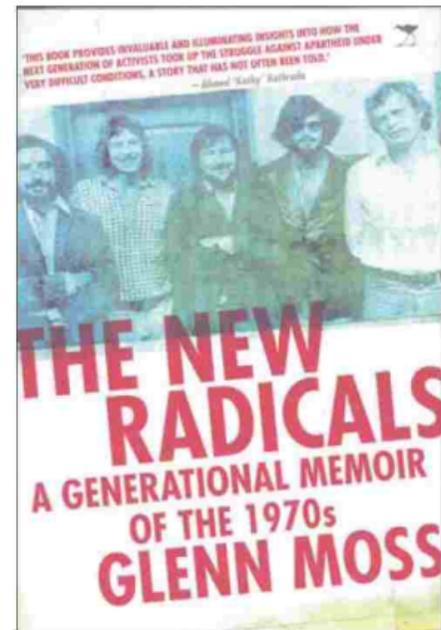


# Emergence of brave new voice in the fight for a multiracial society



**THE NEW RADICALS:  
A GENERATIONAL  
MEMOIR OF THE 1970S**  
Glenn Moss  
*Jacana*

**REVIEW:**  
Shirley de Kock Gueller

JUST a short five or six years in the 1970s was all it took to take a stand and make a difference. Moss, from a Pretoria background – and all that stands for – was at Wits at the age of 17 with the grudging blessing of his apprehensive parents.

His belief in multiracialism was to take a back seat in the face of rising Black Consciousness and the consequent conflicts with the National Union of SA Students (Nusas), where he ultimately became president.

It's a story about the emergence of a new voice, "a much-needed and engrossing personal account of the embryonic student and black trade union movements of the early seventies," according to Barbara Hogan.

There were radicals on both

sides of the campus divide. Policemen like "Spyker" van Wyk were active.

Trade unionism was growing, and the fight inside the country was more important than the fights outside.

Moss was a rebel from his school days when he was beginning to question the disarray in opposition to apartheid.

He didn't impress his parents when he expressed support for a very young Peter Hain who spoke on behalf of his banned family at a memorial for John Harris, the anti-

apartheid activist who placed a bomb in Johannesburg Station, in 1966.

His recollections, tempered as he says with the revisions that come from research, are a superb and well-written addition to the collective memory of a time when some things moved so quickly one got lost in the myriad mysteries and atrocities.

Though some mysteries remain: did Ahmed Timol jump to his death to avoid naming names like that of journalist Tony Holiday or was

he pushed?

Moss reminds one of the inequalities in education – in 1969, R258 million was spent on white education, and only R14.9m on blacks – the legacies of which remain.

Moss fought with Suzman, worked with the best, and must take pleasure from the fact that the students' campaign to free the prisoners on Robben Island buoyed, according to Ahmed Kathrada, the prisoners' spirits immensely.

His description of the Nusas trial and how the testimony of

## A much-needed account of black trade unions, student movements

the accusers was destroyed in the year-long trial reveals how brave these students were. "Hooks" there are aplenty to

draw you in and keep you in.

Stephen Biko's blessing at the beginning; Nelson Mandela's blessing at the end when in Moss's home he speaks to the author's sons; Moss's release after several months in solitary confinement only to be almost immediately rearrested for the infamous Nusas trial.

In the preface, Moss says his children needed to know what he and his friends "did in the war".

What he did can make them proud.