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1996), 209.

[21] G. Marinovich and J. Silva, *The Bang Bang Club: Snapshots from a Hidden War* (New York: Basic Books, 2000), 39.

[22] In a newspaper report recalling the killing of Benjamin Kinikini (discussed below), it was claimed that journalist Jon Qwelane had, "the dubious distinction of having introduced the term 'necklace' in its gruesome context to the language." See 'Two years of the necklace' in *Pretoria News* (2 April 1987).

[23] J. Frederikse, 'South Africa's Media: The Commercial Press and the Seedlings of the Future' in *Third World Quarterly*, Vol. 9, No. 2 (April 1987), 646.

interplay of discourses on necklacing.

It is not my intention to engage such a search for the origins of either the practice of necklacing or the naming of the practice as such. Rather, my intention in this thesis, following Foucault's notion of a genealogical history, is to analyse the emergence of necklacing as a political signifier of the liberation struggle.

On the 19 March 2005, the *Weekend Post*, in the run up to Human Rights Day in South Africa (celebrated on the 21 March each year), ran the following story, 'Revisiting turbulent history of the 1980's'. The caption read: "It was 20 years ago that the most feared and extreme form of mob justice known as 'necklacing' emerged in the Eastern Cape."[24] Written by journalist Francois Rank, the report goes on to detail the brutal killing of Benjamin Kinikini on the 23 March 1985:

> Although the very first 'necklace' victim was already dead when burning tyres were placed around his neck in Uitenhage, it was in fact the first time this kind of "punishment" was seen on South Africa's strife torn streets at the height of political unrest in the mid-1980's…It was all sparked by the Langa massacre in Uitenhage when a total of 20 people died after police opened fire on funeral-goers in Maduna Road on March 21, 1985…it was on the outskirts of industrial Uitenhage where the awful act was first branded into the nation's collective consciousness to become an often controversial and gut-wrenching symbol of the struggle. Winnie Madikizela Mandela would shock the world a year after the Langa massacre by publicly declaring that blacks would be liberated by means of matches and tyres – an infamous reference to necklacing which would haunt her for years. It is generally accepted that the first documented necklacing occurred three months after Langa in Duduza, near Johannesburg, when Maki Skosana was killed by a mob who thought she was an informer. Skosana was still alive when burning tyres were placed around her neck. What made the necklacing of Uitenhage businessman [and community councilor] Tamsanqa Benjamin Kinikini on March 23, 1985 – two days after the Langa slaughter – different was that he was already dead when the burning tyres were placed on his body.

That Rank makes a distinction between the killing of Maki Skosana and Benjamin Kinikini is important insofar as it alludes to the difficulty in distinguishing between a burning and a necklace killing. Whilst there is a distinction between a necklace killing and other forms of burning in the physical sense, this distinction, according to Joanna

---

[24] F. Rank, 'Revisiting turbulent history of the 1980's' in *Weekend Post* (19 March 2005).

Ball, becomes blurred in the cultural arena. For Ball, "[t]he term necklace is applied more broadly than the word implies, for example the media will describe a burning where the tyres are placed on top of the victim's body as a 'necklacing'."[25] Necklacing as ritual in the wider context of burning as analysed by Ball, suggests that the two symbols of the necklace and the fire combine to form a very powerful performance because the "necklace symbol is highly potent in its verbal usage, whereas in the actual enactment of the burning, the fire takes over as the dominant symbol." Ball suggests therefore that "presumably the broader use of this term is related to its symbolic potency and the graphic horror of burning that it captures."[26] It is possibly in this sense that both Benjamin Kinikini and Maki Skosana are regarded as the 'first' to have been necklaced.[27]

Rank highlights three of what can be considered constitutive moments in relation to a broader history of liberation struggle and the place of necklacing therein. The killing of Councillor Benjamin Kinikini and three of his family members on the 23 March 1985 has been claimed as the 'first' necklacing as shown above. Their deaths in the iconography of township revolts, as shown in Rank's rendering, are positioned as causal to the police shootings two days prior in what has been called the Langa massacre where the South African Police (SAP) shot dead approximately twenty individuals.[28] Mono Badela, a journalist who claims to have witnessed the killing recalled later that: "The necklace…Where it comes from? Nobody knows. Whose instructions? Nobody knows.

---

[25] J. Ball, 'The Ritual of the Necklace', Research report written for the Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation (March 1994), 2. Indeed, as recently as 29 March 2009, a Cape Town daily newspaper, the *Cape Argus,* ran the following report, "Teens necklaced by vigilante group." Upon reading the text of the article however, it becomes apparent that tyres and clothing were thrown onto the bodies of the teenagers to "fuel the flames" after they had been set alight. See 'Teens necklaced by vigilante group' in *Cape Argus* (29 March 2009).

[26] J. Ball, 'The Ritual of the Necklace', 2.

[27] For a substantive collection of media clippings relating to both the Kinikini and Skosana cases, including the subsequent trials, see the *Barry Streek South African Press Clippings Collection* - Box: Security-Necklacing (Incidents/Trials) 1986-1989, housed at Mayibuye Archive. In my reading of newspaper clippings, TRC submissions, the appeal case of the Skosana trial and accounts of the period, it became apparent that there is some discrepancy as to whether the killings of both Kinikini and Skosana were necklace killings in the sense of having tyres either around their necks, on their bodies or even of tyres being used in the killings. Whilst in relation to Ball's understanding, this possibly is a moot point but worth noting.

[28] Indeed, it is suggested that this was a crucial factor in the anger of the people of KwaNobuhle that led to the killing of Kinikini and his family members. In relation to the Langa massacre, see R. Thornton, 'The Shooting at Uitenhage. South Africa, 1985: The Context and Interpretation of Violence' in *American Ethnologist*, Vol. 17, No. 2 (May 1990), 217-236.

All we know is that people were tired of being killed. People were angry. People had enough!"[29] Steven Mufson, who had interviewed Badela, describes the killing as:

> [f]ar more personal than lobbing a petrol bomb at a house or pulling a trigger from several paces away. The mob had chased its prey, ignored their pleas, stabbed them, beat them, held them, crushed them and torn them limb from limb. The attack was so savage that months later a court could not establish the precise cause of death of one of Kinikini's sons, Silumko. The medical examiner opined that the arms were amputated before the body was burned, that the head (95 percent of which was missing) suffered a massive assault, and that the burning explained the protrusion of the intestines through the abdomen and the missing genitals. The body was almost completely charred and the right thigh partially amputated. There were also multiple fractures of all the ribs. [30]

A second moment that Rank alludes to is what has also been claimed as the much publicised 'first' necklacing, that of Maki Skosana (20 July 1985). Without taking away from the brutal murder of Maki Skosana, it is what her death has come to signify that makes that moment important. As will be discussed in the following chapter, a video recording showing images of Maki Skosana being beaten and set alight by a large group at a funeral for eight anti-apartheid activists (that had been killed as part of a state sanctioned covert operation, Operation Zero-Zero),[31] was aired both on South African national television and internationally by the apartheid government.[32] This was to justify and legitimate its declaring of a partial state of emergency on the 22 July 1985. Maki Skosana's name has come to be overwhelmingly associated with the practice of necklacing.

---

[29] M. Badela cited in S. Mufson, *Fighting Years: Black Resistance and the Struggle for a New South Africa* (Boston, Mass: Beacon Press, 1990), 92. See also M. Badela, 'The Weeks of Rage That Led to That First Necklace Death' in *Weekly Mail* (4 September 1987); K. Vernon, 'Charred bodies found, police evacuated from townships – East Cape riot toll up to 24' in *Weekend Argus* (23 March 1985) and J. Qwelane, 'Revenge of the Mob' in *The Sunday Star* (31 March 1985).

[30] S. Mufson, *Fighting Years*, 92. In some reports, cannibalism was reported. It was alleged that some individuals in the crowd began eating the burnt bodies. See A. Soule, 'Uitenhage – The killing goes on' in *Sunday Times* (24 March 1985). I have not established the veracity of this or if it related to state disinformation. See Chapter One.

[31] See TRC *Report*, Vol. 3 (Cape Town: Juta, 1998), 667- 668.

[32] The Kinikini killings had also been filmed and those images were used as admissible evidence in the trial that followed the killings. See J. Saunders, 'Court shown video of mob attacking bodies' in *Eastern Province Herald* (20 February 1986) and M. Tyala, 'Kinikini video "may aid defence" – judge' in *Eastern Province Herald* (12 March 1986). It is possible that because of the negative and harsh condemnation of the police and the state in relation to the Langa massacre, those images were not widely circulated.

A case in point can be discerned with images of burning people splashed across the front pages of print media in relation to the South African xenophobic attacks of May 2008. Here scholars have turned to the iconic case of Maki Skosana as a precedent to contemporary images of burning black people in the media:

> The case of Maki Skosana happened to be captured by the media, and it became known as the 'first necklacing case'. One of the photographers who captured these events, the late Kevin Carter, spoke of how this was just one incident that was preceded by others. What made this the 'first' was its coming to view to the South Africa that does not, and dares not go into a township. The apartheid South African government controlled media made maximum use of the moment. A young, helpless black woman being set ablaze by a carnival of black people reinforced what the colonial mentality had long warned of: the barbarism of the native.[33]

Later, on the 16th of December 2008, South Africa's Day of Reconciliation, a memorial service for Maki Skosana was held in Duduza (just outside Johannesburg and where she had been killed) to, "reconcile the community, bury the hatred and move forward as a community."[34] The memorial service, attended by members of the community, church leaders, political parties as well as Skosana's family, formed part of larger Reconciliation Day events taking place around South Africa organised by the ANC led government.[35] This, I suggest, is evidence of an attempt at coming to terms with "a difficult legacy" of a liberation struggle history fraught with ambivalence in it's (re)articulation of necklacing.

A third moment that Rank highlights relates to that infamous speech given by Winnie Mandela on the 13 April 1986 in which she stated, "[w]ith our boxes of matches and necklaces, we will liberate this country."[36] These stirring words were cause for embarrassment to the ANC and UDF, who struggled to articulate a public position on necklacing. For the apartheid state, that statement served to legitimate its claims that the

---

[33] See S. Pillay, 'Dangerous Ordinary Discourse: Preliminary reflections on xenophobia, violence and the public sphere in South Africa', draft paper presented at CODESRIA 12th General Assembly (Yaoundé, Cameroon, 07-11/12/2008), 4. Note: Permission granted to cite this paper by author via email correspondence on 09 March 2009.

[34] See B. Masango, 'True reconciliation as Duduza asks forgiveness' in *The Star* (17 December 2008); S. Hlangwane, 'Whats the price of reconciliation? in *City Press* (14 December 2008) and B. Ngqiyaza, 'An innocent and terrible death' in *The Star* (17 December 2008).

[35] See 'Motlanthe to speak' in *The Mercury* (16 December 2008).

[36] See, 'The language of anarchy' in *The Star* (16 April 1986) and G. van Staden, 'Winnie slams "hysterical" media reaction' in *The Star* (18 April 1986).

ANC propagated and condoned practices such as necklacing.

A fourth moment, I want to suggest, is Chris Hani's (then army commissar of MK) "comment on the necklace" given in December 1986. At the TRC, according to the former apartheid government and its functionaries, Hani and therefore the ANC, condoned and propagated the practice of necklacing. However, a close reading of Hani's "comment on the necklace" reveals no outright condoning and propagating of the practice, despite a tone of understanding and suggests rather a prose of ambivalence, as will be shown in Chapter Two. Official public condemnation of the practice of necklacing by the ANC, was issued by then president of the ANC, Oliver Tambo first in September 1986 and then again in September 1987.

However, as shown later, it is the second condemnation that is considered as 'official'. Thus, a fifth moment is the September 1987 public 'official' condemnation of the practice of necklacing by Oliver Tambo. A sixth moment that I suggest is constitutive in relation to a broader history of liberation struggle and the place of necklacing, is a contestation over the 'ownership' of the practice during the TRC process as alluded to earlier and as examined more fully in Chapter Four.

Ground clearing II

Histories of South Africa's liberation struggle have come to be dominated by the history of the ANC. In part this is due to the extensive archival record of the ANC but also as Hillary Sapire argues, because of the inclination of historians of liberation movements to write from the perspective of 'victors'.[37] It can also be added that this dominance of the ANC in the national liberation struggle archive has the unintended consequence of institutional top-down histories being (re)constructed. Indeed, Allen Feldman argues that, "[t]o simply study power at the 'centre', that is, from the perspective of formal political rationalities, is to collaborate in the essential myth of formal rationalization: that power distributes itself from some place external to its effects, external to its violence, which is

---

[37] H. Sapire, 'Liberation Movements, Exile, and International Solidarity: An Introduction' in *Journal of Southern African Studies*, Vol. 35, No. 2 (June 2009), 275.

reduced to a transparent instrument."[38] Whilst taking the point offered by Feldman, the question of how ambivalence in relation to necklacing has been produced is prompted by an overarching political violence discourse and attending notions of resistance and causality evident in contemporaneous and subsequent scholarly works on the practice of necklacing. That literature, in attempting to make sense of the practice, has resorted to the realms of historical causality and 'cultural (dis)continuities' that has large political overtones in relation to the liberation movements, dominated by the ANC and the UDF.

If, as Ball argues, a "necklacing archive" is difficult to constitute because we are unable to place the practice in a neatly labelled box with a clear sense of time, place and reason,[39] then I might add that literature on the practice of necklacing is equally dispersed, diffused and at times ambivalent. Although a small but significant body of work on the practice has surfaced in South African studies, the discipline of history has been especially silent.[40] Most works derive from the disciplines of anthropology, psychology, sociology, political science and literary theory. Here the practice of necklacing has been understood in relation to crowd/collective psychology and witchcraft beliefs/ritual killings akin to making sense of perpetrator consciousnesses. What is common to these frameworks is an overarching discourse where the practice of necklacing is named as resistance constituted by notions of political violence and a turn to causality in explanation that are beset with both ambiguity and ambivalence.[41]

---

[38] A. Feldman, *Formations of Violence: The Narrative of the Body and Political Terror in Northern Ireland* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991), 2.

[39] J. Ball, 'The Ritual of the Necklace', 4.

[40] Scholarly work dealing specifically with the practice of necklacing is sparse. The most detailed works come from J. Ball, 'The Ritual of the Necklace'; N. Nomoyi and W. Schurink, 'Ukunxityiswa kwempimpi itayari njengotshaba lomzabakaza: An exploratory study of insider accounts of necklacing in three Port Elizabeth townships' in E. Bornman, Y. Muthien, R. Van Eeden and Marie Wentzel (eds.), *Violence in South Africa: A Variety of Perspectives* (Pretoria: HSRC Press, 1998); P. Gobodo-Madikizela, 'Legacies of Violence: An In-Depth Analysis Of Two Case Studies Based On Interviews With Perpetrators Of A "Necklace" Murder And With Eugene de Kock', Unpublished PhD Thesis, University of Cape Town (1999) and L. Praeg, *The Geometry of Violence* (Stellenbosch: Sun Press, 2007). Elsewhere the practice of necklacing is not the main focus of enquiry but forms part of the larger research undertaken and therefore warrants the attention of scholars. See for example B. Bozzoli, *Theatres of Struggle and the End of Apartheid* (Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, 2004).

[41] Ambiguity and ambivalence are, at times, used interchangeably. Ambiguity is taken to mean having more than one meaning and ambivalence to mean having mixed feelings about something or someone.

12

An archive of necklacing can productively be thought of in relation to Ranajit Guha's levels of historical discourse.[42] Guha distinguishes between three levels, a primary discourse, a secondary discourse and a tertiary discourse. They differ from one another in that within the primary discourses, accounts of insurgency are produced by officials and these accounts are then transformed into secondary discourses by official reports and biographies or memoirs long after the original accounts were produced. These transformations are then redistributed through tertiary discourses by historians (scholars) who have no direct link with the event, in time and association, being reconstructed. In so doing a "code of counter-insurgence" is present in the primary discourse that is transformed in the secondary discourse and redistributed in the tertiary discourse. This code lends itself to a paradigm in which the insurgents' subjectivity and agency is not acknowledged. The appropriation of the insurgent is thus constituted by a "code of pacification", produced and transformed, that shapes the tertiary discourse when scholars fail to read the presence of the insurgent or as Guha posits, "the refusal to acknowledge the insurgent as the subject of his [her] own history." [43]

If the primary discourse is meant to represent the official discourse of the state (the Raj for Guha), then I would like to suggest thinking of both the 'official' non-state (ANC and UDF) discourse and the apartheid state discourse on necklacing, as representing that primary level. Whereas for Guha, the official colonial discourse on peasant insurgencies in India elides, or rather silences peasant insurgents by a "code of pacification" where, "insurgency is regarded as external to the peasant's consciousness and Cause is made to stand in as a phantom surrogate for Reason, the logic of that consciousness",[44] the 'official' non-state discourse on necklacing is not so much silent as it is constituted by what I suggest is a prose of ambivalence. This prose of ambivalence comes to the fore in relation to both the interplay between the dominant discourses on the practice of necklacing, that of the apartheid state and that of the 'official' non-state and of the assignation of the practice to more than one category as shown in Chapter Two.

---

[42] R. Guha, 'The Prose of Counter - Insurgency' in *Subaltern Studies Volume 11* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1983).
[43] R. Guha, 'The Prose of Counter Insurgency', 82.
[44] R. Guha, 'The Prose of Counter Insurgency', 46-47.

One needs to keep in mind that it is approximately twenty-five years since the practice of necklacing became prominent and received widespread attention. The implication of this is that the primary, secondary and tertiary discourses of necklacing are blurred. It is blurred because of the immediacy of the dominant necklacing discourses to its constituting members, official and affiliated. Guha posits that one of the distinctive features of the primary discourse is its immediacy in that, "statements of this class were written either concurrently with or soon after the event and…this was done by the participants concerned, a 'participant' being defined for this purpose in the broad sense of a contemporary involved in the event either in action or indirectly as an onlooker."[45] I would add that the category 'participant' for the purpose of this thesis also be thought of as including commentators that were onlookers in a broad sense. In other words, individuals that may not have been physically present at necklace killings but with a vested interest in the anti-apartheid struggle.[46]

Social history or 'history from below' has attempted to recover histories of previously dominated groups, the 'ordinary people', and in so doing has tried to acknowledge and recover subaltern subjectivity and agency.[47] Nicky Rousseau, in an elaboration of social

---

[45] Guha continues by stating that this loose defining of 'participant' excludes, "that genre of retrospective writing in which, as in some memoirs, an event and its recall are separated by a considerable hiatus, but still leave a massive documentation – 'primary sources' as it is known in the trade - to speak to the historian witah a sort of ancestral voice and make him [her] feel close to his [her] subject." See R. Guha, 'Prose of Counter-Insurgency', 48.

[46] In this regard, I find Mark Sanders argument intriguing. He argues that, "after apartheid, the question of complicity is unavoidable…The history of the intellectual and apartheid – whether of support, accommodation, or resistance – can…be deciphered not by fixing on apartness alone, but by tracking interventions, marked by degrees of affirmation and disavowel, in a continuum of foldedness or responsibility-in-complicity. What makes apartheid exemplary for a study of the intellectual and complicity is the paradox that, while supporters disavowed or sought to limit foldedness with the other, opponents, through striving to minimize acting-in-complicity with the agents of apartheid and its policies, tended to acknowledge, affirm, and generalize responsibility-in-complicity." Whilst this is not the argument I am making, it does partially resonate with the re-articulation of the dominant 'official' non-state discourse on necklacing that, as I argue in Chapter Three, is evident in scholarly works on the practice of necklacing. See M. Sanders, *Complicities: The Intellectual and Apartheid* (London: Duke University Press, 2002), 11-12.

[47] I am grateful to Leslie Witz who has pointed out to me that South African social historians would not use the term 'subaltern' to explain the work they do. I, however, do find the term useful in thinking through the work of social history in South Africa. By invoking the term 'subaltern', I follow Premesh Lalu who argues that the combining of the notions 'subaltern' with "subjection of agency", "allows for a distance between those forms of narration which seek to recover subaltern agency at the expense of attending to how the reinscription of the subject into the discourse of history produces repetition, not difference." See P. Lalu, *The Deaths of Hintsa: Postapartheid South Africa and the Shape of Recurring Pasts* (Cape Town: HSRC

history's relation to interdisciplinarity in South Africa in the 1980's and early 1990's, argues that it has an, "uncomfortable relationship to theory…not…only contemporary social and critical literary theories but psychoanalysis, critical geography, language studies – indeed, virtually any discipline where it is not possible 'to strip-mine' or 'gut' for useful empirical facts or context."[48] I want to suggest conversely that scholarly works, in making sense of the practice of necklacing have engaged, wittingly or unwittingly and despite their disciplinary reasoning, the social history paradigm of recovery.[49]

In large measure, this has been enabled by a turn to what can be thought of as perpetrator consciousness in which the agency of the subject (perpetrator) is at the centre.This however, sees the subject of necklacing (re)constituted in a language of 'perpetrators', and in understanding, has the un-intended consequence of silencing the 'victim's' of necklace killings and arguably therefore, eliding the very violence of necklacing. Acknowledging subaltern subjectivity and agency therefore does not necessarily amount to a recovery of subaltern autonomy because subalternity by definition signifies the impossibility of autonomy.[50] Thus in relation to Guha's levels of historical discourses, ambivalence, I suggest, is articulated and re-articulated because these scholarly works run up against a limit of a dominant resistance paradigm at making sense of the practice of necklacing.

Arguably, the turn to perpetrator consciousness has been a part of a coming to terms with a larger national liberation struggle history. Sapire posits that former revolutionaries, now presiding over governments (the South African government) are, "legitimising their past actions and contemporary policies" and that this provides "political saliency" to the "recovery" of liberation struggle histories.[51] The phrasing of Sapire suggests a causal link

---

Press, 2008), 23.
[48] See N. Rousseau, 'Popular History in South Africa in the 1980's: the Politics of Production', Unpublished MA thesis, University of the Western Cape (April 1994), 112-113.
[49] For an interesting critique leveled against the social sciences broadly regarding 'the politics of historical interpretation', see H. White, *The Content of the Form: Narrative Discourse and Historical Representation* (Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press, 1990), 73-75.
[50] See G. Prakash, 'Subaltern Studies as Postcolonial Criticism' in *The American Historical Review,* Vol. 99, No. 5 (December, 1994), 1480.
[51] H. Sapire, 'Liberation Movements, Exile, and International Solidarity', 271.

between legitimising past actions with legitimising contemporary policies, a point that Ciraj Rassool and Terence Ranger have highlighted.

Rassool has explored the question of nationalism through what he has called the 'biographic order' in South Africa. The 'biographic order' can be understood as the production of biographies with the aim of furthering nationalist, or rather nation-building, histories as evident in South Africa post-1994.[52] The notions of nation building histories that rely on biographic modes to (re)construct and strengthen meta-narratives of resistance and eventual liberation may have the unintended consequence of producing patriotic histories that instead of affirming nationalist narratives run contrary to those narratives. Those meta-narratives themselves are embedded in discourse with the nation state and modernity and the tension between colonial and postcolonial (in South Africa, apartheid and postapartheid as well). Terence Ranger draws a distinction between 'patriotic history' and 'nationalist history' and explores this problematic in relation to the current crisis in Zimbabwe. He argues: "[T]here has arisen a new variety of historiography …'patriotic history'. It is different from and narrower than the old nationalist historiography, which celebrated aspiration and modernization as well as resistance."[53]

However, I want to suggest that it is not merely a causal link in the sense of history's complicity in nationalist projects. The relationship between contemporary policies and past actions that Sapire alludes to, suggests rather an oscillatory relationship, somewhat

---

[52] Indeed, Rassool argues that, "the heart of the very constitution of the post-apartheid nation and its citizenry has been a biographic mode, constituting what we can think of as a 'biographic order', a discursive complex of framing and understanding society, memory and the constitution of persons." See C. Rassool, '"The biographic order": further notes on biography in South African public culture after apartheid', paper presented at the Institutions of Public Culture Workshop, Cape Town (7-9 July 2005), 2.
[53] T. Ranger, 'Nationalist Historiography, Patriotic History and the History of the Nation: the Struggle over the Past in Zimbabwe' in *Journal of Southern African Studies*, Vol. 30, No. 2 (June 2004), 218. Similarly, Dipesh Chakrabarty argues that, "'History' as a knowledge system is firmly embedded in institutional practices that invoke the nation state at every step - witness the organization and politics of teaching, recruitment, promotions, and publication in history departments, politics that survive the occasional brave and heroic attempts by individual historians to liberate 'history' from the meta-narrative of the nation state." See D. Chakrabarty, 'Postcoloniality and the Artifice of History: Who Speaks for "Indian Pasts?"' in *Representations*, No. 37 (Winter 1992), 19.

similar to Ian Baucom's "repetition through oscillation" theory.[54] Baucom posits that, "as time passes the past does not wane but intensifies; as history repeats itself it repeats in neither attenuated nor farcical form but by 'redeeming' the what-has-been, 'awakening' it into a fuller more intense, form."[55] Reading Walter Benjamin's 'Philosophy of History', Baucom cites Benjamin: "It is not that what is past casts its light on what is present, or what is present its light on what is past; rather…what has been comes together with the now to form a constellation."[56] It is in this sense I wish to argue that the spectre of necklacing constitutes something like a history of the present.

Histories of violence, such as that of the practice of necklacing in apartheid South Africa, have to contend with the question of how to make such histories narratable. Here, I am intrigued by the work of the Indian historian Gyanendra Pandey who highlights ways in which disciplinary history has dealt with violence.[57] Pandey argues for histories of struggle that usually accompany histories of violence (for him, the Partition in India and for me, South Africa's liberation struggle) not to be separated. By not separating the two, "a history of contending politics and contending subject positions" becomes possible that allows for something like a history of the present.[58] In relation to Pandey's questioning that is engaged with in Chapter Four of the present thesis, I am concerned with asking how necklacing as a manifestation of the violence that 'accompanied' the liberation struggle in South Africa fit into the contours of disciplinary history. In other words, can disciplinary history account for necklacing without running up against an impasse of making that history (non)narratable?

---

[54] See I. Baucom, *Specters of the Atlantic: Finance Capital, Slavery, and The Philosophy of History* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2005), 28.

[55] I. Baucom, *Specters of the Atlantic*, 21- 22.

[56] I. Baucom, *Specters of the Atlantic*, 29.

[57] G. Pandey, *Remembering Partition: Violence, Nationalism and History in India* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001).

[58] G. Pandey, *Remembering Partition*, 4-5. My understanding of this Foucauldian notion relates to a reading of Michael S. Roth: "writing a history *of* the present means writing a history *in* the present; self-consciously writing in a field of power relations and political struggle." Roth suggests that in Foucault positing something like a history of the present, the implication is that the past is uncovered so as to "rupture the present into a future that will leave the very function of history behind it; a future that will have no need of a past to be endlessly recaptured, but that will be situated merely 'in the scattering of the profound stream of time.'" See M. S. Roth, 'Foucault's "History of the Present" in *History and Theory*, Vol. 20, No. 1 (Feb., 1981), 43- 4.

In problematising the relationships between history, violence and nation, I treat the event of violence (the necklacing) as a serious object of study rather than turning away.[59] The implications of this may allow for a possibility of reconceptualising ways in which history in relation to statehood, nation and indeed, violence, are (re)articulated, (re)appropriated and (re)constructed for the purposes of historical, political, moral and ethical legitimacy.

I argue that history has not "*swallowed the necklace*". This research, whilst a few years short of Alfred's prediction that prefaces this Introduction, engages necklacing via the discourses through which it has been filtered. Those discourses constitute the liberation movements, specifically the ANC and the UDF; the apartheid state and its institutions (media); as well as disciplinary knowledge (history/archive, anthropology, psychology, literary theory and political science) including the TRC. This thesis then is neither a history of the ANC nor a history of the UDF, nor one about the apartheid state, neither is it a history of the practice of necklacing itself in a conventional sense. Rather, this thesis is an examination of the refusal of necklacing to be forgotten.

Brief chapter outline

In the following chapter, 'On apartheid state discourse in relation to the practice of necklacing', I suggest that the apartheid state responded to the rise of the practice through its broader discourse on violence associated with resistance. I examine the ways in which the apartheid state responded to the practice of necklacing within a discursive war, via propaganda strategies, constituted through competing claims of legitimacy over the use of violence. The apartheid state characterised the practice of necklacing as 'black-on-black' violence, with attending and racialised notions of barbarity, savagery. Through assigning 'ownership' of the practice to the ANC and UDF, I show that the state attempted to argue that its repressive measures were legitimate and therefore justifiable. In so doing I suggest that the state mainly set the discursive terrain on necklacing in the mid 1980's in

---

[59] By event, I follow Foucault's formulation that an event, "is not a decision, a treaty, a reign, or a battle, but the reversal of a relationship of forces, the usurpation of power, the appropriation of a vocabulary turned against those who once used it, a feeble domination that poisons itself as it grows lax, the entry of a masked 'other'." See M. Foucault, 'Nietzsche, Genealogy, History', 154.

the absence of a clear response from the liberation movements, specifically, the ANC and UDF to the question of necklacing.

That there was not a clear response from the ANC and UDF did not mean there was no response. In Chapter Two, 'On 'official' non-state discourse in relation to the practice of necklacing', I show that a number of key statements were made by leading figures in the ANC and the UDF regarding attacks on suspected collaborators including the practice of necklacing. In examining what was said about the killing of suspected collaborators and/or the practice of necklacing, I argue that those public positions produced a prose of ambivalence.

I suggest that the ANC and UDF were caught in a double bind. They could not explicitly condemn the practice and risk losing their mass support base, or explicitly condone the practice and risk losing the support of important internal and international constituencies thereby giving the apartheid state the upper hand in a discursive war on the moral and political legitimacy over using violence. Yet importantly, that ambivalence was not merely a tactical one. For underlying the 'official' non-state discourse on the practice of necklacing was/is an inherent formulation of the binary of resistance and oppression/repression. The practice understood within this framework could only be rendered as state violence or resistance. In rendering it as the latter, though uncomfortably so, the ANC and UDF proposed that it be understood within a causal framework, as the result of oppression/repression. Ambivalence about the practice of necklacing thus, I argue, was produced in the interstice of the resistance – oppression/repression binary. Leading from this, I argue more broadly that the problematic of violence within the ANC has a far longer history.

In asking how sense of the practice of necklacing has been made in scholarly works, Chapter Three, 'Making sense of the practice of necklacing', points to the inextricable bounded-ness of necklacing to both the apartheid state's larger discourse on violent resistance and attempts by the 'official' non-state to counter that discourse. As pointed out earlier in this Introduction, there is a small but significant body of work on the

practice of necklacing, though the discipline of history has been especially silent. Through examining the most substantial works produced on the practice, I show that the engagement is inter-disciplinary, though specifically within frameworks of collective violence, witchcraft and ritual although these frameworks overlap to some extent. Those analyses, however, operate within an overarching resistance paradigm characterised as political violence. I argue that a resistance paradigm points to limits of what is said about violence that is politically motivated and more so in the case of necklacing that has ambivalence as a symptom of its rationalisation. Ambivalence, I suggest, is articulated and re-articulated precisely because these scholarly works run up against the limit of a dominant resistance paradigm at making sense of the practice of necklacing.

Indeed, the dominant discourses on necklacing, relational as they are, converge and diverge at the nexus over competing claims of the 'ownership', akin to a 'politics of ownership', of both the practice of necklacing and its discourses. Chapter Four therefore, '"A difficult legacy"?: Writing necklacing into a history of liberation struggle in South Africa', points to the persistence of the interplay of the dominant discourses that is still visible in 'official' histories of the liberation struggle in South Africa. By 'official' histories, I refer specifically to the way in which the liberation movement (read the ANC) constructs a history of the struggle and more importantly, their (non)articulation of necklacing through testimonies and submissions at the TRC as well as subsequent histories. In particular, I examine *Every Step of the Way: The Journey to Freedom in South Africa* (2004), a text produced under the auspices of the current ANC government and ask how necklacing is rendered (non)narratable in relation to struggle histories constructed under the rubric of the nation. Stated differently, I ask how necklacing is rendered intelligible as part of a national history of struggle.

In so doing I pose the question of the extent to which nationalist histories elide violence in favour of larger political projects, namely nation building and nationhood. Guided by some of the work of the Subaltern Studies Collective, I examine and question the ways in which disciplinary history works in constructing narratives of struggle that marginalise moments of violence in favour of grand narratives of nation and progress. A further

question prompted by this examination asks what it might mean to write necklacing into a history of liberation struggle in South Africa that is not bound to the dominant discourses on necklacing and indeed, whether this is possible.

The final chapter, 'By way of a conclusion', examines a 'Letter from the President', written in 2007 by former ANC and South African president, Thabo Mbeki. In so doing, I re-state some of the more salient issues that this thesis raises. I suggest that necklacing refuses to be forgotten precisely because of its ambivalence. Indeed, it may be that the inescapable ambivalence of necklacing is the condition for the possibility that it will always also be remembered.

Chapter One
On the apartheid state discourse in relation to the practice of necklacing

> We know what happened "in Duduza in the 1980s". We know who the people
> were who are described as "a mob", and what the apartheid regime did to them.
> We know that it was the late Oliver Tambo, President of the ANC, who
> intervened and stopped the "necklacing" originally started by agents of the
> apartheid regime (*ANC Today*, 21 January 2005). [1]

Part of the difficulty of writing necklacing into the narrative of struggle history arises in relation to the apartheid state's attempt at assigning the emergence of the practice to the ANC and UDF. For the state, this was aimed at de-legitimising them and thus the anti-apartheid struggle more broadly. The aim of this chapter therefore is to examine the emergence of the apartheid state's discourse in relation to the practice of necklacing. I suggest that the apartheid state responded to the practice within a discursive war – strategies of propaganda - constituted through competing claims of legitimacy over the use of violence.

I begin by providing a broad overview of the apartheid state's strategies of responding to increasing, local and global, anti-apartheid sentiment as well as the intensification of violent resistance in the 1980's. These strategies aimed to serve both the state's reformist projects as well as attempt to curtail the rising levels of political violence in South Africa. The state's 'counter-revolutionary warfare' strategy, as will be discussed, was formulated as a shift in belief that 'unrest' had to be dealt with first and via security measures as opposed to its earlier strategy in which it's reform project was seen as central. In particular, I draw attention to the constitutive elements of a propaganda strategy and show that in characterising the practice of necklacing as an excess of 'black-on-black' violence, with its attending notions of barbarity and racial perceptions, the apartheid state attempted to argue that its repressive measures were legitimate and therefore justifiable.

---

[1] 'Who shall set the national agenda?' in *ANC Today*, Vol. 5, No. 3 (21 January 2005). This statement was in reference to Archbishop Tutu and icons in the legacy of struggle history. It formed part of a wider debate about who should set the ANC's national agenda.
http://www.anc.org.za/ancdocs/anctoday/2005/at03.htm
Duduza was one of the key areas in which Operation Zero Zero unfolded and was where Maki Skosana was killed. I discuss this in more detail later in this chapter.

In so doing however, the state inadvertently unmasked the limits of its power: representations that relied on barbarism reinforced a specific kind of racial perception that ran counter to the state's reform project of winning over black moderates.

Apartheid state discourse on violence

Most scholarly works dealing with the inner workings of the apartheid state during the 1980's, predominantly focus on what has been termed the militarisation of the South African state.[2] South Africa was arguably a "state of exception" for the latter part of the 1980's, with numerous emergency powers inaugurated since 21 July 1985 and the increasing presence of the defence force in townships during the latter part of the 1980's.[3]

Since the Soweto Uprising of 1976, the apartheid state saw it as necessary to implement policies that could respond to increasing opposition to its governance that often took a violent form. Whilst violence was frequently in response to the state's violent measures in quelling such opposition, for the state, it was a 'total onslaught' being directed by the ANC. It is in this sense, that South Africa of the 1980's has been characterised as a period of reform, repression and resistance.[4] In particular and of relevance to an apartheid state discourse on the practice of necklacing, was the shift of what the state called a 'total

[2] Most of the scholarly works on the apartheid state were in fact written during the 1980's and very little scholarly work has been written since then. See for example K. W. Grundy, *The Militarization of South African Politics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988); P. Frankel, N. Pines and M. Swilling (eds.), *State, Resistance and Change in South Africa* (Johannesburg: Southern Book Publishers (Pty) Ltd, 1988); J. Cock and l. Nathan (eds.), *War and Society: The Militarisation of South Africa* (Cape Town: David Philip, 1989). See especially G. Moss and I. Obery (eds.), *South African Review* (Johannesburg: Raven Press, 1987 and 1988), Volumes 4 and 5. For a more recent and journalistic account of the strategies of the apartheid state and the "behind- the- scenes machinations of South Africa's security apparatus in the apartheid era", see D.W. Potgieter, *Total Onslaught: Apartheid's Dirty Tricks Exposed* (Cape Town: Zebra Press, 2007).

[3] Though outside the scope of the larger question this thesis seeks to examine, it would be interesting if the apartheid state of the 1980's was examined closely in relation to Giorgio Agamben's notion of "the state of exception." Agamben posits that, "[t]he essential task of a theory of the state of exception is not simply to clarify whether it has a juridical nature or not, but to define the meaning, place, and modes of its relation to the law." See G. Agamben, *State of Exception*, trans. by K. Attell (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2005), 51. In this regard, Richard Abel's examination of some of the major political trials of anti-apartheid activists during 1980-1994, engages the question of how/if law can constrain political power. Thus his work provides a possible point of departure for an examination of the apartheid state in relation to Agamben's notion of "the state of exception". See R.L. Abel, *Politics by Other Means: Law in the Struggle Against Apartheid, 1980-1994* (London: Routledge, 1995).

[4] M. Swilling and M. Phillips, 'State Power in the 1980's: from "total strategy" to "counter-revolutionary warfare"' in J. Cock and L. Nathan (eds.), *War and Society: The Militarisation of South Africa* (Cape Town: David Philip, 1989), 135. See also J.Dugard, N. Haysom and G.Marcus (eds.), *The Last Years of Apartheid: Civil Liberties in South Africa* (Ford Foundation – Foreign Policy Association, 1992).

strategy' to a strategy termed 'counter-revolutionary warfare' that was largely spearheaded by South Africa's security establishment. Mark Swilling and Mark Phillips argue that the state's reform strategy:

> [p]artially restructured the citizenry's access to political society. It promoted new forms of partial inclusion of the unenfranchised into the formal, officially sanctioned institutions of political society. This reformist impulse was formulated primarily by the security establishment. It failed when the consequences of apartheid policies triggered new social movements in civil society in the early 1980's. Articulating their interests chiefly through a national front in political society – the United Democratic Front (UDF) - these social movements rapidly mounted a challenge to state power. In response, the government declared a partial state of emergency in mid-1985. Elements within the state attempted to extend the reform programme beyond its original parameters to dowse the flames of resistance with 'more concessions'. When these measures failed to achieve their objective, a national state of emergency was declared and the security establishment implemented a new and more penetrating, repressive-reform strategy. This 'counter-revolutionary warfare' strategy aimed at reconstituting the fundamental bases of civil society prior to altering the rules of political society. The new strategy, [started] from the assumption that 'total strategy' failed because it left civil society intact. Learning from experiences in Latin America and south-east Asia, the security establishment [attempted] to unite the state and political society around a long term programme whose goal [was] to restructure social hierarchies 'from below'.[5]

Swilling and Phillips posit that the security establishment were largely influenced by the work of a US army official, Colonel John J. McCuen, in particular his book, *The Art of Counter-Revolutionary War*.[6] In that book, according to Swilling and Phillips, McCuen identified four stages of revolutionary warfare; the organisational, terrorist, guerilla and mobile warfare stages. The authors posit that according to McCuen, the task of the state is to, "determine which phase the revolutionaries are in and then use the direction of that phase and turn it back on itself."[7] Stephen Ellis argues that by September 1986, former South African president P.W Botha had ordered that a largely summarised version of McCuen, penned by former army chief, Lieutenant-General Alan 'Pop' Fraser, be translated into Afrikaans and circulated amongst senior officials of the State Security

---

[5] M. Swilling and M. Phillips, 'State Power in the 1980's', 134-135.
[6] M. Swilling and M. Phillips, 'State Power in the 1980's', 144.
[7] Cited in M. Swilling and M. Phillips, 'State Power in the 1980's', 144.

Council (SSC).[8] This text was similarly predicated on the idea that the style of revolutionary warfare could be countered by using the same technique, but in reverse.

The mid 1980's thus saw the apartheid state engaged in an elaboration of counter-guerilla, counter-terror and counter-organisational tactics. Swilling and Phillips proceed to cite a, "high-ranking State Security Council official" as saying: "We have studied counter-revolutionary tactics in Malaysia, Chile, El Salvador. We're using the same hearts-and-minds techniques here. First we neutralize the enemy, then we win over the people [read 'moderate-blacks'] so they will reject the ANC."[9] This 'win hearts and minds' strategy, according to Swilling and Phillips, was integral to the 'counter-revolutionary warfare' strategy that the apartheid state adopted from late 1985.[10]

With the adoption of 'total strategy', the apartheid state formed the National Management System (NMS). The NMS comprised the National Security Management System (NSMS) and the National Welfare Management System (NWMS). Responsibility for the NSMS rested with the SSC, which was established in June 1972 but only activated in the late 1970's. The central aim of the NMS was to ensure that all branches of the state responded in a coordinated manner to what was regarded as a revolutionary threat from the ANC. These structures, headed by the security establishment, can be regarded as the seat of power for the apartheid state during the 1980's.[11] Methods used to counter the 'revolutionary threat' included cross-border operations, strategic communication operations (STRATCOM), extra-judicial killings inside South Africa and other covert operations.[12]

---

[8] The name of General Fraser's book is 'Revolutionary Warfare: Basic Principles of Counter-Insurgency'. The book had restricted circulation. See S. Ellis, 'The Historical Significance of South Africa's Third Force' in *Journal of Southern African Studies*, Vol. 24, No. 2 (June 1998), footnotes 24 and 57, 275.

[9] M. Swilling and M. Phillips, 'State Power in the 1980's', 145.

[10] M. Swilling and M. Phillips, 'State Power in the 1980's', 143.

[11] See M. Swilling and M. Phillips, 'The Emergency State: Its Structure, Power and Limits' in G. Moss and I. Obery (eds.), *South African Review 5* (Johannesburg: Ravan Press, 1989), 77-82.

[12] M. Swilling and M. Phillips, 'The Emergency State', 84. Those covert operations can be understood as including the strategy of 'counter-actions', 'counter-mobilisation' or 'contra-mobilisation' that was "used to organise and support 'moderate blacks' to oppose the revolutionary movements. Of necessity, it was a covert strategy – concealing the hand of the state as provider of logistical, political and financial support – and making use of 'surrogate' forces. Hence, the state would not be seen to be involved in the conflict and violence between groupings and the resistance organisations." See TRC *Report* Vol. 2 (Cape Town: Juta,

While 'total strategy' and 'counter-revolutionary warfare' provided broad strategic direction, the concern here is to focus on the apartheid state's discursive war – what it called strategic communications (STRATCOM) or communications operations (COMOPS). Indeed, a component of the SSC, the Strategic Communications Branch, was responsible for formulating policies regarding this discursive war.[13] What discursive methods did the apartheid state employ to counter violent resistance? In particular, how did it respond discursively to the rise of burnings and necklace killings?

Seemingly the strategies of the apartheid state, particularly the aspects of 'counter-revolutionary warfare' discussed above, related to resistance strategies of the ANC. The ANC's resistance against the apartheid state, specifically its call for a 'Peoples' War' in 1985 that legitimated attacks on 'collaborators' (police officers, local town councillors and suspected informers, amongst others), was complemented by its own propaganda campaign.[14] The objectives of this campaign included the isolation of South Africa through the imposition of sanctions as well as the positioning of the ANC as holding the moral high ground in relation to the apartheid state's all encompassing oppressive and repressive governance.[15]
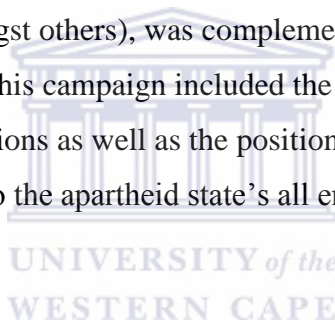
The discursive war waged by the apartheid state was not a strategy that operated in isolation from other strategies of 'counter-revolutionary warfare'. It is with this in mind that I proceed to ask what the constitutive elements of that discursive war were and how they operated in relation to the emergence of the practice of necklacing. As will be argued in the following chapter, the initial hesitancy on the part of the liberation movement, notably the ANC and UDF, to the question of necklacing enabled the

---

1998), 297-312. It is suggestive that this strategy can be linked to what was known as the 'third-force' theory that received widespread attention, particularly in the early 1990's when political violence threatened the negotiation process leading to South Africa's first democratic elections. See for example S. Ellis, 'The Historical Significance of South Africa's Third Force', 261-299.

[13] See for example TRC *Report*, Vol. 2, 316.

[14] See amongst others, T. Lodge and B. Nasson, *All, Here, and Now: Black Politics in South Africa in the 1980's* (Cape Town: Ford Foundation – David Philip, 1991).

[15] Whilst this view is generally known, see for example how it was spelled out clearly in an October 1985 interview with ANC president Oliver Tambo in London with *Cape Times* editor, Anthony Heard. See 'Interview to Anthony Heard, Editor of *Cape Times*, October 1985' http://www.anc.org.za/ancdocs/history/or/or85-12.html

apartheid state to set the discursive terrain on necklacing and thus (in part) the ambivalence that was to characterise the ANC and UDF's discourse on the practice of necklacing.

Constitutive elements of a discursive war

The discursive war waged by the apartheid state was one in which support was sought, from both its white constituency and so called 'moderate blacks', through constructing certain perceptions of violent resistance that would lend sustenance to the state's larger reform policies as mentioned above. For example, a secret memo that was circulated to all members of the SSC by the former deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr. D J Louis Nel on the 12th November 1984 (two months after the outbreak of the Vaal uprisings[16]) outlined key aspects of this strategy.[17]

The memo began by listing certain objectives/aims that all members of the SSC were to carry out, "[w]ithin the total framework of existing strategies, and with the specific need for coordinated counter-actions in the area of psychological action." These objectives included for example withholding credit and publicity from the organisers [such as the UDF] of "*unrest*", particularly any positive social and political recognition. Channeling

---

[16] On the 3 September 1984 violence broke out in the Vaal townships, close to Johannesburg. According to Tom Lodge and Bill Nasson, two major grievances laid behind the violence that propelled more sustained violent resistance throughout the country; apartheid state educational policies and charges against municipal councillors. It is the second grievance that is of more relevance to this thesis. Rent increases by local black authorities (part of the states reform project) saw community councillors responsible for enforcing and collecting rentals from township residents. Though as in the case of Benjamin Kinikini, some councillors profited financially and often had the protection of state sanctioned vigilantes to protect them. In this sense, community councillors were regarded as collaborators with the apartheid 'system' as discussed in the following chapter. See T. Lodge and B. Nasson, *All, Here, And Now*, 65-78. See also amongst others, R. M. Price, *The Apartheid State in Crises: Political Transformation in South Africa 1975-1990* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), 192-200.

[17] D. J Louis Nel (Adjunk-Minister van Buitelandse Sake), 'Aan alle lede van die Staatsveiligheidsraad: Onlussituasies: Voorgestelde Terminologiese Riglyne Vir Amptelike Segsmanne', [To all members of the State Security Council: Unrest Situation: Proposed Terminological Guidelines for Official Authorities], (12 November 1984). Translation of memo my own.
http://www.disa.ukzn.ac.za/index.php?option=com_displaydc&recordID=mem19841112.040.024.084
Julie Frederikse discusses a similar memo in relation to the states 'psychological warfare' of the mid-1980s. See J. Frederikse, 'South Africa's Media: The Commercial Press and the Seedlings of the Future' in *Third World Quarterly*, Vol. 9, No. 2 (April 1987), 639-640. For a sense of the state's propaganda strategies in the 1970's, see G. Hull, 'South Africa's Propaganda War: A Biblographic Essay' in *African Studies Review*, Vol. 22, No. 3 (Dec., 1979), 79-98.

the rage of the "*innocent masses*" against "*criminal activity*", [as opposed to the political aspirations of organisations like the UDF and ANC] was another objective.

Similarly, another objective was to feed both domestic and international public opinion on "the *criminal nature* of so called activities and the uselessness of violence." This was to be complimented by referring to violence as "*black-on-black*" violence although, "not necessarily emphasising it." The final objective was to support the initiatives in creating an atmosphere that would promote peaceful change [read here the reform strategies]. A special remark was made in the memo that stated, "[t]hese guidelines must be seen as complimentary to the SSC – STRATCOM – investigation into 'atmosphere creation.'" The memo continued by stating:

> It is proposed that both government and the SABC [South African Broadcasting Corporation], in their dealings with suburban unrest (in other words; interpretations, comments etc), follow a specific/decided thinking pattern/mentality. The setting of such a thinking pattern happens according to certain psychological principles that lead the listener/reader to view suburban unrests within a fixed given frame.

This, according to the memo, was "*thought manipulation*". A section in the memo titled "Important" read as follows:

> It must be emphasized that the proposed terminologies must only be viewed as conceptual guideline. Upon implementation there must still be depended on the discretion and resourcefulness of the authorities. One general warning to the latter: The audience of an official authority is never limited to his own listeners/constituency.

Following this, emphasis, according to the memo, should fall mainly on specific common-law crimes and should mostly avoid references to crimes with a political connotation. In other words, the terminology to be used should include terms such as "arsonists", "looters", "murderers" and "muggers". The memo stated that when it was practically impossible to refer to specific common law crimes, descriptions such as: "rioters", "boycotters", "protestors", must be avoided and where applicable, replaced with descriptions such as "hooligans", "vandals" and "thugs". In relation to this, the memo stated:

> The status of the instigator escalates when he is associated with widespread unrests/actions. It is proposed as a guideline that the militant organizations (ANC,

UDF etc.) rather be linked to individual atrocities (eg. car bombs) rather than with mass action.

It was suggested in the memo that emphasis be further detracted away from mass action and concentration should rather be focused on individual acts of violence. The emphasis on the "human factor", it was suggested, should also be given importance in that publicity to the 'victims' of violent actions would propagate sympathy and disapproval. This should be done in such a way that, "unity be established amongst the victims. This unity will set the foundation for *counter-actions* [read a strategy of counter-mobilisation] in leadership."[18]

The memo proceeded to give examples, in relation to the terminologies to be used; the emphasis on innocent victims of criminal offences; and what the memo called "the Machismo factor" - "the perception of the street thug of his manhood/masculinity is connected to his 'heroism' and 'bravado' when he confronts danger. Emphasising the cowardly nature of most acts of violence will undermine his own perception and that of the public." These examples included:

> "…drunken vandals ransacked the beerhall (Note: alcohol abuse is rejected by responsible black people)"

> "…the hooligans ran away when a police car arrived (Note: 'ran away' in place of 'dispersed')"

> "…the sixty-year old grandfather was the victim of a cowardly attack by a gang of thugs wielding iron bars, chains…"

The memo concluded with the following recommendations:

> -The systematic application on a coordinated basis of the mentioned terminology as a high priority.
> -The consideration of this within the framework of STRATCOM strategies in connection with the atmosphere for orderly, peaceful governance.
> -Priority attention and publicity to political initiatives related to the key questions on the domestic political front such as consultations with black political leaderships.[19]

---

[18] The notion of "counter-actions" can be thought of as 'counter-mobilisation' or 'contra-mobilisation' strategies. See footnote 12 of this chapter.
[19] D. J Louis Nel, 'Aan alle lede van die Staatsveiligheidsraad: Onlussituasies: Voorgestelde

The detail with which the memo advocates a strategy of "thought manipulation", such as providing examples of the ways in which the type of terminology it advocated was to be used, is indeed striking. So too was the concerted effort at removing any trace of political dissent from political violence, thereby rendering the perception of such violence as non-political and criminal in nature. What this secret memo allows one to discern therefore is the 'manipulation' of language - terminologies - in the construction of perceptions that the apartheid state wanted the public, both local and international, to have of the escalating violence and in so doing, justifying the state's response to it. Notions such as 'black-on-black' violence (the implications of this terminology are discussed later in the chapter), "unrest", "innocent masses" and "counter-actions" were used daily in both televised and print media. I want to proceed by showing how the objectives outlined in the memo were employed in the apartheid state discourse in relation to the practice of necklacing.

During the mid 1980's, the state suggested that violence in the townships of South Africa was not to be seen as acts of political resistance. Rather it was more the criminal elements taking advantage of the "*unrest*" situation. Indeed, all forms of political dissent and violence were characterised as "*unrest*". In a 1985 interview with the Minister of Law and Order, Louis Le Grange, a journalist asked the following question: "The *unrest* now seems part of our daily lives. It has spread throughout the country. Can the chain of violence be broken?" Le Grange responded by saying: "The type of *unrest* situation we have can't be coped with according to a calendar. One must have the patience and accept that it is the aim of any revolutionary to keep a revolutionary climate alive as long as possible… a revolutionary climate being created by revolutionaries." In response to the question: "To what extent is the *unrest* purely criminal as opposed to politically motivated?" Le Grange replied: "There is a strong *criminal element* present, which is normally one of the results of an *unrest* situation. It is a pity that *these criminal elements* are operating against their own people and that the loss of life, injuries and damage to property as a result of riots are being directed by *blacks against blacks*."[20]

Terminologiese Riglyne Vir Amptelike Segsmanne' (12 November 1984). My emphasis.
[20] L. Le Grange, 'All is under control' in *Financial Mail* (7 June 1985). My emphasis.

One can read in the above statements an explicit attempt to remove the political from violence so that it appeared criminal and irrational. There was also a concerted attempt at claiming the victims of the 'unrest' as belonging to the state, very much in line with the state's larger reform project. Another example of this would be an interview with Adriaan Vlok in 1985, then Deputy Minister of Law and Order and Deputy Minster of Defense when he stated: "We, the security forces, are the friends of the black people. We are not the enemy and we want to show this to the blacks, by way, for instance, of a personal presence in the townships…."[21] That "personal presence in the townships", as mentioned earlier, included the use of the SADF together with the SAP in controlling township activities.

With increasing anti-apartheid sentiment, from 1985 onwards, most information regarding violence in townships filtered through the apartheid state's Bureau of Information and most daily newspapers would have "unrest reports", also called "unrest maps" – "the daily map of South Africa giving a geographical, 24-hour breakdown of unrest nationwide."[22] The SAP and the SADF supplied that filtered information. However, there was rising criticism against the SAP and the SADF after the Vaal uprisings of 1984.[23] In particular, a damning report written by the Catholic Church, released on the 6 December 1984 after a Southern African Catholic Bishops Conference (SACBC), drew attention to "irregular police activity." This activity it was argued, resulted in, "indiscriminate use of firearms, birdshot, rubber bullets and teargas, assaults and beatings, damage to property, callous or insensitive conduct, and particularly provocative conduct at funerals of people killed by police who, it says, harboured the belief they were 'at war' with township residents."[24] Thus with the Uitenhage shooting, or the so named Langa massacre, on the 20 March 1985, (see Introduction) the SAP was under close public and international scrutiny.

[21] A. Vlok, 'Authority and defiance' in *Financial Mail* (19 April 1985).
[22] T. Weaver, 'Maps reveal violent wave' in *Cape Times* (14 May 1986) See also Mayibuye Archives, *Barry Streek South African Pressclips Collection*, Security Boxes 1985-1987, for a collection of the *Cape Times* "unrest maps".
[23] See footnote 16 of this chapter.
[24] See, 'Bishops slate police actions' in *Cape Times* (7 December 1984). See also Z. B Molefe, 'The police and unrest: The Seige of the townships' in *City Press* (9 December 1984).

The police responded by arguing that the report was published with "ulterior motives" since there were many "untruths" contained in the report in relation to "details, chronology and events." The SAP continued by stating that it was, "regrettable that [the] publication [did] not condemn or, for that matter, even mention, the extent of damage (which runs into millions of rands), the victimization, intimidation and brutal murder of innocent people by *callous and lawless rioters*."[25]

With this in mind and the objectives aimed at in the secret memo, consider the following two newspaper reports that contained the earliest mention of the term necklace in public media. [26] The first appeared on the 29 September 1985:

> To every story there is another side. And to the story of police brutality in South Africa there is another side – 'The Necklace'. The necklace symbolises another *form of brutality*, that of *the mob*. Buried in daily police reports which have become routine in a South Africa hardened to violence is the occasional account of bodies found with burning tyres around their necks. This is 'The Necklace' – the latest and perhaps most horrifying form of violence yet devised by *the mobs*. The Necklace spreads such terror that the police are not prepared to comment on it even though it would help to illustrate the kind of violence they are up against. For by simply describing the extent and the nature of the necklace, the police would be playing into the hands of those who use the necklace to spread terror among all those involved with 'the system'. An official request to the police for information on this form of *mob torture* received the reply that "it would not be in the public interest, nor that of law and order, to furnish the information that you require." However other sources involved in security say that origins of the necklace can be found in the Eastern Cape where burning of victims was practised by the Xhosas during the Frontier Wars. During the past year of *unrest*, a number of *victims of mob violence* have been burnt. Sometimes their bodies are found under piles of rubble or old tyres. This practice has been mostly associated with the Eastern Cape although it has occurred to some extent in other areas. The Necklace, according to security forces, is a variation of this practice in which a tyre is doused with petrol, placed around the victims neck and set alight. Once rubber is ignited, it is difficult to extinguish, and the victim suffers a lingering death. He may have his hands tied or be beaten into helplessness first. But, *surrounded by the mob*, he is powerless to remove the necklace.[27]

---

[25] '"Untruths" in report – SAP' in *Cape Times* (7 December 1984). My emphasis.

[26] In reading through the *Cape Times* 'Unrest Reports' for the latter part of 1985, there are reports of individuals burnt and tyres are reported as having been present but the terms necklace and necklacing were not mentioned. See for example, Mayibuye Archives, *Barry Streek South African Pressclips Collection*, Security Box -1985.

[27] '…and the horror the mobs call "The Necklace"' in *The Sunday Star* (29 September 1985). My emphasis.

The second appeared on the 4 October 1985:

> Police are highly disturbed over the lack of emphasis local and international news media are giving to the "shocking violence" being perpetrated against Blacks in the townships *by mobs…* "There is only one purpose behind this wanton violence of Black against Black – *that is to intimidate the ordinary, decent , law-abiding people into joining the mobs bent on destroying order in the townships*" said a senior police spokesman. South Africa was recently shocked by video recording of a woman in a East Rand Township being systematically burnt to death by *a mob* which suspected her of being an 'informer' [referring to Maki Skosana]. The police have video material of burnings which make that footage seem mild by comparison. "One of the features of this Black on Black violence is that almost invariably these burnings are done in public. The intimidator effect, as you can imagine, is awesome" said the spokesman. One of the most common methods now being used is the so-called 'necklace' treatment. The victim's hands are bound behind his back, and an old motor car tyre – which is set alight – is draped around his neck. The victim dies a slow and agonising death, while the perpetrators usually carry out a type of ritual dance around his screaming form.[28]

In the first newspaper article quoted, the image of police brutality was juxtaposed with that of 'the mob'. The practice of necklacing was therefore used to counter the debate around police brutality. In relation to why the label, 'necklace', had not been included in the daily unrest reports, the argument presented was that if the police were to include the descriptions of what the practice entailed, it would exacerbate efforts of the police in attempting to instil a sense of law and order in South African townships.

However, a contradiction in terms is evident in reading the second article quoted, publicised one week later. There, the police took a different stance and argued that more reporting on the practice of necklacing ought to be reported by news media, presumably to illustrate the demanding situation in which police were meant to perform their duties. Despite the first article suggesting that the "intimidator effect", as described in the second article, would only make matters worse in the townships by creating an atmosphere of fear, both articles went on to describe the practice in chilling detail. In doing so, the positioning of the practice of necklacing was in the realm of barbarism and irrationality. In relation to the aims of the secret memo, by describing the practice in that chilling

---

[28] T. Stirling, 'Black on Black violence "horrifying" – police' in *The Citizen* (4 October 1985). My emphasis.

detail, emphasis on the "human factor" was to propagate sympathy and disapproval of the practice.

The "ordinary decent law abiding people", those whom the SAP had to protect from the destructive uncivilised 'mobs' highlighted the demarcation of not all 'black' people being included in the category of 'black-on-black' violence. Of significance was the claiming of the origins of the practice, that of beginning during the Frontier Wars of the eighteenth century which suggested a sense of primordialism. For this conjured up an image of both 'tribalism' and 'tradition'. Similarly, the second quote concluded with the description of the perpetrators performing some form of "ritual dance" around the "screaming form" further connoting a sense of primitivism. Indeed, as will be shown in Chapter Three, there is strong contention amongst scholars in linking the practice of necklacing with older 'traditional' forms of burning in making sense of the practice. However, I will argue that there is a certain re-articulation of this framing in relation to the 'official' non-state discourse on the practice of necklacing that will be discussed in the following chapter.
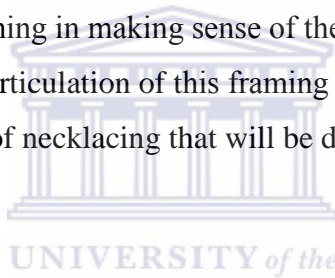
Before proceeding, I wish to draw attention to the newspapers in which these reports were published. The first report was in the *Sunday Star*, a newspaper that according to Rob Davies et.al, was part of the English language commercial press that were "opposed to, and often critical of, specific aspects of apartheid policy, such as…blatant forms of repression considered likely to provoke a response from the oppressed masses or criticism from abroad."[29] In contrast, the second report, published in the *Citizen*, was a newspaper set up in 1976 by the former state Department of Information, "in a secret project to develop a conservative, 'patriotic' English language morning newspaper."[30] The similarity of the tone, register and language of the two reports was an indication that is suggestive of the effectiveness of the strategies advocated in the memo.

---

[29] R. Davies, D. O'Meara and S. Dlamini, *The Struggle for South Africa: A Reference Guide to Movements, Organisations and Institutions, Volume 2* (London: Zed Books, 1984), 409.
[30] R. Davies, D. O'Meara and S. Dlamini, *The Struggle for South Africa*', 408.

The relationship between the media, print media in particular, and the apartheid state was however contested. Whilst the relationship between the Afrikaans press and the state was initially one of symbiosis, during the 1980's that relationship "cooled drastically" as a result of P.W Botha's clampdown on media reporting. Jan-Ad Stemmet and Leo Barnard argue that: "Since the 1970's, and particularly the 1980's, the Afrikaans press became increasingly sober in its critique of the National Party and the National Party Governments. This does not mean to suggest that the Afrikaans press abandoned their allegiance to the party. They continued to support the basic tenets of the National Party's policy and the majority of the Government's plans and decisions."[31]

Whilst Stemmet and Barnard do not deal with the ways in which the Afrikaans press reported acts of violence, their findings on the terse relationship with the state, but also with the more liberal English press, are illuminating. For example, the Afrikaans press had blamed the English press for the governments media clamp down because of their (the English press) coverage of the political turmoil in South Africa.[32] Concerning the English press having a longer history of being more critical of the apartheid government, Rob Davies et.al point to an interesting indication of the basic political stance of the liberal commercial press.[33] They cite a slogan coined by the *Rand Daily Mail* in 1964, 'Adapt or Perish' that prefigured "the slogan 'Adapt or Die' later adopted by P. W. Botha to promote the Total Strategy."[34]

Generally, according to Amanda Armstrong, restrictions on the media, most harshly imposed with the issuing of the national state of emergency of 12 June 1986, had three goals.[35] The state wanted to prevent the international world from knowing the extent of

---

[31] See J. A Stemmet and L. Barnard, 'See no Evil, Hear no Evil, Speak and Publish no Evil: The Relationship between P.W. Botha and the Pro-establishment Afrikaans Press during the 1980's' in *Historia*, Vol. 49, No. 1 (May 2004), 155.

[32] J. A Stemmet and L. Barnard, 'See no Evil, Hear no Evil, Speak and Publish no Evil', 157.

[33] The more liberal commercial, predominantly English press, included the *Cape Argus*, the *Sowetan*, the *Cape Herald*, the *Sunday Times*, the *Rand Daily Mail*, the *Daily Dispatch*, the *Natal Mercury*, the *Financial Mail*, the *Star* and the *Sunday Star* amongst others. See R. Davies, D. O'Meara and S. Dlamini, *The Struggle for South Africa*, 407-408.

[34] R. Davies, D. O'Meara and S. Dlamini, *The Struggle for South Africa*, 409.

[35] A. Armstrong, '"Hear no Evil, See No Evil, Speak No Evil": Media Restrictions and the State of Emergency' in *South African Review 4* (Johannesburg: Ravan Press, 1987).

repression and atrocities committed by its security forces as well as the extent of the opposition to apartheid. In South Africa, the apartheid state attempted to manufacture evidence of normality and prevent the publication of anything that could have a detrimental effect on public morale. Indeed, this was in keeping with the tone of the secret memo. Lastly, the state sought to silence individuals and organisations resisting apartheid. Organising campaigns through issuing pamphlets, by word of mouth, or through mass meetings were made unlawful. However, both the commercial and the more alternative press attempted to resist and limit the impact of media restrictions, though, according to Armstrong, the state strategy had "been fairly successful."[36] Concerning an apartheid state discourse in relation to the practice of necklacing, this is most evident in the two newspaper reports cited earlier.

Despite the memo positing the notion of 'black-on-black' violence not necessarily being emphasised, media reports of violent resistance increasingly employed this term as part of the rubric of the apartheid state.[37] For the state, seemingly its purpose was to have the most impact in de-legitimising any form of resistance related to the anti-apartheid struggle. The notion of 'black-on-black' violence encapsulated a rubric suggesting 'tribal' or 'traditional' rivalry that had little or nothing to do with the politically motivated protests of the anti-apartheid struggle.[38] This was evident in the two reports that contain the earliest mention of the term 'necklace'. It was largely within this rubric that the apartheid state positioned the practice of necklacing. However, as discussed below with the aid of Deborah Posel, by employing the notion of 'black-on-black' violence, the state inadvertently placed its own larger reform policies into question.

Concerning 'black-on-black' violence
In her study of television coverage of violence during 1985-1988, Posel highlights the apartheid state's attempt to contest the representation of township violence as a 'Peoples War', as one that had an articulate and democratic leadership with a clear programme and

---

[36] A. Armstrong, '"Hear no Evil, See No Evil, Speak No Evil"', 211-212.

[37] See J. Frederikse, 'South Africa's Media', 639-645.

[38] For example, an article reporting on the violence between 'indian' and 'black' people in Natal in July/August of 1985, argued that the violence besetting South Africa could now be seen as openly 'ethnic' in character. See, 'Etniese geweld' in *Die Burger* (9 August 1985).

strategy. Posel suggests that the state's discourse on violence was two-fold: "It sought to explain why township residents resorted to violence, and to explain and justify the violence perpetrated by the SADF and the SAP in townships."[39] However, whilst the state sought to isolate the liberation movement, the mechanisms it chose drew on long standing and deeply rooted white racist images and fears: "At the heart of the state's discourse on political violence was a familiar white fear of the rampant black mob, a threat to the 'civilised order' which white society claim[ed] as its basis."[40] Inherent in the state's formulation was a construction of the opposition between supposedly primitive and civilised behaviour. In this sense, what enabled the apartheid state to render necklace killings as 'black-on-black' violence was the perception of barbarism it attached to the practice.

Posel points to principal symbols of township violence in the state discourse on violence, akin to the "thought manipulation" strategy advocated in the secret memo. For Posel, these included the visual and verbal shorthand's of "the crowd", "stone-throwing" and "flames". These shorthand's, Posel argues, taken together, "strongly connoted disorder, destruction, unbridled energy, and the absence of reason or intelligent purpose."[41] This view was juxtaposed with visual and verbal shorthand's of the representation of the SADF and SAP, that of, "evoking a sense of order, control and strength" in 'controlling' township "unrest".[42] Posel thus argues that:

> The state's representation of violence perpetrated by the security forces used images and concepts which epitomised a 'civilised order' – symbolised both by the language of rights and duties, and by the restraint, expertise and neutral rationality embodied in scientific and technical language. These images and concepts were starkly opposed to those of destruction, disorder, mindless energy and 'primitiveness' which were attached to township violence. The overall message therefore, was that conflict between the crowd and security forces was one of opposing value systems and ways of life – one 'civilised', 'advanced', rational and orderly, and the other 'uncivilised', 'backward' and unreasonable. The heat and anarchy in the images of the crowd, stone throwing and flames

---

[39] D. Posel, 'A "battlefield of perceptions": state discourses on political violence, 1985-1988' in J. Cock and L. Nathan (eds.), *War and Society: The Militarisation of South Africa* (Cape Town: David Philip, 1989), 263.
[40] D. Posel, 'A "battlefield of perceptions"', 263.
[41] D. Posel, 'A "battlefield of perceptions"', 269.
[42] D. Posel, 'A "battlefield of perceptions"', 269.

fanned fears of the overthrow of the 'civilised' order; whereas the order and control associated with the images of the SADF-SAP established them as the custodians of 'civilisation'.[43]

In the case of individuals being burnt or necklaced, televised images showing crowds gathered around a burning body were accompanied by verbal descriptions such as, "a barbaric method of intimidation" and as, "unspeakable savagery."[44] Indeed, this is evident in a SABC televised news clip on the 21 July 1985. There, images of Maki Skosana, killed in Duduza on the 20 July 1985, were aired showing her being beaten, encircled by a large group of people, a large rock being placed on her chest and followed by scenes of the lower part of her body in flames.[45] This footage was aired on both national and international television and was widely used by the apartheid state in its justification of declaring the, partial, first state of emergency (21 July 1985).[46]

Maki Skosana attended the funeral of eight members of the Congress of South African Students (COSAS) who had died whilst trying to detonate hand grenades which had been booby-trapped by state security force agents, the so named 'Zero-Zero' operation.[47] She was accused by members of the funeral procession of being involved in a relationship with a state agent who had posed as a MK operative (armed wing of the ANC). This alleged involvement with the agent had cast suspicion on her, leading to her murder at the funeral of the activists.[48]

---

[43] D. Posel, 'A "battlefield of perceptions"', 271.

[44] (TV1 news, 8pm., 14 April 1985) cited in D. Posel, 'A "battlefield of perceptions"', 269.

[45] I viewed this clip as well as an edited version of the original footage captured by a foreign film crew. See below for reference (footnote 46).

[46] VHS Video Collection: Mayibuye Archive, 'VHS 3066-Accession No. Rim.FV.2000.2366', Skosana Necklacing: Used by Government after announcing 22 July 1985 State of Emergency. Note the state of emergency came into effect at midnight of the 21 July 1985. An article written in a prominent Afrikaans newspaper, *Die Burger*, on the 22 July 1985, reported that South Africa's Broadcasting Commission (SABC) had shown footage of the gruesome murder and that this same footage was also shown in the United States of America (USA). The article highlighted the criticism towards the SABC for showing the footage without a warning to sensitive viewers; that images of a woman being beaten and of a burning body would be shown. See, 'Vrou lewend verbrand: Gru-toneel oor TV gesien' in *Die Burger* (22 July 1985). A clip of the killing of Maki Skosana was showed again on South African national television on the 16th December 2008 on SABC 3 in prime time news, in relation to the Day of Reconciliation and a memorial held for Maki Skosana (see Introduction).

[47] See G. Moss, 'Activists on trial: Duduza's civil war' in *Work in Progress*, Issue 47 (April 1987), 28-33.

[48] See S v Motaung and Others (190/88) [1990] ZASCA 75; 1990 (4) SA 485 (AD); [1990] 2 All SA 485 (A) (17 August 1990), 15.
http://www.saflii.org/za/cases/ZASCA/1990/75.html

Writing about the apartheid state's manipulation of the media, Julie Frederikse discusses P.W Botha's announcement of the state of emergency. This announcement was accompanied by footage of both Skosana's killing and the funeral of the 'Cradock 4', four missing UDF activists whose charred bodies had been found on the 27 June 1985.[49] At their funeral, the head of the South African Council of Churches, Rev. Beyers Naude together with Rev. Allan Boesak (a founding member of the UDF) were both filmed so that they appeared to be speaking directly under the banner of the South African Communist Party (SACP). According to Frederikse, numerous other anti-government banners on display on the podium on which they were speaking were obscured. She therefore argues that:

> The SABC told viewers nothing of the situation that had sparked the 'mindless violence': the suspected spy [Maki Skosana] had been linked to an apparent 'dirty trick' in which seven youths (sic) had been supplied with booby-trapped grenades which exploded in the young men's faces and killed them. One TV critic summed up the widespread response to that piece of agitprop: 'you don't have to be a psychologist to realise that the average viewer will perceive a causal link – the emergency announcement is justified by the rhetorical behaviour of two ministers of religion and the actions of murderers.[50]

Here I wish to underscore the relationship between the "thought manipulation" advocated by the apartheid state as part of its discursive war and the media's "legitimis[ing] [of] particular sensorial dispositions over others within and beyond…public culture." This follows Allen Feldman who has written convincingly of the ways in which the mass production of 'facts' through the media materially moulds a subject and culture of perception. He suggests that the,

> mass media has universalising capacities that promote and inculcate sensory specializations…such as the priority of visual realism and the often commented on gendered and racial gaze…objective realism, the depictive grammar of the mass media, should not be perceived as an ahistorical given; it is an apparatus of internal and external perceptual colonization that disseminates and legitimizes particular sensorial dispositions over others within and beyond our public culture.[51]

---

[49] It was later discovered that the four had been abducted and killed by security police who attempted to make it look as if the killings were a result of 'black-on-black' violence specifically that of conflict between the Azanian People's Organisation (AZAPO) and the UDF. See TRC *Report*, Vol. 2, 227-228.

[50] J. Frederikse, 'South Africa's Media', 646-647.

[51] See A. Feldman, 'on cultural anesthesia: from Desert Storm to Rodney King' in *American Ethnologist* (1994), 406.

A similar point about the interplay of the state and its visual media is made by Suren Pillay who suggests that,"[w]hat made this the 'first' [Maki Skosana as the 'first' to be 'necklaced'] was its coming to view to the South Africa that does not, and dares not go into a township."[52] In this sense, the murder of Maki Skosana further enabled the apartheid state to play into what Posel argues was the long standing and deeply rooted white racist images and fears; and in the case of Maki Skosana, of the township as the home "of the rampant black mob."

Thus, *The Citizen* had the following editorial on the 22 July 1985, the day the first state of emergency was put into effect:

> "Emergency"
> No government, anywhere, will allow radicals to take over part of a country without reacting in the strongest possible way, and South Africa's government, facing such *serious unrest*, could not act in any other way than it has. Even the mounting death toll – the figure has gone beyond 500 – could not be allowed to continue since the death of each person is exploited, each burial becomes an occasion for radical outbursts and incitement, each death adds to the image of a country getting out of control. And among those who die are also the victims of *the mobs* – like the young woman [Maki Skosana] who was *savagely* beaten to death at a funeral…[53]

In the 1987 trial that followed the killing of Maki Skosana and the subsequent appeal case, the judge accepted as admissible an edited video.[54] This video, taken from the same SABC news of the 21 July 1985, was filmed by a foreign-service news crew. Reporting on the killing of Maki Skosana a week after her death, the *Sunday Times* reported that: "The TV crew who filmed the *savage mob killing* of a screaming woman who was stoned, beaten and burnt to death spoke this week of their horror during the 'most gruesome news-gathering assignment ever.'" The report continued by citing one of the film crew, Stanley Vesi, as saying: "It's my duty to document the news as I see it – I would not have stopped the *angry mob* from killing that woman. If I'd uttered a word I

---

[52] See S. Pillay, 'Dangerous Ordinary Discourse: Preliminary reflections on xenophobia, violence and the public sphere in South Africa, draft paper presented at CODESRIA 12th General Assembly (Yaoundé, Cameroun, 07-11/12/2008), 4. Note: Permission granted to cite this paper by author via email correspondence on 09 March 2009.
[53] 'Emergency' in *The Citizen* (22 July 1985). My emphasis.
[54] See S v Motaung and Others.

don't doubt they would have turned on me." The same report 'explains' what had happened that day in Duduza: "It all began last week when an angry Duduza funeral procession turned on the defenseless Miss Skosana because they thought she was a police informer."[55]

After viewing the tape in the appeal trial of those individuals found guilty of the murder of Maki Skosana, judge J.A Hoexter, couched his judgement in language not dissimilar from that advocated in the secret memo discussed earlier. In this sense, the terms "*ferocious*", "*ruthless*" and "*savage*", reinforced the depictive grammar of the mass media, its objective realism perpetuated by the 'objectivity' of the court.[56]

Thus, similar to Feldman's examination of the trial of Rodney King's beating, just as Rodney King was, "deleted from the courtroom and from the video as a legal personality"[57], so too Maki Skosana's personhood had been deleted from the "ahistorical given" of a "mood of the crowd" as "ferocious, ruthless and savage". Feldman argues that he (Rodney King), "only existed at the moment of violence, only in relation to material disorder [and] never in relation to language, memory, explanation, emotion and reason."[58] I want to suggest that so too Maki Skosana came to exist as, "a young, helpless black woman being set ablaze by a carnival of black people reinforc[ing] what the colonial mentality had long warned of: the barbarism of the native."[59]

During 1985 and early 1986 the apartheid state attributed the practice of necklacing to 'the mobs', that "carnival of black people". The practice was only *associated* with the liberation movement, specifically the ANC and UDF. However, in April 1986, the speech of Winnie Mandela enabled the state to establish a *direct* link to the ANC. Indeed, in relation to a history of necklacing within the larger struggle narrative, this speech is an infamous iconic moment. Despite the fact that Winnie Mandela was banned, preventing South African media from publicising anything she said, Minister of Law and Order, Mr.

---

[55] C. Naidoo and E. Wessels, 'It left me sick, says TV man' in *Sunday Times* (28 July 1985). My emphasis.
[56] S v Motaung and Others, 125. My emphasis.
[57] A. Feldman, 'on cultural anesthesia', 414.
[58] A. Feldman, 'on cultural anesthesia', 414.
[59] See S. Pillay, 'Dangerous Ordinary Discourse', 4.

Louis le Grange made a special concession, allowing her infamous, "…with our boxes of matches and our necklaces, we shall liberate this country", speech to be widely reported in the press. [60]

Whilst Winnie Mandela has continuously stressed that she was quoted out of context,[61] those remarks had the effect of grounding the apartheid state's claims that 'the mobs' were being incited by the ANC. The Deputy Minister of Information, Mr. Louis Nel, stated that those words revealed the true colours of Winnie Mandela and the ANC. He further stated that: "It is well known that the 'necklace' method is only one of several methods by which *moderate Blacks* who did not support the violence of the ANC were intimidated by radical Black revolutionaries…the word 'necklace' has become the code-word for elimination through violent death."[62]

Not surprisingly in P.W Botha's address to parliament on the 23 April 1986, in which he defended the Public Safety Amendment Bill that called for an extension of police powers, he stressed the importance of focusing on the, "phenomenon of black-on-black violence". He argued that since the outbreak of 'unrest' in September 1984: "508 people, *mostly moderate blacks*, were brutally murdered by *radical blacks*, by the so called 'necklace' method." Botha continued, stating that: "In addition to the people murdered, 439 people were killed during the same period by fellow blacks in so called tribal or faction fighting, which has nothing to do with so-called apartheid, or, for that matter, politics."[63]

Besides quantifying death, here a distinction was drawn between the killing of 'moderate blacks' and the killing between supposed "tribal or faction fighting". The assumption was that, if there was something (for Botha) such as 'tribal' or 'factional' fighting, it had nothing or very little to do with politics. The killing of 'moderate blacks' however, had everything to do with politics. Thus despite the intended focus on the liberation

---

[60] See for example, 'Mandela vra vryheid met vuurhoutjies' in *Die Burger* (16 April 1986).
[61] See G. van Staden, 'Winnie slams "hysterical" media reaction' in *The Star* (18 April 1986). In 1999 Winnie Mandela had argued that her statement was more symbolic that an actual order to go out and necklace people. See, 'Winnie onthul gedenkplaat met gebalde vuis: Vuurhoutjie-stelling "simbolies"' in *Die Beeld* (29 March 1999).
[62] 'Govt. will muster all power to protect SA' in *The Citizen* (16 April 1986). My emphasis.
[63] As cited in 'PW speaks on Black on Black violence' in *The Sowetan* (24 April 1986). My emphasis.

movement, Botha fell into a familiar racialising discourse.[64] That Botha made this distinction pointed to a shift that may also be read as a tension in the state's discourse on violent resistance. The notion of 'black-on-black' violence was meant to draw attention away from the political nature of 'unrest', and as discussed earlier in this chapter, with emphasis placed rather on common-law crimes.

Botha proceeded to call for an examination of the motive behind 'black-on-black' violence, which, for Botha, could only be attributed to the ANC and its "communist allies":

> It is common knowledge that innocent and moderate people are the victims of the so-called 'necklace' executions in public, people who do not support the violent aims of the ANC and the instigators of violence. In the name of freedom and democracy, *moderate blacks* are being robbed of their freedom of choice – peace…and now the 'necklace' alone is no more regarded as effective enough. The latest trend is to first chop off the arms of the victim at the elbows, and then, screaming helplessly, he is made a pathetic victim of what happens to those who oppose the will of the so-called liberators. Not having the spontaneous support for their violence among *the masses*, the ANC and its cohorts use the most *callous and gruesome methods of terror and extreme violence* to intimidate people in order to gain control of the *various black population groups*.[65]

The last sentence of the above quote suggests that whilst Botha seemingly rejected the notion of 'tribal' or 'factional' fighting as shown in the paragraph before, he reverts back to this characterisation of 'black-on-black' violence in assigning 'ownership' to the ANC and "its cohorts", the SACP and the UDF. Yet, as mentioned earlier, the emphasis placed on the protection of the 'moderate blacks' was of critical significance because it was their support that Botha sought within his larger reform policies.

---

[64] Tom Lodge and Bill Nasson suggest that three types of 'black-on-black violence could be discerned: "The first was genuinely internecine. It occurred within the domain of radical politics and was a consequence of intellectual absolutism, the territorial nature of political mobilisation, and third-party mischief-making…second was the violence that represented a more profound and probably more enduring political conflict. It took place between radicals and conservatives, notably the UDF and Inkatha…the third form was the violence between popular organizations and state functionaries or government hirelings – the councilors, the vigilantes, and the kitskonstabels." This third type is most commonly referred to as the 'third-force' in relation to state sanctioned violence by, what can be thought of as 'other means'. See T. Lodge and B. Nasson, *All, Here, And Now*, 201.

[65] As cited in 'PW speaks on Black on Black violence' in *The Sowetan* (24 April 1986). See also House of Assembly Debates (Hansard), Vol.8 (24 March-2 May). My emphasis.

Louis Nel's comment on the Winnie Mandela statement as well as the parliamentary debate just discussed, points to attempts at assigning 'ownership' of the practice of necklacing to the ANC and in so doing justifying and legitimating the apartheid state's use of violence. A booklet published and circulated by the state's Bureau of Information in June 1986, revealed this discourse which I suggest enabled a 'politics of ownership' to take form.[66] The booklet comprised statements of various ANC, SACP and UDF leaders and formulated, or rather structured, by juxtaposing those with statements made by apartheid state officials. Of particular interest and relevance here is a section entitled, "ANC policy on violence". The booklet provided, amongst others, the following statements by ANC officials:

> During a meeting at California State University on the 10 October 1985, ANC spokesman Alosi Moloi justified this policy [of the ANC] of violence as follows: "Among us we have people who have openly collaborated with the enemy. You have to eliminate one to save hundreds of others."
> His colleague, Tim Ngubane, told the same meeting that
> "We want to make the death of a collaborator so grotesque that people will never think of it."[67]

The booklet also cited a 4 May 1986 Radio Freedom broadcast with the following "message to South Africa":

> Let us take all our weapons, both rudimentary and sophisticated, our necklacers [sic], our grenades, our machine guns…let us fight the vigilantes, the so-called 'fathers', together with the apartheid regime, together with the police and the army.[68]

The last statement cited was that of Winnie Mandela made on the 13 April 1986. Following this is a text box describing the South African government's policy on violence. Cited there are extracts of a speech given by P.W. Botha on the 15 May 1986:

> I would however shirk my responsibility if I did not state clearly that the government is adamant to maintain order. People who perpetrate violence must

---

[66] *Talking with the ANC…* (Johannesburg: Bureau of Information, 1986). Note the title of the booklet for it implies actual dialogue with the ANC. This, however, was presumably a deliberate play on words. It was published in relation to calls from various quarters, both national and international, to 'talk to the ANC', as well as the numerous delegations that were beginning to engage in talks with the exiled ANC. The statements cited were rather collected and importantly, selected, from alternative media publications including confiscated ANC, South African Communist Party (SACP) and UDF publications. Indeed, there are photographs of such banned publications that included the ANC journal *Sechaba* in the booklet. See *Talking with the ANC…*,18.

[67] *Talking with the ANC…*, 26.

[68] *Talking with the ANC…*, 26.

take note that if they do not renounce violence, they will inevitably face the full power at the disposal of the State, which has not nearly been applied to the full. In future there must be no misunderstanding about this.

It is my deepest wish that senseless violence be abandoned now. I plead with the public media to assist in this regard.[69]

The booklet, under the title, "Black-on-Black Violence", cited extracts of the parliamentary debate just discussed. The juxtaposing of short extracts of ANC statements with the minimal of context provided, together with the detailed statements of P.W Botha is telling of a discourse on violent resistance encapsulated within a discursive war of propaganda strategies. The seemingly 'radical' nature of the ANC's policy on violence, as presented in the booklet coupled with the seemingly 'rational' and 'orderly' statements of P.W Botha spoke to what Posel highlights. The booklet highlighted the apartheid state's construction of the opposition between supposedly primitive and civilised behaviour. In this regard, that booklet was more than merely justifying and legitimating the impending state of emergency declared nationally on the 12 June 1986.[70]

Similarly, a year later, with the impending renewal of the state of emergency at midnight on the 12 June 1987, P. W Botha stated:

Together with the rest of the civilised world, we reject them [the ANC and UDF] for *elevating terrorism to morality*, *for rationalising the horrors of necklacing* and for claiming responsibility for the atrocities of landmining and car-bombing. We will not talk to these people, we will fight them, for the simple reason that they are part and parcel of the terrorist curse besetting the world today.[71]

---

[69] *Talking with the ANC…*, 27.

[70] There were attempts in numerous newspapers to suggest that violence had decreased since the national state of emergency had been in force. The Deputy Director of the Bureau of Information therefore, commenting on statistics provided on the number of necklace killings and burnings and the decrease in the number of those killed, stated that: "The decline in the numbers of both necklacings and the burnings since the declaration of the emergency indicated the efficiency of the of the measures taken, while in general the number of deaths caused illustrated the need for imposing the emergency." See T. Stirling, 'Hundred burnt to death by the necklace – Bureau' in *The Citizen* (21 August 1986). However, other reports suggested that in fact violence had increased but that the Bureau of Information was witholding information about violent incidents. See for example, R. Green, 'Emergency is effective' in *Pretoria News* (28 June 1986) contrasted with, 'Endemic Violence' in *Cape Times* (25 November 1986). The latter view is also evident after the first state of emergency of July 1985 as was argued by Alex Boraine. See, 'Is SA getting the full Picture?' in *The Star* (9 August 1985).

[71] Cited in C. Cairncross, 'PW renews the State of Emergency' in *Business Day* (12 June 1987). My emphasis. Interestingly, as part of the emergency regulations of 20 July 1985: "The possession of petrol in a container other than a petrol tank of a motor car, and the siphoning of petrol in a container (except with the permission of a member of a force) was prohibited in certain specific areas." This regulation was

Two notions are apparent and discernable from the excerpt of Botha's speech above. The first, that the practice of necklacing, for the state, was irrational, given Botha's claim of the liberation movement's "rationalising the horrors of necklacing", and the other being that the practice was uncivilised and barbaric. The two notions are complementary in that, as shown above, they operated in a discourse constituted largely through a discursive war that had morality and rationality as its attending claims. Indeed the notions were political signifiers of a discourse on violence. Thus the question of violence (or resistance in the guise of violence) for the apartheid state, could not be framed in any other manner except within a discourse of 'black-on-black' violence. Stated differently, the state strategically manipulated the term 'violence' so that it only applied to actions by the liberation movement; the violence of the state disappeared, only to reappear in official discourse as legitimate force. In the rationality of the apartheid state, state sponsored violence that characterised the mid 1980's under the numerous states of emergencies, was legitimated.

For the apartheid state therefore, the practice of necklacing was not construed as political violence: it was not to be given any legality as an act of political resistance. To have done so, would have been to surrender the hegemony of the state to the terms of the liberation movements. Such a position was inconceivable in the exceptionality with which the state constructed its moral right to govern. For the state, it understood resistance to apartheid as terrorist activities and the practice of necklacing specifically, as a criminal activity, a form of barbarism, and a marker of the violence and criminality that supposedly undergirded the liberation movements. The initial hesitation on the part of the ANC and UDF to the question of necklacing and later, as I argue more fully in the following chapter, their ambivalent responses (for the state, "rationalising the horrors of necklacing"), saw the apartheid state, in its rationality, justify its claim that 'ownership' of necklacing belonged to the liberation movement.

---

reintroduced with the second state of emergency that came into effect on the 12 June 1986. *The Race Relations Survey* (1985) posits that the above prohibition was a result of the number of killings by necklace. See C. Cooper et.al, *Race Relations Survey, 1985* (Johannesburg: South African Institute of Race Relations, 1986), 455-460.

However, Posel points to an important contradiction in the formulation of the apartheid state's discourse on political violence, particularly its formulation of 'black-on-black' violence. She argues that this ran contrary to the state's reformist project, which sought to render those reforms in non-racial terms. Posel thus cites P. W. Botha's claim that, "strife in South Africa is between communists and democrats, not the black and white races."[72] Part of the state's reformist strategies was the idea of some form of political power-sharing (albeit unequal), an idea that the state hoped to win support for from those it termed 'moderate blacks'. Thus, it was necessary to avoid racial perceptions of the violence besetting the country. However, in characterising political violence in terms of 'black-on-black' violence, the apartheid state's discourse on violence, "recreated and reinforced exactly this perception" of racialising violence.[73]

In this chapter therefore I argued that the apartheid state mainly set the discursive terrain on the practice of necklacing. The state positioned the practice in the realm of 'black-on-black' violence and in so doing claimed that the practice was criminal in nature and therefore, supposedly, without political affiliation. Yet contradictorily, assigning the practice of necklacing to the liberation movements, and through the state's rhetoric from April 1986, necklacing was clearly positioned in the realm of resistance politics.

In relation to the quote that prefaces this chapter, I draw attention to that which was known to the ANC in 2005. They "knew" what happened in Duduza (where Maki Skosana had been killed whilst attending the funeral of the eight COSAS members); they "knew" who were described as 'the mob' and "what the apartheid regime did to them". This 'knowing' I want to suggest is constitutive of a discursive war with the apartheid state. In stating that it was the late Oliver Tambo who stopped "'necklacing' started by the apartheid regime', Thabo Mbeki's statement points to a contestation over the 'ownership' of the practice of necklacing, what I am calling a 'politics of ownership', which came most forcefully to light at the TRC. (See Chapter Four).

---

[72] Cited in D. Posel, 'A "battlefield of perceptions"', 273.
[73] D. Posel, 'A "battlefield of perceptions"', 273.

Taking the above as a point of departure, the following chapter proceeds to examine what was said in relation to the question of necklacing in what I have suggested be viewed as an 'official' non-state discourse on the practice of necklacing.There was an initial hesitancy on the part of the ANC and UDF to the emergence of the practice that was construed by the apartheid state as a condoning and propagating of the practice of necklacing. When liberation movement figures made statements in relation to the practice as shown above, the apartheid state used those statements as a counter for the justifying and legitimating of its own use of violence in quelling violent resistance to its governance.

UNIVERSITY of the
WESTERN CAPE

Chapter Two
On the 'official' non-state discourse in relation to the practice of necklacing

> [W]e were opposed to any attack on so-called soft targets. On the contrary, our enemy did not hesitate to resort to terrorism to defeat our struggle and further entrench white minority domination… As this struggle continued, our movement insisted that to resort to terrorism would be to dishonour our struggle and to destroy its morality. It openly stated that it was against the very nature of our movement to show disrespect for human life and to deify the use of force as a means of ordering human relations. It was on this basis, for instance, that we condemned the use of the "necklace" and called on our people not to resort to this barbaric form of struggle. It came as no surprise that, subsequently, it was revealed that the use of the "necklace" had in fact been introduced by agents of the apartheid security forces as part of their determined effort to suppress the sustained mass uprising that spelt defeat for the apartheid system (Thabo Mbeki, *ANC Today*, September 2001).[1]

If the state mainly set the discursive terrain on the practice of necklacing in the 1980's, this was in the absence of a clear response from the liberation movements and specifically, the ANC and UDF. Indeed the ANC and particularly the UDF, have been accused of "a shameful shuffling of feet around the issue of the necklace."[2] According to Steven Mufson, this lack of public response arose from, "fear of losing influence with the militant youth they wanted to restrain. Better to avoid public debate and to influence quietly, many thought."[3] The increasing detention of UDF leadership from 1985 onwards further hampered its efforts to respond.

However, the escalation of necklace killings from July 1985 meant that the issue could not be avoided and subsequently leading figures in the ANC and UDF made a number of key statements regarding attacks on collaborators, which included the practice of necklacing. Besides the infamous Winnie Mandela statement quoted in the previous

---

[1] T. Mbeki, 'Letter from the President: Acts of Terror must be condemned unreservedly' in *ANC Today*, Vol. 1, No. 34, (14-20 September 2001). This is an extract of a letter from former South African president Thabo Mbeki to the nation. It was part of the chorus of condemnation of the September 11 terror attacks in the United States of America.
http://www.anc.org.za/ancdocs/anctoday/2001/at34.htm
[2] See for example S. Mufson, *Fighting Years: Black Resistance and the Struggle for a New South Africa* (Boston, Mass: Beacon Press, 1990), 97.
[3] S. Mufson, *Fighting Years*, 103.

chapter, amongst the more prominent were those of then president of the ANC, Oliver Tambo, and MK's chief of staff, Chris Hani. Taken together these statements of both the ANC and UDF, I argue, constitute an 'official' non-state discourse as it relates to the practice of necklacing.

In this chapter, I examine what was said by the ANC and the UDF in relation to the question of necklacing. I argue that even when they officially condemned the practice of necklacing, their position was ambivalent. There were several ways in which public positions on necklace killings tended to produce what I have termed a prose of ambivalence.[4] Firstly, the ANC and UDF were caught in a double bind in that they could not explicitly condemn the practice and risk losing their mass support base, or explicitly condone the practice and risk losing the support of important internal and international constituencies. Consequently, both organisations struggled to formulate a position without giving the apartheid state the upper hand in a discursive war on the moral and political legitimacy over using violence.

This ambivalence was, however, not merely a tactical one. For underpinning the 'official' non-state discourse on the practice of necklacing was an inherent formulation of the binary of resistance and oppression/repression. The practice understood within this framework was rendered causally as resistance arising from state oppression/repression. Ambivalence about the practice of necklacing was thus produced in the interstice of the resistance – oppression/repression binary. Leading from this, through offering a reading of Govan Mbeki's *The Peasant's Revolt* (1964), I argue more broadly that the problematic of violence in the ANC has a far longer history.[5]

While the focus of this chapter is to trace ambivalence and to ask how that ambivalence was produced, I proceed to provide a brief overview of some of the ANC and UDF strategies in the early to mid 1980's. I then outline the key statements made by the ANC

---

[4] I borrow this phrasing rather liberally from the seminal work of Ranajit Guha as discussed in the Introduction to this thesis. See R. Guha, 'The Prose of Counter-Insurgency' in *Subaltern Studies Volume 11* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1983), 45-84.
[5] G. Mbeki, *South Africa: The Peasants' Revolt* (Baltimore, Maryland: Penguin Books, 1964).

and UDF on the practice of necklacing and/or violence in this period, before proceeding to discuss the UDF's formulation of 'defensive violence' and Chris Hani's on the distinction between 'mass' and 'revolutionary violence/justice'. Both these formulations enable an unravelling of the liberation movements prose of ambivalence.

'Official' non-state strategies on (violent) resistance

Around the same time as the apartheid state adopted 'total strategy' in the late 1970's, the ANC produced *The Green Book*, a report on lessons learnt from the Vietnamese liberation struggle.[6] This report placed emphasis on the strengthening of the underground and the building of mass organisations. The role of *Umkhonto we Sizwe* (Spear of the Nation - MK) would be to escalate the armed struggle but as a form of political armed propaganda, "whose immediate purpose [was] to support and stimulate political activity and organisation rather than to hit at the enemy."[7] Violence, while still central to what was conceived of as seizure of state power, would be the result of a mass revolutionary insurrectionary strategy (a 'people's war') and insofar as MK would continue to play a leading role, this would be primarily political not military.[8]

Three of these strategies – the all-round vanguard activity of the underground, the united mass action of the people, and the armed offensive spearheaded by MK – formed part of what was known as 'the four pillars' strategy. The fourth pillar was the international drive to isolate the apartheid regime and win world-wide moral, political and material support for the ANC.[9]

---

[6] See *The Green Book* – Report of the Politico-Military Strategy Commission to the ANC National Executive Committee, August 1979.
http://www.anc.org.za/ancdocs/history/mk/green-book.html
Interestingly, the first national strategy of the SSC, known as Boek 1/Belied: Die RSA se Belange en die RSA – Regeringse Doel, Doelstellings en Beleid, was known as 'Die Groenboek' (The Green Book). TRC Research Notes.
[7] See *The Green Book*.
[8] See H. Barrell, 'Conscripts of their Age: African National Congress Operational Strategy, 1976-1986', Unpublished PhD thesis, Oxford University (1993), 207-260. See also M. Legassick, 'Armed Struggle in South Africa: Consequences of a Strategy Debate' in *Journal of Contemporary African Studies*, Vol. 21, No. 2 (2003), 285-302.
[9] See January 8 Statement- 1984: President's message for 1984.
http://www.anc.org.za/ancdocs/history/jan8-84.html

While the precise relationship between the internal mass organisations and the ANC remains unclear, the early 1980's saw significant mass mobilisation and organisation, including the launch in August 1983 of the UDF, a front of organisations which provided a broad organisational framework as well as symbolic coherence to anti apartheid resistance.[10] Archbishop Desmond Tutu, Rev. Alan Boesak and several former ANC and Congress Alliance members, including Albertina Sisulu (the president of the UDF) and Helen Joseph were amongst its prominent patrons and executive members. The UDF mobilised against reforms proposed by the Botha government, most notably the tricameral system which instituted racially segregated representation in central government for 'coloured' and 'indian' South Africans while excluding 'black' representation except at a local level.[11] The UDF, though ambiguously, propagated non-violence: the forms of resistance, largely led by the UDF, varied from rent boycotts that had begun in late 1984, to bus and food boycotts, worker stay-aways and school boycotts.

Following the boycott of black local elections in September 1984, there was escalating conflict between mobilised masses, mostly youth and students, and security forces.[12] As political strife spread across the country, the UDF declared 1985 'From Protest to Challenge'[13] and in January 1985, the ANC called on South Africans to 'Render South Africa Ungovernable'.[14] The state, as discussed in the previous chapter, increasingly shifted its strategy to one of 'counter-revolutionary warfare'. By July 1985 the state had declared a partial state of emergency and by 12 July 1986, a national state of emergency. This led to wide-spread detentions, significant and increasing number of deaths as a result

---

[10] See T. Lodge and B. Nasson, All, Here, And Now: Black Politics in South Africa in the 1980s (Cape Town: Ford Foundation – David Philip, 1991); J. Seekings, The UDF: A history of the United Democratic Front in South Africa, 1983-1991 (Cape Town: David Philip, 2000) and I. van Kessel, '"Beyond our Wildest Dreams": The United Democratic Front and the Transformation of South Africa', PhD thesis submitted at University of Leiden, (November 1995); G. F Houston, *The National Liberation Struggle in South Africa: A case study of the United Democratic Front, 1983-1987* (Vermont: Ashgate, 1999) amongst others for detailed reviews of the UDF. See also H. Barrell for a discussion on the relation between the ANC's tactical strategies and the UDF, H. Barrell, 'Conscripts of their Age', 261-297.
[11] T. Lodge and B. Nasson, *All, Here, And Now*, 58-64.
[12] See for example A. Marx, *Lessons of Struggle: South African Internal Opposition, 1960-1990* (Cape Town: Oxford University Press, 1992), 147-170.
[13] See M. Swilling, 'The United Democratic Front and Township Revolt' in W. Cobbett and R. Cohen (ed.), *Popular Struggles in South Africa* (London: James Curry, 1988), 103-105.
[14] See 'Render South Africa Ungovernable: President O.R. Tambo's message delivered in Lusaka on January 8, 1985' in *Sechaba* (March 1985).

of security force action, both in protest/street violence, cross border raids and via more sinister forms of covert action.[15] The first report of necklace killings, most notably that of Councillor Benjamin Kinikini and his family members and Maki Skosana, emerged in early 1985 in this rising tide of mass political strife. Indeed, the killing of the Kinikini's followed the Langa massacre, while that of Maki Skosana was directly linked to a sinister form of covert action.[16]

In June 1985 at its Kabwe Conference, the ANC approved a new and intensified mass-based resistance strategy for a 'People's War'. At the same time, it provided some legitimacy to attacks on 'soft targets' such as prominent government supporters, border area farmers, civil defence workers, state witnesses and police informers.[17] This was seen in some quarters as a major deviation from earlier policy, departing from the ANC's earlier commitment to the Geneva Convention, and thus the protected status of non-combatants.[18] However, the ANC regarded many of the above as extensions of state force and thus legitimate targets. Shortly thereafter the ANC launched their land-mine campaign.[19]
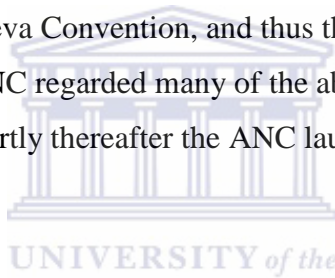
Through legitimating attacks on 'soft targets', it is possible that inside South Africa this was read more broadly as legitimating the killing of collaborators. Thus, although the ANC's new policy on 'soft targets' applied specifically to armed struggle, it could have

---

[15] See for example, D. Webster, 'Repression and the State of Emergency' in G. Moss and I. Obery (eds.), *South African Review 4* (Johannesburg: Ravan Press, 1987), 141-172.

[16] See Introduction and Chapter One.

[17] H. Barrell, 'ANC Conference: "All for the Front"' in *Work in Progress*, Issue 38 (August 1985), 13

[18] The ANC endorsed the Geneva Convention in 1980 binding itself to its stipulations.This was the first occasion that such a Declaration was formally made by a liberation movement before the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). In a statement at the ceremony, President Tambo said that the "United Nations and the ICRC were to be congratulated. They had helped to develop the law so as to extend the concept of an international armed conflict to cover wars of national liberation in which, to use the language of Protocol I, 'peoples are fighting against colonial domination and alien occupation and against racist regimes in the exercise of their right of self-determination'." See 'The ANC signs the Geneva Protocols', The O'Malley Archives.
http://www.nelsonmandela.org/omalley/index.php/site/q/03lv02424/04lv02730/05lv02918/06lv02928/07lv02929.htm
See also 'Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions' of 12 August 1949, and relating to the 'Protection of Victims of International Armed Conflicts (Protocol I)', 8 June 1977.
http://www.icrc.org/ihl.nsf/7c4d08d9b287a42141256739003e636b/f6c8b9fee14a77fdc125641e0052b079

[19] See T. Lodge, 'The African National Congress after the Kabwe Conference' in G. Moss and I. Obery (eds.), *South African Review 4* (Johannesburg: Ravan Press, 1987), 7-10.

influenced the escalation of necklace killings and attacks on collaborators. This in turn created increasing pressure on the ANC and UDF to respond more clearly to necklace killings: the state had framed the practice of necklacing as barbaric and the escalation in necklacing killings and its associated negative publicity threatened growing support locally and internationally for the liberation movements.[20] Indeed, the rise of necklace killings and associated media attention threatened to deflect attention from increasing security force violence in the townships. Both the UDF and ANC began to make public statements on the practice of necklacing, and more broadly on contested aspects of violence. These, however, were not always in unison; indeed, in many instances they were contradictory. It is to these statements that I now turn, highlighting an ambivalence that condemned the practice of necklacing, but condoned those who carried it out.

Between 'condemning' and 'condoning'

Clergymen such as Reverend Alan Boesak and Archbishop Desmond Tutu, both patrons of the UDF, harshly condemned early necklace killings and burnings such as that of the Kinikini's and Skosana. Indeed, both clergymen are reported to have personally protected individuals from being necklaced.[21] Despite this, according to journalist Steven Mufson, Bishop Tutu doubted whether his message of non-violence was getting through to the youth (who were mainly involved in the practice of necklacing): "Tutu himself said that if he were a young black, he wouldn't follow a man named Bishop Tutu."[22] This implied perhaps, on Tutu's part, a degree of understanding for those engaged in this practice.

This condemnation was not, however, uniform. Mufson argues that, "[b]y taking violence to a new threshold, the necklace renewed the debate over the need for violence and limits on violence."[23] This debate is evident in key statements made by the UDF which wavered between condemnation and condonation, despite the Front's public stance on non-

---

[20] Negative publicity was a particular concern with the impending visit of the Commonwealth Eminent Persons Group (EPG) in the first half of 1986. See for example T. Lodge, 'People's War or Negotiation? African National Congress Strategies in the 1980's' in G. Moss and I. Obery (eds.), *South African Review 5* (Johannesburg: Ravan Press, 1989), 45-46.
[21] See for example S. Mufson, *Fighting Years*, 98.
[22] S. Mufson, *Fighting Years*, 103.
[23] S. Mufson, *Fighting Years*, 96.

violence. Initially key figures appeared to condone both the practice of necklacing and the killing of suspected collaborators.

Seekings posits that the escalation of violence in 1985 forced the UDF to restate its commitment to non-violence. Although it had previously adopted a non-violent policy, this was not necessarily uniform or unanimous given the UDF's wide constituencies. According to Seekings while, "some leaders saw violence as morally suspect; others saw it as potentially counterproductive, a threat to sustained revolt; most favoured instead organisation building." [24] On the other hand, others such as Eastern Cape publicity secretary, Stone Sizane, publicly and according to Mufson, "unambiguously" endorsed violence by stating in a speech at a funeral in Queenstown:

> When the youth die they do not die, but fall in the battle. We … must take over their spears, their AK's and go forward. When one nation subjugates another the first thing they do is disarm them. They disarm us and bring in their armed forces to kill and shoot us. They expect us to take it lying down. To wear black robes and mourn. To pray and ask God to liberate us. We say enough is enough. Now is the time to hit back. So that is why we say amabuthu must ever be strengthened, must ever be organised. They must be mobilised to hit more and most effectively.[25]

Similarly, Transvaal UDF president Curtis Nkondo told a thousand strong crowd gathered in a church at a funeral in Alexandra for eight individuals killed: "Either you join the struggle or you join the police. There is no such thing as the politics of neutrality."[26]

This lack of unanimity played itself out in relation to the practice of necklacing. As a result, even when it re-stated its commitment to non-violence, this, according to Seekings, was "qualified in that the UDF refused to condemn what it called 'defensive' violence of protestors against the state and its agents."[27] For example, at the UDF's annual general council in April 1985, shortly after the Langa massacre and the associated killings of the Kinikini's, Mosiuoa 'Terror' Lekota, national public secretary of the UDF,

---

[24] J. Seekings, *The UDF: A history of the United Democratic Front*, 291.
[25] Cited in S. Mufson, *Fighting Years*, 97.
[26] See R.L. Abel, *Politics by Other Means: Law in the Struggle Against Apartheid, 1980-1994* (New York: Routledge, 1995), 323.
[27] J. Seekings, *The UDF: A history of the United Democratic Front,* 135.

argued that the kind of violence meted out to community councillors by angry residents was not "aggressive violence but *defensive violence*."[28] In other words, "councillors were using a subtle type of violence against their own people as they (the councillors) were 'little Vorsters and Bothas in black skin'." He continued by saying: "Our people are very angry at the whole system of apartheid and I would like to appeal once more to the councillors to resign their posts while there is still time."[29] At the same council though, the UDF noted that "in many areas, organisations trail behind the masses, thus making it more difficult for a disciplined mass action to take place. More often there is spontaneity of actions in the township."[30]

At other moments the UDF denied responsibility for the practice of necklacing and burnings. For example in March 1986, Paul Maseko, an executive UDF member according to the *Cape Times*, stated that police informers known to members of the UDF would "have been killed by now had the organisation been a violent one." He was refuting claims that the UDF was a violent organisation that burnt people to death.[31]

A few months later, on June 7 1986, youths returning from a UDF meeting in Alexandra calling for the unbanning of the ANC,

> captured a suspected informer, put a tire around his neck, and made him drink gasoline. He escaped while they went looking for his employer, whom they necklaced and stoned to death. Five days later the AAC [Alexander Action Committee, an affiliate of the UDF] executive condemned the killing, promised to discipline the youths, appointed a committee to protect the victims family, and offered to help with the funeral arrangements.[32]

Although this handful of statements may not be complete, it is clear that there was not an overwhelming response. When the UDF did respond, its statements vacillated and were sometimes contradictory. Even when the UDF expressed a level of discomfort with the levels and forms of violence, its position was ambivalent. To return to Lekota, while his

---

[28] See for example K. Jochelson, 'Local Authorities on their knees' in *Work in Progress*, Issue 4 (Sept., /Oct., 1986) for a discussion on the rise of rent boycotts since September 1984 and complicity of community councillors.

[29] See A. Mphaki, 'Violence justified - UDF' in *Sowetan Sunday Mirror* (7 April 1985). My emphasis.

[30] Cited in T. Lodge and B. Nasson, *All, Here, And Now*, 76.

[31] 'Informers not harmed, says UDF'in *Cape Times* (25 March 1986).

[32] See R.L. Abel, *Politics by Other Means,* 324-325.

comments were in line with the UDF's campaign to boycott local government structures and thus part of the campaign to pressure councillors to resign, his formulation can also be read as a broader statement on violence. That statement argued that the UDF could not condemn such violence because it was "defensive violence." In this sense, the state was complicit, indeed responsible, for such acts of violence. The notion of 'black-on-black' violence as propagated by the apartheid state was rendered nonsensical, as violence in effect remained state violence. Moreover, "defensive violence", to some degree, sanctioned those carrying out the act, who in this formulation are rendered as responding to violence on the part of the state, and thus, in some ways innocent. It should be noted though, as Seekings points out, that while, "popular violence was often defended on the grounds that such violence itself was defensive… not all the targets of popular violence were themselves perpetrators of violence."[33]

Lekota's formulation is also evident in a statement made by Trevor Manuel, the Western Cape regional secretary of the UDF, after the lynching of Moegsien Abrahams following a UDF meeting at the Westridge Civic Centre, Mitchells Plain (Cape Town) on the 25 May 1986.[34] Two days after the incident, having "gathered the facts" according to Manuel,[35] he released the following statement:

> The UDF regrets the loss of life of Moegsien Abrahams. However, it is important we understand his untimely death in context. The context is provided by the growing polarisation and concomitant anger which flows from the apartheid ordering our society. His death occurred in a manner which the UDF cannot be held responsible for…

Following a careful explanation of the chain of events, Manuel continued:

---

[33] J. Seekings, *The UDF: A history of the United Democratic Front*, 159.

[34] Accoring to Manuel, Joe Adam (the chairman of that meeting), announced that "two unwelcome guests at the back of the hall must please leave." Members of the audience surged towards the back of the hall and pursued one of the men trying to run away. Moegsien Abrahams was brought back into the hall by UDF marshals and made to sit on the stage with the rest of the speakers at the meeting in a bid to secure his safety. When the meeting was over and the gathering began singing *Nkosi Sikele' iAfrika* (today South Africa's national anthem), the marshals escorted Abrahams out a back door. However, a group of young men pursued him throwing stones while he ran. Eventually they caught up with him and beat him to death, the final blow being a brick thrown at him. Mr. Abrahams bled to death. See, '200 mourn man killed after UDF rally' in *Cape Times* (27 May 1986).

[35] In response to mounting criticism of the UDF over its reponse or lack thereof, to the death of Moegsien Abrahams, Manuel argued that "at no stage were the facts checked out with us." See, 'UDF's "final word" on death' in *Cape Times* (31 May 1986).

> In light of this, the UDF cannot and will not take responsibility, whether directly or indirectly, for his death. The blame rests four-square on the shoulders of those responsible for the breeding of hatred and anger by their maintenance of apartheid against the will of the people. Our struggle for an end to apartheid is a struggle for an end to the very brutality which led to the death of Moegsien Abrahams and so many others.[36]

The question here is not whether or not Moegsien Abrahams was an 'informer', or about the legitimacy of killing collaborators, but to demonstrate the continuity in the position which held that all political violence was ultimately state-sponsored violence. This move not only denies individual agency to those who physically killed him, but also places Abrahams in a category of fallen victims of apartheid. Thus Abrahams, a suspected informer and hence perpetrator, is also a victim. Indeed, he is a double victim both of context (read the system of apartheid) as well as direct physical violence. An editorial in the *Cape Times* posed the following question, "followed to its logical conclusion, it means that apartheid can be used as justification to do anything to anybody who may or may not be linked to the existing parliamentary system. Is that what the UDF is suggesting? That maiming and murder is excusable?"[37] Seekings suggests that there was a, "continuing ambiguity" in the UDF's position on political violence, citing as an example the UDF's failure to unambiguously condemn the killing of Moegsien Abrahams.[38]

The idea of "defensive violence" as justification is similarly evident in some comments of the ANC, although here too there was lack of unanimity. On the 29 October 1985, Oliver Tambo made a key statement in response to a question posed by the Foreign Affairs Committee of the House of Commons in London regarding the ANC's policy on 'soft targets' and whether they condemned the killing of suspected collaborators. Here he referred to the ANC's call at Kabwe to intensify the struggle but recognised that the intensification of armed struggle would inevitably lead to unavoidable civilian casualties. Countering the state's notion of 'black-on-black' violence, Tambo said:

---

[36] 'UDF: See death "in context"' in *Cape Times* (28 May 1986).
[37] 'An Immoral Cop-Out' in *Cape Times* (30 May 1986).
[38] J. Seekings, *The UDF: A history of the United Democratic Front,* 194.

Now, this question of black *versus* black is generally misunderstood, I am afraid. The South African Government uses black police which it arms and which shoot at our people, so they have got an area of conflict between black and black, but it is not really between black and black, it is between the agencies of the regime - its armed police force killing civilians who are unarmed, and this has been presented as a conflict between black and black. It is not really, it is conflict between, on the one side, the victims of the apartheid system and the forces that represent and defend the apartheid system on the other. In the course of all this, of course, there are excesses which we do not condone, but we understand the circumstances in which all this is happening. There has been such an onslaught on our people by the Pretoria regime, there has been so much killing and shooting - shooting of children who do not have to be killed, they are killed because they are taking a stone and throwing a stone, they cannot hurt anybody throwing a stone, but in return for it they are shot and killed. This enrages the people and makes them more angry and we can understand that they can go to excesses in the way that they respond to this unbridled violence by apartheid.[39]

Here Tambo challenged the depiction of violence as 'black-on-black'; in its place he re-asserted violence as state versus liberation movement, thereby designating all those targeted by the 'comrades' as "represent(ing) and defend(ing)" the apartheid system and 'the people' as victims of apartheid counter-revolutionary strategies. Tambo, however, acknowledged that excesses of violence had been carried out but here, although the ANC did not condone, it understood that, "the circumstances in which all this is happening…we can understand that they ['the people'] can go to excesses in the way that they respond to this unbridled violence by apartheid." In this sense, there is recourse to causality: insofar as 'the people' engage in excesses of violence, it is a result of oppression/repression. Thus the oppression/repression framework is both explanation and legitimation over the use of violence as well as the sanctioning of "excesses" that may be outside the formal policy.

Following Tambo's statement, a series of statements were made that openly supported violence (including by the practice of necklacing) against collaborators. In October 1985,

---

[39] OR85-12a Great Britain. House of Commons, Foreign Affairs Committee, Session 1984-85. *The Situation in South Africa, Minutes of Evidence, Tuesday 29 October 1985*. London: His Majesty's Stationery Office, 1985. Mr. Tambo, together with Thabo Mbeki and Aziz Pahad, members of the National Executive, appeared before the Foreign Affairs Committee on behalf of the African National Congress. Sir Anthony Kershaw was in the Chair.
http://www.anc.org.za/show.php?doc=ancdocs/history/or/or85-12a.html

exiled ANC members and spokesmen Alosi Moloi and Tim Ngubane on the 10 October

1985 stated:

> Among us we have people who have openly collaborated with the enemy. You
> have to eliminate one to save hundreds of others.
>
> We want to make the death of a collaborator so grotesque that people will never
> think of it.[40]

In the November 1985 issue of *Sechaba*[41], one Cassius Mandla, in a discussion article

stated that:

> life in the townships is no longer like it was before…here collaborators and
> informers live in fear of petrol, either as petrol bombs being hurled at their homes
> and reducing them to rack and ruin, or as petrol dousing their treacherous bodies
> which are set alight and burned to a charred despicable mess. No longer is it just
> lucrative and safe to commit unspeakable acts of treachery against the people;
> selling out under cover of innocence, and life being all beer and skittles. Lucrative
> it still is to sell out, but it carries the immediate hazard of having one's flesh and
> bones being reduced to unidentifiable ashes.[42]

Mandla's comment served as a warning to those that would "sell out" and as to what the

consequences of committing "unspeakable acts of treachery" would be. The infamous

Winnie Mandela statement followed this on the 13 April 1986 and thereafter a 4 May

1986 Radio Freedom broadcast:

> Let us take all our weapons, both rudimentary and sophisticated, our necklacers
> [sic], our grenades, our machine guns…let us fight the vigilantes, the so-called
> 'fathers', together with the apartheid regime, together with the police and the
> army [43]

---

[40] Cited in *Talking with the ANC...* (Johannesburg: Bureau of Information, 1986), 26-27 (See Chapter of thesis). Note these statements were also cited and acknowledged as having been stated in the ANC's submission to the TRC. See Truth and Reconciliation Commission – Transcript of the African National Congress Party Political Recall in Cape Town – 12 and 13 May 1997. Day 1 – 12 May 1997. http://www.justice.gov.za/trc/special/party2/anc2.htm

[41] The first issue of *Sechaba* came out in 1967. It was an ANC journal "to be distributed internationally, a journal that would be the voice of the ANC, that would put forward our [ANC] policies and rally support for the liberation struggle of the people of South Africa…The chief task of *Sechaba* has been to publicise and analyse the situation with the country, and to make public the policy of the ANC." See 'Twenty Years of *Sechaba* Journal of the ANC' in *Sechaba* (May 1987), 27.

[42] C. Mandla, 'The Moment of Revolution is now-or never in our lifetime' in *Sechaba* (November 1985), 26.

[43] See *Talking with the ANC...*, 27-27.

While Tambo's statement, despite its somewhat ambivalent disapproval for the practice, was not reported in South Africa, as shown in the previous chapter, statements such as the above were widely used by the apartheid state.

In early September 1986, Oliver Tambo more unequivocally criticised the practice of necklacing at a press conference at the Non-Aligned Movement conference in Harare, where the ANC had observer status. The *Weekly Mail* reported that Oliver Tambo had stated that the ANC was, "not happy with the necklace and hoped his supporters would take this into account." However, according to the report: "He [Oliver Tambo] indicated also that he felt *unable to condemn people* who used the necklace because of the brutality they faced as a result of the South African system."[44] Tambo further accused, "vigilantes of sometimes necklacing anti-apartheid activists and then blaming it on the ANC in the hope of discrediting the movement."[45] In concluding the report, it is stated that when asked about the extent of the ANC's control in South Africa, Oliver Tambo hinted that the ANC had, "structures inside South Africa to make the country ungovernable, however, it [the ANC] could not control all aspects of the revolt, such as necklacing."[46] This statement thus re-states the earlier ambivalence of criticising yet being unwilling to condemn those responsible for necklacing.

---

[44] 'ANC leaders condemn necklace deaths' in *Weekly Mail* (5 September 1986). My emphasis.

[45] Oliver Tambo's accusation about vigilantes, "necklacing anti-apartheid activists and then blaming it on the ANC" speaks to the discursive strategies employed by the apartheid state in that vigilantes, according to Tom Lodge and Bill Nasson, "functioned as proxies for the security forces." See T. Lodge and B. Nasson, *All, Here, And Now*, 97. David Chidester gives an example of the rise of vigilantes aiding government policies: "In the squatter community of Crossroads near Cape Town, for example, during three weeks in May and June 1986, hundreds of armed vigilantes, known as witdoeke ("white headbands"), with apparent police support, destroyed four squatter camps, causing over 100 deaths and the removal of over 70 000 people. It can therefore be said that vigilante action achieved the aims of government policy in suppressing resistance and relocating residents of Crossroads." See D. Chidester, *Shots in the Streets: Violence and Religion in South Africa* (Cape Town: Oxford University Press, 1992), 155. Whilst outside the purview of this thesis, the rise of vigilantes was attributed to conflict between 'black' organisations such as the Azanian Peoples Organisation (AZAPO)/UDF conflict, the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP)/UDF and IFP/ANC conflict thereby exacerbating notions of 'black-on-black' violence. See amongst others A. W. Marx, *Lessons of Struggle: South African Internal Opposition, 1960-1990* (Cape Town: Oxford University Press, 1992), 170-188, M. Murray, *South Africa – Time of Agony, Time of Destiny: The Upsurge of Popular Protest* (London: Verso, 1987), 378-394.

[46] 'ANC leaders condemn necklace deaths' in *Weekly Mail* (5 September 1986).

Some weeks later though, in October 1986, then ANC Secretary General, Alfred Nzo was reported as having said to the *London Sunday Times*:

> "[w]hatever the people decide to use to eliminate those enemy elements is their decision. If they decide to use necklacing we support it."[47]

In September 1987, Oliver Tambo, again in Harare, this time at the Harare Conference on Children, made a further statement in which he called for the practice to stop. This 'official'[48] condemnation of the practice of necklacing was widely seen as an eventual response to the statement made the previous year by Winnie Mandela and other statements that she and others had made.[49] In this regard, it was reported that the ANC viewed Madikizela-Mandela's statement as being "unfortunate".[50] This widely publicised statement had sparked controversy in that a liberation struggle icon, the then wife of Nelson Mandela, publicly endorsed the practice of necklacing. As shown in the previous chapter, the state had triumphantly seized upon the statement to de-legitimise the ANC. Neither organization, the ANC and UDF, criticized her statement publicly at the time.[51]

According to the *Weekly Mail,* at the Harare Conference, Tambo and the ANC gave the following message to South African delegates: "The necklace as a form of punishment should stop. It has, rightly or wrongly, served its purpose and there is no way that people should continue with it." When asked whether the practice of necklacing as a form of punishment was wrong, an ANC spokesperson at the conference replied, "they (people who had applied the necklace) knew very well why they had to resort to using it. Probably they were compelled by circumstances prevailing at the time."[52] Another

---

[47] Cited in *Talking with the ANC...* (Johannesburg: Bureau of Information, 1986), 26-27.

[48] I say 'official' given the emphasis placed on it within recollections of Oliver Tambo as evidenced throughout this thesis.

[49] It was alleged that in September 1987, Winnie Mandela had advocated taking the struggle by way of violence to the white suburbs of Pretoria. See T. Stirling, 'SA "anticipated" ANC position on Winnie Mandela' in *The Citizen* (11 October 1987). According to Mufson; one of the ANC leaders, after watching the speech on TV in Zambia, "called Mrs. Mandela and urged her not to give any speeches for a while." See S. Mufson, *Fighting Years*, 101.

[50] See 'Stop necklacing, recognize all anti-apartheid bodies' in *Cape Times* (1 October 1987) and 'Ire of necklace statement: ANC shows disapproval of Winnie' in *The Star* (1 October 1987).

[51] According to Mufson, one of the ANC leaders, after watching the speech on TV in Zambia, "called Mrs. Mandela and urged her not to give any speeches for a while." See S. Mufson, *Fighting Years*, 101.

[52] See 'ANC says: "Stop the Necklace"' in *Weekly Mail* (2 October 1987) in *ANC News Briefing*, Issue 39, Vol. 11 (5 October 1987). *News Briefing* was a collection of press clippings from various newspapers, local

spokesperson responded as follows: "Our leadership has continually made it clear that the 'necklace' is not a method we advocate or support. But we are not prepared to condemn our people."[53] Indeed, in the September 1986 criticism of the use of the practice of necklacing, Oliver Tambo had framed his critique in precisely this manner.

It is this sentiment of the practice of necklacing, "rightly or wrongly" serving its "purpose" and of those that "knew very well why they had to resort" to the practice and of not being "prepared to condemn our people" that I consider a prose of ambivalence as it relates to the question of necklacing. This position echoes that of Trevor Manuel's response to the lynching of Moegsien Abrahams and Chris Hani's "comment on the necklace" in what follows. For it appears that whilst the ANC condemned the practice of necklacing, that is the practice itself, it did not condemn those who acted and carried out the practice. At the same time, although part and parcel of the larger national liberation struggle, Oliver Tambo was drawing a distinction between the ANC and 'the people' or 'the masses'. This distinction is most visible in MK Chief of Staff, Chris Hani's "comment on the necklace", which I examine more closely in order to demonstrate how this prose of ambivalence is constituted, and how attempts to escape it ultimately failed.

A prose of ambivalence

Following Zygmunt Bauman, if by ambivalence is meant "the possibility of assigning an object or an event to more than one category",[54] then Chris Hani's "comment on the necklace" qualifies as a prose of ambivalence.[55] Hani's comment appeared in a December 1986 issue of *Sechaba* and formed part of a more wide-ranging interview on the state of the struggle, the prospects of which he described as, "very very bright." He further suggested that within South Africa, "*we* [read MK and ANC] have become part and parcel of the ongoing mass struggles of *our people…our people* should look forward to

---

and international.
[53] 'Stop necklacing, recognize all anti-apartheid bodies' in *Cape Times* (1 October 1987).
[54] See Z. Bauman, *Modernity and Ambivalence* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1991), 1.
[55] See Appendix : Chris Hani's "comment on the necklace" for the comment in full.

the situation where, in the course of *their confrontation* with the enemy, *units of MK will be with them.*"[56] He continued by arguing:

> We are going to come increasingly across a situation where comrades in anger are going to react… That is not the policy of the ANC…we are in a state of war…we want to deal with the enemy personnel, the police, the army, with the administration of the enemy… But in the process *our people* are going to get angry…*the Botha regime is solely responsible for this sort of situation. We are not authors of the situation*…And I want to repeat that we are not responsible for this situation…*We are a revolutionary movement.*[57]

Hani's "comment on the necklace" was situated within a merging of the "mass struggles of our people" and MK being there *every step of the way*.[58] The practice of necklacing, for Hani, was in part located within this claiming of the mass struggle of 'the people' as being bound to the larger struggle with the proviso that those in the ANC were not the "autho[rs] of the [violent] situation." Importantly here as well was the assertion by Hani of the ANC being a revolutionary movement with revolutionary approaches to dealing with "the enemy". The category of "the enemy" however, was not merely the apartheid regime (the "Botha regime"); it broadly included those who collaborated with that regime.

Hani proceeded to open his "comment on the necklace" by situating South Africa as a "colonialist power of a special type." This formulation, as explained in a April 1985 issue of *Sechaba*, was understood as a,

> form of capitalist state power in the hands of an internally settled White minority which has industrialised racism and violence as instruments of coercion to perpetuate the racial domination, the racial oppression and the racial exploitation of the aboriginal African majority, the Coloured, Indian and other national minorities of South Africa. And this state is essentially fascist![59]

---

[56] Chris Hani, '25 years of armed struggle' in *Sechaba* (December 1986), 14-15. My emphasis.

[57] Chris Hani, '25 years of armed struggle', 18. My emphasis.

[58] In Chapter Four of this thesis I discuss the 2004 nationalist text, *Every Step of the Way: The Journey to Freedom in South Africa* (Cape Town: HSRC Press, 2004).

[59] A. Mashinini, 'Preparing the Fire Before Cooking the Rice Inside the Pot: Some Burning Questions of our Revolution' in *Sechaba* (April 1985), 21. Premesh Lalu suggests that 'colonialism of a special type', as a "programmatic statement", regulated notions of class and race within discourses of the liberation movements. This, for Lalu is in relation to analyses of the critique of apartheid that saw the concepts of class and race "become somewhat fixed in their meaning." See P. Lalu, *The Deaths of Hinsta: Postapartheid South Africa and the Shape of Recurring Pasts* (Cape Town: HSRC Press, 2009), 15-16. See especially footnote 33 of Lalu's Introduction, 271. See also C. Bundy, 'Around Which Corner?: Revolutionary theory and contemporary South Africa' in *Transformation*, 8 (1989), 1-23.

Having placed the apartheid state in a field of moral indefensibility, Hani stated that in the context of a society that was "very abnormal… [p]eople are angry because [they] are fighting fascism in that country."[60] Hani then linked South Africa to other situations of "classic colonialism" such as India, Kenya, the old Tanganyika in which the "active collaboration by puppets" was essential to colonialism's survival.[61]

In South Africa these collaborators were identified as the "Black policeman, the Black special branch and the Black agent [who] stay in the same townships as we do [and who] have been the conduit through which information about our activities, about our plans ha[ve] been passed to the enemy [making] organisation and mobilisation very difficult."[62] Hani named those considered as collaborators, as legitimate targets that included both 'soft' and 'hard' targets. Indeed, at the end of 1985 an official ANC leaflet, *Take the Struggle to White Areas!*, was distributed in South Africa stating that, "we have created combat groups and mobile units to defend ourselves and our leaders by confronting the racist army, police, death squads, agents and stooges in our midst." Before concluding, the leaflet implicitly warned those who do not throw in "their lot with the fighters for liberation":

> The issue today is not whether or not freedom for the people will come. The question is on which side you should be – whether to perish with apartheid or to live with the forces of democracy and peace. [63]

While there was no elaboration of who "agents and stooges" were, though the phrasing is seemingly synonymous with collaborators, the targeting of such "agents and stooges" was presumably part of a sanctioned discourse regarding the legitimacy of carrying out sanctioned operations against collaborators. For example in 1983, the ANC had established 'suicide squads' or 'grenade squads' that attacked township councillors and those considered 'collaborators'.[64] By late 1985 though, when the above-mentioned

---

[60] Chris Hani, '25 years of armed struggle', 18.
[61] There is an implicit argument here for something like South African exceptionalism by Hani juxtaposing South Africa's "colonialism of a special type" with the "classic colonialism['s]" of other countries.
[62] Chris Hani, '25 years of armed struggle', 18.
[63] '*Take the Struggle to the White Areas*! - Make the whole of South Africa ungovernable! Paralyse apartheid!' Official ANC leaflet distributed inside South Africa in the latter half of 1985. http://www.anc.org.za/ancdocs/history/ug/pam8500.html
[64] Howard Barrell however points out that, "the lack of co-ordination between the ANC's political, military

leaflet was distributed, it was mainly not official MK cadres carrying out the sanctioned targeting and killing of "stooges" or collaborators. Rather, it was predominantly local township youth mobilised by the UDF and other organisations.[65]

Hani continued however by cautioning 'the people': "But we are saying here *our people* must be careful, in the sense that the enemy would employ provocateurs to use the necklace, even against activists."[66] Oliver Tambo, in his condemning of the practice of necklacing as elaborated earlier, had criticised the work of vigilantes in killing anti-apartheid activists and in so doing seeking to discredit the ANC. Indeed, this complication permeated Hani's prose of ambivalence.

The context for the emergence of necklace killings, for Hani, is that of oppression/repression from the apartheid regime. It is in this context of resistance then that, "*the necklace was a weapon devised by the oppressed themselves* to remove this cancer from our society, the cancer of collaboration of the puppets." [67] Hani explicitly stated that the practice was not a "weapon of the ANC", ambiguously distancing the ANC from the practice of necklacing and from 'the masses'. Rather it was, "*a weapon of the masses themselves* to cleanse the townships from the very disruptive and even lethal activities of the puppets and collaborators." [68] In this sense, the practice of necklacing as resistance was assigned to the "masses themselves."

At the same time though, Hani distanced but simultaneously claimed 'ownership' of 'the masses': "*We* do understand *our* people when *they* use the necklace because it is an

---

and security structures seriously compromised the development of these attacks." See H. Barrell, *MK: the ANC's armed wing* (London: Penguin Books, 1990), 57.

[65] For example, in a *Financial Mail* interview with a 'comrade' talking about the practice of necklacing, he was asked the question, "What organization do you belong to?" and his response was, "I am a member of the Tumahole Youth Congress, which is an affiliate of the United Democratic Front". And when asked, "Who do you regard as the leader in this country? The 'comrade' replied, "Baba Nelson Mandela." See 'Talking to a comrade' in *Financial Mail* (31 October 1986). See also for example M. Marks, *Young Warriors: Youth Politics, Identity and Violence in South Africa* (Johannesburg: Witwatersrand University Press, 2001) and G. Straker, *Faces in the Revolution: The Psychological Effects of Violence on Township Youth in South Africa* (Cape Town: David Philip, 1992).

[66] Chris Hani, '25 years of armed struggle', 15. My emphasis.

[67] Chris Hani, '25 years of armed struggle', 15. My emphasis.

[68] Chris Hani, '25 years of armed struggle', 15. My emphasis.

attempt to render *our* townships, to render *our* areas and country ungovernable, to make the enemy's access to information very difficult."[69] Rendering the "country ungovernable" as a strategy of resistance leading towards liberation enabled an understanding of why the practice of necklacing emerged amongst 'the masses' and continued to be used. In this understanding however, the practice was also thus arguably aligned with the ANC.

Following the above, the relationship between those that could kill legitimately with those that could be legitimately killed was also blurred. In other words, when it called for a 'People's War,' the ANC attempted (although failed) to clarify who was considered a legitimate target; what it did not address at all was whether killings could be conducted by members of its mass support base as Hani shows here.

Up to this point then Hani's position largely repeats the ambivalence that is apparent in those statements from the ANC and UDF concerning the condemning of practices such as necklacing and burning. He positioned the state as "fascist" and morally indefensible; the "people/masses" were angry and lashed out at collaborators. In this sense, necklacing as resistance was not the policy or practice of the UDF or ANC but it was at the very least understandable/explicable, and thus justified (albeit ambivalently so). The above arguments therefore also echo some of the same formulations suggested by Lekota, Manuel and Tambo. However, where Hani differs from those formulations is his attempt to resolve the impasse between condemning and condoning through a discussion on the difference, or as I wish to argue, the interplay, between what he called "revolutionary justice" and "traditional forms of justice", to which I now turn.

Several noteworthy aspects are discernable in Hani's attempt to resolve that impasse. Firstly, Hani characterised the practice of necklacing as "traditional forms of justice".[70] What is interesting is that Hani did not refer to the practice of necklacing as punishment, nor violence, but as a form of justice. This begs the question as to how naming the

---

[69] Chris Hani, '25 years of armed struggle', 18. My emphasis.
[70] Chris Hani, '25 years of armed struggle', 18.

practice as justice works to legitimise necklace killings as opposed to it being named as punishment. In other words, within the notion of justice there is implicitly an element of legitimacy. At the same time however, "traditional forms of justice" were regarded as undesirable by Hani, perhaps because of the capacity of 'tradition' to resonate with the state's characterisation of the practice as barbaric or primoridal and as a form of 'black-on-black' violence.

Hani proposed a move away from "traditional forms of justice" to forms of justice that are "revolutionary". In not characterising the practice as punishment, the concept justice, I suggest, served as a mechanism to enable a move to "revolutionary justice". Indeed, Hani posed the question, "What is revolutionary justice?"[71] It appears that it was only through the setting up of revolutionary structures that the question of revolutionary justice could be responded to or rather be actualised. He therefore stated:

> One fact is that, where agents and collaborators are concerned, we should establish, where is it (sic) possible our own revolutionary courts where justice should be meted out. And in those courts we should involve some of our best cadres so that our forms of justice do not denigrate into kangaroo justice. *We would like to maintain revolutionary forms of justice.*[72]

Here there is an implicit association of "traditional forms of justice" with "kangaroo courts" when Hani stated, "…we should involve some of our best cadres so that our forms of justice do not degenerate into kangaroo justice." It should be recalled that in relation to the practice of necklacing, "kangaroo courts" were blamed by the apartheid state as being the official institutions through which, supposedly, the ANC and the UDF were propagating the practice of necklacing as being part of its 'intimidation strategy'.[73] The UDF responded to and propagated 'people's courts' from 1985 with its call to 'people's power'. Kangaroo courts, on the other hand, were chastised harshly.[74]

---

[71] Chris Hani, '25 years of armed struggle', 18.

[72] Chris Hani, '25 years of armed struggle', 18. My emphasis.

[73] See Chapter One.

[74] See J. Seekings, 'People's Courts and Popular Politics' in G. Moss and I. Obery (eds.), *South African Review 5* (Johannesburg: Raven Press, 1989), 119. See also, 'Comrades of the crooked court' in *Probe*, (November 1985) and, 'UDF leader condemns "kangaroo courts"' in *Herald* (31 October 1985).

In "maintaining revolutionary forms of justice", it is possible that Hani was also referring to a document released at the Kabwe Conference dealing with MK's military code that stressed the positive relationship between MK and, "the revolutionary sections of our people."[75] Despite the document's Preamble stating that: "[r]ecognising that our army, Umkhonto we Sizwe, must define its aims and objects in clear and precise terms, and that the rights and duties of each member should be likewise defined without ambiguity…" there was no clear definition of how collaborators were to be dealt with by members. The document stressed that all members of the ANC and combatants were required to respect the terms of the Geneva Convention and that any violation of these terms would be an offence.[76]

Interestingly, in a subsection titled "Punishment" the document stated that, "[t]he purpose of punishment is to deter members from committing an offence, *assist offenders to rehabilitate and protect the ANC, Umkhonto, liberation and the revolution*. In imposing punishment, the competent authorities shall be guided by high political principles to the exclusion of personal animosity or any trace of vendetta. *Punishments shall be administered humanely and without undue harshness or cruelty*."[77] Here it is apparent that in Hani characterising the practice of necklacing as justice and not punishment, the killing of collaborators by individuals claiming allegiance to the liberation movements, who were not members of MK but "revolutionary sections of our people", seemingly fell outside the military ambit of MK's code of conduct.

Hani continued and argued: "We know even the negative and the positive aspects of the necklace. There is a lot of discussion of the necklace. But it is not this silly conclusion that it is Black on Black violence. The necklace has been used against those who have been actively collaborating with the enemy."[78] The negative aspects presumably are what Hani referred to earlier in his comment, namely that, "the enemy would employ

---

[75] See 'Umkhonto we Sizwe Military Code' – [This document was released at the ANC National Consultative Conference at Kabwe in June 1986. It was part of a larger document titled "Report of Commission on National Structures, Constitutional Guidelines and Codes of Conduct"] http://www.anc.org.za/ancdocs/history/mkcode.html
[76] 'Umkhonto we Sizwe Military Code'.
[77] 'Umkhonto we Sizwe Military Code'. My emphasis.
[78] Chris Hani, '25 years of armed struggle', 18.

provocateurs to use the necklace, even against activists."[79] The positive aspects presumably are that the necklace was effective in, "mak[ing] the enemy's access to information very difficult." That the practice of necklacing for Hani was not 'black-on-black' violence, that "silly conclusion", points not only to the interplay of the dominant discourses in contest for the legitimation and justification over the use of violence, but also of Hani attempting to move away from the impasse between 'condemning' and 'condoning'.

The second notable aspect therefore is that, just as Hani's characterising of the practice of necklacing as having emerged as a form of 'traditional justice' was suggestive of the separation between "revolutionary justice" and "traditional forms of justice", so too it suggested a separation of 'the masses' from the movement, the ANC. In this regard three categories of subjectivities that operated within the broader liberation struggle can be discerned; 'the masses'- ('the people'); the militants – (MK), and the movement itself – (the ANC). However, as sketched out above, there appears to be an oscillatory effect by Hani claiming 'the masses' as constitutive with the militants of MK and thus the ANC whilst at the same moment an attempt at maintaining a distinction between those subjectivities.

A productive means of underscoring the significance as well as the limit of this oscillatory effect is possibly in relation to Nigel Gibson's reading of Frantz Fanon and anti-colonial violence. The stage preceding decolonization "is manifestly Manichean" and Gibson suggests this be understood as the dualism of resistance and oppression/repression.[80] For Fanon, according to Gibson, the liberation movement will seek to divide collaborators from 'the people' in an attempt to isolate, "those who work for or support 'native institutions' [by] liquidating collaborators as publicly as possible to encourage others."[81] Gibson however, does not examine this complication and it appears that neither does Fanon.[82]

---

[79] Chris Hani, '25 years of armed struggle', 15.
[80] N.C. Gibson, *Fanon: The Postcolonial Imagination* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2003), 111.
[81] See N.C. Gibson, *Fanon: The Postcolonial Imagination*, 111.
[82] In a footnote relating to the "liquidating of collaborators", Gibson writes that the issue is a lot more

Though Fanon does posit, "for a man in the thick of the fight it is an urgent matter to decide on the means and the tactics to employ: that is to say, how to conduct and organise the movement. If this coherence is not present there is only a blind will to freedom, with the terrible reactionary risks which it entails."[83]

In the case of the practice of necklacing however, it was not the liberation movement "liquidating collaborators", but 'the people', those whom Hani both sought to claim but also separate from the liberation movement. Yet Hani stressed that:

> [t]he ANC will never abandon its leading role. We say to our people, whatever method you devise, there should be democratic participation, there should be democratic discussion and whatever method we use, that method should conform to the norms of the revolutionary movement. As I say we understand why the necklace has been used.[84]

Here one can suggest that the ANC and MK did not want to abandon its leading role simply because "traditional forms of justice" were employed. Rather, it is possible to read this not merely as a distinction but more so as a plea for progress from "traditional forms of justice" to "revolutionary forms of justice."[85]

---
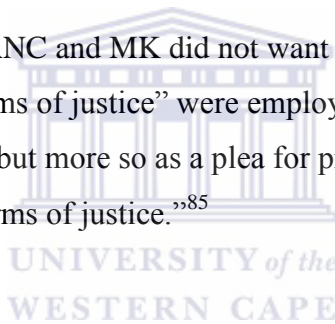
complicated because, and here he is referring to the case of Algeria, "the extent of liquidation of 'collaborators' included political opponents who were liquidated by the FLN [Algeria's liberation movement]. Many were Algerians working for the colonial government and members of the MTLD or later FLN opponents. During the first two and a half years of the revolution the FLN killed six Muslims to every one European." N.C. Gibson, *Fanon: The Postcolonial Imagination*, footnote 17, 228.

[83] F. Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, trans. by C. Farrington (New York: Grove Press, Inc, 1968), 59. Indeed a powerful statement by Fanon is that: "Decolonization [liberation], as we know, is a historical process: that is to say that it cannot be understood, it cannot become intelligible nor clear to itself except in the exact measure that we can discern the movements which give it historical form and content." 36.

[84] Chris Hani, '25 years of armed struggle', 18.

[85] Seekings argues that, "the existence of township courts reflected a form of struggle against the state, by removing issues from its jurisdiction into the extra-state township arena." See J. Seekings, 'People's Courts and Popular Politics' in G. Moss and I. Obery (eds.), *South African Review 5* (Johannesburg: Raven Press, 1989), 120. Similarly, Nancy Scheper- Hughes argues that, "popular justice was designed to produce a South African version of the 'new socialist man', the good comrade who was upright, disciplined, and respectful of communal norms and the new social and political values, who was accountable, and above all, who recognised the true 'enemy', the apartheid state and its collaborators." See N. Scheper-Hughes, 'Who's the Killer? Popular Justice and Human Rights in a South African Squatter Camp', in N.Scheper-Hughes and P. Bourgois (eds.), *Violence in War and Peace: An Anthology* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing Ltd., 2004), 257. For a good historical overview of the rise of popular justice and people's courts, see C. Crais, 'Of Men, Magic, and the Law: Popular Justice and the Political Imagination in South Africa' in *Journal of Social History*, Vol. 32, No. 1 (Autumn 1998), 49-72.

This then is the third noteworthy aspect, namely that such a plea for progress is further enabled by Hani characterising the practice as "justice" in that the ANC's leading role was ultimately one of future governance. As with the idea of "revolutionary courts" being institutions that should reflect democratic values, by 1985, the ANC had come to regard itself as a government in waiting. For example in a discussion on 'Questions of Justice and War', one Sipho Jama, argued that the ANC was a "legitimate authority" given that:

> The ANC is, in effect, given legitimacy by the oppressed majority of South Africans, while the apartheid regime is rightfully considered illegitimate. Umkhonto we Sizwe [MK] is what most South Africans believe it to be, the people's army, and the ANC, by virtue of its support in the country, is surely the legitimate voice of the people of South Africa." He proceeded to cite Mark Uhlig who argued: "Nelson Mandela…would easily defeat any other potential presidential candidate, White or Black if free multiracial elections were held today.[86]

It is in this sense that when Hani stated, "[t]he question of the necklace belongs to all of us, to the ANC, to the democratic movement. We should just sit down and discuss amongst ourselves how we should mete out justice", it is possible that the interplay between the practice of necklacing as a "traditional form of justice" and the call for "revolutionary justice" was possibly also a call to sense the possibility of freedom. This is akin to what Franz Fanon had called "the creation of humanity by revolutionary beginnings."[87]

To return to Gibson's reading of Fanon, it is not violence itself that is central, but the process of liberation that is central to the "'embodiment of history' and the creation of a revolutionary agency that begins to strip away colonial reification."[88] In other words, "the native transcends nativehood only insofar as subjectivity is intimately connected to self-determination and is intrinsic to revolution. What now is crucial are not the traditions which initially sustained an elemental resistance, but rather the new sense of the possibility of freedom."[89] Hani's "comment on the necklace" was thus concluded by him

---

[86] See S. Jama, 'A Discussion Article: Questions of Justice and War' in *Sechaba* (January 1985), 18.
[87] N. C. Gibson, *Fanon: The Postcolonial Imagination*, 117
[88] N. C. Gibson, *Fanon: The Postcolonial Imagination*, 117
[89] N. C. Gibson, *Fanon: The Postcolonial Imagination*, 117

reiterating, "[t]he movement should be vigilant to ensure that whatever sentence is passed on anybody, it is a result of participation by the revolutionary elements of our struggle."[90]

Ambivalence about the practice of necklacing in Hani's "comment on the necklace" was produced in the interstice of the resistance – oppression/repression binary. Similar to the way Oliver Tambo condemned the practice of necklacing but not 'the people', Hani characterised the practice between "traditional forms of justice" and "revolutionary forms of justice" with resistance as the constitutive element of both forms of justice. Whilst Hani attempted to distinguish between "traditional forms of justice" and "revolutionary justice", the interplay between those characterisations of resistance, rather enabled a circular logic of ambivalence towards the question of necklacing.

Thus, in relation to Baumans formulation of ambivalence, ambivalence persists by Hani placing the practice of necklacing as resistance under the name of justice in the categories of "traditional forms of justice" with a plea for "revolutionary justice". This was despite his attempt of a move towards justice and away from punishment as the constitutive element in dealing with collaborators. Hani therefore faltered in escaping the impasse between condemning and condoning. In this sense, it is possible that Hani also implicitly exposed the limits of MK in defending communities as well as its capacity to be solely responsible for liberation violence/justice/punishment.

As mentioned, during the 1980's there was a blurring between official MK cadres and those individuals who regarded themselves as supporters of the anti-apartheid movement under the auspices of the ANC and the UDF, in other words, operating outside the political and military ambit (of MK) of these two organisations. The latter perpetrated the majority of necklace killings. It is suggestive that at the time when the ANC turned towards armed struggle, a similar blurring of legitimate targets was evident. The banning of the ANC and the numerous emergency regulations imposed by the state from 24 March 1960 meant that it had to operate underground.[91]

---

[90] Chris Hani, '25 years of armed struggle', 15.
[91] See T. Lodge, *Black Politics in South Africa since 1945* (Johannesburg: Raven Press, 1987), 231-261, for

The armed struggle, through MK operations, took the form of guerrilla attacks on non-civilian targets defined in the Operation Mayibuye document of 1963 as, "strategic road, railways and other communications; power stations; police stations, camps, and military forces; and irredeemable government stooges."[92] There is no expanding of who falls into the category of "irredeemable government stooges". The document however, implicitly identified these as individuals running trading stations as well as chiefs and their headmen. In the section just before defining the targets, the intelligence department of the operation was advised to study and report on the "location of trading stations and chiefs and headmen's kraals." What follows then is a reading of Govan Mbeki's *The Peasants Revolt* (1964) and leading from this I want to argue more broadly that the problematic of violence and associated ambivalence in dealing with accused collaborators within the ANC has a far longer history.

Tracing ambivalence

In the late 1950's and 1960 rural protests turned violent as peasants engaged in beatings and killings of local authorities and their supporters who were seen as collaborators. There were certain common threads, most significantly the attacking and at times killing of individuals deemed 'collaborators'. The Mpondoland revolt stands out in particular because it was well structured and organised compared to other rural revolts and uprisings of the time that Tom Lodge describes as, "largely a parochial affair."[93] The revolt broke out in March 1960 with grievances such as objections to land rehabilitation, heavier taxation as the region began to contribute more to administration and increasingly authoritarian local government in the form of tribal authorities.[94] Similar to the revolts in Zeerust (1957) and Thembuland (1962-3), the brunt of peasants' anger in Mpondoland

---

a detailed overview of this period of political and violent resistance to apartheid.

[92] '*Operation Mayibuye*', Document found by the police at Rivonia, 11 July 1963
http://www.anc.org.za/ancdocs/history/mk/mayibuye.html

[93] T. Lodge, *Black Politics in South Africa since 1945*, 290

[94] In other words, in response to the governments 'betterment scheme', loosely used to describe the various conservation measures that the state embarked on from the 1930's. For detailed analyses of the Mpondoland Revolt and others such as the revolts in Zeerust (1957-1959), amongst others, see T. Lodge, *Black Politics in South Africa since 1945,* S. Zondi, 'Peasant struggles of the 1950's: gaMatlala and Zeerust', in *The Road to Democracy in South Africa*, Vol. 1 (1960-1970), South African Democracy Education Trust (Cape Town: Zebra Press, 2004) , S. Matoti and L.Ntsebeza, 'Rural resistance in Mpondoland and Themboland, 1960-1963' in *The Road to Democracy in South Africa*, *Vol. 1* (1960-1970), South African Democracy Education Trust (Cape Town: Zebra Press, 2004).

were taken out on local chiefs and headmen who were regarded as collaborators and traitors to 'the people'. Chiefs who supported government policies were attacked; their homes burnt down and in some cases, particularly in the Mpondoland Revolt, where seventeen chiefs, their headmen or their bodyguards and a further five suspected of being police informers, were murdered.[95]

I would like to suggest that responses to and accounts of the attacking and killing of chiefs and informers deemed as collaborators be read as indicative of an ambivalence on the part of the liberation movement, specifically the ANC. Consider Govan Mbeki's *The Peasants' Revolt* in which he provided a detailed account of the injustices against peasants in rural areas and the response of those peasants in the form of revolt. According to Govan Mbeki, discussing the Zeerust revolt:

> Government officials attributed the peasant opposition in the Zeerust area to 'agitators', essentially the African National Congress…ANC volunteers from the towns did go to their home villages to dissuade their wives from taking out passbooks and cooperating with the implementation of apartheid…The A.N.C, men and women, with many others who belonged to no political body at all, were able to lead only because the people were clamouring to follow.[96]

And in the case of the Mpondoland revolt:

> …the aim of resistance became the attainment of basic political ends. Towards this end the movement adopted the full programme of the African National Congress and its allies as embodied in the Freedom Charter. Consequently the struggle in Pondoland became linked with the national struggle for liberation, and brought alive to the leadership of the A.N.C…[97]

For Govan Mbeki, there was a clear relationship between the ANC and peasant insurgents, seen as one of mutual reinforcement. In so doing, he argued that what was happening in rural areas was not isolated from the broader national struggle and this for Govan Mbeki was the 'vital feature' that the Mpondoland revolt disclosed and which, "had a resounding impact both on the thinking of the Congress leadership and the people themselves. The Pondo movement succeeded by example in accomplishing what

---

[95] See T. Lodge, *Black Politics in South Africa since 1945*, 280.
[96] G. Mbeki, *South Africa: The Peasants' Revolt*, 114.
[97] G. Mbeki, *South Africa: The Peasants' Revolt*, 129.

discussion had failed to do in a generation - convincing the leadership of the importance of the peasants in the reserve to the entire national struggle."[98] Indeed, one of the purposes for Govan Mbeki writing *The Peasants' Revolt* was to make the case for the importance of peasants in the reserves and homelands to the entire national struggle.[99]

Govan Mbeki later recalled that, "the most important books on guerrilla warfare that were available at the time in South Africa were the writings of Mao Tse-Tung on the Chinese experience and of Che Guevara on the Latin experience…[which] emphasised the importance of enlisting the support of the peasantry if a revolutionary war is to succeed."[100] Lodge argues that Govan Mbeki, "[did] not explore the more popular historical continuities manifested in the Mpondo revolt: the mountain committees, the people's courts, store boycotts, hut burnings and tax embargoes all suddenly appear in the idiom of peasant struggle without any reference to historical precedents."[101] Lodge posits that notwithstanding this critique, for Govan Mbeki, it was important to highlight the peasants' modernity rather than their retentions from the past so that as much as urban workers, Mpondo peasants belong to "a single common society."[102]

This link between the local and national struggle, or rather of the local folding into a national political consciousness, speaks to the methods of resistance that Govan Mbeki propagated. He had argued that hut-burning was the most effective method of resistance in dealing with collaborators. He had argued further that another technique of struggle, "the ostracism in life and death of those supporting Bantu Authorities", was an effective means of reducing the number of collaborators. In total, three methods of resistance and struggle were mentioned by Govan Mbeki; the hut burnings, boycotts and the ostracism

---

[98] G. Mbeki, *South Africa: The Peasants' Revolt*, 130.
[99] According to Hein Marais, the focus of MK was to be on the rural areas, but that it was an "improbable enterprise" because the countryside was "dominated by white-owned farms and white-run towns and lacking impenetrable natural features usually associated with such warfare." H. Marais, *South Africa Limits to Change: The Political Economy of Transformation* (Cape Town: University of Cape Town Press, 1998), 25.
[100] H. Marais, South Africa. *Limits to Change*, footnote 48, 35. See also G. Mbeki, *The Struggle for Liberation in South Africa: A Short History* (Cape Town: David Philip, 1992), 89.
[101] T. Lodge, 'Charters from the Past: The African National Congress and its Historiographical Traditions' in *Radical History Review*, Vol. 46, No. 7 (1990), 172.
[102] G. Mbeki, *South Africa: The Peasants' Revolt*, 47.

of collaborators.[103] The killing of collaborators however was a technique of struggle that was implicitly condoned though indicative of ambivalence. When discussing the revolts in Zululand, Govan Mbeki states:

> The anger of the resistors was now turned on these families, who were regarded as traitors. A party of over 200 attacked the collaborators, killing two. This resulted in 29 being charged, originally with murder, though in the end only 14 were convicted, on lesser charges, to various periods of imprisonment ranging from 8 to 14 years. The remarks of the judge in this case were significant. He said it was clear that there was deep resentment against Bantu Authorities and that the administration had been aware of this but had imposed the scheme in spite of opposition. In passing sentence he therefore regarded this resentment as extenuating circumstance.[104]

The representation of the killing of the two collaborators by Govan Mbeki is indicative of ambivalence. The original murder charge was dropped for lesser charges by the judge. On one level, judgement or rather, condemnation of the killing was positioned in relation to the very system that was meant to be resisted against. On another, that system was implicitly shown to be complicit in the killing from within that system itself. Most striking, however, is an elision of the killing of the two collaborators in favour of an implicit condoning of the killing. This implicit condonation arose through naming it as resistance which arose from a justifiable cause.

Resentment against the Bantu authorities and the administrations failure to address that resentment was cause for the killing of those regarded as traitors. However, the main point that is evident is the exonerating of violence by turning to a resistance discourse. In exonerating, the implication is that the killing of the two collaborators was made rational. By way of the discussion on the subsequent trial of those accused of the murder and the judge's remarks that implicitly implicated the government as accomplice to the murders for not addressing the issues that the resistors had with the Bantu Authorities, the killing can be seen to be named as resistance.

By 1964, when *The Peasants' Revolt* was published, the armed wing of the ANC, MK, had been formed. MK's campaign of 1961 to 1964 also saw collaborators being attacked

---

[103] G. Mbeki, *South Africa: The Peasants' Revolt,* 131-133.
[104] G. Mbeki, *South Africa: The Peasants' Revolt,* 116.

but despite "the national high command's intention to avoid bloodshed…there were 23 attacks on policemen, their informers or people regarded as collaborators", mainly in East London and Port Elizabeth.[105] In East London and surrounds, early MK activities largely focussed on attacks on collaborators. Cornelius Thomas account of violence in Duncan Village, (just outside East London in the Eastern Cape) is instructive because it points to the distancing of the ANC from the violence that "permeated places like Duncan."[106]

It is not only the ambivalence surrounding the killing of collaborators or even that Hani's "comments on the necklace" assigns the practice to more than one category, but that the ANC's initial call to armed violence was beset by a similar ambivalence. Here an apt example is that of Chief Albert Luthuli and his seeming wavering between condoning and condemning the call to violent armed struggle.

At a meeting in June 1961 of the ANC national executive, the ANC decided that it would not change its official non-violent standpoint but that members who felt the need to begin an armed response, such as Nelson Mandela, could do so. In other words, those who opposed violence, such as the then ANC president Chief Albert Luthuli who was in part inspired by Ghandi's strategies of non-violence, did so, according to Lodge, on "grounds of principle and not expedience."[107]

Scott Everett Couper cites a fitting example of a wavering between condemning and condoning by Luthuli. He cites Luthuli's statement in response to the Rivonia (1964) convictions:

> …no one can blame brave just men for seeking justice by the use of violent methods; nor could they be blamed if they tried to create an organised force in order to ultimately establish peace and racial harmony… [108]

---

[105] T. Lodge, *Black Politics in South Africa since 1945*, 236.

[106] C. Thomas, 'The Entwined Tale of Inkie Hoyi, Washington Bongco, Donald Card, and A "Core Group" of MK Operatives - A Foray into Political Intimidation and Violence in Duncan Village 1959-1964' in *Journal of Contemporary History*, Vol. 30, No. 1 (June 2005), 177.

[107] T. Lodge, *Black Politics in South Africa since 1945*, 233.

[108] S. E. Couper, '"An Embarrassment to the Congresses?": The Silencing of Chief Albert Luthuli and the Production of ANC History' in *Journal of Southern African History*, Vol. 35, No. 2 (June 2009), 347.

Everett Couper suggests that Luthuli drafted this statement only to convey "solidarity, not agreement" with those that resorted to violence. He continues and argues that what is not recognised is the sentence that prefaced that portion of the statement:

> The African National Congress never abandoned its method of militant, non-violent struggle, and of creating in the process a spirit of militancy in the people.[109]

Everett Couper thus argues that Luthuli, "intentionally made distinctions between 'support' and 'condemnation' and between the 'ANC' that he led as President-General and the 'brave just men' who could not be blamed if their patience became exhausted."[110] Everett Couper's reading of Luthuli's statement, thus, has certain parallels with the 'official' non-state discourse on the practice of necklacing.

It is tempting therefore to suggest that just as Lekota, Manuel, Tambo and Hani condemned the act of violence itself, the killing of suspected collaborators (including necklace killings), but were unwilling to condemn those who committed such acts, a similar order of ambivalence is evident in Luthuli's statement regarding the ANC's turn to armed violent struggle. As a means of both concluding this chapter and anticipating the argument of the following chapter, I want to briefly consider Mahmood Mamdani's formulation of the initial hesitancy of the liberation movements to respond to the rise of necklace killings.

Mamdani briefly draws parallels between the practice of necklacing in South Africa and suicide bombings in Palestine. He suggests that the debate around necklacing had two sides to it: a moral side that, "sounded less like a critique on necklacing than a settler discourse on the lack of civilization among natives" and the political effectiveness of necklacing in thwarting the 'proliferation' of informers.[111] Mamdani continues and argues that the reason there was a slow response to the speech given by Winnie Mandela was that as long as there was no effective political alternative to the situation in South Africa, "it was difficult to discredit necklacing politically." Though, "once a non-violent

---

[109] S. E. Couper, "'An Embarrassment to the Congresses?'", 347.
[110] S. E. Couper, "'An Embarrassment to the Congresses?'", 347.
[111] M. Mamdani, *Good Muslim, Bad Muslim: America, The Cold War. And The Roots of Terror* (New York: Pantheon Books, 2004), 226.

way of ending apartheid did appear as an alternative, it was as if the sun had come up, the fog lifted, and there was a new dawn; in a land where few had dared even to whisper criticism yesterday, hardly anyone could be found to champion necklacing the day after."[112]

Indeed, the quote that prefaces this chapter underscores Mamdani's formulation. In that ANC statement, written as part of the condemnation of the World Trade Centre attacks in New York City (11 September 2001), a clear sense of condemnation to the practice of necklacing is asserted whilst at the same time the assigning of 'ownership' of the practice to the former apartheid state. The assigning of 'ownership' of the practice of necklacing points to the interplay of the dominant discourses on the practice. That formulation also echoes what was said by prominent ANC and UDF leaders in relation to the rise of necklace killings and the killing of collaborators, namely that whilst condemning a "barbaric form of struggle", it was nonetheless a form of struggle, though as I have argued; ambivalently caught in the interstice of resistance and oppression/repression.

Mamdani's formulation also speaks to a shift of a resistance discourse to one of irrational political violence in which the implicit condoning of violent resistance no longer makes sense. Explaining necklacing once it was clear that a transition from the oppressive apartheid system to one of a democracy championing human rights caused for pause. Indeed, as I argue in the following chapter, the ways in which the practice of necklacing has been made sense of in scholarly works is located within that pause but filtered through the interplay of the dominant discourses in relation to the practice of necklacing.

---

[112] M. Mamdani, *Good Muslim, Bad Muslim*, 227.

Chapter Three
Making sense of the practice of necklacing

> [A] strategic practice of criticism will ask whether the moment of normalization of a paradigm is not also the moment when it is necessary to reconstruct and reinterrogate the ground of questions themselves through which it was brought into being in the first place; to ask whether the critical *yield* of the normal problem-space continues to be what it was when it first emerged; and, if not, to ask what set of questions is emerging in the new problem-space that might reconfigure and so expand the conceptual terrain in which an object is located (David Scott). [1]

In the previous two chapters of this thesis, I have shown how the emergence of necklacing from 1985 onwards was inextricably bound to both the apartheid state's larger discourse on violent resistance and attempts by the 'official' non-state to counter that discourse. Indeed, these discourses, relational as they are, converge and diverge at the nexus over competing claims of the 'ownership' of both the practice of necklacing and its discourses. Yet it is in the divergence that these discourses on necklacing speak to the ambivalence that I showed in the previous chapter. While the apartheid state characterised necklacing by marking it as 'black-on-black' violence and a marker of barbarism attempting to assert its moral and political legitimacy to use violence; the ANC and the UDF characterised the practice within a duality of resistance and oppression/repression in which the state, not the liberation movement, bore moral and political culpability for the practice. Thus in attempting to respond to the inaugural question this thesis seeks to examine: how necklacing is written into the narrative of struggle history, this chapter asks how the practice has been made sense of within scholarly works.

Despite necklace killings not always having been politically motivated during the mid 1980's, scholarly works attempting to make sense of the practice overwhelmingly position it within a political violence framework.[2] This is in itself an indication of the influence of the dominant discourses on the practice of necklacing and their interplay.

---

[1] D. Scott, *Refashioning Futures: Criticism after Postcoloniality* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1999), 8-9.
[2] See Introduction, footnote 2, 1.

Indeed, an extensive corpus of literature exists on the question of resistance and/or political violence in South Africa. However, the majority of that corpus relegates necklacing to the margins of their enquiry as moments of the violence that 'accompanied' the liberation struggle in the 1980's.[3]

Although a small but significant body of work on the practice of necklacing itself has surfaced in South African studies, the discipline of history has been especially silent. Those scholarly works attempting to make sense of the practice derive from the disciplines of anthropology, psychology, sociology, political science and literary theory. The most substantial works on the practice of necklacing have come from Pumla Gobodo-Madikizela, Joanna Ball, Leonard Praeg and from N. Nomoyi and W. Schurink.[4] Their engagement with the practice is inter-disciplinary, though specifically within frameworks of collective violence and witchcraft and ritual although these frameworks overlap to some extent.
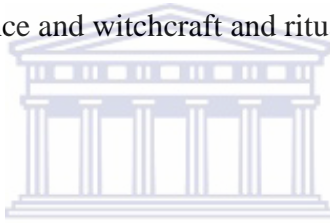
---

[3] See amongst others: T. Lodge and B. Nasson, *All, Here, And Now: Black Politics in South Africa in the 1980s* (Cape Town: Ford Foundation – David Philip, 1991); J. Seekings, *The UDF: A history of the United Democratic Front in South Africa, 1983-1991* (Cape Town: David Philip, 2000); I. van Kessel, '"Beyond our Wildest Dreams": The United Democratic Front and the Transformation of South Africa', Unpublished PhD thesis, University of Leiden (November 1995); D.T. McKinley, *The ANC and the Liberation Struggle: A Critical Political Biography* (London: Pluto Press, 1997); A.W. Marx, *Lessons of Struggle: South African Internal Opposition, 1960-1990* (Cape Town: Oxford University Press, 1992); M. Murray, *South Africa Time of Agony, Time of Destiny: The Upsurge of Popular Protest* (London: Verson, 1987); D. Chidester, *Shots in the Streets: Violence and Religion in South Africa* (Cape Town: Oxford University Press, 1992); J. K Berman, *South Africa's Silent Revolution* (Johannesburg: South African Institute of Race Relations, 1990); J. K. Berman, *Political Violence in South Africa* (Johannesburg: South African Institute of Race Relations, 1993); H. Marais, *South Africa limits to change: the political economy of transformation* (Cape Town: University of Cape Town Press, 1998); R. Greenstein (ed.), *The Role of Political Violence in South Africa's Democratisation* (Johannesburg: CASE, 2003). The exception being E. Bornman, Y. Muthien, R. Van Eeden and Marie Wentzel (eds.), *Violence in South Africa: A Variety of Perspectives* (Pretoria: HSRC Press, 1998) in which there is a chapter that deals with a sociological examination of the practice of necklacing and is briefly discussed in this chapter. Most recently has been A. Jeffery, *People's War: New Light on the Struggle for South Africa* (Johannesburg: Jonathan Ball Publishers, 2009). I discuss the way in which Jeffery deals with the practice of necklacing in the following chapter.

[4] See P.Gobodo-Madikizela, 'Legacies of Violence: An In-Depth Analysis of Two Case Studies Based On Interviews with Perpetrators of a "Necklace" Murder And Aith Eugene de Kock', Unpublished PhD Thesis, University of Cape Town, (1999); J. Ball, 'The Ritual of the Necklace': Research report written for the Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation (March 1994); L. Praeg, *The Geometry of Violence* (Stellenbosch: Sun Press, 2007) and N. Nomoyi and W. Schurink, 'Ukunxityiswa kwempimpi itayari njengotshaba lomzabakaza: An exploratory study of insider accounts of necklacing in three Port Elizabeth townships' in E. Bornman, Y. Muthien, R. Van Eeden and Marie Wentzel (eds.), *Violence in South Africa: A Variety of Perspectives* (Pretoria: HSRC Press, 1998).

However, their analyses, cannot escape being filtered and re-articulated through the interplay of the dominant discourses on necklacing. Specifically, their analyses operate within an overarching resistance paradigm characterised as political violence. I want to argue that a resistance paradigm points to the limits of what is said about politically motivated violence. Indeed, in the case of necklacing, ambivalence is symptomatic of its rationalisation. Ambivalence is articulated and re-articulated precisely because these scholarly works run up against the limit of a dominant resistance paradigm at making sense of the practice of necklacing.[5] In this sense, violence is condemned through understanding but never grasped in its historicality.

On political violence and the practice of necklacing

My argument is prompted in part by a shift in the language scholars and commentators used to describe politically motivated violence: what in the 1980's had been called, and was understood as resistance, in the 1990's was increasingly referred to as political violence. An example of this shift is evident in the two *Journal of Southern African Studies* (*JSAS*) special issues produced in 1992 as scholars tried to make sense of the violence of the early 1990's. The first, edited by leading social history scholars, Shula Marks and Stanley Trapido, was on 'The Social History of Resistance in South Africa' (March 1992) and interestingly points to some of the limitations of social history, arguing that the social and economic context, as directed by the state and its institutions, is crucial to understanding resistance and struggle.[6] In other words, in doing 'history from below',

---

[5] Here I refer to Ranajit Guha's argument (see Introduction) that scholarly works, or what Guha refers to as a tertiary discourse, are bound to repeat dominant discourses because of a "code of pacification" or counter-insurgency. In this case however, it is ambivalence that is (re)articulated. R. Guha, 'The Prose of Counter-Insurgency' in *Subaltern Studies Volume 11* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1983). I also wish to note that by articulation I refer to it as, "a means for understanding emergent assemblages of institutions, apparatuses, practices, and discourses" due to articulation " bring[ing] together disparate elements and, in the process of assemblage, gives that constellation a particular form and potential force. The shape of this formation, the effectiveness of the linkages established among its elements, and the impact it will have on cultural, social, and political processes is historically contingent, not able to be "read" off from an underlying structural logic…thus conceived, articulation offers a means for understanding emergent assemblages of institutions, apparatuses, practices, and discourses. Nodal points of intersections give shape to formations that are reworked through historical agency rather than structurally determined." See D. S. Moore, A. Pandian and J. Kosek, 'The Cultural Politics of Race and Nature: Terrains of Power and Practice' in D. S Moore, J. Kosek and A. Pandian (eds.), *Race, Nature, and The Politics of Difference* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2003), 3-4.

[6] S. Marks and S. Trapido, 'Introduction' in *Journal of Southern African Studies*, Vol. 18, No. 1, Special Issue: Social History of Resistance in South Africa (March 1992), 2.

'history from above' has to be done, the two are not mutually exclusive. Several months later, the language and frameworks of resistance had been replaced by political violence.

For the ANC and the UDF, understanding the violence of the 1980's and necklace killings specifically was conceived of as regrettable but unavoidable as popular resistance against the apartheid state deepened. At the same time excesses (such as necklace killings) were neither justified nor condoned explicitly. According to Andre du Toit, the unbanning of anti-apartheid organisations and the ushering in of the negotiated compromise that culminated in the first non-racial democratic elections in South Africa (April 1994) was intended to signal a shift from a "politics of violence" to a "politics of non-violent negotiation."[7] What was unexpected was the sustained and massively increased levels of violence that threatened the entire negotiation process. This violence physically took place not between state and liberation movement, but between civilian groupings, albeit with state involvement.[8]

In attempting to come to grips with this, Du Toit argues that the violence of the 1980's can be understood if political violence is described as "claims to a special moral or public legitimation for the injury and harm done to others, as well as by the representative character of the agents and targets of these acts of violence."[9] In qualifying this, Du Toit suggests that some kinds of political violence have a "notable symbolic and discursive character: these deeds of violence acquire and generate special public significance resonating far beyond the immediate harm and injury done."[10] Arguably the practice of necklacing certainly qualifies as this type of political violence.

Thus for Du Toit it is when, "political violence escalates and proliferates in ways which seem to confound the conventional criteria for moral legitimation and do not readily

---

[7] A.du Toit, 'Understanding South African Political Violence: A New Problemmatic?', UNRISD Discussion Paper 43 (April 1993), 6, 11.

[8] See R. J, Goldstone, *Final Report of the Goldstone Commission* (27 October 1994) and TRC *Report*, *Vol. 2* (Cape Town: Juta, 1998), Chapter 7.

[9] A.du Toit, 'Understanding South African Political Violence', 6.

[10] A.du Toit, 'Understanding South African Political Violence', 6.

make sense in terms of instrumental rationality …that we are confronted with a more radical problem of understanding such political violence."[11] He argues that:

> [t]he escalation of violent and polarized political conflict that had so long been in the making ha[d] been overtaken by a politics of negotiation and rational compromise. But, precisely when these developments in turn could be expected to bring the earlier cycle of violence to an end…there was a proliferation of sustained political violence, now robbed of much of its earlier significance and rationality.[12]

In other words, Du Toit points to a resistance framework that had run up against a limit in relation to political violence. Violence described as political violence in the context of resistance was explicable. However, without the context of resistance to oppression/repression, the markers of "significance and rationality" ceased to exist. In this sense, political violence was rendered inexplicable.

Taking the above as a point of departure, I want to proceed by providing a brief discussion of the second *JSAS* special issue (September 1992) that signaled the shift in language from resistance to political violence. In particular, an article by historian William Beinart pointed to the difficulty historians and social scientists have in providing explanations of violence "within or between African communities". He points to six ways in which this difficulty is approached. Firstly, each incident or episode of "internal violence" is treated as discrete and as "potentially having a different line of causation" and that this leads to dispensing any notion of "intrinsic tendencies towards violence".[13] Secondly, violence between or within African communities is seen as a result of divisions caused by the nature of colonial or settler rule. Beinart then points to a variant of this second explanation in that the state is seen as directly intervening to take advantage of colonially produced fractures in African communities by empowering or arming one branch, in other words, "brutalising by adoption rather than neglect."[14] A fourth way is to see violence as a reflection of impoverishment and social ills, particularly those produced

---

[11] A.du Toit, 'Understanding South African Political Violence', 5.

[12] A.du Toit, 'Understanding South African Political Violence', 28.

[13] W. Beinart, 'Political and Collective Violence in Southern African Historiography' in *Journal of Southern African Studies, Special Issue: Political Violence in Southern Africa*, Vol.18, No.3 (September 1992), 465.

[14] W. Beinart, 'Political and Collective Violence', 467.

in the processes of industrialisation and global capitalism. Fifthly, such violence is seen as a result of differential policing of white and black areas. Lastly, Beinart points to the increase in systematic liberatory political violence in local township politics in South Africa, "the growth of the liberation movement within the country in the 1980's intensified the political struggle… politicised conflict...exacerbate[d] existing social fractures."[15] As Beinart recognises, all six approaches comprise contextual analyses that come to be informed through a causality framework.

Referring to forms of violence in the first half of the twentieth century, Beinart however explicitly states that contextual analyses alone are not sufficient in themselves to explain violence. He argues that while it is "right" to assert the need to locate violence in its colonial historical context, there is however a tendency to, "include the ahistorical assumption that African violence was born in the colonial era."[16] Therefore, for Beinart, "while it is wrong to see pre-colonial African society as intrinsically violent, it is no less misleading to see it as without violence."[17]

Similarly Beinart argues that the violence of the 1980's and 1990's cannot all be reduced to apartheid violence. He therefore states that while, "it is helpful to disaggregate types of violence, to concentrate on contextual analysis, and to explore different lines of causation there is a certain irreducibility about acts of physical violence and it is perhaps inadequate to see violence purely as an epiphenomenon of different forms of conflict or politics."[18] In this sense, Beinart posits that:

> Much public violence is part of an assertion of political power – either an attempt to monopolize coercion and control, or to break that monopoly. But war, police brutality, riot, insurrection, sabotage, 'faction fight', ethnic violence, gang fight, public beating or 'necklacing'…*may be extensions of rather different political contests*.[19]

For Beinart therefore it is pertinent to expand on the aforementioned explanatory frameworks by taking into consideration cultural expressions of violence in relation to

---

[15] W. Beinart, 'Political and Collective Violence', 468.
[16] W. Beinart, 'Political and Collective Violence', 469.
[17] W. Beinart, 'Political and Collective Violence', 469.
[18] W. Beinart, 'Political and Collective Violence', 457.
[19] W. Beinart, 'Political and Collective Violence', 457. My emphasis.

what was then contemporary violence, the violence of both the 1980's and the early 1990's. In discussing state sanctioned violence of the 1990's, Beinart argues that, "the discourse of total strategy and the notion of the country being at 'war' [had] clearly been important justificatory ideas for excessive force by white southern Africans who have not found it difficult to explain why they go so far to defend their position."[20] He continues by citing Alex Boraine's argument, that for the police, a "cop culture" developed that saw their "professional constraints" erode and that when P.W Botha increasingly incorporated the security apparatus into state decision making, "police felt they had authority to broaden their roles."[21] Beinart thus suggests that, in this context, "the scope for cruelty and atrocity escalate[d] so that they [became]", following Hannah Arendt, "terrifyingly normal".[22]

Similarly in respect to the liberation movement, 'comrades' had conceived themselves as soldiers of the liberation movement and that the, "militarisation of their subculture [was] endemic."[23] Thus according to Beinart, whilst the struggle was seen as a process of counter-violence, it was nevertheless a struggle that involved fighting back and affirming unity. In this sense a "defensive violence", according to Beinart, was increasingly legitimated where violence was portrayed as "against the system."[24] This indeed was the formulation of Mosiuoa Lekota and the legitimation and justification offered by the UDF in relation to the lynching of Moegsien Abrahams as was shown in the previous chapter.

However (and here Beinart appears to agree with Jeremy Seekings), "much collective violence on the part of the "community" was not directed against targets which were unambiguously part of the system, but rather on the margins of the community."[25] Citing as an example the 'necklace' killing of Maki Skosana, Beinart asserts that her murder was the result of an outburst of community anger that was led by a "youth who already

---

[20] W. Beinart, 'Political and Collective Violence', 482.
[21] Cited in W. Beinart, 'Political and Collective Violence', 482.
[22] W. Beinart, 'Political and Collective Violence', 482.
[23] W. Beinart, 'Political and Collective Violence', 483.
[24] W. Beinart, 'Political and Collective Violence', 483.
[25] Cited in W. Beinart, 'Political and Collective Violence', 483.

had convictions for assault."[26] Here Maki Skosana's killing appears as the result of a wider political violence discourse but at the same time its perpetration by a convicted criminal links it to a discourse of criminality. Thus the violence of 'comrades', according to Ari Sitas whom Beinart is citing here, was "seldom co-ordinated and controlled by ANC discipline."[27] Thus, Beinart argues:

> The necklace, with its symbolic references to industrial waste, barricades, fire and sacrifice was a creation of the cultural bricoleurs of the locations [read townships], not the exiled political movements. It was a modern weapon of punishment and social purification, but reminiscent of older purificatory movements against those perceived to betray the community.[28]

Beinart's reading of the practice of necklacing, based on the way in which his argument unfolds as shown above, points to the interplay of the dominant discourses on necklacing. On the one hand, there is the discourse that places the practice within a resistance framework (in the anti-apartheid struggle sense) and on the other, there is the merging of this discourse with one of criminality, a discourse reminiscent of the apartheid state with the practice's emergence from 1985 onwards. That Beinart highlights the leader of the group that killed Maki Skosana as having been previously convicted for assault, followed by his explanation of the practice, points to a limit of the 'official' non-state discourse on the practice of necklacing. What Beinart opens here are therefore questions of cultures of violence, or rather cultural expressions of violence, and crowd/collective violence to which I now turn.

---

[26] W. Beinart, 'Political and Collective Violence', 483.
[27] A. Sitas, 'The Making of the "Comrades" Movement in Natal, 1985-91' in *Journal of Southern African Studies*, Vol. 18, No. 3 (Sept., 1992), 629-641 cited in W. Beinart, 'Political and Collective Violence', 483. Sitas argues in relation to mobilisation that "the 'comrades'… [were] not strictly speaking the correlate of an objective structure…or a structure's simple 'manifestation'. They [were] a movement involving voluntary (and sometimes coerced) participation, cultural dynamics and a new volatile identity shaped through mobilisation and conflict…where the process of mobilisation was fragmented early, then 'comrades' splintered into manifold tentacles and due to scarce resources and competing legitimacy, [violence] was not only turned 'inwards'; but into the youth structures themselves." 633,641.
[28] W. Beinart, 'Political and Collective Violence', 483-4.

On crowd/collective violence and the practice of necklacing[29]

Scholarly attempts at rendering the practice of necklacing intelligible have engaged theories of crowd/collective violence given that the practice was largely 'performed' in crowd settings. [30] Here the focus has been on perpetrators and factors that influenced individual participation in necklace killings. The most common theory used to explain crowd violence in relation to the practice of necklacing has been that of deindividuation or mob psychosis theory. This theory posits that individuals loose their sense of self and become absorbed into the collective self of a crowd.[31] For example, Gill Straker examines the Maki Skosana killing through the lens of deindividuation thesis and the brutalisation of township youth.[32]

Many of Straker's interviewees had severe misgivings about burning or necklacing people.[33] Straker points out that killing people, according to the interviewees, could be justified because it was punishment (for being police-informers), or that it was a warning to other members of the community. However, the unnecessary cruelty of the act disturbed them. Thus, for example a teenager, 'Stanley', was "worried" by the brutality

---

[29] Within the discipline of history, the most notable work on crowd violence is that of George Rude. See *The Crowd in History*. See G. Rude, *Paris and London in the 18th Century: Studies in Popular Protest* (London: Wm. Collins Sons & CO. Ltd: 1974); H. J. Kaye (ed.), *The Face of the Crowd: Selected Essays of George Rude – Studies in Revolution Ideology and Popular Protest* (New York: Harvester .Wheatsheaf, 1988). See also Alain Corbin's *The Village of Cannibals: Rage and Murder in France, 1870* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1992).

[30] Of the most notable is D. Foster, P. Haupt and M. de Beer, *The Theatre of Violence: Narratives of Protagonists in the South African Conflict* (Johannesburg: HSRC Press, 2005). This study deals specifically with narratives of violence from the perspectives of the perpetrators. The authors point to the shifting subjectivities of those deemed responsible for violence and question the static victim-perpetrator binary. Necklacing here is located within lateral or horizontal violence and the authors argue that necklacing was structured around the central axis of struggle - in other words, within a liberation/resistance framework. See 61-62.

[31] This theory was first proposed by Gustave Le Bon, *The Crowd* (London: Ernest Benn, 1896). In relation to the South African situation, see amongst others D. Foster, P. Haupt and M. de Beer, *The Theatre of Violence: Narratives of Protagonists in the South African Conflict*, 80.; P. Gobodo-Madikizela, 'Legacies of Violence',78-80.

[32] G. Straker, *Faces in the Revolution: The Psychological Effects of Violence on Township Youth in South Africa* (Cape Town: David Phillip, 1992), 119-124. In relation to the role of youth in perpetrating violent acts, see M. Marks, *Young Warriors: Youth Politics, Identity and Violence in South Africa* (Johannesburg: Witwatersrand University Press, 2001), 87-112.

[33] The youth interviewed by Monique Marks also had misgivings, though one of the youth interviewed openly supported the practice of necklacing. See M. Marks, *Young Warriors*, 99.

of Maki Skosana's killing.[34] Despite this private ambivalence, Straker posits, for 'Stanley' and other interviewees, execution by burning was quite justified.[35]

This justification, in my reading of Straker's analysis is related to what it meant to be a freedom fighter or comrade, or, what the signifier, 'freedom fighter' entailed within the broader discourse of liberation. 'Stanley' regarded himself as acting as a soldier and in his identity as a 'freedom fighter' was "prepared to carry out tasks which might go against the grain…he [Stanley] ascribe[d] meaning to it, and so justifie[d] it."[36] Straker makes sense of this in relation to the 'authority system' thesis used to explain violence in times of war against civilians:

> For Stanley, the 'authority' in question was not that of a superior officer but that of 'the people'. It is important to bear in mind the rhetoric and rallying cries which prevailed at the time. The whole basis for mass mobilisation revolves around ideas that 'the people' shall govern. Slogans continually refer to 'the power of the people'. The notion of the collective as the ultimate authority was, and to some extent remains, the dominant ideology in the townships. The importance of individual accountability to the group, to the community and to the people is constantly stressed.[37]

Deindividuation thesis in the broader discourse of liberation sees the signifier 'freedom fighter' as being at once apart from an individual identity as well as from a collective political identity. The deindividuation thesis was common in arguing for mitigation in criminal trials for those found 'guilty' of participating in collective violence, including necklacings and burnings and in many instances psychologists provided expert witness in such cases.[38] In using deindividuation thesis, the psychologists could argue that the

---

[34] G. Straker, *Faces in the Revolution,* 120-121.

[35] G. Straker, *Faces in the Revolution,* 119-132.

[36] G. Straker, *Faces in the Revolution,* 121.

[37] G. Straker, *Faces in the Revolution,* 122. Straker cites Kelman (1973), "In certain authority systems, the governing ideology places the highest value on the loyalty of functionaries to the leader as a person or to the organization. Those committed to such a system may well see it as their duty to follow authoritative orders regardless of their personal preferences. Within their value system the order calls forth what they would consider a moral obligation that overrides any other moral systems they might have. Usual standards of morality are considered inapplicable. Functionaries do not expect to be held personally responsible for their actions. They are agents and extensions of the authorities and thus by definition are assured of their protection…They identify with the authority system and are caught up in its glory and mystique." See Straker, *Faces in the Revolution,* 121.

[38] See for example, A.M Coleman, 'Crowd Psychology in South African Murder Trials' in *American Psychologist*, Vol. 46, No. 10 (Oct. , 1991), G. A, Tyson, 'Response to 'Crowd Psychology in South

accused could not be held accountable for their behaviour in a crowd since their responsibility in a crowd, "is reduced to a point where it is almost negligible."[39]

However, as pointed out by Pumla Gobodo-Madikizela, South African psychologists were caught in a paradox: "using deindividuation argument to mitigate sentence in political trials and by so doing rendering, at least from a theoretical point of view, anti-apartheid activism to be meaningless rampage motivated by irrational elements."[40] In dealing with this problem, Gobodo-Madikizela develops a theoretical model based and expanded upon by social identity theory (that builds upon deindividuation thesis), that "explains the relationship between collective identity in a crowd and personal identity factors that emerge in a crowd." [41]

Her analysis of the necklacing of Nosipho Zamela as a case study is based on trying to understand the actions of individuals that commit "indescribable unspeakable" acts. Through numerous interviews of participants and bystanders of individuals present, Gobodo-Madikizela reconstructs the antecedents to the necklace killing. She particularly examines the gathering process of the crowd and specifically the way in which information spread about the behaviour of Nosipho Zamela and the language used.[42] She

---

African Murder Trials' in *American Psychologist* (1993) as well as N. C Manganyi, 'Crowds and their vicissitudes: psychology and law in the South African court-room' in N. C Manganyi and A. du Toit (eds.), *Political Violence and the Struggle in South Africa* (Johannesburg: Southern Publishers, 1990).

[39] Cited in P. Gobodo-Madikizela, 'Legacies of Violence', 77.

[40] P. Gobodo-Madikizela, 'Legacies of Violence', 78. It should be remembered, as pointed out in Chapter One, that necklacings and burnings, for the state, did not constitute political violence and thus trials that emerged from such killings were conceived as criminal trials as opposed to political trials.

[41] P.Gobodo-Madikizela, 'Legacies of Violence', iv.

[42] Nosipho Zamela was accused of having sexual relations with a policeman, labelled an '*impimpi*' (informer) and was necklaced on the 8 December 1985. Gobodo-Madikizela examines the spread of information as 'rumour' and argues that this was central to the actions that led to the necklacing. (118) Indeed, rumour is a critical historical methodological tool. See L. White, *Speaking with Vampires* (Berkley: University of California Press, 2000), 86. See also G. Pandey, *Remembering Partition: Violence, Nationalism and History in India* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 67-91 as well as G.C Spivak, 'Subaltern Studies: Deconstructing Historiography (1985)' in D. Landry and G. Maclean (eds.), *The Spivak Reader* (London and New York: Routledge, 1996), 221-226. A brief but useful deconstruction of the label '*impimpi*' is provided by Gobodo-Madikizela for thinking about the way in which language through rumour is used to de-humanise individuals accused of being informers. She posits that in labelling an individual as '*impimpi*', the individual is marked as a devalued other and this is a "necessary step in the continuum of destruction" of the individual so labelled (125). Similarly, in the killing of Maki Skosana, it was reported that the mob that so viciously attacked her were chanting *'mayife lenja'* (this dog must die). See 'Kill the dog' in *Sowetan* (13 March 1987). Interestingly there were reports by the SPCA of dogs being

examines the dynamics of the crowd and likens the necklacing to spectacle.[43] Whilst I find Gobodo-Madikizela's symbolic articulation of the necklacing of Nosipho Zamela intriguing, for present purposes, the way in which she reconstructs the antecedents of the necklace killing is of greater interest. The antecedents are of interest because analyses thereof resort to causality within the resistance and oppression/repression framework and point to a re-articulation of the 'official' non-state discourse on the practice of necklacing.

Gobodo-Madikizela wants to, "deconstruct th[e] myth [of blacks going on a rampage of mindless unprovoked killing] and to place the incident [the necklacing of Nosipho Zamela] in its proper political context."[44] In order to do so, she seeks to explain politically motivated violence by exploring the complexities of crowd violence discussed earlier. According to Gobodo-Madikizela there are "pressures that mediate behaviour whenever individuals are thrown into violent situations."[45] She thus provides a narrative of the necklacing of Nosipho Zamela that begins with "triggers", "pressures" to the murder. Specifically, she examines police violence in Mlungisi (where Nosipho Zamela was necklaced) as part of the precursors to the necklacing and emphasises its importance in the necklacing that unfolded.[46]

---

necklaced in 1986 as well as a case where a decapitated body with three tyres around the torso was found 10 meters from the carcass of a necklaced dog. See 'Decapitated body: three men face murder charges' in *Evening Post* (13 August 1987) and 'PE police find decapitated body, then head' in *EP Herald* (12 August 1987) and relating to the dogs being necklaced, see 'Dogs being necklaced' in *City Press* (2 November 1986) as well as 'Children necklace puppy' in *Cape Times* (6 August 1986).

[43] The notion of spectacle is used to denote the public display of necklacing. This display was not only public in that large crowds witnessed and partook in the act of necklacing but also that a much wider audience was inadvertently also brought to bear witness to acts of necklacing by way of heightened media reporting and the state's manipulation thereof. Gobodo-Madikizela points to a powerlessness, on the part of those individuals involved in the killing, in her psychological analysis of the necklacing of Nosipho Zamela, and the relation between Nosipho and the crowd. (151). She suggests that Nosipho's burning body was a signifier of both the seen and the unseen. (136). The crowd do not literally see the body being necklaced as it is enveloped with fire and smoke. The tyre is a necklace that adorns the body and this forms part of the distancing that according to Gobodo Madikizela, "enables people in a necklace crowd to watch this act of destruction *par excellence* until the victim disintegrates into nothingness."(136). See also M. Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, translated by A. Sheridan (London: Penguin Books, 1991), 58 as well as F. Graziano, *Divine Violence: Spectacle, Psychosexuality, and Radical Christianity in the Argentine "Dirty War"* (San Francisco: Westview Press, 1992).
[44] P. Gobodo-Madikizela, 'Legacies of Violence', 24-25.
[45] P. Gobodo-Madikizela, 'Legacies of Violence', 273.
[46] P. Gobodo-Madikizela, 'Legacies of Violence', 105-109.

The 'first' necklacings of Maki Skosana and Benjamin Kinikini and family members are also cited as examples to show how police violence or rather "police riots" are causal to necklace murders.[47] Gobodo-Madikizela argues that "what police do when they engage in violence is consistent with their ethic and is part of the conventional repertoire of their behaviour" and cites the work of Brogden and Shearing (1994) who suggest that there is a link between apartheid's "discourse of supremacy" and the injustices visited by the police upon black people in townships. Gobodo-Madikizela therefore suggests that the intensive surveillance of townships and its accompanying violence meted out to residents resulted in reciprocal violent protests.[48] In this formulation, it becomes evident that the rhetoric of the liberation movement, that of violence begetting violence, is re-invoked. It is a language of resistance with recourse to causality - causality being the oppression of the police and by association, the apartheid system.

Gobodo-Madikizela argues that the dominant discourse on violence in South African literature on political violence of the 1980's is the language of 'faction fights', 'tribal fights' and 'ethnic conflict' that ignores or is silent on apartheid-state sponsored violence.[49] She cites as one example of this silence the study on the practice of necklacing by Nomoyi and Shurink. Nomoyi and Shurink quote an interviewee who describes a scene in which a policeman is burnt to death while other policemen watch and "keep a low profile."[50] According to Gobodo-Madikizela, the authors ignore "the critical significance of this detail" in their analysis.[51] Nomoyi and Shurink argue that, "although necklacing was barbaric, it mobilized the black youth against the apartheid government and curbed common crime…"[52]

---

[47] The phrase, "police riots", as used by Gobodo-Madikizela, is borrowed from Stark (1972) and Bergesen (1982). See Gobodo-Madikizela, 'Legacies of Violence', 105.

[48] P. Gobodo-Madikizela, 'Legacies of Violence', 105. The parallels between the circumstances or the "pressures" (police intervention leading to the killing of numerous individuals followed by mass funerals leading to a necklacing), that led to the murders of Maki Skosana (20 July 1985) and Benjamin Kinikini a few months earlier (23 March 1985) are striking. In the case of Maki Skosana, it was the funeral of the COSAS members that had been killed by police booby- trapping hand grenades and in the case of Kinikini and his family members, it was the Langa massacre. See Introduction and Chapter One.

[49] P. Gobodo-Madikizela, 'Legacies of Violence', 28-31.

[50] N. Nomoyi and W. Schurink, 'Ukunxityiswa kwempimpi itayari njengotshaba lomzabakaza: An exploratory study of insider accounts of necklacing in three Port Elizabeth townships', 157.

[51] P. Gobodo-Madikizela, 'Legacies of Violence', 30-31.

[52] N. Nomoyi and W. Schurink, 'Ukunxityiswa kwempimpi itayari njengotshaba lomzabakaza: An

An admission of barbarism by the authors, whilst at the same time attaching a positive attribute to the practice of necklacing - that of curbing crime and mobilising the youth against the apartheid government - points to ambivalence at making sense of the practice. Somewhat similar to Beinart merging a resistance discourse with one of criminality in his explanation of the practice of necklacing, the findings of Nomoyi and Shurink further point to the interplay of the dominant discourses on necklacing. However the point that Gobodo-Madikizela wants to particularly emphasise is that the failure of police to intervene makes them complicit, directly or indirectly, in that incident. For Gobodo-Madikizela, this is a silence in the literature of inter-civilian violence in black townships during apartheid.[53]

Also working with the notion of collective violence, Monique Marks argues, "[i]n understanding political or collective violence, it is important to understand the link between violent acts of the state and those of collective actors. Acts of collective violence carried out by politically active youth in the '80's and early '90's…should not be understood simply as 'mob rule' but rather as having a distinct rationality understood by participants…they should be viewed not as discrete and indiscriminate acts, but as part of a broad continuum of a broad range of collective action…political violence carried out by members or supporters of social movements is largely as *a result of the repressive actions of the state.*"[54] For Marks therefore, collective violence and the practice of neckacing included, "remained rational and purposive even if the purposes became more contested and controversial"[55] and she thus endorses the 'official' non-state discourse regarding the apartheid state.

---

exploratory study of insider accounts of necklacing in three Port Elizabeth townships', 171-2.

[53] In particular the theory of political violence, so named the 'third-force' theory has had wide currency. According to this theory the apartheid government orchestrated a 'third force' made up of the SAP, the SADF, the IFP, vigilantes and 'hit squads' to destroy the ANC. See for example S. Ellis, 'The Historical Significance of South Africa's Third Force' in *Journal of Southern African Studies*, Vol. 24, No. 2 (June 1998), 261-299; J, Kane-Berman, *Political Violence in South Africa*, 16-19. See also TRC *Report*, *Vol 2*, Chapter 7.

[54] M. Marks, *Young Warriors*, 87-88. My emphasis.

[55] M. Marks, *Young Warriors*, 88.

Belinda Bozzoli, in a spatial and temporal study of the 'Alexandra Rebellion' of 1986 underscores these contests and controversies in examining people's courts. Bozzoli brings to the fore the manipulation of power and its multifaceted meanings by the residents of Alexandra township.[56]

Although Bozzoli does not specifically focus on the practice of necklacing as the central object of her study nevertheless it forms part of the wider context of the 'Alexandra Rebellion' of 1986. The necklace killing of Theresa Maseko on 12 April 1986 is rendered intelligible as part of the "repertoire of township resistance" in its "highly dramatic spectacular form."[57] By using testimonies of family members and participants in the necklace murder, Bozzoli points to meanings associated with the practice, particularly in relation to 'comrades' control of the spatial dynamics of the township after the 'Six-Day War'.

The 'comrades' rendered Alexandra a no-go zone for the state. Necklace killings, through people's courts, were a mechanism of defending Alexander from both collaborators and served as a warning for would be collaborators. While the rise of people's courts have been linked to the de-legitimising of police by township residents, she suggests that it was youth who, "projected a transformative moral vision which shaped the discourses of the township [Alexandra] in general, and which challenged the moral authority of older residents in particular."[58] Bozzoli posits that the necklace was "highly dramatic in form"; alongside other acts of resistance such as boycotts and the persecution of councillors, it "constructed new audiences, actors and scripts… [this] dramatic construction of events posing good against evil, cast the comrades as liberators and moral protectors."[59] She points to an ambivalence with which the community of Alexandria viewed the comrades, "although not every audience applauded them - and adults in particular, sometimes found

---

[56] B. Bozzoli, *Theatres of Struggle and the End of Apartheid* (Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, 2004), 15. The terms revolt and rebellion are used interchangeably by Bozzoli. The 'six day war' was the main part of the revolt/rebellion, the first sic days of a six month long revolt/rebellion.
[57] B. Bozzoli, *Theatres of Struggle*, 137.
[58] B. Bozzoli, *Theatres of Struggle*, 2.
[59] B. Bozzoli, *Theatres of Struggle*, 142.

themselves cast on the wrong side - there is no doubt that these dramas furthered the broader possibilities of rebellion."[60]

Bozzoli's key purpose is to understand the violence, with the practice of necklacing as one act characterising the violence, through the lens of performativity, and via this agency, challenge the notion of "immutable laws of history" to explain why people resist their oppressors.[61] However what is of relevance here is the dominant framework that guides her analysis. This framework challenges the role of resistance organisations as ultimately one framed by resistance to the broader oppression, the structural violence if you will, of the apartheid state. In relation to the necklacing of Theresa Maseko, Bozzoli posits that, "the 'mob' was perhaps more overtly political that it had been in the case of the first victim, Maki Skhosana…"[62]

In her discussion of people's courts and the role of 'comrades', Bozzoli argues that "some ['comrades'] took part in spectacular mob burnings and necklacings of those whom they believed *were witches and informers*; *the line between the two forms of accusation was a fine one*."[63] Indeed, the killing of accused witches through collective violence by means of the practice of necklacing has received attention by scholars. I proceed therefore to look at the ways in which the practice of necklacing has been made sense of in relation to witchcraft and ritual.

On witchcraft, ritual and the practice of necklacing
During the months of April and May 1986, 150 individuals were accused of being witches in the Mapulaneng district of Lebowa (North-Eastern Transvaal), and thirty of those individuals were necklaced. In writing about this particular moment, Edwin Ritchken argues that, "witches are to black culture what the snake was to Eve" and this

---

[60] B. Bozzoli, *Theatres of Struggle*, 142.
[61] Here Bozzoli argues that such explanations do not necessarily mean that people resist their oppressors because of the presence of revolutionary organisations such as the ANC in exile because not all oppressed peoples rebel and not all rebellious populations are "notably and consistently oppressed." B. Bozzoli, *Theatres of Struggle and the End of Apartheid*, 3.
[62] B. Bozzoli, *Theatres of Struggle and the End of Apartheid*, 137.
[63] B. Bozzoli, *Theatres of Struggle and the End of Apartheid*, 177. My emphasis.

metaphor captured the "dominant world-view in Lebowa".[64] For Ritchken, it is not important to "prove" the existence of witches, but rather to understand why a belief in witches, "at different times and in different places…has such different meanings and political effects."[65] He thus argues that:

> In Mapulaleng witch accusations had both a private meaning (in that they were used to resolve private conflicts) and a necessary public meaning. In as much as a community councillor is necklaced as a symbol of a system of antagonistic relationships (i.e apartheid) and in as much as the public nature of this punishment serves as an example for all to see and learn from, so the burning of witches served the same function for the people living in Mapulaneng.[66]

Here Ritchken is pointing to witchcraft allegations as not only limited to "private individual antagonisms" but such allegations could also arise out of conflicts "between the people and the system." [67] For Ritchken, making sense of the witch killings by necklace in Lebowa is partly a reflection of a struggle by youth organisations to assert legitimacy in the context of a power vacuum. This power vacuum was left after the transformation of chiefly power to a "bureaucratic figurehead"[68]; a result of apartheid policies akin to what Mahmood Mamdani calls "indirect rule."[69]

---

[64] E. Ritchken, 'Youth politics and witches in Lebowa: Burning the Herbs' in *Work in Progress*, Issue 48 (July 1987), 18.

[65] E. Ritchken, 'Youth politics and witches in Lebowa', 18.

[66] E. Ritchken, 'Youth politics and witches in Lebowa', 18. I want to highlight here the characterising of witch killings by necklace as "punishment" by Ritchken and not "justice" as I discussed in the previous chapter in relation to Chris Hani and his "comment on the necklace".

[67] E. Ritchken, 'Youth politics and witches in Lebowa', 18. Indeed, in his work on witchcraft practices in Soweto, Adam Ashforth argues that the practice of necklacing "though appalling to most people, was understood as an unfortunate but necessary community defence against the secret agents of the evil system of apartheid." More specifically, by referring to the "System" of apartheid as 'evil', Ashforth posits that the community of Soweto collectively took a stand at weeding out those who threatened their social solidarity. According to Ashforth, no one doubted that the "system" as the apartheid state was called, was nothing other than evil. He states that "virtually no one in Soweto doubted the justice of their cause or the necessity of standing together…" See A. Ashforth, *Witchcraft, Violence, and Democracy in South Africa* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005), 102, 268.

[68] E. Ritchken, 'Youth politics and witches in Lebowa', 21. See also I. Niehaus, *Witchcraft, Power and Politics: Exploring the Occult in the South African Lowveld* (London: Pluto Press, 2001), 146, 170.

[69] Mamdani posits that indirect rule can better be understood as decentralised despotism and that this form of power was to "create a dependent but autonomous system of rule, one that combined accountability to superiors with a flexible response to the subject population , a capacity to implement central directives with one to absorb local shocks." M. Mamdani, *Citizen and Subject* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1996), 60.

In this sense, Ritchken posits that Mapulaneng's rural youth (who set up grassroots political structures, 'charged and 'sentenced' those accused of witchcraft) were "victims of a historical process that [was] beyond their control. The witch attacks… [were] essentially their revolt against a society that [could] no longer support them."[70] Noting the link between witchcraft beliefs in a rural area and the wider national struggle for liberation, Ritchken argues that, "the problem of an autocratic youth culture and political practice remains. These practices, like the centrality of witches, do not spontaneously disappear. They have been historically written into everyday life. And under the present repressive situation it is almost impossible to organise openly and democratically."[71]

What is interesting about the Lebowa case was that those necklaced were identified explicitly as witches. Ritchken explains the process of that identification as occurring within grassroots political structures.[72] According to Ritchken, those grassroots political structures, specifically the youth organisation that identified the witches, were dictatorial and extremely violent with discipline being "imposed on the populace by sjambok or necklace" and where "power could be manipulated to achieve selfish ends."[73] It is with this in mind that Ritchken argues that, "under the present political conditions (he was writing in 1987), it may be necessary to organise for survival now, and leave protest for some later date."[74] By "survival", he presumably meant in relation to the "reign of terror" imposed on the residents of the Mapulaneng district by the youth organisation.

Joanna Ball, referring to the Lebowa case as well, argues that, "[t]he fact that at the start of these burnings [necklace killings] witches appear to have been the dominant victims. She argues that it was only later that collaborators began to receive the same punishment and that this "is of secondary importance." Ball therefore suggests that: "Given the situation in South Africa during the mid-eighties with much political unrest and

---

[70] E. Ritchken, 'Youth politics and witches in Lebowa', 22.
[71] E. Ritchken, 'Youth politics and witches in Lebowa', 22.
[72] E. Ritchken, 'Youth politics and witches in Lebowa', 21-22.
[73] E. Ritchken, 'Youth politics and witches in Lebowa', 22.
[74] E. Ritchken, 'Youth politics and witches in Lebowa', 22.

frustration, the transferral would seem almost inevitable, and from the mid-eighties apartheid's spies and puppets and "witches" often became interchangeable."[75]

Indeed, both Ball and Leonard Praeg's attempt to link so called collaborators or informers to the killing of witches suggests a continuity between traditional witch burning and what Praeg calls "contemporary post-colonial versions of the ritual", namely necklace murders.[76] Ball attempts to develop a clearer understanding of the practice as a specific form of burning which has a longer history in South Africa. She suggests that necklace killings cannot be understood outside this wider context of burning.[77] Praeg however takes issue with Ball when she argues that, "collaborators are also seen to be traitors, [who] break the social solidarity of the group, [who] 'sell out' to the enemy and assist in the continued suppression of the black community."[78] For Praeg, the political consequences are not "one perceived [as] betrayal to the solidarity of the community", but rather, "the original sin of the victims was primordial, fundamental. They were traitors to that interdependence which everything, including political liberation, depended."[79]
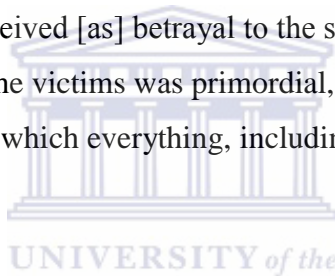
Ball does however question the notion of necklace killings as confined only to political punishment. Rather, noting the wide range of victims of necklace killings ("criminals, rapists, murderers, shebeen owners, other ethnic groups, witches and wizards"), she argues that they are all seen to be traitors to the social solidarity of the community.[80] In this way, she proposes a ritualistic continuity between the burning of witches prior to the 1980's and the emergence and prominence of necklace killings from the mid 1980's onwards.

---

[75] J. Ball, 'The Ritual of the Necklace', 8.
[76] L. Praeg, *The Geometry of Violence*, 63.
[77] See also C. De Coning and J. Fick, 'Menslike Verbrandings: n' Sosio-Politieke Ondersoek na die Aard en Impak van Kataklismiese Geweld in Suid Afrika' in *Politikon*, Vol. 13, No. 1 (June 1986), 22-53.
[78] J. Ball, 'The Ritual of the Necklace', 7.
[79] L. Praeg, *The Geometry of Violence*, 72.
[80] J. Ball, 'The Ritual of the Necklace', 7-9.

Despite Ball's assertion that the practice of necklacing exceeds political punishment, she reverts to the "oppressive apartheid system" as having been the reason for social tensions in both townships and rural areas. Within this context, "the struggle for new economic and social positions by the poorer and more marginalised sectors of the black community, within shifting and uncertain social and economic contexts, is one of the fundamental roots of the violence."[81] Ball thus suggests that "[a]t the time it was very difficult for black people to oppose apartheid and so their frustration would appear to have turned inward, to the excising of the internal 'enemy' in an attempt to grasp some form of control over their lives."[82]

Praeg however, in making sense of necklace killings associated with witchcraft killings, suggests that ambivalence arises within what he terms the paradox of the "cusp of modernity". Both necklace killings and witchcraft killings are a form of pre-colonial cultural practice and at the same time reflect tensions with the project of modernity. Praeg thus posits that:

> In their continuity as archaic sacrificial rituals necklace murders speak of an ontological order of interdependence captured by Mbiti's dictum of identity, *I am because we are*. At the same time, however, they are concerned with bringing about an imagined, democratic community that values human rights, contractual equality and individualism. The fact that, at the moment of their occurrence, necklace murders speak the language of the former in an attempt to bring about the latter is what renders them foundational (Girard) and hence, in a sense, indecipherable (Derrida). This paradox captures what I refer to as the cusp of modernity.[83]

In anticipating a critique of his view that necklace killings be understood as a continuation of pre-colonial cultural practice, Praeg suggests that his understanding will allow for a reflection of the "historical continuity on which [Rene] Girard's theory is based and allows for the tracing of genealogical changes [which] such rituals represent in the transition to post-coloniality."[84] He refers to a participant in the killing of Maki Skosana, Linda Hlope, who stated that his participation in the killing arose from a desire to appear on television. For Praeg, Hlope's admission raises a number of questions about

---

[81] J. Ball, 'The Ritual of the Necklace', 19.
[82] J. Ball, 'The Ritual of the Necklace', 20.
[83] L. Praeg, *The Geometry of Violence*, 64.
[84] L. Praeg, *The Geometry of Violence*, 63-64.

"contemporary culture, modern notions of personhood and the nature of the imagined community that is created through such contemporary acts [necklacing] of founding violence." The critique that Praeg anticipates is therefore also one of differences between a "traditional pre-colonial community and a politicised community engaged in the struggle for liberation."[85] In this sense therefore, Praeg cannot but attend to a struggle discourse that, Du Toit argues, was embedded within a modernising narrative,[86] although for Praeg it appears as if it is the transition to modernity that leads to ambivalence in making sense of the practice of necklacing.

Questions of modernity also frame Bozzoli's analysis. The case of the 'Alexandra Rebellion', is, for her, "emblematic, if not rigidly representative" of the broader patterns of urban struggle in South Africa in the 1980's. Bozzoli suggests that recently urbanised peoples inhabit a space where aspects of modernity co-exist with beliefs in witchcraft and magic. She argues that the resistance framework, widely used in scholarly analyses suffer "analytical awkwardness's" in African settings. Unless the "*stalled* modernities and *frustrated* capitalism" associated with resistance is taken on board, African examples of rebellions and resistance risk becoming "mere 'illustrations' of tendencies elsewhere, exceptions that 'prove the rule', or 'extreme examples'".[87] Thus even though at first glance phenomena such as necklace killings do resemble the three features of revolt as

---

[85] L. Praeg, *The Geometry of Violence*, 63.

[86] A.du Toit, 'Understanding South African Political Violence', 13, 25-28.

[87] B. Bozzoli, *Theatres of Struggle and the End of Apartheid*, 6. For Bozzoli, there is a tendency of comparative work that relies for instance on what Tilly (1995) described as "parochial, bifurcated and particular" activities being present in uprisings of early European movements. See C. Tilly, *Popular Contention in Great Britain, 1758-1834* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1995) cited in Bozzoli, *Theatres of Struggle*. To a limited extent, an exception to this is perhaps Jonathan Glassman's work on popular rebellion on the Swahili Coast in the nineteenth century in which he examines the ambiguity of rebellion and the struggle over meanings of community. In particular, Glassman critiques literature on African resistance to colonial conquest which saw resistance as a defence of 'tradition' as well as notions of "moral economy" which historians of African rebellions and resistance have turned too. This notion of the "moral economy of subsistence" came into vogue with the work of George Rude's analysis of food riots in the years preceding the French Revolution. Whilst Glassman does not explicitly critique the "awkwardness's" found in African examples of resistance when compared to that of early European examples, there is an implicit argument being made that is similar to Bozzoli's. For Glassman, there is an 'avoidance' of the violence that characterised the Swahili rebellion since his analysis, in my view, is based on writing out violence, in favour of conceptions of "contradictory consciousness" and "bizarre combination's" that he uses so as to understand the "struggle for Swahili citizenship", that constituted the popular rebellion he examines. See J. Glassman, *Feasts and Riot: Revelry, Rebellion, and Popular Consciousness on the Swahili Coast, 1865-1888* (London: James Curry, 1995), 8-25, 18-19. See also G. Rude, *Paris and London in the 18th Century: Studies in Popular Protest* (London: Fontana/Collins, 1974).

described by Charles Tilly ("parochial, bifurcated and particular"), in the case of Alexandra,

> [o]rdinary people were indeed involved in direct action and did indeed have patrons to take wider issues further- but…. although the parochial and the national appeared bifurcated, nationalism also had roots in the local community which could not be explained away by simple reference to patronage….so the revolt does not appear to be clearly pre-modern.[88]

Bozzoli therefore proposes the word "syncretic" to describe revolts in townships, such as those in South Africa in the 1980's and particularly Alexandra, that displays characteristics of revolt that were neither clearly modern nor pre-modern and was clearly not a transitional phase of development/progress.[89]

Jean and John Comaroff, in relation to post-apartheid South Africa, present a somewhat similar argument. In citing the necklace killing of a baboon in March 1996 thought to have been a witch in disguise, the Comaroff's wish to draw attention to the ambivalence present in millennial capitalism, "that odd fusion of the modern and the postmodern, of hope and hopelessness, of utility and futility, of promise and its perversions."[90] Citing as "extraordinary" that the ANC commissioned the Inquiry into Witchcraft, [91] they argue that "post-apartheid South Africa, to put it bluntly, is trying to construct a modernist

---

[88] B. Bozzoli, *Theatres of Struggle*, 6.

[89] B. Bozzoli, *Theatres of Struggle*, 6-7.

[90] J and J.L Comaroff, 'occult economies and the violence of abstraction: notes from the South African postcolony' in *American Ethnologist*, Vol. 26, No. 2, The Max Gluckman memorial lecture 1998 (1999), 280, 283.

[91] The report of the *Commission of Inquiry into Witchcraft Violence and Ritual Murders* (appointed in March 1995) posits that, in relation to witchcraft violence related cases that it examined, revolutionary forces chose witchcraft to destabilise rural communities. The reason for this was that "the revolutionaries were fully aware that the local communities were very dissatisfied with the manner in which witchcraft related cases were being handled by the authorities." The report does not however have any section dealing with necklacing and witchcraft specifically. In subsequent testimony to the TRC, Professor Ralushai stated that in urban areas, people who were regarded as enemies of liberation movements were necklaced, "the people who were behind necklacing of people in urban areas, wanted this area to become ungovernable. What did they choose? What was it that could make the people here also ungovernable? They chose witchcraft." See, Commission of Inquiry into Witchcraft Violence and Ritual Murders, Report of the *Commission of Inquiry into Witchcraft Violence and Ritual Murders in the Northern Province of the Republic of South Africa (Ralushai Commission)*, Ministry of Safety and Security, Northern Province (1996), 273. Submission of Prof V. N Ralushai, Amnesty Hearing, Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) (12 July 1999). http://www.justice.gov.za/trc/amntrans/1999/99071214_tho_990712th.htm

nation-state under postmodern conditions, a historical endeavour fraught with contradictions."[92]

Witchcraft discourse then, as Adam Ashforth posits, "[w]ith all the possibilities of nefarious interactions with invisible agencies it exposes, *serves primarily as subtext –* that which is not said but without which one cannot comprehend what is spoken."[93] In this regard, the work of Paolo Israel provokes possible new directions into thinking about the practice of necklacing not taken by the scholars discussed here. He does this by tacitly invoking Giorgio Agamben's notion of "bare life". Israel provides the usual list of theories constituting witchcraft discourse such as, "where sorcery is an explanation of misfortune, where witchcraft crises link social tensions and historic upheavals, where occult discourse is characterised by an ambiguous rationality, and where witch-hunts are forms of sacral, communitarian violence which inhere in the social as a limit point, one called upon to restore its illusory seamlessness."[94]

In his work on the so named 'War of the Lions' in Mozambique, Israel offers a reading of the Muidumbe Easter lynching of 2003. He suggests that whilst other lynchings of this type were considered acts of "popular irrationality", the Easter lynching, "had an overt political character and symbolism" that was considered as an act of "political rebellion" by the government. Israel therefore argues that, "it should be taken as the accomplished expression of the previous lynchings, as the one that did and said what the others wished but had not dared to."[95] Politically motivated necklace killings of the mid 1980s were the "accomplished expression[s]" of 'the masses' and they were ambivalently but overwhelmingly claimed by the liberation movements. Indeed this thesis has shown that necklace killings were both overtly political and symbolic precisely because of the interplay of the apartheid state and 'official' non-state discourses on the practice of necklacing.

---

[92] See J and J.L Comaroff, 'occult economies and the violence of abstraction', 284.
[93] A. Ashforth, *Witchcraft, Violence, and Democracy in South Africa*, 12. My emphasis.
[94] P. Israel, 'The War of Lions: Witch-Hunts, Occult Idioms and Post-socialism in Northern Mozambique', in *Journal of Southern African Studies*, Vol. 35, No. 1 (March 2009), 173.
[95] P. Israel, 'The War of Lions', 167.

Though, as mentioned, it is more in Israel's tacit invoking of Giorgio Agamben's notion of 'bare life' that possibly points to a provocative new direction at making sense of the practice of necklacing. In a footnote, Israel suggests that necklacing is akin to the Shimakonde verb, *kutannola* (the name by which the lynchings in the struggle for liberation in Mozambique were denoted):

> *Kutannola* is a paradoxical trope not dissimilar from the once – obscure figure of Roman law homo sacer. *Kutannola* is a collective killing that only apparently implies a sacrifice. The ritualism of the execution disguises the fact that the crowds are performing the same operation for which the victim is being killed: the drawing of 'bare life'. And is not 'necklacing' the crudest form of producing 'bare life', of annihilating without sacrificing?[96]

Indeed, in a chapter titled, 'The Ambivalence of the Sacred', Agamben posits that: "There are two kinds of sacred things, the auspicious and the inauspicious. Not only in there no clear border between these two opposite kinds, but the same object can pass from one to another without changing nature. The impure is made pure, and vice versa. The ambiguity of the sacred consists in the possibility of this transmutation." He continues, and this I find interesting and of possible relevance to future attempts at making sense of the practice of necklacing:

> An enigmatic archaic Roman legal figure that seems to embody contradictory traits and therefore had to be explained thus begins to resonate with the religious category of the sacred when this category irrevocably loses its significance and comes to assume contradictory meanings. Once placed in relation with the ethnographic concept of taboo, this ambivalence is then used – with perfect circularity – to explain the figure of *homo sacer*. There is a moment in the life of concepts when they lose their immediate intelligibility and can then, like all empty terms, be overburdened with contradictory meanings. [97]

This provokes one of many possible questions: Is it possible that necklacing, as re-articulated in scholarly works attempting to make sense of the practice, represents that moment of losing its "immediate intelligibility" and is thus "overburdened with contradictory meanings"? In other words, attempts at distinguishing the practice of necklacing from the official state discourse on the practice, as shown in the previous chapter with the ANC and UDF, are also evident in scholarly works attempting to make

---

[96] P. Israel, 'The War of Lions', footnote 63, 167.
[97] G. Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1998), 51, 53.

sense of the practice of necklacing. That state discourse, to restate, was to characterise the practice as criminal in nature with pre-modern tendencies.

Indeed, Gobodo-Madikizela strongly criticises scholarly works linking necklace killings with the practice of witch killings arguing that it "racialises brutality" and perpetuates notions of 'black-on-black' violence and its imagery of black savagery.[98] She therefore questions the link between necklace killings (and perhaps placing it within a wider context of burning) and witchcraft killings in that how should scholars account for the burning of 'black' bodies by 'white' security police under apartheid. [99] It is precisely this type of question, posed by Gobodo-Madikizela, which in part speaks to the difficulty of writing necklacing into a history of liberation struggle as discussed more fully in the following chapter. However, for now, it may be productive to consider Zoe Wicomb's reading of the relationship between the practice of necklacing and the notion of the *braai* (barbeque).

Towards writing necklacing into a history of liberation struggle
In a discussion on the necessity of having to "speak about the unspeakable", such as the relationship between the practice of necklacing and the notion of the *braai*, Wicomb raises the problem of culture and its self-representation – what she refers to as a "politics of culture." [100] She also alludes to a disruption of temporality and subjectivities in having to "speak about the unspeakable." Here she refers to Rian Malan's description in the book, *My Traitors Heart*, of his investigation into the murder of Dennis Mosheweshwe at the side of a swimming pool whilst his murderers were *braai'ing*.[101] Wicomb suggests:

---

[98] P. Gobodo-Madikizela, 'Legacies of Violence', 28-33. One can think back to the two newspaper reports (cited in Chapter One) where the practice of necklacing was characterised as 'pre-modern'. Those reports stated: "However other sources involved in security say that origins of the necklace can be found in the Eastern Cape where burning of victims was practised by the Xhosas during the Frontier War" and "The victim dies a slow and agonising death, while the perpetrators usually carry out a type of ritual dance around his screaming form." See 'Black on Black violence "horrifying" – police' in *The Citizen* (4 October 1985) and '…and the horror the mobs call "The Necklace"' in *The Sunday Star* (29 September 1985).
[99] P. Gobodo-Madikizela, 'Legacies of Violence', 28-33
[100] Z. Wicomb, 'Culture Beyond Color? A South African Dilemma', in *Transition*, No. 60 (1993), 28-29. Wicomb was writing about South African literature, or rather thinking about a post-apartheid literary discourse.
[101] See R. Malan, *My Traitor's Heart* (London: The Bodley Head, 1990).

We do not have access to the necessary transformations through which Malan's story has passed, but the translation can be seen as a model for the "rewording" of braaivleis [barbequed meat] as necklacing, where a number of invariants underpin these cultural activities. The most obvious recursive feature is the act of burning as a communal activity; necklacing, like the braaivleis, is never a private affair. Both activities are marked by the iconography of postindustrial culture: the swimming pool (itself a wry transformation from the veld) is topologically rewritten as the waste from another coveted marker of bourgeois culture, the motor car, the discarded tire that is placed around the victim's neck. Both originate in the need to survive: Boers trekking from British domination relied on shooting buck and eating the roasted meat in the open veld; necklacing eliminates those who endanger the community by spying for the community. Necklacing then is about displacing Boer culture both physically and symbolically. It is about positioning: placing the victim as other within an isolated circle of fire and outside of the community; replacing the decorative necklace with the destructive tire, a symbolic reminder to victims of where they have placed themselves as they embraced the enemy with its lure of lucre; and positioning the necklacers above such treachery. Amid hunger and homelessness, even the piffling amount offered to individuals by the South African Police is hard to resist, and the hungry, homeless, and outraged communities respond with acts that challenge our liberal humanist assumptions. Necklacing does not tell us about communities pitted against each other, but about cohesion within communities who take collective responsibility for such a death and who honour the dead with sympathetic ululations as if it were a natural one. The barbarism of such cultural activity speaks of a topological process, a generative transformation in the barbarism of official white culture. Necklacing responds to the countless deaths in the townships recorded as unrest-related and therefore not worthy of investigation, deaths caused by the agents of government who use impimpis to destabilize black communities. The "official" status of necklacing was confirmed in a recent news report of its use in Maputo, where the community used burning tires as punishment for theft, yet another transmutation for our export culture.[102]

Wicomb points to the public spectacle that is the practice of necklacing and likens it to the communal activity of the Afrikaaner barbecue, the *braai*. Both these activities for Wicomb speak to a post-industrial culture as originating in the need for survival. Thus, for the 'Boer' it was the shooting of buck and roasting it on an open fire in the veld. For the 'black' community, it was the elimination of an individual that endangered the very survival of the community by way of spying for the government. The practice of necklacing comes to symbolise both. For Wicomb, this displaces Boer culture both physically and symbolically. This displacing is about positionality as it relates to the

---

[102] Z. Wicomb, 'Culture Beyond Color?', 31-32.

106

practice of necklacing in that "victims" are placed in an "isolating circle of fire" and is a symbolic reminder of where "victims" have positioned themselves in spying for the government. I cannot help but go back to thinking of Cassius Mandla's warning to those who "commit unspeakable acts of treachery against the people."[103]

Similar to Ball and Praeg, for Wicomb, the practice of necklacing is about cohesion within communities. It is a response to the oppression, the repression of, "the countless deaths in townships recorded as unrest-related and therefore not worthy of investigation, deaths caused by the agents of government who use *impimpis* to destabilise black communities." Yet Wicomb also removes necklacing from a resistance framework when she states that the 'official' status of the practice was confirmed with its usage in Maputo, Mozambique, as punishment for theft. This for her is a, "transmutation of our export culture" but more so, it suggests the practice of necklacing being assigned to the categories of both punishment and resistance.

She concludes by positing:

> [w]e need a radical pedagogy that will sensitise those whose privilege has blinded them to the ironies of power. Only then can we speak of an interracial culture of readers and writers who are not passive consumers of culture, but rather who interrogate received news, who interrogate the magisterial discourse of the New South Africa and its cultural institutions, and who above all interrogate the fixed positions that we have allowed ourselves to adopt and assign to others in our practice of necklacing. And with competent readers, who knows, we may even develop a way of reading, which is to say disambiguating…[104]

Necklacing for Wicomb, it appears, is used as a metaphor for racial tensions; in categorising race, those very categories are akin to being placed in that "isolating circle of fire." It also appears that Wicomb's reading is a call for something like a nationalist post-apartheid South Africa where the ambiguities of the past are rendered intelligible by interrogating the very categories that South Africans have allowed themselves to be fixed in, our cultural identities and by implication, our political identities. However, for

---

[103] C. Mandla, 'The Moment of Revolution is now-or never in our lifetime' in Sechaba (November 1985), 26. See also Chapter Two.
[104] Z. Wicomb, 'Culture Beyond Color?', 32.

Wicomb, the disambiguating that is called for is also only something, for her, that can be hoped for.

Thus to return to Beinart's similar call of taking seriously cultural expressions of violence as Wicomb does, a related criticism levelled against such an approach comes from Mahmood Mamdani. He argues that, "even when political identities are drawn from the domain of culture, they need to be understood as distinct from cultural identities."[105] He continues and suggests that, "when the raw material of political identity is drawn from the domain of culture …it is the link between identity and power that allows us to understand how cultural identities are translated into political identities and thus distinguish between them."[106] An example of this approach is in *When Victims Become Killers*, an account of the Rwandan genocide of 1994. Mamdani argues that his " main objective…is to make the popular agency in the Rwandan genocide thinkable…by taking seriously the historical backdrop to political events, [he] hope[s] to historicise both political choices and those who made these choices…To benefit from a historically informed insight is not the same as to lapse into a politically irresponsible historicism."[107] A possible question here though would be to ask if there is such a thing as a politically 'responsible' historicism and what that would entail and therefore imply.

Leading from Mamdani's "taking seriously the historical backdrop of political events", conventionally, to explain episodes of violence such as necklace killings, has been to show that it is a necessary consequence of events and structures that have preceded it. Violence is represented as instrumental to processes of domination, hegemony and resistance. Robert Thornton, in examining the shooting at Uitenhage, the Langa massacre, argues that:

> [t]o understand the event of violence- that is to go beyond an account of the structures and concepts that provide its context and make it more or less likely to happen - we must look at how violence itself comes to constitute social forms and

---

[105] M. Mandani, 'Making Sense of Political Violence in Postcolonial Africa' in *Identity, Culture and Politics*, Vol. 3, No. 2 (December 2002), 7.
[106] M. Mandani, 'Making Sense of Political Violence in Postcolonial Africa', 7.
[107] M. Mamdani, *When Victims Become Killers: Colonialism, Nativisim, and the Genocide in Rwanda* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2001), 8.

meanings, and at how it comes into being as a peculiar kind of social interaction.[108]

It is not only the event of violence itself and its destructive consequences that are causally effective, but rather narratives about violence that are constructed after the event of violence.[109] Violence interrupts, ruptures, and terminates parts or all of previous social relations and therefore requires new stories to be told to explain the loss, to account for the disruptions, and to rebuild social relations after its occurrence. This makes violence appear to be located at the beginning of new social forms, new behaviours, and new accounts, and thus to appear as their cause, but this is a false perception based on what Thornton calls the "peculiar temporality of violence" and its chaotic nature. In other words, it is only clear that it happened, and only clear that it was really violence (particularly in times of resistance struggles against the state) in retrospect. Thornton therefore suggests that "the creative or constructive aspect of the violent event is not the occurrence of violence itself, but rather the interpretations, memories and memorials that violence evokes after the fact."[110]

In anticipating the argument of the following chapter, I want to return to Du Toit's argument that in order to understand South Africa's political violence, the historical context needs to be taken seriously. This is to trace the emergence of "a master-narrative structuring conventional understandings of political violence in relation to the general project of modernization."[111] He argues that violent resistance against apartheid was "justified and criticized from moral, political and strategic points of view, but precisely for those reasons it was also conceived as embedded in, and subservient to, these larger concerns."[112] In this regard, Du Toit posits that once the turn to armed struggle had been taken, the "mainstream liberation movement could not entirely define and contain the thrust of popular violent insurrections such as the proliferation of 'necklace' killings".[113]

---

[108] R. Thornton, 'The Shooting at Uitenhage, South Africa, 1985: The Context and Interpretation of Violence' in *American Ethnologist*, Vol, 17, No. 2 (May, 1990), 218.
[109] R. Thornton, 'The Peculiar Temporality of Violence', Paper presented at Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation (Seminar 1, 29 March 1995).
[110] R. Thornton, 'The Peculiar Temporality of Violence', 20.
[111] A.du Toit, 'Understanding South African Political Violence', 5.
[112] A.du Toit, 'Understanding South African Political Violence', 7.
[113] A.du Toit, 'Understanding South African Political Violence', 27.

Yet importantly for Du Toit, certain "irruptions of political violence during the apartheid era included a number of episodes which hardly fit into the master narrative (that of the mainstream liberation movement) at all." Here he cites the Durban riots of 1949, the Poqo insurrections of the early 1960's and the emergence of the "right-wing vigilante factions in black communities at the height of the populist anti-apartheid struggles of the mid-1980's."[114] These Du Toit argues do, "not fit into the modern understanding of resistance against the apartheid state."[115] The practice of necklacing for Du Toit seemingly fits into that master-narrative. However, in the following chapter, I take issue with this, arguing that necklacing does not seamlessly fit into the master-narrative of struggle discourse.

'the problem of understanding'

Gobodo-Madikizela argues that there is an inherent ambivalence in the project to understand why atrocities, murders, and other acts of 'indescribable unspeakable' violence take place and specifically, the motivation behind such acts. This ambivalence arises in the form of "explanations that could be read as implicitly exonerating killers from responsibility." She adds that the "balance between explaining how perpetrators got to participate in atrocities and the extent of their responsibility in their behaviour is a difficult one to achieve,"[116] and suggests the concept of a "double move" which is "to seek an explanation but also to resist explanation."[117] Gobodo-Madikizela elaborates on this with the help of Rosenbaum:

> [This means] not to resist all or any inquiry, not to resist thought, but to resist the misleading exculpatory corollaries of explanation. To resist the way of explanation can become evasion or consolation …by shifting responsibility from [the perpetrator] to faceless abstractions, inexorable forces, or irresistible compulsions that gave him no choice or made his choice irrelevant.[118]

Gobodo-Madikizela is unable to negotiate this ambivalence and she concludes by stating that "it is one thing to know what happened, but it is another to understand how it

---

[114] A.du Toit, 'Understanding South African Political Violence', 28. For a brief account of the Poqo insurrections see, T. Lodge, *Black Politics in South Africa since 1945* (Johannesburg: Raven Press, 1983), 234-237.

[115] A.du Toit, 'Understanding South African Political Violence', 28.

[116] P. Gobodo-Madikizela, 'Legacies of Violence', 267.

[117] P. Gobodo-Madikizela, 'Legacies of Violence', 266.

[118] R. Rosenbaum (1998), 195 cited in P. Gobodo-Madikizela, 'Legacies of Violence', 266.

happened" and posits that beyond understanding is the challenge of what can be learned from history and how.[119] I would argue that it is not what can be learned from a history of necklacing, but rather to ask how something like a history of necklacing operates within the discursive terrain of struggle histories.

Thus in relation to the quote that prefaces this chapter, I would suggest taking up David Scott's challenge to dehistoricise history. By this he means to "refuse history its subjectivity, its constancy, its eternity; to think it otherwise than as the pasts hold over the present, to interrupt its seemingly irrepressible succession, causality, its sovereign claim to determinancy."[120]

---

[119] P. Gobodo-Madikizela, 'Legacies of Violence', 267-268.
[120] D. Scott, *Refashioning Futures*, 105.

Chapter Four
"A difficult legacy"?: Writing necklacing into a history of liberation struggle in South Africa

> In the foundation of the state, discourse will justify the recourse to violence by alleging the founding, in progress or to come, of a new law. As this law to come will in return legitimate, retrospectively, the violence that may offend a sense of justice, its future anterior already justifies it…The founding moment of the state is outside time, in that, until the state has already been founded, its foundation is in question, and, as a state, it does not exist. In retrospect, it will seem as if a certain act constituted the moment of foundation; at the time when that act takes place…the violence that accompanies it cannot be legitimized. These moments are terrifying – they involve suffering, crimes, tortures – and they are also 'in their very violence, uninterpretable or indecipherable. (J. Derrida) [1]

This thesis is guided by the question of how necklacing is written into the narrative of struggle history in South Africa. Earlier chapters have attempted to show how the interplay of the dominant discourses on necklacing, that of the apartheid state and of what I have called 'official' non-state discourses, have been re-articulated within scholarly works attempting to make sense of the practice of necklacing. The present chapter argues that this interplay of the dominant discourses is still visible in 'official' histories of the liberation struggle in South Africa.

While necklacing is not limited to these 'official' histories, it nevertheless serves as a repressed but consequential element in struggle histories. By 'official' histories, I am referring specifically to the way in which the liberation movement (read the ANC) constructs a history of struggle and more importantly, their (non)articulation of necklacing through testimonies and submissions at the TRC as well as subsequent 'histories'. By considering *Every Step of the Way: The Journey to Freedom in South Africa*, a text produced for public consumption under the auspices of the current ANC government as part of the 'Ten years of freedom' celebrations in 2004, I ask how necklacing is narrated or not narrated in relation to struggle histories constructed under

---

[1] J. Derrida, 'Force of Law: The Mystical Foundation of Authority' in D.Cornell and M. Rosenfield (eds.), *Deconstruction and the Possibility of Justice* (New York: Routledge, 1992), 36.

the rubric of the nation.[2] Put differently, this chapter through examining *Every Step of the Way*, asks how necklacing is rendered intelligible as part of a national history of struggle.

That *Every Step of the Way* was produced as a nationalist text, as is shown in this chapter, prompts the question of the relationship between history, disciplinary history, nation and the place of violence. The critique of nationalism has long entertained a critique of history.[3] I am however interested in the ways in which nationalism operates in rendering violence (non)-narratable specifically the extent to which nationalist histories elide violence in favour of larger political projects, namely nation building and nationhood. Guided by some of the work of the Subaltern Studies Collective, this chapter examines and questions the ways in which disciplinary history works to construct narratives of struggle that marginalise moments of violence in favour of grand narratives of nation and progress. In taking this as a point of departure, the larger question guiding this chapter is to ask what it might mean to write necklacing into a history of the liberation struggle of South Africa.
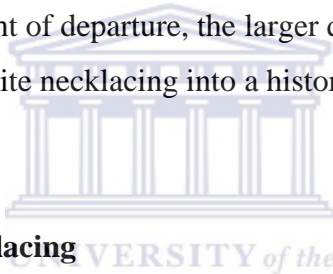
Forgetting to remember necklacing

In 2004, ten years after South Africa's first democratic elections, the Ministry of Education commissioned and funded the book, *Every Step of the Way: The Journey to Freedom in South Africa,* written by journalist Michael Morris. The text, with Bill

---

[2] M. Morris, *Every Step of the Way: The Journey to Freedom in South Africa* (Cape Town: HSRC Press, 2004).

[3] See amongst others, T. Ranger, 'Nationalist Historiography, Patriotic History and the History of the Nation: the Struggle over the Past in Zimbabwe' in *Journal of Southern African Studies*, Vol. 30, No. 2 (June 2004), 215-234; C. Rassool, 'The biographic order: further notes on biography in South African public culture after apartheid', Paper presented at the Institutions of Public Culture Workshop, Cape Town (7-9 July 2005). This view of nationalism entertaining a critique of history has also come across most forcefully through the work of the Subaltern Studies Collective. Subaltern Studies began as a critique of earlier orthodox nationalist and Marxist historical writings on India and at its inception resembled social history or 'history from below'. The initial recovery project of the Collective shifted to one of locating the subaltern within the intersections of dominant discourses, or rather attempts to analyse how subalternity was constituted in dominant discourses. See for example G. Pandey, 'Subaltern Studies: From a Critique of Nationalism, to a Critique of History', paper presented at "Problematising History and Agency: From Nationalism to Subalternity", Conference at Centre for African Studies, University of Cape Town (22-24 October 1997). See also R. Guha, 'The Small Voice of History' in S. Amin and D. Chakrabarty (eds.) in *Subaltern Studies IX: Writings on South Asian History and Society* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), 1-12. For a most stimulating engagement with the works of Subaltern Studies in relation to South African history/historiography, see P. Lalu, *The Deaths of Hintsa: Postapartheid South Africa and the Shape of Recurring Pasts* (Cape Town: HSRC Press, 2009).

Nasson as historical advisor, was aimed at a wide audience, though specifically at high school teenagers, to "brighten the study of history".[4] Despite some quibbles, overwhelmingly the text was lauded for its deft handling of South Africa's past in taking account of a multitude of perspectives and for its accessibility.[5] One reviewer, however, argued that, "the book was written to fulfill the needs of a particular historical moment and a particular political purpose, if nothing else, this book shows that a much wider renaissance in the discipline of history in South Africa over the next few years is necessary to ensure that the old mythologies of the South African past are not simply replaced by new ones."[6]

Interestingly only one review mentioned the practice of necklacing and this in relation to 'white' South Africans having to forget their "amnesia" and "Black's… hav[ing] to live with demons like Boipatong, necklacing and the abuse of women and children."[7] Another reviewer, A.J.B Humphreys, hinted either at the practice of necklacing, though refusing to name it as such, or alluded to township revolts that saw the use of burning tyres as barricades: "Morris sets the scene with 'fire' – from the fires first harnessed by early humans and the profound implications of this advance through to the fire of burning tyres and the fires lit in attempts to dispose of the evidence in the defense of apartheid…"[8]

Essentially presented as a nationalist text aimed at remembering the past in a postapartheid present, as the then current Minister of Education Kader Asmal takes pains to emphasise in the Forward; the Prologue, entitled 'Fires', begins with the following statement:

---

[4] See T. Smith, 'Our past through other people's eyes' in *Cape Argus* (21 May 2004). Bill Nasson is a higly regarded social historian.

[5] For example Patrick Laurence argues that despite Kader Asmal being the driving force behind the text, "Morris is too competent a journalist to have degenerated into a propagandist. Though he obviously sympathises with the quest for liberation by South Africa's oppressed black majority, he does not allow his sympathies to clutter the text. To put it differently, he survives his sponsor." See P. Laurence, 'History or hero worship?' in *This Day* (24 June 2004).

[6] A. G Cobley, 'Review: [Untitled]' in *African Studies Review*, Vol. 49, No. 3 (Dec., 2006), 92-94.

[7] J. Loos, 'Lest we forget, a visit to our recent past' in *Cape Argus* (25 June 2004).

[8] A.J.B Humphreys, 'Review: [Untitled]' in *The South African Archaeological Bulletin*, Vol. 59, No. 180 (Dec., 2004), 71

> It was going to be a long night, but the five men sitting around the braai, talking and drinking beer, had the patience for it. If it took the whole night, well, they would just have to sit it out.[9]

Morris explains that this was the night of the horrific burning of Sizwe Kondile's body in 1981 by five South African police officers as they drank beer and had a *braai* (barbeque) on a separate fire. The prologue proceeds to give a broad overview of the history of fire, its uses and abuses, in South Africa. Towards the end of the prologue, Morris writes that "for most black South Africans… (apartheid's) repression was a raw daily experience, and there was no mistaking it for anything less than systematic brutality. It was a reality that bred seething anger and spurred communities and individuals to harsh measures and excesses."[10] Arguably, the most pronounced 'excess' was the necklace and Morris continues by writing that " a sense of the rage that gave potency to the 'necklace' is evident in [the] controversial passage from a speech by Winnie Madela…", referring to the speech in which she proclaimed that, "We have no guns – we have only stones, boxes of matches and petrol. Together, hand in hand, with our boxes of matches and our necklaces we shall liberate this country." [11]

 The "necklace", writes Morris "became a powerful political tool, and a gut wrenching image."[12] The prologue concludes with the following paragraph:

> To test how much heat it takes to harden an arrow point is to explore an ancient technology that, however remotely, helped shape South African life. Then again, to ask how much fire – and for how long – to burn a fellow human being to ash is a terrible, unavoidable question of our own time. We cannot afford to flinch from it. If we did, we'd be turning back to the dark.[13]

This concluding paragraph is presumably in relation to the burning of Sizwe Kondile and not in relation to the practice of necklacing as the above cited review by Humphrey's alludes to. The practice of necklacing certainly qualifies as one of the abuses of fire that the Prologue wishes to highlight, though as (re)presented in the text, it was an abuse that to some degree is justified even rational, given the harshness of apartheid's repression

---

[9] M. Morris, *Every Step of the Way*, 1.

[10] M. Morris, *Every Step of the Way*, 6.

[11] M. Morris, *Every Step of the Way*, 6.

[12] M. Morris, *Every Step of the Way*, 7.

[13] M. Morris, *Every Step of the Way*, 7.

and its structural violence. In contrast, the burning of Sizwe Kondile's body by apartheid policemen is presented as that which 'black' South Africans were forced to face as a lived reality. The burning of Sizwe Kondile's body by the SAP is juxtaposed with the necklace killings of those individuals suspected of being police informers or collaborators by "communities and individuals". Necklacing is positioned as causal to "a sense of rage" by 'black' South Africans for whom apartheid's "repression was a raw, daily experience, and there was no mistaking it for anything less than systematic brutality." The burning of Sizwe Kondile's body is positioned as proof of the "systematic brutality" of apartheid and the callousness of apartheid's functionaries as shown in the Prologue by the citing of the TRC testimony of former policeman Dirk Coetzee who was present at the 'braai'ing' of Sizwe Kondile.[14]

Necklace killings are briefly mentioned and discussed thrice in *Every Step of the Way*, first in the Prologue and later in the chapter titled, 'Storming the fortress'. Here it is referred to in contradictory terms of cause and effect:

> The petrol soaked tyre, placed round a bound victim's neck and set alight was called a 'necklace', an awful term for something that was never pretty, nor was meant to be. Necklace victims were usually people who were merely suspected of being police informers. Nobody even bothered to establish any proof. The bitter rivalry of the township conflicts did not allow the time or the scope for niceties. It was a problem, a contradiction, for a 'struggle' which proclaimed its ideals as being justice, freedom and democracy for all.[15]

This "problem" and the contradictory terms that surround the practice is highlighted by the historian William Beinart who argues that:

> [w]hile the [exiled] ANC called for ungovernability, it was not able to establish formal internal organization, and a number of Congress and UDF members were uneasy with the excesses of the Comrades…Some UDF militants justified violence, yet the movement had to be careful not to make itself even more vulnerable to state retaliation by openly espousing armed struggle…activists recognized by 1986 that some rebels were not only 'ungovernable to the enemy', but 'ungovernable' to their own organisations'. These tensions were to leave *a difficult legacy* for the liberation movements when they came to government.[16]

---

[14] M. Morris, *Every Step of the Way*, 6.

[15] M. Morris, *Every Step of the Way*, 236.

[16] W. Beinart cited in M. Morris, *Every Step of the Way*, 236. See also W. Beinart, *Twentieth-Century South Africa* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 261. My emphasis.

The third time that the practice of necklacing is mentioned is in the chapter titled, 'When that sunrise comes', in relation to the 2003 rise of vigilantism that included the return of the necklace as a tactic. In that year cases of individuals being apprehended and burnt to death and necklaced by members of communities, frustrated by what they perceived to be the ineffectiveness of the criminal justice system, resurfaced in South African society.[17] The practice of necklacing still, according to Beinart, presents a "difficult legacy for the liberation movements when they came to government."

The last chapter of the book titled '[endpiece] Remembering the future' concludes by noting that:

> There is an entirely unimaginable, and unthinkable, quality to the night-long fire that burned Sizwe Kondile to ash in 1981, as much as to the lives and thoughts of the policemen who perpetrated the atrocity. These seem to belong to another country – that *other* country – yet they are features of the historical landscape South Africans still occupy. To overlook them is to remain in the shadowed world of forgetting. Remembering them is an act of optimism, a letting in of light.[18]

What is striking about *Every Step of the Way* is its structure and register. The text begins with the burning of Sizwe Kondile's body and ends with that horrific 'defacement' of his body.[19] In characterising this as "unimaginable and unthinkable", the killing by the practice of necklacing, in contrast, seemingly appears as 'imaginable and thinkable'. If to overlook the killing of Sizwe Kondile is tantamount to remaining in the "shadowed world

---

[17] M. Morris, *Every Step of the Way*, 310. As cited in the previous chapter, one should recall here the HSRC sociological study on the practice of necklacing done by Nomoyi and Shurink in 1998: "Perhaps the finding with the most pertinent policy implication relates to the suggestion [of those interviewed] that necklacing might be reintroduced to curb the high rate of serious crime confronting many communities in the new South Africa." Indeed, their prediction unfolded in 2003. See N. Nomoyi and W. Schurink, 'Ukunxityiswa kwempimpi itayari njengotshaba lomzabakaza: An exploratory study of insider accounts of necklacing in three Port Elizabeth townships' in E. Bornman, Y. Muthien, R. Van Eeden and M. Wentzel (eds.), *Violence in South Africa: A Variety of Perspectives* (Pretoria: HSRC Press, 1998), 171-2. Numerous newspapers ran editorials on the rise of vigilantism and traced the practice of necklacing back to the mid 1980's. See for example J. Maluleke, 'Necklace anger is back' in *The Citizen* (27 June 2003); P. Laurence, 'When mob is judge, jury, executioner' in *Cape Times* (26 June 2003) and T. Nhlapo, 'Necklace Horror' in *The Star* (23 May 2003).

[18] M. Morris, *Every Step of the Way*, 322.

[19] I use the word 'defacement' and cannot but think of Michael Taussig's argument that the "characterisation of defacement can never confront its object head-on, if only because defacement catches us unawares and can only be known unexpectedly, complicit with the violence of daily life. The writer must confront the resistances. Why else do we write? The shortest way between two points, between violence and its analysis, is the long way round, tracing the edge sideways, like the crab scuttling." See M. Taussig, *Defacement: Public Secrecy and the Labor of the Negative* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1999), 2.

of forgetting" by flinching from it and in so doing "turning back to the dark," then what would it mean to remember necklacing? Is to remember necklacing not also "an act of optimism, a letting in of the light"? Just as much as asking "how much fire – and for how long – to burn a fellow human being to ash is a terrible, unavoidable question of our own time," surely so too is the question of necklacing as it relates to the "historical landscape [which] South Africans still occupy", that "difficult legacy"? Notwithstanding Kader Asmal's claim that "*Every Step of the Way* asks its readers to confront the tangled stories, records and other fragments which make up our history"[20], the text, in my reading, forgets to remember that necklacing is just as constituted by "tangled stories, records and other fragments" that require confronting.[21]

If *Every Step of the Way* is considered as an 'official' history, then in relation to the question of what it would mean to write necklacing into a history of liberation struggle in South Africa, I want to proceed by asking how this juxtaposing of the burning of Sizwe Kondile's body by the SAP and the killing of suspected informers and collaborators by the practice of necklacing works towards and/or against overcoming the "difficult legacy" that necklacing poses. In the (re)construction of 'the history' of South Africa's liberation struggle, evoking the burning of Sizwe Kondile's body in relation to necklace killings can be traced to the early 1990's and more forcefully to the TRC process.

In particular what follows underscores a struggle over the 'ownership' of forms of violence that, at the TRC, saw the former apartheid government strategically attempt to assign what was said and what was not said about the practice of necklacing by the ANC and UDF as the ultimate proof that necklacing was 'owned' by those organisations.

---

[20] K. Asmal, 'Forward' to M. Morris, *Every Step of the Way*, ix.

[21] This is somewhat similar to Shahid Amin's argument in relation to Chauri Chaura in which "all Indians, when commemorating the nation, are obliged to remember – only in order to forget – ..." See S. Amin, *Event, Metaphor, Memory: Chauri Chaura 1922-1992* (Berkley, Los Angeles: University of California Press and Oxford University Press, 1995), 1.

Can necklacing be owned?

In a recent article, Nicky Rousseau posits that a, "side skirmish in the struggles over the ownership of forms of violence" has been elicited in the light of testimony by former state security agents to the TRC. In particular, she suggests that the testimony of Vlakplaas[22] commander Dirk Coetzee that detailed the killing of Sizwe Kondile in 1981 was perhaps the most iconic image of violence entering public consciousness in the wake of the TRC. Rousseau points out that this, and similar burnings of bodies by state security agents, has led to a triumphant seizing upon by the liberation movement, specifically the ANC, "as evidence that the origin of the practice of 'necklacing' lies with the state, thus reversing the state's earlier account of 'necklacing' as some kind of moral marker of barbarism of the liberation movements'."[23]

Indeed, following an allegation by one of the TRC commissioners, Dumiza Ntsebeza, that the origins of the practice lay with the state, a verbal skirmish ensued and former police commissioner, General Johan van de Merwe challenged Ntsebeza to provide evidence of the police burning people alive. The media-director of the National Party (NP), Mr. Daryl Swanepoel argued that, "to use the gruesome necklace method, from wherever it may originate, is sick and barbaric. The ANC made it its own and propagated it," thereafter citing the infamous Winnie Mandela speech.[24]

---

[22] The Vlakplaas unit was established under the directive of the Security Branch in 1979. According to the TRC *Report*, it was initially a "rehabilitation" farm where former ANC and PAC activists were turned into *askaris*, police informers. The *Report* continues as states that "by the end of 1982, Vlakplaas operatives were increasingly becoming 'the special forces' of the Security Branch" and were responsible for numerous murders of liberation movement persons. See TRC *Report*, Vol. 2 (Cape Town: Juta, 1998), 30.

[23] N. Rousseau, 'The Farm, The River and The Picnic Spot: Topographies of Terror' in *African Studies*, Vol. 68, Issue 3 (December 2009), 367.

[24] According to the *Daily Dispatch*, a local newspaper in the Eastern Cape, Dumiza Ntsebeza, a TRC investigations head in November 1997, had said that, "[t]he South African police and their paid agitators were responsible for introducing necklacing into South Africa from the former Rhodesia – and not the African National Congress as previously alleged." Ntsebeza argued that his team had found evidence that two MK soldiers had been burned before being buried. See 'Ntsebeza says necklacing introduced to SA by police' in *Daily Dispatch*, (7 November 1997); C. van Staden, 'Hoe WVK man in storm oor halsbandmoord' in *Die Burger* (14 November 1997) and H. de Vos, 'NP en VF kap Ntsebeza se uitlatings oor halsbandmoord' in *Die Burger* (10 November 1997). Earlier that year, the renowned anti-apartheid journalist, Max du Preez claimed in the television series 'Truth Commission Special Report' that:
"[b]etween September 1984 and August 1989, 771 people were necklaced or doused with fuel and burnt to death. The myth perpetuated by the State then was that this was an example of African brutality. The truth we know now is that this repulsive form of killing was first started by white Rhodesian security forces in the 1970s and then brought to South Africa by the security police…" He was made to retract the statement

With the TRC as a platform through which apartheid human rights violations were brought to light, the question of necklacing was one that arguably epitomised a battle over the moral high ground of the liberation struggle. In response to allegations that it was the former apartheid government that 'fathered' the practice of necklacing, [25] the evidence supplied by representatives of the former government and its security force functionaries were the statements made by liberation movement leaders and icons in the 1980s. The ANC's strategy of a 'People's War' was produced as further proof that necklacing was 'owned' by the ANC. For example in Major-Gen H.D Stadler's *The Other Side of the Story: A true perspective*, 'ownership' of the practice of necklacing is assigned to the ANC and the UDF. [26]

This book served as a submission to the TRC to defend the SAP against claims of gross human rights violations. It ought to be read as a version of an apartheid state discourse on violence. On one hand, the violence unleashed by the state, or in this case more specifically the SAP, was regarded as the 'unfortunate but necessary cost of progress' and the practice of necklacing on the other, as a particular excess of revolutionary violence by the liberation movement (particularly the ANC and UDF) and as barbaric and primitive. Stadler provided an historical overview of the liberation movements (ANC, UDF, PAC/APLA) and the revolutionary total onslaught that warranted the total strategy and later counter-revolutionary warfare of the state in the 1980's. In this sense, Stadler provides a perfect execution of McCuen's rules in that Stadler turned back the argument of the liberation movement that the state was responsible for violence, arguing instead that the liberation movement was responsible for state violence.[27] This move of course elides both the repression and everyday violence of apartheid disciplinary rule.

---

after it was found that there was no or little evidence to substantiate the claim. See 'SABC found guilty over claim about necklacing' in *SAPA* Report (June 16 1997). http://www.rhodesia.nl/truthlie.htm

[25] Even before the official sanctioning of the TRC, media reports with questions pertaining to the 'origins' of the practice of necklacing circulated in the early 1990's. One such report, an editorial comment in *The New Nation* (a UDF orientated weekly) suggested that state security forces introduced the practice. See, 'Who is the father of the necklace?' in *The New Nation* (25 June 1993).

[26] Maj-Gen HD Stadler, *The Other Side of the Story: A True Perspective* (Pretoria: Contact Publishers, 1997).

[27] See Chapter One.

The submission provided very little account of the forms of violence used by the SAP itself. Instead, it was as though by providing an account of the revolutionary violence of the liberation movements', Stadler was able to argue that the SAP and by association, the apartheid state, were merely responding to a violence prescribed by the liberation movements, a process of action leading to reaction leading to further action and reaction; or of violence begetting violence. For Stadler, it was the practice of necklacing that was the ultimate act of "savagery". He said this much when he claimed that; "to put a petrol-soaked tyre around the neck of a human being and set it alight, for that person to slowly burn to death, can only be described as savagery of the highest degree."[28]

Stadler set up a formulation in which the notion of 'Peoples' War' and its intended consequences was used as a condoning and propagating of the practice of necklacing by the ANC and UDF. He argued that:

> Neither the ANC or [sic] the UDF can deny the facts, i.e:
> -That members of the street committees and other structures of 'people's war' had been directly responsible for these inhuman and barbaric actions.
> -That the ANC had been directly and indirectly responsible for this strategy.
> -That the UDF played a major role in these manifestations at grass roots level.
> -That it was the ANC strategy to make South Africa ungovernable and set up alternative structures, etc.
> -That the ANC ordered the elimination of 'collaborators'[29]

Stadler continued and posed the question, "surely the ANC and the UDF, if they did not order these actions, must have foreseen the probable consequences of that which they propagated, or was this in fact that which was actually intended?"[30] In this formulation a claim for equivalence between the liberation movements and the Security Forces was being made in terms of accountability for atrocities committed. The practice of necklacing, for Stadler, underscored the "challenges" that the SAP faced. The spirit of reconciliation in which the submission was supposedly meant to be presented, came across more as a damning indictment of the ANC and UDF in their discourse of violent resistance. According to Stadler it appeared therefore, that the practice of necklacing as an act of revolutionary violence represented the ultimate justification for state violence.

---

[28] Maj-Gen HD Stadler, *The Other Side of the Story*, 180.

[29] Maj-Gen HD Stadler, *The Other Side of the Story*, 180-181.

[30] Maj-Gen HD Stadler, *The Other Side of the Story*, 181.

Similarly, in the former ruling party, the National Party's (NP) second submission to the TRC, former state president F.W de Klerk, dedicated a sub-section to the question of necklacing.[31] To emphasise the view of 'ownership' belonging to the ANC and linking it to the political prisoner indemnity saga[32], de Klerk argued that:

> It is also significant that some of the 525 prisoners whose release the ANC demanded on 26 September 1992 as its price for returning to the negotiating table had been convicted of necklace murders and other heinous offences. Nevertheless, the ANC claimed them for its own. One of these people, George Skosana, said on his release from prison that "he would do it again if he had to." He said that he remembered the dying screams of the "police informer" he helped to burn alive in Saulsville:
> "We were angry and he was our enemy, so we necklaced him. I felt happy watching him burn." Another of those released at the insistence of the ANC was Lucky Malaza who described how he had helped to kill a man called Fanayana: "….We put the tyre around him, poured petrol on him and lit a match. He screamed and screamed and tried to pull the tyre off, but could not. I looked at his face. It was like meat. He took a long time to die."[33]

Of significance in this statement was the allegation of the ANC "claiming them for their own". This implied that in "claiming" perpetrators of necklace killings, according to De

---

[31] Second Submission of the National Party to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (23 March 1997) http://www.justice.gov.za/trc/hrvtrans/submit/np2.htm

[32] In 1991, there was dispute as to whether prisoners convicted of necklace murders should qualify for political prisoner status and thus be eligible for indemnity. In the 'first' round of negotiations in 1990, the 'Groote Schuur Minute' (4 May 1990) stipulated an agreement to "release political prisoners and the granting of immunity in respect of political offences to those inside and outside South Africa." By the 6 August 1990, it was agreed and confirmed in the 'Pretoria Minute' that all political prisoners would be released by the 30 April 1991. However on the 1 May 1991, the *Daily Dispatch* ran the following article, 'FW rejects freedom for necklace killers'. Former South African president F.W de Klerk is reported as having stated that of the applications received from individuals for consideration of release and indemnity, had included applicants who had been convicted of particularly brutal methods, many of them involving the necklace method…A significant group of these people were…opportunists or dangerous criminals. The majority, however, fall within a grey area regarding the question of whether the crime was politically motivated or not." See 'FW rejects freedom for necklace killers' in *Daily Dispatch* (1 May 1991). Similarly, in 1987, a number of individuals accused of necklace murders were on trial and former Minister of Law and Order, Adrian Vlok argued that, "as long as gruesome and senseless killings such as necklace murders and public funeral pyres are committed, no one can claim pardon for such brutal killers…these acts can never be condoned and must be treated by competent courts of law as crime and nothing else." See, 'Necklace Killings: No Pardon, says Vlok' in *The Sowetan* (4 September 1987). This was in response to calls for the apartheid state to dispense with capital punishment. See 'Pretoria Minute', Minutes and Accords between the ANC and the South African Government, May 1990- February 1991. http://www.anc.org.za/ancdocs/history/minutes.html#PRM See 'Groote Schuur Minute', Minutes and Accords between the ANC and the South African Government, May 1990- February 1991. http://www.anc.org.za/ancdocs/history/minutes.html#PRM

[33] National Party Second Submission to the TRC. See also B. Pearson, 'Victims deserved to die, say freed necklace killers' in *The Sunday Star* (27 September 1992).

Klerk, the ANC must be held responsible for such killings. Effectively, this would "remove whatever moral base it [the ANC] may have had to point fingers at others concerning the violence." Indeed, this was the argument that De Klerk presented in 1992 through an open letter to Nelson Mandela. [34] In particular, in the TRC submission, De Klerk was attempting to point out the gross violations of human rights committed by the ANC and the lack of candor in their submission as to responsibility and accountability for such violations. He argued that the ANC condoned the practice and that by implication, "blame" rested solely with the ANC for the loss of lives by that practice.

In its submissions and testimonies, the ANC juxtaposed Oliver Tambo's official condemning of the practice of necklacing in September 1987 and the apartheid state's refusal to publicise it with the extensive publicity given by the apartheid state to the statement by Winnie Mandela. [35] The intended effect of this strategy, it appears, was to counter the former apartheid government and its functionaries' claims that the failure of the ANC and its ally, the UDF, to condemn necklacing more vociferously was tantamount to 'ownership' and hence responsibility of and for the emergence of the practice.
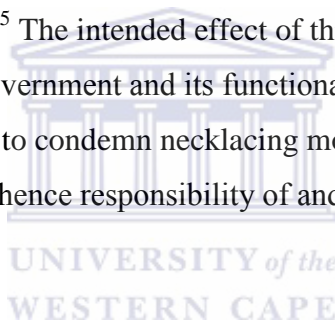
In the NP second submission, F. W de Klerk pointed to certain "facts" that "contradict" the ANC's claims that it never supported or condoned the practice. De Klerk cited certain key statements made in relation to the practice of necklacing, (the same statements as those cited in the propaganda booklet, *Talking with the ANC...* See Chapter One),[36] such as Winnie Mandela's April 1986 speech as well as statements made by Alosi Moloi ("Among us we have people who have openly collaborated with the enemy. You have to eliminate one to save hundreds of others") and Tim Ngubane ("We want to make the

---

[34] Letter from FW de Klerk to Nelson Mandela (2 July 1992): Annexure D: Views on the current violence
http://www.anc.org.za/ancdocs/history/mandela/1992/links/lett2july.htm
[35] See Truth and Reconciliation Commission – United Democratic Front Submission (06 May 1998)
http://www.justice.gov.za/trc/special/udf/udf.htm
Truth and Reconciliation Commission – Transcript of the African National Congress Party Political Recall in Cape Town – 12 and 13 May 1997. Day 1 – 12 May 1997.
http://www.justice.gov.za/trc/special/party2/anc2.htm
[36] See *Talking with the ANC...* (Johannesburg: Bureau of Information, 1986), 26. See also Transcript of the ANC Party Political Recall in Cape Town.

death of a collaborator so grotesque that people will never think of it") in October 1985 made at California State University in the USA.[37] In particular, De Klerk cited the December 1986 Chris Hani "comment on the necklace" in which Hani stated:

> So the necklace was a weapon devised by the oppressed themselves to remove this cancer from our society, the cancer of collaboration of the puppets. We have our own revolutionary methods of dealing with collaborators, the methods of the ANC. But I refuse to condemn our people when they meet out their own traditional forms of justice to those who collaborate. As far as I am concerned the question of the necklace and how it should be used belongs to all of us, to the ANC, to the democratic movement.[38]

Interestingly in the NP Party Recall, De Klerk stated that:

> If I read the ANC's evidence… correctly they say they were not in favour of necklacing… And I must accept if there is evidence from the ANC's leadership that they tried to stop it although as I point out there are quotes from the late Chris Hani and so on which indicates that they actually condoned this.[39]

De Klerk acknowledged, even affirmed that the ANC was "not in favour of necklacing" but questioned whether the ANC leadership "tried to stop it." Though it was the Hani "comment on the necklace" that de Klerk argued was proof that Hani both claimed 'ownership' of the practice of necklacing (on behalf of the ANC and the UDF) and propagated its usage as a liberatory tool. As I have shown in Chapter Two, however, those responses were more ambivalent than any outright condoning or condemning of the practice of necklacing, that is, in condemning the practice, the ANC refuse[d] to condemn, to disown, those who partook in the practice. For the former apartheid government, by implication and by claiming responsibility for those who partook in acts of necklace killings, responsibility and 'ownership' of the practice lay with the legacy of the liberation movement.

The ANC criticised such allegations by arguing that it was, "a profoundly dishonest attempt to create the impression that Chris Hani expressed approval of, and claimed ANC

---

[37] National Party Second Submission to the TRC.

[38] Cited in National Party Second Submission to the TRC. The full comment is attached as an Appendix to this thesis.

[39] Truth and Reconciliation Commission - Political Party Submissions – Transcript of the National Party - Party Political Recall in Cape Town – 14 May 1997
http://www.justice.gov.za/trc/special/party2/np2.htm

responsibility for, the phenomenon of 'necklacing' by quoting one sentence from a lengthy response he made to a question on the ANC's attitude towards 'necklacing'."[40]

Speaking on behalf of the ANC, Mac Maharaj admitted that the ANC made a "mistake" in delaying outright condemnation of the practice of necklacing. Azhar Cachalia did the same in the UDF's submission to the TRC. [41] The reason both Maharaj and Cachelia gave for this hesitation in responding was that the organisations had not wanted to alienate their mass support base. For the ANC particularly, Mac Maharaj responded in part as follows:

> And the masses in this country need a huge tribute to be paid to them for where we are today, because by and large again, just as we focus sometimes on the violations and the larger picture disappears, and it appears as if the entire struggle of the masses was characterised by necklacing, it is the strikes, the demonstrations, it is the youth fighting with sticks and stones against saracens and tanks that has been an indispensable ingredient of where we are today. So the ANC in its efforts to reach home needed to interact with the masses in motion and it needed to appreciate anything that they did even if it looked to us from a distance to be a form that we did not like. It needed to locate its appreciation in that context. The result is both the necklacing and various other activities that took place could not be reacted to by immediately having the benefit of the knowledge that the enemy was perpetrating those acts and seeking to discredit us. It had to be reacted to as something that the masses had taken up under conditions of extreme brutalisation and repression.[42]

The apartheid state, through its discourse, had in large part characterised the struggle of 'the masses' in relation to necklace killings. Importantly however, as shown with the Hani statement of December 1986 as was discussed in Chapter Two, one is able to discern an implicit assigning of necklacing to 'the masses' by the ANC whilst at the same time a claiming of 'the masses' as belonging to the ANC. This, what I have called 'between condemning and condoning', is indicative of the ambivalence towards

---

[40] 'Further Submissions and Responses by the African National Congress to Questions Raised by the Commission for Truth and Reconciliation (12 May 1997)
http://www.justice.gov.za/trc/hrvtrans/submit/anc2.htm
[41] For the UDF's response, see Azhar Cachalia on behalf of the UDF, Truth and Reconciliation Commission – United Democratic Front Submission (06 May 1998)
http://www.doj.gov.za/trc/special/udf/udf.htm and for the ANC's response, see Mac Maharaj speaking on behalf of the ANC, Truth and Reconciliation Commission – Transcript of the African National Congress Party Political Recall in Cape Town – 12 and 13 May 1997. Day 1 – 12 May 1997.
http://www.doj.gov.za/trc/special/party2/anc2.htm
[42] Transcript of ANC Political Party Recall.

necklacing in relation to a history of the liberation struggle. Necklacing here was explained but was also explained away by claiming that it was the apartheid state and its security forces that introduced the practice. As the preceding quote makes explicit, they were "perpetrating those acts and seeking to discredit us [ANC and UDF]." From this observation can be suggested that the ANC and UDF were constantly attempting to counter the apartheid state's strategy of de-legitimising the liberation movement by assigning 'ownership' of necklacing to the apartheid state.

Magnus Malan, former Minister of Defense during the 1980's, posed the following question in his submission to the TRC, "Who conceived the 'necklace' method and ordered the application thereof? Who chose and authorised the targets?" He proceeded by citing similar statements in relation to necklacing by prominent ANC leaders as done in the official NP submission, and his explanation for using those statements were:

> Why do I refer to these public utterances by the ANC leadership? What is their relevance to the actions of the South African Defence Force? The Commission should keep in mind that neither the actions of MK, nor the actions of the South African Defence Force occurred in isolation. Members of the South African Defence Force were kept informed of the statements by the ANC. Their sense of morality was obviously shaped and influenced by the sentiments expressed by the ANC leadership. This should be taken into account when the *bona fides* of the actions of members of the South African Defence Force is considered…. The purpose of these quotations is not to fuel the fire of criticism against the ANC, but to illustrate to this Commission the atmosphere which prevailed at the time when objectives were set, planning was done and orders were given, interpreted and executed.[43]

Malan's statement points to a crucial aspect of the propaganda strategies of the 1980's - that of morality. If the statements made by ANC leaders shaped the moral standing of state security forces, then not only was a propaganda war being fought, on both sides, for justification of the legitimate use of violence, but also a battle for the moral high ground. From claims such as above therefore, the question of which was more morally reprehensible and more barbaric was invoked; security force agents disposing of bodies through burning (such as the case of Sizwe Kondile) or township crowds', 'the masses' killing by necklace a perceived collaborator by the necklace?

---

[43] Submission to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission: General. M.A. de M. Malan (7 May 1997) http://www.justice.gov.za/trc/hrvtrans/submit/malan.htm

Formulations such as that of Stadler's and Malan's highlight a claim for equivalence with regards to accountability for atrocities committed in relation to the liberation movements'. Yet it is through the invoking of the above sort of question and through the submissions of both sides that the struggle for 'ownership' played itself out at the TRC. During the mid 1980's, 'ownership' of the practice of necklacing was in relation to larger strategies of de-legitimation and conversely legitimation over the use of violence in securing political aims. At the TRC, in the context of the indefensibility of apartheid and its forms of violence, the state waged a desperate battle to reclaim some moral ground, if only via a strategy of staining the ANC's record. In this sense, arguably whomsoever 'owned' the practice of necklacing would be relegated to the annals of history as being the more morally bankrupt, reprehensible and barbaric in the struggle that beset South African society with greater intensity since the mid 1970's.[44]

If the aporia persists, it is only because the claims of morality are founded on the grounds of the immediacy of violence, not its theorisation. We may want to heed the suggestion of Michel Foucault that, "no one is responsible for an emergence; no one can glory in it since it always occurs in the interstice."[45] Hubert L. Dreyfus and Paul Rabinow's reading of this statement is insightful and helps to qualify the point I wish to make in reference to the quagmire posited by the argument about morality and violence. They suggest that:

> …the play of forces in any particular historical situation is made possible by the space which defines them. It is this field or clearing that is primary…this field or clearing is understood as the result of long term practices and as the field in which those practices operate…what takes place in the field is not simply the permutation of meaningless serious speech acts. These are social manoeuvres of great consequence for those involved.[46]

---

[44] For debates around the TRC as producer of History and claims made that the TRC sought to construct a singular nationalist narrative, see amongst other, N. Rousseau and M. Fullard, 'Uncertain Borders: The TRC and the (un)making of public myths' in *Kronos*, Vol. 34 (November 2008), 215-239 and D. Posel and G. Simpson (eds.), *Commissioning The Past: Understanding South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission* (Johannesburg: Witwatersrand University Press, 2002) ; J. Cherry, ' "Just War" and "Just Means": Was the TRC wrong about the ANC?' in *Transformation*, 42 (2000), 9-28. Importantly see R. Wilson, *The Politics of Truth and Reconciliation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001).

[45] M. Foucault, 'Nietzche, Genealogy, History' in D. F. Bouchard, (ed.), *Language, Counter-Memory, Practice: Selected Essays and Interviews* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1977), 150.

[46] H. L. Dreyfus and P. Rabinow, *Michel Foucault: Beyond Structuralism and Hermeneutics* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983), 109.

Wendy Brown posits that the "interstice", also called a "non-place", a "place of confrontation" is a,

> non-place because in the confrontation or battle…at the site of emergence, contestants do not oppose each other within an order that houses them both, instead, each fights to bring into being an order in their respective images. The "place" that will feature the constituents recognized by the historian does not exist until the contest has been (provisionally) won; the contestants do not acquire their identities until the battle is (provisionally) over; the elements in a new regime do not exist until that regime has (provisionally) emerged, until a new order of meaning and power has been brought into being.[47]

In response to the question posed at the TRC as to why the ANC took so long to respond to the rise of the practice of necklacing, Mac Maharaj cautioned that, "if some people say our condemnation was made too late we can say, in all honesty that yes, it is possible to make that judgement from hindsight, but it would not be a judgement that would be very wisely made, and should not be too lightly made."[48] A similar caution is advanced by Kader Asmal when he posits that *Every Step of the Way* "is a strikingly humane history, aware of the ease with which hindsight can lead us into harsh judgements of our past."[49]

Perhaps the most blatant attempt at making such a judgement has recently come from Anthea Jeffery who argues that whilst the ANC and the UDF did not "openly endorse such executions [necklace killings]…neither did it condemn them. On some occasions, members of the organization seemed almost to welcome them."[50] To qualify this claim, Jeffery cites the same statements cited by the former apartheid government and former state security agents as discussed in this chapter. Whilst the overall argument of Jeffery's 'history' is that the ANC is responsible for the some 20 500 people that died between 1984 and 1994[51], necklacing is cast in a very similar discourse to that suggested by the apartheid state during the mid-1980s and at the TRC in the mid-1990s. Despite Jeffery implicitly acknowledging ambivalence on the part of the ANC and UDF, this

---

[47] W. Brown, *Politics Out of History* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001), 105.

[48] See Truth and Reconciliation Commission – Transcript of the African National Congress Party Political Recall in Cape Town – 12 and 13 May 1997. Day 1 – 12 May 1997.
http://www.doj.gov.za/trc/special/party2/anc2.htm

[49] K. Asmal, 'Forward' to M. Morris, *Every Step of the Way*, ix.

[50] A. Jeffery, *People's War: New Light on the Struggle for South Africa* (Cape Town: Jonathan Ball Publishers, 2009), 110.

[51] Indeed, that is the opening paragraph of the synopsis to the book!

ambivalence, it appears, is tantamount to responsibility with no recourse to further analysis.[52] For Jeffery, the practice of necklacing is (re)presented simply as an aid to the ANC's policy of 'People's War' through terror and intimidation in securing a "virtual monopoly on power."[53]

Thus for Jeffery, Oliver Tambo's 'official' condemning of the practice of necklacing in September 1987 is formulated against a broader discussion of those that openly condemned the practice. She cites AZAPO and Inkatha statements as juxtaposed to those statements of the ANC and UDF who presumably for Jeffery, despite the implied ambivalence, condoned the practice. In this regard, Jeffery cites Oliver Tambo's denouncing of the practice but then proceeds to cite statements made by certain leaders of the ANC made later, such as the Chris Hani interview of December 1986 that supposedly propagated the practice.[54] Whilst Jeffery's book sparked a debate between herself and Mac Maharaj concerning the validity of Jeffery's claims,[55] I wish to point out that in attempting to write a history of South Africa's liberation struggle, more needs to be done than simply inverting the binaries in which that struggle was fought. For Jeffery, as it relates to necklacing, this includes her not merely engaging but to some extent perpetuating the same rhetoric as that of the apartheid state and its allies, so-called 'moderate blacks' and in so doing, perpetuates a historicist rendering of so-called 'black-on-black' violence.[56]

---

[52] Other attempts at critically analyzing the ANC and the liberation struggle broadly elide necklacing all together in favour of a Marxist-Leninist framework that sees analysis focused primarily on economic and political structures. In this sense, the argument of Dale McKinley is that "the struggle for the liberation of South Africa, as practiced by the ANC, has failed to place the revolutionary struggles of the oppressed at the centre of its revolutionary practice and to locate itself firmly within the broad mass as a means to a desired end – liberation for a full transfer of power to the people." See for example D.T Mckinley, *The ANC and the Liberation Struggle: A Critical Political Biography* (London: Pluto Press, 1997), 135.

[53] See synopsis of A. Jeffery, *People's War: New Light on the Struggle for South Africa*.

[54] A. Jeffery, *People's War*, 155.

[55] See M. Maharaj, 'History 101, anyone?' in *The Sunday Times* (13 September 2009) and A. Jeffery, 'The Truth will out, Mac Maharaj' in *The Sunday Times* (20 September 2009).

[56] My understanding of historicism is influenced by David Scott's reading of Jean-Luc Nancy who writes that historicism "is in general the way of thinking that presupposes that history has always already begun, and that therefore it always merely continues. Historicism presupposes history, instead of taking it as what shall be thought." This is cited in David Scott, 'Dehistoricizing History', in D. Scott, *Refashioning Futures: Criticism after Postcoloniality* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1999), 95.

While *Every Step of the Way* engages the 'official' non-state discourse on necklacing, it also perpetuates the rhetoric of that discourse but in a way that I suggest is somewhat similar to Slavoj Zizek's formulation of a "fetishist disavowal": "'I know, but I don't want to know that I know, so I don't know'". Zizek continues and adds: "I know it, but I refuse to fully assume the consequences of this knowledge, so that I can continue acting as if I don't know."[57] It is somewhat similar because it is not that in *Every Step of the Way* there is a refusal to "assume the consequences" of necklace killings. Rather, despite the "unimaginable and unthinkable" nature of such acts of violence as the burning of Sizwe Kondile's body, there is a plea for a remembering, for inserting such acts into history. Necklacing however, seemingly rendered as 'imaginable and thinkable', is also seemingly forgotten, being rendered, I want to suggest, as outside of history. Yet it is also that very juxtaposing that allows for the limits of the relation between history and violence to become visible. Just as the liberation movement (here specifically the ANC) struggles to confront acts of violence such as necklace killings, so too history, or rather disciplinary history, is faced with an impasse, that of the difficulty of coming to terms with violence, of rendering violence narratable.
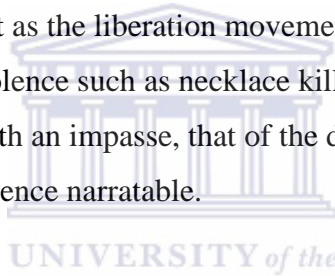
Before proceeding, it must be stressed that the argument being presented here is not one of re-engaging the struggle over necklacing in relation to 'ownership', or of engaging a politics of blame. Rather my argument is that recourse to struggles over the 'ownership' of necklacing limits what can be said about the liberation struggle. This is insofar as the seeming obsession with the 'ownership' of necklacing and the politics of blame has at its root a question of how a history of liberation struggle incorporated within a nationalist

---

[57] S. Zizek, *Violence* (London: Profile Books Ltd, 2008), 45-46. Michael Taussig has a somewhat similar formulation of "knowing what not to know" in relation to "public secrets". See M. Taussig, *Defacement: Public Secrecy and the Labor of the Negative*, 2. Interestingly, with regards to the relationship between photography and violence, Patricia Hayes draws attention to that violence which is not photographed. In an interview, the photographer Santu Mofokeng states: "There's no real vocabulary for the non-photographed of apartheid". This statement speaks to an earlier statement made by Mofokeng: "*the violence is in the knowing*". I find Hayes insight into this useful. She suggests that in violence not only being about seeing, there is an implication that "there are knowledges attached to seeing…" My reading of this suggests that 'knowledges' can be thought of as the multiplicity of meanings ascribed to violence, not only in the violence that is seen, but also in the violence that is known. This violence which is known further implies that it is informed by the circulation of the multiplicity of meanings that comes to stand as its representation. See P. Hayes, 'Santu Mofokeng, Photographs. "The Violence is in the Knowing", paper presented at the South African Contemporary History and Humanities Seminar Series, No. 294 (21 October 2008), 2, 6. My emphasis. Note: permission granted to cite paper upon verbal request 09 March 2009.

project works in and/or against coming to terms with "a difficult legacy". With this in mind, what follows is a broader discussion of the interplay between history, violence and nation with the aid of, amongst others, Gyanendra Pandey.

History-violence-nation

One of Pandey's central arguments in his study of Partition in India is that, "violence and community constitute one another" in many different ways and that therefore, "narratives of particular experiences of violence go towards making the 'community'- and the subject of history."[58] The subject of history then is 'community', that can be read as the local that constitutes the nation. Following this argument, Pandey suggests that, "violence becomes the language that constitutes - and reconstitutes - the subject."[59] Indeed, in South African liberation struggle discourse, the subject constituted and reconstituted are 'the masses' as Chris Hani emphasised in 1986 and as Mac Maharaj took pains to emphasise at the TRC.

In relation to nationalist histories, Pandey cites E. Valentine Daniel's argument that in the founding of nation-states, there is an "aestheticising impulse" as regards the official claims and denials of violence. For Daniel more specifically, "the nation-state is aestheticized by the nationalisation of its past, which is projected onto the future – by which act the present is appeased."[60] This impulse at "aestheticising" in *Every Step of the Way* comes to the fore when Kader Asmal writes of a "national experience" of a shared past, present and future and struggle beginning with,

> [p]olitical protests and civil struggles against the injustices and oppression of undemocratic rule. Different sorts of people were involved, often disputing among themselves how resistance might be conducted most effectively. Towards the end, a militant minority took up arms and confronted repression with bloody consequences…when the shooting was effectively over, a new and more inclusive politics started…out of this grew the civilized conditions for shared citizenship in a single yet healthy plural nation, with a great assortment of peoples, communities, customs, cultures, religions, traditions and life chances. Perhaps,

---

[58] G. Pandey, *Remembering Partition: Violence, Nationalism and History in India* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 4.
[59] G. Pandey, *Remembering Partition*, 4.
[60] E. Valentine Daniel, *Charred Lullabies: Chapters in an Anthropography of Violence* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1996), 155.

more than anything, inclusion was what people most wanted from their new statehood…this is, self-evidently, not the description of an imaginary country. It is a description of South Africa at the turn of the 20th century…for our purposes what matters is the historical point: South Africans are like others in the ways in which they have come to the challenge of hammering together a nation. If building a nation has involved robust arguments, principled disputes, the resolution of conflict through compromise, or mediation between the haves and have-nots, that is how nations all over the world have come to be made. Nationhood has also come about when people have faced up squarely to the nature of their past, and to the questions it has raised, even when these have not been easy questions. Equally, it is present history which moves them forward, always into unknown territory. With the past behind and future ahead, all of us face futures we can only but imagine, carried by the hope that through the right choices and influence, things will go our way rather than come to get us.[61]

The "aestheticising impulse", according to Pandey, is perpetuated when 'history' works to produce the 'truth' of violence but denies its force at the same time, naming an event and yet denying its eventfulness. In *Every Step of the Way*, necklacing is named as resistance but there is a shying away from such acts of resistance, somewhat similar to what Shahid Amin means when he argues that, "[t]he nationalist master narrative…induces a selective national amnesia in relation to specified events that would fit awkwardly, even seriously inconvenienc[ing] [that] neatly woven pattern."[62] In the case of liberation struggle narratives in South Africa, that "neatly woven pattern" is the resistance narrative. Pandey thus points to (re)constructions of the nation, particularly through violent struggle, that invariably gets cast through the language of violence, yet denying that violence, of it being somehow outside of history at the same time.

Thus in *Every Step of the Way*, necklacing, as it relates to a history of the liberation struggle, is rendered as outside the (non)imaginary nation which Kader Asmal propagates. Whilst I take the point offered by Amitav Ghosh that "what a book says is much more important than what it does not say",[63] I suggest that it is within the interstice of what *Every Step of the Way* says and what it does not say that possibly allows for a consideration of what it might mean to write necklacing into a history of liberation

[61] K. Asmal, 'Forward' to M. Morris, *Every Step of the Way: The Journey to freedom in South Africa*, vii-ix.

[62] S. Amin, *Event, Metaphor, Memory*, 3.

[63] A. Ghosh and D.Chakrabarty, 'Reflections: A Correspondence on Provincializing Europe' in *Radical History Review*, Issue 83 (Spring 2002), 168.

struggle in South Africa. In order to do so, however, it is necessary to examine the work of history in (not) narrating moments of violence so as to argue that the interplay of history, violence and nation may shed light on "the shadowed world of forgetting."[64]

Pandey highlights common ways in which disciplinary history has dealt with violence. One such way has been to proclaim violence as non-narratable. Here, as in societies that experienced "uniquely unique" instances of traumatic, genocidal violence, a "limit case" of history is declared. A second way is the localising of violence, "in time, as a freak occurrence, like a natural calamity, which requires no historical explanation (these things happen); or in space, as a characteristic happening in some unassimilated part of the society or the world (these things happen there)."[65] A third way in which violence becomes non-narratable is "through transforming the history of the event into a history of its causes or origins - which, thus, themselves become the event."[66]

In the previous chapter, I pointed out that some of these limits were not just restricted to disciplinary history but to the social sciences more broadly, which rendered the practice of necklacing explicable via the turn to causality. Whilst recourse to causality suggests a limit in rendering violence intelligible, there is an irreducibility in turning to causality as an interpretative framework. In this sense, Reinhart Koselleck argues that, "[i]f one wishes to comprehend the singularity of a historical event, one can only use causal inferences in a subsidiary role."[67] An example of this would be the approach to history that sees the production of histories as constitutive of questions around the representation

---

[64] M. Morris, *Every Step of the Way*, 322.

[65] G. Pandey, *Remembering Partition*, 46.

[66] G. Pandey, *Remembering Partition*, 45. Indeed, this is precisely the approach advocated by South African historian William Beinart. This approach is also discernable in Mahmood Mamdani's detailed study on the Rwandan genocide. I do not suggest that contextualisation is not necessary, rather I am inclined to agree with Dominick LaCapra when he posits that, "contextualisation is an altogether necessary but not sufficient condition for historical understanding, particularly in intellectual and cultural history, where dialogic and critical issues of reading and response are also pertinent." See W. Beinart, 'Introduction: Political and Collective Violence in Southern African Historiography' in *Journal of Southern African Studies*, Vol. 18, No. 3. Special Issue: Political Violence in Southern Africa, (Sep., 1992). See M. Mamdani, *When Victims become Killers: Colonialism, Nativism and the Genocide in Rwanda* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001). See D. LaCapra, *History in Transit: Experience, Identity, Critical Theory* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 2004), footnote 1, 72.

[67] R. Koselleck cited in G. Pandey, *Remembering Partition*, 50.

of pasts and more specifically questions of the representation of violence and nation therein.

This approach is evident in the recent histories of assassinations of prominent African political figures, specifically Luise White's *The Assassination of Herbert Chitepo* and David William Cohen and E.S. Atieno Odhiambo's *The Risks of Knowledge*. Cohen and Atieno Odhiambo deal with the death of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Kenya in 1990, John Robert Ouko.[68] The authors trace the evidence that came to constitute the knowledge that surrounded investigations into his death as does White in her analysis into the death of Herbert Chitepo, an African nationalist from Zimbabwe (formerly known as Rhodesia) who was killed by a car bomb in Zambia in 1975.[69]

This knowledge, for Cohen and Atieno Odhiambo, included testimonies of various individuals at the official Commission of Enquiry immediately following the death of Ouko as well as the repeated re-emergence of its evidence into the public sphere over more than a decade. For White it is the numerous confessions and accusations that have surfaced over the years. My reading of the word 'knowledge' can be understood as both meaning and representation. In other words, meanings ascribed to both the death of Ouko and Chitepo as they circulated in the Kenyan and Zimbabwean nations by means of constant media reporting and the constant search for 'the truth' of who killed Ouko and who killed Chitepo as well as the circumstances that led to their death and thus the representation thereof. Put another way, the production of a particular history that is constantly being revisited.

What is interesting is White's assertion that "events have rough and complicated antecedents, and each has an afterlife, often in the form of more texts and more words that render the actual event obscure."[70] Indeed this is precisely what Michel-Rolph

---

[68] D. W.Cohen and E.S. Atieno Odhiambo, *The Risks of Knowledge: Investigations into the Death of the Hon. Minister John Robert Ouko in Kenya, 1990* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2004).
[69] L. White, *The Assassination of Herbert Chitepo: Texts and Politics in Zimbabwe* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2003).
[70] L. White, *The Assassination of Herbert Chitepo*, 3.

Trouillot underscores in his analysis of the ways in which history is produced and what Pandey points to in relation to the writing out of violence, of making it non-narratable.[71]

For White and Cohen and Atieno Odhiambo, the texts that have appeared after the event that they are examining have been almost their sole interest in that it is not so much the event themselves that those scholars are examining, but rather how that event has come to be (re)represented within each text they examine. In both White and Cohen and Atieno Adhiambo's narratives, the event of the killing of Chitepo and Ouko becomes secondary. Indeed the scholars say as much. This is not to say that what White and Cohen and Atieno Adhiambo attempt to do is 'bad history', for indeed the production of histories, the circulation of meanings of particular events, the discursive formations of knowledge that come to constitute such events, are crucial in understanding historical knowledge practices.

Both White and Cohen and Atieno Adhiambo do not seek to discover who killed the two prominent political figures. Rather they seek to unravel the complexities and dialogues that exist as well as permeate the various discourses surrounding the deaths of Ouko and Chitepo. White in particular is interested in the ways in which the death of Chitepo has come to play such a prominent role as a founding myth of nation.[72] In many respects both texts critique grand narratives of progress, nation, voice/recovery and the centrality of capitalism. A focus on representation, as developed by White and Cohen and Atieno Adhiambo, suggests that it leads straight into questions of nationalism and possibly nationalism's failure to render violence narratable.

In this regard, Pandey's point of the centrality of the state in relation to history (progress?) and nationalism is intriguing.[73] He argues that "'real' violence, of which the 'riot' [or in this case, acts of necklace killings] might be described as the quintessential

---

[71] See M-R. Trouillot, *Silencing the Past: Power and Production of History* (Boston, Mass: Beacon Press, 1995), 26.

[72] L.White, *The Assassination of Herbert Chitepo*, 6-7, 11.

[73] G. Pandey, *Remembering Partition*, 56. See also P. Chatterjee, 'Towards a Postcolonial Modernity: AsiaSource Interview with Partha Chatterjee' http://www.asiasource.org/news/special_reports/chatterjee.cfm Se also S. Amin, *Event, Metaphor, Memory*, 1-3.

form, lies outside the domain of the state, outside progress and history."[74] Pandey therefore points to the 'ahistoricity' of violence of which the assumption is that state 'violence' is understood as state 'force' that is written into history as the "unfortunate but necessary cost of progress" and 'real' violence as being outside that history. Violence is thus viewed as an accompaniment to history and not as history itself. Where the writing of history repeats this ahistoricity, it can be said to be implicated and I would add complicit in such political projects.

My reading of this particular strategy of rendering 'real' violence non-narratable or rather of marginalising such violence, points to a tension within political projects where such projects are directed by those that fought for/in the struggle towards liberation. Here it would be productive to examine what happens to this distinction between 'real' violence and state 'force' when state power is transferred (in the case of South Africa, a negotiated transfer) from the oppressors to that of the liberators. The apartheid state and its supporters, as highlighted in Chapter One, strategically manipulated the term violence so that it only applied to actions by the liberation movement; the violence of the state disappeared, only to reappear in official discourse as legitimate force. Whilst the apartheid state saw the practice of necklacing as 'real' violence and its repression on 'the masses' as state 'force'; the ANC (as government in waiting) and UDF arguably regarded the practice of necklacing primarily as 'state force' and to a lesser extent, though ambivalently so, as 'real' violence. The practice of necklacing as state 'force' was the complicity of the apartheid state in such acts.

In the aftermath of democracy, the violence that constituted, as opposed to accompanied, the liberation struggle in South Africa may be considered as state 'force', albeit fragmented, which implies that necklacing, as part of a resistance discourse, is no longer not only 'real' violence, but also part of the "unfortunate but necessary cost of progress". This indeed is the way in which the ANC has framed its discourse on necklacing. Although perhaps not in these exact terms, the gist of their argument has been that necklacing as the expression of the anger of 'the masses' in achieving the means to a

---

[74] G. Pandey, *Remembering Partition,* 56.

liberated South Africa, and thus, was the "unfortunate but necessary cost of progress".
'Progress' however should be read here as a pre-activated trope for what was to be
compromise and negotiation in the early 1990's.

If struggle in the form of violent resistance leading to liberation is articulated in
disciplinary history by way of making violence non-narratable, following Pandey, the
question then is, can (should?) the moment of violence be written back into history? In
Every Step of the Way, necklacing is (re)constructed in a similar way to Pandey's
argument of the ways in which Partition in India has been rendered, in that there is a
"normalising [of] the struggle, evacuating it of its messiness and making it part of a
narrative of assured advance towards specified (or specifiable) resolutions."[75] For
Pandey, writing moments of struggle back into history requires providing alternative
perspectives to those (for him the history of Partition) advanced by nationalist discourse.
Whilst Pandey is concerned with asking how to write a history of an 'event' involving
genocidal violence (Partition) "following all the rules and procedures of disciplinary,
'objective' history, and yet convey something of the impossibility of the enterprise"[76], I
am concerned with asking how necklacing, as a manifestation of the violence that
constituted the liberation struggle in South Africa, fits into the contours of disciplinary
history. In attempting to respond to this question, I turn to Dipesh Chakrabarty's example
of what he terms "subaltern pasts" and their ability to point to the limits of the discourse
of history.

Necklacing as signifier of "subaltern pasts"
'Minority histories', are those histories that according to Chakrabarty, stay 'minor' in that
their incorporation into historical narratives converts them into pasts of "lesser
importance vis-à-vis dominant understandings of what constitutes fact and evidence (and
hence vis-à-vis the underlying principle of rationality itself) in the practice of
professional history."[77] Chakrabarty calls these "subaltern pasts" in that these are
marginalised not because anyone consciously intends to marginalise them but because

---

[75] G. Pandey, *Remembering Partition*, 4-5.
[76] G. Pandey, *Remembering Partition*, 4-5.
[77] D. Chakrabarty, 'Minority histories, subaltern pasts' in *Postcolonial Studies*, Vol. 1, No. 1 (1998), 18.

"they represent moments or points at which the very archive that the historian of a (marginalised) group mines in order to bring the history of that group into a relationship with a larger narrative (of class, of the nation, etc) develops a degree of intractability…these are pasts that resist historicisation…"[78] For Chakrabarty importantly, the term "subaltern pasts" does not belong exclusively to socially subordinated groups. He posits that elite and dominant groups "can also have subaltern pasts to the extent that they participate in subordinated life-worlds."[79]

I wish to propose considering necklacing as a signifier of "subaltern pasts" within a broader nationalist history of liberation struggle. A nationalist rendering of the liberation struggle, as espoused in *Every Step of the Way*, suggests that a history of a particular manifestation of that struggle, namely the violence of the practice of necklacing, is relegated to the margins of that struggle story.

History as a discipline, according to Chakrabarty, requires two questions to be answered affirmatively for any account of the past to be "absorbed into, and thus made to enrich, the mainstream of historical discourse: Can the story be told/crafted? And does it allow for a rationally-defensible point of view or position from which to tell the story?"[80] Chakrabarty posits that the way in which the story is told or crafted challenges historians to be both creative and imaginative in their research and narrative strategies. Relating to the second requirement, he argues that: "the story has to be plausible within a definable understanding of what plausibility may consist in. The author's position may reflect an ideology, a moral choice, a political philosophy but the choices here are not limited. A madman's narrative is not history."[81]

The point that Chakrabarty wants to underscore is that "the investment in a certain kind of rationality and in a particular understanding of the 'real' means that history's, the

---

[78] D. Chakrabarty, 'Minority histories, subaltern pasts', 18.
[79] D. Chakrabarty, 'Minority histories, subaltern pasts', 18.
[80] D. Chakrabarty, 'Minority histories, subaltern pasts', 16.
[81] D. Chakrabarty, 'Minority histories, subaltern pasts', 16.

discipline's, exclusions are ultimately epistemological."[82] Chakrabarty thus posits that what is important is both the story that is told but more so, it is the historian that writes the story and her/his (in)ability at making the story plausible or, in other words, rendering it rational.

It is necessary to briefly sketch Chakrabarty's argument to underscore the stake involved for both history and nationalist discourse in asking the question of what it might mean to write necklacing into a history of liberation struggle. Chakrabarty's aim is to understand what 'historicising' the past does and does not do. He examines the seminal work of Ranajit Guha, 'The Prose of Counter-Insurgency',[83] and argues that in Guha's attempt at making the insurgent peasant's consciousness the core of a resistance narrative, the above mentioned questions renders historicising the Santal peasants rebellion problematic but productively so.

The problematic is in Guha wanting to write the consciousness of the peasant into mainstream history, of making the peasant the agent of the insurgency. Indeed, the object of Guha's research is that of consciousness itself. Yet Guha is confronted with the subaltern ascribing agency to their god, 'Thakur'. Chakrabarty argues that when the rebel said, "I rebelled because Thakur made an appearance and told me to rebel", "the subaltern is not necessarily the subject of his or her history but in the history of *Subaltern Studies* or in any democratically minded history, she or he is."[84] Thus, Chakrabarty argues that in Guha wanting to take seriously the voice of the rebel, he "cannot take it seriously enough, for there is no principle in an 'event' involving the divine or the super-natural that can give us a narrative-strategy that is rationally-defensible in the modern understanding of what constitutes public life."[85]

Chakrabarty continues and posits that Guha's position relating to the Santal's own understanding of the event thus "becomes a combination of the anthropologist's

---

[82] D. Chakrabarty, 'Minority histories, subaltern pasts', 16.
[83] See R. Guha, 'The Prose of Counter-Insurgency' in *Subaltern Studies Volume II* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1983), 1- 42. See Introduction to this thesis.
[84] D. Chakrabarty, 'Minority histories, subaltern pasts', 20.
[85] D. Chakrabarty, 'Minority histories, subaltern pasts', 20.

politeness – 'I respect your beliefs but they are not mine' – and a Marxist (or modern) sense of frustration with the intrusion of the supernatural in public life."[86] Guha, in negotiating this tension thus writes "it is not possible to speak of insurgency in this case except as a religious consciousness…except that is, as a massive demonstration of self-estrangement (to borrow Marx's term for the very essence of religiosity) which made the rebel look upon their project as predicated on a will other than their own…"[87]

The productivity of this problematic, for Chakrabarty, is that it allows for a critical self-reflection of the historians craft: when there is no recourse to a rational-defensible position from which to tell the story, the very limits of the discipline of history are called into question. If minority histories "are going to be about inserting hitherto neglected identities into the game of social justice, [they] must also be good, and not subversive histories, for history here speaks to forms of representative democracy and social justice…" Though Chakrabarty argues that minority histories can do more than this:

> The task of producing 'minority' histories has, under the pressure of a deepening demand for democracy, become a double task. I may put it thus: 'good' minority history is about expanding the scope of social justice and representative democracy, but the talk of the 'limits of history', on the other hand, is about struggling, or even groping, for non-statist forms of democracy that we cannot yet either completely understand or envisage. This is so because in the mode of being attentive to the 'minor-ity' of subaltern pasts, we stay with the heterogeneities without seeking to reduce them to any overarching principle that speaks for an already-given whole. There is no third voice which can assimilate into itself the two different voices of Guha and the Santal leader, we have to stay with both, and with the gap between them that signals irreducible plurality in our own experiences of historicity.[88]

For Chakrabarty, heterogeneity allows treating the Santal to doses of both historicism and anthropology - the Santal subject is treated as a "signifier of other times and societies." But in asking if the Santal's way of being in the world is a possibility for our own way of being in this world, the Santal is neither historicised nor anthropologised:

> To stay with the heterogeneity of the moment when the historian meets with the Santal, the peasant, is then to stay with the difference between these two gestures: one, that of historicizing the Santal in the interest of a history of social justice and democracy, and the other, that of refusing to historicise and of seeing the Santal

---
[86] D. Chakrabarty, 'Minority histories, subaltern pasts', 21.
[87] Cited in D. Chakrabarty, 'Minority histories, subaltern pasts', 22.
[88] D. Chakrabarty, 'Minority histories, subaltern pasts', 23.

instead as a figure throwing light on a possibility for the present. When seen in the latter, the Santal puts us in touch with the heterogeneities, the plural ways of being, that make up our own present…that is the function of subaltern pasts. A necessary penumbra of shadow to the area of the past that the method of history successfully illuminates, they make visible at one and the same time what historicizing can do and what its limits are.[89]

It is this penumbra, this uncertainty, which plagues the question of what it would mean to write necklacing into a history of liberation struggle. Indeed, more questions have arisen from that inaugural question. Whose history/story of the liberation struggle should necklacing be written into, that of 'the masses', those to whom the practice have overwhelmingly been ascribed to, albeit ambivalently? One might therefore also ask whether it is at all possible to write a history of liberation struggle without a treatment of necklacing that attends to its prose of ambivalence.[90]

Indeed, Premesh Lalu, writing about colonial violence and the killing of the Xhosa king Hintsa in 1836 argues: "[i]f violence is the signature of our modernity, then we might say that this very violence is that which we cannot seem to escape."[91] He continues by suggesting that:

> [t]he uncertain relation of history to the intrinsic violence of modernity also places it in an uncertain relation to the encounter with the violence of apartheid. Given the *aporia*, it has become necessary to return to the place of history in this modernist predicament, not as a source but as a symptom. If apartheid is symptomatic of modernism's violence, then we might say that its history has not really escaped the realms of complicity. The discourse of history, we might say, hosts modernity's supposedly inescapable paradox. That much is known to us.[92]

---

[89] D. Chakrabarty, 'Minority histories, subaltern pasts', 24.

[90] As alluded to in my discussion of Pandey earlier in this chapter, a similar question is posed by him in asking "how can we write the moment of struggle back into history?" Pandey acknowledges his question stemming from a reading of Gramsci's critique of Croce's histories of Europe and of Italy in the *Prison Notebooks*. My question stems from both a reading of Pandey and from discussions at the Programme for the Study of the Humanities in Africa (PSHA) reading group where we read selections of Gramsci's *Prison Notebooks*. Also cited in Pandey, Gramsci asks, "Is it possible to write (conceive) a history of Europe in the nineteenth century without an organic treatment of the French Revolution and the Napoleonic Wars? And is it possible to write a history of Italy in modern times without a treatment of the struggles of the Risorgimento?" Pandey includes Gramsci's further question, "Is it fortuitous, or is it for a tendentious motive, that Croce begins his narratives from 1815 and 1871? That is, that he excludes the moment of struggle…" See G. Pandey, *Remembering Partition*, footnote 6, 4. See also A. Gramsci, 'Notes on Italian History' in Q. Hoare and G. N. Smith (eds.), *Selections from the Prison Notebooks* (London: 1971), 118-119.

[91] P. Lalu, *The Deaths of Hintsa*, 264.

[92] P. Lalu, *The Deaths of Hintsa*, 264.

It may therefore be that the inescapable ambivalence of historicising necklacing is also the condition of possibility for its persistent remembering.

By way of a conclusion
The refusal of necklacing to be forgotten

> *Ma ebizwa amagama amaqhawe Ngab'elami*
> *Ngolifica likhona!*
> *Koba njani*
> *Sesihlezi noTambo*
> *Sesimtshela*
> *NgamaBhun' egingqika!*
> (When the roll call of heroes and heroines is read, will my name feature among
> these? What will the atmosphere be when we meet Tambo to report to him about
> how we, revolutionary combatants, destroyed the oppressors!)[1]

In thinking and writing about necklacing, one is drawn into representations of its
gruesome practice, its complexity, its seeming singularity, its contradictory impulses and
its ambivalence. Thus, concluding in the space of ambivalence is always to expect points
of irresolution.

Broadly, this thesis has examined the difficulty of writing necklacing into the narrative of
struggle history. This difficulty arises from the interplay of apartheid state and 'official'
non-state discourses in relation to the practice of necklacing. Scholarly writings
attempting to render the practice explicable have not been able to escape the inextricable
bounded-ness of that interplay. Indeed, scholars have stumbled between a resistance and
witchcraft trope where the former presents a causal explanation in which resistance arises
from oppression/repression but in so doing re-articulates the ambivalent discourse of
condemnation/condonation. The latter, in attempting to navigate a route through tradition
and modernity, runs up against the obstacle of tradition/barbarism that has been placed in
their path by the state discourse. This re-articulation of the dominant discourses speaks to
the ambivalence that haunts necklacing and propels into being a 'politics of ownership'.
In remembering the struggle for liberation in South Africa, I have argued that the
forgetting to remember necklacing in liberation history functions to surreptitiously re-
introduce the 'official' non-state discourse of necklacing.

---

[1] T. Mbeki, 'Oliver Tambo Remembered' in *ANC Today*, Vol. 7, No. 43 (2-8 November 2007). According
to Mbeki, this freedom song derived in part from a hymn. At the time when this letter was published online,
Thabo Mbeki was both president of the ANC and of the country.
http://www.anc.org.za/ancdocs/anctoday/2007/text/at43.txt

With this in mind I want to use a 'Letter from the President' in the November 2007 issue of *ANC Today* as a means of re-stating some of the more salient issues that this thesis has sought to examine.[2] In the letter, former ANC and South African president, Thabo Mbeki, provided a summary of the book *Oliver Tambo Remembered*, published as part of celebrating and honouring former ANC president Oliver Tambo.[3] In a key section of the summary, 'The Necklacing Must Stop', Mbeki cited Kader Asmal's contribution to the book in relation to the 'official' condemnation of the practice of necklacing by Oliver Tambo at the September 1987 conference on children in Harare (Zimbabwe):

> [A] call was made for all the South Africans to gather away from the conference…There was silence when OR [Oliver Tambo] spoke movingly about violence by the regime and then, about 'necklacing'. There was a hush – exiles did not know what would happen next – but then there was a dramatic full-throated roar of approval when Tambo said, *'This must stop'*. I don't think, he had discussed this matter with the NEC [National Executive Committee] of the ANC. His was a cry, drawing on the humanism of our struggle and the need to relate means to ends. He did not need anyone's permission to do this.[4]

Mbeki thereafter recalled the question of necklacing:

> [At] the ANC Headquarters in Lusaka, we had discussed the urgent need to call on the masses of our people firmly to repudiate the practice of 'necklacing'. At the same time, our Headquarters was interested that the call of our movement in this regard should enjoy the support of the leadership of the mass democratic movement in our country. OR thought the presence of many among this leadership at the Harare International Conference on Children provided us with a good opportunity to communicate the message that the entirety of our movement had to intervene to stop the 'necklacing'. To ensure that this message reached the masses of our people, successful arrangements were also made to ensure that it reached some sections of our domestic media…

Mbeki stated that he referred to the "episode to make the point that the ANC that Oliver Tambo built, of which millions were and are proud, was and is characterised by a value system symbolised by the life, the words and deeds of that great hero of our people, Oliver Tambo." Mbeki then made reference to his famous "I am an African" speech delivered at the adoption of South Africa's Constitution on the 8 May 1996:

---

[2] T. Mbeki, 'Oliver Tambo Remembered'.

[3] See Z. P. Jordan (ed.), *Oliver Tambo Remembered* (Johannesburg: Pan Macmillan, 2007).

[4] T. Mbeki, 'Oliver Tambo Remembered'. My emphasis.

> Among us prowl the products of our immoral and amoral past… The great masses who are our mother and father will not permit that the behaviour of the few results in the description of our country and people as barbaric.[5]

He then referred to a speech given by Oliver Tambo on the 1 July 1989: "It is indeed our collective responsibility to rid our country of the cause of conflict, deprivation and disunity which has earned it the distaste of the rest of humanity…"[6] Mbeki linked this to his own call to members of the ANC to adhere to the "revolutionary oath" as propagated by Oliver Tambo. The letter is concluded with the freedom song that prefaces the present chapter.

The letter should be read as serving a dual purpose: to memorialise Oliver Tambo but also, in so doing, to remind the ANC's constituency and the South African 'nation', one month before the ANC's 52nd National Conference at Polokwane (16-20 December 2007), of the ideal citizen that Oliver Tambo represented. Besides the obvious nationalist overtones in this public letter to the 'nation' (the ANC, through Oliver Tambo, in a sense, as constituting the 'nation'), Mbeki laments the passing of Oliver Tambo and valorises Tambo's contribution towards an all inclusive South African nation which includes *an* answer to *a* question of necklacing. For Tambo, the question was ultimately whether the practice of necklacing would relate to a politics of ends. His response, born out of humanism, was for the practice to be stopped.

However, as I have argued in this thesis, there never was an absolute and uncompromising condemnation of necklacing. Oliver Tambo and other ANC and UDF leaders condemned the practice of necklacing but did not condemn those, 'the masses', who partook in the practice. In Chapter Two, I have suggested that this wavering between condemning and condoning was in part due to the ANC's concern to maintain its support base as well as its inability to clearly define whom it regarded as legitimate targets in its call to a 'People's War'. I showed that there was a blurring between who could kill legitimately and who could be killed legitimately. This wavering was exacerbated by the apartheid state mainly setting the discursive terrain on the practice of necklacing. In other

---

[5] T. Mbeki, 'Oliver Tambo Remembered'.
[6] T. Mbeki, 'Oliver Tambo Remembered'.

words, because of the initial hesitancy in responding to the rise of necklace killings, the ANC and UDF were compelled to respond to the state discourse on the practice rather than set the discursive terrain themselves.

Indeed, Mbeki's recollection of the 'official' condemnation of the practice by Oliver Tambo is suggestive of the interplay of state and liberation discourses on necklacing that haunts current remembering of the practice. Mbeki states:

> Considering the importance of OR's statement on 'necklacing', Helen Suzman sought to have this statement published. To her dismay, PW Botha refused. Cynically, Botha preferred that the 'necklacing' should continue. This would give the apartheid regime the possibility, with charred human bodies as evidence, further to demonise especially the ANC and United Democratic Front (UDF), *falsely attributing the unacceptable practice of 'necklacing' to them.*[7]

The apartheid state had emphasised the publicising of statements made by ANC leaders that seemingly propagated the practice whilst ignoring those that 'condemned' that practice as underscored in Chapters One and Two. The apartheid state discourse on the practice of necklacing characterised it as evidence of 'black-on-black' violence with notions of barbarism and savagery. The apartheid state assigned 'ownership' of the practice to the ANC and UDF and later at the TRC, this assigning would come to constitute a 'politics of ownership'. This 'politics of ownership' permeates the legacy of necklacing in the liberation struggle as was shown in the previous chapter and is evident in the above cited quote.

The TRC was a site where contested versions of the liberation struggle were waged. There the question of necklacing was not only whether the practice should have continued or not, it was also one that encompassed the complexity of whether it justified the ends of a liberated South Africa. The contestation centred around whether the practice of necklacing was carried out by 'the masses' in the name of the ANC and the UDF, whether understanding those who engaged in this practice was tantamount to condoning its occurrences and whether the practice as a form of resistance was rational at all.

---

[7] T. Mbeki, 'Oliver Tambo Remembered'. My emphasis.

However, for Mbeki in 2007, the question of necklacing seemingly does not constitute the same formulation of "the need to relate means to ends" that had as its constituting subjectivity, 'the masses', as it did for Tambo in 1987. Through Mbeki's recalling of the question of necklacing, the practice is seemingly rendered as being perpetrated not by 'our people' or 'the masses' but by a handful. This enables Mbeki to place necklacing beyond the legacy of the resistance and oppression/repression binary in which Tambo formulated it. It is through Mbeki re-engaging that question of necklacing and through recalling its 'official' response, the practice had to stop, that he re-asserts the ANC's 'value system' that seemingly condemns the behaviour of ANC members that would lead to the 'nation' as being referred to as 'barbaric'. In this sense, Mbeki re-formulates the question of necklacing in relation to ANC members, and by implication the nation, acting out of expedience in postapartheid South Africa.

Thus, it is the response to the question of necklacing that is recalled by Mbeki to underscore a 'value system' that he wants to assert as the moral compass of the ANC as well as for a South African 'nation'. Mbeki's reassertion of the condemnation by Tambo, juxtaposed with a sharp rebuke to ANC cadre's who have lost those "noble values", served as an opportunity to discipline ANC cadres in the build up to the Polokwane Conference. Mbeki thus strategically reaffirms and re-legitimates Oliver Tambo's 'official' condemnation of the practice so as to legitimise a policy espoused by Mbeki in rooting out those ANC members acting out of expedience.

Mbeki re-engaged a discourse of necklacing approximately two decades and two months to the day that Tambo 'officially' condemned the practice. Implicitly, Mbeki's attempts to obscure the ambivalence of necklacing in the country's "immoral and amoral past" was aimed at demonstrating that it was not 'the masses' but only "a few among our ranks" and that, " th[e] struggle did not turn our people into blood-thirsty and mindless brutes with no respect for human life and human dignity."[8] This was a question of representation as much as it was one about the national subject. In this sense what Mbeki's letter obscures is not only the ambivalence of the formulation of Oliver Tambo's

---

[8] T. Mbeki, 'Oliver Tambo Remembered'

condemnation as was shown in Chapter Two, but also to the question of necklacing and its ramifications for a history after apartheid.

In the case of the practice of necklacing it was not just the mere application of violence. It was the excess and excessiveness of that violence and its assignation to categories of both barbarism and resistance that renders it ambivalent. I suggest that in Mbeki's 'letter to the nation', recalling Oliver Tambo's 'official' condemnation of the practice of necklacing, though not its ambivalence, constitutes the possibility of also assigning necklacing to more than one category: one representational and the other, ontological. In this regard, a number of moves are apparent in Mbeki's rendering: Mbeki asserts a humanism in Oliver Tambo's call for the practice of necklacing to stop thus seemingly asserting a re-presentation of the black subject in Tambo's humanist framework. In other words, Mbeki's articulation (as representative of the new state) operates to overturn the rendering of the black subject as barbarous and savage by the apartheid state; by re-articulating the 'official' non-state discourse, he inserts in its place Tambo's humanist black subject.
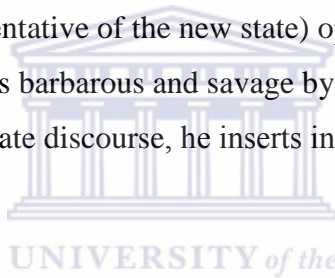
However, and this is the second move, Mbeki includes the following sentence from his "I am and African" speech: "The great masses who are our mother and father will not permit that the behaviour of the few results in the description of our country and people as barbaric." This perhaps points to a departure from Tambo's humanist framework. For Tambo, it was the practice of necklacing that was barbaric and not "the behaviour of the few". Indeed, Tambo was unwilling to condemn 'the masses' because the practice of necklacing, understood as resistance, was rendered explicable only in an oppression/repression context.

Thus the third move discernable is that Mbeki, eliding this strategic departure, links Tambo's humanist framework to a question of the constituency of the current ANC. In this sense, Mbeki seems to offer a warning to the ANC's constituency and indeed its leadership, of slipping into a somewhat familiar formulation of being between 'condemning' and 'condoning' those among the ANC's constituency who are, "the

product of our immoral and amoral past." In other words, Mbeki is pointing to those, "criminals who, whilst wearing ANC t-shirts, have corruptly abused their positions in government to manipulate government tenders to enrich themselves and their collaborators." In doing so, Mbeki re-formulates the question of necklacing.

This re-formulation, however, does not occur in the interstice of resistance and oppression/repression as it had for Tambo. I suggest rather that it is in the ramifications of a legacy of struggle that fails to attend to the ambivalence that saturates necklacing. In the end then, Mbeki's re-formulation operates within the same circular logic of ambivalence of Tambo and that Chris Hani in his "comment on the necklace" had tried, and failed, to escape. This then too must qualify as a prose of ambivalence.

At the Polokwane Conference, Mbeki was relieved of his duties as ANC president and later in September 2008, of the South African presidency. However, a question lurking behind the tactical re- formulation of the question of necklacing by Mbeki as I have attempted to sketch here, suggests necklacing as signifier neither of resistance nor of "subaltern pasts", but one of political power that strategically oscillates between past and present in a re-articulation of an 'official' non-state discourse on necklacing. Mbeki's 'letter to the nation', in so far as the emphasis placed on the 'official' condemnation of the practice of necklacing, can therefore be read as a continued attempt at coming to terms with a national liberation struggle history. The "difficult legacy" that this history presents is haunted by the spectre of necklacing, indeed it is haunted by the refusal of necklacing and its ever present ambivalence, at being forgotten.

Is it impossible then to escape this impasse of remembering and writing violence, of marginalising violence so that violence itself comes to stand as nothing more than a referential for larger narratives of nation-making and statehood? For indeed, as Gyanendra Pandey argues:

> Liberation is not a cut-and-dried object, obtained once and for all in some seamless form. Progress and justice are not notions of crystal-clear content and unmistakable indices, which may easily be measured. Every liberation in history

has come at the cost of the establishment of new hierarchies and new kinds of bondage, not to mention the reinvention of old ones.[9]

This thesis then scratches the surface of that "difficult legacy" which necklacing poses. History certainly needs to do much more work at tracing the impasse that necklacing presents in writing histories of South Africa's liberation struggle. Though to do so, it may have to begin with its own ambivalence.

---

[9] G. Pandey, *Remembering Partition: Violence, Nationalism and History in India* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 19.

Appendix
Chris Hani's "comment on the necklace"

Why the necklace? You know for a long time South Africa, being a colonialist power of a special type, has depended on the continued repression of our people through active collaboration by puppets. We know that even in the classic colonial situation in countries like India, Kenya, the old Tanganyika and elsewhere, the colonialist have depended on the African askari. Similarly in our country, we know ourselves that the colonialists, the racists, regime if you like has always depended on the active collaboration of the oppressed, on the recruitment of the Black policeman, the Black special branch and the Black agent stay in the same township as we do, they have been the conduit through which information about our activities, about our plans have been passed to the enemy. This has made the process of organization and mobilization very difficult. So the necklace was a weapon devised by the oppressed themselves to remove this cancer from our society, the cancer of collaboration of the puppets. It is not a weapon of the ANC. It is a weapon of the masses themselves to cleanse the townships from the very disruptive and even lethal activities of the puppets and collaborators. We do understand our people when they use the necklace because it is an attempt to render our townships, to render our areas and country ungovernable, to make the enemy's access to information very difficult. But we are saying here our people must be careful, in the sense that the enemy would employ provocateurs to use the necklace, even against activists. We have our own revolutionary methods of dealing with collaborators, the methods of the ANC. But I refuse to condemn our people when they mete out their own traditional forms of justice to those who collaborate. I understand their anger. Why should they be as cool as icebergs, when they are being killed everyday? As far as I am concerned the question of the necklace and how it should be used belongs to all of us, to the ANC, to the democratic movement. We should sit down and discuss amongst ourselves how we should mete out justice. What is revolutionary justice? One fact is that, where agents and collaborators are concerned, we should establish, where is it (sic) possible our own revolutionary courts where justice should be meted out. And in those courts we should involve some of our best cadres so that our forms of justice do not degenerate into kangaroo justice. We would like to maintain revolutionary forms of justice. But SA is not a normal society; the situation is very abnormal. People are angry because we are fighting fascism in that country. The ANC will never abandon its leading role. We are saying to our people, whatever method you devise, there should be democratic participation, there should be democratic discussion and whatever method we use, that method should conform to the norms of the revolutionary movement. As I say we understand why the necklace has been used. We know even the negative and positive aspects of the necklace. There is a lot of discussion now going on the question of the necklace. But it is not this silly conclusion that it is Black on Black violence. The necklace has been used against those who have been actively collaborating with the enemy. We say the movement should be vigilant to ensure that whatever

sentence is passed on anybody, it is a result of participation by the revolutionary elements of our struggle.[1]

---

[1] Chris Hani, '25 years of armed struggle' in *Sechaba* (December 1986), 15-18.

Bibliography

Books

Abel, R.L., *Politics by Other Means: Law in the Struggle Against Apartheid, 1980-1994* (London: Routledge, 1995).

Agamben, G., *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*, trans. by D. Heller-Roazen (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1998).

Agamben, G., S*tate of Exception*, trans. by K. Attell (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2005).

Amin, S., *Event, Metaphor, Memory: Chauri Chaura 1922-1992* (Berkley: UCLA Press, 1995).

Anderson, D., *Histories of the Hanged: The Dirty War in Kenya and the End of Empire* (New York: W.W Norton & Company, 2005).

Ashforth, A., *Witchcraft, Violence, and Democracy in South Africa* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005).

Bakhtin, M., *Rabelais And His World*, trans. by H. Iswolsky (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1984).

Barrel, H., *MK: The ANC's Armed Struggle* (London: Penguin Books, 1990).

Baucom, I., *Specters of the Atlantic: Finance Capital, Slavery, and The Philosophy of History* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2005).

Baum, Z., *Modernity and Ambivalence* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1991).

Beinart, W., *Twentieth-Century South Africa*, *New Edition* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001).

Berman, J.K., *South Africa's Silent Revolution* (Johannesburg: South African Institute of Race Relations, 1990).

Berman, J.K., *Political Violence in South Africa* (Johannesburg: South Africa Institute of Race Relations, 1993).

Bhabha, K.K., *The Location of Culture* (New York: Routledge, 1994).

Bornman, E.Y., Muthien, R. Van Eeden and M. Wentzel (eds.), *Violence in South Africa: A Variety of Perspectives* (Pretoria: HSRC Press, 1998).

Bozzoli, B., *Theatres of Struggle and the End of Apartheid* (Ohio: Ohio University Press, 2004).

Brogden, M and C. Shearing, *Policing for a new South Africa* (London: Routledge, 1993).

Brown, W., *Politics out of History* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001).

Bunzl, M., *Real History: Reflections on Historical Practice* (New York: Routledge, 1997).

Callinicos, L., *Oliver Tambo: Beyond the Engeli Mountains* (Cape Town: David Philip, 2004).

Caputo, J.D. (ed.), *Deconstruction in a Nutshell: A Conversation with Jacque Derrida* (New York: Fordham University Press, 1997).

Chakrabarty, D., *Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000).

Chidester, D., *Shots in the Streets: Violence and Religion in South Africa* (Cape Town: Oxford University Press, 1991).

Cobbett, W and Cohen, R (eds.), *Popular Struggles in South Africa* (London: James Curry, 1988).

Cock, J and l. Nathan (eds.), *War and Society: The Militarisation of South Africa* (Cape Town: David Philip, 1989).

Cohen, S., *States of Denial: Knowing about Atrocities and Suffering* (Malden; MA: Blackwell Publishers Inc, 2001).

Cohen, D.W and E.S Atieno Odhiambo, *The Risks of Knowledge: Investigations into the Death of the Hon. Minister John Robert Ouko in Kenya, 1990* (Ohio: Ohio University Press, 2004).

Collins, J., *Occupied By Memory: The Intifada Generation and the Palestinian State of Emergency* (New York: New York University Press, 2004).

Cooper, C et.al, *Race Relations Survey, 1985* (Johannesburg: South African Institute of Race Relations, 1986).

Cooper, C et.al, *Race Relations Survey, 1986* (Johannesburg: South African Institute of Race Relations, 1987).

Cooper, C et.al, *Race Relations Survey, 1987* (Johannesburg: South African Institute of

Race Relations, 1988).

Corbin, A., *The Village of Cannibals: Rage and Murder in France 1870*, trans. by A. Goldhammer (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1992).

Daniel, E.V., *Charred Lullabies: Chapters in an Anthropography of Violence* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1996).

Das, V., *Life and Words: Violence and the Descent into the Ordinary* (Berkley: University of California Press, 2007).

Davies, R., D. O'Meara and S. Dlamini, *The Struggle for South Africa: A Reference Guide to Movements, Organizations and Institutions, Volume Two* (London: Zed Books, Ltd, 1984).

Debord, G., *The Society of the Spectacle*, trans. by D. Nicholson-Smith (New York: Zone Books, 1994).

Deegan, H., *The Politics of the New South Africa: Apartheid and After* (London: Pearson Education Ltd., 2001).

Dreyfus, H.L and P. Rabinow, *Michel Foucault: Beyond Structuralism and Hermeneutics (2nd edition)* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983).

Dugard, J.N. Haysom and G. Marcus (eds.), *The Last Years of Apartheid: Civil Liberties in South Africa* (Ford Foundation – Foreign Policy Association, 1992).

Dupuy, A., *The Prophet and Power* (New York: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 2006).

Edelman, M., *Constructing the Political Spectacle* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988).

Fanon, F., *The Wretched of the Earth* (New York: Grove Press, Inc., 1963).

Feldman, A., *Formations of Violence: The Narrative of the Body and Political Terror in Northern Ireland* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991).

Feinstein, A., *After the Party: A Personal and Political Journey inside the ANC* (Cape Town: Jonathan Ball Publishers, 2007).

Foster, D.P. Haupt and M. De Beer, *The Theatre of Violence: Narratives of Protagonists in the South African Conflict* (Cape Town: HSRC Press, 2005).

Foucault, M., *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, translated by A. Sheridan (London: Penguin Books, 1975).

Foucault, M., *The Archaeology of Knowledge* (London: Tavistock Publications Ltd, 1974).

Frankel, P., N. Pines and M. Swilling (eds.), *State, Resistance and Change in South Africa* (Johannesburg: Southern Book Publishers (Pty) Ltd, 1988).

Frankel, P., *An Ordinary Atrocity: Sharpville and its Massacre* (Johannesburg: University of Witwatersrand Press, 2001).

Gandi, L., *Postcolonial Theory: A Critical Introduction* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998).

Gibson, N.C., *Fanon: The Postcolonial Imagination* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2003).

Girard, R., *The Scapegoat*, trans. by Y. Freccero (Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press, 1992).

Glaser, D., *Politics and Society in South Africa* (London: Sage Publications Ltd, 2001).

Glassman, J., *Feasts and Riot: Revelry, Rebellion, and Popular Consciousness on the Swahili Coast, 1856-1888* (London: James Curry, 1995).

Gobodo-Madikizela, P., *A Human Being Died That Night: A Story of Forgiveness* (Claremont: David Philip, 2004).

Gordon, C (ed.), *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings 1972--1977 by Michel Foucault* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1980).

Graziano, F., *Divine Violence: Spectacle, Psychosexuality, and Radical Christianity in the Argentine "Dirty War"* (San Francisco: Westview Press, 1992).

Greenstein, R (ed.), *The Role of Political Violence in South Africa's Democratisation* (Johannesburg: CASE, 2003).

Grundy, K.W., *The Militarization of South African Politics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988).

Guha, R., *Dominance without Hegemony: History and Power in Colonial India* (Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1997).

Hall, S., C. Critcher, T. Jefferson, J. Clarke and B. Roberts (eds.), *Policing the Crisis: Mugging, the state, and Law and Order* (London: Macmillan Education LTD, 1987).

Hamerton-Kelly, R.G (ed.), *Violent Origins: Walter Burkert, Rene Girard and Jonathan. Z Smith on Ritual Killing and Cultural Formation* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1987).

Houston, G.F., *The National Liberation Struggle in South Africa: A case study of the United Democratic Front, 1983-1987* (Vermont: Ashgate Publishing Company, 1999).

Jeffery, A., *People's War: New Light on the Struggle for South Africa* (Cape Town: Jonathan Ball Publishers, 2009).

Jordan, P.Z (ed.), *Oliver Tambo Remembered* (Johannesburg: Macmillan, 2007).

Kaye, H.J (ed.), *The Face of the Crowd – Studies in Revolution Ideology and Popular Protest: Selected Essays of George Rude* (London: Harvester.Wheatsheaf, 1988).

LaCapra, D., *Rethinking Intellectual History: Texts, Contexts, Language* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1983).

LaCapra, D., *History & Criticism* (London: Cornell University Press, 1985).

LaCapra, D., *Representing the Holocaust: History, Theory, Trauma* (London: Cornell University Press, 1994).

LaCapra, D., *Writing History, Writing Trauma* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2001).

LaCapra, D., *History in Transit: Experience, Identity, Critical Theory* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2004).

Lalu, P., *The Deaths of Hintsa: Postapartheid South Africa and the shape of recurring pasts* (Cape Town: HSRC Press, 2008).

Leatt, J., T. Kneifel, and K. Nurberger (eds.), *Contending Ideologies in South Africa* (Cape Town: David Philip, 1986).

Liebenberg, I., F. Lortan, B. Nel and G. van der Westhuizen (eds.), *The Long March: The story of the struggle for liberation in South Africa* (Pretoria: HAUM, 1994).

Lindqvist, S., *Exterminate all the Brutes* trans. by J. Tate (London: Granta Books, 2002).

Lodge, T., *Black Politics in South Africa since 1945* (Johannesburg: Raven Press, 1983).

Lodge, T and B. Nasson, *All, Here, And Now: Black Politics in South Africa in the 1980's* (Cape Town: David Philip, 1991).

Malan, R., *My Traitors Heart* (London: The Bodley Head, 1990).

Mamdani, M., *Citizen and Subject* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press: 1996).

Mamdani, M., *When Victims become Killers: Colonialism, Nativism and the Genocide in Rwanda* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2001).

Mamdani, M., *Good Muslim, Bad Muslim: America, the Cold War And The Roots of Terror* (New York: Pantheon Books, 2004).

Manganyi, N.C., *Treachery and Innocence: psychology and racial difference in South Africa* (Johannesburg: Raven Press, 1991).

Marais, H., *South Africa limits to change: The political economy of transformation* (Cape Town: University of Cape Town Press, 1998).

Marinovich, G and J. Silva, *The Bang-Bang Club: Snapshots from a Hidden War* (London: William Heinemann, 2000).

Marks, M., *Young Warriors: Youth Politics, Identity and Violence in South Africa* (Johannesburg: Witwatersrand University Press, 2001).

Marx, A.W., *Lessons of Struggle: South African Internal Opposition, 1960-1990* (Cape Town: Oxford University Press, 1992).

Mbeki, G., *South Africa: The Peasants' Revolt* (Baltimore, Maryland: Penguin Books, 1964).

Mbeki, G., *The Struggle for Liberation in South Africa-a short history* (Cape Town: David Phillip, 1992).

Mbembe, A., *On The Postcolony* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001).

Mckinley, D.T., *The ANC and the Liberation Struggle: A Critical Political Biography* (London: Pluto Press, 1997).

Mda, Z., *Ways of Dying* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995).

Meli, F., *A History of the ANC: South Africa belongs to us* (London: James Curry, 1988).

Minnaar, A. de V., *Conflict and Violence in Natal/Kwazulu: Historical Perspectives* (Pretoria: Human Sciences Research Council, 1990).

Moore, D.S., J. Kosek and A. Pandian (eds.), *Race, Nature, and The Politics of Difference* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2003).

Morris, M., *Every Step of the Way: The Journey to Freedom in South Africa* (Cape Town: HSRC Press, 2004).

Moss, G and I. Obery (eds.), *South African Review- Volume 3* (Johannesburg:

Raven Press, 1985).

Moss, G and I. Obery (eds.), *South African Review- Volume 4* (Johannesburg: Raven Press, 1986).

Moss, G and I. Obery (eds.), *South African Review- Volume 5* (Johannesburg: Raven Press, 1987).

Moss, G and I. Obery (eds.), *South African Review- Volume 6* (Johannesburg: Raven Press, 1988).

Mufson, S., *Fighting Years: Black Resistance and the Struggle for a New South Africa* (Boston, Mass: Beacon Press, 1990).

Murray, M., *South Africa, Time of Agony, Time of Destiny: The Upsurge of Popular Protest* (London: Verso, 1987).

Niehaus, I., E. Mohlala and K. Shokane, *Witchcraft, Power and Politics: Exploring the Occult in the South African Lowveld* (Cape Town: David Phillip, 2001).

Pandey, G., *Remembering Partition: Violence, Nationalism and History in India* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2001).

Pandey, G., *Routine Violence: Nations, Fragments, Histories* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 2006).

Portelli, A., *The Order Has Been Carried Out: History, Memory, and Meaning of a Nazi Massacre in Rome* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003).

Posel, D., *The Making of Apartheid, 1948 – 1961* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991).

Posel, D and G. Simpson (eds.), *Commissioning The Past: Understanding South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission* (Johannesburg: Witwatersrand University Press, 2002).

Potgieter, D.W., *Total Onslaught: Apartheid's Dirty Tricks Exposed* (Cape Town: Zebra Press, 2007).

Praeg, L., *The Geometry of Violence* (Stellenbosch: Sun Press, 2007).

Price, R.M., *The Apartheid State in Crises: Political Transformation in South Africa 1975-1990* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991).

Ramphele, M., *Laying Ghosts to Rest: Dilemmas of the transformation in South Africa* (Cape Town: NB Publishers, 2008).

Rude, G., *Paris and London in the 18th Century: Studies in Popular Protest* (London: Collins Sons & Co. Ltd, 1974).

Sanders, M., *Complicities: The Intellectual and Apartheid* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2002).

Scott, D., *Refashioning Futures: Criticism after Postcoloniality* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999).

Seekings, J., *The UDF: A history of the United Democratic Front in South Africa, 1983-1991* (Cape Town: David Philip, 2000).

Shklar, J.N., *The Faces of Injustice* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990).

Sole, K., *The Blood Of Our Silence* (Johannesburg: Ravan Press, 1987).

Spink, K., *Black Sash: The Beginning of a Bridge in South Africa* (London: Methuen, 1991).

Stadler, Maj-Gen HD., *The Other Side of the Story: A True Perspective* (Pretoria: Contact Publishers, 1997).

Steger, M.B and N.S Lind (eds.), *An Interdisciplinary Reader: Violence and its Alternatives* (London: Macmillan Press Ltd, 1999).

Straker, G., *Faces in the Revolution: The Psychological Effects of Violence on Township Youth in South Africa* (Cape Town: David Philip, 1992).

Taussig, M., *Defacement: Public Secrecy and the Labor of the Negative* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1999).

Taylor, J., *Body Horror: photojournalism, catastrophy and war* (New York: New York University Press, 1998).

Trouillot, M-R., *Silencing the Past* (Boston, Beacon Press, 1995).

White, H., *The Content of the Form: Narrative Discourse and Historical Representation* (Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press, 1987).

White, L., *The Assassination of Herbert Chitepo: Texts and Politics in Zimbabwe* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2003).

White, L., *Speaking with Vampires* (Berkely: University of California Press, 2000).

Wilson, R., *The Politics of Truth and Reconciliation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001).

Worden, N., *The Making of Modern South Africa*, *Third Edition* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2000).

Young, R., *White Mythologies: Writing History and the West* (London: Routledge, 1990).

Zizek, S., *Violence* (London: Profile Books Ltd, 2008).

Journal Articles, Articles in Books and Research/Seminar Papers

Alfred, L., 'A Story of Burning Flesh' in *New Contrast*, Vol. 25, No. 2 (June 1997), 13-25.

Armstrong, A., '"Hear no Evil, See No Evil, Speak No Evil": Media Restrictions and the State of Emergency' in *South African Review 4* (Johannesburg: Ravan Press, 1987).

Asad, T., 'On Torture, or Cruel, Inhuman and Degrading Treatment' in R.A. Wilson (ed.), *Human Rights, Culture and Context: Anthropological Perspectives* (London: Pluto Press, 1997).

Ball, J., 'The Ritual of the Necklace'- Research report written for the Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation (March 1994). http://www.csvr.org.za/wits/papers/papball.htm (Last accessed 10 May 2010).

Barrell, H., 'ANC Conference: "All for the Front"' in *Work in Progress*, Issue 38 (August 1985).

Beinart, W., 'Introduction: Political and Collective Violence in Southern African Historiography'in *Journal of Southern African Studies, Special Issue: Political Violence in Southern Africa*, Vol.18, No.3 (September 1992), 455-486.

Bentor, E., '"Remember Six Feet Deep": Masks and the Exculpation of/from Death in Aro Masquerade' in *Journal of Religion in Africa*, Vol. 24, fasc.4 (November 1994), 323-338.

Bell, D.F., 'Reading Corpses: Interpretive Violence' in *SubStance*, Vol. 27, No. 2, Issue 86: Special Issue: Reading Violence (1998), 92-105.

Bozzoli, B and P. Delius, 'Radical History and South African Society' in *Radical History Review*, Vol. 46, No. 7 (1990), 13-45.

Bundy, C., 'Around Which Corner?: Revolutionary theory and contemporary South Africa' in *Transformation*, 8 (1989), 1-23.

Chakrabarty, D., 'Postcoloniality and the Artifice of History: Who Speaks for "Indian"

Pasts?' in *Representations*, No. 37 (Winter 1992), 1-26.

Chakrabarty, D., 'Minority histories, Subaltern pasts' in *Postcolonial Studies*, Vol. 1, No. 1 (1998), 15-29.

Chatterjee, P., 'Towards a Postcolonial Modernity: AsiaSource Interview with Partha Chatterjee'
http://www.asiasource.org/news/special_reports/chatterjee.cfm
(Last accessed 21 August 2008).

Cherry, J., '"Just War" and "Just Means": Was the TRC wrong about the ANC?' in *Transformation*, Vol. 42 (2000), 9-28.

Cobley, A.G, 'Review: [Untitled]' in *African Studies Review*, Vol. 49, No. 3 (December 2006), 92-94.

Cohen, D.W., 'The Uncertainty of Africa in an Age of Certainty' in D.W Cohen and M.D Kennedy (eds.), *Responsibility in Crisis: Knowledge Politics and Global Publics* (Ann Arbor, MI: Scholarly Publishing Office, 2005).

Colman, A.M., 'Crowd Psychology in South African Murder Trials' in *American Psychologist*, Vol. 46, No. 10 (October 1991), 1071-1079.

Comaroff, J and J. Comaroff, 'Occult Economies and the Violence of Abstraction: Notes from the South African Postcolony' in *American Ethnologist*, Vol. 26, No. 2 (1999), 279-303.

Couper, S.C., '"An Embarrassment to the Congresses?": The Silencing of Chief Albert Luthuli and the Production of ANC History' in *Journal of Southern African Studies*, Vol. 35, No. 2 (June 2009), 331-348.

Cracraft, J., 'Implicit Morality' in *History and Theory*, Vol. 43, No. 4 (December 2004), 31-42.

Crais, C., 'Of Men, Magic, and the Law: Popular Justice and the Political Imagination in South Africa' in *Journal of Social History*, Vol.32, No. 1 (Autumn 1998), 49-72.

Das, V., 'The Anthropology of Violence and the Speech of Victims' in *Anthropology Today,* Vol. 3, No. 4 (August 1987), 11-13.

Das, V and A. Kleinman, 'Introduction' in V. Das, A. Kleinman, M, Ramphele and P, Reynolds (eds.), *Violence and Subjectivity* (Berkley: University of California Press, 2000).

Davis, S., 'The African National Congress, its Radio, its Allies and Exile' in *Journal of Southern African Studies*, Vol. 35, No. 2 (June 2009), 349-373.

Derrida, J., 'Force of Law: The Mystical Foundation of Authority' in D.Cornell and M. Rosenfield (eds.), *Deconstruction and the Possibility of Justice* (New York: Routledge, 1992).

De la Roche, R.S., 'Why is Collective Violence Collective' in *Sociological Theory*, Vol. 19, No. 2 (July 2001), 126-144.

De Coning, C and J. Fick, 'Menslike Verbrandings: n' Sosio-Politieke Ondersoek na die Aard en Impak van Kataklismiese Geweld in Suid Afrika' in *Politikon*, Vol. 13, No. 1 (June 1986), 22-53.

Du Toit, A., *Understanding South African Political Violence: A New Problematic* (Geneva: United Research Institute for Social Development, 1993).

Ellis, S., 'The Historical Significance of South Africa's Third Force' in *Journal of Southern African Studies*, Vol. 24, No. 2 (June 1998), 261-299.

Ellis, S., 'Review Essay: "Truth and Reconciliation Commission of South Africa Report", Volumes 1-5. Pretoria: Government Printer, October 1998' in *Transformation*, Vol. 42 (2000), 58-72.

Feldman, A., 'On Cultural Anesthesia: from Desert Storm to Rodney King' in *American Ethnologist*, Vol. 21, No. 2 (1994), 404-418.

Frederikse, J., 'South Africa's Media: The Commercial Press and the Seedlings of the Future' in *Third World Quarterly*, Vol. 9, No. 2 (April 1987), 638-656.

Foucault, M., 'Nietzsche, Genealogy, History' in D.F. Bouchard (ed.), *In Language, Counter- Memory, Practice: Selected Essays and Interviews* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1977).

Fullard, M., 'State Repression in the 1960's' in *The Road to Democracy in South Africa, Volume 1 (1960-1970), South African Democracy Education Trust* (Cape Town: Zebra Press, 2004).

Ghosh, A and D. Chakrabarty, 'Reflections: A Correspondence on Provincializing Europe' in *Radical History Review*, Issue 83 (Spring 2002), 146-172.

Glaser, C., 'Violent Crime in South Africa: Historical Perspectives' in *South African Historical Journal*, Vol. 60, No. 3 (September 2008), 334-352.

Gobodo-Madikizela, P., 'The Rupture of Necklace Murders: A Need for Psychological and Broader Strategies of Reparation' in E. Doxtadar and C. Villa-Vicencio (eds.), *To Repair the irreparable: reparation and reconstruction in South Africa* (Claremont: David Philip, 2004).

Graff, J., 'South African Explanations of Political Violence 1980-1995' in *South African Journal of Philosophy*, Vol. 20, No. 1 (2001), 102-123.

Gramsci, A., 'Notes on Italian History' in Q. Hoare and G. N. Smith (eds.), *Selections from the Prison Notebooks* (London: 1971).

Grundlingh, A., 'Some Trends in South African Academic History: Changing Contexts and Challenges' in S. Jeppie (ed.), *Toward New Histories for South Africa: On the Place of the Past in our Present* (Cape Town: Juta Gariep, 2004).

Guha, R., 'The Prose of Counter Insurgency' in *Subaltern Studies Volume 11* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1983).

Guha, R., 'The Small Voice of History' in S. Amin and D. Chakrabarty (eds.) in *Subaltern Studies IX: Writings on South Asian History and Society* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997).

Guha, R., 'Chandra's Death' in R. Guha (ed.), *A Subaltern Studies Reader, 1986-1995* (Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press, 1997).

Gwala, N., 'Political Violence and the Struggle for Control in Pietermaritzburg' in *Journal of Southern African Studies*, Vol. 15, No. 3 (April 1989), 506-524.

Hall, S., '"When was the 'Post-Colonial?" Thinking at the Limit' in I. Chambers and L. Curti (eds.), *The Post Colonial Question: Common Skies Divided Horizons* (London: Routledge, 1996).

Hani, C., '25 years of armed struggle' in *Sechaba* (December 1986).

Harnischfeger, J., 'The Bakassai Boys: Fighting Crime in Nigeria' in *Journal of Modern African Studies*, 41, 1 (2003), 23-49.

Harris, V., '"They should have destroyed more": the destruction of public records by the South African state in the final years of apartheid, 1990-1994' in *Transformation*, 42 (2000), 29-56.

Harris, B., '"As for violent crime that's our daily bread": Vigilante Violence during South Africa's period of transition' in *Violence and Transition Series*, Vol. 1 (May 2001).

Hayes, P., 'Santu Mofokeng, Photographs. "The Violence is in the knowing"', Unpublished paper presented at the 'South African Contemporary History and Humanities Seminar', Centre for Humanities Research, University of the Western Cape, No. 294 (21 October 2008).

Hull, G., 'South Africa's Propaganda War: A Bibliographic Essay' in *African Studies*

Review, Vol. 22, No. 3 (December 1979), 79-98.

Humphreys, A.J.B., 'Review: [Untitled]' in *The South African Archaeological Bulletin*, Vol. 59, No. 180 (December 2004), 71.

Israel, P., 'The War of Lions: Witch-hunts, Occult Idioms and Post-socialism in Northern Mozambique' in *Journal of Southern African Studies*, Vol. 35, No. 1 (March 2009), 155-174.

Jeganathan, P., 'A Space for Violence: Anthropology, Politics and the Location of a Sinhala Practice of Masculinity' in P. Chatterjee and P. Jeganathan (eds.), *Subaltern Studies XI, Community, Gender and Violence* (Delhi: Permanent Black, 2000).

Jewsiewicki, B., 'African Historical Studies Academic Knowledge as 'Usable Past' and Radical Scholarship' in *African Studies Review*, Vol. 32, No. 3 (December 1989), 1-76

Jochelson, K., 'Local Authorities on their knees' in *Work in Progress*, Issue 4 (Sept., /Oct., 1986), 15- 27.

Lalu, P., 'The Virtual Stampede for Africa: Digitisation, Postcoloniality and the Archives of the Liberation Struggles in Southern Africa' in *Innovation*, No. 34 (June 2007), 28-44.

Lang, I.R., '"Necklace Murders": A Review of a Series of Cases Examined in a Port Elizabeth Mortuary' in *Medicine and Law*, Vol. 13 (1994), 501-509.

Lee, C.J., '"Causes" versus "Conditions": Imperial Sovereignty, Postcolonial Violence and the Recent Re-Emergence of Arentian Political Thought in African Studies' in *South African Historical Journal*, Vol. 60 (2008), 124-146.

Legassick, M., 'Armed Struggle in South Africa: Consequences of a Strategy Debate' in *Journal of Contemporary African Studies*, Vol. 21, No. 2 (2003), 285-302.

Lodge, T., 'The African National Congress after the Kabwe Conference' in G. Moss and I. Obery (eds.), *South African Review 4* (Johannesburg: Ravan Press, 1987).

Lodge, T., 'People's War or Negotiation? African National Congress Strategies in the 1980's' in G. Moss and I. Obery (eds.), *South African Review 5* (Johannesburg: Ravan Press, 1989).

Lodge, T., 'Charters from the Past: The African National Congress and Its Historiographical Traditions' in *Radical History Review*, Vol. 46, No. 7 (1990), 161-188.

Magubane, B., P. Bonner, J. Sitholi, P. Delius, J. Cherry, P. Gibbs and T. April, 'The Turn to Armed Struggle' in *The Road to Democracy in South Africa, Volume 1 (1960-*

1970), South African Democracy Education Trust (Cape Town: Zebra Press, 2004).

Mamdani, M., 'Making Sense of Political Violence in Postcolonial Africa' in *Identity, Culture and Politics,* Vol. 3, No. 2 (December 2002), 1-24.

Mandel, J. J., 'Les retrecisseurs de sexe Chronique d'une rumeur sorciere' in *Cahiers D'etudes Africanes*, 189-190 (2008), 185-208.

Mandla, C., 'The Moment of Revolution is now-or never in our lifetime' in *Sechaba* (November 1985).

Mani, L., 'The Production of an Official Discourse on *Sati* in Early Nineteenth-century Bengal' in F. Barker et al (eds.), *Europe and its Others, Vol.1* (Colchester: University of Essex Press, 1985).

Manganya, N and A. du Toit, 'Introduction' in N. Manganya and A. du Toit (eds.) *Political Violence and the Struggle in South Africa* (Halfway House, 1990).

Manganyi, N.C., 'Crowds and their Vicissitudes: Psychology and Law in the South African Court - Room' in N. C Manganyi and A. du Toit (eds.), *Political Violence and the Struggle in South Africa* (Johannesburg: Southern Publishers, 1990).

Marks, S and S. Trapido, 'Introduction' in *Journal of Southern African Studies*, Special Issue: Social History of Resistance in South Africa, Vol. 18, No. 1 (March 1992), 1-18

Mashinini, A., 'Preparing the Fire Before Cooking the Rice Inside the Pot: Some Burning Questions of our Revolution' in *Sechaba* (April 1985).

Matoti, S and L. Ntsebeza, 'Rural Resistance in Mpondoland and Thembuland' in *The Road to Democracy in South Africa, Volume 1 (1960-1970), South African Democracy Education Trust* (Cape Town: Zebra Press, 2004).

Mbeki, T., 'Letter from the President: Acts of Terror must be Condemned Unreservedly' in *ANC Today*, Vol. 1, No. 34 (14-20 September 2001).
http://www.anc.org.za/ancdocs/anctoday/2001/at34.htm
(Last accessed 10 May 2010).

Mbeki, T., 'Letter from the President: 'Oliver Tambo Remembered' in *ANC Today*, Vol. 7, No. 43 (2-8 November 2007).
http://www.anc.org.za/ancdocs/anctoday/2007/text/at43.txt
(Last accessed 10 May 2010)

Moss, G., 'Activists on trial: Duduza's civil war' in *Work in Progress*, Issue 47 (April 1987).

Mowitt, J., 'Trauma Envy' in *Cultural Critique*, No. 46 (Autumn 2000), 272-297.

Nandy, A., 'History's Forgotten Doubles' in *History and Theory*, Vol. 34, No. 2 (May 1995), 44-66.

Ndlovu, S.M., 'The ANC and the World', in *The Road to Democracy in South Africa, Volume 1(1960-1970), South African Democracy Education Trust* (Cape Town: Zebra Press, 2004).

Nesbitt, N., 'Turning the Tide: The Problem of Popular Insurgency in Haitian Revolutionary Historiography' in *Small Axe*, Vol. 27 (October 2008), 14-31.

Nomoyi, N and W. Schurink, 'Ukunxityiswa kwempimpi itayari njengotshaba lomzabakaza: An Exploratory Study of Insider Accounts of Necklacing in Three Port Elizabeth Townships' in E. Bornman, Y. Muthien, R. Van Eeden and Marie Wentzel (eds.), *Violence in South Africa: A Variety of Perspectives* (Pretoria: HSRC Press, 1998).

O'Boyle, G., 'Theories of Justification and Political Violence: Examples from Four Groups' in *Terrorism and Political Violence*, Vol. 14, No. 2 (Summer 2002), 23-46.

Pandey, G., 'Subaltern Studies: From a Critique of Nationalism to a Critique of History' Paper presented at "Problematising History and Agency: From Nationalism to Subalternity", Centre for African Studies, University of Cape Town (22-24 October 1997).

Pillay, S., 'The Radical Imagination of Peace: Belonging and violence in South Africa's past and future' in *African Journal on Conflict Resolution*, Vol. 5, Issue. 1 (2005), 11-31.

Pillay, S., 'Dangerous Ordinary Discourse: Preliminary Reflections on Xenophobia, Violence and the Public Sphere in South Africa', draft paper presented at CODESRIA 12th General Assembly (Yaoundé, Cameroun, 07-11/12/2008).

Pigou, P., 'The Apartheid State and Violence: What has the Truth and Reconciliation Commission found?' in *Politikon*, 28, 2 (2001), 207-233.

Posel, D., 'A "battlefield of perceptions": State Discourses on Political Violence, 1985-1988' in J. Cock and L. Nathan (eds.), *War and Society: The Militarisation of South Africa* (Cape Town: David Philip, 1989).

Posel, D and G. Simpson, 'The Power of Truth: South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission in Context' in D. Posel and G. Simpson (eds.), *Commissioning the Past: Understanding South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission* (Johannesburg: Witwatersrand University Press, 2002).

Prakash, G., 'Subaltern Studies as Postcolonial Criticism' in *The American Historical Review,* Vol. 99, No. 5 (December 1994), 1475-1490.

Ranger, T., 'Nationalist Historiography, Patriotic History and the History of the Nation: the Struggle over the Past in Zimbabwe' in *Journal of Southern African Studies*, Vol. 30, No. 2 (June 2004), 215-234.

Rassool, C., 'The Biographic Order: Further Notes on Biography in South African Public Culture after Apartheid', paper presented at the Institutions of Public Culture Workshop, Cape Town (7-9 July, 2005).

Ritchken, E., 'Youth politics and witches in Lebowa: Burning the Herbs' in *Work in Progress*, Issue 48 (July 1987).

Roth, M.S., 'Foucault's "History of the Present"' in *History and Theory*, Vol. 20, No. 1 (February 1981), 32-46.

Rousseau, N., 'The Farm, The River and The Picnic Spot: Topographies of Terror', in *African Studies*, Vol. 68, Issue 3 (December 2009), 351-369.

Rousseau, N and M. Fullard, 'Uncertain Borders: The TRC and the (un)making of public myths' in *Kronos*, Vol. 34 (November 2008), 215-239.

Roy, S., 'The Ethical Ambivalence of Resistant Violence: Notes from Postcolonial South Asia' in *Feminist review*, 91 (2009), 135-153.

Saunders, C and C. Kros, 'Conversations with Historians' in *South African Historical Journal*, Vol. 51 (2004), 1-23.

Sapire, H., 'Liberation Movements, Exile, and International Solidarity: An Introduction' in *Journal of Southern African Studies*, Vol. 35, No. 2 (June 2009), 271-286.

Scheper-Hughes, N., 'Who's the Killer? Popular Justice and Human Rights in a South African Squatter Camp' in N. Scheper-Hughes and P. Bourgois (eds.), *Violence in War and Peace: An Anthology* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing Ltd, 2004).

Seekings, J., 'People's Courts and Popular Politics' in G. Moss and I. Obery (eds.), *South African Review 5* (Johannesburg: Raven Press, 1989).

Segal, L., 'The Human Face of Violence: Hostel Dwellers Speak' in *Journal of Southern African Studies*, Special Issue: Social History of Resistance in South Africa, Vol. 18, No. 1 (March 1992), 190-231.

Simpson, T., 'Toyi-Toyi-ing to Freedom: The Endgame in the ANC's Armed Struggle, 1989-1990' in *Journal of Southern African Studies*, Vol. 35, No. 2 (June 2009), 507-521.

Sitas, A., 'The Making of the "Comrades" Movement in Natal, 1985-91' in *Journal of Southern African Studies*, Special Issue: Political Violence in Southern Africa, Vol. 18,

No. 3 (September 1992), 629-641.

Sitas, A., 'The New Tribalism: Hostels and Violence' in *Journal of Southern African Studies*, Vol. 22, No. 2 (June 1996), 235-248.

Spivak, G.C., 'Subaltern Studies: Deconstructing Historiography (1985)' in D. Landry and G. MacLean (eds.), *The Spivak Reader: Selected Works of Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak* (London and New York: Routledge, 1996).

Stemmet, J and L. Barnard, 'See no Evil, Hear no Evil, Speak and Publish no Evil: The Relationship between P.W.Botha and the Pro-establishment Afrikaans Press during the 1980's' in *Historia*, Vol. 49, No. 1 (May 2004), 154-166.

Stephen, M., 'Witchcraft, Grief, and the Ambivalence of Emotions' in *American Ethnologist*, Vol. 26, No. 3 (August 1999), 135-153.

Swilling, M and M. Phillips, 'State Power in the 1980's: from "total strategy" to "counter- revolutionary warfare"' in J. Cock and L. Nathan (eds.), *War and Society: The Militarisation of South Africa* (Cape Town: David Philip, 1989).

Swilling, M and M. Phillips, 'The Emergency State: Its Structure, Power and Limits' in G. Moss and I. Obery (eds.), *South African Review 5* (Johannesburg, Ravan Press, 1989).

Swilling, M., 'The United Democratic Front and Township Revolt' in W. Cobbett and R. Cohen, (ed.), *Popular Struggles in South Africa* (London: James Curry, 1988).

Tambo, O., 'Render South Africa Ungovernable: President O.R. Tambo's message delivered in Lusaka on January 8, 1985' in *Sechaba* (March 1985).

Thomas, C., 'The Entwined Tale of Inkie Hoyi, Washington Bongco, Donald Card, and A "Core Group" of MK Operatives - A Foray into Political Intimidation and Violence in Duncan Village 1959-1964' in *Journal of Contemporary History*, Vol. 30, No. 1 (June 2005), 156-177.

Thornton, R., 'The Shooting at Uitenhage, South Africa 1995: The Context and Interpretation of Violence' in *American Ethnologist*, Vol. 17, No. 2 (1990), 217-236.

Thornton, R., 'The Peculiar Temporality of Violence', Paper presented at Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation, Seminar 1 (29 March 1995). http://www.csvr.org.za/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=724 (Last accessed 10 May 2010).

Tyson, G.A., 'Response to Crowd Psychology in South African Murder Trials' in *American Psychologist* (1993), 583-584.

Webster, D., 'Repression and the State of Emergency' in G. Moss and I. Obery, (eds.), *South African Review 4* (Johannesburg: Ravan Press, 1987).

Windrich, E., 'South Africa's Propaganda War' in *South Africa Today*, Vol. 36, No. 1 Apartheid under Siege: Challenge from the Churches, Sanctions and the White Right (1st Qtr., 1989), 51-60.

Wicomb Z., 'Culture Beyond Color' in *Transition*, No. 60 (1993), 27-32.

Wolpe, H., 'The Liberation Struggle and Research' in *Review of African Political Economy*, Vol. 32 (April 1985), 72-78.

Xaba, T., 'Repressive and Restitutory Sanctions in the Townships: The Social Origins of the Different Forms of Punishment in the People's Courts', in *Transformation*, Vol. 28 (1995), 51-74.

Zondi, S., 'Peasant Struggles of the 1950's: gaMatlala and Zeerust' in *The Road to Democracy in South Africa, Volume 1 (1960-1970), South African Democracy Education Trust* (Cape Town: Zebra Press, 2004).

(N.A), 'Twenty Years of *Sechaba* Journal of the ANC' in *Sechaba*, (May 1987).

(N.A), 'Who shall set the national agenda?' in *ANC Today*, Vol. 5, No. 3 (21 January 2005).
 http://www.anc.org.za/ancdocs/anctoday/2005/at03.htm
 (Last accessed 10 May 2010).

(N.A), 'Comrades of the crooked court' in *Probe*, (November 1985).

Dissertations/Theses

Barrell, H., 'Conscripts of their Age: African National Congress Operational Strategy, 1976-1986', Unpublished PhD thesis, Oxford University (1993).

Gobodo-Madikizela, P., 'Legacies of Violence: An In-Depth Analysis of Two Case Studies Based On Interviews with Perpetrators of A "Necklace" Murder And With Eugene de Kock', Unpublished PhD thesis, University of Cape Town (1999).

Grunebaum, H.P., 'Spectres of the Untold: Memory and History in South Africa after the Truth and Reconciliation Commission', Unpublished PhD thesis, University of the Western Cape (2006).

Rousseau, N., 'Popular History in South Africa in the 1980's: the Politics of Production, Unpublished MA thesis, University of the Western Cape (1994).

Van Bever Donker, M., 'Re-articulating History: Historical Play, Nation, Text',
   Unpublished MA thesis, University of the Western Cape (2007).

Van Kessel, I., '"Beyond our Wildest Dreams": The United Democratic Front and the
   Transformation of South Africa, Unpublished PhD thesis, University of Leiden
   (1995).

Commissions - Reports

Goldstone, R.J., *Final Report of the Goldstone Commission* (27 October 1994).

Ralushai, N.V., Commission of Inquiry into Witchcraft Violence and Ritual Murders.
   Report of the Commission of Inquiry into Witchcraft Violence and Ritual Murders in
   the Northern Province of the Republic of South Africa (Ralushai Commission).
   Ministry of Safety and Security, Northen Province, RSA (1996).

Truth and Reconciliation Commission Reports', Volumes 2 -3 (Cape Town: Juta, 1998).

Internet articles

M.A Perouse de Montclos, Does Africa need the police?, trans. by Barbara Wilson in *Le*
   Monde diplomatique (September 1997).
   http://mondediplo.com/1997/09/afpol
   (Last Accessed 10 May 2010).

'Mozambique: Lynchings symptom of state failure', IRIN Africa – humanitarian news
    and analysis (9 April 2007).
    http://www.irinnews.org/Report.aspx?ReportId=71234
   (Last accessed 10 May 2010).

Newspaper articles cited

Introduction

Badela, M., 'The Weeks of Rage That Led to That First Necklace Death' in *Weekly Mail*
   (4 September 1987).

Baleta, A., '348 "necklace" deaths in two years – review' in *The Star* (12 January 1987).

Hlangwane, S., 'Whats the price of reconciliation? in *City Press* (14 December 2008).

Masango, B., 'True reconciliation as Duduza asks forgiveness' in *The Star* (17 December
   2008).

Ngqiyaza, B., 'An innocent and terrible death' in *The Star* (17 December 2008).

Qwelane, J., 'Revenge of the Mob' in *The Sunday Star* (31 March 1985).

Rank, F., 'Revisiting turbulent history of the 1980's' in *Weekend Post* (19 March 2005).

Saunders, J., 'Court shown video of mob attacking bodies' in *Eastern Province Herald* (20 February 1986).

Soule, A., 'Uitenhage – The killing goes on' in *Sunday Times* (24 March 1985).

Stuart, B., '286 necklace deaths during 1986 terror escalation' in *The Citizen* (22 August 1987).

Swart, F., 'Die donker kant van Aristide…sy teenstanders is glo volgens halssnoer-metodes tereggestel in *Beeld* (22 October 1993).

Tyala, M., 'Kinikini video "may aid defence" – judge' in *Eastern Province Herald* (12 March 1986).

van Staden, G., 'Winnie slams "hysterical" media reaction' in *The Star* (18 April 1986).

Vernon, K., 'Charred bodies found, police evacuated from townships – East Cape riot toll up to 24' in *Weekend Argus* (23 March 1985).

'Mandela vra vryheid met vuurhoutjies' in *Die Burger* (16 April 1986).

'PW speaks on Black on Black violence' in *The Soweton* (24 April 1986).

'White man faces "necklace" charge' in *The Argus* (17 July 1986).

'Two years of the necklace' in *Pretoria News* (2 April 1987).

'White guilty of necklace murder' in *Cape Times* (5 May 1987).

'392 died by necklace' in *Business Day* (16 June 1988).

'1100 charged for necklacing' in *Cape Times* (16 June 1988).

'Necklace case white won't hang' in *Soweton* (29 May 1989).

'Less necklacing, but other ways of death by burning' in *E.P Herald* (2 July 1990).

'Die demokrasie van die halsnoer' in *Die Afrikaaner* (29 September 1994).

'Teens necklaced by vigilante group' in *Cape Argus* (29 March 2009).

Chapter One

Cairncross, C., 'PW renews the State of Emergency' in *Business Day* (12 June 1987).

Green, R., 'Emergency is effective' in *Pretoria News* (28 June 1986).

Le Grange, L., 'All is under control' in *Financial Mail* (7 June 1985).

Molefe, Z.B., 'The police and unrest: The Seige of the townships' in *City Press* (9 December 1984).

Naidoo, C and E. Wessels, 'It left me sick, says TV man' in *Sunday Times* (28 July 1985).

Staden, G., 'Winnie slams "hysterical" media reaction' in *The Star* (18 April 1986).

Stirling, T., 'Black on Black violence "horrifying" – police' in *The Citizen* (4 October 1985).

Stirling, T., 'Hundred burnt to death by the necklace – Bureau' in *The Citizen* (21 August 1986).

Vlok, A., 'Authority and defiance' in *Financial Mail* (19 April 1985).

Weaver, T., 'Maps reveal violent wave' in *Cape Times* (14 May 1986).

'Bishops slate police actions' in *Cape Times* (7 December 1984).

'"Untruths" in report – SAP' in *Cape Times* (7 December 1984).

'Vrou lewend verbrand: Gru-toneel oor TV gesien' in *Die Burger* (22 July 1985).

'Emergency', in *The Citizen* (22 July 1985).

'Is SA getting the full Picture?' in *The Star* (9 August 1985).

'Etniese geweld' in *Die Burger* (9 August 1985).

'…and the horror the mobs call "The Necklace"' in *The Sunday Star* (29 September 1985).

'Mandela vra vryheid met vuurhoutjies' in *Die Burger* (16 April 1986).

'Govt. will muster all power to protect SA' in *The Citizen* (16 April 1986).

'PW speaks on Black on Black violence' in *The Soweton* (24 April 1986).

'Endemic Violence' in *Cape Times* (25 November 1986).

'Winnie onthul gedenkplaat met gebalde vuis: Vuurhoutjie-stelling "simbolies"' in *Die Beeld* (29 March 1999).

Chapter Two

Mphaki, A., 'Violence justified - UDF' in *Sowetan Sunday Mirror* (7 April 1985).

Stirling, T., 'SA "anticipated" ANC position on Winnnie Mandela' in *The Citizen* (11 October 1987).

'UDF leader condemns "kangaroo courts"' in *Herald* (31 October 1985).

'Informers not harmed, says UDF' in *Cape Times* (25 March 1986).

'200 mourn man killed after UDF rally' in *Cape Times* (27 May 1986).

'UDF: See death "in context"' in *Cape Times* (28 May 1986).

'An Immoral Cop-Out' in *Cape Times* (30 May 1986).

'UDF's "final word" on death' in *Cape Times* (31 May 1986).

'ANC leaders condemn necklace deaths' in *Weekly Mail* (5 September 1986).

'Stop necklacing, recognize all anti-apartheid bodies' in *Cape Times* (1 October 1987).

'Ire of necklace statement: ANC shows disapproval of Winnie' in *The Star* (1 October 1987).

'ANC says: "Stop the Necklace"' in *Weekly Mail* (2 October 1987).

Chapter Three

'Kill the dog' in *Sowetan* (13 March 1987).

'Decapitated body: three men face murder charges' in *Evening Post* (13 August 1987).

'PE police find decapitated body, then head' in *EP Herald* (12 August 1987).

'Dogs being necklaced' in *City Press* (2 November 1986).

'Children necklace puppy' in *Cape Times* (6 August 1986).

Chapter Four

Jeffery, A., 'The Truth will out, Mac Maharaj' in *The Sunday Times* (20 September 2009).

Laurence, P., 'When mob is judge, jury, executioner' in *Cape Times* (26 June 2003).

Laurence, P., 'History or hero worship?' in *This Day* (24 June 2004).

Loos, J., 'Lest we forget, a visit to our recent past' in *Cape Argus* (25 June 2004).

Maharaj, M., 'History 101, anyone?' in *The Sunday Times* (13 September 2009).

Maluleke, J., 'Necklace anger is back' in *The Citizen* (27 June 2003).

Nhlapo, T., 'Necklace Horror' in *The Star* (23 May 2003).

Pearson, B., 'Victims deserved to die, say freed necklace killers' in *The Sunday Star* (27 September 1992).

Smith, T., 'Our past through other people's eyes' in *Cape Argus* (21 May 2004).

de Vos, H., 'NP en VF kap Ntsebeza se uitlatings oor halsbandmoord' in *Die Burger* (10 November 1997).

van Staden, C., 'Hoe WVK man in storm oor halsbandmoord' in *Die Burger* (14 November 1997).

'Necklace Killings: No Pardon, says Vlok' in *The Sowetan* (4 September 1987).

'FW rejects freedom for necklace killers' in *Daily Dispatch* (1 May 1991).

'Who is the father of the necklace' in *The New Nation* (25 June 1993).

'SABC found guilty over claim about necklacing' (June 16 1997).
  http://www.rhodesia.nl/truthlie.htm
  (Last accessed 10 May 2010).

'Ntsebeza says necklacing introduced to SA by police' in *Daily Dispatch* (7 November 1997).

Truth and Reconciliation Commission transcripts and submissions cited

Second Submission of the National Party to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (23 March 1997).

http://www.justice.gov.za/trc/hrvtrans/submit/np2.htm
(Last accessed 10 May 2010).

Submission to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission: GEN. M.A. de M. Malan (7 May 1997).
http://www.justice.gov.za/trc/hrvtrans/submit/malan.htm
(Last accessed 10 May 2010).

Truth and Reconciliation Commission – Transcript of the African National Congress Party Political Recall in Cape Town – 12 and 13 May 1997. (Day 1 – 12 May 1997).
http://www.doj.gov.za/trc/special/party2/anc2.htm
(Last accessed 10 May 2010).

Further Submissions and Responses by the African National Congress to Questions Raised by the Commission for Truth and Reconciliation (12 May 1997).
http://www.justice.gov.za/trc/hrvtrans/submit/anc2.htm
(Last accessed 10 May 2010).

Truth and Reconciliation Commission – United Democratic Front Submission (06 May 1998).
http://www.doj.gov.za/trc/special/udf/udf.htm
(Last accessed 10 May 2010).

Truth and Reconciliation Commission - Political Party Submissions – Transcript of the National Party - Party Political Recall in Cape Town – 14 May 1997.
http://www.justice.gov.za/trc/special/party2/np2.htm
(Last accessed 10 May 2010).

Submission of Prof V. N Ralushai, Amnesty Hearing, Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) (12 July 1999).
http://www.justice.gov.za/trc/amntrans/1999/99071214_tho_990712th.htm
(Last accessed 10 May 2010).

Online and other archival material cited

'*Operation Mayibuye'*, Document found by the police at Rivonia, 11 July 1963
http://www.anc.org.za/ancdocs/history/mk/mayibuye.html
(Last accessed 10 May 2010).

'Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions' of 12 August 1949, and relating to the 'Protection of Victims of International Armed Conflicts (Protocol I)', 8 June 1977.
http://www.icrc.org/ihl.nsf/7c4d08d9b287a42141256739003e636b/f6c8b9fee14a77fdc125641e0052b079
(Last accessed 10 May 2010).

The Green Book – Report of the Politico-Military Strategy Commission to the ANC National Executive Committee, August 1979.
http://www.anc.org.za/ancdocs/history/mk/green-book.html
(Last accessed 10 May 2010).

'The ANC signs the Geneva Protocols', The O'Malley Archives.
http://www.nelsonmandela.org/omalley/index.php/site/q/03lv02424/04lv02730/05lv02918/06lv02928/07lv02929.htm
(Last accessed 10 May 2010).

January 8 Statement- 1984: President's message for 1984.
http://www.anc.org.za/ancdocs/history/jan8-84.html
(Last accessed 10 May 2010).

D. J Louis Nel (Adjunk-Minister van Buitelandse Sake), 'Aan alle lede van die Staatsveiligheidsraad: Onlussituasies: Voorgestelde Terminologiese Riglyne Vir Amptelike Segsmanne' (12 November 1984).
http://www.disa.ukzn.ac.za/index.php?option=com_displaydc&recordID=mem19841112.040.024.084
(Last accessed 10 May 2010).

Render South Africa Ungovernable
http://www.anc.org.za/show.php?doc=ancdocs/history/or/or85-1.html
(Last accessed 10 May 2010).

VHS Video Collection: Mayibuye Archive, 'VHS 3066-Accession No. Rim.FV.2000.2366', Skosana Necklacing: Used by Government after announcing 22 July 1985 State of Emergency.

OR85-12a: Great Britain. House of Commons, Foreign Affairs Committee, Session 1984-85. *The Situation in South Africa, Minutes of Evidence, Tuesday 29 October 1985*. London: His Majesty's Stationery Office, 1985.
http://www.anc.org.za/show.php?doc=ancdocs/history/or/or85-12a.html
(Last accessed 10 May 2010).

Oliver Tambo, 'Interview to Anthony Heard, Editor of Cape Times, October 1985'
http://www.anc.org.za/ancdocs/history/or/or85-12.html
(Last accessed 10 May 2010).

'*Take the Struggle to the White Areas*! -Make the whole of South Africa ungovernable! Paralyse apartheid!, - official ANC leaflet distributed inside South Africa in the latter half of 1985.
http://www.anc.org.za/ancdocs/history/ug/pam8500.html
(Last accessed 10 May 2010).

'Umkhonto we Sizwe Military Code' – [This document was released at the ANC

National Consultative Conference at Kabwe in June 1986. It was part of a larger document titled "Report of Commission on National Structures, Constitutional Guidelines and Codes of Conduct"]
http://www.anc.org.za/ancdocs/history/mkcode.html
(Last accessed 10 May 2010).

Talking with the ANC... (Johannesburg: Bureau of Information, 1986).
http://www.disa.ukzn.ac.za/index.php?option=com_displaydc&recordID=boo19860600.026.021.000
(Last accessed 10 May 2010).

House of Assembly Debates (HANSARD), Vol. 8, Cols. 2333-4876 (24 March - 2 May 1986).

S v Motaung and Others (190/88) [1990] ZASCA 75; 1990 (4) SA 485 (AD); [1990] 2 All SA 485 (A) (17 August 1990).
http://www.saflii.org/za/cases/ZASCA/1990/75.html
(Last accessed 10 May 2010).

'Pretoria Minute', Minutes and Accords between the ANC and the South African Government, May 1990- February 1991.
http://www.anc.org.za/ancdocs/history/minutes.html#PRM
(Last accessed 10 May 2010).

'Groote Schuur Minute', Minutes and Accords between the ANC and the South African Government, May 1990- February 1991.
http://www.anc.org.za/ancdocs/history/minutes.html#PRM
(Last accessed 10 May 2010).

Letter from FW de Klerk to Nelson Mandela (2 July 1992): Annexure D: Views on the current violence.
http://www.anc.org.za/ancdocs/history/mandela/1992/links/lett2july.htm
(Last accessed 10 May 2010).

Archival collections consulted:
UWC Robben Island Museum Mayibuye Archive

MCH 73 – *Streek, Barry South African Press Clips Collection*
Newspaper cuttings- 1984-1994
Box: Security Unrest 1984-1985
Box : Security Necklacing (Incidents/Trials) 1986-1989
          Duduza 1987
          Necklacing 1986
          Necklacing Trial

Box: Security Necklacing Incidents 1990-1992

NMC 1990-1992

Box: 1986 State of Emergency Sept-Dec
Box: 1986 State of Emergency Jan-July
Box: 1987 State of Emergency Jan-May
Box: 1987 State of Emergency June-December Supplement June 1987-June 1988
Box: 1989 State of Emergency General
        State of Emergency Comment 1987-1989
        Government Comment 1987
        State of Emergency Regulations 1987-1989
        Apartheid Barometer Political Violence 1988

Box: Security
    Kitskonstables
    1986-1990-1992
    Kangaroo Court
    1990-1992
    Koevoet
    1991-1992

Box: UDF 1983/84 (CTD)
Box: UDF 1985-1986
Box: UDF 1987

MCH 31 – *IDAF Collection*
Publications

-*ANC Weekly News Briefings* 1983-1990 (files)
-*Work in Progress* No. 30-50 (files)
-*FRONTLINE* 1983-1984 (files)
-*Facts and Reports* 1984-1995 (files)
-*Sechaba* 1983-1990 (boxes)