PRACTICAL THEOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE ON RECONCILING RELATIONSHIPS IN A POST-APARTHEID SOUTH AFRICA

BY

TREVOR PETER (AMAFU) NTLHOLA

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SUPERVISOR: Prof Tinyiko S. Maluleke

CO-SUPERVISOR: Prof Julian Müller

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Declaration

I, **Trevor Peter Ntlhola** declare that – **'A Practical Theological perspective on Reconciling Relationships in a Post-Apartheid South Africa'**, which I hereby submit for the degree Philosophiae Doctor at the University of Pretoria, is my work and has not been previously submitted by me for a degree at this or any other University. All the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by employing complete references.

Signed at Johannesburg, in 29 July 2021.

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Acknowledgements

The journey of undertaking this research has been an exciting one but was punctuated by a few series of painful and uncontrollable episodes in my recent past life. The paramount and uninvited episodic encounter was the shocking death of my dear wife which inevitably imposed confusion and a huge temptation to cease this project. Parallel to this, other trying episodes pressed against me. But a few people injected spiritual stamina and mental fortitude within me to keep moving forward. Finally, I can see the academic fulfilment and rewards are excitedly looming on the horizon thus certainly palpable. It is no wonder that I am in this space – almost to accomplish this research project, it is because of the following people and organisation that I would like to thank –

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Abstract

This research is an investigation into the Christian notions of reconciliation within the context of apartheid and its current and palpable racial legacies. It is now more than two decades since the dawn of democracy and the word 'reconciliation' has come to evoke strong emotions in South Africa – especially between black and white peoples. Both the concepts of 'national reconciliation' and the 'rainbow nation' have become highly contested, not only across racial lines but also across class, gender and ethnic lines.

In this study, I will reflect on the place of reconciliation in the political and contemporary life of Adriaan Vlok - the former apartheid Minister of Law and Order. In terms of epistemology and methodology, this thesis will use the post-foundational and narrative approaches.

I will argue that in his life, first as an advocate of apartheid, then as a repentant Christian who asked for forgiveness from some of his victims, also as one who appeared before the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) and disclosed as much as humanly possible, and later as an ordinary South African who tried to give back to the communities that were disadvantaged by the apartheid regime he was part of. He, Vlok was a personification of post-apartheid reconciliation. This is in the sense that he, from the Apartheid's Nats high echelons were the only one to acknowledge and accept his own political criminality as far as Apartheid is concerned (Giliomee 2003:654 & Pikoli/Wiener 2013:221).

Key Terms: apartheid; reconciliation; racism; post-modernism; post-foundational; Black Conscious Movement; Seven Movements; narrative; racialised society; Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC); horizontal reconciliation and vertical reconciliation

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Chapter 1

The Research Journey

1.1 Introduction.

The chief purpose of this chapter is to introduce the philosophical, epistemological and methodological approaches of this study. This is critical, as these approaches will guide, navigate and possibly be a constrictive conduit for the overall purpose of this project. Without this the entire study will be obtuse and directionless. But, before we embark on the methodologies or philosophies (which is the purpose of this chapter), the following is of significance as it will bring clarification.

The purpose of this study is to examine a real-life example of reconciliation. Reconciliation as a Christian notion. It is also about the infamous and final apartheid Minister of Law and Order (currently known as Minister of Police) Adriaan Johannes Vlok, who unashamedly sought reconciliation with those that he, as an agent of apartheid, had hurt. In other words, the study seeks to explore the meaning of reconciliation by using Vlok's alleged conversion or sincerity towards his pursuit of reconciliation, which inevitably will have political or societal ramifications, and how those around him view his alleged conversion and reconciliation. It is in this context that it is entitled: **'A Practical Theological perspective on Reconciling Relationships in a Post-Apartheid South Africa'.** A suitable methodology will be adopted to navigate this research journey.

The post-foundational approach will, therefore, be the main methodology for this study, partly assisted by one other methodology – narrative methodology and the inescapability of the literature review. The latter methodology will therefore be defined, detailed and described at the appropriate space somewhere below. Attempts will be made to lay the groundwork on how we will navigate this long and sometimes arduous journey.

This chapter is about the methodologies and philosophical outlooks of which this thesis will rely upon. It should be mentioned that post-modernism will be this study's philosophical and (where possible) epistemological introduction, especially to the post-foundational methodology which is the main methodology. This is done to appropriately assemble this study's main methodology i.e. post-foundational approach.

It is logical to preface post-foundational methodology with post-modernism – as will be demonstrated below. Once again, post-modernism is not the methodology but an acknowledgement of our current philosophical era that we should engage with. Therefore, post-modernism and post-foundational are not synonymous - but they just happen to be appropriately complementary for the purposes of this study.

1.2. The Aim and Research Question

Having indicated above that this study is about reconciliation as a Christian notion and focusing on Vlok's narrative, let's now move towards the goal/aim of this study. This study's goal is to indicate, through this thesis, that the Christian notion of reconciliation, at least within the post-Apartheid South African context, is crucial and can be sustainable if sincerely desired and diligently pursued. But it depends on individuals - such as Vlok, you and me. Reconciliation can only cascade to commonality and thus a social space, if it is initiated, cultivated and anchored by an individual(s). Without this, authentic reconciliation is destined to collapse. Therefore, responses should be made to: What kind of a human being does the new South Africa expect to birth? And what kind of a human being does she nurture?

1.3. My Context: Soweto

First of all, the postfoundational approach, which is the primary methodology being utilised in this study, demands an acknowledgement of my context (Muller 2004: 300 &Van Huyssteen 1997:16) and it will be explained and described below. My context is generally, Soweto in particular and South Africa in general.

The goals and research question(s) of this study are explored from the specified concentrated context or contextualities. It is impossible to be a-contextual, for it is an involuntary and automatic process imposed on all human beings. This therefore should not be denied but be consciously acknowledged, accepted and integrated with one's realities – even this academic expedition. It can be a mammoth task especially the spiritual, theological and academic aspects, however, these realities should be meaningfully engaged.

The role of context will therefore be accepted and acknowledged in this study. This study is, therefore, birthed out of the many years of an existential relationship between Vlok and I, long before I ever thought of embarking on an academic study of this nature. Now that this study

is here, my realities inevitably come to the fore. Chief among them are my contextualities - be they political, geographical, ideological, theological etc.

The post-foundational methodology is aptly suitable to equip me to wrestle with my contextualities in interaction with Vlok. It is, for this reason, that, the postfoundationalist Müller asserts -

> One of the key concepts of post-foundational language is contextuality. A very real, concrete and definite context is taken as a starting point for academic reflection. Therefore, as a practical theologian who is seriously trying to work on a post-foundational basis…start with a very specific context (2010).

My primary context, to start with, as pointed out by Müller's encouragement, is South Africa. But specifically, Soweto. With this in mind, the following study - my reflections but more so my theological and academic reflections will certainly be influenced by context. And, to a certain extent, it has also been Johannesburg, though from a distance. My geopolitical context will inevitably influence my theoretical and epistemological approach to this study – a matter that will be explained fully below. While the context may be difficult for me to explain scientifically, it is a real and constant influence on me.

According to the post-foundational paradigm/episteme, context is critical and demands specificity, making a-contextual or a-historical methodologies unimaginable. Having acknowledged the criticalness of context or contextuality in utilising the post-foundational approach for this study, the context itself will be inescapable. While pursuing this study and having engaged intensively with Vlok, I have had to re-examine my history, culture and theology. In short, I have had to re-evaluate my understanding of my context.

Having established the importance of context in the post-foundational approach, we now move on to the equally important notions of language and narrative, as mediators and interpreters of context. Writing about the post-foundational approach, to be specific - the post-foundational theology, Müller underscored the importance of narrative in this manner:

> At this stage of my life, I prefer the language of post-foundational theology as a comprehensive language, which provides a theological framework within which the contextual and narrative approaches not only make sense but also is inevitable (2010).

Taking my cue from Müller's understanding of post-foundational theology as a comprehensive language system, I now offer the framework for my own contextual narrative 'theology' below.

I was born and bred in Soweto, which is adjacent to Johannesburg. I also used to work in Soweto. "Soweto is home to more than a million black men, women and children. It lies South West of Johannesburg, called Egoli, the golden city…it has attracted many catchy labels and journalistic clichés. Some of the most apt descriptions of this place, include: the city within a city, 'shadow city', 'Johannesburg's twin city', 'the forbidden city' and even 'the city that does not exist' are to be found" (in Lee and Magubane 1983). Johannesburg is the most economically advanced and cosmopolitan city on the African continent.

Contemporary Soweto and Johannesburg are populated by a large and vibrant youth population who are exposed to globalisation through social media, the internet and many other information technologies. And yet Soweto is massively characterised by poverty and underdevelopment. In the case of Soweto and Johannesburg, wealth and poverty, as well as a massive uptake of communication technologies by the youth, coexist. But such is the pervasiveness of poverty that even what looks like wealth on the surface requires further examination. Scholars like Southall (2014) have noted that the situation of poverty in Soweto is such that even members of the nominal middle class with professional qualifications start on a very low base. Writing in 2014, Southall gives the following example:

> Arthur, a young black man whose mother has been a teacher, who worked as a graduate trainee at a large IT company, and who already owned several cars, it was not until he bought his own house in Soweto that he felt he had joined the middle class: 'My house, that is how you define me because of the bond, the furniture.' Yet, although he now

> identified himself as middle class, this was only concerning the black people around him, and he was quite unable to compare himself with the white middle class or conceive of a national middle class with shared interests… (2014:184).

The above scenario paints a fairly accurate picture of the middle-class and a post-apartheid Sowetan. And yet, the salient features and legacies of apartheid are visibly and grotesquely palpable in many Sowetans' lives. Nevertheless, during these economic difficulties,

> A new Soweto' is arising, with fancy restaurants, upmarket drinking-holes, and even sushi bars as well as a shop specialising in wine, 'serious wine, not plonk'; there are the shopping malls of Maponya, Jabulani, Protea Gardens and Bara Mall; and, compared with the barren desert of yesteryear, there are now 'trees everywhere, fresh, planted-yesterday saplings' as if some, a revolutionary environmentalist has been let loose' and told to plant trees to his heart's content. There is even less crime. (Southall 2014:183).

Seven years later, Southall's above statement remains mostly true. I continue to visit Soweto monthly, if not weekly. To reiterate, Southall's description cannot be ignored for it is a reality as I personally and experientially know, as it is my former neighbourhood, although I no longer reside there. I currently live less than fifteen kilometres south of Soweto.

> Black Sowetans are worse off than most whites, but better off than most other black people in the country, except concerning one or two quirks of apartheid township legacy. This may well explain why Soweto remains a destination for migrants… (Alexander et al., 2013:60).

It must be pointed out that I disagree with Alexander's suggestion that 'black Sowetans [are]…better off than most other blacks in the country…". There are conspicuous and appalling pockets of poverty in Soweto such as found in the massive squatter camps. For example, Kliptown's informal settlements have not changed to this day (2021). Less than five kilometres from Kliptown, there's a newer informal settlement (squatter camp) and it keeps

growing. But generally, as Alexander explained, Soweto is advanced compared with all other black townships in the country.

The growing presence of immigrants especially from other countries such as Pakistan, Egypt, Mozambique, Zimbabwe etc., in Soweto, is a stark reality that is often forgotten. Notwithstanding the obvious fact that there is an older generation of migrants who have been in Johannesburg from time immemorial. For example, the Malawians - there is a place in Soweto named after a famous Malawian surname: Phiri. Now that Soweto and Johannesburg have been inevitably and deeply 'Africanised' – by this I mean that there are more Africans with different shades, cultures, languages etc. than before. These are people from different neighbouring African states and other parts of the world which means cosmopolitanism and plurality have become the order of the day. With this reality, among many or a wide spectrum of ideas such as traditional and post- modernistic worldviews, paradigms and epistemologies, live side by side in cosmopolitan places such as Johannesburg and Soweto.

1.4. Post-modernism and Black Consciousness Movement in Soweto

> The term post-modernism is used in a wide variety of ways and covers a wide variety of ideas as post-modern worldviews, attitudes, concerns and results spread rapidly throughout the world and enter every major aspect of contemporary life (Dawn 1999:39).

Given the above-mentioned definition, postmodernism can be described as an elusive and slippery worldview concept that can be difficult to explain and define. It is a philosophy, thinking, possibly a lifestyle, fashion, music or worldview phenomenon that certainly defies the current status quo yet at the same time integrates the very old pastiches to strangely create itself as a novelty and finally ingratiate itself.

> Post-modernism is an open set of approaches, attitudes and styles to art and culture that started by questioning or exceeding or fooling with one or more aspects of modernism. The blurry group of ideas we call post-modernism started to come into focus in the 1950s and 1960s… (Hart 2004:14).

Aspects of this phenomenon, mainly western, which boldly questions modernism's narratives, are present in Soweto. The rejection of learning Afrikaans when it was made a medium of instruction and the rejection of the African distorted histories thus making Africans less human was and still are examples of the rejection of the modernism 'school of thought'. The questioning and discarding of the western modernistic meta-narratives, philosophies and epistemologies that have dominated the public space – were and still are obvious phenomena in Soweto let alone in Johannesburg. In my twenties, I used to belong to a book club in Jabavu, Soweto that dedicated itself to reading books written by African writers such as Chinua Achebe, Ngugi wa Thiongo, Ayi Kwei Armah, Ezekiel Mphahlele and others. These books conscientised us into realizing that the praised modernistic way of viewing life was a fallacy. As members of the book club, we realized that the western modernistic views which emerged from the so-called Enlightenment period, were also ultimately connected to the genesis of the colonialism and apartheid projects.

I am by no means implying that Soweto is post-modernistic in the western sense. For example, it has never been easy for the African people to sacrifice their ubuntu (communal life or amity), belief in the spiritual world (God, gods and ancestors) and reverence towards their living-ancestors (i.e. the elderly/old people). The known western atheistic, irreverent and individualistic notions that often characterise their modernistic, post-modernistic and rationalistic views would be conspicuously absent in many African beliefs or ideologies. The utter rejection or protestation against colonisation and Apartheid would be expressed with a recognisable tinge of respect, reverence and possibly with an implicit acknowledgement of the African spiritual realities.

Western post-modernism is shy to openly admit reverence towards ancestors. But it reveres them in other ways. This is what makes the difference with African post-modernism, as I call it. In his article titled, 'African Post-modernism: Its Moment, Nature and Content' Lamola (2017), makes the same sentiments or points, I am trying to articulate in this epistemological/philosophical crisis, when he says,

> Given its epistemological nature, we maintain that this crisis calls for an Africanist deconstruction of the modernist-derived thought-categories that constitute the philosophical architecture of Afrocoloniality. Thus, our proposition of Afropostmodernism (Lamola 2017:19-120).

Reflecting on Lamola's point, anachronistically, could this 'Afropostmodernism', be the Black Consciousness and its Siamese twin - Black Consciousness Movement (BCM)?

> "Afropostmodernism is a distinctly catalytic framework that is instanced by a methodical commitment to a formulation and application of analytical tools and concepts that are characterised by an unfettered critique of the intellectual culture prevailing in Africa since the end of direct colonisation. Of course, *a priori*, it differentiates itself from the classical post-modernist movement by being anti-Eurocentric…" (Lamola 2017:120).

I, therefore, argue that both Black Consciousness and the Black Consciousness Movement (BCM) are very post-modernistic in the sense of Lamola's 'Afropostmodernism'. We learn from Holland that,

> a dynamic force that burst into Sowetan homes during the 1970s, a philosophy is known as Black Consciousness, successfully mobilised black resistance to apartheid (1979:6).

It should be emphasised that although Black Consciousness is not originally from Soweto, it had a profound influence on the politics of Soweto in the 1970s. "By 1969, the South African Students' Association (SASO), … rapidly developed a coherent set of views known as Black Consciousness, or BC … [with] Steve Biko, [as] the father of BC and the first Chairman…" (Pogrund 2006:349). Biko, born and bred in Ginsberg (Eastern Cape) was not only the father of this consciousness (BC) but also "the respected founder of the Black Consciousness Movement" (Ngcukaitobi 2018:163). Nonetheless, the BCM's ideas found fertile soil in the Sowetan youth's mind and as a result, they then rejected the old dysfunctional ideas. Tatusko asserts that -

> In our times the concept of a universal truth is no longer accepted. The challenge raised by post-modern theories, such as Foucault's understanding of knowledge/power, cuts at the foundationalist assumption of the "university." Perhaps a so-called "multiversity" takes no assumption for granted and is continually critical even of itself in a

> scheme of multiple rationalities and democratic organisation, devoted to reducing the force of the power/knowledge matrix (2005:114).

Through Black Consciousness, the pre 16th June 1976 Soweto's worldview, ideologies and views were challenged. Henceforth, Soweto was no longer the same, as far as her politics are concerned. In my view, 16th June 1976 was ideologically the day on which Soweto was reborn anew. The 16th June 1976 is almost another name for Soweto. It was the culmination of Soweto's political conscientisation and this was through the new political consciousness called Black Consciousness and Black Consciousness Movement. "Steve Biko and the Black Consciousness literature have made many perceptive comments about the desperate need for blacks to stop thinking of themselves as non-Whites" (Cell 1989:244). This certainly also means or involved black Sowetans who may have thought of themselves as non-Whites as it was the case in many other places. I too as a young Sowetan was impacted and influenced by a culture of 'Black Consciousness literature' as Cell described above – this was tremendously significant as far as one's political identity and conscientisation are concerned. Consider the views of a white man called Berold, one of the very few white teachers teaching in Soweto during 1976. The views I captured in (Hlongwane et al 2016:118):

> I was teaching (illegally) in Soweto…I'd(sic) joined Morris Isaacson because I wanted to be in a Black environment, which was a hard thing to do in the 1970s and usually illegal…So here I was, my first teaching job, unqualified to teach, with huge classes, 50 or more kids…Occasionally the daring guys from the Black Consciousness Movement would come to the school. The whole school would walk out of the class for an hour while they addressed them. South Africa was going to be free, they said. Black man, you are on your own.

As indicated in the quotation above, shows the reality that Black Consciousness and Black Consciousness Movement in Soweto played a significant role in ushering in a new awareness of that era. The late 1970s especially in Soweto, was like the political and ideological renewal, even though this (Black) consciousness was unfortunately besmirched by the violence – which was the reactionary violence, intentionally caused by apartheid violence.
Kane-Berman described,

> The violence was not confined to Soweto. Within, not much more than a week, other townships on the Reef, stretching from Mohlakeng in the West to Daveyton in the East, as well as townships around Pretoria, also gave vent to their rage. 'Townships blaze all over Reef', ran one newspaper headline…Within two months of 16th. June, at least 80 black communities all over the country had expressed their fury…Soweto was the epicentre of the revolt… (1978:2)

If there was ever a time the world became aware of Soweto, it was in 1976. Since then, Soweto could never be viewed as indifferent or neutral – ideologically or politically. It has made an international if not a geopolitical footprint. As noted by Sheldrake (2001:7) "place is space which has historical meanings... where some things have happened which are now remembered, and which provide continuity and identity across generations. The place is a space in which important words have been spoken which have established identity…"

For me, Soweto is one such a space. According to Holland (1994:1), "Soweto is a vast, impoverished and violent city that epitomises downtrodden black South Africa" and "no other name, apart from that of Nelson Mandela, evokes the images of black defiance of white rule that spring to mind at the mention of Soweto".

As I grew up in Soweto, I have seen many protests and participated in a few of them, including the famous one of 1976 when I was nine years old. De Gruchy (1979:169) reminds us that "until the middle of 1976 the black township of Soweto, on the southwestern border of Johannesburg was largely unknown outside of South Africa." (1979:169). Together with Lee, the famous and revered photographer Magubane adds,

> When the smoke of arson and the smell of tear gas had cleared, the illusion of white invulnerability and black docility lay shattered. The children had hurled defiance, hate and rubble that paves their streets at the system which governs them. They shook the country and sent the name Soweto around the world (Lee and Magubane 1983:13).

Indeed, the name Soweto has become "a symbol of protest against apartheid, a new symbol generated by young blacks who were no longer prepared to accept the situation in which they found themselves" (de Gruchy 1979:170). Holland describes Soweto thus:

> Though typical of black South Africa's living conditions, Soweto is also unique, a phenomenon in its own right…Soweto is the result of urbanisation perverted by apartheid. It is a forsaken and hostile place, even to most of the four million people who call it home. Although Soweto is known internationally as a city, Sowetans refer to it as a township (1994:1).

It is indeed a perversion, hostility and forsakenness of the apartheid architect's brainchild. It is no accident that this place bred revolutionaries, such as Archbishop Tutu, Sisulu, Mandela and Mothopeng etc. I, personally, have conducted Soweto tours especially for overseas tourists. Sowetans take pride in the fact that there is no place worldwide where there are at least two, Nobel Laureates who live in the same street except in Soweto, namely– the late Nelson Mandela and Archbishop Mpilo Tutu. These two icons add their political weight to Soweto's unique idiosyncrasies and her politics.

There were not many senior or older people of their age who had faith in the political liberation of this country. Their peers appeared to have given up, but the youth disagreed. This is crucial especially when we see the ideological, epistemological and philosophical transitioning from the parents' old ways of reasoning of the 'no-longer-modern' or 'traditional' in their outlook.

The *Financial Mail* newspaper in 1976 that, "a new generation has now grown up. Unlike many of their parents, who have developed an attitude of fatalistic resignation to second-hand citizenship, these younger men and women are impatient, radical, militant, brave and proud" (1976, Kane-Berman). The new thinking, ideas, beliefs and politics had forcefully asserted themselves. "Like all recently urbanised people, Sowetans are a transitional species caught between two cultures-traditional African and modern European. They have changed their…lifestyle more in the last seventy years than in the previous two hundred…" (Holland 1979:2). This change was in many ways and certainly, in ideas, thoughts, worldviews etc., triggered – urbanism. This precipitated a lot of things from politics to fashion or art. Should we call it post-modern! The fact was the Sowetan's old ideas, beliefs, thoughts, arguments etc.

were certainly defunct. This globally then-unknown township but with curious suddenness got the world's attention in a short space of time. De Gruchy mentions –

> But few people, if any, will deny that Soweto is a powerful symbol in the contemporary history of South Africa. As such, it is important for understanding the struggle of the church. First of all, Soweto has become an international symbol. By the time of Biko's death, Soweto was already a household word throughout much of Europe and North America… (1979:170).

Reverend Gittens affirms de Gruchy's point by saying the following:

> Soweto – a name almost unknown, even in South Africa, until a few months ago…but now a household word all around the world. The events of and since the sixteen of June nineteen seventy-six have ensured that Soweto and the urban black people of South Africa will never again be overlooked or ignored (1978: i).

This is no exaggeration what these two authors are describing. The late South African black journalist Nat Nakasa who died in 1965 was 'prophetic' about the Sowetans long before June 1976's epochal events – "Soweto lives fitfully. It lives precariously, dangerously, but with a relentless will to survive and make the best of what I think is an impossible job…" (Lee & Magubane 1983:20). Holland put it this way:

> A dynamic force that burst into Sowetan homes during the 1970s, a philosophy is known as Black Consciousness, successfully mobilised black resistance to apartheid. It was based on the premise that oppression was essentially a psychological problem. The new movement's charismatic leader, a young medical student named Steve Biko, believed blacks needed to shake off the inferiority complex bequeathed to them by generations of white masters demanding subservience. Biko achieved a new mood of militant pride among urban blacks. Within a few years, Black Consciousness was sweeping University campuses throughout the country. Achieving an unprecedented level of political education, it

> spread beyond the universities into thousands of schools, especially those in Soweto (1979:6).

Is Black Consciousness an African version of post-modern tailor-made for Sowetans? Not necessarily. But the irruption of Black Consciousness through June 1976 student unrest, had a formidable impact on Soweto in general and on the youth of Soweto in particular. For four and half days in May 1976, Steve Biko was a witness during the 1976 BPC-SASO trial. Some have speculated that this may have played a role in inspiring the 1976 protests, but it is not possible to prove it. Just over a year later, Steve Biko was found dead in police cell in Pretoria. Like his ideas, his death came at the time when the political and ideological soil was richly fertile to accelerate political change amidst the simmering anger of the youth. To the extent that they questioned the status quo in similar fashion as post-modernism does, Biko's ideas of 'Black Consciousness' can arguably be seen as post-modern in South African black politics of the 1970s.

It is important at this juncture to make a brief pause. The African people's ideas, beliefs, epistemologies and philosophies have often, if not always, been vehemently critical of oppressive, exploitative, colonial and imperialist cultures long before the emergence of post-modernism.

> For indigenous peoples, the critique of history is not unfamiliar, although it has now been claimed by post-modern theories. The idea of contested stories and multiple discourses about the past, by different communities, is closely linked to the politics of everyday contemporary indigenous life. It is very much a part of the fabric of communities that value oral ways of knowing…Many of these systems have since been reclassified as oral traditions rather than histories. (Smith 1999:33).

Biko as an indigenous African was acculturated in a similar manner to the one described above by Smith. Biko's sentiments were personally shared in – 'I Write What I Like' which is his memoir. Much has been and can be attributed to post-modernism, but this must not be overdone. This I admit. Smith is correct to remind us that our 'critique of history…has now been (sadly) claimed by post-modern theories'. Care should be taken that Black Consciousness

is not buried under the tag of postmodernism because it is an indigenous initiative. Espin (2007: 20-21) put in this way:

> Contemporary First-World post-modernism, by arguing that its views are the best philosophical explanations for and in today's globalised world, is but refashioning and preserving the same old and tired First-World colonial mentality which in past centuries set itself up as the world's standard and silenced most alternative voices. The alternative to First-World post-modern approaches is not the return to what has been called foundationalism. The alternative, I suggest, is intercultural dialogue, which can acknowledge and accept much of post-modernism's critique of foundationalism while refusing to share post-modernism's inclination to sterile particularisms or its uncritical and ideological legitimation (by omission) of the First-World's interest (2007:20-21).

Biko's ideologies were not modern or traditional but certainly beyond the modern thus post-modern in that sense. It was not long before they were speedily and courageously filtering into the fertile minds of young blacks, especially in Soweto, thus politically conscientising them.

> The death of Biko gained prominence largely because of the awakening of intense interest in South Africa and in young blacks in the aftermath of Soweto. For the outsider, Soweto…stood for the total rejection of apartheid by blacks. It suggested that revolutionary change was only a matter of time. It reinforced all that anti-apartheid movements in the Western world had been claiming through the years in their attempt to expose South Africa. Indeed, on the admission of government spokesmen, Soweto has done far more to damage the reputation of white South Africa than anything else in its history. It also has done far more to awaken sympathy and support for black South Africa than any political rhetoric has managed in the councils of the nations. (de Gruchy 1979:170).

In hindsight, Soweto in the mid-1970s became a breeding ground for a new post-traditional and post-modernistic beliefs, ideologies, philosophies and epistemologies.

> Black Consciousness had taught the youth to examine critically all the forces that enabled whites to keep blacks subjugated, and the students concluded that their parents' generation was culpable by default. Believing, for example, that their parents had been lulled into political passivity in the numerous beerhalls provided by Soweto's white-run municipality, the students had singled out these drinking establishments as arson targets; sixty-seven of them had been burnt to the ground by the end of June 1976. 'It is our parents who have let things go on far too long without doing anything'. They have failed, 'was a typical comment from one of the marching students to a reporter in 1976'… In a society which traditionally venerated age as the source of communal authority, many parents were no longer able to control or even influence the behaviour of their children (Holland 1994:8).

In light of this quote, I suggest that if Black Consciousness was a form of postmodernism, it was also very different from conventional postmodernism, because,

> there are many modernities, many different processes of modernisations, and many different modernisms; and the same can be said for their assertively post-prefixed expressions. Modernity and post-modernity are not singular and homogenous concepts to be categorised neatly by their opposing essences…Every contemporary commentary on modernity and post-modernity must begin by recognising this multiplicity of forms and meanings (Jones, Natter & Schatzki1993:113).

It may therefore be possible therefore to talk of Sowetan's post-modernism. The fact is that a "post-modern outlook is characteristically suspicious of [rigid] definitions…" (Keesmaat and Walsh 2004:22). All in all, and for a long time, Soweto has not been a domicile of political conservatism. It has been a place of ideological difference, radical politics and activism in which a new ideological shift took shape.

> Most academics and art critics would agree that what was once defined as "modernism" in art, architecture, even philosophy has been supplanted by something 'postmodern' in recent years, though hardly anyone will venture to say exactly what the new 'postmodern' worldview is…Both art critics and academics agree something postmodern has happened, but no one knows exactly what it is. (Eberle 1994:18).

Eberle could also be referring to Soweto. One of the distinct characteristics pre-1976 Soweto was the glaring fragmentation, which was a "consequence of imperialism" (Smith 1999:28). In was in this situation of fragmentation, in which, "many older blacks … [had] to overcome years of conditioned subservience" (Berman 1978:106) that the Black Consciousness ideas of Steve Biko were introduced. "Even if many of the younger pupils have not fully absorbed the philosophy of Black Consciousness, they do seem to have readily identified with its spirit – even to no greater extent than giving enthusiastic black power salutes" (Berman 1978:106).

This is an accurate description of the Soweto of my youth.

> Post-modernism is, as I see it, first of all, a very pointed rejection of all forms of epistemological foundationalism, as well as of its ubiquitous, accompanying meta-narratives that so readily claim to legitimise all our knowledge, judgements, decisions, and actions. (Van Huyssteen 1997:2)

According to Van Huyssteen therefore, post-modernism rejected all forms of epistemological foundationalism and meta-narratives. The very idea of "I Write What I Like" under which Biko wrote many essays strikes one as a defiant post-modernistic idea. This defiance is what characterized the 1976 Soweto protests:

> Soweto, it appears, was not the result of some organisation's planning, but was part of an interconnected web of circumstances and events. And central to this was the rise and…impact of Black Consciousness within and upon the black community. Soweto could not have happened if the message of

> black dignity and protest, a message which had its greatest impact upon young black students, had not been preached and heard during the years before it took place. Black schoolteachers have subsequently remarked…that most of their pupils, even in junior school, were highly politicised. And if some were not politically aware before Soweto, they were soon deeply affected by it. This is a new phenomenon in the South African situation, and it is of tremendous consequence for the future. To use a Latin American term, the younger generation of blacks have been "conscientised" (de Gruchy 1979:171-172).

I concur with de Gruchy in that 'Soweto could not have happened if the message of black dignity and protest … had not been preached and heard'. The BCM left a deep consciousness on all the people of Soweto. It is just sad that "the politics of consciousness-raising and cultural empowerment that inspired the Black Consciousness Movement have all but disappeared in contemporary South Africa" (Mangcu 2012:296).

1.5. Post-modernism – Further Descriptions

A number of post-modern scholars agree that it is not easy to define or describe what post-modernism is, however. For this study, it is necessary to take into cognizance that post-modernism as a philosophy relates to and introduces my post-foundational approach – the latter being the main methodology in this study. To this end postmodernism is only useful insofar as it lays the ground for my deployment pf post-foundationalism. As Eberle (1994:22) put it,

> Post-modernism is nevertheless a useful term for our purposes if we allow it to denote a sort of late-twentieth-century zeitgeist that senses that we are ankle-deep in the pieces of a past that has inexplicably crumbled and that we have come to accept this state of affairs as normal. For better or worse, it is where we are as a culture, but it is also where we must begin.

For my purpose postmodernism is useful as one of the strategies for resisting and contesting the dominant meta-narrative of modernity (Lyotard 1984: xxiv).

> To the post-modern mind, meta-narratives are merely human constructs, fictive devices through which we impose an order on history and make it subject to us (hence they may be termed "master" narratives) … On a post-modern reading, meta-narratives, just like absolutist claims to "reality," invariably serve to legitimate the dominant power structures and to trivialise, marginalise or suppress those whose stories and experiences do not fit the metanarrative. Post-modernism, says Terry Eagleton, thus "signals the death of such 'meta-narratives' whose secretly terroristic function was to ground and legitimate the illusion of 'universal' human history." (Middleton and Walsh 1995:71).

However, Espin (2007:21 has noted that not all postmodernisms are allied to social justice.

> First-World post-modernism can become an attempt at ethically justifying self-sufficiency and the silencing of the voice of the others, especially when the others might either challenge our self-sufficiency, our particular cultural hubris, our silence in situations of injustice, or the asymmetric and unfair power structures of globalisation, which benefit many of the First-World proponents of post-modernity (2007:21).

This is relevant to our situation in South Africa where the First World has dominated through apartheid and colonisation for a long time. On the positive side there are a few post-modernist thinkers - such as Michel Foucault, Jacques Derrida and Richard Rorty - whose views must be taken heed of.

> Many voices have joined the post-modern chorus. But of these, three looms as both central and paradigmatic – Michel Foucault, Jacques Derrida, and Richard Rorty. They constitute a trio of post-modern prophets who sometimes sing in unison but more often produce the kind of discordant music that we would expect in the post-modern era (Grenz 1996:123).

I, therefore, with qualification, support this post-modernism as a premise or launching space for post-foundationalism which will be used as the ley methodology in this study, and a lens through which we can view contemporary society. Postmodernism also helps us to understand the explosion of communication technologies during our times – what Gibbons 1999:38-39 calls the 'mediatisation process':

> The mediatisation process is the one that more than any other continues to affect and change social life to even greater extents…the media culture is increasingly changing from a print culture to an *electronic culture.* The roles played by electronic and print media differ between cultures, of course…This is due to the accessibility of electronic media. These media are, of course, not more 'real' than print media, but they are more reminiscent of reality. Television, especially, looks like reality; it is the one medium whose codes everyone can understand, even children (in Gibbons 1999:38-39).

Mediatisation is certainly happening in our country, where foreign movie and news stations such as CNN and BBC have penetrated the local market. Many homes even in informal settlements, such as RDP housing areas in Soweto have satellite dishes. Through the internet, people can communicate across borders.

In light of this, Gibbons (1999:42) says that "no one can seriously question that the mass media have drastically changed people's everyday lives. A simple indicator of this fact is the amount of time that people spend with the mass media every day. The mass media have without question taken time away from other social practices" Building on the ideas of Baudrillard, Gibbons continues saying,

> We live in an age of hyperreality, … a world in which the distinction between reality and the models of reality has become blurred, and in which the models produce, or at least define, reality… (1999: 50).

1.6. Post-foundational Approach

Having described the character of post-modernism, it is proper now to introduce my methodological approach in this thesis, namely, the post-foundational approach. Post-modernism created an epistemologically conducive atmosphere for us to move into postfoundationalism.

The post-foundational approach necessarily must be preceded by an examination of what the foundational entails.

1.6.1. Foundationalism defined

Foundationalism broadly can be defined as a rigid form of self-authorisation. "Epistemologically, foundationalism at all times implies the holding of a position inflexibly and infallibly…" (Park 2010:1). In foundationalism, static knowledge is held without question. Such knowledge is often grounded in parochial and inflexible ideologies. In this way, infallibility tends to be advocated. This breeds self-authorising epistemologies which often are rooted in religiosity.

> The foundationalist strategy seems to work for one reason: the paradigm of foundationalism is hegemonic to a large degree. Its dominance allowed foundationalism to frame the discussion in its terms… (Marchart 2007:13).

For centuries this has been the epistemological and philosophical stance adopted by modernity so that some have concluded that "foundationalism is a feature of the epistemology of modernism" (Van Huyssteen's 1999:62). As such, "foundationalism fails to recognise the subjective and contextual aspects of knowledge. The absolute relativism of non-foundationalism limits the scope of knowledge and research to the local and subjective to such an extent that they become virtually irrelevant" (Eliastam 2014:47). This blindness breeds self-authorisation.

It is for these reasons that foundationalism, as has been described above, will be inappropriate as a tool or methodology in this thesis to navigate these treacherous philosophical stormy waters.

Finally, as a preamble to his views on post-foundational, Van Huyssteen (1997:2) defines foundationalism as "the thesis that all our beliefs can be justified by appealing to some item of knowledge that is self-evident or indubitable".

1.7. Post-foundational defined

Although the definitions of several scholars on post-foundational will be used, that of Müller will be my main point of departure. In part, this is because his definition has an affinity and harmonizes with post-modernism, though it is substantially not post-modernistic. Secondly because the definition of post-foundational by Müller is suitable for integration with the narrative approach. The Müller approach is relational and contextual – both qualities being important for my thesis.

For Eliastam, a "post-foundational approach offers the possibility of avoiding the naïve realism of foundationalist approaches, without surrendering to the absolute relativity of non-foundationalist approaches" (2011:29). In this study I am going to make sure that I do not surrender "to the absolute relativity' (Eliastam 2011:29). This is the hidden temptation that is built into post-foundational. I am particularly attracted to the ability of post-foundational to create a platform for multi-voices, because "post-foundationalism searches for truth in multi-disciplinary dialogue" Meylahn (2006:998) and as such it is a disruptive methodology (Marchart2007:16).

Meylahn (2006) suggests that in the work of Van Huyssteen (year?) one encounters an understanding of post-foundationalism which is akin to postmodernism and opposed to unquestioning certainty, rigid objectivity and oppressive forms of universality. Such an approach will assist me to analyze the Apartheid past – a past in which black perspectives were suppressed - with openness and freedom.

In my view, he post-foundational approach is amenable to African worldviews and African spirituality. What attracts me to it is "the Postfoundationalist choice for the relational quality of religious experience thus opens up the possibility of interpreting religiously the way that we

believe that God comes to us in and through our manifold experiences of nature, persons, ideas, emotions, places, things, and events." (Van Huyssteen 1997:29). I would argue that although post-foundationalism has never been named as such in African spirituality, elements of it have always been in it. This point is made well by (Linda Tuhiwai Smith 1999:33-34) of the Maori tribe, when she notes that,

> …for indigenous peoples, the critique of history is not unfamiliar, although it has now been claimed by post-modern theories. The idea of contested stories and multiple discourses about the past, by different communities, is closely linked to the politics of everyday contemporary indigenous life. It is very much a part of the fabric of communities that value oral ways of knowing. These contested accounts are stored within genealogies, within the landscape, within weavings and carvings, even within the personal names that many people carried. How these histories were stored was through their systems of knowledge. Many of these systems have since been reclassified as oral traditions rather than histories. (Smith

The 'oral traditions rather than histories' of which Smith writes existed long before the arrival of both postmodernism and post-foundationalism. In and of itself post-foundationalism is not going to solve all our problems. However, post-foundationalism is helpful insofar as it can be mobilised to affirm already existing African epistemological notions.

According to Müller (2011:3), whose particular approach I have adopted in this study, post-foundational thinking "is always concrete, local, and contextual, but at the same time reaches beyond local contexts to transdisciplinary concerns. It is contextual, but at the same time in acknowledgement of how our epistemologies are shaped by tradition". In terms of methodology and orientation, Müller (2011:3) suggests that "the postfoundationalist approach forces us to listen first to the stories of people in real-life situations". At the same time, it helps us make the "shift of emphasis from the individual to social, from subjective towards discourse, which constitutes a new epistemology in the social sciences, is also part and parcel of the Postfoundationalist movement" (Müller 2011:3). I find it helpful that Müller applies his post-foundational approach to the discipline of practical theology in specific ways. For him,

> ...Postfoundationalist Practical Theology has the versatility and dynamic in moving between various disciplines, moving on a continuum between social sciences and humanities and even further to natural sciences like evolutionary biology and cognitive science. From this perspective, Practical Theology is not only a subject but also an act. (2011:4).

To this end, Müller has developed seven movements designed to make his approach to post-foundationalism implementable. In these steps, the narrative methodology is built in.

Müller's approach enables me to process the story of Adriaan Vlok and to analyse it against the South African objective of national reconciliation. To this end, each subsequent chapter is built around some of the seven steps of Müller's post-foundationalism.

1.8. Müller's Understanding of Post-foundational within Practical Theology

1.8.1. A specific context is described

This thesis was born out of my relationship between Adriaan Johannes Vlok the former apartheid Minister of Law and Order (Minister of Police). In the process of our many conversations and confrontations, it occurred to me that both Vlok and I, each of us in our own ways, are interested in Christian reconciliation. It is out of this relational context that I was persuaded to do this research study.
In the subsections below, the seven steps of Müller's post-foundational approach which will be used throughout the thesis, are as follows:

1.8.2. Listening and Describing

Using Müller's post-foundational methodology, I will analyse Volk's story, as 'objectively' as possible. In this regard, the narrative approach will be used to listen to the story of Vlok, to tap into his experiences and to describe it.

1.8.3. Interpreting Experiences

In keeping with the post-foundational approach, I will not use terms such as 'informants', 'research subjects', 'research data' or 'field work'. Instead of field work, I will speak of 'co-research' and instead 'informants' or 'research subjects', I will speak of 'co-researchers'. To process and interpret the resulting co-research I will use the narrative approach.

1.8.4. Describing Experiences

In executing my co-research, I will mobilise the insights of my co-researchers, especially my chief co-researcher, namely Adriaan Vlok as well as the voices that come for literature and media sources.

1.8.5. Reflecting on God's Presence

Nothing has surprised me more than the deep relationship I have been able to form with Adriaan Volk. Given my background as a Sowetan, Vlok is not the person I expected to relate to. Indeed, our relationship started on a hostile note. Both of us have spent most of our adult lives under the system of Apartheid which prohibited relations between blacks and whites. For me therefore, our relationship is a result and proof of God's intervention.

1.8.6. Interdisciplinary Investigation

As noted in the sections defining post-foundationalism above, post-foundationalism is interdisciplinary. This means that it is a methodology that enables multiple and diverse voices to speak. Necessarily, the outcomes of a post-foundational methodology may not be conventional and straightforward, but they will be diverse complex and multi-disciplinary.

1.8.7. Beyond the Local Community

Müller encourages researchers to endeavour to "allow all the different stories of the research to develop into a new story of understanding that points beyond the local community, not to generalise…" (2004:304). This can be further applied through the means of the narrative approach.

1.9. The Narrative Approach

Because stories or narratives are contextual, unique, personal, experiential and real, I shall be using the narrative approach to unpack the story of Adriaan Vlok. Additionally, I will use the relevant literature, some of which will be reviewed below. I am convinced that the unlikely story of Vlok's conversion/reconciliation journey can be best known or investigated through a narrative approach.

1.10. Co-researchers

As explained above the people normally called interviewees of research subjects will be called co-researchers in this thesis. This is because in terms of narrative research, "we view people not as 'research subjects', but as 'research participants' or 'co-researchers'... In other words, research `is not conducted on them, but with them. (Park 2010:4)

In this thesis we have more than fifteen (15) co-researchers from whom I managed to derive information about Vlok, including Vlok himself. For the purposes of this study I will make use of nine (9) co-researchers. All co-researchers explicitly permitted me to use their information/data and this was done through the applicable university policies.

These interviews were conducted over three years 2015-2017. On average, the interviews took about twenty-five minutes though some took more than thirty minutes. Vlok's interviews took place at various times and at different times and were the longest – between fifty and ninety minutes.

The co-researchers were from different social and economic backgrounds. Some of them are victims of Apartheid, members of the Vlok family, his friends, his colleagues and his domestic worker. For example, his domestic worker is Sarafina Ntombana Zwane. She worked for the Vlok family for fifty-two (52) years. And, there is Leon Wessels who was an apartheid cabinet minister, a former colleague. The rest of the co-researchers were involved in anti-apartheid activism. epistemes and philosophies which influenced the apartheid proponents such as Vlok.

1.11. Literature Review

1.11.1. Scholars on Reconciliation

Many scholars wrote about reconciliation from an international or the African (continent) perspective and some refer to the South African situation as an example.

Walter Wink (1998 & 1998), wrote two books on that same year – 1998. He focused on violence and reconciliation. He basically traces violence from spiritual powers such as demonic or satanic forces. And sees authentic reconciliation in a given country as the impish Satan's defeat or fall from his entrenched positions. He uses post-apartheid South Africa, among other countries, as an ideal example to prove his hermeneutic key (of the reality of spiritual powers)

as enshrined from Pauline's texts such as Ephesians chapters - two and six and Colossians chapter two.

Katongole (2017), a Ugandan theologian, but now based in the USA. He essentially focusses on the modern Africa, as the continent wrestles with the concept of reconciliation especially from the post-colonial era. This is written from a Christian perspective. He, first of all, sees reconciliation as the gift that must be welcomed. This he emphasise because the African continent is riddled with many social challenges such as poverty, war, violence and etc. For him, reconciliation must be traced from creation and to the ecclesiology. He mentioned a number of African countries that had to deal with reconciliation and South African's reconciliation narrative is distinctly addressed.

Roberts Schreiter (1992) wrote two books, both in the same year 1992. In both books he deals with the reconciliation from the theological, biblical and (Christian) spirituality point of views. These two volumes can be seen as one volume for they delve deep into the richness of reconciliation especially the horizontality and verticality of reconciliation.

John de Gruchy (2002), a South African theologian. In his book – 'Reconciliation: restoring Justice' traces the South African history and Christianity's position as far as reconciliation is concerned. He then further goes to the biblical aspect, especially the Pauline theology as he (Paul) deals with reconciliation. De Gruchy's work on this theme 'reconciliation' is arguably encyclopedic in nature, as it details reconciliation. It is as if it was South African 'tailor-made'!

Pumla Gobodo-Madikizela (2003), 'A Human Being Died That Night: A Story of Forgiveness' book - it is basically about Madikizela interviewing Eugene de Kock who was an Apartheid's cold-serial-murderer who was clandestinely paid by the previous regime. Many people died in the horrific manner under his supervision. The book climaxed where Gobodo-Madikizela visits de Kock where he's imprisoned. It is here where she surprisingly reaches out to him as she was overwhelmed by compassion where she eventually sobbed by discovering de Kock's humanity.

Tinyiko Maluleke (2016 and 2020) In the newspaper article entitled – "We need to do reconciliation differently" laments that reconciliation together with truth, forgiveness etc. are left in ruins. He emphasised that he's still believed in the notion of reconciliation. But, he says, it must be done differently and right. For Apartheid didn't only make Black and White enmity

but also between Blacks and Blacks, hence Black-on-Black violence e.g. xenophobia. He also unashamedly brought the issue of the land as integral part of authentic reconciliation. It was again in early 2020 that he wrote that 'the Christianization of Africa cannot be historically untangled from its colonization' - this was done in article named – 'Racism en Route: An African Perspective'. These two articles are pivotal for this study for they both deal with Christianity and racism which this research attempts to address.

Desmond Mpilo Tutu (2000), 'No Future without Forgiveness' – is about Tutu's pastoral anecdotal and reflections of the TRC's findings of which a number of them were Apartheid's victims chilling and horrific stories. Tutu's reflections are tinged with the message of hope and a deep Christian spirituality especially the emphasis of forgiveness.

Cilliers Breytenbach (2006) is one of the New Testament scholars (essayists) in honouring Bernard C. Lategan. He focused on the biblical meaning, historical meaning (especially within the Rome/Greek context) and the etymological roots of the word 'reconciliation'. This is of importance for this study since the core of this research is about reconciliation. The exciting thing about Breytenbach is that his academic-theological acuity goes into the Apartheid's South Africans whereby he challenged his New Testament's colleagues about their political stance in not condemning Apartheid. This is very explicit in this volume as follows -

> "One is saddened by the fact that this professional society which, by the Constitution is explicitly ecumenical and non-racial, has never chosen to demonstrate the relevance that its study of the NT as the society in which its member did their research. It must be stated from the outset, that the society did reject all forms of discrimination and that some individual members of the society were clear and decisive in their critique against and rejection of apartheid, nevertheless the silence of the majority of its members and the commitment of some of the society leading members took a neutral scientific stance until the end of apartheid is revealing" (2010:337).

It must be mentioned that there are other scholars below in this study, who have strengthened the argument especially in the area of reconciliation.

Regarding resources or materials written about Vlok, there's not much, except columns, anecdotes in some books and articles – these have been utilised in this study. Further, I have applied or used information that I managed to collect and possibly 'rummaged' from Vlok himself, as I interviewed him and others who furnished me with valuable information about Vlok. This information too is distinctly made available here in this study (almost all the appendices).

1.11.2. Scholars on Methodologies

In the same manner, there were few scholars, for the methodologies (post-foundational and narrative approaches) I'll deploy in this study to bolster my argument. I have relied heavily on one or two scholars albeit I have employed others to complement these.

Julian C. Muller (2004; 2009; 2011; 2015 & 2017) is a veteran theologian and scholar of Practical Theology based here in South Africa. A staunch believer in post-foundational approach and has written numerous articles mainly on post-foundational to critique the foundationalism hence can be acclaimed as a post-foundational theologian. Most of his work debunks the obviousness and subtlety of modernism and its 'cousin' i.e. foundationalism especially within the Christian theology's milieu. His notable 'seven movements' post-foundational approach will primarily be employed in this study as the key methodology.

Van Huyssteen, J.W. (1997 & 2006) is a theologian and scholar originally from South Africa but now based in the USA. His works emphases the significance of the integration approach in doing proper Christian theology with integrity. By this he means, if possible, all disciplines from science - such as biology, history, zoology, anthropology, etymology etc. must be employed or integrated with Christian theology and spirituality to have a 'admirable' or authentic theological outcome. In the absence of this, it will inevitably birth foundationalism. It is out of this context that he promotes post-foundational approach as the needed methodology in the post-modern world.

There are other post-foundational scholars or post-foundational theologian that I have integrated in this research work to bolster the abovementioned scholars.

1.12. The Uniqueness of this Study

In light of the literature review provided, this study will enhance the literature on reconciliation attempts in South Africa and it will do so from a person biography point of view. This is precisely the gap in current reconciliation literature. That gap is: the conspicuous absence of an (prime) example of a South African who participated in and led in carrying out Apartheid's atrocities and yet who has embarked on the journey of conversion and reconciliation and has done so as a practicing Christian.

In my estimation, Adriaan Vlok, is that who, with and in his own life, has attempted the shift from perpetrator of Apartheid atrocities to a contrite and dedicated builder of the new South Africa. While there are political motivations and implications for his actions, in my interactions with Vlok he always made it clear in the Jesus Christ who motivates him to try to be and to do what he is trying to do. For this reason, I have made his story central to my thesis so that Vlok himself becomes **'A Practical Theological perspective on Reconciling Relationships in a Post-Apartheid South Africa'.**

1.13. Conclusions

In this chapter, I introduced the main focus of the study. After that, I delved into the definition and discussion of the key theories and methodologies that will be used in this thesis, namely, modernism, postmodernism, foundationalism, post-foundationalism, Black Consciousness, the Black Consciousness Movement and how these (may) interact with African notions of struggle and spirituality. I then moved on to introduce the particular approach to post-foundational which is used by Julian Müller, because I will use his approach throughout this study. I focused specifically his conception of the seven movements of post-foundationalism. I also argued that the potential originality of this study, lies in my focus on the life of someone who not merely participated in Apartheid atrocities, but was a leader in those days - someone who nevertheless changes his ways in response to the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Chapter 2
Reconciliation Revisited

2.1. Introduction

In this chapter, we will focus on the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC). The TRC was a South African democratic institution or instrument appointed by the democratic government to probe, investigate, and if possible grant amnesty to all those who intentionally committed atrocities during apartheid. Of particular interest to me will be the appearance of Vlok before the TRC. However, I will first focus on the TRC, its history, objectives, diversity, and challenges. To do this properly I will also refer to the contents of the final TRC reports, especially the reflections of the TRC Chairperson, Archbishop Tutu. This chapter, like all chapters to follow, will be written against the backdrop of the relevant steps, among the seven post-foundational steps of Julian Müller.

2.2. Post-foundationalism and 'Seven Movements'

In this chapter only movements numbered one, named – 'a specific context is described' which mainly furnishes us with the specific and described context. In this case it is about the relationship of Vlok and the researcher/author of this study. It is of importance that Vlok is understood within the context of the TRC as he did appear before it. Where necessary a narrative approach will be used predominantly and will be augmented by the literature review approach especially regarding Vlok since he was a public figure during the apartheid years.

Again, movement numbered two would also be applied – 'listening and describing' for there a number of stories that were captured during this research through literature review methodology thus need to be 'listened to and be aptly described' especially they relate with the TRC. Another movement will be used which is 'iinterpreting experiences', numbered three. Since concepts, meanings and words, especially Afrikaner and Zulu/Xhosa words will be highlighted and described within the contexts of experiences. The term 'co-research' simply means those I have/shall have interviewed. They will be referred to as 'co-researchers'. Methods used: The narrative approach in conjunction with co-researchers will be applied. Feedback will be applied especially to Vlok and the chief co-researcher aimed at reflecting on our research to ascertain that I represented their stories and meanings properly. Interpreting is

inescapable thus unavoidable especially with the inherited political and ideological colourful tapestry.

The following one is numbered four – 'describing experiences'. Explorations of perceptions, discourses and meanings from experiences of the co-researchers will be embarked upon and their impact evaluated. It is inescapable that experiences will be described to make sense. Finally, the last movement named, 'beyond the local community' which is numbered seven. Müller encourages researchers to endeavour to "allow all the different stories of the research to develop into a new story of understanding that points beyond the local community, not to generalise…" (2004:304). This can be further applied through the means of the narrative approach.

All of the above isolated movements are relevant for this chapter, for they are inevitably contextual and experiential thus a need to be listened to, described and interpreted. And this chapter is amassed with narratives and context as it directly relates with the TRC, of which this chapter is about. I will also use the narrative approach to unpack the complex TRC victim and perpetrator account. According to Müller,

> The postfoundationalist approach forces us to first listen to the stories of people in real-life situations. It has not got the aim of merely describing a general context, but of confronting us with a specific and concrete situation. (2009:5).

Some of the TRC witness accounts were sincere, confrontational and cathartic. Throughout this chapter, I will use a combination of the postfoundational approach, narrative methodology and literature review

2.3. Why the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC)?

The reason for my focus on the TRC in this study is that Vlok appeared before the TRC to apply for amnesty. The first meeting of the TRC took place in the small city of East London, Eastern Cape on 15 April 1996 under the chairpersonship of Emeritus Archbishop Desmond Tutu. The TRC was a Commission that was established by the first democratic government

following the Promotion of National Unity Act (much of this will be discussed below). In terms of this act, the TRC was mandated to probe the gross violation of human rights between the 1st of March 1960 to 10th May 1994.

According to Lapsley and Karakashian (2012:164), the genesis of the TRC goes back to the moment when promotion of national unity so that "before being finalised it became the most debated legislation of the first democratic Parliament and many proposals were put forward." The bill was noted how that "the Promotion of National Unity and Reconciliation Act was signed into law on the 19th July 1995, by President Nelson Mandela. This was the first example anywhere of a Truth Commission that was established not by a presidential decree but by a Parliament as representative of the people" (Graybill (2002:3 & 4).

2.4. The Objectives of the TRC

Some of the key provisions of the Promotion of National Unity Act were:

> (a) establishing as complete a picture as possible of the causes, nature and extent of the gross violations of human rights which were committed during the period from 1 March 1960 to the cut-off date, including the antecedents, circumstances, factors and context of such violations, as well as the perspectives of the victims and the motives and perspectives of the persons responsible for the Commission of the violations, by conducting investigations and holding hearings;
> (b) facilitating the granting of amnesty to persons who make full disclosure of all the relevant facts relating to acts associated with a political objective and comply with the requirements of this Act;
> (c) establishing and making known the fate or whereabouts of victims and by restoring the human and civil dignity of such victims by granting them an opportunity to relate their accounts of the violations of which they are the victims, and by recommending reparation measures in respect of them;
> (d) compiling a report providing as comprehensive an account as possible of the activities and findings of the Commission contemplated in paragraphs (a), (b) and (c), and which contains recommendations of measures to prevent the future violations of human rights (Act 34 of 1995**).**

2.5. The Diversity of the TRC

In his introductory remarks to the final report of the TRC, its chairperson, Archbishop Tutu indicated that the intention of the TRC was to address the wounds of the South African past, comprehensively. Amongst other things, Tutu highlighted that the idea of the TRC did not originate with him and his deputy. He also indicated the commission's legal basis, the mandate as well as the gender, race, confession and disciplinary diversity of membership.

Apartheid, among other things, was based on a hatred and animosity towards the black majority, resulting the lowering of their dignity as well as their exclusion form economics, sports, culture, and politics. Though these exclusions eventually had theological and spiritual consequences, Maluleke (2017:43) notes that when the Dutch colonialist first settled in the South Africa, "their initial interests were commercial and economic. After all, the Cape was historically supposed to be only a halfway station between India and the Netherlands" (Maluleke 2017:43). Christianity should at least be expected to be interested in spiritual enterprise, but it was not entirely so with its arrival here, in South Africa. Commerce and politics also played central role. It is no wonder that the first apartheid Prime Minister DF Malan and Dutch Reformed pastor is reputed to have understood the role of the church as that of supporting the state and the Afrikaner nation:

> The church has a special calling with regard to the Afrikaner people. The church sees it as its duty to be nationalistic, to guard the specific national interests, and to teach the people to see the hand of God in its history and to keep alive an awareness of its national calling and purpose. The church would serve its calling to the Kingdom of God and existence of the Afrikaner people best by keeping itself as a church, and also the ministers in their official capacity, strictly outside the arena of party politics unless religious and moral principles are at stake or the interests of the Kingdom of God justify such action (Loubser 1987: 22 & 23)

Most of the important hearings of the Commission have been conducted in public in the full glare of television lights. For this reason, Desmond Tutu, in his introduction to the TRC report, could insist that, no one in South Africa would ever again be able to say, 'I did not know'.

Many wounds were laid open in the TRC hearings. Tutu also suggested that the TRC hearings revealed that South Africa consisted not only of victims but survivors and innovators who saw beyond narrow conceptions of punitive justice. Instead, Tutu argued that through the TRC process, South Africa not only enabled ordinary South Africans to tell their stories of pain, but the TRC pursued the broader and nobler objectives of restorative justice, national reconciliation and forgiveness. And yet there were times during the hearings when the stories told, the experiences expressed, and the pains shared were so much that even Archbishop Tutu broke down and cried. In this, was the TRC hearings became an arena for unburdening and for healing.

While conceding that "there is no denying that the basic idea behind the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) is a noble one" Maluleke (1997:324) nevertheless raises a few critical points:

> Two significant "facts" about the TRC need to be openly acknowledged: namely that it was part of the political settlement which catapulted the ANC into power without having been militarily victorious; and secondly that the Promotion of National Unity and Reconciliation Act No. 34 of 1995 defines and put significant limits to what the TRC can/should do and achieve. Without questioning the extent to which the negotiating political parties were desirous of national healing; it is true to say that at that stage it was political power and impunity rather than national healing that were at stake. As a result, the Act is formulated in such a way as to put the spotlight on the 'foot soldiers' rather than the persons or institutions which planned and legitimised gross violations of human rights-letting most politicians off the hook. (1997:327)

In many parts of Africa, the word used to describe interdependence between humans and between humans and other creatures is called Ubuntu - the essence of being human. Fortunately, and for our purposes, Ubuntu finds an epistemological and philosophical home in the post-foundational approach of Müller:

> Ubuntu, like all philosophies, is not an isolated entity. It is part of a dynamic network of ideas, discourses, and cultures. Research on ubuntu can, therefore, not be done in isolation. It

> needs to be explored in its relation to other issues such as race, gender, ability and disability, and space. Interdisciplinary work is complex and difficult, but part and parcel of the post-foundational approach…The starting point for this interpretation is always a very specific, local, concrete narrative, which is taken from the narratives recorded by the researcher (2017).

I find this contextual and comprehensive take on Ubuntu, which incorporates race, gender, ability and disability very helpful or my own purposes. This means that I will be able to use Ubuntu also as an analytical category in my engagement with the story of Adriaan Vlok.

2.6. The TRC Challenges and Dilemmas

The following are actual and real dramatic events that took place within the TRC's chambers. They confront one to the core of one's being and also plunge one into the very corridors and chambers, absorbing one in the experience. It is enriching to do so. One is left challenged about this beloved country of ours when you visualize these painful yet cathartic sessions.

2.6. 1. Thando Ntlhola: Watching TRC's Proceedings

One Sunday evening in 1999, my daughter Thando Ntlhola (nine years old at the time) and I, were sitting side by side, watching a television report or series on the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) presented by a radical left-wing Afrikaner author-cum-journalist Max du Preez. I saw that Thando was glued to the television screen. Watching what happened to black people and the apartheid atrocities they were subjected to, stirred up her not-yet-mature emotions. It struck me again that night that all this had happened, and we had lived through the vortex of this iniquitous system. Some of the stories that night were particularly heart-rending with horrific and repugnant pictures of sheer brutality. Inescapably, they evoked feelings of anger and revenge in me. As black people watching that programme, I knew that we were indeed *' be si hlukumeza*' (Zulu word to mean - for how one feels when one has been wronged — or as the liberation theologians call it, "being sinned against") by the previous regime.

My daughter was also horrified when she realised that children as old as fifteen, or even less, were tortured and killed. Her shock from this horror reminded me of what JP Opperman (a former apartheid intelligence officer and Commander of a hit squad) once said – "depending

on the circumstances, I do not have problems with killing children" (Asmal et all. 1996:74). Her racial innocence disappeared forever in a few minutes. She wondered, had she been child during that period, if she would have been victimised like those other children. We were both unconsciously plunged into a state of shock and it was a cathartic session. This, paradoxically was enlightening but simultaneously sad.

My daughter's episode as she was watching the TRC's sessions and her 'visual reality' of the commission through du Preez, made an indelible imprint on my mind that I cannot erase to this day. Whenever the acronym TRC or its full name, is mentioned it inevitably triggers that moment when our living-room was momentarily transformed into a political space.

I must mention that many years later, unbeknown then to my daughter and me, we would meet and meaningfully interface with Vlok. And this interaction with Vlok happened long before I even thought of and explored the possibility of going on this academic expedition. It was intriguing to see my daughter's mixed emotion response to Vlok – given that epochal event when we both were watching that du Preez' TV programme.

2.6.2 Rabbi Schimmel: The Challenge of Forgiveness

A very curious observer of our TRC was a Jewish rabbi who witnessed a mild altercation between a fellow rabbi and a fundamental Christian. What Schimmel describes is almost astounding –

> Among those participants in the forum was a white police officer. This man had ordered that two houses in a black township be set on fire. Seven adults and five children were inside, and all twelve were killed. The amnesty rule freed the police officer from any legal obligation to the families of the victims, and recounted his story, lamenting how much he regretted his action, audience members began to weep, eventually giving him a standing ovation. I was aghast. I am sorry but this is ridiculous, I called out…You cannot sadistically murder twelve innocent people by burning them alive and just say 'I am sorry'" the rabbi complains and continues but agitated one Christian participant in the forum

> immediately attacked the rabbi for his comment, "that is because you Jews do not know how to forgive". (Schimmel 2002:8).

The temptation to 'force' only one particular understanding of forgiveness on the country in general and the victims in particular, was sometimes too strong. This episode at the TRC chronicled by this rabbi gives one such occasion when this happened. The following is another harrowing experience interestingly witnessed and reported by Wilhelm Verwoerd.

2.6.3. Wilhelm Verwoerd.

Verwoerd is the grandchild of the infamous apartheid architect Hendrik Frensch Verwoerd (Kenney 2016:59).

> Wilhelm Verwoerd recorded a conversation he had with a young woman: What makes me angry about the TRC and Tutu is that they are putting pressure on me to forgive . . . I do not know if I will ever be able to forgive. I carry this ball of anger within me and I do not know where to begin dealing with it. The oppression was bad, but what is much worse, what makes me even angrier, is that they are trying to dictate my forgiveness… Forced forgiveness is destructive, only the individual herself or himself can choose to forgive or not to forgive South Africans cannot forgive perpetrators on behalf of individual victims. (Graybill 2002:50 & 53).

2.6.4. Stompei Sepei

Another challenging case to hear, was the one about the murder of Stompei Sepei – a young Sowetan teenage activist who was strangely connected to the late political heavyweight Winnie Mandela.

> These hearings looked into the kidnapping and murder of Stompei Sepei…the testimony placing Winnie Mandela at the centre of these events was overwhelming, she vehemently denied any responsibility. At the end of the ninth day of testimony, after Tutu pleaded with Madikizela-Mandela to show some sign of contrition, she replied tersely: "I am saying it is true, things went wrong. I fully agree with that and for that part

> of those painful years when they went wrong . . . for that I am deeply sorry". The hearings ended "on that false note" (Graybill 2002:52)

As one commentator put it, Tutu later argued: "It may have been considered a lukewarm plea, but I am not sure that we are right to scoff at even what might appear a half-hearted request for forgiveness. It is never easy to say, "I am sorry". The expectation by Bishop Tutu and others from the faith community that perpetrators would express remorse and victims would find it in their hearts to forgive has not universally occurred" (1999:135). But the following is a refreshing story that inspires hope –

2.6.5. Beth Savage

> Beth Savage personified the willingness to forgive. Shot with an AK-47 at a Christmas party at King William's Town Golf Club in 1992, her body remains so full of shrapnel that she sets off the alarms at airport security. Her father, who had always opposed apartheid, went into a deep depression and died a broken man soon after the attack. Savage had this to say about her experience to the commissioners: "But all in all, what I must say is, through the trauma of it all, I honestly feel richer. I think it's been an enriching experience for me and a growing curve, and I think it has given me the ability to relate to other people who may be going through trauma". Ms Savage indicated that she wanted to meet the soldier from the Azanian People's Liberation Army (APLA) who threw the grenade, with an "attitude of forgiveness and hope that he could forgive me too for whatever reason". She had her wish fulfilled at Mr Thembelani Xundu's amnesty hearing, and later told the press that she no longer had nightmares about the attack. (Graybill 2002:43).

2.6.6. Linda Biehl - the Mother of Amy Biehl

Linda Biehl, mother of Amy Biehl, the American Fulbright scholar who was killed in Guguletu township near Cape Town in 1993 by members of the Pan-Africanist Students Organisation (PASO) – the student wing of the PAC – explained her ability to forgive -

> I do not think I have anything to forgive, I never truly felt hatred. Our family never felt anger or hatred, only incredible sadness. Each amnesty applicant made an apology at the hearing. "When I look closely at what I did, I realise it was bad," said applicant Ntobeko Peni. "We took part in killing someone we could not have used to achieve our aims. I ask Amy's parents, friends, relatives – I ask them to forgive me" (Graybill 2002:46).

These are such moving gestures that rational descriptions or explanations fail to capture the emotions stirred by this extraordinary forgiveness. This following story gives us renewed grace and hope in humanity.

2.6.7. James Wheeler and Corrie Pyper

James Wheeler and Corrie Pyper asked forgiveness from Papuyana for killing his son Vuyani Papuyana, a student and taxi driver. Four years earlier, Pyper had asked the family for forgiveness. Nelson Papuyana said:

> I immediately knew that it was the best thing I have ever done, to face the man who murdered my son. The meeting helped me to overcome my emotional problems. Before that meeting, I was convinced that I would never be able to forgive my son's murderer. In my wildest dreams, I did not think that the meeting would become a situation where I would be the one trying to comfort the murderer and his wife. Mrs Pyper was crying so much that she could not talk…Pyper had offered to pay for the funeral costs and offered R5200 to the family. Said Mr Papuyana: I at first refused to accept it, but when he insisted, I could see that it would relieve his pain if I accepted it. He felt better afterwards (Graybill 2002:50).

2.7. Reflections on TRC's Oddities

In this section I focus on some of the challenges which faced the TRC, lest it be assumed that the process was smooth and easy. Far from it, the TRC process was not easy.

> The process of seeking forgiveness and reconciliation in South Africa was very difficult and often painful. A Gross Human Rights Violation Committee went

> out to the hinterlands to the people to hear stories of victims. The suffering and pain of the victims were heard, recognised, and reverenced by the nation. The stories came largely from apartheid victims (Browning and Reed 2007:6).

And in spite of the many difficulties, the TRC managed to carry out its complex task, navigating between its key committees with amazing the difficulties, without denying the many sticking points, sometimes something akin to a miracle occurred at the TRC. According to (Graybill 2002:50). Meiring suggested that South Africa was "a strange, wonderful country …where the father of the murdered son embraces the perpetrator, the murderer, and his wife to comfort them"

2.8. The TRC Chairperson's Introduction Report

It is of importance that we glance at the chairperson's report especially the introductory one, for it brings to the ordinary persons the history and the reasons it was created. It further gives the context which without there'll be no understanding. Rev. Tutu introduced his report in the following manner -

> All South Africans know that our recent history is littered with some horrendous occurrences – the Sharpeville and Langa killings, the Soweto uprising, the Church Street bombing, Magoos Bar, the Amanzimtoti Wimpy Bar bombing, the St James Church killings, Boipatong and Sebokeng. We also knew about the deaths in detention of people such as Steve Biko, Neil Aggett, and others; neck lacings, and the so-called black-on-black violence on the East Rand and in Kwa-Zulu Natal which arose from the rivalries between IFP and UDF and later the ANC. Our country is soaked in the blood of her children of all races and of all political persuasion. It is this contemporary history – which began in 1960 when the Sharpeville disaster took place and ended with the wonderful inauguration of Nelson Mandela as the first democratically-elected President of the Republic of South Africa… (Tutu, TRC Report 2003. Vol.1:1.).

As Chairperson of the TRC, Desmond Tutu opens the TRC Report with the preceding words. In one short paragraph Tutu tried to capture the breadth of the period and the painful events the TRC was required to probe. So broad was the scope and so deep were the wounds the commission could only start the process. So difficult was the job assigned to the TRC so that in the end only God could make it work. The controversy of this mammoth task was inescapable – so it can be agreed that there must have been divine help. Another strategy that assisted the TRC was that, whereas other commissions in the world "met behind closed doors", the South African TRC was "open and transparent nature" (Tutu, TRC Report 2003. Vol.1:85). To sum up the significance of the TRC report, Desmond Tutu put it this way:

> The report tries to provide a window on this incredible resource, offering a road map to those who wish to travel into our past. It is not and cannot be the whole story; but it provides a perspective on the trust about the past that is more extensive and more complete than anyone Commission could, in two and a half years, have hoped to capture (2003. Vol.1:85).

Tutu was nevertheless satisfied that the work of the TRC and Report would assist the nation in coming to terms with its difficult past. He was also open about the many difficulties experienced, especially the difficulties created by the strict legal parameters within which the commission had to operate. This also meant having to work with expanded notions of truth as 'full disclosure' and forgiveness as 'amnesty'. But Tutu and the TRC always kept their eye on the bigger picture of national reconciliation beyond the individual people and individual cases that were brought before them. Nor was Tutu unaware of the key moments such as when Madikizela-Mandela, PW Botha and Wouter Basson appeared before the TR and the opportunities these presented to the commission in terms of the broader objective of national reconciliation. He also noted the criticism the commission had been subjected to in relation to the appearances of these high-profile individuals. Some of the criticisms related to the defiant manner in which some of the prominent witnesses such as PW Botha had interacted with the commission.

The TRC as an institution was a competent as well as a sacrificial body of professionals from various disciplines. They did their best in executing what was expected of them. This was a daunting task which they carried out despite the challenges. Tutu was especially thankful for the endorsement for the work of the TRC which was received from a number of foreign heads

of state including the leadership of the UN at that time. In Tutu's mind, such was the importance of the work of the TRC that it would have repercussions across the world. He regarded the work of the TRC to be so important that it was not worth his time to dwell on the criticisms of the commission. Instead, he focused on the goal of national reconciliation.

> Some have been upset by the suggestion that the work of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission could have resulted in making people angrier and race relations more difficult, it would be naïve in the extreme to imagine that people would not be appalled by the ghastly revelations that the Commission has brought about. It would have been bizarre had this not happened. What is amazing is that the vast majority of the people of this land, those who form the bulk of the victims of the policies of the past, have said they believe reconciliation is possible. (Tutu, TRC Report 2003. Vol.1:88).

Nor was Tutu unaware that, in the South African context at least, the word reconciliation was so widely misunderstood and abused so that in some quarters it was a swear word. At every opportunity, Tutu would provide explanations that distinguished false reconciliation from true reconciliation. In the context of the TRC, Tutu always insisted that reconciliation must be understood within the context of truth-telling – hence the name of the commission being, truth and reconciliation. He was particularly perturbed by what he saw as wide-scale non-responsiveness of white South Africans, especially white people in leadership positions. He surmised that it would have been very significant had one prominent former Apartheid leader issues a public apology on behalf of all white people.

In concluding his first TRC report, Archbishop Tutu recalled the words of a visitor to the Commission from Netherland who suggested that the TRC would necessarily fail in its task because it was simply too demanding. But apparently, the Dutch visitor also suggested that even if the TRC were to fail on explicit grounds, it would have still succeeded implicitly, by the mere fact that they attempted to do such an enormous task. The task was not only enormous it was also painful. But it had to be done.

2.9. Conclusions

In this chapter I introduced the TRC, highlighting both its national significance and its significance because an important subject of this thesis, namely Adriaan Vlok appeared before it. I explained the history, objectives, diversity and challenges of the TRC. Of particular focus in this chapter were the summarizing introductory comments to the TRC report by the chairperson. In these introductory comments, are contained the archbishop's own assessment of the proceedings, the impact and the broad objectives of the TRC. While external and objective assessments of the TRC are important, the TRC's own self-assessment is as important. For someone like Adriaan Vlok, the TRC was a helpful and important platform. How and where else could have he started his journey towards repentance and reconciliation?

In the next chapter, I will delve briefly into the biography of Adriaan Vlok.

Chapter 3

A Case Study: Vlok's Apartheid- Story[1]

3.1. Introduction

In this chapter, we will focus on the biography of Vlok and his family. I will trace is political ascendancy within the Apartheid state to the point of becoming the Minister of Law and Order. In the process we will get seek to understand his conversion and his passion for reconciliation. The bulk of the data that forms the basis of this chapter was derived from interviews with Vlok himself. In order to situate Vlok within his context, I will briefly introduce the Apartheid system.

3.2. Post-foundational Approach

The post-foundational epistemology accommodates multiple voices, including those that have been previously suppressed. According to Van Huyssteen -

> The postfoundationalist approach forces us to listen first to the stories of people in real-life situations. It does not aim to describe merely a general context but confronts us with a specific and concrete situation. This approach, although also hermeneutical, moves beyond mere hermeneutics. It is more reflexive and situational embedded in epistemology and methodology (2006a:10).

What Van Huyssteen suggests is that our stories are embedded in real-life situations. That is how I approach the story of Vlok, especially his political and Christian lives. Post-foundationalism assists us to see human beings like as "... embodied persons, and not abstract beliefs, should be seen as the locus of rationality. We, as rational agents, are thus always socially and contextually embedded" (Müller 2011:3). Two of Müller's Seven Movements, to which I have referred earlier, become relevant for this chapter. These are, the second step which focusses on the interpretation context through listening as well as the sixth stem which entails a description of experiences. These steps will be used together with the relevant literature as well as the narrative methodology.

[1] It should be noted that everything that is said/written/quoted from or about *Adriaan Johannes Vlok* has been permitted by him and this was done through a signed consent form.

I will closely follow Vlok's own narratives and his own interpretations of his own life. This is made necessary by the narrative methodology which I have chosen to use together with post-foundationalism

3.3. Vlok's Narration

In this chapter I will recount and summarise the biography of Vlok according to accounts given by Vlok himself. Over the period stretching from 2016 to 2019, I conducted interviews with Vlok. I have used these interviews to reconstruct the life story of Vlok in the section that follows.

Adriaan Johannes Vlok was born on the 11th December 1937 which will make him 83 years old in December 2020. Vlok had four brothers, three of whom have died. He has three children. He was born in Sutherland, one of the coldest parts in the country – in the north-western part of the Northern Cape in the Karoo. He was very young when his family left Sutherland. His father, Nikolaas Vlok, bought a little plot at Keimoes on the Orange River below Upington, Northern Cape. The senior Vlok, farmed vegetables, grapes and so on. The junior Vlok grew up there and went to school there. Vlok's late father belonged to the old United Party, which for that time, was liberal in the context of Afrikaner politics, it was the opposing party to the National Party. Vlok attended one political meeting with his father. According to Adriaan, his whole family were not interested in politics. Both parents were Christians - practising Christians. His mother was a Sunday school teacher. Breggie-Elizabeth, Vlok's mother, was a leader of prayer meetings every Wednesday for the coloured women.

According to Vlok, he played with his playmates in the Orange River, and there were no problems, not at all. Vlok's parents took in a coloured son who was an orphan, a boy whose name was Willem. When they got their meals, he ate the same food as them, but he never ate at the same table. He was older than Vlok and they played together - they laughed together, and they fought together. Willem was with the family for many years. That is how it was at the time, and they did not see anything wrong with it – that was how it always was. He did not have a room inside the house, his room was outside where he stayed separately, but otherwise, they were friends.

Strangely, they did not attend the same church. Willem was not allowed to go to school. He remained at home. He worked in the kitchen, and he worked on the plot. That was how they grew up. Vlok had to start working as his father could not afford to pay his university fees. He intended to study to be a lawyer because he liked the law, but his father could not afford it. At the age of eighteen, he started to work at the Department of Justice in Keimus, which was 30 kilometers from Upington. They transferred him to the Magistrate's office in Upington and that is when he started from the beginning. He did the registering of births, marriages and deaths and also worked in the revenue office. It was a normal job – filing in forms and doing clerical work. There were only white people working there. Coloured people were cleaning the offices - there were no black people.

Vlok emphasises that though he was working in that environment he still was not involved in politics. He vividly remembers when there was a referendum when South Africa, (only whites could vote) had to decide to leave the Commonwealth or not. His father was against the idea, he said we should stay in the Commonwealth, but the outcome of the vote was to leave the Commonwealth and become a Republic. He was too young to understand what was going on. Then he was transferred to Pretoria to the Department's head office. He was in his twenties. There he did one of the most ordinary jobs. He was the clerk of the court in the office that had to note the applications for leave of the staff. He met his wife while he was working at the Magistrate's office. She was working in the office of a firm of attorneys. It was his wife's duty as a typist and secretary for the attorney, to bring documents to the Magistrate's office, and that is how they met.

She was staying in a boarding house called 'Die Koekblik'. There were only women staying there. They were allowed to visit but they were not allowed to go to the rooms of the ladies. They eventually got married after a couple of years. They lived in Pretoria, and it was during that time that Dr Verwoerd was murdered in the Parliament.

> Tsafendas plunged the blade into the seated man's chest, just left of centre. He pulled the knife out and struck again, into Verwoerd's lung. He stabbed twice more, the heart and the neck. Verwoerd slumped forward with blood spurting from his neck… Verwoerd, deathly pale and bleeding profusely with his left arm hanging limply…It was then

> that MP's, officials and spectators began to realise Verwoerd was dead (Dousemetzi and Loughran 2018:56)

The newly married Vlok couple was plunged into political shock with the dramatic death of Verwoerd, even though he was not interested at all in politics – this is according to him. It was during that time that John Vorster was the Minister of Justice. Vlok was already working in his department when Vorster was elected Prime Minister of South Africa. Vorster brought along his staff. He brought his Private Secretary and then they started looking for an assistant Private Secretary for his department. They approached Vlok and he eventually got the job.
He would be going to Parliament and would have six months in Cape Town and six months in Pretoria. They later wanted him to become the assistant Private Secretary to Vorster. This gave him access to Prime Minister Vorster. According to Vlok, this was exciting and extraordinary for a young man like him. Vlok's description of Vorster – "he was a wonderful person. He was an introvert, not outgoing but he was a wonderful person and a very intelligent man, one of the most intelligent people that I have ever come across. He was a fantastic speaker, communicator…" (Appendix 1).

Then Vlok started working for him as an assistant Private Secretary. When he went to the office of Vorster, he was listening to him and sitting in Parliament listening to the debates. Vlok excitedly reminisced about the good old days – "…then I became involved and more aware of what was going on, and I believed that apartheid was the best system for South Africa" (Appendix 1). His admission was natural as he relates other matters about his life – no self-consciousness and petty justifications as often as would happen. He liked apartheid because it was an economic system that was anti-communism and pro-capitalism. He further agrees, but now in retrospect after more than thirty years having believed in the ideology system and practice of apartheid, that "…yes there were horrendous practices, but it was better than communism…" (Appendix 1). The early octogenarian still stubbornly making his almost belligerent stance against the 1970-1980s Cold War. It was interesting to watch - I had a glance at the young politician Vlok resuscitating.

Now he is in Parliament listening to the debates, and his friend and 'brother' the coloured Willem at home in the Northern Cape, was thrown into oblivion. Vlok did feel conflicted and bad about Willem, but he comforted himself - that he has been taking care of by his people – the coloured people. It was interesting that Vlok also remembered a fellow by the name of Mr

Nkosi – who was black. Vlok conceded that at that time he regarded Nkosi as a friend but inferior to him as he was a superior white and Nkosi was black.

It was not long before Prime Minister Vorster got sick and was replaced by President PW Botha. Vlok was then appointed Deputy Minister of Defence and that was a wonderful portfolio, according to Vlok. He was working with the '*troopies*' i.e. the soldiers, the guys who were going to war on the borders. They were seventeen, eighteen, nineteen years old. Vlok's former wife enjoyed accompanying her husband to visit these '*troopies*'. Then Louis La Grange, the Minister of Police got sick. Vlok was subsequently appointed the Deputy Minister of Police - thus he had two portfolios at the same time, i.e. those of the Minister of Defence and the Police. It was the exciting pinnacle of his career. He then became emotional as he explained –

> My late wife suffered from depression. But it left her when they were in the camps on the border of Namibia, Angola, and South West Africa – visiting these 'troopies'. There were 70 to 150 people. When we came there, they would welcome us - I as the Head of the Defence Force and the Dominee would read something out of the Bible. Then I had to deliver a speech, and when they had time to socialise…they were not interested in me. They were interested in my wife because she was a mother. They were longing for their mothers. They were just touching her and talking to her (Appendix 1).

It was more than twenty years ago but Vlok still gets emotional. After all these years, he still gets men who come up to him and say, "I saw you on the border, you phoned my mother and father" (Appendix 1), it still touches him today. The boys were in danger and some of them died. It was also his wife's duty to attend the funerals. And then his wife died around that time. "For twenty years she was suffering from serious depression, and on the 28th July 1994, she took her own life…" (Appendix 1). Vlok got mildly emotional and dropped a tiny noticeable tear. In all probability, it surely was the end of one era and the genesis of a new one. The ideology of apartheid was still a strangely paramount ingredient of his life, as he was mourning his dear wife then. This too was confirmed several times on many occasions in and out of the interviews – off and on the record. Vlok was an apartheid zealot.

3.4. Vlok on Vlok: Apartheid Practitioner

From 1986 to 1991 Vlok was the Minister of Police. It was in the mid-1980s when the urban townships were ungovernable and there was violent unrest. This was the time that Vlok was ushered into the highest pinnacle of his political career. It looks like he was prepared for this for his entire life – now the time had arrived. Vlok concedes –

> It was a very difficult period in our history because the unrest was not subsiding, it was getting worse and worse all the time. I got instructions from Pres. Botha that I must do everything possible to stop the violence. We considered many things. What can I do? And that was when we realised, and Magnus Malan was with me - Minister of Defence… One of the things is that we stood strongly on, is that we must negotiate. Talk to the people, they cannot prescribe, talk to the people, the way forward is negotiation, not shooting, but in the meantime.... (Appendix 1).

I was shocked. His memory is really extensive and impressive for he remembers even the details especially the dates, the times and names of people. The era that Vlok was now describing was the 1980's which I vividly remembered. It was in 1981-1994 that I used to zigzag between Katlehong (next to Germiston, in the Eastrand) and Soweto for I had family and relatives residing in both locations. As he was describing this time, I was mentally 'parachuted' into that toxic atmosphere riddled with teargas, eerie noises of *caspers* and the random thundering of the automatic rifles.

Vlok explains that they had to make changes to the law for they could not prosecute all (i.e. anti-apartheid marchers especially in the townships) of them. No capacity. No resources to detain all of these rioters especially in the absence of evidence of their so-called criminality. So, the option was to detain them to ten, fourteen, twenty-one or thirty-five days without a visit (detention without trial) and often this meant solitary confinement. This minister, Vlok, was that notoriously known person who introduced the barbaric State of Emergency and merciless solitary confinement. I asked him how he felt now regarding the harsh measures of those days.

He coldly and sincerely mentioned that it was a job. The pressure was unbearable, and this was exacerbated by overseas' sanctions, he emphasised.

> It was the worst time that I can remember…PW Botha, one day they (cabinet) had a briefing – asked what's happening in Khotso House. And the security people had info that there were people in Khotso House, not people from the church. There were people that are supplying the terrorists coming back into the country. We had informers telling them all this but they could not use the informers in court so they could not prosecute them. Pres. Botha said to me, "so you've heard what was going on there, should we allow this to carry on?" … He said again "you must go out and see what you can do and make a plan". So, he left and called the Commissioner of Police Johan van der Merwe and they discussed it, and he was also present at that meeting. They must make a plan – he said he would see what he could do, and that was how it started. They went to Khotso House, Eugene De Kok and people from Vlakplaas, they decided to make the building unusable. (Appendix 1.)

Vlok explained how they denied the whole incident but blamed it on Shirley Gunn – a white lady who was a member of the ANC. "But the police came to me with a statement, telling me that she was seen there, wearing a greatcoat, and it was thick, and the story was that she was carrying mines and that it was the mines that blew up. It was a very thin story it could not hold, but they were desperately fighting during that time. The building was unusable, so they succeeded in their aim. She was prosecuted, arrested even though we knew she was not…sent to solitary confinement" (Appendix 1.). Vlok paused briefly "And she was pregnant. Or she a had a baby at that time…" This was horrifying to hear.

> Vlok did not produce a shred of evidence, but the SABC and Afrikaans newspapers like Beeld and Die Burger called it a 'shocking revelation' and pounced on Gunn, branding her a 'white ANC woman terrorist'. On June 25, 1990, Gunn was arrested on a remote Karoo guest farm and detained under

> section 29 of the Internal Security Act. Her 16-month-old son, Haron, was incarcerated with her in the Culemborg security police headquarters in Cape Town…Magistrate had ordered the removal of her child. 'I was left standing behind a locked gate while a security policeman and Social workers took him away. I will never forget his voice, screaming for me, looking at me in anguish'… Vlok admitted in his amnesty application that he had falsely implicated Gunn…Gunn has laid criminal charges and instituted a civil claim of R500 000 against Vlok.' (Pauw 1997:78)

The irony is that apartheid was supposed to be Christian. The following says it all - "the Afrikaner Churches, in particular the mainstream Dutch Reformed Church, were the prime instrument of the theological justification for apartheid. In the church, fervent prayers were heard for Boetie op die Grens (Little Brother on the Border), who was fighting black terrorists and shielding the Afrikaners from the godless atheism… The Afrikaner Churches were a powerful transmission line for apartheid politics and policies..." (Jansen 2014:72)

I was getting irritated with the old 'apartheid-Vlok' as I was interviewing him and forgetting the 'Oom Vlok' that I had started to respect, "let's talk about Frank Chikane…" I heard myself say almost irritably. "Chikane was a brilliant man as the Secretary General of the Council of Churches, he was a pastor…" he mentioned as he shifted in his chair to compose himself. He paused to think further. In a pensive mode he continued -

> General van der Merwe came to me and said that there was a discussion at a meeting where he was present with security people and others, and there was an instruction that they must disrupt the people who were going overseas and causing trouble for the country…So if a person like Chikane would address these gatherings they would listen to him, then business people and governments would not help us with investment. So, they had to disrupt them to the maximum, and if you are not successful, then you can consider (and these were the words) – you can consider taking them out, and from that, I understand "you can kill them".

> On the list they gave me was the name 'Frank Chikane', …They would frustrate them and make them less successful… (Appendix 1).

The rest of the gory details can be found in Appendix 1 and the above-mentioned is inserted to indicate the life of the famous anti-apartheid person who was a target - this was under the supervision of Vlok. He was narrating these events to prove his knowing complicity in this horrendous work of apartheid. To confirm these disturbing atrocities the gutsy and famous veteran author cum journalist Jacques Pauw narrates –

> At Vlakplaas, a celebration party was laid on, attended by Several Generals, Johannesburg security policemen and the bombing squad. The guest of honour was the Minister of Law and Order, Adriaan Vlok. Vlok congratulated us on the operation and said that all that remained of the building was a pile of rubble… the minister thanked us for our service and said that we would fight till the better end. We would never give over to the ANC. He said we would fight them for the next thousand years. He wanted to thank us for several operations…the celebration continued late into the night. In my interaction with him and whenever the question about the notorious Vlakplaas is mentioned, he becomes coyly stupefied. He has dismissively said he has never been to this place thus does not know where it is located (1997:76).

Schmidt came to my rescue when he wrote a few years ago as if he was defending my observations and this bolstered Pauw's narration above -

> I held motivational talks with the security forces in which I told the guys to make a plan. And we used words like "eliminate" in the speeches'…Now Vlok admits to Groenewald and Makgetla that police authorities turned a blind eye to how their underlings got information from detainees: 'that was wrong, 'he admits. He tries to distance himself from the death squads for which he bears

> ultimate responsibility, telling Groenewald and Makgetla, ` I did not visit Vlakplaas more than two or three times, maybe four times, ` and denying any knowledge of what really happened there… Vlok is not entirely sorry for his past. The attempted plea-bargain between prosecutors and Adriaan Vlok for the 1989 attempted murder of the Reverend Frank Chikane by poisoning… (2014:145-6).

The Vlakplaas saga will haunt many especially these veteran policemen. "But de Kock who was one of your police on the ground said that you gave him a medal. Did you?", I forthrightly demanded by confronting him. "That was not for supplying them with weapons, it was for the work he had done, he did good work in some instances…", Vlok explained. "By killing people?", I impatiently injected. "You know by giving a medal...well the document that landed in front of me as a minister, did not indicate that it was for killing people, it was for doing a good job…" (Appendix 1). He quickly responded as he was noticeably annoyed. "What kind of good job?", I reiterated without fear. So far, the discussion was staccato-like but at least it was brutally honest and culturally as a black person of my age I am not expected to launch this kind of a confrontational attack on an elder(s) – certainly of Vlok's age. "Well, it was not specified", he emphasised and continued with his point "and nobody was going to tell me that, because it was also classified. But it was for doing the work in the department and it may have been including eliminating the enemy, but it was never spelt out…" (Appendix 1), he calmed down and he paused.

> General Johan van der Merwe said in his submission to the TRC", Jacques continues "that Adriaan Vlok had ordered him to blow up Khotso House". 'According to Mr Vlok, this instruction had come from President PW Botha personally.' Vlok admitted his complicity in the bomb attack when he said in his amnesty application that PW Botha ordered the destruction of the building because it had become 'a house of evil'. According to Vlok, Botha said to him: 'I have done everything possible to persuade them [the South African Council of Churches] to come to their senses, but nothing helps. We

> cannot act against the people. You must render the building unusable.' (Pauw 1997:76).

The 'groot-krokodil', I presume he was fondly called, was a cantankerous old man but dared to do indescribable damage. The proximity Vlok had to the seat of power (i.e. the President of the country) was close and this conveys the political clout that he wielded much to our dismay, chagrin or possibly, envy! All this was done to preserve and entrench what is widely known as apartheid. What is this apartheid thing that characters like Vlok were willing to sacrifice their lives and the rest of South Africa for? Now that Vlok has admitted several times - in believing in this ideology and its application, which he had tenaciously and defensively implemented to its zenith, what is it?

3.5. What is Apartheid?

The apartheid party – named National Party came into power in 1948 under their Prime Minister JF Malan. He was responsible for the implementation of the monstrosity called apartheid though his successor HF Verwoerd who "was more that of master-builder than architect" (Kenney 1980:9). To sketch-out a description of apartheid, it was the following, and these would be considered as the pillars of apartheid's grand plan: the apartheid government came into power in 1948 under the slogan. The won the whites only elections because they promised whites complete separation from black people. As soon as the government was in place, they started making a string of laws designed to ensure the separation they promised. In 1949, the promulgated a law prohibiting marriage between blacks and whites. To make sure that no relations of a romantic or sexual nature occurred between blacks and whites the passed the so-called immorality laws in 1950.

In that same year, 1950, two extra laws were enacted which were: The Population Registration Act and the Group Areas Act. Both of these laws, they actually entrenched the social aspect of Apartheid's iniquitous regime. These two laws classified people according to their racial appearances or grouping it is in this context that the infamous dompass was birthed. The Group Areas Act was essentially dictating where people should live or reside or not reside. And in 1953 two laws were made – the Reservation of Separate Amenities Act and the Bantu Education Act. The latter was mainly about the inferior education mainly for Coloureds and

Blacks and the former was about amenities such as universities, parks, beaches etc. were made or set-apart for different racial groupings according to the Apartheid's hierarchy.

The above are just a few of these acts, and there are litanies of them, and they cannot easily be catalogued here. These will be considered as the pillars of grand apartheid. The Afrikaners may not necessarily be architects or originators of racism and discrimination but certainly, the 'up-to-date' 'made in South Africa' racism or product was: Apartheid! It was a proudly Afrikaner product then. This version of racism and discrimination is called apartheid and is essentially one of the most wickedly discriminative and fascistic examples.

The Afrikaners are therefore the ones who bred, invented, and perfected it. It is of vital importance to mention at this juncture that the Afrikaners are not the inventors of racism and discrimination as they too were its victims. It is interesting for the following to be confirmed, "though Afrikaner acquired the notoriety, it was the British who first broke black power…" Allister Sparks reminds us "crushing the tribes in war, annexing their territory, and eroding their institutions with Christianization, education, and finally industrialisation and urbanisation" (Sparks 1991:46). It is proper and appropriate that Sparks bolsters this point as he himself is English (or from British ancestry). Let the following be known too. Nadine Gordimer described the white South African in this manner:

> An extraordinary obdurate cross-breed of Dutch, German, English, French in the South African white settler population produced a bluntness that unveiled everyone's refined racism: the flags of European civilisation dropped, and there it was, unashamedly, the ugliest creation of man, and they baptised the thing in the Dutch Reformed Church, called it *apartheid*, coining the ultimate term for every manifestation, over the ages, in many countries of race prejudice. Every country could see its semblances there, and most peoples (1987:209)

Many of us will agree with the liberation theologian, Gutierrez when he says,

> Situations such as the one in South Africa display a cruel and inhuman racism and an extreme form of conflictual confrontation that is also to

> be found, even if in less obvious forms, in other parts of the world. It raises difficult questions for Christians living in these countries (1996:157).

What Gutierrez is explicitly saying here, needs to be carefully pondered – our racism is the worst (most cruel) example of all racism in the whole world, this includes England, the mother of all racism. Again, Gutierrez poses a challenge to the South African Christians (such as Vlok as he claims to have converted to Christ Jesus) in that there are many valid questions to be answered by us, Christians, particularly white Christians. From an average black South African, there was no difference between the British Empire who birthed and championed modern racism and the Afrikaner's apartheid. For both unashamedly undermined the black's dignity. It is for this reason that the young black advocate Ngcukaitobi described –

> In South Africa, the colonial encounter was particularly violent and disruptive. Invading European settlers took the land that Africans lived on, and by depriving them of their cattle…South Africa, with its apartheid pathology, became a typical case of colonialism transmogrifying into a form of imperialism (2018:272).

People like Vlok could easily be seen as the agents or an extension of colonialism as there was not much difference between the UK's colonial racism and the Afrikaner's apartheid racism. It is known that the Afrikaners, such as Vlok, also hated colonial Britain because they had been oppressed by them. But they do share much in common.

3.6. Vlok Begins to Lose Political Power

Despite what the veteran journalist and author - Sparks, has said (above) about the origin of apartheid's racism, this does not render Vlok and his ilk not responsible and culpable for their wicked acts. The 1980s were the most challenging time for Vlok and the apartheid regime. The political cracks in apartheid's seemingly formidable wall, were being felt. Even though it appeared that the Nats had a grip on power, on the ground, in reality, power was slipping.

The mid-1980's was the time when Vlok and his notoriety came to be known in the townships - especially in the troubled townships based in what was known as the PWV (now Gauteng)

and Natal (now KZN). This does not mean his obvious megalomania was not felt in other parts of the country – certainly, he was 'omnipotent' in the rest of the country, but his tentacles were palpably felt in the PVW (now Gauteng) and Natal. These areas were characterised by unstoppable violence between the police, local people, ANC, IFP, hostel dwellers and many more. The pressure from anti-apartheid's local and international activism was unbearable to Vlok. Jeffrey (2009), an author - seems like she had a fairly good grasp of Vlok's political power and the Nats especially when he was the then Minister of Law and Order (police) - this was evidenced in the number of books and articles she wrote -

> To curb the violence thus being unleashed, the ANC demanded the dismissal of Law and Order Minister Vlok and Defence Minister Malan; a ban on the carrying of traditional weapons; the dismantling of all counter-insurgency units, including 32 Battalion; the appointment of an independent commission of inquiry to probe misconduct by the security forces; the phasing out of hostels; and an assurance that the security forces would no longer be issued with live ammunition but confined to civilised methods of crowd control. Unless all these demands were met by 9th May, the ANC would withdraw from constitutional negotiations, the letter said (Jeffrey 2009:275-276).

These demands were forceful and appeared in local and international print and electronic media. Little did Vlok know that his service and position as the minister of the seemingly invincible apartheid regime was slowly but certainly being eclipsed by a new dawning era. The violence was having its day in Sebokeng or the Vaal as it was known then – there was a small township there called Boipatong where a programme was planned. The same in the Eastrand, Soweto and some pockets of Westrand townships such as Swanesville -

> Speaking thereafter at the Swanesville funeral, Mandela told the crowd that he had repeatedly urged De Klerk to ban the carrying of spears. 'However, I was not able to move Mr De Klerk

> because, like all average whites, he has no regard for the black man's life'. All De Klerk was prepared to do was to promise firm action against spears if the government found that these weapons were being abused. 'I told him that over 8000 blacks have died in the violence since 1984 and that these spears are being abused now. How many more people should die before you ban these dangerous weapons? If only 50 whites had been killed, there would have been a revolution' and the government would have banned all weapons immediately. 'But because it is blacks, we have to work for years to convince him that he needs to protect the lives of our people and for spears to be banned,' Mandela said (Jeffrey 2009: 280).

A new term was being used - 'the third force' which everybody was talking about. It became a buzzword especially in the progressive media such as 'Weekly Mail' now renamed as 'Mail & Guardian' and the almost belligerent Catholic-owned newspaper 'The New Nation' to mention a few. The Reef or PWV (now Gauteng) and Natal (now it is KZN) were fertile ground for the violence sowed by 'the third force'. This was the height of Vlok's infamy, and his name sends chills down the spine of so many blacks. The pressure was mounting against the apartheid regime especially the two ministers - Vlok and Malan, the latter was heading the Defence force. There was pressure for the formation of an interim Government of National Unity. "On 29th July of that year, the state President announced that he was removing Malan from the Defence portfolio and Vlok from the police. Malan would become Minister of Water Affairs and Forestry, while Vlok would be appointed Minister of Correctional Services…" (Jeffrey 2009:286). The above is just a brief description of Vlok's exodus from power.

3.7. Conclusion

This chapter was essentially about Vlok's involvement with apartheid ideology, idiosyncrasies, and praxis. To assist with a proper comprehension of who Vlok is, his background was proffered here; from his childhood to his exit from the world of political influence and power. His political ascendancy and notoriety visibly began in the 1980s at the height of the anti-apartheid struggle. His notoriety was characterised by violence, secret deaths, torture and, collusion with shady organisations such as Inkatha. He was behind the third force e.g.

Vlakplaas/Askaris activities, and the bombing of buildings e.g. Khotso House – SACC headquarters etc.

These iniquities were buttressed by unashamedly wicked legislation that made apartheid this monstrosity that was incomprehensible to the sane soul. This chapter had to demonstrate the essentiality of apartheid so its delusional power and politics can be exposed. And these atrocious apartheid laws –1949: Prohibition of Mixed Marriages Act; 1950: Immorality Act; the1950: Population Registration Act; 1950: Group Areas Act; 1953: Reservation of Separate Amenities Act and 1953: Bantu Education Act – to mention a few.

Vlok's kingdom, as it were, collapsed when he was expelled as this was precipitated when he was exposed for his collusion with the 'third force' activities.

The following chapter will be a continuation of Vlok's life story - in that it will serve the purpose of showing how Vlok was allegedly converted and rehabilitated as he has vocally stated. Thus it makes logical sense that it should follow now.

Chapter 4

Discussing the Repentance of Vlok

4. 1. Introduction

In this chapter, we will discuss how Vlok embraced repentance, sought forgiveness, and attempted to walk the difficult journey towards reconciliation. This chapter is therefore about Vlok's conversion. Vlok's narrative will continue from the previous chapter but focus on his conversion (according to him). This will be followed by other voices (at the bottom of these pages) – my co-researchers that I have interviewed: Frank Chikane; Paul Verryn; Dali Mpofu; Fr. Michael Lapsley. They will agree or disagree as to whether Vlok has converted or not and is thus reconciled or not.

It is only after we have heard the story of his conversion and have listened to these above-mentioned co-researchers that we will fully address reconciliation. Reconciliation is the main theme of – **'A Practical Theological perspective on Reconciling Relationships in a Post-Apartheid South Africa'**, and as such, deserves its own dedicated space for discussion. Therefore, the next chapter (chapter five) will discuss and address the concept of reconciliation in depth.

Vlok's conversion will be evaluated, judged, or assessed by the above-mentioned co-researchers and a thorough understanding of reconciliation (following in chapter five) will be furnished.

4.2. The Research Journey: Where are we now?

As has been mentioned a few times, the post-foundational approach is our epistemological framework, accompanied by the Seven Movements' methodological structure (Müller 2004:300). The Seven Movements will certainly be of assistance in this regard. Of all Seven Movements, some are particularly relevant to this chapter, and these are: 'in-context experiences are listened to and described'; 'interpretations of experiences are made, described and developed in collaboration with co-researchers'; 'description of the experience, thickened through interdisciplinary investigation' and finally, 'a reflection on the religious and spiritual aspects, especially on God's presence, as it is understood and experienced in a specific situation'.

These four movements (of the seven) together with the narrative approach are integral to the mechanism through which we sourced and applied stories directly from the co-researchers. These co-researchers shared their stories (regarding Vlok's claims of repentance and conversion) thus enriching this. This is the 'hermeneutical key' to unlock the alleged authenticity of Vlok's conversion or non-conversion – depending on the conclusion of this chapter. The narratives that will be shared here will explicitly reveal the quality of the relationship and 'irrelationships' that some of these co-researchers had with Vlok. It is, proper, first to hear from Vlok himself.

4.3. Vlok's Conversion according to Vlok

"But the real moment came when everything changed,…", Vlok said this to me in a pensive mood and continued "it was that moment when I sat in the Union Buildings, Pretoria, in front of Rev. Frank Chikane when I asked him to allow me to wash his feet. I was standing on my knees in front of him and looking into his eyes" (Appendix 1). He further expressed that Chikane was shocked with disbelief from what he heard and saw, and what was happening to him.

Vlok describes - "yes, you can wash my feet" and at that moment when I took off his shoes and socks and I sprinkled the water over his feet and started to dry them with a little towel, which was when the Lord touched me. Nothing happened outwardly, but I realised… that, that was the moment, a real-life-defining moment in my life…in 2006" (Appendix 1). This was the racial deliverance. It was for the first time he consciously and deeply in his heart had realised that the racism in his heart was supernaturally dismantled.

There was a deep and disturbing silence between Vlok and me, but strangely I needed this for my soul to absorb this sobering yet moving confession. "So how did you feel, '*meneer*' (meaning, mister), an Afrikaner, to kneel in front of a black person?" I cautiously asked. "But that was the Lord that was because of the Lord and also the Lord working in him … the Afrikaners, the people who voted for me. They were conservative people, good people. It was not part of my upbringing to do that, to humble myself in front of a black person …" (Appendix 1). I was moved by his sincerity in that he did not ostentatiously self-aggrandise, which is often what we have seen with witnesses, but attributed all to his Lord Christ Jesus. I had to push it further, "what led you to do that, something must have happened to you", I curiously asked. He responded in the following manner -

> Back then, the thought was never in my mind to wash somebody's feet, but there appeared an article in "Beeld" where Stefaan Joubert wrote about a fighter pilot in the South African Airforce, washing the feet of the lady who worked for him, and when I read it, the thought came into my mind; if I can do that, I would wash the feet of Rev. Chikane…I read a little book where the Dominee (minister) explained what the washing of feet was humbling of oneself. But once again, I did nothing, then on the 30th July 2006, there was a sermon on Radio South Africa where the Dominee read from John 13:14-17 where Jesus washes the feet of his disciples. I was trying to do what I read in the Bible, I was struggling but it was not always easy and the devil was not happy, he was trying to pull me away from the Lord. (Appendix 1).

He further explained the details of how thoroughly he manoeuvred the logistics so that he was able to reach Chikane's office in the Union Buildings. He finally managed to secure an appointment with a response from the office and this was the 31st. July 2006. He finally got to this office and asked for forgiveness. This aspect was not easy but the asking of washing Chikane's feet was the most difficult one.

> I cried out, my soul cried out to the Lord and He heard me…helped me and I asked Frank. He was taken aback, he was shocked and said: "but why do you want to do this?" I said to him "I must do this, I want to prove to you that I mean it and it is a serious matter for me…After that, I looked at people with different eyes. Since that time colour does not matter to me anymore…It was months later that I had the opportunity to wash the feet of those ladies from Mamelodi". This was something. I could not control myself from my obvious curiosity. "What happened when you washed Frank Chikane's feet?" I asked intently. "Well he cried and there were tears in his eyes" and I said "please pray" and he prayed for us". He thanked the Lord – but I was so scared at the time that people would find out. He got up and he put on his socks and shoes again and I said "Frank before I leave, please will you keep this secret, do not tell anybody" (Appendix 1).

This has since been published by the local and international media. I kept asking more questions as I was intrigued by the whole event (the rest is in Appendix 1). The TRC's interface with Vlok came to mind as I was listening to this old man. Vlok's seemingly authentic repentance at the unforgettable TRC should further be reinforced here –

> The TRC also opened up a major cleavage between NP politicians and the police leadership, who felt the government had subjected it to the unbearable pressure to suppress the uprisings and that the least the NP leaders could do was to accept common responsibility for violations of human rights. Ex-President Botha…refused to co-operate with the TRC… De Klerk was sympathetic to the demand that the political and the police leadership should ask for a form of collective amnesty, although the legislation did not permit it… However, most of his ex-cabinet colleagues rejected this course… In the end only one politician -Minister of Police Adriaan Vlok (Giliomee 2003:654).

Pikoli, the advocate, who was the national director of Public Prosecutions from 2005 to 2007, emphasised that "to the best of my knowledge, the Vlok … case remains one of only two TRC cases to have been successfully prosecuted by the NPA" (Pikoli and Wiener 2013:221). The fact that Vlok was the only one to approach the TRC out of all his Nationalist colleagues can be a sign – a shred of repentance or remorse. Having worked with and seen him around the country I have utterly been convinced that Vlok is sincere thus authentic in his pursuit of conversion and reconciliation.

Being politely or even for that matter, arrogantly accused of being gullible or being a victim of Stockholm's syndrome (further below) or a spy collaborating with the sinister forces to undermine the gallant work of anti-apartheid activism, was taken in cognisance when I began this academic expedition. Again, I am fully aware that there are people who are still cynical of Vlok's sincerity as I was until I got to know him and started to pursue this academic study.

> "But I think that it is too convenient for when there is another explanation. If let us say in 1987 way back and Vlok said no I can no longer be part of this I cannot be detaining children I am

> resigning then I will say he had a Damascus moment…Ja, how can they all of a sudden have all of them had a Damascus moment in 1990 it does not happen like that even God does not work like that… (Appendix 9).

The above are words from my co-researcher Dali Mpofu (one of the Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF's) leaders whom I interviewed. This is merely to prove that there are people who disagree with Vlok's sincerity regarding his alleged conversion. Pikoli and Giliomee are not explicitly saying anything about Vlok's conversion but merely conveying what they found in their area of responsibility.

> 'Yes, you can wash my feet' and at that moment when I took off his shoes and socks and I sprinkled the water over his feet and started to dry them with a little towel, that was when the Lord touched me. Nothing happened outwardly, but I realised … that, that was the moment, a real-life-defining moment in my life…in 2006' (Appendix 1).

This is Vlok verbatim. His conversion was 'that moment…a real-life-defining moment in my life'. I certainly cannot authenticate this or not, but I believe it as I indicated above. What I have observed having worked and gone around some parts of our country with him for eleven years (before I was even encouraged and persuaded to do this study on Vlok); is that it has been intriguing, challenging, shocking, and it made me and others reflect involuntarily on our previous views on Vlok. It is for this reason that several people encouraged me to write a book about him, and also one of my current supervisors asked me to do an academic investigation of Vlok which is contained in this current study. It is not for me to either agree or deny that I am or am not suffering from Stockholm syndrome[3] as it can easily be assumed. It may be

[3] The term originated in name from a bank robbery in Stockholm, Sweden, in August 1973. Four employees of the bank (three women and one man) were taken hostage by the robber and put into a vault with him and kept there for 131 hours. After release they appeared to have formed an emotional bond with their captor (McLaughlin 2015)

appropriate, again, to mention that sometimes, I hear within myself some deep and cynical voices that may be justified reflections of many who are understandably suspicious of Vlok's sincerity and authenticity. These voices may be courageously articulated by the son of the late anti-apartheid legend Steve Biko, Hlumelo Biko in his book, with a thundering title – 'The Great African Society: A Plan for a Nation Gone Astray'-

> "Apartheid became a crime with no perpetrators and only victims. Overnight, simply by subjecting themselves to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and admitting their racism towards blacks and complicity to the apartheid ideology, everyone could become a victim of apartheid. South Africa began to create a fetish of race relations studies. National healing was the buzzword of the decade, with even the richest members of the society claiming a need to cure themselves of the ills of apartheid racist thinking, paving the way to entry into 'citizenship' as a guiltless member of the new South Africa" (Biko 2013:57)

Is he referring to Vlok? These are legitimate and valid questions. It should be reminded that at this juncture, the study is interested in Vlok's conversion (and obviously reconciliation). Vlok's authentic conversion is difficult to ascertain. What I also know from many people's implicit tone is they would not want Vlok to be converted or to pursue racial reconciliation. I am not so naïve as to not to realise that in pursuing this ministry of reconciliation (with Vlok) and pouring myself into this academic research with (disreputable) characters such as Vlok who in many quarters are still seen as the epitome of apartheid, it is a disturbing and sobering reality. In terms of political and (possibly theological) correctness, this study may seem to be eccentric – this I accept.

This is important to listen to Vlok's narrative especially as far as his conversion is concerned. Our post-foundational methodology requires us to know the "experience and the descriptions are the initial contingent of anyone's narrative…" (Müller 2011:3), more so, now that his conversion is being investigated here. It is worth hearing about Vlok's 'many conversions', Wallis explains - "conversion is a progressive, integrative process that has consequences in society not merely in the spiritual life of the individual. Conversion is not a single event, but

an ongoing process in which the totality of a person's life is transformed" (1981:172). This concurs with the veteran scholar on conversion(s), the respected Rambo –

> (a) conversion is a process over time, not a single event; (b) conversion is contextual and thereby influences and is influenced by a matrix of relationships, expectations, and situations; and (c) factors in the conversion process are multiple, interactive, and cumulative (1993:5).

Vlok is moving from one level of conversion to another as he further describes Chikane. It can be said that one is converted to God, to oneself, to family, to community/neighbourhood and the broader society/country. The latter (South African society) should be required of Vlok especially because of his previous role in the politics of our country. If it is true, then Vlok should have had a racial deliverance or racial conversion. It was for the first time he consciously and deeply realised that racism in his heart was supernaturally dismantled when he washed Chikane's feet. Longenecker looks at 'conversion' and concludes with the following –

> Meaning associated with conversion: (1) a gradual change of life that grows out of the past…(2) a sudden change of life that rejects the past and takes a new direction… and (3) a cognitive change of life that reconceives the past is a 'transformation'… (1997:15).

This was also evidenced in Vlok's life. Rambo, an erudite scholar on religious conversion, lists a seven-stage model that may be worth mentioning briefly to see Vlok's conversion – (a) context (b) crisis (c) quest (d) encounter (e) interaction (f) commitment and (g) consequence (1993:20,44,56). Vlok's conversion stages according to Rambo will be determined and ascertained by the following people who knew him relatively well. Without going into the details of Rambo's seven-stage model, it does seem like Vlok has gone through some of the stages such as (b) crisis (d) encounter and (f) commitment to mention a few. Some of the following people without knowing Rambo's stages will implicitly concur with Rambo, for example, Fina would do so.

4.3.1. Fina

The second time I met Vlok, this was after our initial meeting at the George airport, Western Cape, I heard of his 'girl', though he was fondly referring to her as 'Fina'. This was in the year 2010. I had arrived earlier at the petrol station in Midrand adjacent to the wide-open N1 highway – where we agreed to meet. It is a busy petrol station. This is as a result of being next to the highway - cars, trucks, vans etc. were amassed. To my surprise, out of an old-rickety Datsun 1400 came an octogenarian walking towards me. It was him, Vlok! I felt both the van and him were symmetrically in sync. We joyfully exchanged greetings. Without wasting time, he related his journey, especially his political career. It was obvious from what he was saying, that when he was a youngster even a young adult, he never had political ambitions nor was he involved in youth political activities or political violence.

For Vlok like many whites in apartheid South Africa, it was normal to 'have' a 'girl' which was a discriminatory and derogatory word for the black domestic worker. He had one. One cannot imagine Vlok without a domestic worker. Our conversation would not go far without the name 'Fina' being mentioned. The discussion was getting richer and richer. I then decided to ask who this 'Fina' is. It turns out that she was the lady who worked for his family for many years. Her full name was Sarafina Ntombana Zwane. She was his family's domestic worker for fifty-two years.

Vlok would use the name 'Fina' as an endearment and it was obvious that he was fond of her. "I never heard the Lord speaking loudly to me, no, but he put thoughts in my mind. I realised that I must ask my late mother for forgiveness, and my children and my wife (new wife as Vlok got remarried) but also "Fina". When I asked Fina to wash her feet she said "NO, why do you want to do that. It is not necessary; you have been good to me why?" I said I must do it. So I washed her feet and I cried" (Appendix 1).

That same year, in April 2010 I met 'Fina'. As I imagined, she was feisty, outspoken elderly Zulu lady. Since then, I have met her several times. And for this research's purposes, I had to drive Vlok to her home in the Northwest province to deliver the monthly food parcel that Vlok helps her with. She too liked Vlok, as Vlok liked her. They were and are fond of each other. I then challenged her – just to be negative in confronting her and cynically asking questions. I, almost implied that Vlok was insincere and hypocritical regarding his conversion. I poked her with my challenging tone. She told me that – "*ukhulume into o yi yaziyo…onga bhedi laa…*"

(Appendix 3), meaning – 'you must know what you are talking about… And do not come here and speak nonsense'. She was affirming Vlok's sincere conversion. Later, Vlok insisted on informing me of the following –

> Yes, her son Simon and her daughter Emily, I knew them but they are deceased. Wonderful people, wonderful children. I took food to Emily in Tembisa and Simon was working in a factory near Hammanskraal. I know her kids. I know the grandchildren and the great-grandchildren…Oh yes, I have kept the relationship. And tomorrow I am taking food for Fina… (Appendix 1).

4.3.2. Vlok's Home: Living Arrangements

Vlok was excitedly telling me about 'Fina' as we were both gravitating towards a building that looked like it was a car garage. I had visited Vlok's home a few times previously but had not noticed that it was, in fact, not a garage but a workshop. I had insisted on making this an official visit for this current research. This was in the middle of 2017. This took place at Vlok's home in Pretoria in the same old house where he has been residing since he was Minister of Police. I noticed some people were living in his house. They did not all look like him – not all were white. There were about eleven or twelve people. Although it is uncomfortable to classify people by race and skin colour, it is done here merely for clarification. I realised there were six white people, this includes Vlok himself. And there were six coloured people and two black upholsterers, who run their business in the same space (Appendix 1). The yard is massive.

"No. I would not have done so", Vlok exclaimed after I was trying to 'interrogate' him and especially now that I had invaded his territory. I had asked him whether he did this out of his own volition – I was referring to all the these people described above, such as Fina, these six coloureds and the two black guys living and working at his home. "To my mind it was impossible, but this is what has happened and this is proof of what can happen to you if the Lord changes your life. If He changes my heart then it is different… I look at everybody like a human being, as a creation of the Lord and He said we must love His creation" (Appendix 1).

The above is Vlok's self-narration and as he talks, I happen to realise that I have met some of the people he was referring to. It is impossible to mention all of them here but they are enclosed in Appendix 1. The Zulu woman (Fina) and all these people from different cultures or

languages residing and working in the house of the former police minister (it should be highlighted that there are a lot in the Appendices 1., to bolster this point) cannot be ignored thus giving us something to seriously think about regarding his conversion, and in pursuit of reconciliation.

It is therefore vital at this juncture to hear from some of them. Most of these people have kept their relationship with him. It is not necessarily a friendship but some sort of relationship that has given them some knowledge of him – whether right or wrong. Relationships, especially a reliable relationship of people often birth some kind of knowledge. Relationships with people and knowledge of those people are essentially and socially embedded and socially constructed.

4. 4. Importance of Relationships

Relationships are critical and none of us can live outside of them. All human beings are relationship embedded - be they healthy or unhealthy relationships. To ascertain whether one has transformed or not can only be verified or even be authenticated by other fellow human beings. This then inevitably becomes a social matter for relationships are essentially spiritual and visibly or phenomenologically a social fact. Relationships transport one's reality into a social web or others' reality. Müller aptly describes –

> The shift of emphasis from individual to social, from subjective towards discourse, which constitutes a new epistemology in the social sciences, is also part and parcel of the postfoundationalist movement… The idea of socially constructed interpretations and meaning is part of the postfoundationalist approach (2004:205).

It is societal involvement. Either relationship becomes socially embedded or they are nonexistent – they simply cannot be called relationships. To know one well is inescapably facilitated by (un)intended relationships thus bound to be socially defined thus socially entrenched. The unconscious knowledge of other(s), which essentially is a social fact, happens through relationship(s). Eliastam conveys it much better - "through this socially constructed knowledge people come to understand the world around them and define 'reality'. This means that people construct their social and cultural worlds while these worlds simultaneously construct them…" (Eliastam 2015:32). This can arguably be also true with or about Vlok, for we view him through our beliefs, ideologies etc. which are societally based.

> The main premise is that the beliefs, values, institutions, customs, labels, laws, divisions of labour, and the like that make up our social realities are constructed by the members of a culture as they interact with one another from generation to generation and day-to-day. That is, societies construct the lenses through which their members interpret the world (Freedman & Combs 1996:16).

To bolster the above-mooted point, the serial-killer Saul of Tarsus' (later called Paul) conversion, repentance and reconciliation with Christ Jesus and the early church was authenticated by the web of other reliable relationships including Ananias, Barnabas, Peter and the church leadership in Jerusalem. So, relationships say it all about us. The Afrikaner author Venter humorously asks "why are relationships so fundamental to our human existence? Because the ultimate reality is relational. Relationships, not money makes the world go around." (2009:270). "*Umuntu ngu muntu nga bantu – motho ke motho ka batho ba bang*" These are African sayings to describe the essence of humanity, meaning one's humanity essentially is derived from others not from oneself thus, I am because of others/community. There are always relationships, which are inescapably entrenched in people or community be they healthy or unhealthy. And these relationships either make or unmake us.

Regarding Vlok, there should be, obviously outside of himself, people or community that is in a relationship with him that can "… authenticate a credible relationship based on integrity and humility …" After all repentance, conversion, forgiveness, and reconciliation are essentially relational matters. Outside the relational purviews, they are redundant and useless. Van Huyssteen (2006:10) would emphasise in this fashion "... embodied persons, and not abstract beliefs, should be seen as the locus of rationality. We, as rational agents, are thus always socially and contextually embedded". Social embeddedness which is deeply contextual becomes a social glue and thus births social and epistemological constructionism.

> Knowledge, discourse, and action are seen as social constructions, interpretations of the world and us that try to make sense of that reality while engaging with others who form the "audience" for our stories (Ganzevoort 2011:217).

These relationships, therefore, to use Ganzevoort's words - 'form the audience for (Vlok's) our stories' which inevitably become the 'knowledge, discourse, and action…'. The frequency and quality of these relationships with Vlok vary widely, even the most belligerent or adversarial happenstance does constitute a relationship. The following individuals or co-researchers are Vlok's friends or family. It must be confessed upfront that the first individual below started his relationship with Vlok as his colleague when the latter was still a politician and it has ended up being a friendship to this day. To reiterate, the following have some form of relationship with Vlok be it healthy or unhealthy – nonetheless, this qualifies them to have a view on Vlok's veracity regarding his conversion or repentance.

4. 5. Others on Vlok's Conversion

Several people or co-researchers were consulted, and their information is attached in the appendices below as part of the bibliography. It was not easy to select the co-researchers for this specific chapter thus for the relevancy of this study, but all the interviews from co-researchers are made available here. So, the following are people that come from different contexts – there is a family member, domestic worker, colleague while Vlok was head of police, victims, and other ordinary people. I decided to engage these people since all of them will bring an interesting and informed viewpoint to the 'puzzle' that is this man Vlok. The domestic worker, the colleague, family member, the priest-victim etc., should suffice to arguably authenticate his conversion.

4.5.1. Nico and Annemarie: Vlok's Children

Vlok has three children – two sons and a daughter, all of them are married. Two of his sons relocated to Australia almost twenty years ago. Vlok lives with his daughter and son-in-law in Pretoria's luxurious suburbs. I was fortunate enough to pay a visit to Vlok's home. The visit coincided with the visit, to his father, of Vlok's eldest son from Australia. He excitedly agreed to have an interview with me, and we were joined later by his daughter. We made sure that their father (Vlok) did not join us so that we could have the desired freedom from the influence of this previously heavy-handed chief policeman.

They both spoke warmly of their late mother who committed suicide. This was surely regrettable. It was intriguing for me when they endlessly spoke about their family's domestic worker who served their family for fifty-two (52) years. Their faces would uncompromisingly and almost in unison, brighten up when they mentioned her nickname, Fina. They would again,

fondly call her Sarafina Zwane *Coetzee*! The reason is simply that Annemarie is married to Coetzee. But, more importantly, is that - "she is Fina she is sort of ja she raised us I mean geez when we were young…" Nico excitedly explained (Appendix 7). Annemarie could not wait to bolster her brother's point.

> Ja she is caring and look after us when mom and dad have a meeting, she sits with us look after us in the evening…in the 1970s. It is about when dad was in Parliament…she (Fina) was 21 years when she started and then she travelled with my dad from here to Cape Town every six months. It is the packing all the staff eh go there and come back. It was difficult for her family…" (Appendix 7).

It was an exciting mood that ignited the atmosphere thus making it easier for me to talk frankly even about the sensitive racial issues in the family when they were at school and generally in the country. In no time it was natural for me to plunge into my other catalogue of questions: "tell me about your dad … your dad decided to go to the TRC … your dad of all the cabinet ministers he is the only one who went to the amnesty section to seek for pardon. How do you feel about that?" In a pensive mood, Nico without hesitation answered -

> Very proud of him. That was the right thing to do because his job as Minister for Police the job required people to do certain things. Some people went above that which it is wrong, but he went there because they expect people to do certain things in the line of duty. He went there to say I am out of my job as the head of the department where he worked for. "I take the responsibility" - that was that make me very proud of him… I always say that because that was the right thing to do the others should have done the same (Appendix 7).

Annemarie the sister also concurred, and she impatiently waited for him to finish his point then blurted out –

> Very proud. It was stressful it was difficult, but I am very proud…ja it was for me it was not nice to see him standing there (TRC) talked to the people and they ask questions… I did not like that to see him. He tried

> to talk on behalf of others who don't want to come there and speak. It was not nice to see him like that because it was tense, and he believes and as Nico said we were very proud of him but eh we care for him and eh we feel sad (Appendix 7).

I had to ask them what motivated their father to appear before the TRC's Amnesty section when none of his colleagues did, especially his leaders - Presidents Botha and De Klerk. In the same line of questioning, I quickly posed another one in a barrister manner: "Would you say your father changed?" I challenged. The atmosphere or the mood suddenly shifted as the disappointment was visible in their countenances. There was a short silence, though it felt long, the sole reason was that the discussion so far was lively and moving energetically fast. I felt at home in the house of the former powerful policeman surrounded by his children who were very '*ubuntu*' in their hospitality. As I noticed this awkwardness birthed by this peculiar silence, Nico overcame it with an authoritative tone -

> My take on this at that time was that he felt he could not let the people who work for him…who they were required to do certain things to apply the laws of the country he could not let them down. Eh, we did not get down to a deep conversation in terms of what was the real drive behind that, like I said people often ask me about why he is doing this. My normal answer will be he feels strongly about supporting the people…I would not say it was a shock it was an eye-opener that to me was probably the signs - things are changing in his life. At the time I felt that maybe he is going a little bit too far now is not because of washing a black man's feet just the concept of washing feet. I mean yeh to be honest at that time my feeling was no maybe he is pushing a little bit too far now too quick perhaps (Appendix 7).

I had to push Annemarie to share her views on her father's transformation or not. Again, in the pensive mood and she struggled with her English and her brother had to try to translate from Afrikaans to English. For her, she realised her father's deep transformation around the issue of feet washing.

> Yes, and then he talked to us and he explained everything, and he asks us can he wash our feet. And, he explained everything …it was eh difficult because I feel I respect him. And I, I do not feel he need to do that but, in his heart, he felt *ja* (sic) he wanted to do that. So, it was very special because he had eh tell everything …put your feet and very special - emotional. And I know is special for him… Grandma, me and … I do not think my husband was here and then my little brother and his wife and then Fina … her (Fina) eyes were in tears very special … (Appendix 7).

4.5.2. Leon Wessels

I asked Vlok's previous colleague, his deputy Leon Wessels, who has known him since 1974, about their origin of their relationship.

> I never met him before 1974. We had a very friendly relationship. It was a political relationship where one may without fear of contradiction that it was a respectful one and we were friends. You know in politics you know a lot of people, but you do not have a lot of friends. I say this with respect – Adriaan was in the middle of the ground relationship. He was friendly and respectful to his elders within the National Party… I was at one stage, for sixteen months I was his Deputy Minister of Law and Order. (Appendix 3).

He went on at length describing their deep and cordial relationship based on mutual respect. "Vlok goes to the TRC. What did you think of that?" I did not hesitate; I was blunt and asked. Wessels' posture was a relaxed one as he responded – "No. No. Vlok did not go on his own to the TRC, he went on his own when he applied for amnesty. When De Klerk made the presentation to the TRC on behalf of the National Party …" (Appendix 3). He generously gave the context of the National Party's internal politics regarding TRC and PW Botha's position regarding the TRC. It was a clarified confirmation for me to hear from inside the National Party that Vlok did go on his own volition to approach the TRC to seek amnesty without the support of his colleagues. "My response then, and still my response now is that whoever is serious about seeking forgiveness and acting on his religious beliefs, that should be respected and in Vlok's case, not only respected but applauded" (Appendix 3). This he said and affirmed his

admiration of his former colleague. Wessels was willing to generously expand so I allowed him -

> Well, I believe it took a lot of courage for him to do that, extraordinary courage, and beyond that public news event. Vlok and I met on a number of occasions, regularly, beyond that because I thought, it was my conviction, that Vlok needed the support because not many people were rallying around him…He was always extremely calm, serious, dignified about the whole situation. It was a serious matter and he never had any regrets, he never wanted to turn back on it. That was his conviction and his belief… (Appendix 3).

He was on a roll and I had to interrupt him as he was flowing from fact to fact. The reason is that many people had been cynical about his transformation especially the local and international media and I justifiably had to 'exploit' this opportunity given by this witty law professor. "Do you think he changed? Because he says that the Lord changed him?", I challenged Wessels. Since he was keen to clarify, I courageously gave him space to do so.

> I do believe he changed because the Vlok from 1974 to the Vlok of 2018 is most definitely a different believer and a different individual…you see, if you don't grow in your faith, you become stale, and I think for Vlok it was a continuous growing experience in his faith and his belief. So, you can only stand on the side lines, bow your head and applaud him. I think it must have taken a lot, lot, lot of courage, it is almost impossible to imagine how much courage it must have taken, because I do not know what the situation is right now, but there were not many people who would defend him, I am talking about old colleagues who were in Vlok's corner at that stage. A sad experience for me, was the absence of other colleagues when Vlok entered into that plea-bargain agreement, and standing there, this forceful, fearful person; I'm referring to the mid-1980s, now standing in the dock and being vulnerable and not many of the old colleagues giving him a pat on the back. (Appendix 3).

I gently and embarrassingly jumped in quickly with my next question. He was not offended nor deterred. He was focused with an acute mind, 'painting' me his picture of a longstanding friend, Oom Vlok. "How do you think he felt?" I interjected.

"He never complained about it. He was never pointing a finger and never apportioning blame to anyone, it was just how it was. He did not want to do battle with anyone; he did not want to quarrel with anybody" (Appendix 3). Wessels made sure I hear the following – "Vlok was indeed the only minister who went to ask for amnesty… It is Vlok owning up for his deeds, and in that sense owning up individually for what he had been doing" One day I said to Vlok - "you know Vlokkie, if I was God I would not have chosen you to do this work of mending fences, reaching out, building bridges, being a reconciler" I said "because you were never a philosopher, you were never a theologian" but I would have to acknowledge that I would have been wrong. God is much wiser than me because He has chosen you to do this job. The way he lives his life certainly is an inspiration to every one of us to do our thing wherever we find ourselves" (Appendix 3).

I was happy that I did not interrupt as he was explaining but simultaneously applying self-introspection. The self-introspection was also about the Afrikaners that both of them were. He emphatically mentioned that Vlok needs to be respected by the divided Afrikaner nation. "I can only couch the things I have said to him differently by simply saying that Vlok always has been an inspiration, and he is certainly now setting the bar very high in the example he is setting for us to help South Africans, to mend fences and to forge ahead together … Afrikaners have always been divided. They have never been a homogeneous group, and at this juncture, in our history, they will never attain unity. They can only afford one another respect…" (Appendix 3). It was like the Afrikaner sage had spoken.

4.5.3. Michael Lapsley

Father Lapsley had a lot to say about Vlok, apartheid and other issues related to the country. I asked him about Vlok but now in a specific manner relating to Vlok's conversion. "So, for me meeting with Vlok was a very unsatisfactory encounter and at Piet Meiring's initiative, there was a subsequent meeting, a private meeting at his house, which I think …" (Appendix 5) he paused in a pensive mood and then continued -

> "We had a much more satisfactory meeting and, I have no doubt in his genuineness and his commitment to discipleship. I still worry about the default position of washing feet. Not too much theologically, but it has become his chosen ritual; is this always the appropriate response and that concerns me. But we are all genuine in the ways that we are genuine, and I would want to say that he is genuine in the way that he is genuine, I do not think he is fake or pretending. I think he is sincere. I do not know how much the theology he was brought up with prepared him for a journey, but maybe that is true of all of us, that our theology is not necessarily adequate. It is like "Ok, I am sorry" but like you said, "what is the fruit of repentance". What does remorse look like? I think in his way he is seeking to live out that journey and I respect him for that". (Appendix 5).

Father Lapsley did not say more than what he just uttered regarding Vlok's conversion and repentance. It was not often he was generous about affirming of Vlok but here he was gracious - I found.

4.5.4. Frank Chikane

The bold activist and pastor, Chikane, turned his face towards me as he was coming from another meeting. He still exuded energy despite the fact that he was embroiled in many current difficult issues in this democratic era. This was shocking because the enemies now were not Vlok and his ilk. Before I can even be specific, he gets to the point –

> Now with Vlok, I couldn't tell you exactly when I first met him because Vlok for me was life before I saw him, he was so much life – he commanded this operation that was destroying people's lives. People were detained, people were killed, and he became the face of that because it is the minister, who speaks, and unfortunately it was the Police who were the foot soldiers, it was not the army. The intelligence was the police…so he was commanding every operation. The closest for me would be hearing about him and being a victim of his without meeting him (Appendix 2).

This was the reality especially in the townships as the reverend was explaining that many black people in the 1980's met Vlok without necessarily 'meeting' him in person. 'Vlok' the name exuded crippling fear thus was 'omnipotent' throughout the country and possibly he was 'omnipresent' too. Some were daringly courageous to "chants of 'Vlok off'…" (Jansen 2014:43). He 'knew' our names and our addresses, so we thought. His name was synonymous with permanent disappearance, suffocating death, maim, torture. Chikane was aptly descriptive: "Many of us in the now, of course, Vlok goes to confess this, which is they were responsible for that operation, and if I met Vlok before, I cannot tell you whether it was before or after the bombing of Khotso House …" (Appendix 2). He tries hard to remember the actual dates and finally dumps the whole exercise of searching for the dates.

> It was after the TRC, it was well after …Vlok came to me … at the TRC he did not tell the whole truth, that is the real issue. You see, I can tell you the truth but keep some of it back, so it does not mean I have told you the whole truth. The TRC will give amnesty for the thing I have told them, but not for the other things I have not told them. By the time Vlok came to me it was blanket forgiveness, "forgive me for everything I have done", even that which he did not disclose. There was a good reason why he came to me. The TRC was to get amnesty so he did not go to jail. To me it was a voluntary thing; he was not forced by anybody. Some people said it was because the prosecuting authority was investigating, but I do not know. At that point, they were still confident they could get away with it, but he must have had a Damascus experience. (Appendix 2).

As indicated above, Chikane acknowledges that Vlok was not coerced but voluntarily sought humility and forgiveness. The much-acclaimed academic Jansen had to remind us that –

> Both Chikane and Vlok come from the same Evangelical background, a theological world in which washing the feet of others is an expression of servanthood, submission, and humility. These common beliefs, albeit ones shaped in a racially divided world, enables a commonness of purpose. Chikane forgives the former head of Police and Vlok then asks him whether, in an act of contrition, he may wash his feet. Chikane hesitates but then allows Vlok to proceed (2014:44).

This was very interesting to hear, according to Chikane, Vlok came voluntarily and not coerced by anyone. His countenance and body gestures were in unison with his words. He was

convinced, though he reluctantly entertained those that were pejoratively cynical of Vlok. As with Father Lapsley, he was benignly overwhelmed with information to educate some of us, so I permitted him to flow. He further elaborated –

> But Vlok, you must depend on him, but his Damascus experience is also related to what happened to his wife. That is critical because something happened in his life, which had nothing to do with all these other things … I have no doubt he meant it, but anyway, even if he did not mean it, I had forgiven him, so the debate that people are having is irrelevant for me because for me I did not think he needed to wash my feet but he said: "please allow me, it is for me. I know you are ok, but I am not ok" (Appendix 2).

He was finished explaining Vlok's conversion. He saw my facial posture was awaiting more. To my surprise, he went further and gave more.

> Take away the colour and they are human beings, like any other human being. It is just that we get indoctrinated one way or another, and I think his conscience hit him, his conscience could not allow him to stay without doing it. I mean he did not need to do this…it is not like it went public without his knowledge…he did not want it to be public because it was about himself and his soul, it was not to tell people, that is why I had to ask him, I said the media has picked up this thing and I cannot deny it happened. That is when he said, "I did not mean to make it public" … He was not campaigning. (Appendix 2).

4.5.5. Paul Verryn

Many would not be aware that Reverend Paul Verryn is a *bona fide* Sowetan who still lives in Soweto after more than thirty years. Verryn is white. He stubbornly stayed in Soweto because it was against his faith in Christ Jesus to be imposed upon to live where apartheid's engineers determined. There are not many whites who reside in the black townships even in the new era of democracy. The Sowetans were unperturbed, I observed, by this 'umlungu' who naturally made his day-to-day life part and parcel as theirs. No big deal! He sits down looking as if he is tired, but his spiritual stamina or residue is palpable in the room as he greets me with a wide and inviting smile. There is a 'too much *motho'* (humaneness) here in this being called Paul. The conversation bounced from topic to topic mainly to do with things about my research and

about reconciliation - obviously about Vlok. He generously shared Vlok from his personal experience. Somewhere I launched in – "do you think Vlok's alleged conversion is authentic?"

"I'm not bothered about whether it's authentic or not…" (Appendix 4) indeed, he was easily not bothered as his body, his face and voice harmonised. This mildly disturbed me, but I had to apply some amount of self-control. He continued –

> Because God's got a way of taking us seriously, even if we do not mean it. He will win us into a house, and He will make us furnish that house. Even if it is expedient and I am doing it because I do not want to go to prison or whatever it is, but if I get to the place where I am saying I am sorry. I think he tried to poison Frank, or he arranged for it, so clearly, he has come to some place of insight and …we must not think that because we constructed a rainbow nation and added TRC that it has solved everything. So, when people come forward and say "I am sorry" we must grab it with everything that we have got. Even if it is false and they do not declare everything, the fact of the matter is, he has started a journey, and all of us, ultimately, will stand before God and plead for mercy for some of the things we did and said that were far away from the gospel. (Appendix 4).

The bespectacled Bishop stopped, abruptly, though unintentionally, in his comments about the veracity of the conversion of the former Minister of Police. I was astounded. I wanted more but recognized his generous attitude of admitting to a minutia of Vlok's repentance or conversion expressed in 'I am sorry'. I had to be content. He was not bothered. He essentially believed that Vlok has converted because "the fact of the matter is, he has started a journey, and all of us, ultimately, will stand before God and plead for mercy for some of the things we did and said that were far away from the Gospel" (Appendix 4). I reticently moved to another matter but that is how this gentle veteran activist preacher closed this aspect of the interview.

4.5.6. Marta Steyers: Vlok's Beneficiary

It must have been an ordinary day during the week in the sunny morning when I decided to accompany Vlok for his daily routine. I patiently drove behind his rickety old Datsun 1400. This minivan was loaded with a lot of food. The kind of food ready to be eaten, just needed to be warmed – such as pizza and garlic bread. We were destined to a new township outside of Centurion, Pretoria, called Olievenhoutsbosch. He is always accompanied by his assistant who

is employed by him part-time to help in carrying these 'goods' as they can be heavy for this octogenarian. Without wasting time, we were in this buzzing and overcrowded place with taxis all over the place. We were now beyond the entrance of this busy spot when all of a sudden, his tiny van stopped. The old man got out and walked towards me dragging his left leg. All the pedestrians' eyes were glued on him as he was distinctly 'non-black'. He seemed not bothered by these onlookers.

"Let's pray for the Lord's protection as we've arrived at Olievenhoutsbosch…" (Appendix 1) Vlok politely explained to me as he reaches out to grip my hand to embark on an agreement in prayer. He then prayed a short prayer as he was standing outside next to my driver's door while I remained seated. He further explained that we would be delivering food to four places. Then he goes back to his van almost like dragging his whole torso, an old one! I followed him in serpentine-like fashion so that I should not get lost. The irony was immediately noticeable – usually in the township, it is the black guy like me who should lead but here it was the other way round. The white and Afrikaner former head police, Vlok is leading a supposed comrade on his turf. He certainly knew this area with tiny-compacted streets dotted with cramped RDP houses.

In less than four minutes we were at Marta Steyer's tiny house. It looked like they were awaiting him - for five members of the family was standing outside the gate. The euphoric mood was palpable and welcoming at least for me. It was obvious they knew each other, all of them. I had to wait to be introduced by Vlok and it did not take long to be part of this 'family gathering'. "Yes, the time I met Oupa (Vlok), I saw Oupa for the first time my daughter was one-year-old …she is now eleven years old…" (Appendix 8). Marta excitedly explains to me. Our discussion, seemingly interrupted as food-parcels were off-loaded, actually continued fairly smoothly.

> I used to see Oupa (Vlok) by the time he paid regular visits here at my home and the blue house there… I also saw him on TV … Oupa, yes, a lot. We love him so much…is like we know Oupa now for over eleven years and is a very good man. He is like our father, a family member… (Appendix 8).

As I was listening to Marta, someone in this informal gathering, beautifully interjected, only to discover that it was Marta's older son, Fogus. "What I can say is that … He was a former Minister of Law and Order and I used to see him on the TRC a long time ago. So now when I starting to see him here, I did not think this is Mr Vlok" (Appendix 8). He mentions this - astounded as this was the first time, he realises that this is Vlok. He then admitted that he has seen Vlok many times before there, coming to his place but never linked Vlok's face and Vlok's name.

> The way he treats these people here, the way he talks to people. Always help him, I mean I am staying in this shelter… I just come out and help get things inside the house. Then I forget his Mr Uncle Adriaan Vlok. I always talk to Mr Adriaan… He has changed…Too much, too much (Appendix 8).

As I was about to leave and walking away from this impromptu self-created throng, an old lady volunteered to confirm what has been discussed – "no, this man (Vlok) is a very good man, we love him and the kids love him, he helps us a lot…" (Appendix 8)

4.5.7. Dali Mpofu: An Advocate and Political Activist

Petrol stations can be an interesting venue to meet all kinds of people and 'collide' with those you never think you would meet. There he was, Dali Mpofu the youngest former ANC stalwart (at least in the 1980s) and a former chairperson, and an outspoken current member of Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF), at the petrol station, trying hard to quickly duck and dive, to avoid public attention. I saw him from afar. Without hesitation, I approached him and was gently attended by a man who appeared to be his security guard. They both agreed that I could talk to him. It did not take long – my appointment with him was easily made for the discussion on Vlok's conversion, which he calls Vlok's Damascus experience. We spoke at length about conversions and God. He could not accept that Vlok was a genuinely transformed person or a seriously repentant Christian. And he believes it was too convenient. I then pressed him further by asking whether God does change people. He affirmatively agreed but not Vlok, he emphasised. I then reminded him that Vlok is the only National Party's senior politician who went to the TRC's amnesty section to personally ask for clemency, unlike all the National Party and ANC's leadership.

> Fair enough I think for that you can give him credit…at least he was prepared to talk about it but again it was because remember Vlok and Malan were not just National Party ministers, Vlok and Malan were the ministers in charge of the security apparatus those are the people who were in charge for the actual brutality of apartheid. So is not surprising that he had to go the extra mile than the other people because all these things - the assassinations happened under him, the massacres happened under him so in that case there were specific issues for him to answer… (Appendix 9).

Still, after he acknowledged that there was some repentance evidenced by Vlok's appearance at the TRC especially the amnesty section, his cynicism was still present due to Vlok's distinct complicity in apartheid. He further emphatically challenged -

> But I think that it is too convenient for when there is another explanation. If, let us say in 1987 way back and Vlok said no I can no longer be part of this (apartheid) I cannot be detaining children I am resigning then I will say he had a Damascus moment…Yah how can they all of a sudden have all of them had a Damascus moment in 1990. It does not happen like that, even God does not work like that… (Appendix 9).

4.6. Reflections

Schmidt talks of 'sins'; 'atonement' and 'conscience', these are religious words that are often used for a repentant sinner. "The imminence of a potential Vlok trial is the most pressing matter, however. Vlok would be the highest-ranking apartheid figure to be brought to book since the 1996 Trials of the Generals ..." (2014:151), Schmidt later admittedly relates that Vlok was the only 'highest-ranking apartheid figure' which is what Wessels had conceded earlier. To add further, the famous and respected historian and academic Giliomee emphasised that there was "only one politician (Minister of Police, Adriaan Vlok) and a few military officers asked for amnesty …" (2003:654). Again, to remind us, the bold Father Lapsley said regarding Vlok –

> I have no doubt in his genuineness and his commitment to discipleship. I still worry about the default position of washing feet. Not too much

> theologically, but it has become his chosen ritual… But we are all genuine in the ways that we are genuine, and I would want to say that he is genuine in the way that he is genuine, I do not think he is fake or pretending. I think he is sincere… What does remorse look like? I think in his way he is seeking to live out that journey and I respect him for that. (Appendix 5).

Lapsley does not praise Vlok. He had a dim view about a lot of things that had to do with Vlok. But he does acknowledge Vlok's 'personal genuineness'; 'personal commitment to discipleship'; 'not faking or pretending'; 'I think he is sincere' and finally, 'I respect him for that".

Rev. Chikane strongly emphasised this to me when I asked about Vlok's sincerity: "Take away the colour and they are human beings, like any other human being. It is just that we get indoctrinated one way or another, and I think his (Vlok's) conscience hit him, his conscience could not allow him to stay without doing it. I mean he did not need to do this (washing of his feet) …" (Appendix 2).

And Mpofu, conditionally and reticently acknowledged: "fair enough I think for that you can give him credit … at least he was prepared to talk about it …" but it is important to accept that essentially, he did not recognise Vlok's conversion. Therefore, most of my co-researchers accepted Vlok's conversion.

4.7. Conclusion

This chapter was about Vlok's alleged conversion and his pursuit of reconciliation. Müller's four movements (from the Seven Movements) post-foundational approach was primarily deployed to methodologically navigate this entire chapter. It was through these methods that Vlok's conversion and reconciliation were then discussed and debated. Through the narrative approach applied by the co-researchers such as Fina, Vlok's domestic worker, Rev. Chikane whose feet was washed by Vlok to prove his remorse, Mpofu the advocate also one of the political leaders of the (EFF) who himself was Vlok's political victim through imprisonment without trial in the 1980's – does not believe Vlok is sincere. And others were interviewed regarding Vlok's alleged conversion and reconciliation.

Giliomee helped us through his reflections by emphasizing that the "only one politician (Minister of Police, Adriaan Vlok) and a few military officers asked for amnesty…" (2003:654) to point that indeed Vlok did cooperate with TRC to seek amnesty, and this could be seen as a sign of his conversion. It should be remembered that scholars such as Longenecker and Rambo were used to furnish the detailed definitions and descriptions of conversion. The following chapter is about the reconciliatory relationships in South Africa, this will further assist us with further shades of the meaning of conversion and reconciliation.

Chapter 5.

Reconciling Relationships in the New South Africa

5. 1. Introduction

This chapter, will define, and describe the process of reconciliation and in that way attempt a demonstration of what such a process should entail in post-apartheid South Africa which will form part of the recommendations for this dissertation. Since Vlok is at the centre of this study, this chapter's objectives as tabled above, will inevitably - but more so critically revisit Vlok's authenticity as far as his pursuance of reconciliation is concerned.

5. 2. Post-foundational Approach and Reconciliation

The post-foundational approach as has been emphasised throughout this study will still be the methodology applied here. Müller's Seven Movements which essentially or unashamedly have post-foundational rationality will be pursued in this chapter, especially due to the fact that this chapter is about relationships but to be specific – reconciliation. The 'weight' of reconciliation, as a big issue to be dealt with is a constant reality - whether we choose to ignore it or not. Human experiences, especially human-to-human experiences are the subject of all human relationships. So, it is with reconciliation since it is fully relational whether characterised by doubts or honour – it is, nonetheless relational. For example, hatred is essentially relational – in that it is a perverted relationship, seemingly opposed to reconciliation but simultaneously has the potential to grow into a reconciliatory relationship. Reconciliation is experience-bound, like other human relationships, we must not forget this aspect.

The methodology that should deal with such issues – anger, hatred, hubris, unforgiveness, reconciliation etc. will be post-foundational approach which is appropriate since most of these are not measurable.

There is no doubt that reconciliation in the context of this study or concerning Vlok's journey is theologically or divinely charged. It is an experience that is God-initiated. Since reconciliation is relationally determined, it experiences post-foundational episteme or philosophy together with its 'partner' Seven Movements (Müller 2004:300) to navigate this chapter. To be specific, out of the 'Seven Movements' – this chapter will only utilise the two which are: (i) a description of experiences as it is continually informed by traditions of interpretation and (ii) a reflection on God's presence, as it is understood and experienced in a specific situation.

Experiences in human relationships especially concerning reconciliation are inevitable. By this I mean, every person must have gone through a reconciliation at a personal level (this will include Vlok). It may not be so at the political or social level, but some sort of personal reconciliation must have ensued. Having a positive relational experience does not necessarily mean that it is reconciliatory. This very methodology, post-foundational, is also critical of experience –

> In a postfoundationalist Christian theology, the focus will always, and first of all, be on a relentless criticism of uncritically held crypto-foundationalist assumptions. This should allow us to explore freely and critically the experiential and interpretative roots of all our beliefs and to open to the fact that, even in matters of faith, religious commitment, and theological reflection, we relate to our world only through interpreted experience (Gregersen and Van Huyssteen 1998:46).

Reconciliation and relationships are essential experiences embedded in human interaction. And, relationships (even reconciliation) or experiences can be subjective, and it is in this context that post-foundational methodology can freely be critical of both without truncating them but acknowledge that 'we relate to our world only through interpreted experience' as mentioned by Gregersen and Van Huyssteen. Since this chapter is about reconciliation, it should be acknowledged upfront that reconciliation, especially within the context of South Africa, can be controversial, misunderstood, abused and possibly a political taboo, at least to some. The fact is that the word is not politically neutral or free. It has mutated into a lot of things – an enigmatic conundrum.

5. 3. The South African Reconciliation Conundrum

The word 'reconciliation' tends to slip from its ordinary rational meaning like many other words. But then it invokes emotions that often are not stable but poised (perhaps precariously) to act probably without one's full consciousness or control. The following points will delineate the conundrum of reconciliation.

5.3.1. The Timing of Reconciliation

Reconciliation, to be specific when it is politically driven, tends to be introduced prematurely. This often happens when relationships have gone awry (mostly by the perpetrators) – with obvious ulterior motives. It is important to mention that it is not always the case. It is obvious the word in itself is neither guilty nor criminal, but it is the perpetrators who possibly abuse the word. It is as if the word 'reconciliation' means 'betrayal 'or 'untrustworthy' etc., yet we know it does not mean that.

> We must recognise the danger of speaking about reconciliation. There is certainly a time for remaining silent, and sometimes silence can express our concern even better than words. But that is no excuse for not speaking, for not daring to speak when the time demands it. Sensitive to questions we have raised, we dare to speak of reconciliation because we dare not remain silent in a world torn apart by hatred, alienation and violence. We dare to not remain silent whether as citizens or as Christians (de Gruchy 2002:16).

The above is well articulated by de Gruchy – this acute symmetrical connection between silence and expression or 'speaking' as far as reconciliation is concerned especially in South Africa is deeply insightful. It is often from experience that we hear either nauseating, clamoring voices or silence regarding reconciliation. They are asymmetrically disproportionate. De Gruchy, warns us about 'the danger' of speaking about reconciliation.

5.3.2. Pursuing Reconciliation without commitment to Justice and the Poor and Marginalised

The word 'reconciliation also has been misused', the famous theologian Wink once remarked twenty-three years ago, saying,

> One person we spoke with commented, "the two dirtiest words in black South Africa today are 'nonviolence' and 'reconciliation'. Reconciliation is necessary, and it must be engaged in at all stages of the struggle. The human quality of the opponent must be continually affirmed. Some kind of trust, which can serve as the basis of the new society to come, must be established

> even during conflict. But when church leaders preach reconciliation without having unequivocally committed themselves to struggle on the side of the oppressed for justice, they are caught straddling a pseudo-neutrality made of nothing but thin air (Wink 1987:7).

The word itself is almost a political animal thus treated with suspicion and caution because it has gone through political and social trials – if not political and social contamination.

5.3.3. Why Luthuli's ANC Rejected Reconciliation

In this country of South Africa, the word 'reconciliation' has been with us much longer than the dawn of the legendary TRC. The passionate Cape Town veteran theologian de Gruchy chronicles –

> Luthuli went on to speak of how Africans had suffered oppression at the hands of European colonialism and yet, despite this, sought peace and concord rather than vengeance. This was a profound statement of what national reconciliation might mean from one who was both a leading politician, as President of the African National Congress and a devout Christian. But Luthuli expressed the fear that the outstretched hand that he and others offered to the apartheid regime would be rejected and the struggle would have to continue and possibly intensify. That, indeed, was the case (2002:33).

It is therefore important before we speak of 'reconciliation' as the country, we realise our historicity with this unintentionally contaminated word.

5.3.4. The possible difficulty of Reconciliation in conditions of Violence

> In the wake of the Sharpeville Massacre and the subsequent banning of the ANC and the Pan-Africanist Congress, the armed struggle that Luthuli and others had tried to prevent through non-violent resistance, was launched. The story of the struggle is now widely known. Less widely known but well documented is the response of the South African member Churches of the World Council of Churches to the Sharpeville Massacre, notably at the Cottesloe Consultation. This, together with the formation of the Christian

> Institute in 1963 under the leadership of Beyers Naude, signalled the beginning of the church struggle against apartheid. At the heart of this struggle was a theology of reconciliation that fundamentally challenged both the politics and theology of racial separation. God's will, as expressed in the gospel of Jesus Christ, was not apartheid but the reconciliation of the peoples of South Africa in one nation. This was most clearly and fully expounded in The Message to the People of South Africa published by the South African Council of Churches in 1968. The message was not the first church statement critical of apartheid. (de Gruchy 2002:33).

The Nobel laureate Luthuli's attempt to reach out in the name of reconciliation was to no avail. Even in this democratic era, the unforgettable 1960 Sharpeville pogrom and his reconciliatory gesture have not been adequately recognised. No wonder people were and are suspicious of any mention of the word 'reconciliation'.

5.3.5. The difficulty of Reconciliation in conditions of Inequality

"The main challenge facing any serious attempt at sustained reconciliation in South Africa is first and foremost how to bridge the huge disparities between the rich, who form a tiny minority, and the bulk of poor people" (Doxtader and du Toit 2010:85). South Africa is riddled with iniquitous poverty because of the previous apartheid regime's intentional inequality levelled against the black majority. Therefore, any mentioning of reconciliation void of justice, equality, and fairness – cannot be authentic.

5.3.6. Difficulty of Reconciliation between the Free and the Unfree

Reconciliation must never be compromised. The people who had unapologetically addressed the land question explicitly without fear were the Pan African Congress (PAC) and the Black Consciousness Movement (BCM) and others. Reconciliation was not considered by them because of the intensity of the unashamed white oppression of blacks. The notion of reconciliation void of land was suspect and obvious chicanery. It is for this reason that the Black Consciousness Movement would not associate itself with the concept of 'reconciliation'.

> For the proponents of Black Consciousness, any talk of reconciliation or social integration before achieving liberation was regarded as undermining

> liberation, hence the rhetoric of reconciliation was suspect. The suspicion deepened when the apartheid regime itself began to speak of reconciliation within the framework of its own 'reformist' policies as pursued by PW Botha in the late 1970 and early 1980s. Botha's policies were designed to perpetuate the regime's control and hegemony in a new guise. (de Gruchy 2002:34).

5.3.7. Difficulty of Reconciliation without Land Restitution

The discussion of reconciliation has been given so much 'air-time'. This seems premature and unfair when the land issue has not been adequately addressed. It was shocking to discover that even the lauded and legendary TRC sidelined the land question(s) but were courageous to boldly discuss 'truth' and 'reconciliation', apparently in the absence of the land question. The academic and theologian Maluleke avers about the land issue -

> We need to address the question of land, going beyond the jaded notions and slow process of land reform and land redistribution. Once people have lost respect for, and their affinity with, the land on which they walk, work and live, how can they be reconnected to it? This is the dilemma in which many black South Africans find themselves. Even when the land commission eventually awards claimed land back to some communities, they do not know what to do with it, so they often take the cash. Can people assume a sense of ownership of a country and a state built on land from which they have been alienated? (Maluleke, 2016).

The land question or matter has been politically avoided for some time now. There may be reasons for this. Could it be the fear of this discussion negatively affecting the economy? Should land expropriations be executed a 'la Zimbabwe's style? Could it be fears of the right-wing Afrikaner farmers' backlash? Some fears are nebulous but seemingly palpable, nonetheless. Therefore, the moral self-ingratiation by our government especially the lauded TRC when the land was discussed – should distinctly be treated with extra caution if not contempt.

> It is unfortunate that the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) never considered the resolution of the land question in South Africa as lying at the

> heart of reconciliation and thus as part of its remit. Business, including the white commercial farming sector, was not called to account during the life of the TRC, a point that was made by former commissioner Dumisa Ntsebeza: "there has never been any legislative framework for business to come… before the TRC to give full disclosure of what they did… there was no threat to business, whether they came or not. They were under no obligation to make a full disclosure…" (Doxtader and du Toit 2010: 86-7).

As it is fully known the massive agricultural land that is in the hands of white's is largely commercial – it is immaterial to differentiate between the two since at the core it is profit-making. To discuss and trigger any semblance of reconciliation in this atmosphere, is almost making a mockery of reconciliation. Could it be that broader business, or the South Africa Corporates were in collusion, with impunity, to avoid the TRC's platform?

> When the TRC eventually applied its mind to the role of business, it concluded that the white agricultural industry benefited from its privileged access to the land and that it failed to provide adequate facilities and services for employees and their dependents. Sampie Terreblanche, however, disagreed and suggested that the TRC was mild in his findings. He arrived: 'The commission is mistaken to think that the agricultural sector benefited mainly from its privileged access to land. Although access to land was important, its privileged position was based on its access to very cheap and bounded black labour (Doxtader and du Toit 2010: 87).

With the above undeniable assertion, can we still talk of reconciliation? To this day the land issue has not been adequately resolved to the satisfaction of the majority of this country. Lungile Ntsebeza reminds us in 2008 (Doxtader and du Toit 2010: 87), what took place in this country regarding commercial farmers though he may have reported this more than ten years ago – it is still relevant to this day. "Today, reconciliation," Maluleke emphasises – "together with its sister notions of negotiation, truth and forgiveness, lies in ruins…Many have become cynical about it" (2016).

> The challenge in 2008 by commercial farmers and their allies in the Expropriation Bill is a clear indication of the lack of commitment by white

> commercial farmers to reconciliation. They put so much pressure on the government that it decided to withdraw the Bill without any clarity as to how even the limited objective of transferring 30 per cent of the land to black owners by 2014 would be…This raises the question of whether there can be any reconciliation in South Africa under current conditions where the bulk of the land remains in the hands of a white minority… With the majority of black Africans living under conditions of squalor and without land either in the rural or the urban areas…Radical land redistribution in South Africa, so pivotal to reconciliation, is it possible? (Doxtader and du Toit 2010: 88 & 89)

Ntsebeza's points are encased in the above quotation by Doxtader and du Toit to lament the whole matter regarding the controversial issue – the land. This must be entertained thus listened to even if it is unpalatable especially for those who would accept cheap reconciliation. It is because often truth or canescent-truth and reconciliation are seen to be disjointed and adversarial items.

5.3.8. Difficulty of Reconciliation without Truth

Sometimes reconciliation is understood to be aborting the truth's project. "As an Argentinian journalist, reflecting on the attempt in his country", de Gruchy reporting and continues - "to subvert attempts to get at the truth about the disappeared, put it: 'the political discourse of reconciliation is profoundly immoral because it denies the reality (i.e. truth) of what people have experienced" (2002:16). Truth, here in South Africa has always been in the public knowledge, for example, among many – the black townships and black men's hostels are the actual, obvious monuments of apartheid.

5.3.9. Difficulty of Reconciliation that ignored Anger

One can hear the anger, pain, and justifiable fury. This must be seen and heard by all especially the perpetrators, so that they know the cost of forgiveness and reconciliation, and the unquantifiable human damage they have bred.

> Listening to the rage of victims of oppression is not only a necessary step in the process of preventing further outbreaks of violent fury, but it is also a step -in process of recognising that victims are not simply passive objects of

> oppression…. So, the rage for justice may be seen also as a protest against victimhood, an affirmation of power amidst powerlessness…What is truly remarkable in the struggle of justice, however, is not the sound of fury, but the word of forgiveness, a key moment in the process of reconciliation. Yet it is only when we listen to the outrage of victims that we can begin to appreciate their offer forgiveness… (de Gruchy 2002:170).

The current generation in this country, especially those who are naively poised to confidently coerce and innocently encourage (a blind) reconciliation, needs to know the 'politics' and the conundrums around this word – 'reconciliation'. Gobodo-Madikizela speaks of her fears -

> As we approach the twentieth year since the end of apartheid, more and more criticisms are made of the role that reconciliation has played in the transition to democracy in South Africa. This debate is happening at all level of society. Some of the debates are part of the larger context of a search for identity in a changing society, and they touch our deepest and most hidden fears about what it means to be white in post-apartheid South Africa and what it means to be black in the context of social 'transformation'…One often hears the comment that things are 'worse than they were under apartheid', especially about education and job availability. These feelings and perceptions may be at the heart of deep, unnamed fears as South Africans from diverse racial and class … (in du Doit & Doxtader 2010:135).

Could be it be possible that the reconciliation project in South Africa was, and still is, premature? Could it even be that the 'kairos' has expired? The witty professor Ndebele implicitly alludes to this – "it remains the challenge of moving beyond the reconciliation of the kind associated with the TRC. We are now called upon to lay the foundations for a post-reconciliation South Africa" (in Doxter & du Toit 2010:73). Post-reconciliation epoch? It is known that the post-apartheid society is not necessarily post-reconciliatory South Africa – even in 2019. The nomenclature 'post-reconciliation' could accelerate and inspire us to be the embodiment of reconciliation. The fact is that as the country we could be at the pre-reconciliatory phase even in 2019! Could it be possible that we do not know what reconciliation should look like in Mzantsi? Will we ever know when we have full-blown reconciliation? How will we know when it has dawned on us? We may need to once again heed

the strong warning from de Gruchy – "…even so dare we Christians to speak about reconciliation as though we have a monopoly on the word and its basis, as though we all agree on what it means, and as though the church has been a shining example of a community of reconciliation?" (2002:15).

5. 4. What then is the Authentic Reconciliation?

Confusion abounds, regarding the actual meaning of the word 'reconciliation'. People often act or practice this word with their spouses, family, friends, in social relationships and many other contexts without being tired or irritated by it.

Is South Africa going through 'reconciliation-fatigue? But what is reconciliation? It is only in a political and theological context that many people get irritated, annoyed, or avoid it. Milbank (2003:105) colourfully responded to our current world as we wrestle with this word –

> For now, we glimpse dimly its perfection within a process of reconciliation that is but fragmentarily realised-like a fleeting passage of an aerial creature amongst the trees, which we are scarcely sure we have a glimpse at all". The 'glimpse dimly'; 'imperfection'; 'fleeting passage' and 'scarcely sure' which for Milbank are the realities of our global world thus the definitions or descriptions of reconciliation often elude us (Milbank 2003:105).

Once again, Gobodo-Madikizela vulnerably discloses the following in her experiential narrative that for me epitomises this phenomenon of reconciliation.

> The woman in the audience raised her hand and waved it frantically. It was early 2003, and I had just given a lecture at the Los Angeles public library during my American book tour…. And I pointed at the woman who seemed desperate for a chance to speak. 'I am an Afrikaner,' she said. 'I read your book last night and feel an increasable need to speak right now.' She went on to explain that she had come to the United States to pursue postgraduate studies in international relations. She had been burdened with guilt for having benefited from apartheid and reading the book had stirred her deeply. Her voice trembled as she continued: 'When I complete my degree, I want to return home to South Africa and payback in whatever way I can. More than

> anything,' she said, now weeping visibly, 'I want to ask for forgiveness for having benefited from a system that destroyed so many lives.' (2014).

This Afrikaner woman has already surrendered herself to the eventuality of reconciliation because she is probably aware of the qualitative and quantitative width and breadth of apartheid's decimation of many South Africans, especially blacks. She may have already counted the cost and seemingly she is prepared to pay the eventual cost. She is mentally and psychologically already en route to reconciliation, thus '…payback in whatever way I can; more than anything…' is her attitude. Gobodo-Madikizela was invited thus she easily reciprocated by reaching out – "I took a few steps forward and extended my hand to reach out to her from the edge of the stage. She came towards me, still sobbing. There was a stillness in the packed auditorium. You could have heard a pin drop. As we embraced, the audience applauded" (2014). The obvious is that for the reconciliation to take place the other must be there to respond. An authentic reconciliation is not easy. It is a messy project. It can easily transcend the rational aspect of oneself without being irrational or a-rational but reasonably emotional. And it is purely because it is by nature cathartic and therapeutic.

> Reconciliation cannot be condensed into a quick-fix project, one that has to take place within a prescribed space of time. It needs work, on a personal and public level. Perhaps the most enduring effects of totalitarian rule and the systematic oppression under apartheid cannot be measured in terms of numbers of the dead but are immeasurable losses of the human spirit. That is what has to be restored… How does this society restore its humane fabric in the aftermath of a horrific past? (Gobodo-Madikizela 2014:22)

For Schneider, reconciliation must be first understood as to what it is. He mentions three false understandings – reconciliation as a hasty peace – mostly advocated by the perpetrators of abuse and violence; reconciliation instead of liberation – to some people these two are separate and therefore liberation is seen as suspect. "We do not call for reconciliation instead of liberation; we call for liberation to bring about liberation… It is a managed process – the process acknowledges that both sides have legitimate interests, but that both sets of interests cannot be met in a finite world. Consequently, a balancing process must be undertaken that will require both sides to give up, but not give up so much that the conflict flares up again". (2006:22 & 25).

Again, according to Schneider reconciliation it is not only the above three. For him reconciliation – "it is God who reconciles.... reconciliation is not a skill to be mastered, but rather, something discovered – the power of God's grace welling up in one's life ... reconciliation becomes more of an attitude than an acquired skill." (2006:26).

Volf's reconciliation is the unison of the vertical and horizontal dimensions. "Reconciliation of human beings to God has privacy, reconciliation between human being is intrinsic to their reconciliation to God" (Volf 2000:166). He employs St. Paul, who was on his way to Damascus to persecute the people of God, as an example. St. Paul's intention to kill was against God as it was against humanity. These two are intrinsically inseparable. "Reconciliation involves a turning away from enmity towards people, not just from enmity towards God, and it entails a movement towards a human community, precisely that community which was the object of enmity" (Volf 2000:166). For him, reconciliation is centred in God but unresolved in human social reality or relationships. Karkkainen details the multifaceted approach to the meaning of the word -

> The multifaceted meaning of the term "reconciliation" healing and bringing together broken relationships. Of all the metaphors of salvations, reconciliation has the potential of being the most inclusive and comprehensive, encompassing ideas such as "cosmic" reconciliation, the Hebrew notion of shalom, the meaning of the cross, the psychological effects of conversation. The work of the Holy Spirit, the overcoming of the barriers between Christians, the work of the church in the world, peace-making, movements towards ethnic reconciliation and the renewal of ecological balances between humanity and its natural environment. Underlying many of these facets of reconciliation is the motif of restoration of relationships. The goal of reconciliation is the 'restoration of the sin-broken fellowship of humanity with its Creator, the source of its life'. (Karkkainen 2013:364).

This is a rich word especially from a theological and Biblical point of view. The often politically implied or connotative meaning has been hurled at us almost daily which sadly makes it almost hollow in meaning. We often hear of reconciliation from the social or political context – even in a mundane environment such as – mathematical or bank statements needing

to be reconciled. It is for this reason that we are robbed of its deep pregnant meanings especially from its Biblical and theological definitions.

The following are South African theologians that I have intentionally chosen mainly because they had something to say regarding this contentious word (reconciliation) especially within the 'racially-charged' Mzantsi. The other reasons are that the issues around reconciliation are stickily persistent - such as land, blacks as the indigenous owners of the land and whites especially the Afrikaners who violently stole the land from blacks. Finally, they will shed meaning on what reconciliation entails.

Maluleke is a veteran black theologian whose South African blackness and black experience inform his theology regarding reconciliation especially when reconciliation (un)pleasantly interfaces with the land question. Maluleke will contribute below how the land and reconciliation in the South African situation should relate.

Breytenbach is a veteran white Afrikaner theologian who specializes in New Testament studies. He has written richly in the area of reconciliation from the NT and intentionally reflected on volatile South African reconciliation especially from the viewpoint of Afrikaner Christians and the body of white Christian theologians. He did not shy away from dealing with the notoriety of the infamous Broederbond. He too will be utilised below to give his specialty.

Finally, de Gruchy will, below, generously furnish us with his deep and rich theological knowledge on reconciliation and the historicity of South African blacks attempt to reconcile with their white exploiters and oppressors. He too is a veteran white English theologian who wrote extensively in the area of reconciliation within the South African situation. These three renowned theologians were chosen for the above reasons and possibly because they, being South Africans, have an affinity with this version of reconciliation: 'Reconciliation - Made in South Africa'. Real and durable reconciliation cannot be parachuted in from other countries.

5. 4. 1. Maluleke

Maluleke believes that our current post-apartheid country, at its core, was built on reconciliation. "Nothing illustrates this possibility better than the dire state of our core national project – the very scaffolding on which post-apartheid South Africa has been premised, namely, the notion of reconciliation…Reconciliation was the vision around which South Africa

was to be rallied." (2016). For him the national project, for now, is reconciliation though it has faded – "today, reconciliation, together with its sister notions of negotiation, truth and forgiveness, lies in ruins" and as a result "many have become cynical about it" (2016). Many have indeed become sceptical and cynical. Maluleke bemoans the ruins that we are in as a country by asking deep questions and for this, he explicitly asks all South Africans – "how did we end up here? From the top of the heap of our smouldering dreams, we ought to do better than blame the usual culprits: The blacks, the whites, the ANC, or even our latest national culprit, the President" (2016).

It is not often that black South African pundits and theologians would pose direct questions to the black community – often it is asked of whites for obvious reasons.

> The Christian faith revolves around the realisation that God so loved the world that God has taken concrete and costly steps towards the world intending to reconcile all creation to God's self. Yet, this term can be and has been grossly misunderstood, misappropriated and softened. Until now the notion of reconciliation appears to have been thoroughly abducted into the discourse of the ruling classes in South Africa. From this perspective reconciliation appears to be something which the powerless must do for the powerful; it seems to be a necessity for the wronged and an optional extra for beneficiaries and perpetrators; reconciliation comes across as some ritual to be performed by the poor; a rite for blacks and a right for whites; something women should consider more seriously than men (Maluleke 1999).

For him, the word has been cheapened and he maintains that the verticality of the word reconciliation, through its horizontal use - has been 'misunderstood', 'misappropriated' and 'softened' because it has been 'abducted into the discourse of the ruling classes in South Africa'. Maluleke, despite the scarred word, still believes in it.

> I still believe in reconciliation. It is cheaper than stun grenades, water cannons and live ammunition. But I think we should do reconciliation differently. We have to do it right. To begin with, we must cease understanding reconciliation as something blacks must do for whites (or even vice-versa), not only because historically blacks have done a lot of things for whites, so it is superfluous,

> even demeaning, to ask them to do more, but also because racial reconciliation, especially when understood superficially, is not the be-all and end-all…There are neglected dimensions of reconciliation (2016).

It is encouraging that the erudite scholar still believes in the horizontal aspect of reconciliation though he explicitly and emphatically mentions that it must be done in an orthodox manner although differently. I presume Maluleke's call for reconciliation's revision as far as the national project is concerned, is because it must have failed at many levels by blacks and whites. He further mentions -

> Class is an area crying out for reconciliation…we need reconciliation between black and black. Apartheid did not just separate black from white; it also separated black from black. Black-black strife takes various forms (and note that I am not talking of the poisonous notion of "black-on-black" violence) … Just below the surface of normality, there are simmering tensions between Africans and Africans, between Africans and coloured people, and between Africans and Indians. When will we begin to do the requisite reconciliation work in this terrain? (Maluleke 2016).

The mentioning of and attempt in executing reconciliation within racially charged South Africa will be complex and intricate. This can render us into self-paralysis. However, Maluleke (1999) believes there is a solution – restitution.

> The word restitution is itself not preferred much in our land. As a country, South Africa's concept of choice is reconciliation – usually seen both as a means and as an end. It is a word that is more pleasing to our sensibilities. Not that there is anything intrinsically wrong with the wonderful (and Christian) notion of reconciliation… Reconciliation appears to be something which the powerless must do for the powerful; it seems to be a necessity for the wronged and an optional extra for beneficiaries and perpetrators; reconciliation comes across as some ritual to be performed by the poor…Restitution, on the other hand, appears more disagreeable, rougher, more divisive and less amenable to taming and down-toning. We are frightened of this term even though it should sound less ominous than the

> term repossession. Perhaps there is a general suspicion that the two terms are interchangeable. So, we avoid the former and detest the latter intensely…but it was never quite embedded into national memory, even less so in the national psyche to the extent that the term "reconciliation" was to become…

Earlier on the professor chastised us about hollow reconciliation but went on at length to expose this chimaera of reconciliation. But he is being optimistic through and through – in that he still believes in this horizontal reconciliation. Then he brought up the land question within the context of the reconciliation discussion. He then emphasised that reconciliation must be carried out properly. It is only when restitution has been 'exploited', exhausted and implemented - that reconciliation can be entertained. Maluleke (1999) emphasise and describes restitution -

> We operate from the assumption that restitution is a desirable and necessary course of action – one which is both contextually and theologically justifiable. Restitution is for us at once a human ideal and a God sponsored objective. The basic intention and outcome of God's revelation is restoration and restitution. In reconciling the world to God-self, God also means to restore the world to its originally intended and ultimate state. Restitution is therefore at once an aspect of the doctrine of atonement and a dimension of the doctrine of creation. Restitution is at the heart of both Christology and Trinitarian Theology.

Reconciliation void of restitution is bound to fail thus making a mockery of authentic reconciliation. Human beings in this country, both black and white, especially blacks, have been grossly dehumanised – racism, rape, sexism, xenophobia etc. were and still are, weapons utilised to achieve this dehumanisation. It is the people of this country who need help rather than the country itself. When the former has been cured then the latter i.e. country will inescapably follow. Humans are the core business.

> Restitution is at once about humans; about human interaction; about human relations to the environment; about human use and abuse of prayer (religion) as well as human use and abuse of the Bible. Restitution is about justice, but an expanded notion of justice. Ultimate restitution entails the restoration of just relations between and among humanity, creation and God. Theologically

> speaking, God is the author and grand architect and driver of restitution. Ultimately – only God can restore. But we are invited and undertook to participate in restitution both in penitence and ingratitude… (Maluleke 1999).

God is the founder, centre and the dispenser of restitution, and humanity is just invited to co-partner in its implementation - if they so wish. Maluleke (1999) emphasised - "Restitution is therefore not merely a social gospel fad. It is apt for South Africa and South Africans, but it is ultimately about the human condition, the world and relations with God. Theologically speaking, restitution, like reconciliation which is facilitative of restitution." Reconciliation which is the zenith of the restored relationship that went awry for many past years –then deepens into land restitution (among others).

Finally, the following from this insightful theologian Maluleke is paramountly significant as it demystifies the whole notion of a caricatured understanding of reconciliation and restitution. They both start at a personal level and its eventuality is the 'otherness' of humanity i.e. the community – who often has been decimated and wronged. The otherness of the relationship wrought by an authentic reconciliation will inevitably breed something to further enhance and dignify that same otherness or community. And it is restitution. Maluleke (1999) beautifully succinctly points out the following -

> Restitution is different…Restitution starts with an admission of personal, historical and communal guilt. It starts from an awareness that whatever it is we can do in pursuit of restoration, we must do, and do it NOW. …In short, restitution acts stem from a realisation that we owe God so much there is not enough time and wherewithal to pay back. It stems from the realisation that individually and communally; across the generations we have wrought so much havoc and pain and destruction in the lives of other human beings... It stems from the realisation that while we may not have caused every individual injury, we may have indirectly occasioned it, permitted it, not acted against it or benefited from (ill-gotten gains). Restitution is not inspired by narrow, short-term or factional guilt. Restitution is the grateful and joyous response of a penitent sinner who has been "saved by the bell", clutched from the jaws of death by God's loving-kindness.

This scholar believes that we, as South Africans, are all responsible for the situation of alienation between humans, between humans and the environment, and between humans and God. We are all, be it directly or 'indirectly' culpable, thus restitutory reconciliation can be a panacea.

5. 4.2. Breytenbach

Breytenbach comes from another angle as he dutifully excavates and exegetes this word 'reconciliation', especially from the New Testament. "To appreciate St. Paul's, use of the metaphor of reconciliation, it is necessary to know exactly what is meant by the word – reconciliation. It means a change from enmity to friendship. The process results in peace and friendship… reconciliation can also be seen as the result of peace negotiations..." (2010:172-3). Interestingly, the word has a direct meaning of friendship with one's enemies according to Breytenbach's findings. Is it not too much of a jump from hostility to friendship? It resonates with us in that Christ Jesus and his disciples - 'He loved us while we were his enemies' (Romans 5:10) and he promoted his disciples to "I no longer call you servants but friends…" (John15:15). This implicitly resonates with our Christian theology in which the deity (i.e. the Triune God) especially the Son of God (Christ Jesus) eventually invites his followers for divine friendship.

> If we make friend with the gods and are reconciled, we shall have the fortune that falls to a few in our days, of discovering our proper favourite in these cases, albeit that Plato expresses the similarly between reconciliation and becoming friends, it is the human agent who reconciles himself with the gods. The gods are disposed to forgive the offence of men and are easily reconciled, their anger being appeased by prayers and sacrifice… (Breytenbach 2010:170).

From the above statement, Breytenbach shows how the Hellenistic's deity can befriend and be reconciled to his subjects. The famous and sapient sage Plato also concurs with the friendship and reconciliation between the gods and people as the result of previous hostility. In this Hellenistic religion, it is the human being who initiates the reconciliation journey towards his deity – the reward is friendship. It is within this Greek, Roman and Jewish milieu that the

Christian 'religion' was lived and practised. The word 'reconciliation' was used and understood in this context long before it had a Christian ring to it.

> Hellenistic Judaism forms part of this tradition by transferring the terminology of reconciliation to the relationship between the only God and the wish of people…. In those few instances where the terminology refers to a change in the relationship between God and the people, God changes, he reconciles himself to them... God is the agent who brings about the change; he changes from being hostile to being friendly. Paul's God does not change, he does not reconcile himself to his human's enemies, instead, and he reconciles humans to himself. (Breytenbach 2010:170).

Now we explicitly see the comparison between St. Paul's or the Christian God and the Greek god's understanding and embodiment of this reconciliation concept. St. Paul's God does not change but brings transformation in people's lives and it is only then that St. Paul's God will reconcile these transformed people to himself.

> From the context, it becomes clear that next to the goodness and kindness of God (who rather forgives than punishes), the moral improvement of those who are being led to reconciliation, i.e. to truce and peace agreement plays a fundamental role to help them to become well-pleasing to God as sons do to their father…Paul's theology is different…God reconciled dual, the persecutor (St. Paul) of his assembly, to him entrusted him as his ambassador with the message of reconciliation [2 Cor. 5:18-20] (Breytenbach 2010:179).

God, according to Breytenbach, 'helps them' - those who have been reconciled to God to be sons to their father and more so, well-pleasing sons. St. Paul's previous life – when he was known as Saul (his Jewish name) was extremely hostile towards God's people i.e. the Church who he ended up persecuting. St. Paul, after having been transformed, reconciled, morally improved, and made to be a well-pleasing son to his Father (God) – is now being entrusted to be an ambassador of the message of reconciliation. This journey is solely and prodigally executed by St. Paul's God is breath-taking. Breytenbach (2010:181) further exegetes

> Reading the passage as an implicit reference to Paul being called by God… This means that Paul the persecutor of the church, who judged Christ by human standards, is dead, the old has passed. Paul, the envoy to the Corinthians is a new creature, he does not judge Christ by human standard any longer (2 Cor. 5: 16-17). Verses 14-15 by introducing the notion of change from enmity to friendship (reconciliation). Paul's new way of judging Christ and the fundamental renewal brought about by the Creator is taken and that everything mentioned from verse 14-17 has its origin in God's action, it includes the addressees of the letter in the use of the first-person plural the focus of the is on Paul himself.

All this work as earlier indicated is done by and through Christ Jesus, who is St. Paul's new God – hence he is an ambassador to the Christian community in Corinth. This is an eminent position from having been a mere enemy of God, to be a friendly ambassador. An eminent emissary he has become. The picture (or language) is very rich. Breytenbach (2010:183) explains further -

> Language in portraying himself as an ambassador of the exalted Christ. As is the case with the Apostle is representing the one who sent him, in this case, Christ, thus expressed by him asked for the sake of Christ, as if God is appealing through him: be reconciled to God. Paul represents Christ. As is common in Paul, the action the Apostle performs on the behind of Christ is also performed in the authority of God. He asks the Corinthians to be reconciled to himself.

St. Paul is not only an ambassador but Christ's ambassador. He has been authorised or delegated to speak and represent Christ Jesus whose church he previously persecuted thus directly persecuting Christ Jesus himself. To crown it all, Breytenbach reminds us of the historicity of the word reconciliation and its deep riches – 'from the current hostility to one of friendship and love.' Reconciliation as a word is very deep and rich. Astounding indeed.

Breytenbach did not just remain in a theological 'ivory tower' but he 'dirtied his hands' by challenging his fellow Christian leaders to live out what they were saying academically. He intentionally reflected on his South African context. He was an Afrikaner New Testament

scholar hence a proud member of the NT body – the New Testament Society of South Africa (NTSSA). He lived during the heyday of apartheid. He intentionally reflected on this rich word 'reconciliation' after he had exegeted it within his immediate apartheid context especially as a Christian.

> Though pride can be taken in the scholarly achievement of the New Testaments Society of South African (NTSSA) since its foundation in 1965, one is saddened by the fact that this professional society which, by the Constitution is explicitly ecumenical and non-racial, has never chosen to demonstrate the relevance that its study of the NT has the society in which its member did their research. It must be stated from the outset, that the society did reject all forms of discrimination and that some individual members of the society were clear and decisive in their critique against and rejection of apartheid, nevertheless the silence of the majority of its members and the commitment of some of the society leading members took a neutral scientific stance until the end of apartheid is revealing. (2010:337).

This is reconciliation and its supposed practitioners. The beginning of the journey towards a real and rich reconciliation should be preceded and precipitated by the admission of truth – then one is guaranteed an authentic reconciliation. Breytenbach's admission is disturbingly intriguing and fascinating at least for me. He mentioned some NT Afrikaner scholars who unashamedly supported apartheid without seeing their double think as a major problem. They comfortably straddled their sanction of apartheid's policy and their Christian convictions. He mentions some of their names and this study will not furnish those names, as it will undermine the spirit of reconciliation. And he further mentions those who took an anti-apartheid activist role.

> The light of the NT scholar who was most influential in the post-war era…stood at the cradle of the Dutch Reform church theological underpinning of the heresy of apartheid. Some would still call [him] the doyen of South Africa NT studies. He and many other theologians of Afrikaans origin played a leading disseminating apartheid ideology…After all aspect of South African culture, very few Afrikaner's speaking NT scholar dared to oppose the apartheid policy of the white minority government, and the influence of

> Broederbond on the white only Afrikaners Churches. In the third quarter of the 20th. The century, most South Africa NT scholars came from an Afrikaans reform background. In the course of their careers, many of them were asked to become members of the Broederbond, which had first and foremost as goals their furtherance of the supremacy and interest of white – speaking people. There was, however, an exception… (2010:338).

The above is attached here just to demonstrate the seriousness of Breytenbach's NT scholarship and its applications in raw life situations - South Africa's racial realities. The above is also an expose' of when apartheid culture took precedence over one's faith. He intentionally exposes the hypocrisy and doublethink of many theology scholars - a substantial number of them were '*dominees*', at the expense of reconciliation. To continue with Breytenbach's disturbing expose', which I must admit is tempting, would be diverting me from my specific work, which is to describe and define the word 'reconciliation'. However, it is interesting that he explicitly unmasks the Afrikaners heretical theological scholarship particularly of the NT, only and after he had exegeted the word 'reconciliation'. This is revealing.

> In the South Africa context, for example, condemning apartheid is not enough. To make a non-racial, democratic, inclusive society viable and enduring, much more is required – of which creative and imaginative theological thinking is not the least fundamental theological lieu and their complication for all facts of society must be though… not only as an academic exercise but as a grassroots undertaking…. As Paul selected from the repertoire of Hellenistic morality in the light of the gospel, Christians should scrutinise the whole South African ethical tradition, and through ecumenical discourse engage those elements that could contribute to the much-needed general system of values needed by the transformed South African society. (Breytenbach 2010: 346 & 350).

This is so relevant almost ten years later here in Mzantsi. Breytenbach challenges us to scrutinise our cultural ethics and our ethos 'in the light of the gospel of Christ Jesus' especially regarding our ever-toxic relationships as South Africans in the quest for reconciliation.

5.4.3. De Gruchy

De Gruchy has written a large volume of more than two hundred pages on this thorny or interesting subject, depending on where one's position is on the political spectrum - the book is not solely for political consumption. He covered it from a multifaceted approach thus making it a rich material to inform and educate oneself.

> There is more to understanding the meaning of a word than studying its genealogy and etymology. Nonetheless, that is an important place to begin. The word reconciliation entered Christian discourse through the Vulgate's use of the Latin a word…used to describe God's saving work in Jesus Christ. However, already by the seventeenth century, the word was used in a variety of ways. Amongst these was restoring someone to favour, reconciling penitents to the church, purification of sacred objects such as church buildings after their desecration, overcoming the estrangement of married partners, or simply the act of reaching an agreement (de Gruchy 2002:24).

The above sentence explains the evolutionary movement of this word over several years. There is even talk of 'reconciliation' in the business industry. It seems the word had easily mutated in all aspects of life – to family, social, politics, business, marriage and in ecclesiastical contexts etc. "For many people today, reconciliation may only refer to sorting out their banking accounts, a difficult enough task in itself for most of us. The word is so overloaded with ambiguity in some contexts and so emptied of significant meaning in others...Its meaning may even receive a new twist that alters its sense, thereby indicating how difficult it can be to communicate its meaning, let alone achieve reconciliation in reality" (de Gruchy 2002:25). Within the context of South Africa, we can hesitatingly declare that –

> reconciliation implies a fundamental shift in personal and power relations between former enemies…reconcile-ation was the search for a nation at peace with itself' and the building of a better life for all. Thus, within South Africa, reconciliation is part and parcel of what we refer to as democratic transformation and reconstruction. Reconciliation, as we shall argue, is about restoring justice (de Gruchy 2002:25).

The South African political landscape has inescapably 'contaminated' this word or vice-versa - for better or worse. De Gruchy believes that the word is about restoring justice. Many would not agree with him. But he gingerly emphasised that 'we shall argue' this justice aspect of reconciliation.

> In our situation in South Africa today (in 2002) it would be unchristian to plead for reconciliation and peace before the present injustices have been removed. That is not Christian reconciliation, it is sin. It is asking us to become accomplices in our oppression, to become servants of the devil. No reconciliation is possible in South Africa without justice…. Many white Christians and church leaders believed that they could be agents of reconciliation without becoming engaged in the struggle to end it, such as Archbishop Tutu, were unhappy about how 'church theology' and reconciliation were, in their terms, caricatured and criticised. (2002: 35-6).

De Gruchy becomes almost personal to the white community especially white Christians of whom he is part and parcel. He abjures cheap reconciliation, which is riddled with the absence of justice and sacrificial struggle, and thus had become a caricatured and jaded notion of reconciliation. He believes that "reconciliation is only possible after repentance, and it demands reparation, though how to deal with guilt and repentance if full reparation is no longer possible is an issue that remains unresolved" (2002:22).

However authentic and well-intentioned reconciliation is, it should not be paralysing thus rendering those who want to apply it immobile. One needs to deliberately and responsibly plunge oneself into the world of the 'otherness' and become conscious of the personhood of the 'other', for without these indivisible virtues no lasting reconciliation shall take place.

> The process of reconciliation begins through the taking of what might appear to be small and often tentative steps such as meeting and listening to the estranged 'other'...The 'other' is initially experienced as a barrier, someone who stands in the way of us getting our way. Are we going to regard the 'other' as a conversation partner, a fellow human being struggling with us to find a way beyond the impasse in which opposing claims are countered in an endless cycle? Who do we think we are, and what are we trying to become? What are

> our interests and values, and how do they serve the common good? In the process, we are also forced to see ourselves not as an initiating and dominating, but as one who is also an-other (2002:152).

On this journey of reconciliation, there are a lot of inevitable introspections, which are uncontrollably and intermittently interspersed by deep and self-confronting and self-questioning. These auto-interrogations should be handled with sincerity, boldness, vulnerability and humility. It is often that these four virtues are anxiously and prematurely evaded thus aborting handsome and formidable reconciliation.

> But even so dare we Christians to speak about reconciliation as though we have a monopoly on the word and its basis, as though we all agree on what it means, and as though the church has been a shining example of a community of reconciliation? …But even if we dare to speak, as we must in a world increasingly torn apart by enmity and violence, how should we speak? Speaking assumes a particular form of discourse, a language, a style of rhetoric. What language should we employ? What is the appropriate way for those of us who are citizens and Christians, as well as the heirs of colonial privilege, to speak about reconciliation? Should we confine ourselves to the language of tradition or search for new ways of speaking? Or is it possible to critically retrieve the tradition in a way that speaks with new potency for today? (2002:15 & 17)

Unfortunately, Christianity in this country, has since its arrival has been mired by hypocrisy and colonial realpolitik. Almost all Christian virtues were unashamedly undermined and lampooned for decades if not centuries, especially in the African continent. It is in this context that de Gruchy's poignant questions, above, should be heeded especially by the Christians who are proud to quickly champion the reconciliation project. Could it be that the message and ministry of reconciliation have never sincerely been attempted since the arrival of Christianity especially in the Southern part of Africa?

> The role of Christianity in shaping the social fabric of South Africa over the past 350 years has been widely documented, discussed and contested. Christianity, in its many and varied forms, is the dominant global religious

> tradition, with church affiliation numbering about two-thirds of the total population. Christianity took root in South Africa as the religion of both the European settler community and, as a result of European missions, of the indigenous population. But its role as the embodiment and an agent of reconciliation was seriously compromised by colonial interests and by the denominational divisions that were planted in South Africa. Converts often complained that the coming of Christianity introduced new divisions into African society, reinforcing ethnic divisions as a result of missionary strategy, and dividing communities along traditional and Christian lines (de Gruchy 2002:121).

To move ahead as a country, taking cognizance of what de Gruchy has vividly and explicitly painted above, we need to acknowledge our Christian history or her obvious presence in this country, before the authentic reconciliation-project is fully realised. It needs to be understood that reconciliation is not our most urgent project for there are prerequisites to be willingly and primarily comprehended.

> The first or theological refers to reconciliation between God and humanity, and what this means in terms of social relations. But we must note here that for many people the theological meaning is irrelevant, and because it can so easily cloud the issue, the religious discourse that embodies it is also regarded as unhelpful. For them, reconciliation refers to the overcoming of enmity between people whether we speak of interpersonal relations, or the broader social and political situation, without reference to God or divine activity. But even then, it is difficult to speak about it without recourse to theological and religious terms as we previously noted. Primary and secondary expression of reconciliation keeps on intersecting. (de Gruchy 2002:26).

Miseducation and miseducation regarding reconciliation, is appalling, as is obvious in the light of de Gruchy's wide knowledge of reconciliation - hence it eludes many. Regarding reconciliation as a national project of South Africa, we need to learn that -

> The task of national reconciliation in South Africa is an ongoing challenge that not only has to deal with the past crimes of apartheid or overcoming continued forms of alienation and discrimination, but also the healing of interpersonal

> relationships. The healing of such relations is vital for the national project, and the process of national reconciliation undoubtedly facilitates the healing of interpersonal relationships…Indeed, political reconciliation has its complexities that need to be taken into account when seeking the reconciliation of people at an interpersonal level within situations of social conflict. (2002:27).

As we attempt to execute this national project we also should not irresponsibly forget that - "we therefore need to avoid confusing politics and theology in defining and determining the contours of national reconciliation… Reconciliation as a final achievement is, in a sense, always beyond our grasp…So it is important to recognise the relationship and distinction between reconciliation as an event, a process and a goal, and not to confuse our ultimate hopes with realistic possibilities even if they are connected." (de Gruchy 2002:14 & 28).

And finally, de Gruchy reminds and teaches us that in pursuing reconciliation we should be informed about the Christian understanding of reconciliation and how it will interface with the political and social realities to eschew naiveties and the past fatal mistakes we made in championing reconciliation without comprehending it, given the complexities especially here in South Africa.

> Bridging the gap between the Christian vision of reconciliation and the realities that confront us on the social and political stage is, at the primary level of doctrine, trying to develop a public theology relating to the politics of democratic transformation. But at the level of secondary expressions of Christian faith, that is, the erecting of signposts of reconciliation in the world that signify the reality of God's gift, it is a challenge facing the Christian church as God's agent of reconciliation... As we indicated at the outset, reconciliation is an event, an action, praxis, a process and celebration, before it becomes a doctrine or theory. (2002:75).

The extensive definitions, anecdotal narratives and descriptions of reconciliation dispensed above, were provided in order that we may know what we are discussing as far as reconciliation is concerned, since it features prominently in this entire dissertation. The above scholars have not by any means exhausted the meaning of reconciliation but have shed light in the right

direction. So now that an attempt has been furnished, in some part, to come to the comprehension of reconciliation, it is of paramount significance that first, we appreciate that reconciliation is about people and secondarily is about people's relationships – that have ruptured and atrophied. The two are intricately inseparable thus are in unison.

Reconciliation is therefore there to heal, restore and bring dignity to those persons and their relationships in an authentic and qualitative manner. Millions of ordinary South Africans have racial and toxic relationships therefore they have a reconciliation-deficit. They have to ask themselves questions regarding their future and their relational challenges. And, at an individual level ask what kind of human beings we as a country want to 'breed'.

5. 5. Current Challenges

To capture or 'diagnose' the current challenges that we are facing as a country, probably some questions would be of assistance. The questions are: What kind of a human being does the new South Africa presuppose? And what kind of a human being does she nurture? This question should be followed by: What kind of a society does South African aim to have; thus, what kind of society is she nurturing?

The answer to the above questions will determine what kind of human beings will end up inheriting a reconciled nation. This will directly impinge on the national project – i.e. reconciliation. Fundamentally and essentially reconciliation starts with a person, and it is only then that it can at the collective (familial, social, and political) space, fully thrive. In the absence of individual participation and responsibilities, it will be sabotaged, ridiculed, and undermined before it reaches the social and political sphere. Ndebele reminds us of what we might have forgotten regarding the individuality of a person, which can easily be drowned by the 'masses', or well-intentioned 'community'. Nonetheless, he points it out –

> It was with the TRC hearings that for the first time in our history the pain of the oppressed individuals, as opposed to groups, was formally and publicly acknowledge. Previously, the reality of individual pain disappeared in the sea of collective pain, and thus could not be fully contemplated. Although we knew of many in the townships who had been arrested, tortured or killed by the oppressive state, it all remained in the realm of private knowledge. With the TRC hearings, the private not only became public and official, but it also

> acquired legitimacy. We knew publicly who had been tortured or murdered. We knew whose father or mother, son or daughter they were. (Doxter and du Toit 2010:70).

This was important as black culture is more communal thus can unintentionally sacrifice people's individuality - one's identity can be truncated resulting in an atrophied being who is paradoxically rich in communality. To be frank, black communality in the twenty-first century in a post-industrialised and post-colonial/apartheid urban context can be tragically quixotic, especially living in the global (western-lopsided) world where individualism and capitalism are the tyrannies of the era. Ndebele bemoans this aspect of individuality at length –

> Cognition: self-application, rigour, expertise, sensitivity, intelligence, honesty, sincerity, and their opposites: betrayal, cruelty, brutality, vanity, arrogance. None of these attributes can be expressed or experienced on behalf of individuals. It is possible, though, that groups can select those attributes by which their members may be required to distinguish themselves from members of other groups. But even this cannot spare the individual from the specificity of his or her own experience. (Doxter & du Toit 2010:73).

This is a truth that can be too uncomfortable to be politically accepted especially by those who have political beliefs or ideologies that are strangely 'manufactured', 'rhetoricated' and 'sloganised'. It is worse when black communities can even 'outsource' their thinking capacities at the expense of their individual thinking prowess – so that they let others think and act on their behalf. This is a strong rebuke from Ndebele and must be heeded. Gobodo-Madikizela too reminds us about the role of individuals –

> Dealing with the past' requires finding the best approach that will help transform relationships in a society with a past marked by violent conflict between groups. In a repressive system, it is not only the conscience of individual perpetrators that is silenced. Large sections of the population helped keep the abusive governments in power and were direct beneficiaries of the regime. They also have to engage in critical reflection on what their individual and collective roles were in the sustained repression that went on for decades in South Africa. (Doxter & du Toit 2010:139).

Ndebele almost symmetrically concurs with Gobodo-Madikizela – it is almost like a verbatim copy-and-paste. He continues to bolster his point once more -

> Democracy, ultimately, is about this. It is something with which South Africans have yet to grapple and which, I sometimes believe, they fear. It remains the challenge of moving beyond the reconciliation of the kind associated with the TRC.
> We are now called upon to lay the foundations for a post-reconciliation in South Africa. I suspect that such a country is about creating a humanised public space beyond the postures of a politics habituated by struggle. It is about a democracy of individuals with a public conscience, who enable us to transcend group stereotypes by discovering the value of individuals. (Doxter & du Toit 2010:73).

Blacks often do grapple with democratic matters although from the political point of view, again, from 'beyond the postures of a politics habituated by struggle' as Ndebele emphasises. As to whites, who have lived bulk of their lives in 'a humanised public space' this was under the apartheid – hence racism thrived. Ndebele bolsters this point further –

> It is about Black South Africans finally have no obligation to prove themselves to anyone but themselves. It is about their reconnecting to emancipatory goals that are in danger of being forgotten. It is about assailing the resilient factors with passionate intelligence and ethical resolve. It is about their finally arriving home by seizing this moment to avoid the risk of being permanent second-class citizens subordinate to their dreams, to become the chief architects of the future of their country. (Doxter & du Toit 2010:73).

Reconciliation can only cascade to communality and thus a social space if it is initiated, cultivated, and anchored by an individual(s). Without this, authentic reconciliation is destined to collapse. The South African reality to be confronted is not only that of broken relationships but the reality of broken individuals - dehumanised individuals. We therefore have to view the quest for reconciliation also as a quest for re-humanisation. For this reason, as many dimensions of reconciliation, including the "neglected dimensions of reconciliation" (Maluleke

2016) must be invoked. According to (Schneider 2006:26). “reconciliation is not a skill to be mastered, but rather, something discovered”.

5.6. Conclusion

In this chapter I focused on reconciliation between races. To do this, I used, amongst others, the story of Gobodo-Madikizela. To process and analyse this story, I used the world of other scholars such as Maluleke (year), Breytenbach (year) and de Gruchy (year). I then posed the following questions: What kind of a human being is necessary for the new South Africa, which is sometimes described as a rainbow nation, to become a reality? What kind of a society should that new South Africans consist of?

Through the story of Vlok, I have argued that reconciliation begins with an individual and then moves to the level of society.

In the next chapter I will focus on reconciliatory relationship within the broader context of South Africa.

Chapter 6

Possibilities of Reconciling Relationship in the New South Africa

6. 1. Introduction.

In chapter I wish to explore the possibility of reconciliatory relationship.

6. 2. The Applied Methodology

As indicated in the first chapter, although post-foundationalism is my adopted methodology this thesis presupposes the post-modern episteme and philosophy. The two, that is, post-foundationalism and post-modernism are not synonymous, but they complement each other. What attracts me to post-modernism is its courage to question past beliefs in order to make sense of the harsh realities on the ground.

In the harsh context of Soweto 1976, the youth asked hard questions of the apartheid regime and the manner in which their parents appeared to have adjusted to its evils. To do this, they employed the philosophy of Black Consciousness. As (Gerhart & Karis 19997:9) noted,

> The South African government's ability to shrug off the criticisms of the world remained relatively strong until the Soweto uprising of 1976-1977…The Soweto revolt gave rise to doubts that were new and unexpected, however, foreign investors now had reason to question the country's long-term prospects for stability.

Black Consciousness was an indigenous-contextual philosophy which assisted the youth of the 1970s to combat Apartheid. Experiences are often relationally embedded, though not always, but are certainly narrative (inescapably the narrative approach will be utilised). Relationships often and naturally do birth all kinds of experiences, be they familial, social, or political. It is in their nature to proliferate (good and bad) experiences.

Once again, I return to methodological tools, namely, the seven movements of post-foundationalism coined by Julian Müller and to narrative methodology. In this chapter. The following are - the second and third steps which focus on listening to experiences and the interpretation of experiences respectively.

6. 3. Apartheid's Fractured Relationships

The apartheid ideology resulted and thrived in unhealthy, fractured and superficial relationships of superiority and inferiority between human beings. These hostile relationships dehumanised of both blacks and whites. "Dehumanisation, marks not only those whose humanity has been stolen, but also those who have stolen it, it is a distortion of the vocation of becoming more fully human" (Freire 1972:20). It is often assumed that whites were not 'dehumanised' by the racist apartheid system, though many of them embodied and practised it. Infliction of pain on others would naturally or logically make one the perpetrator and breeder of that wickedness. Dehumanising inevitably begets self-dehumanisation. It is therefore important to agree that in general terms the populace of South Africa is relationally fractured, gutted and scarred thus deeply dehumanized, even though the levels of damage may differ in degrees.

It is important to beware of the simplified and (positive) irresponsible generalisations about us as being a most amazing and '*ubuntu*' spirited South African people. This is often glibly mentioned as self-praise or even self-ingratiation of the South African populace. This has led us to incorrect conclusions. For example, the simplified and irresponsible generalisation of our narrative and history has been -

> 'At the core of apartheid's struggle is the whites against the blacks' the argument goes. This is, dangerous and a simplification thus may unintentionally lead to incorrect uninformed conclusions. It was in April 1964, that the United Nations enlightened many – "the struggle in South Africa is not a struggle between two races for domination; it is a struggle between the protagonists of racial domination and the advocates of racial equality" (Asmal, Asmal & Roberts 1996:41).

This sobriety referred to by the UN, miniature as it seems, addresses and rebukingly corrects a certain portion of our misinformation. It is true though, that the majority of whites had falsely superior attitudes and behaviour towards all other racial groups in the country. It is also true that there were those whites who championed anti-apartheid activism. The latter especially must be highlighted for the stereotype of a white person as an apartheid agitator still prevails.

These matters have a massive bearing on our education, politics, future, economy, history and possibly to our spirituality - basically on our racial relationships as a country.

One example is of a brilliant young white American female student, Amy Biehl, who was murdered in Guguletu township next to Cape Town in 1993 by members of the Pan-Africanist Students Organisation (PASO) – the student wing of the PAC. Amy's mother, Linda Biehl – explained her reactions after this tragedy - "I do not think I have anything to forgive, I never truly felt hatred. Our family never felt anger or hatred, only incredible sadness" (Graybill 2002:45-6). Each amnesty applicant made an apology at the hearing for the murder of the young Amy Biehl. "When I look closely at what I did, I realise it was bad," said applicant killer Ntobeko Peni. "We took part in killing someone we could not have used to achieve our aims. I ask Amy's parents, friends, relatives. I ask them to forgive me" (Graybill 2002:45-6). Amy was coldly and carelessly killed merely because she was white. That is all!

Another sad and poignant example to bolster the UN's anti-apartheid stance (as early as the sixties) is narrated by the Irish priest who came to serve the troubled townships in the Vaal, Father Noonan in his book – 'They are Burning the Churches'. The following two-paragraph story is by its very nature inevitably post-modernistic, post-foundational and narrative for it unashamedly aborted the lopsided and monochromatic foundational approach which is the archaic metanarrative.

> On a bright summer's day in August 1983, I visited the famous Ann Frank Huis Museum in Amsterdam, Holland. It is the attic home where the young Jewish girl, Ann Frank, and her family hid from the Nazi police during World War Two. Tragically, the family was discovered, arrested, and deported to concentration camps, and all but her father died in the gas chambers. It was a moving experience… As I prepare to sign the visitor's book, I was alerted to something familiar. My eyes caught the words 'South African' just above where I was writing. Somebody from South Africa had been there very recently. He wrote under 'remarks' an astonishing public admission: "I am a South African and I still would like to kill blacks in a gas chamber." Signed – a white South African (I have withheld his name) … (2003:157).

This is a harrowing experience that Fr. Noonan, much to his dismay, unexpectedly encountered about South African racism even when in a foreign country. This nauseating and proudly white South African wrote his unashamedly abhorrent thoughts down - laced with hubris and animosity towards the black majority. He did not care about the consequences of his writing. It is important to note that on the same register, according to Fr. Noonan, there was another white person though (an Australian) who reacted in an opposite spirit:

> I was still coping with this disturbing experience as I crossed the city to the Franciscan sisters' hostel where I was staying. In the entrance, my eye caught the black cover of their visitors' book. I am glad I opened it. It made that day for me. It was a sign of hope. It said: "Thank you for upholding the traditions of St Francis" – Charles Yeats, Durban, August 22, 1983. (Yeats is a South African who had been imprisoned as a conscientious objector). There you have it. Two white South Africans giving public witness to their beliefs in a foreign city in the eighties; one sad and hurting – profoundly so, the other happy and thankful – profoundly so (Noonan. 2003:157-8).

The above two stories of the Biehl family and Fr. Noonan make the trenchant point of the United Nation's April 1964 condemnation of apartheid as a crime against humanity. Simplification of anti-apartheid activism, void of informed conscience plus shocking ignorance crowned with hubris and hostility may have sadly resulted in the same fascistic violence (e.g. PASO) purported to be fighting against. The April 1964 UN's anti-apartheid statement, apart from condemning the atrocious evil of racism, was an attempt to appropriate and explain the healthy relationships (or rather how they should have been) between the South African blacks and whites.

6. 4. Possibilities of Reconciliatory Relationship

It is difficult or even impossible to entertain the discussions about 'possibilities of reconciliatory relationships' when South Africans' relationships exist in an atmosphere that was and still is riddled with fear, anger, hubris, suspicion and animosity. This can happen only when we address this 'dehumanisation' that came because of apartheid and through those 'whose humanity has been stolen … and … those who have stolen it' as Freire educated us. To heal or cure these fractured relationships - truth, repentance, forgiveness, reconciliation - are prerequisites but unfortunately, they're overshadowed by suspicion and hatred.

Concepts such as forgiveness, repentance and reconciliation fall within the domain of human relationships. Outside of relationships, these concepts are redundant, irrelevant, and non-existent. Needless to say, these concepts are people-centred. Relationships are always unique, challenging and complex be they at the personal, familial, marital, corporate, political, and international level. One thing that is known of relationships is that they are often harmoniously dignifying or adversarially costly to those of us who are inescapably involved in them.

Their notoriety is that they often do not leave the people involved in a neutral space. One can be indifferent to strangers but often people are polite to strangers hence it is a possible 'pretentious politeness'. It looks like there is a 'grammar' of relationships. Being indifferent to another person is another strange response but it is a relational response that has gone awry. Hatred such as xenophobia, racism, ageism, tribalism, colonialism, and apartheid - at their core are very relationally entangled. Nonetheless, it is still relatedness.

To be born in the current or the apartheid past South Africa, one unknowingly was plunged into an ocean of loaded-relational responses that are inescapably riddled with estrangement, indifference, fear, hubris and certainly hatred of other racial groups. Apartheid's political infrastructure seems well-nourished and cultivated for this relational estrangement. By political infrastructure, I mean the policies, laws, regulations, ideologies, beliefs, values, and theologies that were imbued with apartheid's relational ethos.

For example, before I was born in apartheid South Africa it was already predetermined and predisposed how I was meant to relate with the broader South African society be they blacks, coloureds, Indians, or whites. The following narrative will show a rich versus an impoverished relatedness. Melisa, who is a white South African woman, in her book entitled "Whiteness Just is not What It Used to Be", poignantly relates the harrowing struggle for her identity. Without going into detail she finds herself in a space where she had to relate with a black woman who happened to be her elder brother's domestic worker:

> Later in my life, my eldest brother's daughter was killed in a tragic accident… My brother had married a conservative Afrikaans woman, and the funeral was held in the local Dutch Reformed Church. The grief-stricken African woman who had been her nanny drove in the car with me to the service. At the church,

> I learnt that there was a separate section where she, along with the other Africans who worked on my brother's farm and had wanted to attend the service were to sit…The church was full of white people who had hardly known the little girl… Yet the one person besides the immediate family, whose grief was deep and genuinely inconsolable, was not fit to sit in the church pews. My outrage reached snapping point when the Dominee (the minister) sanctimoniously came to commiserate with me at the graveside, and I could not hold back my bitterness. Speaking my mind at that unorthodox time and place gave some measure of relief. Yet shame, guilt and anger seem to have accompanied me throughout my white life (Steyn 2001: xiv).

This is a painful narrative to demonstrate how relationships between blacks and whites were already assumed and determined to be conducted within the apartheid space. This is a small insight into the day-to-day real-life experiences of the average whites and blacks, though there are a few exceptions. The reality is that behind this 'inter-relatedness' is a deliberate and conscious philosophy, theology, belief, and ideology to birth this activity. It is apartheid. Steyn explicitly admits that '… shame, guilt and anger seem to have accompanied me throughout my white life.' I presume that most of the average whites in this country still live with this reality to this day. Is there hope? Are there 'possibilities of reconciling relationships in New South Africa?' Meiring relates the following to give us a flicker of hope –

> When a perpetrator, after much anguish and embarrassment, eventually unburdened himself to the Amnesty Committee, when he made a full submission of all the relevant facts, after the questioning and cross-examination had come to an end, it was as if a cloud was lifted. On the last day of his appearance before the TRC, when he had to testify to his role in the Khotso House bombing, ex-Minister of Police Adriaan Vlok told me: 'When the final question was asked and when the legal team of the South African Council of Churches indicated its satisfaction - that the team was willing not to oppose my amnesty application - my heart sang. I got a lump in my throat and I thanked God for his grace and mercy to me". (Villa-Vicencio and Verwoerd 2000:129)

The above narrative about Vlok after he willingly subjected himself to the harsh yet liberating truth, by these SACC's lawyers, resulted in his 'heart sang … and thanking God for his grace and mercy', should be seen for what it is. We should also question ourselves: at what point was Vlok's subjection to this confrontational yet cathartic experience became 'the possibilities of reconciliatory relationships'? In answering this, it will help us to appreciate and value an authentic lasting relationship in South Africa? A possible response is that it is almost like right at the beginning. And it was the piercing truth that initiated the process. The truth here precipitated and proceeded by disclosure (though sometimes authentic disclosure can be synonymous to the truth.), possibly repentance, forgiveness and finally the truth.

6. 5. The TRC's Amorphous Truth

It was laudable and courageous for the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) to have branded and sloganised itself as – "Truth, the road to Reconciliation" (de Gruchy 2003:128). Another word for reconciliation is re-relationship, I would like to submit! Therefore, truth is the prerequisite of any authentic relationship including one that was previously fractured. Without the unvarnished truth, there is no relationship, thus no reconciliation. The late Dullar Omar who was Minister of Justice when the TRC was established, made truth the initial focus and importance so we can -

> Join in the search for the truth without which there can be no genuine reconciliation'…How does one establish the truth? … What the TRC indeed should be able to do was 'to curtail the number of lies that up to now had free rein in society…Finding the truth goes well beyond establishing historical and legal facts. It has to do with understanding, accepting accountability, justice, restoring and maintaining the fragile relationships between human beings, as well as with the quest to find the Ultimate Truth, God himself… The search for truth needed to be handled with the greatest sensitivity. Would that not be the case, the nation could bleed to death. But if we succeeded, it would lead to a national catharsis, peace and reconciliation, to the point where the truth in all reality sets one free (de Gruchy 2003:128-9).

We as individuals, communities, institutions and certainly as a country, can understand that the quest for the truth has always been high on the agenda. Its thirst has never abated. It should also be mentioned that logically or naturally not all South Africans are concerned with the

truth. But those that were on a quest for the truth needed to understand that it is about 'restoring and maintaining the fragile relationships between human beings' and 'the Ultimate Truth, God himself' and that 'the greatest sensitivity' must be applied otherwise 'the nation could bleed to death' as the then minister Omar rightly warned us. The truth was the paramount anchor, without which, the new democracy South Africa aspired to be, could not be built. Again, it is only the truth that could lead to 'national catharsis, peace and reconciliation' (Omar) and eventually to liberation. It looks as if everything hinged on this attractive yet piercing and sharp virtue – the truth!

The TRC's chairperson, Archbishop Tutu, in his widely read TRC report stated in its foreword - 'We believe we have provided enough of the truth about our past for there to be a consensus about it. … We should accept that the truth has emerged even though it has initially alienated people from one another. The truth can be, and often is, divisive' (in Villa-Vicencio 2000:143). Unfortunately, that is the truth. All it does is shed light, so the darkness inevitably becomes exposed. As a country we quested after the truth about the past through the mechanism of the TRC. Sadly, we may not have arrived at the purest truth nor all the truth we desired, but some vestiges are better than nothing. "Many of the complexities and nuances of the truth are lost", Chery points out and continues to make this sobering fact – "it seems that we have to acknowledge that the truth that the TRC has uncovered is, at best, only a partial truth. And while half a loaf is better than no bread at all …" (Villa-Vicencio 2000:143).

De Gruchy also emphasises joining the above 'chorus' –

> Given our human limitations, not least the partiality of our perspectives shaped by social location, experience, loyalties, values and interests, as well as the nature of the truth itself, we can never arrive at or grasp the whole truth. There is an inevitable discrepancy between what happened, and how we perceive and narrate what happened. This does not necessarily imply or lead to scepticism or relativism. In some instances, it is possible…" (2003:155).

The truth is within grasp but also, because of inevitable human amnesia, the truth can, unfortunately be ungraspable. Nonetheless, it must forcefully be pursued for our salvific welfare, trust, and societal sanity. Failure to unearth this truth will leave us groping in the choking darkness.

> The work of the TRC in uncovering the truth had to do, in the first place, with the truth about historical events and their reporting. Its stated objective was to establish as complete a picture as possible of the causes, nature extent of the gross violations of human rights which were committed during the period from 1 March 1964 to the cut-off date, namely the day of the first general election in 1994. The purpose of the TRC was to promote national reconciliation through unearthing the truth, quite literally at times through the exhumation of the bodies of murder victims, so that the past could be remembered and dealt with inappropriate ways (de Gruchy2003: 156).

The then TRC's chairperson Rev. Tutu makes the same point about this truth at the legendary TRC –

> When it came to hearing evidence from victims because we were not a criminal court, we listened to facts on the basis of a balance of probability. Since we were exhorted by our enabling legislation to rehabilitate the human and civil dignity of victims, we allowed those who came to testify mainly to tell their stories in their own words. We did do all we could to corroborate these stories and we soon discovered that, as Judge Albie Sachs, a member of our Constitutional Court, has pointed out, there were, in fact, different orders of truth which did not necessarily mutually exclude one another. There was what could be termed forensic factual truth – verifiable and documentable –and there was 'social truth, the truth of experience that is established through interaction, discussion and debate'. The personal truth –Judge Mahomed's 'truth of wounded memories' – was a healing truth and a court of law would have left many of those who came to testify, who were frequently uneducated and unsophisticated, bewildered and even more traumatised than before (Tutu 1999:33).

If it produces healing, deliverance by and from the 'truth of wounded memories' then it indisputably qualifies to be proudly named – truth.

De Gruchy (2003:156) previously mentioned that 'the truth' had to be exhumed so that 'the truth' can be 'seen' and 'heard' and thus enabled to defend itself.

> Those who had strutted about arrogantly in the days of apartheid, dealing out death and injustice and apartheid's excesses with gay abandon" the cheerful Archbishop Tutu elaborates – "had never imagined in their wildest dreams that their involvement in abomination hatched out in secret would ever see the light of the day. They had fondly expected to rule the roost for as long as they wished. Now it was all coming out, not as wild speculation or untested allegations. No, it was gushing forth from the mouth of perpetrators themselves: how they had abducted people, shot them, and burnt their bodies or thrown them into crocodile-infested rivers. They helped us exhume more than fifty corpses of those who had abducted and then killed and buried secretly. Those ghastly and macabre secrets might have remained hidden except that this is a moral universe and truth will out (Tutu 1999:76-7).

Truth can be ghastly hence it is often treated with an unconscious trepidation, reverence and possibly fear. It should be remembered that within a Christian context the pursuance of truth is for the restoration of relationship hence reconciliation, obviously through justice, forgiveness, and compassion. But the truth must never be compromised because it inevitably entangles or embroils the 'otherness' (neighbour) of humanity or ubuntu. "Truth only becomes the truth for us when we interact with it, that is when it begins to impact on our lives, changing not only our perspective but also changing us and our relationship to the 'other'" (de Gruchy: 2003:162). This should not be trivialised at all for –

> If the truth we now know is shelved in the multi-volume TRC report and becomes a matter of interest only to archivists and researchers, it may serve some historical purpose but not that of national reconciliation. If it becomes a political tool, selectively misread in the interests of party and group, then it will serve the purpose of further division, taking us away from rather than towards national reconciliation… (de Gruchy 2003:163).

If the truth is not fundamentally about the restoration of people's relationships and harmony, then anything else (such as political tools, or mere educational and historical facts as de Gruchy alluded to), may not be worth it after all. The quest for the truth is often not for the truth's sake

but for 'justice to roll…' that is aimed at the execution of justice (and possibly clemency which essentially is forgiveness) so that the authentic restoration and healing of relationships between (blacks and whites) will finally be realised. It is only in this context that reconciliation will justifiably and appropriately make sense. But the truth is the initiator of this delicate process. Truth in healing relationships is undisputable, critical, and often it breeds sudden inner freedom hence Vlok 'sang and thanked God'. "It shall set you free…" taught Christ Jesus (John 8:31).

> The truth liberates and sets free, the truth heals and restores, but only when the truth is lived and alone. Truth serves the cause of reconciliation and justice only when it leads to a genuine metanoia, that is, a turning around, a breaking with an unjust past, and a moving towards a new future. From a biblical perspective, the failure to listen to the truth and become transformed by it has dire consequences. Truth and light have led to forgiveness and healing become a truth that judges and condemns in deeds of righteous anger (de Gruchy 2003:164).

Truth does not leave us cushioned in neutrality, but it liberates us or paralyses us, depending on our response. Truth strangely mutates, especially within a relational context where it has been trusted thus permitted to lead. As the truth becomes mutable it surprisingly becomes justice, forgiveness, peace, harmony and possibly must eventually mutate into reconciliation. Gobodo-Madikizela's love for the (mutable) truth found her in an irreversible and unstoppable metaphoric 'roller-coaster' expedition. All this because of the love and pursuit of the truth. The following is her personal experience, which plunged her into an emotional and spiritual imbroglio that eventually was worth it –

> I asked de Kock to speak about the meeting with Pearl Faku. His face immediately fell, and he became visibly distressed. I could hear the clatter of his leg chains as he shuffled his feet…He started to speak. There were tears in his eyes: in a breaking voice, he said, "I wish I could do much more than [say] I am sorry. I wish there was a way of bringing their bodies back alive. I wish I could say, "here are your husbands," he said, stretching out his arms as if bearing an invisible body, his hands trembling, his mouth quivering . . . I have to live with it (Gobodo-Madikizela 2003:32).

She had to let de Kock face and hear the smouldering yet freeing truth. The relationship was already in process, though in its elementary phase. Gobodo-Madikizela further elaborates -

> Relating to him is the only way one does in such human circumstances, I touched his shaking hand, surprising myself. But it was clenched, cold and rigid. As if he were holding back as if he were holding on to some withering but still vital form of his old self. This made me recoil for a moment and to recast my spontaneous act of reaching out… With a person who not too long ago had used those same hands, this same voice to authorise and initiate unspeakable acts of malice against people very much like me. I tried as best… And yet I felt guilty for having expressed even momentary sympathy and wondered if my heart had crossed the moral line from compassion, which allows one to maintain a measure of distance, to identifying with de Kock (2003:32).

It is important, before reflecting on Gobodo-Madikizela's intentional vulnerable narrative, to point out that the above is the harmonious conjunction between post-foundational and narrative approaches - demonstrated. It is easily and frequently forgettable to point out these conjunctions, for –

> Narrative is one of the main characteristics of post-modernity, following Wittgenstein's (1961:115) 'The limits of my language mean the limits of my world'. However, Van Huyssteen (1999:177) claims: 'In a postfoundationalist notion of rationality, the narrative quality of one's own experience...is always going to be rationally compelling'. An awareness of the role of narrative in constructing human experience and giving significance to events in our lives has only recently surfaced in the human sciences, and narrative theory of human understanding focuses its attention on existence as it is lived, experienced and interpreted by the human person. Furthermore, this narrative construction of human experience is socially derived (Polkinghorne 1988:106, 125, 184). Furthermore, this narrative approach is a valid

> form of doing theology in Africa, since Africans experience life through stories" (Park 2010).

Park has learnt from few scholars such as Wittgenstein, Van Huyssteen and Polkinghome whom he has quoted above, that post-modernity, experience, and post-foundational find 'home' in narrative research, possibly vice-versa. Going back to Gobodo-Madikizela's vulnerability as a black woman who was humbly and kindly reaching out and loving de Kock, demonstrates that foundational meta-narratives such as de Kock's have for decades if not centuries obfuscated and even eclipsed Gobodo-Madikizela's narratives which post-foundational episteme proudly embraces.

She allowed herself to initiate a reconciliatory relationship with the 'hazardous' de Kock, though it was not there yet. Reconciliation was on the horizon and certainly, it must be led, accompanied but preceded by the truth which she calmly and courageously incarnated. It should be emphasised that truth is intricately inseparable from the reconciliation project. It cannot be the other way round. Authentic reconciliation cannot be imposed thus hurried. All this has been 'caught' within the orbit of the relationship though not yet within the 'atmosphere' of 'the reconciliatory relationship'. We may call it relatedness if we must, but reconciliation could be premature though poised to go in that direction.

De Kock and Gobodo-Madikizela hopefully, may potentially lead to 'the possibilities of reconciliatory relationship', but the purifying truth must be allowed her own space, pace, and time. Gobodo-Madikizela admittedly confessed, acknowledged, and believed that 'relating to him is the only way one does in such human circumstances.' It seems like here the initial relationship or relatedness was the prerequisite for the truth to come to the fore for an authentic reconciliatory relationship to take place. Failure to do this will abort the entire gestational process.

The above description is by Gobodo-Madikizela, especially about where she is redemptively caught in 'a cathartic vortex' and was consciously aware of what was beautifully happening to, within, and through her. It was a 'divine set up', should I say – an emotional-spiritual entrapment! It was as if the situation was beyond her control. An undefined dynamism had unconsciously taken over. All were initiated by a mere conversation between these two South Africans who normally would not have met let alone have had a conversation. Well-intentioned

conversations can intriguingly astound us and unconsciously lead where we did not even contemplate. What should we call this phenomenon between these two? The magic or the mystique of relationship? Lee explains

> Conversation is not just verbal talk between people. It is the continuing to and fro of movement, the relentless cycle of questions and answers… The conversation is an image for the relational dynamics that are the relationship. As we converse, we build the selves that meet each other… That constant cycle IS the relationship, full of risk, change, pain, satisfaction, movement, challenge, and reward…the honest attempt to grant another person his/her ground is full of risk. The honesty of this attempt means suspending judgement to listen… It means that I shall surely be shaped by the otherness I experience there. (1998:45).

This is what took place between these two, especially Gobodo-Madikizela, as unconsciously they have been 'transported' to another realm which is enriching even in this gestational phase. Gobodo-Madikizela beautifully and further explains -

> But as I drove out of the prison towards Johannesburg, I started to feel a sense of great anxiety and despair. During my drive, I suddenly broke down in sobs… My emotions were becoming increasingly confused, but only in the sense that they represented my multiple identities, the past, the present: as a child, student and adult growing up under the apartheid regime, as a human being able to feel compassion for the suffering of others, as a member of the Truth & Reconciliation Commission expected to remain level-headed in my thinking about the past (2003:33-34).

Here is a vulnerable professional South African black woman, caught in her '*botho*' with a supposedly '*lekgowa*' (i.e. de Kock) who looks like he may slowly evolve to '*botho*' and be *'motho'*. Intentionally or not, she was delicately trapped in a relationship web. One of the most interesting and respected TRC commissioners had an insight into our new country and as a result, refused to be aloof thus possibly clinical because of her profession and her academic background.

> My tears were for all those years of being denied the right to share a sense of pride about being South African…, I felt a deep sense of loss about this. But at the same time, I felt a sense of loss about de Kock that the side of him I had touched had not been allowed to triumph over the side that made him apartheid's killing machine. That moment…gave me a glimpse of what he could have been…the experience made me realise something I was probably not prepared for – that good and evil exists in our lives, and that evil, like good, is always a possibility… (2003:33-4).

She is Gobodo-Madikizela. De Kock was no longer the same and certainly, Gobodo-Madikizela mourned the 'deep sense of loss of de Kock, the side of him I had touched had not been allowed to triumph over the side that made him apartheid's killing machine. That moment back in the interview room gave me a glimpse of what he could have been…' Could it be possible that this episodic emotional vortex is a paramount prerequisite that all South Africans need to experience (thus be 'baptised' into the reality of the incarnate authentic possibilities of reconciliatory relationship in this country)?

This was an incubating space birthing an unconscious dual and mutual new humanity or 'botho' of South Africanness. Is it not that we often prematurely 'abort' this gestational process thus 'miscarries' the very **'A Practical Theological perspective on Reconciling Relationships in a Post-Apartheid South Africa'?** I am personally convinced that de Kock and Gobodo-Madikizela's mutual (almost accidental) ability is a prerequisite and an essential recipe for a proper humane South Africa. I really do! An erudite and gallant Catholic priest and activist Father Freire prophetically warns -

> How can the oppressed, as divided, unauthentic beings participate in developing the pedagogy of their liberation? ... As long as they live in the duality where to be is to be like, and to be like is to be like the oppressor, this contribution is impossible. The pedagogy of the oppressed is an instrument for their critical discovery that both they and their oppressors are manifestations of dehumanisation (1972: 25).

The previously oppressed, according to the Catholic priest, naming them 'the unauthentic beings'; 'to be is to be like, and to be like is to be like the oppressor'. Thus, the unstoppable

inevitability shall blindly pounce on us once again (as in the previous apartheid era) now in a new or post-apartheid South Africa, called: re-dehumanisation. This new continuum of dehumanisation (re-dehumanisation) from the previous dispensation is a new mega-conundrum as a consequence of the impoverishment of authentic relationships between black and white. Any attempt to sincerely and convincingly abjure these artificial relationships or dehumanisation especially by the previous oppressors such as Vlok and de Kock shall effortlessly invoke compassion from many – *a 'la* the magnanimous Gobodo-Madikizela's reconciliatory outreach to de Kock.

Again, Father Lapsley responded with abundant generosity after I asked him about the sincerity of Vlok's conversion, he cautiously explained even though he does not agree with everything about Vlok, but he conceded –

> I have no doubt in his genuineness and his commitment to discipleship. I still worry about the default position of washing feet. Not too much theologically, but it has become his chosen ritual…But we are all genuine in the ways that we are genuine, and I would want to say that he is genuine in the way that he is genuine, I do not think he is fake or pretending. I think he is sincere … I think in the way he is seeking to live out that journey and I respect him for that (Appendix 5).

I deliberately questioned all my respondents or co-researchers regarding the sincerity of Vlok's conversion. Almost all of them agree that his sincerity was unquestionable except Dali Mpofu (Appendix 9) – it was purely based on their subjective intra-relationship or lack thereof with him. Most of these relationships with him were initiated after they were convinced and had witnessed Vlok's emotional writhing during his bold yet humble submission to the grilling from SACC's advocates. The then SACC's General Secretary, Rev. Chikane emphasised this to me when I asked about Vlok's sincerity –

> Take away the colour and they are human beings, like any other human being. It is just that we get indoctrinated one way or another, and I think his (Vlok) conscience hit him, his conscience could not allow him to stay without doing it. I mean he had no need to do this (washing of his feet) (Appendix 4).

Vlok's or de Kock's marginal but (allegedly) substantial recovery towards humanity through rehabilitation or conversion, makes them appropriate examples. Other fellow human beings obviously should authentically seek rehabilitation or conversion. The TRC's chairperson Tutu found himself unconsciously led to the new vista of 'the possibilities of reconciliatory relationship' when he chaired one of the sessions –

> At the TRC's first victims' hearing (East London, 19 April 1996), Mrs Nomonde Calata, widow of Fort Calata (one of the 'Cradock Four'), was momentarily overcome with grief, while relating the story of her husband's abduction and murder. Her anguished wails filled the hall. The audience and the Commissioners at the table were shocked into silence. When Tutu, after allowing a few minutes for Mrs Calata to compose herself, needed to start the session again, he intoned in his voice the Xhosa hymn *Senzeni na* ('What have we done?'). Everyone, even the journalists and security personnel, joined in the singing. Tears flowed. But the atmosphere was set for the rest of the day. (Villa-Vicencio & Verwoerd: 2000:126).

Tutu got into that emotional or spiritual space, possibly because he was pastoral (not that being pastoral cannot be rational) and realised that reason or rationality may stifle the whole process at that juncture. The archbishop's timely and appropriately 'lubricating' of that TRC session with a hymnal rendition in which 'everyone … joined in the singing.' and 'tears flowed', hugely furnished the possibility of 'reconciliatory relationship'. Meiring continues to emphasise, "the atmosphere was set for the rest of the day. The lesson was properly learnt and at many future meetings, in a particularly difficult situation, the singing of a hymn or a prayer saved the day." (Villa-Vicencio & Verwoerd: 2000:126).

These atmospheric 'incubations' *a 'la* TRC can be easily replicated to create the realities and possibilities of reconciliatory relationships. These can take place in our local residential communities to abort the massive palpable angst, anxieties and fears that have engulfed our country which is: full-blown pessimism and paralysis. But sincerely what is or are relationship(s)?

6. 6. The Centrality and Importance of Relationships

Venter asked the pointed question which we probably haven't raised, "why are relationships so fundamental to our human existence? Because ultimately reality is relational. Relationships—not money—makes the world go round." (2009:270). It is not money as we have been made to believe, that it makes the world go around, but relationships. It is in the context of healthy relationships that money or what it can purchase can authentically enhance and deepen relationships. Money ideally should be there to serve all kinds of healthy relationships not the other way round.

> Most material aspirations translate into relational categories. We use the money to express love, to secure influence, respect… Not many gourmets will eat alone, and not many sexual gourmets will treat their partners as mere objects of lust. In these, as in almost every activity, we wish to be with others…, Good company belongs no less surely to the definition of well-being than adequate nutrition and health care. Indeed, we could argue that the Relational takes precedence over the material… To be is to be in relation (Schluter & Lee 1993:51).

We may not all have money but certainly, we all are in relationships. And as Schluter and Lee pointed out, most material can be translated into relationships such as marriage, friendship, and parenting. It is also true that things thus commodified can macabrely replace or use relationships. But the fact is that "by nature, we are relational beings … this is true for each of us no matter what circumstance or motivation prevailed at our conception." (Venter 2009:270). There are inbuilt capacities for all human beings to relate and all it needs is a conducive atmosphere where a healthy-authentic relatedness is richly experienced. It is human nature to relate. And according to the theologian Venter, 'ultimate reality is relational' which cannot be divorced from real human beings.

Williams concurs with Venter "A person finds identity, not in individual attributes, but the group. If the stress falls on the community, the relationships between individuals then become extremely significant" (2013:1). Dignity-endowed identities and formidable solidarities cannot take place in a vacuum but in relatedness, thus, personal identity becomes real. Again, Williams continues "…a person cannot be human without relating to others and God" (2013:1).

It is interesting to note that Williams has intentionally differentiated between a person and a human. He implicitly implies that a person does not mean a human for it is only in relationships that a person can be made into a human. Either way, relatedness with others breeds a complete human being.

> The very human essence itself, which lures and enables human beings to become Abantu or humanised beings, living in daily self-expressive works of love and efforts to create harmonious relationships in the community… The prominence or primacy of the community does not mean that individually is abhorred or obliterated. But individuals do not live in a vacuum. They are true Abantu only when they express ubuntu in society… To call a person Umuntu is immediately to associate that person with Abantu, in community (Kapolyo 2013:24).

It is almost as if an individual is non-existent, but the corporate-plural human being is anchored in multiple relationships. The fact is that no individual is solely self-created, thus self-independent in an African way of life, known as *ubuntu*. "In a social milieu where connectedness to others is an essential feature of human relationships, each of our identities should extend beyond self-focused individualism to relationships with others with whom our human identity is intertwined" (du Toit and Doxtader 2010:139), this is a deep description of ubuntu. Gobodo-Madikizela comments further on ubuntu -

> This shared humanity with others has been explained by the concept of *ubuntu*. … The ethos of ubuntu focuses on social relationships that encourages co-operation for the good of our communities. The inspiration behind the goal of reconciliation is thus a commitment to creating future social relationships focused on respect and dignity for all the country's citizens" (du Toit & Doxtader 2010:139).

The implicit coherence is almost invisible between an individual and the broader communal identity, it is the glue called relationship. Wilkinson describes or explains human beings through the prism of relationships, "the basic element in the concept of the health of human beings in the Old Testament and the Bible as a whole, is that of relationship. That is why the words which we used to describe the characteristics of health or well-being are all words of relationship. Righteousness and obedience describe our relationship with God. Righteousness

also goes along with strength, fertility and longevity to describe our relationship to other people" (1998:19). The God of the OT or the entire Bible according to Wilkinson made the relationship to the believers' deity and his community central. He further convinces –

> in the Old Testament, health is regarded as a matter of right relationships with that which is right, for which the keyword is righteousness. In other words, well-being consists of right relationships … health consists in a right relationship to God … health is a right relationship to us expressed as an unselfish humility and … health is a right relationship to our neighbours both domestic, social and national, which is expressed as love and service. These result in mutual fellowship and trust and stable society" (1998:19-20).

The Scottish theologian based in the Eastern Cape, South Africa, Williams, concurs with Wilkinson – "

> The final aspect of relationship giving the nature of what it means to be human must be, for Christians, the major one. The relation to God is not an addition to human nature but is its core and ground. … However, any person must have a relationship with God simply due to the fact of being a created being. But if it is possible to have such an ongoing relationship with God, it follows that this is an essential aspect of a human being. It is this that gives full personhood; in a sense of people who do not relate to God are less than human as they do not have all the aspects of humanity. … The humanity of people is dependent upon relating to God (2013:86-8).

Relationship cements both God and humanity and without it, humans cannot help but atrophy themselves.

> The humanity of people is dependent upon relating to God. This aspect is seen in the Bible to be critical to the understanding of the nature of humanity, so much so that … humanity is described as having been created in imago Dei, "in the image of God" … very significantly, the idea of the image indicates both the similarity of people to God, but also

> a distinction from him. An image is not an identity. Likeness indicates differentiation (2013:88).

An interesting and unfamiliar (at least to me) theologian Kovacs, emphasises what he calls 'relationalism'. It is a 'tradition viewed an individual' according to Kovacs,

> not as a static, atomistic being, but as a person continuously living in and through a relationship with some other. Implicit therefore to the personalist perspective is a profound appreciation for the inherently relational quality of reality. … There is no personality, except it be in and through another, no thou, no I. Therefore, the highest antithesis is by no means I and non-I, but I and another I-I and thou." (in Kovacs 2011:45).

'The relational quality of reality' is an interesting and intriguing way of describing this relatedness aspect or the phenomena of relationships, especially within human identity. Now Williams furthers his 'relational theology', which concurs with Kovacs – "A person cannot be human without relating to others and God" (2013:1). He, Williams, then immediately discusses contextual theologies but points beyond them. He argues -

> It is really not so much the actual context, which is determinative, but the interaction with that context. It is not context, but a relationship, that is determinative. This means that irrespective of an actual environment, the nature of a person can well be affected by relationships that would not naturally be part of that context. It is possible to maintain strength in a situation of zero gravity, by enhancing inner physical interacting, and it is possible to maintain spiritual health in a city by deliberate interaction with God (2013:7).

The context becomes meaningful not because of its politics or histories but merely because of people's relationships. According to Williams, relationships or relatedness is everything – "In contrast to the stress on individualism, many recognise the essential plurality in people". For example, Sachs (1991:9) insists that we can either live or develop outside of the community. Martin Buber insisted that the nature of people is determined not so much by what they are, but their relationships". Similarly, Brunner (1939:106) said that humanity is only in a

relationship (cf Cairns 1973: 156). For Berkhof (1979:180), "humanness is now defined as fellow-humanness" (2013:11).

To bolster Williams point, in Sesotho, when a new acquaintance or friend(s) is introduced to one's family members, it will often be said – '*ha a nsheba' or 'ha ke mo sheba'* meaning both literally and metaphorically – "when I look at her/him or she/he looks at me", then one would continue in introducing – 'I see an uncle/aunt' or 'She sees her aunt or nephew'. Basically, in Basotho/Xhosa/Zulu and other African languages, in one's face, you see one face or person, but you are said to 'see' a few relational human beings (in the person you are introduced to) such as the uncle or aunt, hence the plurality/collective of relationships within one face. It is interesting that Jesus similarly said, "If you see me, you've seen the Father" (John 14:9).

"There is then a fundamental plurality in the biblical understanding of humanity. … It implies both an individual, incorporating the many…the corporate personality obviously" (Williams 2013:14). This 'relationalism' or 'relational quality of reality' as Kovacs calls it, is prominently real. "In keeping with this is an approach that sees the nature of people not so much in substantive qualities, but in terms of relationships" Williams continues,

> When we refer to human beings, we often speak of people or persons; this means that a fundamental aspect of being human is being personal. We tend to think of this as a synonym for an individual, and indeed a famous definition, and Boetius, who said that a person is the "individual substance of a-rational nature", formulated indeed a famous definition…personality is not a quality of an individual so much as in the relationships with others. J MacMurray writes that "we are persons at all through our relations with other persons, we are only if our relations are real (2013:8).

Relationships are essential in almost all aspects of life especially for human beings of African descent. Venter who earlier on stated, "ultimate reality is relational. Relationships, not money, make the world go round." (2009:270). He cautions us –

> Relationships either make us or break us. Mostly it is a bit of both. Relationships can be the most destructive force for pain and alienation this side of hell; or the most loving source of healing and happiness this side of heaven. The tragedy is

> that we are such broken people because we are so unskilled at relationships (Venter 2009:269).

This was and still is the essence of apartheid, especially regarding racial relatedness. And even in the new democratic era of our body-politic, there is the appalling 'poverty' of our broken relationships. This includes the whole society and her religious communities. Regarding the healing of these broken and dis-eased relationships Venter explains –

> We 'miss the grace of God' by not taking responsibility for relational "dis-ease", by not making every effort to heal it. 'To be holy' is a relational reality, not a private morality… To be holy is to "set us apart" to honour God…in relational love and integrity and ourselves… Relational conflict is the norm. What counts is whether we sincerely seek to resolve it or not. Some refuse reconciliatory efforts, rejecting any healing of the relationship. We cannot be responsible for other people's responses or lack thereof. So long as we take responsibility for our part in the breakdown and "make every effort" at reconciliation and healing, we can leave the rest to God…" (2009:272).

Yes, indeed one can do what one is capable of (i.e. responsibility.), beyond that it is simply impossible thus leaving 'the rest to God' as Venter points out. Once again Venter's rich emphasis – 'relational reality' echoes Kovacs' sentiments – 'relationalism' and 'relational quality of reality' which are essentially synonymous. The assumption is that this 'relational reality' is embodied in humility hence becomes repentance. Without which 'relational reality' will be impossible. Venter further expatiates -

> relational healing should include repentance from sinful and broken patterns of relating, and growth in new skills and abilities, learning to love as God loves… And this healing must include related dimensions of the whole person that either contributed to or resulted from, the relational sickness: Spiritual healing from sinful patterns; psycho-emotional healing from past hurts and poor self-image; physical healing from any sickness—and deliverance from any demonisation—that may have been part of the relational disorder (2009:273).

Repentance is a building block in this metaphoric building that we all desire to construct so that we all enjoy and experience its warmth, as it were. It will be easy for other healing to naturally take root if all relational sicknesses have been repented from. It is important to pause here to briefly remind us of the reason for the restoration or healing of relationships within this country of ours. Vlok's Deputy Minister of Law and Order, Leon Wessels frankly reminds us:

> Let us admit it in all honesty: We did not know our country and its people; we also did not know our history, before or during apartheid. When a group of senior Commonwealth leaders, the so-called Eminent Person Group, visited South Africa in 1985, they found that only about ten per cent of all white South Africans knew what was happening in the townships… Today, the very old story - 'we' knew 'them' because 'as children, we played and swam in farm dams together- only covers the fact of 'our' ignorance about 'them' (du Toit & Doxtader 2010:10).

This is indeed sobering especially if ruptured and scarred relationships are to be restored. All this was caused by diabolical and inhuman atrocities through the orgies of violence and dehumanisation. The following few examples can assist us in understanding the context and the paramount reasons for restoring South African relationships. Otherwise, this emphasis on the healing of the damaged relationships, as the prerequisite for authentic reconciliation, will be trivialised. An activist, prominent and ebullient academic Njabulo Ndebele reminds us with an intense and lengthy conscientisation (felt almost guilty to truncate it) about our indelible past.

> For a people so extensively traumatised and anguished by settlements created for their dehumanisation, newly enfranchised South Africans have displayed an exasperating lack of urgency in their commitment to changing these conditions in radical ways. The townships, as these settlements are popularly known, are dormitory enclaves which house the vast majority of South Africans, who have been objects rather subjects in the process of the state formation over the last hundred years or so. Dormitory enclaves are by definition built to export their energies. Not by any meaning self-referential, they are necessarily orientated, through various forms of compulsion, towards an outward reality (du Toit & Doxtader 2010:58).

This is disturbing, but it is real sobering truth and facts on the ground. The legacy of apartheid to many black South Africans is alive and ghastly palpable to this day. Ndebele's description is precise and blunt, which is appropriate especially in our democratic era, which unintentionally has plunged us into dark oblivion. He continues to further his blunt point –

> This is because the span of allowable social interest is limited to basic housing, under-resourced schooling, limited entertainment, limited formal medical facilities, limited shopping and trading facilities, extensive religious participation, high birth-rates, and a network of transportation to export labour out of the dormitories… Consequently, post-apartheid provision of housing has not produced bold models that represent alternative conceptualisations of settlements. … When we built houses, we forgot that the building of houses should have been more about building communities (du Toit & Doxtader 2010:58).

Hayner mildly reminds us too that "South Africa has learnt first-hand what was already evident elsewhere: that knowing the truth is never enough. South Africa's past is as present as it was before the (TRC) commission began…" (Villa-Vicencio & Verwoerd 2000:41). Hayner's point reinforces what Ndebele spoke about regarding the poor quality of black townships as dormitories which have thus resulted in pseudo-communities - with the obvious absence of communal or societal amenities such as electricity, bus or taxi shelters, and shortages of public spaces.

There is so much that an average person has to deal with regarding day-to-day realities, especially since the majority of poor blacks are trapped in 'the dormitory enclaves' that Ndebele calls them. It does not necessarily mean they are excused from their citizenship responsibilities such as pursuing reconciliation, fairness, and magnanimity. But, Hayner insists on pushing the raw reality -

> On an individual level. However, reconciliation is much more complex and difficult to achieve by employing a national commission … to individual healing and forgiveness for some individuals, but knowing the global truth, or even the specific truth about one's case, will not

> necessarily lead to a victim's reconciliation with his or her perpetrators. Forgiveness, healing and reconciliation are deeply personal process, and each person's needs and reactions to peace-making and truth-telling may be radically different." (Villa-Vicencio & Verwoerd 2000:40).

Despite what Hayner points out, I am reticently admitting, we are relationally bound or glued together. Schluter & Lee have to say the following about ourselves - "in contrast we can make the rather general observation that pro-relational qualities like trust, sympathy, respect, understanding, self-restraint, loyalty and co-operation do seem to come easily where encounter occurs" (1993:9). Sadly, it is not often we experience these 'pro-relational' qualities or virtues, indicated above (such as sympathy, self-restraint, respect etc.) as we daily encounter each other. The late gutsy heroine and activist Hannah Arendt cemented the Schluter and Lee's insightfulness -

> For all its intangibility, this in between is no less real than the world of things, we visibly have in common. We call this reality the "web" of human relationships, indicating by the metaphor its somewhat intangible quality. … The realm of human affairs, strictly speaking, consists of the web of human relationships, which exists wherever men live together… (Arendt 1958:182-4).

This relatedness which Arendt calls a 'web of human relationships is the one that inevitably 'whisked' me into an encounter with Vlok in a small airport in George, Western Cape. A few 'pro-relational qualities' as beautifully described by Schluter and Lee, were unconsciously demonstrated by Vlok in that space towards me hence our current friendship ten years later. Conversation uncomfortably plunged both Vlok and me into the 'web of human relationship'.

To express my feelings about that epochal day at that Western Cape airport (I was the one who initiated the conversation with Vlok though without the intention of initiating a relationship) I will allow Lee to articulate those feelings – "I always enter a relationship from the perspective of my world. When I meet someone, I view him/her on my horizons, but I am encountering someone with a different world who experiences on a different horizon" (Lee 1998:46). This

is vulnerably true regarding me or my first encounter with strangers – certainly, it was so with Vlok.

> Two people meet for the first time. Each presumes some things about the other. Each immediately and instinctively makes some initial judgements about the other. We are usually able to have some initial understanding because we live in the same world and have gone through some of the same events of history. While it is true that we begin with some shared world, it is also true that each of us enters into the new meeting with a lot of "old history" that we do not share…We can never become fully aware of all the presuppositions that lead us to the judgements we make, but whatever can be brought to awareness will help the conversation (Lee 1998:43).

It is as if Lee was there on that day when I met Vlok for the first time, as he is endowed with exceptional skills to aptly describe what happened, at least from my angle. Yes, I entered that space with some sort of 'justifiable judgements' because 'I know' this 'other', Vlok! The history we both shared was apartheid hence some 'initial understanding because we live in the same world' though 'it is also true that each of us enters into the new meeting with a lot of "old history" that we do not share', Lee has beautifully and artfully explained. Lee calls this space - "the living presence of conversation" (1998:44).

> Conversation is not just verbal talk between people. It is the continuing to and fro movement, the relentless cycle of questions and answers. It is the risk-taking that daily characterises the game of life… And new construction requires ongoing conversation. That constant cycle IS the relationship, full of risk, change, pain, satisfaction, movement, challenge, and reward…the honest attempt to grant another person his/her ground is full of risk. The honesty of this attempt means suspending judgement to listen… It means that I shall surely be shaped by the otherness I experience there (1998:45).

Risk. Risk it was. In that space, that tiny airport, as I was accusatory engaging the then Minister of Police (then called Law and Order), I was not initially aware of this risk-phenomenon taking place. It was only later I became fully aware. In all this, almost with a belligerent attitude from my side, Vlok politely exhibited the 'pro-relational qualities' as Schluter and Lee calls. I was

unconsciously becoming trapped in a web of human relations – yes with Vlok! Indeed, 'conversing keeps construction underway, and new construction requires ongoing conversation. That constant cycle IS the relationship, full of risk, change, pain, satisfaction, movement, challenge, and reward', it was, – aesthetically described by Lee once more. Risk ushered in unconsciously at least on my side. Lee further prophesied as it were –

> The honest attempt to grant another person his/her ground is full of risk. The honesty of this attempt means suspending judgement to listen. It means relinquishing the familiar and entering into an alien land. It means that I shall surely be shaped by the otherness I experience there (1998:45).

This has been both excitingly and painfully my journey or my relationship as I got to know Vlok whom I unashamedly call *'Oom Vlok'*. Now in retrospect, it eerily feels like that was a set-up though the journey, over all these years, has been enormously enriching, incalculably rewarding, and spiritually transforming. I have learnt a lot and once again Lee will conclusively articulate the lesson I am and still learning about the 'otherness' of the gospel in and through the simple *'botho'* of Vlok -

> Once I have been receptive to otherness, I can never come home the same. That is the risk: I never know ahead of time what kind of self I will bring back home. I am always different after taking in otherness. Even if I do not agree, my horizon has been altered… It is a risk. It would be hard to overestimate the importance of letting another voice speak from its horizon… Granted, we can never stand within another's horizon in the same way as the one for whom the horizon is indigenous. The otherness of another's world may be small or maybe large. But it is a safe presumption that otherness always exists and that I must work very hard indeed to hear the voice on its ground (Lee 1998:46).

Once more this relational-risk aspect, which is critical for all the relatedness that our country aspires to or envisages, must be boldly pursued. I had to vulnerably disclose my feelings (above) regarding my relationship with 'Oom Vlok' to demonstrate this relatedness aspect of

this 'Possibilities of Reconciling Relationship in a New Mzantsi' as this current chapter is all about.

> Relationship - what we could call the R-factor - is central to human life. One is, rather obviously, that relationships cannot be avoided. In the normal course of events, almost everything you do is done in the context of relationships. If you work, you work with or for others; if you eat, you eat what others have made; if you read, you read words written by another, as you are doing now. And relationships endure… The relationship is one of the base dimensions of existence… We are shaped by relationships, dependent on relationship… But there is a second reason why relationships matter. Not only do we live in relationships, as surely as we breathe air; we live for them. (Schluter & Lee 1993:49).

Yes, indeed these two academics, Schluter and Lee, are profoundly insightful in that we cannot avoid relationships thus we depend on and live through them. This again echoes that indefatigable savant and prolific author Hannah Arendt's sentiments – 'intangible quality' and the web of human relationships. We as South Africans clumsily try to avoid this 'R-factor' in the name of political correctness or so-called radicalism. This authentic relationship must be correctly spelt 'reconciliation'. Yes, that hated word by some members of our country. It has already been demonstrated and incarnated by many in this country and outsiders have even witnessed the political if not the spiritual wherewithal and stamina of reconciliatory relationships.

It is important to mention the following to encourage South Africans. The Chilean ambassador to our country, several years ago observed the TRC chairperson Archbishop Tutu, and the late TRC deputy Rev. Boraine leading a prayer session in preparation of one of the hearings in Johannesburg. He profoundly observed –

> I could not help but reflect that this would have been unthinkable in many countries where the separation of Church and State is taken seriously. Yet it seems to have worked in South Africa, where there is a great religious diversity but where the strongly Christian subtext of repentance and forgiveness that pervades the Commission's

> proceedings conveys both the right message as to what reconciliation is all about. It manages to put at ease humble, profoundly decent South Africans who have been offered, often for the first time, the opportunity to state their case…" (Villa-Vicencio & Verwoerd 2000:131).

6. 7. Conclusion

Finally, reconciliation within the raw political reality of South Africa was defined in this chapter. The post-foundational epistemology and its Seven Movements (Müller 2004:300) methodology in conjunction with narrative methodology were used, especially the second movement named "in-context experiences are listened to and described…" then the third movement "interpretations of experiences are made, described and developed in collaboration with co-researchers..."; then the "a description of experiences as it is continually informed by traditions of interpretation…" and finally "a description of experience, thickened through interdisciplinary investigation …" and in conjunction with narrative methods to navigate this chapter.

It was essentiality about the bloody fractured racial relationships of South Africans through the gaping wound caused by apartheid. An example was proffered – Amy Biehl and others. And another South African whose remorse Villa-Vicencio and Verwoerd described in this fashion – "When the final question was asked and when the legal team of the South African Council of Churches indicated its satisfaction - that the team was willing not to oppose my amnesty application - my heart sang I got a lump in my throat and I thanked God for his grace and mercy to me (2000:129). This was Vlok – possibly demonstrating before the TRC's panel his alleged conversion and reconciliation.

Much space was given to prove that the TRC's unflinching pursuit of the truth (as far as the apartheid atrocities were concerned), was such that reconciliation did(does) not come cheaply but in a dignified fashion. Gobodo-Madikizela's emotional and painful story in reaching out to the so-called 'Prime-Evil' (nickname for de Kock) was deployed to demonstrate a rich and formidable work of reconciliation in action here in South Africa. This proved that relationships, not money, make the world go around, especially reconciliatory relationships. This chapter was a chapter of encouragement.

The following chapter is the last, it will summarise the previous six and finally, furnish us with recommendations now that the main issues have been addressed.

Chapter 7

Conclusive Chapter

Towards a New Humanity in a Post-Apartheid South Africa: The Example of Vlok

7. 1. Introduction

This is the last chapter of this thesis. This chapter will, therefore, furnish us with a concise summary of the six previous chapters. In the process I will highlight the main arguments of each chapter. In this chapter, I will also return to the question of the original contribution of this thesis and why it came to be titled: **'A Practical Theological perspective on Reconciling Relationships in a Post-Apartheid South Africa',** will be delivered.

7.2. Previous Chapters

7.2.1. Chapter 1: Methodology and Epistemology

The first chapter focusses on the methodology of this thesis, namely the post-foundational approach of Julian Müller. Some space was used describing post-modernism and situating it in the context of this thesis as well as a focus on foundationalism and modernity.

Post-modernism was very influential in the twentieth century not only in the western world, but also in the global South. (Rossouw 1995:54-56). Similarly, I spent some time describing black consciousness and Black Consciousness Movement (BCM) of the 1970s. Although the BCM was not Sowetan in its origins, it was very influential in Soweto in the 1970s.

It was in that context that the post-foundational approach was used as a methodological 'tool' to navigate the terrain of literature and other sources in this thesis. To this end each chapter was written around the 'seven movements' of post-foundationalism (Müller 2004:300). Müller's Seven Movements are:

a) A specific context is described;

b) In-context experiences are listened to and described;

c) Interpretations of experiences are made, described and developed in collaboration with co-researchers;

d) A description of experiences continually informed by traditions of interpretation;

e) A reflection of God's presence, as it is understood and experienced in a specific situation;

f) A description of experience, thickened through interdisciplinary investigation and

g) The development of alternative interpretations that point beyond the local community.

Together with the seven movements I have used the narrative approach. These will help me to interpret Adriaan Vlok's own story in a contextual manner.

Central to my main argument in this thesis is to indicate that the Christian notion of reconciliation at least within the South African context, is crucial and can be sustainable. This is what the story of Adriaan Vlok demonstrates and proves. More than this, I use the story of Vlok to suggest that through his story, Vlok portrays, perhaps inadvertently, the kind of a human being, South Africa needs to become a reconciled nation.

7.2.2. Chapter 2: Reconciliation and Forgiveness Revisited

In this chapter, I traced the genesis and history of the TRC. I also profiled a few of the key players during its formation. Referring to the Promotion of National Unity and Reconciliation Act 34 of 1995, I outlined the objectives and the structures of the TRC. I also highlighted some of the drama in the TRC the proceedings as well as some of the criticisms levelled against the commission. An important aspect of my introduction of the TRC was a focus on the self-assessment of the TRC by way of focusing on the chairperson's introductory remarks to the TRC's Report. It was important to give this comprehensive introduction to the TRC because the TRC played a great role in making in the journey of the repentance of Adriaan Vlok.

7.2.3. Chapter 3: A Case Study: Vlok's Apartheid- Story

In this chapter, I sketched a biography of Adriaan Vlok, his family and his political context. I noted how Vlok was deeply affected by the death of Hendrik Verwoerd's and how his response

to this death is tied up with Vlok's own political ambitions. I tracked his life up to the point of his appointment as minister of police.

7.2.4. Chapter 4: Discussing the Repentance of Vlok

In this chapter, I narrated how Adriaan Vlok was converted, and how, on the 31st of July 2006, he consciously sought out and proceeded to wash the feet of Frank Chikane. I also explored the complex but durable relationship between the Vloks and Fina – their domestic worker, as well as other relationships within the Vlok family. However, not everybody is persuaded of the authenticity of Vlok's conversion. That much is acknowledged in this chapter. However, having spent hours and days interviewing Vlok, I may not agree with him on every point, but I have come to believe in the authenticity of his conversion. This is not necessarily an objective position, but it is a position reached through post-foundational listening and narrative

7.2.5. Chapter 5: Reconciling Relationships in the New South Africa

In this chapter, I focused on reconciliation. I used the work of Gobodo-Madikizela (2003 & 2014) based on her encounter with De Kok as well as other voices such as those of Maluleke (1997, 1999, 2016 & 2020), Breytenbach (2006) and de Gruchy (2002). I then moved on to ask the question: what kind of person would it take to create a reconciled South African citizen and how might a reconciled South African society look? These and related questions are probed in this chapter.

7.2.6. Chapter 6: Possibilities of Reconciling Relationship in the New South Africa

This chapter was primarily about human relationships and their potential to build the so-called new South Africa. To this end we examine Vlok's attempt at reconciliation, first with self and then with his fellow black South Africans. I also touch on the researcher-co-researcher relationship between Eugene de Kock and Gobodo-Madikizela. These relationships prove that it is possible to go beyond the racialized relationships legislated and enforced by the Apartheid state – especially of Jesus Christ enters the fray.

7.3. Main Argument of the Thesis

In this thesis titled: 'A Practical Theological perspective on Reconciling Relationships in a Post-Apartheid South Africa' I have used post-foundational philosophy; black consciousness post-modernism, Black Consciousness Movement (BCM) as the root and basic methodologies. For me as a Sowetan, June 1976 is very important. I also suggest that June 1976 was the height of black consciousness and the black consciousness movement. In my view, June 1976, was both the darkest day and the brightest ever.

Using Müller's seven movements, and the narrative approach I have been able to present the story of Adriaan Vlok to illustrate how a reconciled new South might look like. But without the TRC, the conversion of Vlok would probably not been possible. It would certainly have lacked context. Whereas some of my co-researchers believed the conversion and repentance of Vlok was authentic, others were doubtful. For the former, Vlok's washing of Chikane was proof of repentance. For the latter, Vlok's washing of Chikane's feet was proof that he was into performance and gimmicks and not into genuine repentance.

I have argued that the true essence of reconciliation is relationship building – the restoration of restored relationships. Whereas the Apartheid system had intentionally and irrevocably damaged South African relationships – Vlok in his relationship-building journey, proved that there was a way to overcome this.

7.4. Revisiting the Research Questions

What kind of a human being does the new South Africa presuppose? What kind of a society do South Africans aim to be? These were some of my key research questions which I try to answer through, amongst others, the story of Adriaan Vlok. The subject of reconciliation has been looked at with suspicion especially within black South African communities. This is understandable but, in my opinion, it is unjustifiable. Reconciliation is among the list of many other matters that need urgent attention such as the eradication of poverty, unemployment, and illiteracy. In order for us to redeem the notion of reconciliation and give it its proper meaning and status, we would need to undergo introspection. According to Gobodo-Madikizela (2014:37)

> On the one hand, there is a great deal of anger and frustration among black and white South Africans for reasons that are different for each group. On the other, the spirit of reconciliation and sense of hope that reverberated throughout the country during the years of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), which inspired a transformed conception of politics and society, has dissipated.).

But in terms of my experience with Vlok, reconciliation is not yet expired. It may be that it has not been fully experienced thus embodied. In light of this, I would like to make some recommendations. My working assumption is that true reconciliation humanizes and produces a '*motho*', human being created in the image of God.

7.5. Recommendations

7.5.1. '*Motho*'

Once Adriaan Vlok saw the light, he moved ahead with so deep a conviction I have come to conclude that such conviction could only have been planted by God himself. Though some may say Vlok's appearance before the TRC was self-serving and that he was only in search of amnesty, my own view after questioning him about this, is that it was about more than a quest for amnesty. Vlok was looking to unburden. It was also brave of him to voluntarily go to the TRC when so many of his colleagues chose not to.

But he took it a step further when he chose to go and apologise personally to Frank Chikane, opting to wash his feet as a symbol of repentance. At the time of writing up this thesis, Vlok was feeding the poor of Mamelodi and Eersterus. And he provided housing for the homeless. In my view, such actions can only be the result of Jesus Christ touching his heart. In the process, it is my conviction that he changed from being a '*lekgowa*' (one who is not humane) into a '*motho*' (one who is truly human). Vlok's search for a journey of reconciliation is evidenced in all the acts highlighted above: his appearance before the TRC, his washing of the feet of Chikane, his one-man attempt to feed and care for some poor people. These are not mere acts of altruism but part of the man's search for and demonstration of reconciliation.

Through these acts he is humanizing himself and attempting to humanize others – he is being a 'motho' by bestowing 'botho' on others. In his own way, within the sphere that he can influence Vlok is attempting to undo the harm done by Apartheid and its legacy. In the process he smashes the old distinctions between black and white, 'baas' and servant. Muller & Stone 1998:326 testify to the entrenched nature of racial stratification in Apartheid South Africa, when they write,

> Most South Africans grew up with definitive and even rigid role distinctions and expectations. Although Daniel was my (black) friend, we both knew that he was the servant and I was the boss and that the bosses are white and the servants are black in the South African community. Therefore we grew up with the stereotype that a person's colour equals his or her value and status in society. When people are raised from childhood with these stereotypes, they cannot easily shed them. I must admit that, within the South African context, up to this day it is not easy for me to keep from putting myself in the boss role when communicating with a black person. I and many other white South Africans try hard, but find it still an effort, a struggle to become free from the roles of our upbringing. The roles into which Daniel and I fitted so readily from childhood were the inheritance of generations before us. That inheritance goes back to the legalisation and enforcement of apartheid, the lowest point of inhumane and unChristian discriminatory practices in South African history. It is deeply rooted in the history of this community.

These are rare but honest admissions by white South Africans – a reality that continues in the South Africa of today. What they describe is the nature of broken relationships between whites and blacks.

In the South-Sesotho language, which is my home language, the word/name for a white person is *lekgowa*. According to Harding (2010:39) '*lekgowa'* "denotes a person who is disrespectful" towards you or 'undermines your dignity.' The language includes the ideas of defamation of character, and this is sometimes given as a further explanation of the word" (Harding 2010:39). He further explains that the word "is used in the sense of lack of decorum, to be rude, to be an embarrassment (or a person who embarrasses you), to be annoying, to be disrespectful, to have no regard for other people, to have no shame…denotes a person who is 'disrespectful' towards

you or undermines your dignity" (2010:39). Harding also contrasts the '*lekgowa'* with '*motho*', as in '*ga se lekgowa, ke motho*', meaning so and so is not discourteous but he or she is humane.

7.5.2. Ubuntu

> Before the advent of white people in black Africa, the term 'ubuntu' referred only to black people… With any one person, ubuntu indicates the presence in one's life of such human characteristics as kindness, charity and love of one's neighbour (it thus means the essence of being human, humanness) (Kapolyo 2005:35).

Kindness and charity are the hallmarks of being '*ubuntu*', '*umuntu*' and '*botho*'. *Ubuntu* is famously known for 'being there' for others. It, therefore, assumes that social harmony which is another word for a healthy relationship(s) were already a reality. In African cosmology, deep-healthy relationships and ubuntu are inseparable.

> *Ubuntu* is another-centred principle that promotes relationality between persons in a community. It is this relationality that sits at the heart of humanness. To be regarded as a full human, one must always consider the well-being of others, and act in ways that are directed at bringing about others' welfare (Ogude 2018:67).

As part of my emphasis on the importance of relationships, I touched on the question of relationality in the previous chapter. This ties up with Ogude's principle of relationality between persons in a community. Kapolyo further explains the idea of communality thus:

> This communal orientation is seen from the qualities that are regarded as typical to a true Umuntu: caring, humble, thoughtful, considerate, understanding, wise, godly, generous, hospitable, mature, virtuous, and blessed. The overriding quality is a virtue, the practice of giving of oneself to the promotion of the good of the community. (Kapolyo 2005:39).

To be human, one, had to be immersed in communality.

7.5.3. '*Humanitas*'

In his definition of humanitas, Espin (2007:52 & 53) comes close to notions of ubuntu/botho.

> By humanitas, I mean that which we share and recognise in a person and communities that is, that living, historical, complex reality that allows us to then speak of 'humanity' but that first allows us to point to a being and a community and label them as 'human'. Humanitas, it seems to me, identifies the most crucial of theologically anthropological question. Humanitas is not historically a quality that exists apart from or before or 'underneath' specifically and diversely contextualised person or communities; humanitas exists only in and through real person and communities, not as a pre or ahistorical substratum underlying "person" and "community" but as the living, dynamic intersection of real-life diverse contextualisation, which exists only and when that living intersection historically exists.

At the heart of '*humanitas*' lie the values of sharing, mutual-acknowledgement and community. In this way, there are similarities between '*humanitas*' and '*motho*'/ '*ubuntu*'.

> Consequently, humanitas only exists if and when contextual. There is no pre-contextual or a-contextual humanitas. Contextualisation, therefore, is not adjacent or added to humanitas but, rather, contextualisation is very sine qua non-condition of humanitas. The contextualised historical reality of humanitas is never monochrome or simple. Contextualisation is always complex, plurichrome, and multiple, intersecting in and thereby producing a vast array of human differences. Humanitas is thus not only contextual but also diverse; and just as contextualisation is not adjacent or added to *humanitas* but *sine qua non* condition for it, so is diversity a *sine qua non* condition of *humanitas.* Contextual diversity or diverse contextualisation: without these, there has never been and there can never be humanitas (Espin 2007:53).

The implication of Espin's definition of context is that, our uniqueness in terms of colour, culture and gender should not be given an overarching value.

> "We cannot define ourselves or claim an identity as humans in generic term because only specifically and diverse contextualised human exist…Because there is no generic human person, can there be a discipline that asks about human persons generically and attempts to reply also generically? Of course, not… "(Espin 2007: 54 & 55).

The former Archbishop of Canterbury Williams echoes Espin's idea when he says, "we can never say, for example, that such and such a person has the full set of required characteristics for being a human person and therefore deserves our respect, and that such and such another individual does not deserve our respect" (Williams 2018:32). Such unwarranted distinctions between human beings is what brought a lot of pain and suffering in Apartheid South Africa.

7.5.4. Personal Dignity

For his part, Rowan Williams (2018: 35) suggests that "as human beings in a relationship we sense that our environment is created by a relation with other persons, we create an environment for them, and in that exchange – that mutuality – we discover what 'person' means". According to Williams even though personal dignity is inherent and God-given, we as human beings have the power to ascribe or deny the personal dignity of one another.

7.5.5. Interconnectedness

According to Antjie Krog interconnectedness-towards-wholeness is "to grow into one's fullest self, one's fullest potential personhood, the deed of asking for forgiveness and forgiveness itself needs to lead to recovery, reconciliation and eventually fuller personhood" (in Doxtader & du Toit 2010:141). 'Fuller personhood' according to Krog constitutes essentiality which is a result of forgiveness and reconciliation. She illustrates this by recalling a particular TRC session:

> As the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) testimonies and texts will show, within the worldview of interconnectedness- towards- wholeness, to grow into one's

> fullest self. The most coherent and deeply understood sense of interconnectedness related to forgiveness that I know was articulated by one of the Gugulethu Seven mothers, Cynthia Ngewu, who testified during the second week of the TRC hearings on human rights violation. After a meeting in which the killer of her son asked forgiveness, Mrs Ngewu formulated her understanding of reconciliation as follows: 'This thing called reconciliation…if I am understanding it correctly…If it means this perpetrator, this man who killed Christopher Piet, if it means he becomes human again, this man, so that I, so that all of us, get our humanity back…then I agree, then I support it all". An astonishing formulation. Her words mean, first, that she understood that the killer of her child could, and did, kill because he had…lost his humanity; he was no longer human. Second, she understood that forgiving him would open up the possibility for him to regain his humanity, to change profoundly. Third, she understood also that the loss of her son affected her humanity; she had now affected humanity. Fourth and most importantly, she understood that if indeed the perpetrator felt driven by her forgiveness to regain his humanity, then it would open up for her the possibility to become fully human again (in Doxtader & du Toit 2010:141 & 142).

7.6. Vlok and Reconciliation: A Critical Assessment

In several interviews Vlok told me that his journey towards reconciliation begun in his own heart as he confessed his sins and begged God for forgiveness. Thus, he started his journey to be '*motho*' or '*humanitas*' or '*umuntu*'.

Having been with the man and having watched him do community service, the centrality of Christ Jesus in Vlok's life cannot be exaggerated. I have witnessed the transformed Vlok. He attributes his journey of reconciliation to his reconciliation with Jesus Christ. I have chosen to believe rather than disbelieve him. Vlok does not believe in a completely internalized and pietistic notion of reconciliation. He sees his social activities as part of reconciliation. In this regard it may be helpful to speak of social reconciliation, just like Robert Schreiter (1998:4) spoke of a spiritual and a social face of reconciliation. The social face,

> …has to do with providing structures and processes whereby a fractured society can be reconstructed as truthful and just. It has to do with coming to terms with the past, punishing wrongdoers, and

> providing some measure of reparation to victims. It must create a secure space and an atmosphere of trust that makes civil society possible (Schreiter).

Schreiter further argues that the spiritual face of reconciliation "has to do with rebuilding shattered lives" because according to him "the state can set up commissions to examine the wrongdoing of the past, but it cannot legislate the healing of memories. The state can offer amnesty or mete out punishment to wrongdoers, but it cannot guarantee forgiveness." (Schreiter 1998:4).

In the life of Vlok we find both dimensions of reconciliation. Once he recognized how much harm he had done in the name of Apartheid, and how alienated he was fro fellow human beings, he sought to be reconciled to God and to fellow humans. But he also knew that inner reconciliation was incomplete if it was not accompanied by social reconciliation, because

> social reconciliation sets up conditions that make reconciliation more likely, but those conditions cannot of themselves affect it. That is why secular NGOs (non-governmental organisations) frequently turn to their religious counterparts and ask for help with this necessary spiritual dimension…In all of this reconciliation seems to be ever more elusive. The fragmentary realisation of any reconciliation reminds Christians that reconciliation is ultimately the work of God and the gift of God. That does not mean that people striving for reconciliation should give up their efforts and sit idly by…What becomes key for Christians involved in reconciliation-either as victims or as ministers of the reconciliation – is to understand how they interact with the work of God and how they become instruments of God's work in all of this… (Schreiter 1998: 4 & 15).

For Schreiter, these two 'faces' of reconciliations are - like two sides of the same coin and both were embodied in the changed life of Vlok not as a gimmick but as part and parcel of his own life, because for him, "reconciliation is more a spirituality than a strategy" (Schreiter 1998:16). In an interview with Frank Chikane, he told me that, although he was initially taken aback by Vlok's request to wash feet, he soon realized that the man was earnest.

> Take away the colour and they are human beings, like any other human being. It is just that we get indoctrinated one way or another, and I think his (Vlok) conscience hit him, his conscience could not allow him to stay without doing it. I mean he had no need to do this (washing of his feet)…it is not like it went public without his knowledge…he did not want it to be public because it was about himself and his soul, it was not to tell people, that is why I had to ask him, I said the media has picked up this thing and I cannot deny it happened. That's when he said, "I did not mean to make it public… He wasn't campaigning". (Appendix 2).

Father Lapsley lost his arm after receiving a parcel-bomb which was sent to him by the Apartheid state while he was exiled in Mozambique. He too was sceptical about Vlok initially. But Vlok won him over:

> I have no doubt in his genuineness and his commitment to discipleship. I still worry about the default position of washing feet. Not too much theologically, but it becomes his chosen ritual; is this always the appropriate response and that concerns me. But we are all genuine in the ways that we are genuine, and I would want to say that he is genuine in the way that he is genuine, I do not think he is fake or pretending. I think he is sincere. I do not know how much the theology he was brought up with prepared him for a journey, but maybe that is true of all of us, that our theology is not necessarily adequate. It is like "Ok, I am sorry" but like you said, "what is the fruit of repentance". (Appendix 5).

It is remarkable that someone who was directly and visibly victimised by the regime which Vlok was part of to read sincerity in Vlok's repentance.

7.7. Conclusion

In this chapter I have first summarized the main arguments in each chapter of the thesis. I then revisited my initial research questions before proceeding to demonstrate how, in the Adriaan Vlok's journey of reconciliation, I have been able to respond meaningfully and with originality to the research questions. On the basis of the evidence of the reconciled life of Adriaan Vlok,

the philosophies of post-modernism, post-foundationalism and black consciousness, I have also been able to make several recommendations regarding the promotion of reconciliation in South Africa. Like Tutu and Vlok and many before them, I am convinced that, though imperfect as all human endeavours must be, South Africa has the potential to make a unique and special contribution to the theology of reconciliation in the world. This is not because our past of division racism and violence. Many countries have such a history. However, it is the manner in which we have attempted to resolve our differences. Above all, it is the example of such persons as Lapsley, Chikane, Tutu, Gobodo-Madikizela and Vlok, that makes me realize that our country is an experiment in reconciliation – one that the world must sit up and take notice of. There was something prophetic in what Biko said about the potential of this country, more than forty years ago:

> We believe in the long run the special contribution to the world by Africa will be in the field of human relationships. The great powers of the world have done wonders in giving the world an industrial and military look, but the great gift still has to come from Africa – giving the world a more human face (1978:51).

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APPENDICES

INTRODUCTION

CO-RESEARCHERS

This section will focus on the key people themselves, beginning with the prime focus **Adriaan Vlok** himself, the apartheid regime former Minister of Law and Oder – **(Appendix 1)**.

Leon Wessels (Appendix 2), will naturally follow as he was not only Vlok's colleague but a friend.

Saraphina 'Fina' Zwane (Appendix 3), she is very critical for this study as she was very close to the Vlok's family as a domestic worker – serving them for 52 yrs. She sadly passed on early this year 2020.

The involvement of **Frank Chikane (Appendix 4)** who was the General Secretary of South African Council of Churches (SACC) and pastor of the Apostolic Faith Mission (AFM) - thus an anti-apartheid cleric and activist, made this research valuable in witnessing Vlok's wrestling with his conscience during the demise of apartheid.

Father Michael Lapsley, **(Appendix 5)** is an anti-apartheid Anglican Priest and heads an NGO Institute for Healing Memories, which focused mainly the Apartheid's victims – he's based in Cape Town. He had to confront Vlok few times during apartheid's and even after the demise of the apartheid regime. Another famous and gallant Christian and leader-activist Rev.

Paul Verryn (Appendix 6). It must be mentioned that Verryn (a Methodist white priest) is a white lad who still lives in Soweto for more than thirty years. Verryn interfaced with Vlok's horrendous regime, especially during the 1980s.

I could not refuse the availability of Vlok's children when I discovered that **Nico and Annemarie (Appendix 7),** were in town especially Nico, who currently resides in Australia. They all are, obviously older thus already married. And, Annemarie with her husband is staying with her father (Vlok) to look after him and mainly his health. Vlok is frail and is in his mid-eighties.

Marta Steyers (Appendix 8) and her family, literally are staying at Vlok's place in one flat at the back of the house. Vlok helped her and her family – thus basically they are materially depending on Vlok for their livelihood.

And, finally **Dali Mpofu (Appendix 9)**, the former ANC leader who left his political party to join the newly formed Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF). He's also a former chairperson of EFF. In his young-adult years, during apartheid days, he directly and indirectly interfaced with Vlok as a young advocate and again, later during the transitional years from apartheid-era to democratic era.

The following are the stories of the above individuals including Vlok who had been interviewed thus inevitably become legally and ethically a co-researcher for this thesis. Therefore within the methodology that this study embraces – Müller's (2004:300) Seven Movements which is essentially post-foundationalist approach, these co-researcher narratives will harmonise with the above-mentioned methodology and automatically fall on the second movement. This section will merely and in detail describe these co-researcher experiences aimed to justly listen as for now. I began by listening to the stories of co-researchers in unstructured interviews.

All that is recorded here is directly from the co-researchers without any interpretation from me. Most of the interviews took place in Gauteng province except two that took place in Northwest and Western Cape. Sarafina Ntombane Zwane lived in Klipgaat, Northwest province (before she died) where I had visited twice to collect information. Michael Lapsley is based in Cape Town, Western Cape province.

APPENDIX 1.

ADRIAAN VLOK

NTLHOLA: I just want to thank you, Oom Vlok (as I fondly call him). How are you this morning?

VLOK:

I'm fine, thank you very much, I slept well and I want to thank you for what you are trying to do, I really regard it as a great honour although I still think that I am not worthy but thank you very much, I really appreciate it.

NTLHOLA: Can we go straight to your upbringing? You came from a large family; how many members were there in your family?

VLOK:

I was born the eldest son of five sons; Christian parents and I grew up in a Christian home.

NTLHOLA: What year were you born?

VLOK:

I was born on the 11th December 1937, which makes me 80 years old now, which is Twenty-Nine Thousand Two Hundred and Twenty-Nine days. Three of my brothers died to there are only two of us left. I have three children.

NTLHOLA: So, what part of South Africa were, you born in?

VLOK:

I was born in Sutherland, the coldest part of South Africa. It's in the North/Western part of the Cape in the Karoo. It's a small town with wonderful people.

NTLHOLA: Tell me about your upbringing, the memories that you still have?

VLOK:

I was a very young age when we left Sutherland. My father bought a little plot at Keimoes on the Orange River below Upington. He was a farmer and farmed vegetables, grapes and so on. I grew up there, went to school there, Keimoes High School and from there I went to work in the Department of Justice.

NTLHOLA: Was your family political?

VLOK:
No, not at all. My late father belonged to the old United Party, which for that time was liberal in the context of Afrikaner politics, it was the opposing party to the National Party.

NTLHOLA: Did you meet some of the officials at that time?

VLOK: No –not really. If I can remember correctly, I attended one political meeting with my father. I was not interested in politics and neither was my father.

NTLHOLA: Was your family spiritual?

VLOK:
My father and mother were Christians, practising Christians, going to church every Sunday and my mother was a teacher in Sunday school for children. In the area where we stayed, it was an island in the lower Orange River. There were about 30 families on that island, and amongst us, there were living people of colour. Mainly coloureds – there were not many blacks in that area. My mother was leading prayer meetings every Wednesday for the coloured women, so she had that relationship. I can say they were really practising Christians.

NTLHOLA: Did you have interaction with the coloured people?
VLOK:
Yes, they were my playmates in the Orange River, and there were no problems, not at all. My family, my mother and father took in a coloured son who was an orphan, a boy whose name was Willem. When we got our meals, he ate the same food as us, but he never ate at the table. He was older than me but at the time was still a small boy and we played together, we laughed together, and we fought together. He was with the family for many years.
NTLHOLA: So, all the time he was with you he never ate at the table with you! Why? Did you not see anything wrong with it?
VLOK:

That's how it was at the time and we did not see anything wrong with it – that was how it always was. He did not have a room in the house, he had a room outside where he stayed separately, but otherwise, we were friends.

NTLHOLA: Did he go to church with you?
VLOK:
No, he did not as there was a separate church, but he frequently did not attend. He also could not get there.
NTLHOLA: What about school? Did he go to his own school?

VLOK: No, he did not go to school. He remained at home. He worked in the kitchen and he worked on the plot. That was how we grew up.

NTLHOLA: When you left home you went to University?

VLOK: No, I went to work, as my father could not afford to pay University fees. I intended to study to be a lawyer because I liked the law, but my father couldn't afford it.

NTLHOLA: Who inspired you? What made you want to become a lawyer?

VLOK: No one really, I just loved to argue, to talk and to reason with people. When I started work, I joined the Department of Justice in Keimus, I was about 18, a little place 30 km from Upington. They transferred me to the Magistrate's office in Upington and there I started from scratch. I did the registering of births, marriages and deaths and I worked in the revenue office.

NTLHOLA: How was it?

VLOK: It was just a normal job – you start from scratch and do filing and clerical work.

NTLHOLA: Were there only white people working there?

VLOK: Mainly white people, there were coloured people cleaning the offices, but there were no black people.

NTLHOLA: How was your interaction with the coloured people?

VLOK: To me it was normal, they were my friends, and we did "*kattekwaad*" naughty things that boys would do – we did together.

NTLHOLA: So, did you go up the ranks in the department?

VLOK: I was working in the department doing all work that needed to be done, prosecutions, revenue office etc. Then I was still not involved in politics. Then we had a referendum when we decided to leave the Commonwealth. My father was against the idea, he said we should stay in the Commonwealth, but the vote was to leave the Commonwealth and become a Republic. I was too young to understand what was going on. Then I was transferred to Pretoria to the Department's head office. I was in my twenties. There I did one of the most ordinary jobs. I was the clerk in the office that had to note the applications for leave of people. It was a system where you wrote it down on cards – there were no computers and no Internet! While I was there, I was also working as a clerk who was looking at the merit assessment of people in the department. Organising people to go out and visit the offices, talk to the people, see how they are working and see if they can be graded.

NTLHOLA: So, were you married at that time?
VLOK: No, I met my wife while I was working at the Magistrate's office

NTLHOLA: Tell me about how you met her?

VLOK: She was working in the office of a firm of attorneys, and I was working in the office of the clerk of the court. It was her duty as a typist/secretary for the attorney and she had to bring documents to the Magistrate's office, and that is how we met. She was staying in a boarding house called "Die Koekblik" – The Cake Tin. There were only women staying there. We were allowed to visit but we were not allowed to go to the rooms of the ladies. There was a room and you had to sit there and talk, and you could go to flick and so on. There we met and were married after a couple of years, then as I say, I was transferred to the head office. We stayed in Pretoria and it was during that time that Dr Verwoerd was murdered.

NTLHOLA: Before you go into that, who was he?

VLOK: Dr Verwoerd was the Prime minister and he was murdered in the Parliament by Tsafendas.

NTLHOLA: He was also the head of the National Party?

VLOK: When the National Party came into power, I was not interested at all – I was apolitical.

NTLHOLA: Did you meet Dr. Verwoerd?

VLOK: No, I never met him. Years later I met a family member of his – his wife's sister, Annetjie. She was working in Mr Vorster's office, but that was years later.

NTLHOLA: So, you came in at the time he was assassinated?

VLOK: When he was assassinated, Mr Vorster who was the Minister of Justice, and I was working in his department – he was elected Prime minister.

NTLHOLA: Sorry to interrupt, but at the time, according to you why was he assassinated?

VLOK: Well, many years later, I met Tsafendas who was the guy who murdered him. He was in prison at the time I visited him with some other people. Tsafendas was a messenger working in Parliament.

NTLHOLA: Was he a black guy?

VLOK: No, he was a coloured guy – not a black guy, and the court decided that he was not compos mentis, he had a mental problem and he was sent away to be detained forever.

NTLHOLA: So, the murder was not politically motivated?

VLOK: No, I don't think so. They tried to find if there was any political motive behind it, but they could not.

NTLHOLA: So, let's go straight on – Vorster then became the Prime Minister?
VLOK:
Yes, he became the Prime Minister. He said that the people who worked for Dr Verwoerd, the staff in the Prime minister's office – one resigned and the other one was bitter so he couldn't carry on, so Mr Vorster brought along his own staff. He brought his Private Secretary and then they started looking for an assistant Private Secretary in his department and they came to me.

NTLHOLA: Why you?

VLOK:

I don't know – I think it was the hand of the Lord at that stage.

NTLHOLA: So, you were a Christian at that time?

VLOK: You know all my life I attended church and I believed I was living the life of a Christian, but I was not really as I didn't know Jesus.

NTLHOLA: We'll come to that. Then they asked you to come – but you were not politically active.

VLOK:
The Private Secretary interviewed so on, and me and asked if I was interested in joining the office of the Prime Minister. Of course! That would be an honour, I would be going to Parliament and have six months in Cape Town and six months in Pretoria and working in that office – that was wonderful.

NTLHOLA: So, you got a big salary?
VLOK:
No, the salary was not bigger – you stayed on your same salary. It was not a promotion, but it was a change of focus and workplace, and you were given allowances for travelling between Cape Town and Pretoria, we could fly and up to that point I had never had the opportunity to fly. When I was working as a clerk of the court, we had a temporary court at a place called Witdraai, which is a small place deep in the Kalahari, and once a month we had a court session

there. We would use a car to get there – it was about 250km, but then they got permission from the department to fly – that was the first time I had entered a plane. Now, I am in head office and they want me to become the assistant Private Secretary to Mr Vorster, so I would fly down to Cape Town and all this, it was a wonderful opportunity.

NTLHOLA: How was he, Mr. Vorster?

VLOK:
Mr Vorster was a wonderful person. He was an introvert, not outgoing but he was a wonderful person and a very intelligent man, one of the most intelligent people that I have ever come across, he was a fantastic speaker, communicator. On many occasions, I went with him in the car when he was going to a political meeting, and very seldom we had to prepare speeches for him. I saw frequently that when we got into the car in Pretoria, travelling for two or three hours to a place by car, then he started preparing his speech. He smoked a cigarette; don't know if it's still on the market, "Rembrandt van Rijn", they came in packets of 20 and 50 cigarettes. Tape 9658 When we got into the car and started driving, he would start writing down on the back of the cigarette box. Just making a few notes, then he would be able to speak for an hour or hour and a half from the few notes on the back of the cigarette box. As I said, he was an introvert, thinking and doing his own thing. He loved the Kruger National Park. He would go there on his leave even though he had a place in the Eastern Cape, where he had a home at the beach. He stayed there frequently. He would to the Kruger Park and sit for hours at a water hole watching the animals. Then I started working for him as an assistant Private Secretary.

NTLHOLA: Tell me about one of the interesting things that happened.

VLOK:
Yes, there were a few things that happened that I could remember. There was the right-wing grouping that was coming together, and there was a minister in the cabinet, Dr Albert Hertzog. He decided to fire Dr Hertzog, because of things that he said, and he was not with the National Party Policy any longer. He was not comfortable with that. Mr Vorster decided to fire him, and I remember he had his legal advisers in and they drew up a letter ending his term in the cabinet, and Mr Vorster said to the Private Secretary "This letter must be delivered by hand to the minister", and they asked me to do that.

NTLHOLA: How did you feel?

VLOK: Well, it was exciting! Here I am walking with a letter to fire a minister, walking to the Union Building to fire that minister in Pretoria and delivering the letter to his office, they had to sign for it.

NTLHOLA: Like those guys who were sent by the current Pres. Cyril Ramaphosa to fire ministers.

VLOK:
Exactly, then I thought about that again, I was walking there delivering a letter.

NTLHOLA: So how was it for you, were you scared?

VLOK:
I was excited, I was a young man and it was part of history. Nowadays you will not read anything about that because it's not relevant now it's in the past.

NTLHOLA: So how was it when you got there?

VLOK: Well the atmosphere was not good, the staff knew there were problems, and something was coming, and here was someone from the Prime Minister's office bringing a letter. I delivered it, they signed for it and I left quickly. I delivered the message and he was fired from the government. It was uproar but that is now part of history. One thing I do remember, Mr Vorster loved his children very much, his family. We were attending meetings in the Eastern Transvaal and I was going with him to make the arrangements and so on, and his children were at the Afrikaans Seuns Hoerskool and they had a concert and he wanted to attend, and he pushed us to get back to Pretoria before the end of the evening because he wanted to attend that concert. We entered the school hall while they were busy and he didn't mind where he sat, he just said, "Let's sit here so we can watch the children" so he loved his children very much.

NTLHOLA: It's funny, but as a black person thinking of all these leaders of the Nationalist Party, and to hear you talking like this, what was his relationship to black people?

VLOK:
Not bad, not bad at all. I remember that there was a black police sergeant working as a messenger in his office in the Union Buildings, his name was Alfred Nkosi, he was part of the staff.

NTLHOLA: Do you remember any discriminatory attitudes from him?

VLOK:
No, not from Mr Vorster. Alfred was a policeman and Mr Vorster loved the police; he was very security inclined. He was the master of bringing in security legislation, 21 days without trial etc. Because of the Communists at that time, he was very heavily anti-Communist at that time, he said we must fight the Communists tooth and nail.

NTLHOLA: During that time, it was the era of the Eastern bloc, the USSR, cold war as they used to call it.

VLOK:
Yes, but in Africa, it was not a cold war, it was hot. They were rolling across the continent taking over countries – not by soldiers – but by people working on their behalf and they were slowly going down to the South of Africa, and that is where we were. Rhodesia was in their way, Mozambique was in their way, Angola, and so they were coming and coming closer.

NTLHOLA: Do you think that is why there was an anti-Communist onslaught?

VLOK:
It was a Communist onslaught and we tried to avoid it by every possible means. Fighting, locking up people without trial because we did not have the evidence to take them to court because it was not always possible to get the evidence.

NTLHOLA: In your eyes, and from your perspective, it was a Communist onslaught and the response was fear and a kind of phobia or paranoia?

VLOK: Well looking at the rest of the world where the Communists took over it was chaos. They killed the people in charge, and they were totally anti-Christian. Their economic policies were socialism and communism, and we were totally against that, so I supported the government fully in this.

NTLHOLA: But did you ever think that the Western countries, which were your allies, were doing even worse because they came with colonisation.

VLOK:
During that time colonialism was on its way out. England, Portugal and Belgium, they were leaving Africa, it was on the way out.

NTLHOLA: My question is, as a Christian, these countries came in the name of Christianity, yet at the same time they impoverished and exploited people, they defaced human beings and took their dignity, so the same passion with which you fought communism, why was it not directed at against that?

VLOK:
I didn't really see it like that, but if you had to compare colonialism with communism, communism was worse because it was brutal – it took over and killed and destroyed everything, while there is something to say for colonialism, they also killed but they also built – communism did not build, they only destroyed.

NTLHOLA: That's debatable, but let's move on.
When did you become aware of apartheid ideology?

VLOK:
When I went to the office of Mr Vorster – I was listening to him, and sitting in Parliament listening to the debates, then I became involved and more aware of what was going on, and I believed that apartheid was the best system for South Africa. The economic system was anti-communistic and pro-capitalism.

NTLHOLA: Despite its horrendous practices of exploitation?

VLOK:
Yes, there were horrendous practices, but it was better than communism. If I have a choice, I will always pick capitalism before communism.

NTLHOLA: But you had a good relationship with coloured folks?

VLOK: Yes!

NTLHOLA: But now you're in Parliament listening to the debates, and your friend Willem at home with whom you had a good relationship, now these people are bringing policies that were not friendly to Willem… your friend, what happened then, did you not feel conflicted?

VLOK:
Yes, there was conflict within me, but I answered with the argument of the National Party – "Separate but Equal". We were bluffing ourselves that it was equal, but it was not equal, you are right, it was not equal, but it didn't really bother me really at the time, it only came later.

NTLHOLA: Would you say that that's the same thing with many Afrikaners and other white people at that time?

VLOK:
There are still some Afrikaner people who are bluffing themselves, even now they still say it was equal. It was not equal. There was a big difference. When we had money to spend, and that came to me when we were sitting in the cabinet, when we had to spend money, we realised that there was not enough for everybody.

NTLHOLA: Did you meet DF Malan?

VLOK:
No, he was before my time.

NTLHOLA: He became the Prime Minister then the year before you were born.

VLOK:

The National Party came into power in 1948 and he became the Prime Minister after that, he was the first one. When I came to Parliament there were all white people, there were no coloured people, and we believed in equal opportunities, but separate. It was not working practically, but we believed we were moving in that direction, but I still regarded myself better than coloured people and black people. I thought, "I am white" that was my upbringing. It was wrong – today I see it was wrong.

NTLHOLA: Before we talk about today, what were the things; was it because you were in the Parliament, all of you were white and that's why you ended up thinking like that?

VLOK:
No, it was part of my upbringing, it was ingrained. In family, school, my friends, everywhere. You see people, you were friends, but you were not the same, I regarded myself as better.

NTLHOLA: What about the church? Did they contribute to that belief?

VLOK:
Well, there were separate churches, they went to their churches and we went to ours. That interrelationship was not there. I was doing my own thing living my life and my culture – although, I still think that the coloured people, their culture is very close to us.

NTLHOLA: Mr Nkosi, were you close to him?

VLOK:
Anton Nkosi? – Yes, we were friends

NTLHOLA: But you still regarded him as inferior?

VLOK:
Yes, I thought he was not on the same level as I was. He was different, he had another culture. Anton was a wonderful person, I loved him very much, but he was the messenger and I was the secretary. Then Mr Vorster got sick; he had problems with his lungs. He was a chain smoker, smoking heavily and he became sick. It was also during that time that there were

political upheavals because the right wing was getting stronger and stronger, and that led to the firing of Dr Herzog, as I told you, and then there was the scandal of the Information department, Dr Mulder and so on.

NTLHOLA: Let's get back to the newspaper – the Citizen…Did you know about that, the inside info?

VLOK:
No, no, not at all. We were just working in the office. But that was also political upheaval and Mr Vorster then said he didn't know what was happening. The Minister of Information was involved, the Head of the Department Eschel Rhoodie was involved, and eventually, there were investigations by judges and at that stage, Mr P W Botha took over, and he became the Prime minister.

NTLHOLA: Before we go to him, in your understanding, how was the mood politically in the whole country, when Mr Vorster was still Prime minister?

VLOK: We were following him, the white people were following him, and he had huge majorities in elections.

NTLHOLA: Even the English people?
VLOK:
Yes, most of them were following him because the whole world was against us, and we believed that our policy was the right thing for South Africa, the whole world was telling Mr Vorster that he must change, and he said, "what will happen to us? If we change, we will become like the rest of Africa, being taken over by the Communists" Our way of life, our culture, economics our Christianity, all will be destroyed, and we cannot do that. And that turned out to be not true; here we are not being taken over like the rest of Africa. I still believe that what helped at that time was important, as time went by, there were more and more people coming over to see that they should not destroy South Africa. You know, if we had allowed the Communists; and I firmly believe that if we had started the changes much earlier, the Communists would have been strong enough. You know when Russia was experiencing problems, I was in the cabinet and I remember Pik Botha saying, "this is our window of opportunity". Communism was falling apart; the Berlin wall was falling and communism in

the world was crumbling. If they were in their heyday, they would have destroyed South Africa, I firmly believe that.

NTLHOLA: What did he mean when he said, "this is our window of opportunity"?

VLOK: This was now our opportunity to get rid of apartheid.

NTLHOLA: So, you guys believed that it was wrong?
VLOK:
Slowly. It didn't happen overnight, but it was growing, slowly, slowly people were seeing that what we were doing was wrong and we must change that, and that was our opportunity. Pik Botha, of course, had exposure because he travelled overseas, and he could see it from the outside. Yes, he saw it better than us.

NTLHOLA: But what about you guys on the outside? What led you to the conclusion that this thing must come to an end?
VLOK:
Well you know, discussions in cabinet talking to colleagues like Dawie De Villiers and Pik Botha, people travelling overseas, and they were pointing out to us that what we were doing was wrong, and slowly but surely we came to the conclusion that what we were doing was really wrong and could not continue. What were you at that time? I was in the cabinet; I was the Minister of Police. Magnus Malan and I, we were saying to the cabinet, we cannot win this war, we cannot save South Africa through security action alone.

NTLHOLA: Let's pause there and go back. Tell me how you came to be Minister of Police.

VLOK: While Mr Vorster was still there, I resigned to go into business.

NTLHOLA: Why?

VLOK: Well because at that stage I was busy getting interested in politics, and at that stage, it was not possible for me as a Civil Servant to enter politics, so I had to resign first.

NTLHOLA: What triggered this desire?

VLOK:
Well, sitting there in Parliament listening to the arguments. I was firmly in the National Party, and I saw in the area where I live in Pretoria, that the guy who was the Member of Parliament there was going out. His name was Sarel Reinecker, a National Party member, and he was going to retire. He spoke to me and said "you must be my successor" but I had to resign first. So, I did resign to go into business.

NTLHOLA: For how long and what kind of business?

VLOK:
I was the messenger of the court – delivering court document and this sort of thing. It's hard work, a difficult job…

NTLHOLA: Delivering letters was hard?

VLOK: No, but sometimes you have to arrest people and attach their property and sell it at auctions.

NTLHOLA: What do they call it today?

VLOK: Sherriff of the court. I was in that business for a few years and then the elections were coming up in 1974 and in1973, I was picked as a candidate for the National Party in Verwoerdburg, and I won that election against the right right-wing, and then I came to Parliament as an MP and I was there doing my ordinary work in the constituency. At the time we had constituencies for Verwoerdburg, which was changed later to Centurion. It was originally Pretoria District, and then it was changed to Verwoerdburg and later on changed to Centurion. So, I was sitting in Parliament, I was legally qualified, so I became a member of the Justice department, I was interested in police matters, so I was on the committee of police… study groups, it later became committees but then it was study groups. So, I became secretary and chairman of some of these groups and normally when there is a promotion to the cabinet being considered by the Prime Minister or the President, they would look at the chairman of the committees. That was when Mr Vorster was retired. He was very sick and in hospital and so on and he retired. Mr P W Botha was then elected as Prime Minister and then I was

appointed Deputy Minister of Defence and that was a wonderful portfolio because at that stage I was working with the "troopies", the soldiers, and the guys who were going to war on the borders. They were seventeen, eighteen, nineteen years old. That was a fantastic job and my wife, and I enjoyed it very much.

NTLHOLA: So how many years were you in that position?

VLOK: For two years. Then Louis LaGrange, the Minister of Police got sick. When he first got sick, I was also appointed Deputy Minister of Police, so I had the two portfolios at the same time, Defence and police.

NTLHOLA: You spoke about the excitement that came with the job. Were you talking about going to visit the troops? What was exciting about it?

VLOK:
I was wonderful to mix with the guys, and I remember so well. This was my late wife and she suffered from depression. It lifted her we were in the camps on the border of Namibia, Angola, and South West Africa. There were 70 to 150 people. When we came there they would welcome us, the Head of the Defence Force and the Dominee read something out of the Bible, then I had to deliver a speech, and when we had time to socialise and to mix, they were not interested in me, they were interested in my wife because she is a mother. They were longing for their mothers! They were just touching her and talking to her. Then she came with the idea. The visits to the border, we did them during the year sometimes, but regularly and usually over the Christmas period, before Christmas we would visit these camps. There were no cell phones and the public phones were not working, so she had the idea to take the names of the guys, (not where they are because that was confidential), but the number of his mother and his father, and contact them and tell them that we have seen your son, so we did this. So, on Christmas morning we had a very early breakfast with the guys, then an early breakfast, then a normal breakfast, then a late breakfast! It was at several different bases and we were flying by helicopter. We talked to the guys and the Dominee read from the Bible, I made a speech and the head of the camp said something, then we were off to the next one where we would have an early lunch, etc..... repeated at teatime. At about 7 pm we were at home, and she had a list of telephone numbers, and the names of the boy, their son and the names of their mothers and fathers. Then we sat down, each with a phone and we phoned them. At first, when they heard

it was Adriaan Vlok they got a fright and thought there was something wrong. "No, we said, there is nothing wrong – we saw your son this morning and he sends his love" they were crying, and my wife was crying, and they wanted to know "is he ok? What did he say?"

NTLHOLA: You are getting emotional?

VLOK:
I am! It was more than 30 years ago but I still get emotional. After all these years, I still get guys who come up to me and say "I saw you on the border, you phoned my mother and father" it still touches me today. The boys were in danger and some of them died. It was also my wife's duty to attend the funerals. It was a wonderful time but also very touching.

NTLHOLA: And then your wife, you said she died?

VLOK:
Yes. For twenty years she was suffering from serious depression, and on the 28th July 1994, she took her own life.

NTLHOLA: I'm so sorry about that. For the sake of time, let's move on. So, then you were promoted?

VLOK: Well Louis LaGrange was getting sick more and more, and he decided to retire and was then appointed as Speaker of Parliament and Mr P W Botha said to me "Would you be interested in becoming Minister of Police" and I said yes, it was a challenge and a great responsibility.

NTLHOLA: What year was that?

VLOK:
It was in 1987, end of 1986, 1987, 1988 and 1989 I was the Minister of Police, but that was the time of the violent unrest in South Africa.

NTLHOLA: Tell me about that. It was at that time I began to hear about this Minister Vlok. I was a little boy.

VLOK:
It was a very difficult period in our history because the unrest was not subsiding, it was getting worse and worse all the time.

NTLHOLA: You were responsible for making sure that you quelled this.

VLOK: I got instructions from Mr P W Botha that we must do everything possible to stop the violence. We considered many things. What can we do? And that was when we realised, and Magnus Malan was with me, he was Minister of Defence. We would argue this in cabinet – it was not possible to get this unrest down with only security actions, we have to do other things. One of the things we stood strongly on is that we must negotiate. Talk to the people, we can't prescribe, talk to the people, the way forward is negotiations, not shooting, but in the meantime…

NTLHOLA: Shoot!

VLOK:
No – we couldn't prosecute all of them, we don't have the capacity, but we don't have the evidence, so detain them! So, we had the law changed so that we could detain for 10, 14 and 21 days.

NTLHOLA: In solitary confinement?

VLOK:
No, just get them off the streets, so if people were going through the townships burning and throwing stones, we would detain them.

NTLHOLA: But you were known as the minister who brought in this state of emergency.

VLOK:
We had to use the emergency regulations; we needed it to detain them in terms of the emergency Regulations.

NTLHOLA: How were you feeling?

VLOK: Well, for me it was a job and it was effective. We measured what was happening in the country. I received on my desk every morning a report on what was happening the night before, and during a period of 5 years there were 80 000 (eighty thousand) incidents. Stoning, burning, burning of houses, hand grenades thrown into houses and so on. The unrest spread to our schools…

NTLHOLA: White schools?

VLOK:
No, not white schools, black schools in the townships and consumer boycotts were the order of the day. There were sanctions from overseas that they were fighting in cabinet – the minister of Finance and the Foreign Affairs minister, Mr Pik Botha and we got these briefings once or twice a week in cabinet and the Security Council. The situation was bad, and if there were a consumer boycott people would come to me in droves and say, "help us, we want to buy food and we are not all we are not allowed to do that. People were being intimidated not to go out and buy food. It was really the worst time that I can remember.

NTLHOLA: For the sake of time, let's talk about one or two issues. Let's talk about the bombing of Khotso House.

VLOK: P W Botha's method of working was that he worked on the basis of "need to know" so all the members in cabinet did not know everything, and he explained it to us that it was better for us not to know everything because then you can't talk about it. One day we had a briefing, inter-alia went about things happening in Khotso House, and the security people had info that there were people in Khotso House, not people from the church. Khotso House was the Head Office of the South African Council of Churches. There were people there supplying the terrorists coming back into the country, they had to live and buy food and so on, they were supplying them with money.

NTLHOLA: Let's say ANC Liberation Movement, PAC and all that, you called them terrorists at that time?

VLOK:

Yes, we called them terrorists. We had informers telling us all this but we could not use the informers in court so we could not prosecute them. P WZ Botha said to us, "so you've heard what was going on there, should we allow this to carry on?" I said, "I think not" and he said, "What are you going to do about that?" His words were "you must go out and see what you can do and make a plan". So, I left and called the Commissioner of Police Johan van der Merwe and we discussed it, and he was also present at that meeting. We must make a plan – he said he would see what he could do, and that was how it started. They went to Khotso House, Eugene De Kok and people from Vlakplaas, they did a recce and decided to make the building, and they decided to make the building unusable.

NTLHOLA: Instructed by whom?

VLOK: It came from the President, I told the commissioner and he gave the message through, that was the chain of command. So, they went there and blew up the building, which was not usable after that, so the Council of Churches had to find other accommodation.

NTLHOLA: You said you didn't own up – why?

VLOK:

But you couldn't! If the state was getting involved in this sort of thing and admitting it, it would be a problem. So, I had to deny everything, and we denied it; we said, "No, it's not us" and we blamed somebody else. There was a lady there, Shirley Gunn. I was not there, but the police came to me with a statement, telling me that she was seen there, wearing a great coat, and it was thick, and the story was that she was carrying mines and that it was the mines that blew up. It was a very thin story it couldn't hold, but we were really quite desperate fighting during that time. The building was unusable, so we succeeded in our aim.

NTLHOLA: She was prosecuted, arrested even though you knew she was not…

VLOK:

No, she was not prosecuted but she was arrested and detained. We could not prosecute her because we had no evidence.

NTLHOLA: So why did you do that, why arrest her when you knew she was not guilty – was it just for media?

VLOK: It was just for media; it was a front – we were lying but we had to carry through with the lies.

NTLHOLA: In solitary confinement? And she was pregnant!

VLOK:
No, it was not solitary confinement, if it was, I was not aware. I think she had the baby at the time

NTLHOLA: But still, she was the mother of a tiny baby!
I want to focus on the atrocities that happened at that time at the height of the intensity of the struggle and the backlash that happened at the time when you were the minister…and let's also talk about Frank Chikane.

VLOK:
It was also during that time. Frank Chikane was a brilliant man a brilliant speaker as the Secretary General of the Council of Churches; he was a pastor, a priest and was in very high standing. General van der Merwe came to me and he said that there was a discussion at a meeting where he was present with security people and others, and there was an instruction that we must disrupt the people who were going overseas and causing trouble for the country. At that stage, as you know we were struggling to get investment from overseas, so if a person like Frank Chikane would address these gatherings, they would listen to him, then businesspeople, and governments would not help us with investment. So, we had to disrupt them to the maximum, and if you are not successful, then you can consider (and these were the words) – you can, consider taking them out, and from that, I understand "you can kill them". On the list they gave me was the name "Frank Chikane", it came from somewhere, we didn't know where and we did not ask. Let us start with it and disrupt these people. I said, "OK sir, I will get it together and put some people on to it". He was not specific because we didn't know what to do, but there were certain things that we did. If the security police knew of someone going overseas to address a gathering of investors, we would cancel his place on the flight, then when he would be late for the conference. We would frustrate them and make them

less successful. We were grasping at straws while at the same time negotiating and talking to people. Then, all of a sudden there was news that there was an attempt on the life of Frank Chikane. I asked who was responsible? I heard about it on the news. The info I got back was that it happened in Namibia, it was outside our jurisdiction and we were only allowed to work inside the country, so it must have been somebody else. We didn't know everything that was going on in the security community. It was only later that I realised that it was the police who were responsible. By the Grace of God, he survived.

NTLHOLA: Now you were serving under the new President FW De Klerk. So, what were you doing there, was it the same position?

VLOK:
I started in the same position but then there were a lot of upheavals, mainly hostels in Gauteng were attacked by groups of people, and Mr Mandela and others from the ANC went to FW, because negotiations were on the verge of starting, and they complained about Magnus Malan and myself, they said we were hard-liners and were not in favour of negotiations, so he decided to move us. Either fire Magnus and me or move us to other departments. I was then moved to the Dept. of Correctional Services, as well as – you know we had Departments and Ministries of Own Affairs which was on the road to developing the different races. We had Own Affairs for whites, for coloureds and for blacks, we had cabinets for them, and we had ministers for them. In the negotiations, it was agreed that the government would get rid of these and I was part of the winding up.

NTLHOLA: So, it was your responsibility to close all of them?

VLOK: Well no, not all of them but most of them.

NTLHOLA: Is it true that you were, at least your department, or you as the Head of the Department of Police at that time that you were working in cahoots with Inkatha?

VLOK: No, we were not working in cahoots with them, but we were in favour of them.

NTLHOLA: Why?

VLOK:
Because they were not causing trouble for us, they were not fighting us, they were fighting the ANC, we helped them and as far as I can remember we supplied them with money.

NTLHOLA: But it was denied!
VLOK: Well we had to deny it, but there was never, as far as I know, an agreement to supply them with weapons. I learned later on that some of the police had supplied them with guns, it was never approved or agreed to by me, or as far as I know, by the government.

NTLHOLA: But de Kock who was one of the soldiers on the ground said that you gave him a medal.

VLOK:
That was not for supplying them with weapons, it was for work he had done, he did good work in some instances…

NTLHOLA: By killing people?

VLOK:
You know by giving a medal…well the document that landed in front of the minister, did not indicate that it was for killing people, it was for doing a good job.

NTLHOLA: What kind of a good job?

VLOK:
Well, it was not specified, and nobody was going to tell me that, because it was also classified, but it was for doing the work in the department and it may have been including eliminating the enemy, but it was never spelt out.

NTLHOLA: Then let's talk about going to the TRC. It is written by a lot of columnists, authors, journalists that you were the only minister who went to the TRC to own up…you were the only one who went there. Why? Why did you do that?

VLOK:
It was because I believed that if you have done something then you must take responsibility for that and it was not easy to do that.

NTLHOLA: It was a betrayal to your own people?

VLOK:
No, it was not a betrayal to them. I still think it was a way of freeing my people and myself. We have made a mistake, admit it, take responsibility and then face the consequences, and that's what I did.

NTLHOLA: And what was the response of your seniors?

VLOK:
PW Botha didn't like it and he said "I wouldn't do that; I would not go to the TRC. We were doing our jobs so why would you admit that you are doing wrong? You have admitted that you have committed a crime and for that crime, you could be prosecuted, and I am not prepared to do that" and I respect him for that, and he respected me for what I did.

NTLHOLA: Did he say he would support you?
VLOK:
I went down and we had a friendly discussion, it was not aggressive. I asked if he remembered that he had given me that instruction about Khotso House, and he said he could not remember it, but if you say so then it is you that is saying that. He will deny it, if they ask him he will say that he can't remember, and that was that. But it was my responsibility, so I said that I am going to apply for amnesty but I was not certain what to do because many people who I spoke to, and the majority of them said "NO – don't apply for amnesty" the reason was they said that if you apply for amnesty you must admit that you have committed a crime, a criminal deed, and the reasoning was "What about your good name, you have a good name in South Africa as Minister of Police, now you are doing to destroy that". I thought a lot about that because the Bible also said "A good name is worth more than gold"

NTLHOLA: Did you really believe that you had a good name in South Africa?

VLOK:

Yes, amongst the white people, but not amongst the black people, but that was not important to me, at that stage, it was not important. Then someone told me to go and read Matthew5: 23-24

"When you bring your gift to the altar and there you realise that somebody has something against you, leave your gift. Go and be reconciled and make peace with your brother and then come back and bring your gift"

I realised that there are many people that have something against me and that going to the TRC and the Amnesty committees was the first step in going and being reconciled because before the Amnesty Committee you have to tell all and be honest about what you have done, so I did it, a full disclosure. I did it, and I received amnesty.

NTLHOLA: How was it when you were there?

VLOK:

It was bad! It was like sitting in the limelight, with the cameras, the TV cameras, the media and the sharp lights, and it was hot. People were outside screaming and cursing and toy toying and saying, "lock him up", luckily, they didn't throw anything at me.

NTLHOLA: Where were you, friends? Did no one support you?

VLOK:

No, no one supported me. When I had to admit that I know about the attempt on the life of Mr Frank Chikane and we were sitting in court, me with five policemen. There was only one ex-colleague there, that was Johan Wessels, and he was sitting there and supporting me. The other guys were not there because they were ashamed of me and I can understand it, and afterwards, I realised that it is only Jesus that is not ashamed of me, He is with me, and if I admit and obey Him, then He is with me.

NTLHOLA: I just want to know, how did you end up facing people like Frank Chikane, because he was one of the people that you said you have wronged, and you ended up washing his feet.

VLOK: I realised that I have to go to Frank and ask him for forgiveness, and I prayed about this, and the Lord led me to realise that I must do something more. It's easy to say, "will you please forgive me", that is the easy part, but then how do I prove that I'm really sorry. At that stage I was realising that I must love a person, to be able to go and do that. …I also read John 13 the story, which is being told, is about Jesus washing the feet of his disciples. When I read it, I saw that He did not because He was prepared to serve them, by washing their feet, to show that He was not above them, but He is prepared to serve them, and He did it because He loved them. I realised that if I want to obey the Lord and ask for forgiveness, then I must love the people, and I realised that I must go and wash the feet of Frank Chikane. Then there appeared three articles in the newspapers about different people. One about a pilot from the air force washing the feet of the girl working with him, and there was something else about washing the feet, showing that you are prepared to serve, and it happened three times. A Dominee reading over the radio about washing the feet, and I realised the Lord is speaking to me, so I decided to go and ask for forgiveness and then washing the feet of Frank Chikane. He granted me an interview – I was late, and I ran into his office. He was irritated. He sat down in the chair and I sat opposite, and there was an official to take notes because he did not know what I wanted to talk to him about. I took out a Bible that I had prepared, and I had written certain things in the Bible, and I said, "I have sinned against the Lord and against you dear Frank, will you please forgive me? We talked about it and he said, "OK I will forgive you", but then I was too scared to ask him to wash his feet, I was not scared of him and I was not scared of the Lord, and I say this to my shame, but I was scared of people! What would my people who I have represented in Parliament say, if they find out that I was standing on my knees in front of a black person washing his feet?

NTLHOLA: So, it was white people you were afraid of?

VLOK: Yes, it was the white people, my constituents in Centurion. I was not a Member of Parliament anymore but in my perception, they were important so I was too scared to ask, and I think my soul cried out to the Lord "Help me!" and stumblingly, I asked him "will you please allow me to wash your feet". He was taken aback and he said "but why do you want to do that?" and then we talked, and he told me about an incident that I did not know of before, that the Commander of the Security Police in Johannesburg picked him and his mother up in Soweto one day, and on that day they were looking for his brother travelling on a train from Johannesburg to Soweto, and on the radio, somebody on the radio asked "what should we do

if we find him?" and that guy blatantly said, "shoot him on sight"! He said he had to take his mother to the doctor. I said "Frank, we did not know about that, and that is why I am here to show to you that I am very sorry for what I did and for what happened to you and your family, so will you please forgive me and allow me to wash your feet?" and then he said OK and he started taking off his shoes and is socks, and I took out of my briefcase a little basin with two little towels, and I took water from the table and poured it in my basin and sprinkled it on his feet and washed and dried them. He prayed and I prayed and I cried and he had tears in his eyes, but at that very moment, when I looked in his eyes, I connected with him, there was this link that today I am even seeing it more clearly; at that very moment my life changed completely, forever! Since that day, that moment, people are creations of God, they don't have black skins for me anymore or white skins for me, they are all a creation of God, we are all sinners who do bad things, but I respect the creation of God –that changed my life.

NTLHOLA: It was like a break there and the racism that was carrying on was gone. Let's go to Safina.

VLOK: Sarafina was a young Zulu girl when she came to us and that was way back in the 1960s and since that day she was working for my family, all the time. She retired two or three years ago after 52 years working in my family. She is old now, she is on pension, but she is part of the family. She fell down the day that my wife committed suicide, she found her there with my son, and it was terrible, but Fina stayed with me and after washing Frank's feet, and the mothers from Mamelodi feet, I realised that I must ask my family, my children and Fina is part of the family, I must also ask for their forgiveness. Washing the feet is not the important part, it is just to show that I am committed, it's not only words. I am prepared to look you in the eye and say "I'm sorry and I am going to prove it to you, I'm nothing and I submit to you.

NTLHOLA: What was Fina's response?

VLOK:
She could not believe it, she said, "but why do you want to do that?" and I said" I want to say sorry" and she said, "but you have been good to me and to me and my family". I said "but that is not the point, I have regarded myself as better than you are" so I did that, and it was a wonderful feeling for me in front of my family. All of them were there, my children and Antoinette, my present wife, they were there. After that, you feel free. All of us cried. I also

washed my mother's feet –she was still alive at that time, all of us cried, it was if the walls were breaking and the barriers were breaking down.

NTLHOLA: Oom Vlok, thank you so much for this. It is an honour and a privilege and I still say I am not worthy.

APPENDIX 2

LEON WESSELS

TREVOR: Thank you *tatu u*, Wessels. I am a pastor but also a student at the University of Pretoria researching reconciliation and forgiveness and repentance. By focusing on someone who has now become a friend of mine, I call him Oom Vlok, but he is known as Adriaan Vlok, the former Minister of Law and Order during the apartheid days. I want, first of all, to thank you for coming. He mentioned you, so I would like you to introduce yourself.

LEON: Well, my name is Leon Wessels. I was a Member of Parliament for a long time, a period of 22 years, and during that period I got to know Adriaan Vlok quite well; I spent 10 years in the South African Human Rights Commission as a commissioner, and during that time I maintained close contact with Vlok.

TREVOR: But when did you get into politics?

LEON: In 1974, I met Adriaan Vlok in 1974. I was a member of the Provincial Council of Transvaal and he was a Member of Parliament, so he was my senior, and I was the leader of the Youth Wing within the National Party in the Transvaal, and Vlokkie was one of the junior elders that worked with us a lot. So that's when I first met him and got to know him very well.

TREVOR: I just want to get a bit of a background about you, why did you end up in politics? Why politics and not ministry or a lawyer?

LEON: Well I am a trained lawyer, I was an advocate, and then as the say in law "I was called to the Bar" and after that, I was called to join politics to be a politician in my hometown of Krugersdorp where I went to school and where I lived. I was prodded on; I did not really see myself as a politician. I did not go to University to become a politician; I went to study law but was always deeply involved in politics getting to know people like Onkgopotse Tiro and others who were my contemporaries. So, you now have a context of how I met with Adriaan Vlok.

TREVOR: So, outside of that context, like in the church, did you have contact with him?

LEON: No, I never met him before 1974. We had a very friendly relationship. It was a political relationship where one may without fear of contradiction that it was a respectful one and we

were friends. You know in politics you know a lot of people, but you don't have a lot of friends. I say this with respect – Adriaan was a middle of the ground relationship. He was friendly and respectful to his elders within the National Party, always looking and hoping for a better future rather than a better past, but was not someone who was always involved in internal political struggles and fights; so I would say that when he was the Minister of Law and Order and the image you had of him was the image of the National Part at the time. His image was not contradicting that particular objective, he wasn't out of step with anything that the National Party was saying or doing. That was my experience of him. I was at one stage, for sixteen months I was his Deputy Minister of Law and Order; but I must hasten to say that even in spite of that stern outlook, there was a firm belief in those circles that we had to find a political solution, that you could not maintain that hard line security enforcement.

TREVOR: So, in other words, you had to keep the stern image to the public but behind the scenes, you were looking for political solutions.

LEON: It was a stern image, but it was based on a firm belief, for example, the Rabie commission that crafted the security legislation of the 80's, Chief Justice Rabie said "you cannot govern a country through security legislation" and I think Adriaan was very alive to that idea.

TREVOR: Let's just take a step back. You knew him for many years but as I understand you became close when you started to work with him as his deputy, but did you work with him before that?

LEON: Yes, we served on different internal political parties and I was at one stage a secretary of a particular study group and he was the chair, and so forth. Different but continuing relationships in different capacities but building up to that close co-operation of working together as deputy and minister

TREVOR: Is there anything you want to say regarding that time before we go into the 80's when he became this powerful person, I'm talking of course of when he became the Minister of Law and Order.

LEON: I think the way I phrased our relationship that was the nature of our relationship all along, it was never a quarrelsome one, it was always a friendly relationship between us, but that was the nature of his relationship with everybody he came into contact with. You know they say in politics "the enemies are within your own party" and the real friendships are elsewhere. The real enemies are within the party, the opposition is not the enemy. Winston Churchill had a saying "If you want friends in politics, buy a dog". Now Vlok was not like that. Vlok got on well with everybody, both in and outside the party.

TREVOR: So, let's talk about the 80's. This era where he was the minister because he exuded to us, he was this powerful person who was not the president, but we were more fearful of him.

LEON: I can understand that perception because he was involved on a hands-on basis in running that particular portfolio, but his role and his conduct was not out of line with anything that the National Party had advocated at that time. But there was something that was unique about Vlokkie as we called him, was known to be an extremely hard-working minister, and he wanted to have a grip on all the issues relating to his portfolio, and that was extremely demanding.
I became his deputy in April 1988, and I continued to be his deputy until September when FW De Klerk became state President, and then I was moved to be Pik Botha's deputy of Foreign Affairs for 23 months, and then I became a Cabinet minister and served in the cabinet with Adriaan Vlok from 1991, and so we had these different relationships. We worked extremely well together.

TREVOR: Before we continue with Vlok, just a little bit about you. Were you not feeling the contradiction of pushing the line of the National Party, and yet at the same time in your heart you are aware of the need to find political solutions seeing the way that the country was going?

LEON: My mandate was a softer mandate than that of Adriaan. I had a tremendous task/challenge to co-ordinate different government activities, and with that particular hat on, I was allowed to and was asked to interact with a number of people who were activists in townships where the struggle was rife and fires were burning, so there were never any secrets between us. He had to know at all time where I was and what I was doing. I think I can give you three prime examples of what was happening: -

A group of people were detained and then they went on a hunger strike, and Vlokkie asked me to see what I could do to interact and interface and break that particular hunger strike. I explained to Vlok the challenges. I didn't have the power to detain people, that was his power, but I said "you know what has happened now is that the people I had met within prison, some of them are no longer in prison than they would have been had they been convicted. They were charged for doing particular wrong deeds, but had they been sentenced to prison it would have been less than they are currently in prison now". I furthermore explained that I met one particular person whose mother had died, and he was not permitted to go to her funeral, so he said, "it was not worth living so I am going on a hunger strike". Those were the circumstances and I related that to Adriaan Vlok, and he understood the predicament in that situation, and he even asked me to convey that message to PW Botha when I had my regular meeting with him. I remember Botha saying, "So what you are telling me now is that we have achieved nothing through the detentions without trial" That's just one little example.
Then there was another example – people would loosely refer to that component of government as Beurocrats because it was not only policemen, military and different people involved. So, one day someone said to me that the situation in the schools, in the Western Cape, in particular, is out of control, you must speak with minister Alan Hendrickse. I said you know, I am a deputy Minister, I cannot just speak to a minister without my seniors and supervisors knowing about it. So, I discussed it with Vlok, and he spoke to PW Botha, and he said, "Don't speak with Hendrikse because he does not have influence with the young people; speak with Franklin Sonn". So, I meet with Franklin and I meet, and I told him I wanted him to know everything we were discussing, and I would have to relate this to Vlok and to PW. He said that's fine, he wanted them to know everything that was discussed. He would relate to Jakes Gerwel and Desmond Tutu.

So on the one hand we were keen to be involved in a situation where change would come about by negotiation at the ballot box and not through the barrel of a gun, and that was the advice we were getting from the police, soldiers, everybody, and Vlok was alive to that an awareness of that.

TREVOR: Can you explain to me how that time was for you? I can see now as you are painting this picture it must have been very hard.

LEON: It was very hard and difficult. It was challenging but it was rewarding in the sense that we knew what we were busy with, namely "holding the fort" so to speak. The ANC challenge remember was to make the country ungovernable, and we were not going to allow them to do that, but realising that we have to find solutions. I mean, we were involved in another extremely exciting exercise, looking forward to how we would deal with the situation once Nelson Mandela was released. We had discussions around that, documents were circulated. PW Botha gathered them all and he shredded them all, that's how secretive it was.

TREVOR: Let`s talk about one of the things that come out clearly in our talks with Adriaan Vlok. He talks about a lot of things but one of them is the bombing of Khotso House.

LEON: You know, you and I are involved in storytelling and also doing the storytelling with a view to crafting scholarship work. I think for me, the safest way would be for me to interpret rather than to say "this, that and the following". So, first of all, I was not involved in the direct interaction that Vlok and General van der Merwe had with PW Botha. I was only told about that years later. Being the deputy and given my responsibilities, I was not privy to that so I can safely say I was not part of it, I was not informed about it at all.

TREVOR: Then Oom Vlok goes to the TRC. What did you think of that? Many of you guys in the National Party did not, but he went and informed PW Botha who said he was not going, and he would advise Vlok not to go. What did you think of that?
LEON: There are two things I need to tell you. First of all, this was more or less I 1995 or 96, Vlok is out of politics; he left in 1994. In 1994, 5 and 6 I am still involved in politics, I am the Deputy Chairman of the Constitutional Assembly, the body that wrote the Constitution. So Vlok and Magnus Malan had fallen out with PW altogether, it was a terrible thing. So Vlok calls me, now this is before OUR appearance at the TRC and says to me, "Magnus and I, would like you to speak to PW because PW does not speak with the two of us because we have had this fallout"

TREVOR: What was the fallout?
LEON: Well the fallout was that FW went to Lusaka with Pik Botha and met with Kaunda. And PW Botha had the expectation that Magnus and Vlok would side with him in that particular conflict, and they did not, and that made him extremely annoyed because they were his "security" ministers, part of the security Cluster, and he was extremely annoyed because

the two of them sided with FW De Klerk. FW had the backing of Vlok and the whole cabinet because FW was projecting this vision of "peace with our neighbours" in Southern Africa, and negotiations have to get going etc.
Let me explain – I will not lose my thread but will come back to it – when FW was state President and I was then Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, there was a closed *bosbaraad* which was attended by FW, Magnus Malan, Byron du Plessis – the minister of Finance and myself. Vlok was not there. I was representing Pik Botha at that meeting. In that meeting, FW stopped the formal presentation given by the Defence Force on "so many Russian Migs, so many Cuban soldiers. ... ..." He said, "stop it! Because you are basing your presentation on the assumption that there will be a war indefinitely, and I am telling you, there will be peace". You see the soldiers were still in the old mould.

Now we fast forward six years when Vlok and Magnus asked to speak to PW. I am in Cape Town, I am the Deputy Chairman of the Constitution Committee and I called PW, and I said "Meneer, you know when you appointed me as Deputy Minister of Law and Order, I was proud of that fact, and I am not running away from that fact, but what is happening now is not correct, we don't want you to appear in front of the TRC on your own, we are all together and we are willing to support you and explain what we were doing and what we were hoping for, and PW made the following comment, he said, "With my God on my side I will never be alone – I have nothing further to say to you". That was the end of the discussion. When I reported this conversation to Vlok, he just chuckled and said to me he knew it would happen because he is not even taking our calls, so we were on our own.

TREVOR: So, what did you think of that, of Vlok going to the TRC

LEON: No, Vlok did not go on his own to the TRC, he went on his own when he applied for amnesty. When FW made the presentation to the TRC on behalf of the National Party, I was with FW, I was sitting there with FW, and then after the Constitution was accepted, I left politics, because I became a lawyer again. We made the presentation on behalf of the National Party, there were no questions asked at that presentation, different parties just made their presentations, these would then be digested, and FW would be recalled. In that period, I leave politics. The Constitution is concluded, signed by Madiba in December 1996. I'm out and I'm an advocate in Johannesburg. So, the TRC says," you know there are a few things we would like to clear with you, are you willing to speak with us?" Maybe you could consult the book

written by Piet Meiring who was a theologian and an academic, and he has written a book about the TRC process.

TREVOR: Did they ask you as an individual?

LEON: No, as a former minister. We are then called upon to explain how the Security Council operated and functioned, so at that set of hearings is Pik Botha, Vlok, Roelf Meyer and myself. We all had different roles to play so we all had different stories to tell. Pik Botha takes the floor, Vlok takes the floor – in fact, Piet Meiring describes this in his book. We have to make written submissions. I still have my submission and I will be happy to give you a copy. So, we had to make written submissions, and when I listen to everybody and the whole story that is playing itself out in the media, I realise that my submission is wrong! My written submission is in the hands of Tutu and Boraine and the likes. There are two things relating to my submission. The first thing is:

Everybody expects that an Afrikaner guy from Krugersdorp is going to take the Oath at an occasion such as that. I don't take the Oath.

TREVOR: Why is that – is it because…….?

LEON: No not because of any religious considerations, but Jonathan Janssen quotes me in one of his books, and so does Christy van der Westhuizen, and that was my reason "You don't know what you don't know". So, for me to take an oath to say, "everything I am about to say is the truth" – I know what I know, but I don't know what I don't know". We were all working in different silos, and then I said, "Wherever I use the word "we" I want you to delete the "we" and replace it with "me". That was a liberation because I don't have to represent PW Botha, I don't have to represent the four guys that are sitting there; this is what I believe, and then I make the point that "I do not believe that the political defence of "I didn't know, is available to me" because, in many respects, I did not want to know. Khotso House was not my business; I didn't want to know about it. It was not my responsibility and because of that, I didn't want to know.

TREVOR: Sorry for interrupting you here, but isn't this running away from the collective responsibility of your party where you worked as a collective?

LEON: Well, the party did not want to be associated as a collective. I called PW Botha and said, "let's go there as a collective" and he said, "I don't want you to be there". I sat there with FW and you can read about his own version. That's why I said "I" my version; I didn't want it tainted with all the other guys who were fooling around. I initially did make the statement that "I do not believe that the political defence of "we didn't know is available to us", but nobody

wanted to be part of that collective, so I said that I don't believe it's available to me, so it's finished and *klaar* and lawyers were saying to me "you are setting yourself up for serious trouble" and there were attacks on me. Magnus called me that very same day and said, "beware, PW is hot happy with your account" – so there was a fight, but I will let you have that account in writing. So, there was this quarrel, but Vlok was restrained because his amnesty hearing was hanging in the air and at that juncture, he couldn't speak freely, and he didn't want to speak freely became his lawyers were advising that he has this amnesty hearing pending.

TREVOR: Let's talk about Vlok and his theological call – his Damascus Road where he met the Lord and he changed. What do you think of that?
LEON: Look, he didn't discuss that with me beforehand. I was in Port Elizabeth, interestingly enough, and I heard it on the radio, and I was asked "what do you think about it there and then"

TREVOR: Let's go to that. What did you hear on the radio?

LEON: I heard on the radio that he had had this encounter and the meeting with Chikane. I did not know about his conversion at that time but only after the event. My response then, and still my response now is that "whoever is serious about seeking forgiveness and acting on his religious beliefs, that should be respected" and in Vlok's case, not only respected but applauded.

TREVOR: Why do you say that?
LEON: Well I believe it took a lot of courage for him to do that, extraordinary courage, and beyond that public news event, Vlok and I met on a number of occasions, regularly, beyond that because I thought, it was my conviction, that Vlok needed the support because not many people were rallying around him. My interaction with him was a very personal and intimate one. I guess that is why Vlok said you should come to me.

TREVOR: How was he at that time, because it must have been a very difficult time for him.
LEON: Well, I think it must have been difficult, but when I met him, he had thought the whole thing through, he had prayed the whole thing through; he was convinced there was no alternative for him. He was always extremely calm, serious, dignified about the whole situation. It was a serious matter and he never had any regrets, he never wanted to turn back on it. That was his conviction and his belief – finish!

TREVOR: Do you think he changed? Because he says that the Lord changed him.
LEON: do believe he changed, because the Vlok from 1974 to the Vlok of 2018 is most definitely a different believer and a different individual. And I would like to believe that I am also a different person – but let us focus on Vlok. You see, if you don't grow in your faith, you become stale, and I think for Vlok it was a continuous growing experience in his faith and in his belief. So, you can only stand on the side-lines, bow your head and applaud him. I think it must have taken a lot, lot, lot of courage, it's almost impossible to imagine how much courage it must have taken, because I don't know what the situation is right now, but there were not many people who would defend him, I'm talking about old colleagues who were in Vlok's corner at that stage. A Sad experience for me, was the absence of other colleagues when Vlok entered into that plea-bargain agreement, and standing there, this forceful, fearful person; I'm referring to the mid1980s, now standing in the dock and being vulnerable and not many of the old colleagues giving him a pat on the back.

TREVOR: How do you think he felt?

LEON: He never complained, he never ever complained about it how he felt? How he discussed it, he was never pointing a finger and never apportioning blame to anyone, it was just how it was. He didn't want to do battle with anyone; he didn't want to quarrel with anybody. That was his position, that was how he believed it, that how he lived his life and he wanted to live in peace with whoever was frowning at him.

TREVOR: I have read a lot, as you can imagine, in doing my research, and it is said that Vlok is the only senior Nationalist in the cabinet who went to the TRC and owned up, as an individual. Not as you guys went as a party.

LEON: My understanding of that comment is that "yes that is the correct comment. It is Vlok owning up for his individual deeds, and in that sense owning up individually for what he had been doing" But, as I tried to explain, the National Party was not in the mood to own up as a collective or as individuals. There were accusations about Roelf Meyer and me, you can ask Vlok about that, he has a view because we were both his juniors, and he tried to nurture us and protect us, but let Vlok explain that to you. The thing is, that because of the positions that Roelf and I held, there was one instance where somebody made the accusation and said that

the two of us knew more than we were willing to account for, and therefore we should not be taken seriously in whatever we were saying and doing. I responded to that and said, "If ever, any government, finds himself in hot water because of any decision that I was involved in, that individual must shout from the rooftops and I will rush to his side!" Now that was in 1995, and nobody has ever made that claim.

TREVOR: De Kock, he was given a budget, he had his support team, and then when the chips were down no one covers for him. I asked Vlok, and his answer is "Trevor, I went to meet with de Kock and asked him "Did I personally ask you to go and do what you did?" and he said "No". This is Vlok's interpretation, I have not met de Kock, but de Kock said: "But you gave me an award". So, Meneer Wessels, my question is, there was no way that the guys on the ground, the atrocities they did without the backup from you guys.

LEON: Look, two-fold. First of all, I never met de Kock and I never managed his badger – never ever, but when I was I front of the TRC, I made the point that "I", still not "we", I stated that "I" cannot denounce these guys as we were on the same side of the conflict, as much as I cannot defend what they were doing, so I cannot denounce them. Let me give you just one example that I have grappled within the broader context, in the broader scheme of things. Steve Biko; they were my contemporaries, I told you about Onkgopotse Tiro, Barney Pityana and guys I worked with.

TREVOR: You said they were your friends?

LEON: Barney and I worked with at the Human Rights Commission but didn't know as a friend, but Tiro I write about. There was a book being written about Tiro and they interviewed me, and we sat right there and had a long interview, a long interview because it comes through that there were many interactions between Tiro and myself in 1971/1972

TREVOR: He led the march in Cape Town in 1976, around that time.

LEON: No, it was not Tiro. Tiro must have been killed by that parcel bomb in Botswana in about 1974. It was the Mashinis who led the march. So, I was making the point then that we were on the same side – I'm talking about Biko. I do not believe that Vlok or anybody would

have permitted that Biko should be humiliated as he was, driven on the back of a bakkie without clothes on. I cannot imagine Vlok, or Le Grange, it was not their era.

TREVOR: Like de Kock, similar atrocities …

LEON: No, we mustn't lose a very important point here my argument at the time and still is, I cannot denounce these guys because we created the climate where those guys would say "We are in step with the greater policymakers".
Vlok, as far as Khotso House was concerned, my understanding is that he gave direct permission for that, but my argument is that we cannot disown these people because we were on the same side of the conflict and we were part and parcel we and we thought "*Ons gaan die terroriste opneek*" we will fight them to the finish. I mean now the policeman on the ground, catches someone who he suspects is smuggling AK47's and he assaults him thinking "I'm in step with these fellows at the top"

TREVOR: Let's bring this to closure, I just want to ask you, what do you think of Vlok now. I don't know if you are aware of what he is doing.
LEON: Yes, I am very much aware. Look, maybe this is not a theologically sound argument, but my defence is that I am not a theologian. But there was one moment, you will have to excuse the crude way I am putting this now and I hide behind the fact that I am not a theologian. I one day said to Vlok, I said "you know Vlokkie, if I was God I would not have chosen you to do this work of mending fences, reaching out, building bridges, being a reconciler" I said "because you were never a philosopher, you were never a theologian" but I would have to acknowledge that I would have been wrong. God is much wiser than me because He has chosen you to do this job because no one can fulfil it with as much credibility as you have.

TREVOR: Now, he has just turned 80 and in December he will be 81 years old. The other day he was sick, and he was forced to come out of bed, and I said to him "you can't ". 80 Years is old, what do you think? I mean I'm not saying he is going to die but he is very old.

LEON: The remarkable thing about this is, as they say – you know we have just watched the world soccer matches and many a match is won in additional time, so Vlok has been granted a wonderful opportunity, in rugby terms, they talk about "injury time" but now "add on time" so

it's a wonderful opportunity, and the way he lives his life certainly is an inspiration to each and every one of us to do our thing wherever we find ourselves.

TREVOR: If you had to get a chance, I know you are friends, but Trevor is asking you, what is it that you would like to say to him?

LEON: I can only couch the things I have said to him in a different way by simply saying that Vlok always has been an inspiration, and he is certainly now setting the bar very high in the example he is setting for us to help South Africans, to mend fences and to forge ahead together.

TREVOR: Afrikaners! I mean he is an Afrikaner and at his age, for me, he is very radical and is very inspirational, but the fact is, he is an Afrikaner and many Afrikaners are not anywhere near there. Is there anything you want to say to Afrikaners?

LEON: Afrikaners have always been divided. They have never been a homogeneous group, and at this juncture, in our history, they will never attain unity. They can only afford one another respect.

TREVOR: That's very radical. Why do you say that?

LEON: The divide is too big, the divide has always been like, even since the Anglo Boer War, the divide has been a very intolerant group, and unity is definitely not possible. They can grant one another space and respect but you cannot expect more than that. Those that subscribe to Vlok's philosophy have to rally around him and support him.

TREVOR: Do you think Afrikaners can learn something from him?

LEON: It goes beyond Afrikaners; I think South Africans can learn from Vlok.

TREVOR: Is there anything you want to say. He is a South African he is a son of the soil; he was born here. Is there anything you want to say in the context of the whole thing about Vlok, is there anything you want to say to South Africa?

LEON: When you think about reconciliation, I interact a lot with students, the younger generation, I'm involved In activities at different universities and there is this old narrative amongst a younger generation, saying that "we are sick and tired of listening to the fights that old white men fought against each other a long time ago, but there is something crucial about reconciliation, nobody can deny anybody his pain, so you cannot deny Vlok the pain that he went through, as much as I cannot deny you the experiences that you have had at the receiving end of the strong arm of government, that is of critical importance. Once we acknowledge that we cannot deny each other the pain that you carry with you, after listening to one another, we can forge ahead and build together.

TREVOR: Meneer Wessels, thank you for your time, I really appreciate it

APPENDIX 3.

SARAFINA 'FINA' ZWANE

TREVOR: Greetings Gogo (elderly woman)

FINA: Yes, Yes! It's been a long time. The old man (Vlok) has been updating me about what you guys have been up to. I am fine, just forever getting old and easily tired.

TREVOR: Good to hear…

FINA: How are you, mother?

TREVOR: I am okay, and mom is fine. She's been staying and taking care of me especially since my wife died – we're fine.

FINA: I am happy to hear that both of you are doing well…

TREVOR: I need your help and I believe *utatu* Vlok told you about the talk we both needed to have. Did he tell you?

FINA: Yes, he did, but we did talk a few years ago, remember?

TREVOR: Oh, yes, I do. This time around is about my studies.

FINA: Ok, let's do it…. What do you want?

TREVOR: Are you ready to start now? Ok, let's start with your full name.

FINA: They call me, especially Vlok's use to call me - 'Fina' but my full name is Seraphina Ntombana Zwane. I originate from Kwa-Zulu Natal.

TREVOR: How old were you when you started to work for the Vlok?

FINA: My son, it was many years ago – I was 22 years old when I started working here. I actually worked for them for the past 52 years!

TREVOR: Wow! That's many years

FINA: My kids knew them (the Vloks) well and we used to eat together on the same table when they visited me. The Vloks bought them new clothes and ….

TREVOR: Really!

FINA: This was in the 1970s and 1980s. I raised all their three children. The kids loved me. I actually harmonised well, relationally, with Oom Vlok than with his late wife. I remember I had an intense altercation with Mrs Vlok that I packed my bags to go. Oom Vlok came in between to reconcile both of us. I travelled with them to Cape Town, KZN, Kimberley but often it was through flying especially to Cape Town as the Parliament was situated there. I need to mention though, that before Mrs Vlok died, we became good friends.

TREVOR: I am sorry, ehhh

FINA: She actually committed suicide! It was terrible…

TREVOR: How was your relationship as a black maid to a white boss especially the most feared Minister of Law and Order Adriaan Vlok!

FINA: You know, my son, I only got to know later, after many years that my boss had that position. I wasn't interested in politics. Vlok was the different person here at home than out there. No apartheid here!

TREVOR: (I was shocked and my face, especially my limbs or gestures indicated my disbelief. With a staccato-like voice I tried to control voice. She could see my unverbalized and loud gestures). That can't be true!

FINA: (She got annoyingly irritated as if I was literally saying that she's a liar! A black culture, after all, takes as repugnance to suggest unbelief to an elderly. With a booming but stinging voice, she unwaveringly went for me…) "*ukhulume into o yi yaziyo…onga bhedi laa…*" (Appendix 3), meaning – 'you must know what you are talking about… And do not come here and speak nonsense!' Where were you? Where were you when this happened, you're just a child! Don't debate with me! (She is a feisty woman, and this was obvious).

TREVOR: But, but, (She tonetically charged me, once more)

FINA: Let me tell you, Vlok treated me well. One morning he called me in front of his whole family in their living-room. I walked in and only to find they were there already. Oom Vlok said to me – I need to ask for your forgiveness for all I've done. I actually later realised he had the same to his late mother … He insisted to wash my feet too. I said shamefully - "No! why do you want to do that. It is not necessary; you have been good to me why?". I eventually succumbed to his pressure and onlooking family members watching me. Vlok, my former employer is a good man!

TREVOR: I hear you; I really do…

FINA: (She walked away for few minutes, later she came back with something) Look here, this is an old photo of Oom Vlok and I next to an old Kombi that Vlok finally gave to my parents. (Her disturbed anger I caused were already abated by now as she remembers those memories).

TREVOR: How are your current relationships since you stopped working for him the last few years?

FINA: We're now friends, Oom Vlok drives here in Klipgaat, every month to bring food for me and my grandchildren. Literally every month.

TREVOR: Many people are sceptical about Vlok's transformation, what can you tell them?

FINA: Yes, they won't know since they've never stayed with him. (There was a long silence), people often talk nonsense something they don't know.

TREVOR: So, you really think that Vlok has repented from Apartheid's mentality? (I pushed again!)

FINA: Yes, the man has changed, I mean long, long ago.

TREVOR: Mme Zwane, thanks for your time. The

APPENDIX 4.

CHIKANE

FRANK CHIKANE: Basically, I've been involved in the struggle for a very long time, at least for me, and the history of my engagement etc., in terms of my faith, in terms of how I developed and how I ended up in politics is well documented. I always say to comrades "you know, I did not get into politics just because I was angry. You know apartheid was a terrible thing, it makes you angry and even those who have no respect for justice, it makes you angry to the extent that you fight this, not because you want a just order, but because this thing is just too bad, and some comrades have gone into the struggle and ended up in exile, and when they come back, they surprise us when they have no respect for the law, they don't have respect for concepts of justice because they never really fought for justice. We thought all of us were fighting for justice, but actually, some people were just angry. I always make this example – I cannot forget the trip to Durban because it is so vivid in my mind. You know when you are in Soweto Johannesburg you did not feel it. This was in the old days when I was young. You get hungry on the way and then you stop at a shop, then you discover you cannot go in, you must buy from a window, but whites come, and they go inside, and then when you finished buying, you cannot sit. There is a seat inside the shop, but you cannot sit there, you have to go and sit on a box somewhere and eat or eat in the car, but whites would sit inside, but you pay the same price! You see what I'm talking about, you don't have to be a just person or moral person, it just angers you because you paid the same price but you don't get the same behaviour, just because you are black, and so it was easy to be recruited into the struggle, but you were not there about justice, you were not there about righteousness, you were not there about good and evil, it is just that this thing angers you. Some people went in because they could not make money. After all, you are black because, well, you cannot sell clothes in Soweto. There was one shop in Soweto that sold little jerseys and socks, etc. They used to arrest you in Soweto for selling anything that was not basic needs in terms of food – not clothes; you had to go to a white shop to buy clothes. Bread, milk, sugar, mealie meal; those shops were close by to supply that, but anything else, because you are black, you could not sell it, it was illegal. That would anger any business entrepreneur, you don't have to be a moral person, and you fight this thing.

TREV: Interesting, it must have been difficult…

FRANK: Then you win, and you do the same thing because you were actually not about justice. I'm saying this because I've learnt from our current situation, that where you come from determines how you behave, and when people behave in a strange way, we get shocked, but we should have known. Now, I didn't go through that route, I went through the route of faith and I arrived at the struggle from the righteousness of God and the issues of justice. When you read my book, you will see that our mother was the one that brought the Gospel, although my father became a pastor, it was the mother. My mother was in the Lord, I went to preach with her father. Her father was an itinerant preacher. He would work for three months, six months where he would preach and come back. You know in those old days, 1930's they went without knowing where they were going to sleep. She went with her father and she would sing, and he would preach, and they got accommodation wherever they were, they gave them food. Really the old Biblical stuff –that's where my mother comes from. So, with my mother comes the Gospel. There is no member of the Chikane family that comes from, even if they fall from grace and do you own thing, but the truth is remembered! My mother always used to say, "I pray for my children – they will come back" they never go away forever, and one of them came back last year, and I said, "I wish my mother was here to see that". So, from the age of eight years, she made me preach a sermon. In Bushbuck Ridge her uncle had a church and she arranged that on Sunday I would preach. So, I had to prepare, and for me to preach that sermon, I mean it was on John 14. There are many mentions of this; it was in 1958 that I preached that sermon. Then, of course, she made me preach it to her on Saturday, so by the time I go to preach. she puts me on the chair, and I preach

TREVOR: But why you? You had other siblings

FRANK: I did have siblings, but we took turns, and this was my turn to go and preach. But of course, it was usually Wednesday and Fridays we preached in turns, you know, Wednesday it would be me and Friday it would be my brother. This was a special issue – the point I am making is that she drills it into you to the extent that at age eight you can preach a sermon and that was my first sermon. She made us grow in the Lord. Unfortunately, she had to pray for my father, and fast for him. They married in 1946. It took her about sixteen years praying and fasting for my father and at 62 he gave himself to the Lord and within two years my father became a deacon and established the church, then he became a pastor. Because women were oppressed, she remained a Deaconess, she never became a pastor- you know what I am talking about, but she was the driver. We went to do a house visitation and I was in the car with them.

My father was visiting a sick person and wanted to know "now which text do we use when we are there?" and my mother would tell him exactly which verse to use there and he does the job. When I worked with Mbeki as well, she was like a walking Bible and Mbeki would ask for a verse on this and that – you remember I used to quote the Bible? Then he would ask for a verse and I would say I don't remember, or I don't have time, but I would call my mother and she would tell me exactly where it is. She didn't have to go and check the Bible; she would tell you the chapter and verse. She was about 72 at the time. Then it had to do with justice and the righteousness of God. It was not contrasted against apartheid, but it had to do with the Gospel, what the Gospel means.

About the year 1965, I would have been about 15 years. It was then about from 15 to 16 years you would be arrested for an ID. They would look at you and the police don't know when they met you whether you are sixteen or seventeen, so if you looked like you were sixteen, they would ask for a pass. Suddenly you would realise "but there is something wrong here". The last thing in my book was when they brought my mother's sister from Bushbuck Ridge, she had seven operations because she had to have caesarean births, and you know if you are African you didn't stop because it was difficult, you kept on giving birth. Seven births, I mean it was hell. She really was sick and the only place you could get help if you were black, was Bara. Bara was the best place because it was a teaching hospital. It was for blacks, but it was a teaching hospital, so you got the Professors from Wits so even if it was a bad hospital you got good doctors. She arrived here at about ten o'clock in the night and then 2 am the police raided the house and they arrested her for not having a permit. During those days they had to apply for a permit for a visitor, even your relative. So, the Superintendent had to give you a permit to have a visitor, and the name and ID etc. I don't know how, but they used to keep spies around and if there was a stranger that arrived, they would arrest them. They didn't ask, they found a sick woman who can't even walk, and they took her to the van, and she had to sleep on the cement floor – not in the cell, but in the office of the Superintendent. The judge is the Superintendent – he is going to pass judgement. So, they go to the local municipal office, not the cell, the office because that is the judge! That to me was ungodly and unjust, I mean God cannot allow this type of thing – it doesn't matter how you explain this story, it is unjust, unrighteous and it is worse if these people claim to be Christian, those who are doing this to you. It was well before my detention and all that, but it made me aware.

By the time I went into the secondary school the consciousness was high and we went into the Student Christian Movement, and then to preach the Gospel, you had to explain yourself because this Bible is a white man's thing, they took our land and gave you the Bible and all

that, it's in my book as well and quite detailed there. So, you had to justify your faith, and so you were bound to critique the apartheid system against the faith, therefore it is faith based, it is justice, it's God, it's not about my feelings. It has to say "what is God all about?" and so that is where the difference is for me because whereas others would see money and melt, I can't because the reference point for me is outside of myself, and when I interact with my comrades I say "you see your problem is that YOU are the ultimate reference point, YOU can change". So, you can move the goalposts and pins. You know the Bible talks about moving your pin to put it on somebody else's land, you can move the pins and rob people, but I can't because the reference point is God, and God is not moving, so I can't change my character and say "but no, there's money there, why can't I do the following?" before I get there I have to confront that reality. That's really the fundamental difference. So, I got involved in the struggle, not for myself but for the people and that has not ended because that's what God is about. And therefore, you end up you know being detained, tortured – it is all in my book. Family members going into exile, others remain. Then the torture part, it's also in the book and it is detailed. So, what happened is . . ..

TREVOR: Was it before the Vlok era?

FRANK: Yes, remember my first detention was in 1977 in Kruger's time, actually I was detained about five or six times and two of them were really bad. What we call third degree torture.

TREVOR: Would you mind describing it, or is it also in the book?

FRANK: It's in the book and I wouldn't like to talk about it. You know the reason for writing that book, is because my wife said: "I will not travel with you anymore because when you address people they ask about the torture and they want to hear it, so you keep on repeating it and I can't stand it". So, I wrote the book so that I don't have to repeat it again and again.

TREVOR: Is it a second or third edition?

FRANK: Well it's a revised print. It was reprinted in the past and it has been translated into many languages, you can get it in Japanese, French, German, etc.

TREVOR: Last time we were with you in one of the meetings you said you had to remove a chapter or photo

FRANK: It was a letter, the suspension letter from my church. This poor man who was secretary there, I thought "no, he's been tortured enough by this letter and his family; the children have grown up." So, every time I looked at that letter, I thought no . . .. so, when we revised the text is still there but the letter with his signature is not, it was really bad.

TREVOR: Just another thing before we go to Vlok, in the book you spoke about this guy who tortured you, the Afrikaner guy who was a deacon of your church, and I met you a few years ago and I asked you, did he come and apologise? And you said No – this was about five years ago.

FRANK: We have never found him, and I must now assume that he is dead. That generation is dying, and I had information that he was in the Free State, but I could not get somebody to assist. I thought my church would help me, but I have not found him – that is the one person I have not found. The black guys who were with them we know them, but they got scattered. One of them went to Bophuthatswana. So, the Krugersdorp crew which tortured me in Krugersdorp, none of them have come to say, "we are sorry". It was more the poisoning crew that did that, but the Erasmus guy who was the one who put me on the death list, that was the one that confessed, you know at Timo's enquiry last year? He got me on the phone, and we talked, we didn't sit together.

TREVOR: Do you think he was sincere?

FRANK: Well he had no reason to look for me and find me. Remember they were just doing their job, you know if you are an eighteen-year-old white Afrikaner, you really know nothing. The only thing you know is the indoctrination of racism etc., and then you get taken into the army or you go to the police.

TREVOR: Let me interrupt you. I find it very encouraging and refreshing that you can be gracious, whereas many of us would just say NO! They would not look at the age or the context.
FRANK: I've done counselling, I've dealt with human beings. For me, human beings are not about colour. Think of a child that gets born in an Afrikaner family who does not meet black

people, at best meets the nanny who takes care of him/her or the gardener. Like you talk about Vlok's helper, it looked like a normal relationship. Even if she does not sit at the table, she cooks for you she puts the food on the table, but she can't eat with you, then she comes and removes the plates again so as a child you would not think anything out it. Unless you got consciousness from school or something else. But there was no chance, the school was the same. Then you go to the military or the police. Erasmus said, "I was eighteen years when I joined the force", remember you could choose to go to the police when you were conscripted, or if you were a medical doctor. If you refused, they would lock you up. Most Afrikaner kids didn't resist, I mean they were not a rebellious group of people, so they accepted it. So, when they said to him that he should make up a list of people who qualify to be put on the list. Then they look at the list and say, "who has caused problems around here; who has been detained; who made these statements, etc." and so you were put on the list. So, Erasmus called – he went through the Mail and Guardian, or in those days it was the Rand Daily Mail.

I was talking to a journalist and the journalist said "this guy wants to talk to you; it's about your detention and being put on the list" so I said "I will talk to him", he could not believe that I would talk to him, but I did say let's talk on the telephone so I know what we are talking about before I met with him. So, we spoke via telephone, and he made it clear to me that he had no understanding, he had put me on the list, it was just a job. Then he said it was only now, that he understood the implications, so he would not have tortured me directly, but he put me on the list. He had no reason to talk to me, he could have kept quiet, but he clearly had seen light somewhere else. I told him, "you want my forgiveness? I forgave you even before you asked for it because me forgiveness is a given, I don't want to hold people in my heart. You know, this thing of "forgive them because they know not what they are doing" – the Jesus story. These people are indoctrinated, and they really believed in what they were doing.

I mean, for this deacon of my church to say "I'm doing my job. Then he tortures you and doesn't see a contradiction! He would leave me here and go to church on a Sunday, leaves me standing on top of bricks, and I am chained, and I have not slept for three days and you are beaten, and he does not see a contradiction in that! They would underfeed you, but it does not touch him. There must be something wrong with the faith if you have to translate it that way. So that is why I said, "forgive them". Maybe it was also the fact that I was not detained by chance, they did something and then went to jail, or they burnt a car with the mob, and you end up there and you get very angry. I decided that we must get rid of apartheid and I knew they

would get me. If they got you, well you were like a soldier, but you know it is part of the struggle. Forgiveness, for me, was general; even for the guys who poisoned me, I said, through the lawyer; "I don't want to know because I wasn't them to go to jail. I want to know first, just for me to know, but for their sake." They are scared that one day we will find out and they will go to jail, so I want them to voluntarily come, and when they have done it I have no interest in sending them to jail. What would it benefit them to go to jail? It would benefit nothing.

TREVOR: Sorry to interrupt, but because of this issue of forgiveness as part of *ubuntu*, do you think that South Africa understands that view? Because we have not spoken about forgiveness enough.

FRANK: Remember that my starting point is the Word, it's my faith and I have understood from my faith what forgiveness is, and it does not matter how much evil is around, but if you go to that line, the line is clear. I've often said, and I think you will see it in my book, I said that I would not expect other people to do what I did, I did not expect it because we have not come to the same route. For me, it's for MY liberation. By the way, I always say to people "you know you will go to hell, but if you don't believe in hell, then you are going wherever you are going". When somebody hurts you, you get so angry that you go and do something wrong. That person might repent at the last minute, and I remain with the problem! You know, forgiveness is liberating; it liberates you. I don't allow anybody to create a situation where I am forced to sin. Me and my wife, we agree that we shouldn't do something that would force any one of us to sin, because, you know getting angry, once you are angry you are likely to sin and it changes the way you react and it pollutes the atmosphere. I decided long ago that they have been forgiven. That's why when Vlok and van der Merwe came and he wanted to wash my feet, I said" but you don't need to, I believe you and I have forgiven you"

TREVOR: Just before we get to Vlok, it's very interesting, just to be theologically specific, Jesus would say the Lord's prayer, He makes one comment about forgiveness that if you do not forgive others, then the Lord will not forgive you. The other thing that came out in my research, I have found that many universities overseas have established a department about the whole thing of forgiveness, without the religious aspect to show that this thing about forgiveness is very important, on an individual level and even on a national level – I just wanted to mention that.

FRANK: Unfortunately, it is taken as a religious concept and people resist it, the world is worried because people are not forgiving. Talking about forgiveness, if you do it, it's about healing, it's more about healing and about your mind. If you don't forgive you become a prisoner of somebody, so when I talk about the past and the future, it's about being a victim of the past and future; people want to be permanent victims. The point is, if you become a victim, you transmit the victim root from one generation to another, you react to the world differently, you become a prisoner yourself of the victim mould and you can't transcend it. There are people who are victims but deal with the consequences. I was declared a victim by the TRC, if you go to the records you will see I am one of the victims and I was supposed to get R30,000-00 because each victim was given R30,000-00 but I said to them, "sorry, give it to a needy person because it can't pay for my pain, so give it to someone who needs it, rather than me", the point I am making, just to summarise is that if you don't forgive you become a prisoner. The person that caused you the trouble might be enjoying himself somewhere, might even have repented for that matter, but you remain with the pain.

Now with Vlok, I couldn't tell you exactly when I first met him because Vlok for me was life before I saw him, he was so much life – he commanded this operation that was really destroying people's lives. People were detained, people were killed, and he became the face of that because it is the minister who speaks, and unfortunately it was the police who were the foot soldiers, it was not the army. The intelligence was the police, not the Military Intelligence so he was actually commanding every operation. The closest for me would be hearing about him and being a victim of his without meeting him. When it came to Khotso House, I was the General Secretary at that time, they set up an operation where the unit that bombed Khotso House is commanded by the guy who was the first one to come and investigate it. So, the one who bombs you is the one who is sent to investigate the bombing so that all the evidence is destroyed! Then they have the guards go and arrest someone who was totally innocent, she was a white woman Shirley Gunn a member of the Communist Party, and she is part of Khulamani. She was pregnant at the time. They detained her, they tortured her, she never came out alright even up to the present day, and they knew she was innocent. They wanted the world to think that it was the Communists who had attacked the headquarters. We are not, fools. We are not going to believe that. Now, of course, Vlok goes to confess this, which is they were responsible for that operation, and if I met Vlok before, I can't tell you whether it was before or after the bombing of Khotso House. It was when I dealt with the hunger strike. Remember there were people who went on a hunger strike? As General Secretary, I had to interact with the Minister

of Police and FW De Klerk to negotiate the release of the detainees who were on the hunger strike and they allowed me to visit the in the prisons in PE and other places. The likelihood is that I would have met Vlok during that time. I'm sure if you check with him he will say that we met when I was a member of the delegation from the Council of Churches, it is also possible that when we went to see PW with heads of churches, but not really at a personal level, but we met more closely when he came to ask if he can wash my feet.

TREVOR: When he came to ask if he could wash your feet, was it before the TRC or after?

FRANK: It was after the TRC, it was well after. The TRC happened immediately, I think it was 1996. Vlok came to me in. I can't remember, but it would be in the records.
The reason why this is very important because we open up to people after we do the interview and people go like . . . "If in the TRC you pleaded 'not guilty' and you got amnesty eventually, why then did you go and wash the feet of these people"
At the TRC he did not tell the whole truth, that's the real issue. You see, I can tell you the truth but keep some of it back, so it does not mean I have told you the whole truth. The TRC will give amnesty for the thing I have told them but not for the other things I have not told them. By the time Vlok came to me, it was a blanket forgiveness, "forgive me for everything I have done"

TREVOR: Even that which he did not disclose?

FRANK: Yes, even that which he did not disclose, and there was a good reason why he came to me. The TRC was to get amnesty so he did not go to jail. To me it was an op armed, voluntary thing; he was not forced by anybody. Some people said it was because the prosecuting authority was investigating, but I don't know. At that point, they were still confident they could get away with it, but he must have had a Damascus experience.

TREVOR: He says that he even went to PW Botha to tell him that he felt convicted and he was going to go there, he said he was not asking permission, but he just wanted to let him know. PW said to him if you go there don't be surprised if we deny some of the things.

FRANK: But Vlok, you must depend on him, but his Damascus experience is also related to what happened to his wife. That's critical because something happened in his life which had

nothing to do with all these other things. Somebody who has a nasty experience, it is like a wakeup call, it changes your life. I have no doubt he meant it, but anyway, even if he didn't mean it, I had forgiven him anyway, so the debate that people are having is irrelevant for me, because for me I didn't think he needed to wash my feet but he said "please allow me, it's for me. I know you are ok, but I am not ok"

TREVOR: Mr Chikane, for the research, we talk about *ubuntu*, I know you are not only a Christian, but you are *ubuntu*. Can you see Mr Vlok as Ubuntu?

FRANK: Take away the colour and they are human beings, like any other human being. It's just that we get indoctrinated one way or another, and I think his conscience hit him, his conscience could not allow him to stay without doing it. I mean he had no need to do this. I even asked him if he wanted this thing to be public, he said "Ja", it's not like it went public without his knowledge.

TREVOR: He said many times that he did not. . . in fact I've got many clips where he says he made it clear, he becomes explicit that he told Frank that he did not want it to be public. For me to hear this is very interesting.

FRANK: No, you see, it's maybe we are using wrong words. If he said "make it public" then it meant that he was playing to the gallery, he didn't want it to be public because it was about himself and his soul, it was not to tell people, that is why I had to ask him, I said the media has picked up this thing and I can't deny it happened. That's when he said, "I did not mean to make it public". It happened in an office not a private place, so you can't hide it, so that is why he said "I did not want it to be public" but he accepted that if it happened it was ok. He wasn't campaigning.

TREVOR: Now *ubuntu*? I don't know in what context you mean; he just became a human being and realised what wrong he had done, and he responded. The *ubuntu* concept is much deeper than just repentance.

APPENDIX 5
FATHER LAPSLEY

TREVOR: Thank you for allowing this interview. I just am fascinated and would like to know how you would introduce yourself to people who don't know you

LAPSLEY: Well, I'm originally from New Zealand, I'm a South African and the organisation that I am involved in is called the Institute for Healing of Memories which seeks to contribute to the healing journey of communities, individuals and nations.

TREVOR: Why did you choose to come to South Africa?

LAPSLEY: I didn't, in fact I joined an Anglican Religious Order in Australia, and just after I was ordained as a priest in 1973, my Order transferred me to South Africa. So, I was already a priest and I came here to study. I studied at the University of Natal in Durban, English and Psychology. I also became a chaplain to three campuses in Durban. University of Natal - Durban, which was almost entirely a white campus. The University of Durban Westville, which in the reality of apartheid at the time, was mainly people of Indian descent. I was also chaplain to the black medical school. And then in the middle of 1976, I elected to be the National Chaplain of Anglican students. Then in September 1976 I was expelled from the country and went to Lesotho.

TREVOR: Why were you expelled?
LAPSLEY: They didn't give any reasons, so that is a speculative question, but it was a time when school children were being shot on the streets and detained and imprisoned. I had begun to speak out against the killing of children.

TREVOR: At that time were you in Johannesburg?

LAPSLEY: No, I was in Durban.

TREVOR: Then how long were you in Lesotho?

LAPSLEY: I was in Lesotho from 1976 to 1983. I completed my first degree at the National University of Lesotho, also became chaplain of that University, as well as being involved in the training of priests. But also, whilst in Lesotho, I joined the ANC, African National Congress of South Africa and became one of the Chaplains of the ANC in exile. So, in 1983 after a massacre in Lesotho at the end of 1982, I was away but the church authorities believed I was one of the targets of the massacre, so I was forced to leave there. Then I went to live in Zimbabwe from 1983 to 1992 when I came back to South Africa.

TREVOR: So, all these years in Lesotho and Zimbabwe you were a chaplain in the ANC?

LAPSLEY: Yes, and in the ANC, I guess I had three areas of responsibility, Pastoral, Educational and Theological. I was involved in trying to help find educational opportunities for exiled children from crèche to University. Also pastorally, doing the things that a priest does, caring for people in exile, but also theologically you know, apartheid before it was a justice issue and a political issue and a human rights issue, it was a theological issue, because, of course, the apartheid state claimed to be Christian; claimed divine guidance for what they were doing. Part of my work was that of "unmasking" and de-legitimatising that claim to be Christian and seeking to mobilise faith communities internationally to support the struggle against apartheid.

TREVOR: Why in the ANC? You know people would say you would be partisan.

LAPSLEY: In fact, I had a biography written about me that was entitled "priest and Partisan". If you read Jesus' description of his own mission, in Luke, quoting Isaiah He did not say "I came to preach good news to everybody". "I came to preach the good news to the poor, to open the sight of the blind, to bind up the broken-hearted". So, through scripture, we see a God who was in favour of everybody from a partisan position. The difference between joining a political party and joining a liberation movement; it's not accidental that the first three Presidents of the ANC were Ministers of Religion. People who had heard a Gospel of justice, of freedom, of equality would experience the opposite in their lives, and so they realised as people of faith that they needed to act politically, and so they formed and became part of the ANC. But also, for me, it was the recognition that in the end the apartheid state was not ultimately threatened by individual action or even prophetic action. At the end, the threat to the regime was a people united, organised politically. That made me realise I needed to . . .

my problem, if you like, was a theological problem but it had a political manifestation, so I needed to act politically, to be able to fulfil the command to "love God and love your neighbour" because I would say that, in the context of apartheid, I couldn't be a neighbour to a black person. I was locked into this 'oppressor' 'oppressed' position, so one needed to deal with the system so that we could indeed be human beings to one another.
TREVOR: What is it that Father Lapsley did in order for the apartheid government to target you in particular?

LAPSLEY: Well that's also a speculative question because they never wrote a note saying "this is the reason we have sought to kill you. I was not a gun runner! So, I can say the only automatic weapon I have ever used in my life is my tongue. So, in a way, they were a bit stupid, because they removed my hands, which I didn't need for shooting, but they left the tongue working perfectly well. My conclusion is that it was my theology that was a threat to the apartheid state because what I was saying internationally is that apartheid was a choice or an option for death, carried out in the name of the Gospel of Life, and that is why it was an issue of faith to say no to it. So, in a sense, by seeking to kill me, they illustrated the point that that was indeed what it was.

TREVOR: Let's go back to the whole thing of them trying to kill you. I mean, can you explain how you lost your hands, how did it happen? I understand you were out of the country when it happened.

LAPSLEY: I was living in Zimbabwe, and the Zimbabwean authorities said that they had information that I was on a South African government hit list. I lived with armed police guards 24 hours a day for several years. So, 1990 came, Nelson Mandela was released, the regime said they wanted to talk, to negotiate. My armed guards were taken away. There were assurances that there would be no further attacks on the front-line states. Three months after Nelson Mandela was released from prison, I received in the post two religious' magazines from South Africa. I was at home and so I opened the magazines and one of them exploded. I lost my hands, my eye, my eardrum.
TREVOR: Did you lose consciousness?

LAPSLEY: No, I didn't lose consciousness. I think when the bomb went off, firstly I knew they had got me; the regime. Secondly, I knew that somehow, I had won, and they had lost

because they had sought to kill me and I was alive, so in that sense, it was a defeat. But also, I had a sense that God was with me in that experience. He did not step in and say "there's a bomb" – I opened it but, in that experience, I had a sense of the presence of God with me.

TREVOR: What was going on in your mind?

LAPSLEY: Well there was the shock and pain and all of that – there's a lot going on in the mind but it's obviously a major trauma.

TREVOR: Were you with friends or comrades?

LAPSLEY: I was with a friend who was on the other side of the room who went seeking for help, and then other friends arrived and took me to the hospital in Harare.

TREVOR: How long were you in the hospital?

LAPSLEY: One month in a Zimbabwean hospital, and then I was flown to Australia and there I spent seven months in two Australian hospitals, after which I came back to Zimbabwe. I visited South Africa in 1991 and in 1992 I returned to the country. Maybe, an important thing to say is that because during the apartheid years I had lived in Southern Africa, but I travelled the world in the struggle against apartheid. So, when I was bombed, there were messages of prayer, love and support from all across the world. I think the prayer, the love and support from people of different faiths, people of goodwill – I think that is what helped me to make my bombing redemptive. By that I mean to bring the good out of evil, life out of death. Also, I realised that if I was filled with hatred and bitterness, self-pity and desire for revenge, that I would be a victim forever. They would have failed to kill the body, but they would have killed the soul.

TREVOR: Is this where the whole thing – the Institute was birthed?

LAPSLEY: Let me put it this way. I was accompanied on my journey of healing by the prayers and love of people, and I began to discover a new calling. A calling to accompany others on their journey of healing. In 1993 I became a chaplain to a trauma centre for victims of violence and torture and I was there for five years. It was at the time of the preparation for the Truth

Commission, and I had a question, even before the commission happened. My contention was that we were all damaged by the journey the nation had travelled; we all had stuff inside of us because of our experience, so my question to the commission was "what happens to those who don't qualify to come to the commission?" So, it was my reflection on the nation's journey and my reflection on my personal journey was the thinking that allowed us to develop a process, essentially an experiential workshop that we called "The Healing of the Memories". So, we developed that programme while I was at the trauma centre. There was also an organisation there called the "Religious Response to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission". But then in 1998, we created this separate Institute for Healing of Memories – 20 years ago this year.

TREVOR: Then let's go straight to the TRC. Were you invited or did you go to the TRC and did you meet some of the perpetrators?
LAPSLEY: I gave evidence to the TRC. I did not meet any of the perpetrators. I was in Kimberley and was simply one of the people invited to tell my story.

TREVOR: So, because of time, let us go straight to Vlok. Had you ever met him before you met him in Pretoria?

LAPSLEY: That was my first time to meet him, and for me, it was a very unsatisfactory meeting.

TREVOR: Before you go into it, how did it happen?

LAPSLEY: It was set up by Professor Piet Meiring at this particular conference, and it was unsatisfactory in the sense that I felt already that; because at that stage he had already spoken to and had interactions with Frank Chikane, so the time he spoke I felt that it had become a little bit of a performance – you know, "he did his thing" and then when I spoke in response he didn't seem to listen, he seemed to be writing and doing he own things. But I was concerned as well that he had gone for the highest profile figure, like Chikane, but he clearly had been responsible for the suffering of a number of people, so I was concerned about that. I think it's like, as I said in the commission, I said I would be interested to meet those who were responsible for what happened to me, but my question is "well what are you doing with your life? OK you are sorry for what you did, and you have asked me to forgive, but what are the signs of the fruit of repentance. I was also struck that the interaction with Adriaan Vlok, there

seemed to be a lot of "I don't remember" and we have seen this with a number of people who were perpetrators at various levels and some of them direct torturers. Remember some of those encounters with one particular torturer, Benzine, where the victim remembers everything, and the perpetrator remembers nothing. Now, what is that about? Is it denial; is it psychological; is it physiological? Is it deliberate and what are we talking about? I think it may be a great mixture of things because all of us in our lives when we think about the past and even if we were part of the same event, we remember different things. Like I would remember Benzine, he would remember the colour of the wall, but not what he had done to people. So, for me meeting with Mr Vlok was a very unsatisfactory encounter and at Piet Meiring's initiative, there was a subsequent meeting, a private meeting at his house, which I think was much more satisfactory meeting. I have no doubt in his personal genuineness and his personal commitment to discipleship. I still worry about the default position of wash your feet. Not too much theologically, but it's become his chosen ritual; is this always the appropriate response and that concerns me. But we are all genuine in the ways that we are genuine, and I would want to say that he is genuine in the way that he is genuine, I don't think he is fake or pretending. I think he is sincere. I don't know how much the theology he was brought up with prepared him for a journey, but maybe that is true of all of us, that our theology is not necessarily adequate. It's like "OK I'm sorry" but like you said, "what is the fruit of repentance". What does remorse look like? I think in his own way he is seeking to live out that journey and I respect him for that.

TREVOR: We are coming to closure; but what about the church in South Africa, with the journey you have gone through and your role now is to heal at many levels. Is there anything you would like to say to the church, black and white?

LAPSLEY: I think maybe not just to the church, but to the nation. As a nation we have experienced centuries of war and oppression and conflict, it has characterised the last few hundred years of our lives, as a consequence, there is inter-generational trauma, so the journey of healing is of several generations. So, the question to our generation is, do we recognise our woundedness? Do we recognise the woundedness out of our lives and also our parents and grandparents and within our communities? You see the important question is how we break the cycle that turns victims into victimisers. Because that cycle is true of individuals, of communities and nations. For example, someone who has had something terrible done to them with hatred and bitterness, they may become the victimiser to those around them. We see this

in domestic families, sexual violence, so where the public and political plays itself out in the intimate or the private space, or it becomes self-harm. Whether in drugs or alcohol, suicide. Breaking that cycle from the Christian perspective at the heart of our faith is the Jesus story where the crucified one of Good Friday, the victim of Good Friday, becomes the Victor of Easter day, but the wounds are still visible. For me, that is an image of the journey we need to travel as a nation, we should never forget what we have done to each other, but the wounds can heal step by step. My particular work is in the area of psychological, the emotional and the spiritual, but that is not an alternative to the political, the social and the economic interplay. So, if we, as a nation, become a just society it would be easier for the wounds to heal. But even if we do that and we are still filled with rage and bitterness we won't create a very nice society. So healing is an imperative, principally for us and it should never be seen as an alternative to justice. We need to continue to struggle for justice even as we seek to travel the journey of healing for ourselves and for the nation.

TREVOR: The last one, when I see your missing hands – the first time I saw you was on the TV, but I wanted to ask, how did you adjust to this?

LAPSLEY: Well I think that my participation in the struggle had prepared me for the possibility of death. It had not prepared me for the possibility of permanent major physical disability so that was its own journey. I would say for me, you know in our work we often say, "but how do you feel?". So, I am not full of rage and bitterness, but I think the dominant feeling that you live with as a permanent part of your life is grief, not that you cry every day, but it is a permanent reality and losing limbs is like that. But for me, it has also been redemptive in that I have been able to walk beside others in their journeys of healing because they know that I know. It is like someone says, "so you are a healer, how many people have you healed" Well, no one, but I know I have created spaces where healing happens.

APPENDIX 6

PAUL VERRYN

PAUL: I am Paul Verryn, I am a Methodist minister – retired actually, technically at the end of last year (2017); so, I've been in the ministry since 1973 which is 45 years. I was born in Pretoria, schooled first of all at a Catholic School Lerato Convent in downtown Pretoria, then at CBC, Christian Brothers College to the end of what was then standard 5 (Grade 7). Then I went to St. Stitians College here in Randburg and completed my matric there.

TREVOR: And your family? Brothers and sisters?

PAUL: I have one sister who was sixteen years older than me, but she passed away about 14 to 15 years ago.

TREVOR: Tell me about the family atmosphere when you grew up – was it a Christian family?

PAUL: Yes. My parents were separated when I was four or five and that's when we moved into the inner city. My mom worked in, what was then called the Permanent Building Society which eventually became absorbed into Nedbank. She was the first woman in the country to be appointed a manageress in the Permanent Building Society and she had her offices in Gezina. Gezina was a very conservative suburb in Pretoria.

TREVOR: Is it still there?

PAUL: Yes – I don't know whether it is still called Gezina, but it was near a school called Iona Convent which is the school where my sister went to school and her daughters went to school. It was the first school (I think) which opened its doors to black people. The nuns used to have to get up early in the morning and clean the graffiti off the walls so that the children wouldn't be traumatised when they came to school.

TREVOR: How old were you when you consciously became a Christian?

PAUL: Well I went to Sunday School, but I ran away from Sunday School when I was a four-year-old; I'm not sure why, but I know I ultimately went to Wesley Methodist church which was downtown Pretoria. There was a wonderful old lady Made Slade and she had a way with little people that really worked for me, I loved her. Also, a very good minister called Bobby Bellis and his son was ultimately my Chaplain at St Stitians. I suppose if you wanted to know about my conscience or conscientiousness because my mother worked, we had a black woman worked for us, her name was Julia Nkademele and she educated me about the whole issue around pass laws, around transport from Mamelodi and, and. So, my mom would moan at Julia *for* being late for work, or whatever it was, and she knew that she would get absolutely nowhere because I would argue for Julia. My mom said if there was a fire and I and Julia were in the

fire, you would get Julia out before you thought of me. So, I would come home from school every day and actually understood the pass laws quite intimately.

TREVOR: So, this was the first aspect that you became aware of in the Apartheid system.

PAUL: Yes, even before 1961. There was good work done, particularly through that chaplain at St. Stithian's college. Then I suppose one of my biggest conscientisation happened when I was conscripted into the army at the age of 16 going on 17. It was just a year, going into Voortrekkerhoogte, and then I was trained as a G Clerk, so I was taught typing and office management and all that kind of stuff. Then I was moved to defence headquarters, from headquarters to Quartermaster General right in the centre of Pretoria. What happened there? Well, I was a very compliant child. I never ever got into trouble at school, but it was the opposite in the army. There wasn't anything I would accept, and I was AWOL (absent without leave) every day from the 8th June until I left. I would be there from 8 to 4 and then get on the bus and go home. My pretext for that was that I was registered at Unisa for my first year where I did English, Philosophy, German, Sociology and Psychology.

TREVOR: Why were you studying that? Were you aware that you were going to become a minister?

PAUL: The Chaplain at St Stitians said to me "If you are going into the ministry, then I plead with you do not go straight into theology, study something else and then go into theology. Philosophy, psychology and English particularly have been the most important informants for the studies.

TREVOR: So, you understand humanity at a deeper level

PAUL: Not only that, my thesis was in New Testament so the study of English, and I did one year of Honours as well, it really helped me in terms of the understanding of scripture and literature and all that kind of stuff.

TREVOR: And then of course, you went into the ministry. Where did you study for the ministry?

PAUL: I first of all started – you know the Methodist church has this combination where you do practical work and your formal theological training. So, I started in Uitenhage, and I had congregations in Despatch, Glentana and Springbok Flats who are farming communities on the way to Graaf Reinet, and I was responsible for youth work in Uitenhage itself. This was in 1973. Then I moved from there to Butterworth. Two years in Butterworth and there I had a congregation in Butterworth and Idutywa(?) and Willowvale, those were the formal congregations. This was in 1974/5. A lot of my congregation would go down to the coast and so I started a congregation down at Xologa.

TREVOR: Is it a black area?

PAUL: No, it used to be a very beautiful seaside resort and we used to have services in the bar at the hotel on Sunday morning. Then three years at Rhodes and then five years in Port Elizabeth, then Roodepoort and then to Orlando. From Orlando to Jabavu and the Central Methodist.

TREVOR: I'll come back to this – but when did you move to Soweto?

PAUL: 1987 on the 17th December which makes this my 31st year.

TREVOR: We missed this part – tell me, when were you born?

PAUL: 26th February 1952

TREVOR: So, Paul, I know you mentioned the chaplain at the school, but was there anything that led you to think that you have a calling to the ministry?

PAUL: Yes, I think from a very early age I kind of felt that this was where God wanted me to be, basically that. There was an Alan Walker Raleigh that took place at Loftus Versveld in Pretoria, my sister was very involved in that. Alan Walker was an Australian evangelist and there as some of the stuff he spoke about, particularly the formal, recognisable commitment to Christ that took place. So, I was about ten years old when that happened.

TREVOR: Then Politics! I come from a background where I was taught that you can't mix politics and religion and your faith, of course now none of us believe that, it was rubbish, but I remember when I was young, I used to see in Orlando this white guy, this priest, then later I got to know you. So, I want to know how you ended up going into the space of politics when it was, so to speak, taboo!

PAUL: Well you know I worked with a minister in Port Elizabeth with the name of George Irvine, and he exposed me to all sorts of things. For instance, he would take me along with him to meetings and one of those meetings was Lifeline, so I trained as a Lifeline Counsellor and eventually ended up as a trainer in Lifeline. He exposed me to Hospice in Port Elizabeth and also took me to the East Cape Council of Churches. There I became responsible for inter-church aid. Inter-church aid was a development programme of the SA Council of Churches, so it looked at areas that were specifically under-resourced, communities that were desperate and looked at ways to enable those communities to develop themselves economically. In that East Cape Council of Churches, there were people who were political.

TREVOR: Do you remember names?

PAUL: Yes, so Sakkie Maxosoma was one of them, Zondani was another one (I don't remember his surname) and he worked for the Dependence Conference. Probably those two – Oh, I taught Sakkie to drive. He stayed in Kwazakele in New Brighton. Sakkie was not a pastor. He came off Robben Island and we gave him a job at the Council of Churches.

Then there was a note that came across my desk, and the note was about the detainee's parent support committee. This was in the early 1980s. The notice called us to a meeting in the northern areas of Port Elizabeth. It caught my eye, but I couldn't get to the meeting on time because we had a church function somewhere. So, I arrived as the meeting was finished, only to be told the date of the next meeting. I went to the next meeting and became the chairman of the Detainee's Parents Support Committee in Port Elizabeth. That then exposed me to a group of people. It was mixed –I was not the only white. I met people like Mkhuseli Jack, Blackburn, Judie Chalmers. Blackburn was a member of the Provincial Council PFP. Judie Chalmers was a Member of Parliament in the first Parliament of South Africa. It was a very interesting group of activists. That took me right into the heart of a consciousness that I was not that aware of. I was certainly politically awake. Then the church moved me to Roodepoort, and I really just plonked myself down in the SACC and basically first started working with Dr Kistner and attended the DPSC (Detainee's Parents Support Committee) meetings over here, and then formed the Detainee's Counselling Service with a group of Social Workers, Psychologists and Psychiatrists and we did some very interesting work on post-traumatic stress. We worked with NAMDA (National medical Doctors Association), and so we set up an office downtown, so it was Princess, Krugersdorp, Kagiso - that whole West Rand area. There I had some interesting experiences, so I had just been in Johannesburg for a short while when Mollie Blackburn, who was eventually 'killed' in an accident. She was the member of the Provincial Council. There were four of them in the car, two were killed and two survived. Mollie was killed and Des Chalmers was killed. Guy Bishop and Judie Chalmers survived. Actually, Des was not killed – these things slip your mind. Mollie phoned me and said Ford Calata which was in Sun City (Johannesburg Prison) here in section 28 and they allowed visitors for section 28 which was a kind of 'protective custody' and asked if I would go and visit him. So, I went to visit him and so I was involved in the Dependents Conference which was the arm of the SACC that was the dependents of political victims. So, I worked with people like Tom Mthatha and that group of people. I worked there when Desmond was there. I became the Treasurer of the Church's Hunger Fund; I think it was about 1984. There were a terrible drought and people were really suffering from starvation. The church's Hunger Fund was set up to give grants, ten, fifteen thousand Rand at a time – which was a lot of money at that time. So, I was the Treasurer of that fund, and I tell you that for a specific reason. Then I came back one night at about half past twelve from a Detainee's Council Service meeting and came into my house in Roodepoort but right on the boundary of Krugersdorp. I walked into the house and could smell that somebody had been in the house from a cigarette smell. I had a little entrance hall, then I turned

right and there was the lounge and I could see that someone had been in the house. There were files all over the lounge. I just walked into the lounge, instinctively, to see what had happened and these three people came out of the dining room and basically, they held me hostage for eighteen hours. They handcuffed me and basically forced me to make out a cheque for R15,000.00 (fifteen thousand Rand), and you won't believe me, it was only last year that I connected the dots.

TREVOR: Who were those people?

PAUL: Well, I knew the person. He was a man called Peter Zulu, but I saw him at a big funeral last year in the paper, and then I understood that there was an informant in the Finance department in the SACC, but I only put it together last year. I did see him at the airport and tried to have him arrested! I did make mistakes on the cheque which I hoped the counter signatory would pick up, but he didn't. They then came back to me and said if I did it again, they would kill me, they basically held me at gunpoint.

TREVOR: Was this the first time you had come into contact with the State apparatus? Before then was it smooth?

PAUL: No! no! no! We had a memorial service in New Brighton on the 16th December, I don't remember the year. Helen Joseph came as a guest speaker. You remember it was called "The Day of the Vow" then? And we renamed it *Detainees Day.* We had the church service and we came out and we were arrested – seventeen of us. We were arrested and taken to New Brighton police Station, but nothing happened with that. They didn't lock us in, they kept us in the charge office. They said it was an illegal gathering and what. Every now and again we would be confronted in the townships by security, so we had had quite a lot of interaction.

PAUL: Coming back to the robbery, I had become aware of the fact that they had gone, by six o'clock. I called my family; I called the police. The police came, they unlocked my handcuffs.

TREVOR: Did you suspect that this was political, or did you just see it as a crime?

PAUL: I did suspect that it was political because the SACC was under siege. The phenomenon that happened that made it very difficult was that then Fort came out of prison and came and stayed with me because he was a school teacher and they would not let him go back and teach, so we organised for him through the SACC to get a heavy-duty driver's licence because he had a family with two children at that stage. He got the driver's licence and went back down to Cradock and then he was killed. He came back from a Pepco meeting in Port Elizabeth, they were ambushed by the security police and they murdered all four of them. Fort, Matthew Goniwe and two others. Their murder was terrible. I can understand the shooting of an enemy, but to cut-off fingers and burn bodies and mutilate them as they were found ….

TREVOR: The Minister of Police then was Adriaan Vlok?

PAUL: Yes, I think so. By this stage I was very friendly with the family; I still am. His son, Lukhanyo Calata who was one of the SABC eight, he's just finished writing a book on the Calata's. You know the old man, James Calata was the first General Secretary of the ANC, Canon James Calata. The family was quite persecuted, but you can imagine; the congregation I was in a fairly conservative congregation. I was sent up there because the minister resigned from the pulpit on the issue of baptism, so you must know they were conservative, semi-charismatic, and . . .. Now they had this minister in their presence, the front page of the Sunday Times was Mvume Dandala and I photographed "priests March Under Communist Flag" (the Red Flag), you can imagine! I came back and, in that congregation, there were certainly a family of security police members. I got up on the pulpit and said, "this is what was in the papers" and I explained everything, and they knew Fort because he had come to church on more than one occasion, but now you want to ask me questions. I was asked directly in that service "are you a Communist?" Then another phenomenon happened. It clearly started becoming dangerous for political activists and so Nomonde's wife came and stayed with me, she was pregnant at that stage. It was interesting, about two or three weeks ago, I met a United States Senator who had visited me at that time. He was not a Senator then, just a researcher who worked at the SACC, now he is a Senator. He remembers Nomonde and her distress and her grieving for Fort, so I knew these two little children, Dorothy, who is now a clinical psychologist and Lukanyo who is a press person. Then we had this attack, basically on young activists and the Wits Council then opened up sanctuaries. There was a sanctuary in Bosmont and Wilgespruit which was quite near Princess.

TREVOR: What does it mean "they opened sanctuaries"

PAUL: Remember there were about 60,000 young people on the run in this country, and this was in the 1980s where young people were targeted, and I'm talking young children from the age of about 9 up, so then I opened my house to some of those young people as well to provide them with a safe space. This Senator reminded me that at that time there was a white car parked outside my house all the time.

TREVOR: Were you not scared?

PAUL: To be honest, no. We were at war! People don't realise that there really was a war here. When a country turns on its children!? So Emsen Banda stayed in the house for some time with his family. There were young people from Nelspruit and Mpumalanga, Northwest; you would be interested to know some of the people who stayed in my house, they are now in

senior positions, even Premiers. People from the Northern Cape and the Eastern Cape, Kwa-Zulu Natal, all over.

TREVOR: Can you remember, off the top of your head, how many people you had staying?

Easily 50. They were sleeping in the bathroom, down the corridors, in the kitchens, all over

TREVOR: So, the Central Methodist thing was not recent, you had already started that?

PAUL: Yes – and it continued. Let me just say, you must also know that me sitting in the Detainees Counselling Service, I was getting information that was . . .

TREVOR: Was its sensitive information

PAUL: Well I'll tell you because it relates to Vlok. On the night before I left Soweto, I was raided by the security police it was 1987. They just wanted to know what I was doing etc., but the next day, I had an interview with the BBC and it eventually became a documentary called "Suffer the Children". Now at that stage, they had promulgated regulations in Parliament which prohibited speaking about anything related to detention. The fine was 20 years or R200,000.00 and the BBC came and interviewed me the next day about what I knew about the torture of children, or what was happening to children in detention. I can still remember some of the things that I said. I said I had seen one child who had been hit so hard, he put up his hand to protect himself, and his hand was broken, so there was also assault. They came back with wounds that had to be referred to the doctors. Boys and girls were taken into detention and were electrified through their genitals and through their nipples. Some of the children were put into detention into solitary confinement. There was a young child who was put into a coffin with a corpse and made to speak. I think those were the things I said – five or six things, and then moved into Soweto, 17th December 1987.

TREVOR: Let's pause there. Why did you decide to move to Soweto?

PAUL: I didn't decide, the church moved me.

TREVOR: You could have said yes or no

PAUL: No. In the Methodist church, you make a vow when you are ordained "will you go where you are sent"? And you make that vow. It's the equivalent in the Catholic church to the Vow of obedience, and I'll tell you why. I was District Supervisor of studies in the Methodist church, right from my days in the Eastern Cape, then I moved up to this district which I think was called the South Western Transvaal, and I remained Supervisor of studies until I became Bishop in 1996 and Simon Xubule said to me at some church gathering, didn't I want to come and teach at Fedsem. So, I went to my Bishop then who was Peter Storey and I said to him, Simon has approached me to come and teach at Fedsem. So, he said, "what do you think?" so I said "my difficulty is that I have only had experience in the white churches" so, how do you

teach with authenticity people who are mostly going to be ministering in black communities. So, unless I have experience in a black context, and I understand it. He said, "are you serious"? so, I said "Yes", so he moved me into Orlando.

TREVOR: So, you arrived in 1997 in Orlando. Tell me how did you feel? Were you anxious, were you excited, first time living in a black community in the 80's right at the height of anti-apartheid?

PAUL: You know at one level it was so busy. I had the congregations in Orlando, I was working. At that stage I was the liaison officer for the Regional Councils, so they really were crazy times. One didn't have time to process, how am I feeling here?

TREVOR: So, you just adjusted?

PAUL: No, I did not adjust that easily. First of all, the worship thing was another thing. I was used to one hour, and if you went over you were… you know and here it was two and a half hours, it was definitely something I needed to change. I remember Siyakudumisa, it went on and on and on and I was thinking to myself – and you know I studies liturgy so I knew the worship we were following was dated back to 1652 and the old order for prayer in the Anglican church (actually) that we had just adopted and we needed to change the stuff. People were very patient with me, as you can imagine.

TREVOR: Were you the only white person in that church at that time in Orlando?

PAUL: Yes, the only white Methodist. You remember the only other white that lived in Soweto was father Emmanuel La Font, he was Catholic. The Catholics managed it much better than the Methodists, even still now. You must understand that work in a church in the black context is a different story, just in terms of the load. So, every week I would go with my Bible woman and do Intendo Leko with the Chatins. Those were the men who were sick and couldn't get to church anymore and the elderly. I mean they educated me.

TREVOR: That expression, The Bible Women; can you explain it to me?

PAUL: They were an order in the Methodist church their double responsibility is pastoral work. They care for the sick and they call … I think the derivation of it goes back to them being the women who were responsible for the education of the small people (young people), the Sunday School, so you would find them there. She would come in the morning and we would go out and do communions for half a morning. And then, of course, you know that every Saturday there are two, three funerals. There were often times when I would do the service at the funeral, and then the local preachers would take over because I had another funeral and another funeral. Not many were political. There was one that I remember, but I will tell you about that at a later stage. It's hard work. Somebody dies, you go to the home the night before, there's a vigil and

so there's constant engagement with the community. It's just on and on and on. Just in terms of workload and ethos, it was very different.

TREVOR: Can we link straight to the Mandela's, because that was where they were, and you were in the neighbourhood. Did you get to know them?

PAUL: Well I didn't really. I didn't really know Winnie, although as I have said before we were quite intimately engaged for thirty years, I didn't really know her. She did not come to the church. I tell you who did come to the church, was Kenneth Kaunda when he came to South Africa (with his white handkerchief). He would always come to the early service at Orlando West. That's the other thing, of course, I mean *mtendeleko* again and again. I had a congregation in Orlando West, Orlando East which we called Baragwanath, but it was far in, Orlando South, Noordgezicht and Orlando North, and I was alone.

TREVOR: Would you say, in retrospect, I know you stay in Soweto now, but would you say it was a good time for you?

PAUL: Yes – it was phenomenal. First of all, it was a huge learning curve in all sorts of things, in terms of culture, in terms of values in terms of just humanity. And somehow, I clicked in that congregation wonderfully. There was a conspiracy to get rid of me at one stage, in Orlando, it was the year before I became Bishop. My colleagues basically conspired and the people in Orlando got to hear about it, and boy, they were ready! So when the invitation came and people wanted to talk, they stood up on points of order, and they said, when we get to this, the laws on discipline says there is no discussion and they put it to vote to the whole circuit, so the vote was unanimous. So, it was interesting. It was a difficult time, a year after I got here Stompei was killed. 1988 he was abducted, and he was dead by the 8th January. There were no others that were killed, only Stompei. There were four others abducted.

TREVOR: So how did you end up being caught up in that whole thing?

PAUL: A woman came to stay in the house whose name was Xoliswa Falate.

TREVOR: She is now "late" Xoliswa

PAUL: Yes, I buried her. You will remember that Stompei was brought to me by Ace Magashule (the current General Secretary) and Matthew Chaskalson, and they were afraid that his life was in danger. He was one of the kids, I think, that was put into a coffin and tortured. He was about 14. I was away on holiday; my first holiday and I was with my family in Pretoria and at quarter to eight on the 31st December the call came through to say that they had abducted four children – they called them children but actually, Stompei was the only child. There was also Pelo Mekgwe and Kenny Kgase. There was evidence that the children had been seriously

assaulted because I think they took the children to Asvat who had said that Stompei must be taken to hospital. He also examined the others for sexual assault.

TREVOR: Who assaulted them?

PAUL: The allegation was that Winnie and the soccer club. The allegation came from the community at that stage. I got a call from a person called Erick Ingelesa and he was working for the Wits Council of Churches at that stage, but he was also in the Soweto crisis committee. And then all the rest of it unfolded.

TREVOR: What is it that you did when you got this news?

PAUL: They said I must not come back because they felt my life was in danger and that Winnie had accused me of sexually assaulting the kids.

TREVOR: I remember reading that. But had you seen the kids before?

PAUL: Yes, they were staying in the house. So, I came back one night for a meeting, from the SACC and Xoliswa was interrogating Stompei, and Stompei was busy crying with his head in his hands, he was really traumatised. I was not happy; I was very angry with him because I felt that one thing, I did not want to happen in the house was a repeat of what had happened to these kids in detention. You must really know that some of the stuff that happened at the hands of the police was really sick, and you were dealing with young people who couldn't get their lives together. They would have flashbacks, they would struggle with depression, their behaviour was abhorrent, often violent. Very, very deeply disturbed. Some of the kids stayed at the house for years. The community managed to negotiate with Winnie for the release of the children into Peter Storey's hands. I went straight to Peter Storey and told him what exactly was happening and also what the allegations were. He had not known. He immediately started a full investigation into the allegations. Before I could have any verbal contact with the children, he investigated and interrogated them, the community had seen them and there was a big community meeting where all the children in the house were questioned about what was happening in the house, whether there was sexual stuff going on, and . . . . .

TREVOR: Did you have an encounter with Winnie to talk about this?

PAUL: No. It was her and Falati. Eventually, Falati withdrew the rumours and she apologised. She became a very broken sick person. I ministered to her at the end of her life and I did her funeral.

TREVOR: Let's just go back. Why were they spreading these rumours against you?

PAUL: You know, to this day I'm not sure. I just had apologies and once you have had an apology, you don't say "what was going on with you, why did you choose to do this . . .". I

was vulnerable if you come to think of it. I used to come home at night and try to find a place in my bed to sleep because there were people wall to wall, and I was not married you know, the natural allegations, it actually does not surprise me, and then, you must also know, I was in a sense, politically naïve because I moved into the township with activists and people who were creating all sorts of stuff all over the country. Many of those people have ended up in leadership positions in this country. I didn't realise Winnie had this soccer club which was a kind of rebellion against the system but was also creating, as you know, a huge amount of anxiety and fear in Orlando, but it looked as if I was in competition with her with these people, you understand, and I would never have seen that. The need was so huge that anybody who could help must help if that makes sense to you.

Just two or three other things. One night in that 1987 year I had done an audit of one of the Council of Churches in Worcester, came back on the late-night flight; they used to call them the red eye flights, they were cheap. I came into Kgotso House, put my stuff down because I was too tired. I didn't understand why Welcome (the security man) did not turn on the lights. I switched on the lights for the garage, I got into my car and before I got home, Tom Mantata had phoned my home I don't know how many times to find out if I was alright because Kgotso house had been bombed, so I must have missed the bomb by about ten minutes. The person who detonated the bomb was Eugene de Kock

TREVOR: Sent by Vlok, of course, who was the minister then

PAUL: And then In the June of that year we had synod and the BBC film came out "Suffer the Children" and Vlok was confronted with it in Parliament and Vlok said "Mr Verryn will have to justify every one of the allegations he has made, and then Frank Chikane said "fine, we'll get affidavits. We collected affidavits one after the other, the children themselves came forward. We took legal affidavits facilitated by lawyers and we submitted the documents. It just disappeared – we never heard another thing.

TREVOR: Have you ever met Vlok personally, and what do you think of him?

PAUL: No, I never met him, and I think he was part of a system, at that time, that had gone insane with power, and you must know that it was a system that sought to marginalise black people. I mean if you think of it, it was mad. How do you ultimately alienate 80% of the population? Economically, educationally, medically and geographically. We are coming on to nearly 30 years after the fact, you must know that people were in a corner. There was no way in which this thing was sustainable any longer, it was bizarre, madness and had all the psychological features of the dysfunction of apartheid and it became more and more vicious. You tell me, what makes a father, an adult, a Christian, do what they were doing to children

and somehow think that this is ok? And then you go to church on Sunday! Have you got rocks in your head – it just does not penetrate. I don't know if Vlok was involved in any of that stuff.

TREVOR: He was the Minister.

PAUL: Well that's an interesting word. Let alone what I heard about but happened in Vlakplaas! They chased people into the bush and then pursued them like animals and shot and killed then. They were burning bodies one side and having a barbeque on the other side. I've been to one of the sites at Vlakplaas, because believe it or not there is a foster home on one of those places, and the woman there is connected to one of the congregations I am serving with. You go into that place and there is something eerie, place of death. One of our ministers said, "if you listen carefully, the birds don't sing there". I was a minister and an International Broadcasting Corporation with reasonable credibility, BBC is not a "fanagalo", if they were prepared to publish that kind of thing about my ministry, I tell you, in a flash, I would set up a commission to investigate. Mr Vlok basically, very cynically set it aside saying it was rubbish. Let me just tell you, at that stage, if you had told me that what would happen in 1994 would happen, I would have said to you it's impossible, I don't see a solution to this thing without a bloodbath. You can't demonise people to that degree and think you are going to waltz out of this as though nothing has happened. No matter what we say, the politicians have negotiated a new South Africa but there are many people who still carry the wounds of what happened in those years. They don't function, their families are dysfunctional. We don't give proper gravitas to what psychological dysfunction is about.

TREVOR: Let's talk about the church and we will come back to Vlok as it is my focus. The white church; what do you think of the white church?

PAUL: There was a term that was coined by theologians which was called "the hermeneutics of suspicion". It thinks one has to listen and listen. Somehow the whites still benefit from apartheid. If apartheid was abolished, we would not be sitting in Soweto, there would not be special places for black people. There would not be places where black people have to live like animals to survive.

TREVOR: So, you are saying implicitly that Apartheid is still alive and kicking?

PAUL: Yes, I think so. I don't think you get rid of a doctrine like that at the snap of the fingers. There are still people who really think that that is the solution to this country.

TREVOR: Paul, one day you had a bullet shot at you, what happened.

PAUL: I came to Soweto and I don't know if you remember Prof Kumalo, he is a Professor of Missiology at UKZN, he was a member of my congregation in Orlando East, and he was getting married. I had done a wedding somewhere in one of these wedding places. I got out of my car

and I was carrying my vestments and my clothes and everything because I had slept away to be in time for that wedding and was now coming to another wedding. I came out and walked to the front of my car to go down to my house, and the young man came to the passenger side with a gun and said give me your keys and he shot a bullet. I said, "what did you say" and he shot another bullet. Then I said to him "I am not going to give you my keys, no matter what you do I will not give you my keys. Then he fired a third bullet and then a fourth bullet – that one jammed. I thought that he was playing with me and it was just a cap-gun, but I nonetheless thought I should get out of there. Poor Mr Radebe who was one of my '*gosas'* (leaders), came out of my house and was crying and pleading for mercy. I ran down to him and this guy fired another bullet. I went into my bedroom to sort out myself for the rest of the work that I had to do, took my clothes and put them into the washing basket, took my stole and lifted up my stole so I could fold it properly, and the stole went down, down. There were three bullet holes. I thought I will do the wedding, and after the wedding, the church was having a big conference in Benoni, I had better go and show my Bishop. So, I went and showed him, and then my friend who was sitting near the back came out and I showed him my stole, and he found the bullets in the stole. And then I had a Sunday School meeting and we had a Mrs Dldadlamba who was a member of the congregation, she said to me "I don't understand it, but Mrs Sisulu said I must say to you that the young man who caused trouble with you on Saturday, you don't have to worry, we have dealt with him" I don't know what that meant but I still have the stole with the bullet holes in.

Then I came back from America because there is a congregation that I have had a relationship with, they came to the synod at the point in time when the BBC and the news had broken that they were going to pursue me legally for the revelations about conditions in detention, and then they started a partnership with Orlando and me. In fact, I was on the phone when you came and that was a call from that same congregation.

IN the churches in Soweto at that stage, Christmas was not an issue, so you could take a holiday then and I would always come back at the beginning of the year. My family would pick me up at the airport and take me to a family gathering where my niece had married into a family. Her brother-in-law was called "Ouboet" and he was an operative in the security police – I'm sure! He said to me that there was somebody important that wants to meet with me and I do think it's important that I meet with him. I said I will have to check with my Bishop and will come back to you, so I went to Peter and he said "yes, well find out what they want" I said to him I think it's the security police. He said, "if it is the security police, well you have dealt with them many times". So, there was this gathering at the Carlton Hotel, and in walked this tall person

on a safari suit. The first thing he said to me is "If there's anybody who can convince me that there is a God, it's you because I don't understand how you are sitting in front of me, because I personally know of three occasions when you should have been killed, and I don't understand how it is that you are still here, unless there is a God". Then we spoke and he said there was a transition beginning in the country so the issues of security are important, and you are connected with communities all over the place, and so if ever know of any place where there is a threat to the security of the country will you let us know. Well, I said, you know I suppose the things that are a threat to the security of the country you won't think are. He said if ever you are in trouble you call me; we'll eliminate whatever is causing you distress and my name is Eugene de Kock. I didn't know who he was, I had no idea. A Leslie Lawson who was doing a photographic essay on me for the Millennium Magazine and I went and visited her that night and she was going to continue the journalistic thing. I told her about Eugene de Kock. The ANC had a book of identified ANC operatives and there was Eugene de Kock and Vlakplaas and everything, she had to explain to me about Vlakplaas, but there was a woman in my Noordgezicht congregation I used to give a lift home to every Sunday night and before I mentioned it she said to me "I had a funny dream about you "and I said, "yes Dolly". She said, "don't mock me listen to what I want to say to you. I dreamt that you met a man dressed in brown, brown from top to bottom, and all I want to say to you is just be very careful because he is evil". It was only after when I saw Dolly again that I remembered the dream and the man dressed in brown.

TREVOR: So, Paul, Vlok went to the TRC, came out and applied for amnesty. He was the only Apartheid senior cabinet minister who went to the TRC to own up to things for which he must take responsibility and he was given amnesty. And later he had an encounter where he became a Christian and then he was convicted to go and personally ask for forgiveness of Frank Chikane. It came out in the media how he washed Frank's feet and there were signs of repentance. What do you think of that?

PAUL: You know I am involved in victim/offender dialogues in the prison, so I'm dealing all the time with that issue all the time, asking for forgiveness and so on. So, I would accept that.

TREVOR: Do you think it's authentic?

PAUL: I'm not bothered about whether it's authentic or not because God's got a way of taking us seriously, even if we don't mean it. He will woe us into a house and He will make us furnish that house. Even if it's expedient and I'm doing it because I don't want to go to prison or whatever it is, but if I get to the place where I'm saying I'm sorry. I think he tried to poison Frank, or he arranged for it, so clearly he has come to some place of insight and obviously, I've

told you a lot that he must have been aware of, and he was told about the stuff by me via the press that was happening on his watch. The first person who was abducted by Winne, Kenny Kgase is totally dysfunctional, so what happened there which was torture, and all the complications which were revealed in the court case with Georg Bizos, totally demolished Kenny. His sister phoned me and told me that he was eating grass, he would only take food out of a dustbin because he is so scared that they are still coming after him. He has not recovered, and there are many of our young people then who are now adults, who have totally dysfunctional lives. We are going to be starting hearings for conscripts who were involved in the war in Angola etc. and all over the place in those years. It often makes me think of that story of Jesus crossing the lake and going and visiting that man that was in the tombs who was cutting himself and breaking the chains and the desperate loneliness and alienation and lack of belonging anywhere. That is still the narrative that is part of our journey in this country. We must not think that because we constructed a rainbow and added TRC that it has solved everything. So, when people come forward and say "I'm sorry" we must grab it with everything that we have got. Even if it's false and they do not declare everything, the fact of the matter is, he has started a journey, and all of us, ultimately, will stand before God and plead for mercy for some of the things we did and said that were far away from the Gospel.

TREVOR: Paul, what is the meaning of 'reconciliation' in the context of South Africa?

PAUL: I'll give you a good illustration that's one week old. I have been doing work in Coligny where that young man was killed, ultimately, for stealing a sunflower. We had a meeting first of all last Friday with the young people. I had eleven young people, all obviously unemployed. Let me just say it was a phenomenal meeting. I asked them to answer two questions: Give me an analysis of what is happening in Coligny, what is good and what's bad, then you begin to talk about how to be the agents of change. Those young people as far as I am concerned can be sworn into Parliament tomorrow. It was mature and it had a vision that gave me hope for the future of this country.

Then we had a meeting with the police and the security. Then we had a meeting with white farmers and white business. The first thing they spoke about was that there was no future, no hope. They carry a community post-traumatic stress with the murders that are happening on the farms and they are traumatised because they feel their identity has disappeared. Then one of them spoke about food security and the stealing of the sunflower was a symptom of a profound issue, and this white farmer felt – well it is an issue – 20million people go to bed at night hungry. Then another one spoke about job creation, and the fact that were between 6 and 6.2 million young people between 18 and 25 who are not in education and not in fixed

employment and it is very unlikely that they are ever going to be absorbed into the fiscus. Then they spoke about skills development and empowerment, and then lastly, they spoke about the whole education system. There are little children that have to walk 5km to school, and by the time they get to school they are so tired, and they are hungry. And then, one of them said, "in this place, we have got to have a march for reconciliation, because we don't know one another". This was one of the old farmers, and while he spoke, he was in tears because he feels this a vision that has been given to him by God, and if the black and white in that place, Coligny, they could make it a model. So, the farmers are struggling with the pain of their memories and their identity, but you can't talk reconciliation without talking food, job creation, skills development. You can't talk reconciliation while the little people still have to walk so far. Reconciliation is not just … e.g. "I'm sorry Trevor, I killed your mother. . . and your mother was the breadwinner in the family and so you are futureless. I'm sorry, God bless you etc." . . . and because you are a Christian you don't have an option, so you forgive me. Then …" can you possibly give me R10 for a loaf bread?" . . ." well, I'm not sure that that would be helpful because it creates dependency and it's a dysfunctional rescue. . .so all I can say is God bless you". Now that is treachery. You want to know what reconciliation is? It is the journey to feeding the hungry. The feeding of the 5000 is not just a happy little miracle, but about compassion for the hungry, and in John's Gospel, particularly, he connects the 5000 to the communion. So, when you take Communion in South Africa, remember that there are 20million people who do not have food, and if your faith has anything to do with the truth, you better start a feeding scheme. Go and have a look at the rubbish bins outside Anglo American. God sees it – there is such opulence, in the face there is not enough room in the stomach to consume what gets put on those tables and downstairs, there are people scratching in the rubbish bins, just so that the pain of hunger can be removed from them. I want to say two things to you:

PAUL: There is absolutely no justification for poverty in South Africa, there are enough resources and jobs. In my humble opinion, there is no justification for unemployment, but we are going to have to adjust –Houghton and Orange Farm. You know in the northern suburbs on the corner of Witkoppen and Main Streets, there is a very fancy Clay Oven restaurant and the super-rich go there. Then down into the valley and up and there is Porsche where a car costs more than R1 mill and in between those two in the valley, there is an informal settlement.

TREVOR: Then the whole thing of forgiveness. I know you implicitly spoke about it when you dealt with reconciliation, but just for the record, how would you define reconciliation and forgiveness in the context of South Africa with the backdrop of Vlok? I had an interesting thing

going around with Vlok, especially among the black people. One time we were invited by the synod of the Anglican church, and the response, especially from the black priest, was very negative. I think they were just honest "you were the guy that caused this and now you come and say you are a Christian. Some of them were very cynical, not all of them and there were those who were sincere. So, what do you think about forgiveness?

PAUL: I actually think that it is a journey, not a destination and the implications of our forgiveness are very far-reaching. My forgiving you, does not give you the right to abandon the relationship from that moment. So, I can say I'm sorry because I have some kind of insight into the fact of the damage that I have done, but I don't think that we could ever imagine that that is the end of the journey. Look at St Paul. He murdered, or he stands by the murder of Stephen and then he is confronted on the road to Damascus, and then? He goes back to his studies of the pharisaic studies of the law. No. He then starts a journey of getting the very thing that he was persecuting, spread throughout the whole gentile world, he works, he writes letters, he works his fingers to the bone, in actual fact with a complete change of direction. If you forgive me, you immediately load me with responsibility. That is my mandate to get moving. So, the issue of forgiveness – well, I've often found, for my own psychological health and for me to be able to carry on functioning imaginatively, I've got to let go of the stuff that keeps me in prison in terms of resentment and hatred and all the other things. So, forgiveness works two ways – I want to try and keep myself healthy. You know the cross – if that is what Jesus said (there is some question about it) – I think He is one of the most profound instructions to freedom.

TREVOR: Can you be specific?

PAUL: Can you imagine if all the black people had to try and remember all the things that they suffered with, they would never be able to enjoy anything because they would be occupied with it, it would affect their whole relationship. They would never be able to love properly because they would be obsessed with what they felt, so it is remarkable, the move we have made. It is absolutely stunning. But it is also an astute self-preservation decision. But once you have been forgiven, if you are the offender, be careful because a huge agenda comes with it, and you must understand that if you ask for forgiveness, you must understand that it is not conditional.

TREVOR: Finally, your years in downtown? We cannot leave this space without that one. How do you remember that? You were a pastor there for . . . how many years?

PAUL: I was there from 1996 to 2014, 18 years.

TREVOR: How was it in retrospect?

PAUL: It was hectic – it was very heavy work. There was a point where there were 3,500 people in that place sleeping there.

TREVOR: Tell us some of the snippets. I remember some of the kids were named after you.

PAUL: Well there is a little boy over here who was abandoned in the home-based care. He was called Moses because he was like Moses – he was abandoned and found, and his surname is Verryn. You know what was incredible, that suddenly Africa was on my doorstep. At some level South Africans are not part of Africa, they are a little colony on the tip of Africa, and they think that they know what Africa is.

TREVOR: White people are obvious, but also blacks?

PAUL: Most of the people who stay here are Zimbabwean, not all, some DRC and it is such a privilege. You know I made a point that this was not supposed to be a destination and so we ran training programmes there for sewing, for carpentry etc. so that people could get out. The school we started there won the prize.

TREVOR: And the media did not give any exposure?

PAUL: No, but it does not surprise me. It was not registered. I mean the department is excruciatingly slow –there are so many forms to fill in.

TREVOR: The highlight for you?

PAUL: The refugee service in the evening when they would sing. You know "How can we sing the Lord's song in a strange land". This might sound strange but the privilege of walking with people in the place of their suffering and alienation IS the walk with God actually. I don't think God is father Christmas! I don't think He walks around with tinsel and drives in big black cars. I think you will find God in the places where there are no answers when people are struggling with their lives in their hands, and that for me was a great privilege. I would not call it a highlight, in that sense, but a very profound privilege.

TREVOR: And the downside?

PAUL: The negativity and hostility of the congregations. There were a few people who caught the vision. I conducted quarterly meetings and there was a local preacher who was the caretaker of one of the buildings, who shouted out in one of the meetings "You must fuck off out of here". I must be honest with you, it was from that quarterly meeting that Mrs Mathakathaaka (??) one of my stewards here who became a minister under me, she had a stroke and died – she never recovered from it. She was the one who worked with me. I think the strain of that stuff.

TREVOR: The guy shouting at you, was he a black guy?

PAUL: Yes, we only had three white members in total in that whole thing. It feels like I got rid of all the whites. We used to have an evening service with mostly just whites and eventually

it was taken over by the refugee service. It was, and still is, an incredible experience. I do not go and visit – when I leave a place then I leave. The new minister has repaired the church, he has not managed to get to the lifts yet, but it is looking really great – one of those!!!

TREVOR: And Paul, Soweto? You moved here in 1987 so this year, wow, more than 30 years. How do you feel – you are a Sowetan now. What can you say about it?

PAUL: The best thing about Soweto is that it is a community. Houghton is not a community; you literally have to get a telescope to see your neighbours. I tell you, we had Good Friday here and I decided for the first time we would do "Stations of the Cross". So, we put the stations around this courtyard, and we started the service, and members of the community, particularly little people, came and joined us and went from station to station. They were so serious about repeating the things that they were supposed to repeat, and I just thought "man this is wonderful". Now that would only happen in Soweto, you know what I mean? There is an immediacy of relationship. The relationships are not always happy. I've got young people here who smoke Nyope, on Monday night we had one of the young people who has the skill of doing dreadlocks, and there are sometimes things that go with dreadlocks – but not everybody who has dreadlocks – now he wants to train other people to do dreadlocks. The old age home and we don't connect at all – that is a separate business, it is Methodist, and nobody goes in there. And we have a school here one of the nice things, our young people go to Morris Isaacson, and Mr Kanyile there is a superb person. Now I know that doesn't happen in other places.

TREVOR: The future – what do you think of the country, are you hopeful?

PAUL: You know, I do hearings around the country. It's not the TRC but it is giving people a chance to talk. Tomorrow I go to Izingolweni near Port Shepstone. In 1985 about 45 mostly young people were burnt to death in a thatched house, and although we have had more than one hearing there, I can't tell you who did what to who so you must know that the secret is still in place. Then on Christmas day 1995, there was a massacre in that area, they basically slaughtered people. So tomorrow we are going and having, can you imagine, we had all the political parties present the Ndunas, the Nkosis, the Mayor, the councillors and then the religious community together planning what is going to be a cleansing, healing day where we are going to cleanse the whole place. We expect more than 2,000 people, so it's that type of thing that I am doing, the work in Coligny, the Church Unity Commission. It's called Places of Hope and hearings.

TREVOR: And yourself? You said you just retired. How do you see or visualise yourself?

PAUL: Well I have been busier this year than I have for many years. I've started work in the prisons. Yesterday I was busy with that victim/offender dialogue, the rape of a fifteen-year-old girl fifteen years ago. We started at 8.30 and finished at 15.30 non-stop. So, there are doors that are opening up and we are starting a Truth Commission for Zimbabwe in South Africa

TREVOR: Paul, thank you so much for your time. You know at a personal level; we have kept friendship for years. You may not know, some years ago, about 1988 I saw you in Orlando and I was disturbed. Not in a bad sense but "a white person in Soweto" and then I started to get involved with Macaw (??) and one of the meetings was hosted in this place and then you inspired me, you touched my heart as a young person. I have not forgotten, and I always at that time, "he's my man, one day I hope to be like him, and I would like to be friends" I have never told you that, so you had to be part of my research. I don't know what my Professors will think, they may say this is not pertinent, but I don't care also with Father La Font. Thank you so much especially for this time- may God bless you.

PAUL: Thank you. I think that this is what reconciliation is – making a space that is different from the suspicion that is outside

APPENDIX 7

NICO AND ANNEMARIE: VLOK'S CHILDREN

TREVOR: Eh I am here at Oom Vlok's place with Anne Marie and Nico I just want to thank you for agreeing to share with me the journey not only with your dad but also about yourself in the context of South Africa.

TREVOR: so, I will like to eh I don't know who is the oldest here.

(by show of a hand is Nico followed by laughter)

TREVOR: So, Nico tell me a little bit of yourself before we go to your dad because you have your own identity apart from your father ja

NICO: Ja well geez where do I start, I mean eh

TREVOR: where were you born in this very house?

NICO: no here in Valhalla in this area I grew up here I went to primary school and I went to high school and there I joined the police force as part of my military service and then after that, I work in computers and then after that I got a job overseas and we migrated to Australia

TREVOR: When did you live to go to Australia?

NICO: 20 years ago

TREVOR: 20 years ago

NICO: 98

TREVOR: How many kids do you have?

NICO: Two children.

TREVOR: What are their names?

NICO: Is Karin and Adriaan, and Karin is now 31 years old and Adriaan is 29. Karin is married and got a kid I became Oupa myself

TREVOR: Wow

NICO: and then my son just got engaged two days ago.

TREVOR: Wow you must be excited

NICO: I am

TREVOR: is your name Anne Marie, Anne Marie that one is correct

ANNE MARIE: yes

TREVOR: tell us about yourself

ANNE MARIE: also born in Valhalla and then moved here and I went to same primary and high school as him and then I went to eh Department of Justice as a typist and later as a secretary and eh then I got married we don't have any children

TREVOR: Ok

ANNE MARIE: but then we moved here to stay after my mother passed away me and my husband eh, we stayed here yes.

TREVOR: Tell me about your family life how was it at home and also tell me a little bit about Fina

NICO: Oh, Fina she is just the best

TREVOR: Why do you call her Fina

NICO: Fina

TREVOR: her name is Sarafina, but you just call her Fina

ANNE MARIE: We call her sometimes we say Sarafina Zwane Coetzee.

TREVOR: Coetzee

ANNE MARIE: Ja because she stayed working a long time for us after my mother has passed away, she worked for us here and then he joked with her.

TREVOR: oh, he joked with her

NICO: No, she is Fina she is actually sort of ja she raised us I mean geez when we were

ANNE MARIE: she is my second mom.

TREVOR: Do you have memories of who was the naughtiest

ANNE MARIE: He is the naughtiest she can tell you he was the naughtiest.

NICO: That's not true but anyway no she is Fina oh man I have got plenty of memories from Fina. Since the Valhalla days when I was just really a young

TREVOR: pikinini

NICO: yes, she looked after us very well she was always there for us and we loved her Fina very dearly.

TREVOR: So, you did not see her as black because you are white

NICO: 0h no Remember when you are kid when you lived so closely within there is no black and white thing that's never was the thing, I mean eh yes there was never an issue.

TREVOR: ja

TREVOR: Do you want to say something Anne Marie also about when you were young the memories of your dad and of Fina

ANNE MARIE: Fina was always here for us I remember every Sundays she cooks us a very nice eh lunch with all the nice eh beautiful.

NICO: she was the best vetkoek cooker

TREVOR: *amagwinya*

ANNE MARIE: Ja she is caring and look after us when mom and dad have a meeting, she sits with us look after us in the evening

TREVOR: this was the year was in the 70s

ANNE MARIE: It's about when dad was in Parliament

NICO: oh, yeh look but she I mean she started off with for a long time

TREVOR: She told me she has been looking for the family for 52 years

NICO: Easily well ja I am 56 now so ja probably longer than 52 I mean I was just like being born by this year maybe two years older or something when she started with us

ANNE MARIE: she was 21 years when she started and then she travelled with my dad from here to Cape Town every six months. it's the packing all the staff eh go there and come back. It was difficult for her family

TREVOR: and then your mom I am sorry to hear about your but how was your mom your father told me about her going with her to sometimes Namibia and leaving her from the children point of view how was she

NICO: As a mother gees she is a lovely caring mother she was always there for us always go to her with questions with issues with I mean she raised us together with Fina you must understand before politics we were like a solid family unit but once my dad start with politics things changed a lot because then the work became number one and when we were young we went to Cape Town we went with but once we were in high school we stayed behind, and then my grandmother his mother looked after us here. And the work and the politics that interfere a lot with family, family life that was where my mother played a much bigger role than my dad because we could always talk to her but we could never or not never but it was hard to get hold of him or to have a chat with and sit like this and just have a conversation or just ask for advice he was really very busy he did 12 to 18 hours a day.

TREVOR: ja it was a demanding area

NICO: Absolutely That's the nature of the job it comes with the territory

TREVOR: Are there some regrets as children it must have been hard to have a father but who is not there

NICO: I don't think the regrets are ours I mean we just grew up we get older and we went on with our lives, our careers I think he might have that some regrets because the things I remember when I was in primary school before he went to Parliament he was involved in rugby training he went on

TREVOR: spent time with you

NICO: just took a week off here we went on hiking in the mountains we spent some quality time and once he entered politics that's it no more or very little of that.
TREVOR: and for you
ANNE MARIE: I also miss him a lot and when they travel a lot and I stay at home and Nico was already working out of the house and I stayed here, and my little brother travelled with them it was sometimes lonely
TREVOR: I mean family You don't choose family you don't choose to be born by Vlok family you don't choose to be white you don't choose to be Afrikaners you can be born in china you know so by this I am trying to say how was it to grow in a family of this high profile politician how was it your dad was always in the media
NICO: It could not be so much when he started. We had little pressure on us in terms of because everyone knew who your dad was but it never I can't recall anything where it was to our advantage he would not allow it and neither with us yeh it was a good feeling that your father was a member of a Parliament I will be honest on that one but we have no special privileges because of that one just part of kids high school kids we had our circle of friends we have our girlfriend boyfriend
TREVOR: just normal
NICO: just pretty much normal except for like I said when I started when we started in high school, they were down in Cape Town for six months and we are here that's sort of - its a bit challenging.
TREVOR: tell me about your experience I mean you guys were leaving with Fina because she is just black, and you guys are white but then out there and how were you feeling about the country I mean things are not okay there and out there

ANNE MARIE: yes, we did not have a problem because we did not get involved but after ja like this day it's a we get the feeling of negativity we did not grow up with that we did not experience that
TREVOR: ja So you were not aware of what was happening around that time
ANNE MARIE: ja but nothing personal no attacks personal attacks and people speaking behind your backs no nothing like that like this this maybe 5 years that you can hear that people are not positive and I don't like that he is out of the country I don't experience that much but is I don't like it
TREVOR: could it be some of the reason you left the country

NICO: No but remember when I left school, I joined the police that was still in the olden day's apartheid was still happening okay eh

TREVOR: What year did you live

NICO: Australia in 98 eh but in terms of Fina in those years I don't know we just look at her in a different way in terms of when I join the police apartheid was still in I mean that was the olden days okay it was pretty much an apartheid system I was part of that, at that time man yeh you know as well as I do what happened how things happen and how things turned out. With every non-white that we came into contact in a work context seriously personally I have never ever had issues never problems no problems as such working with them they are some bloody fantastic non-white people and its only not black is coloured is Chinese it's all that staff eh lately when I left the police and I worked for info planet in Denel same thing I had a black manager and I can tell you now still one of the best managers I worked under

TREVOR: wow who is he?

TREVOR: Joseph Khumalo very tall guy very bright and just a bloody good human so anyway when I left the country now in Australia is very different from here there is no apartheid there is no that sort of eh to me was an eye opener.

TREVOR: What was the reason to leave.

NICO: Mainly okay the first reason was I got the job there so I said to my wife look overseas qualification will look good on my résumé when I come back and the after well because we will get the opportunity to apply for permanent residency I said to her look let's take the opportunity we can always come back if we want to but at least we open the door that side and that is round about that time where things started to turn a lot here the politics was quite difficult the economy turn down worse all those things and we had a good job there we had some good opportunity and I said to her look we can go back every year we would visit this chapter are we going back we never close the book of going back door but at least here we can get some good opportunity for ourselves but more for our kids that's the reason why we stay and we are still there. At this stage I mean.

TREVOR: how often do you visit.

NICO: well it depends but roughly every two or three years okay last few times was for a specific reason like this time my father in law turned 80, 18 months ago my dad turned 80 before that it was my 50th I think.

ANNE MARIE: ja and then mine ja I think I was here on my 40th just for special reasons to come back.

TREVOR: for reconnection lady, eh I will also want to ask you to how were you feeling about the whole idea of apartheid from outside because you were at home he was not there he was out of the country as the Afrikaner as individual not as the daughter of Vlok.

ANNE MARIE: oh Yes I don't think about that was right there at that stage but now things are changing and people need to live it alone and go forward and that the problem I see with the people and the children eh they are not nice to the older people they are rude they are not respecting like we respect older people it's not only eh it's all kind of people. I think the children growing up are growing up very differently like we grow up more they don't understand apartheid but they say apartheid but that they learn that from their parents that's not always right because they don't know really what was happening because they are still young but everything goes because they have lot of friend with the children at from schools they tell me how bad sometimes in the schools because if there only there is a fight oh you are like that you are like that I don't like that between the children of today it I don't think it is good I don't know how they are going to change that but my mother in law stays with us and she is 76 I walk with her I can see the people just go past and eh like me I give way for somebody.

TREVOR: older people.

ANNE MARIE: Yes and yes I respect I did not grow up like that we respect older people I don't think at the moment and I don't have a lot has to do with apartheid at the stage but I hear from my friends with the children is very high in the school.

Trevor: tell me about when your dad decided to go to the TRC he was the only I mean I know De Klerk went to TRC but as a party not as an individual but your dad of all the cabinet ministers he is the only one how do you feel about that?

NICO: Very proud of him that was the right thing to do because his job as minister for police the job required people to do certain things some people went above that which is absolutely is wrong but he went there because they expect people to do certain things in the line of duty he went there to say I out of my job as the head of the department where he worked for I take the responsibility that was that make me very proud of him like I always say that because that was the right thing to do the others should have done the same.

TREVOR: How did you feel about that how did you feel about the others who did not?

NICO: They should have done the same thing Minister of Defence all of them they should have done the same because all of them work for the same government requiring the same staff from the people okay applying the laws of the time which was enforcing the apartheid to some degree

there are some individuals within those departments they went just high way which is absolutely wrong I mean the system dealt with them quite appropriately over the years.

TREVOR: the same with you how did you feel about that?

ANNE MARIE: very proud it was stressful it was difficult, but I am very proud.

TREVOR: he could have gone to jail did he think about it?

ANNE MARIE: yes, he spoke to us about that yes.

NICO: but It was still the right thing to do.

TREVOR: I just want to know how the feeling at that time was just going back in your memories when you see your dad on TV on newspaper what was going on?

ANNE MARIE: ja it was for me it was not nice to see him standing there talked to the people and they ask questions.

TREVOR: your mother was still alive right when he was going to the TRC?

NICO: No, I don't think so.

ANNE MARIE: No, she passed away in 94.

TREVOR: oh, ja it started in 96.

ANNE MARIE: I did not like that to see him he tried to ja talk on behalf of others who don't want to come there and speak it was not nice to see him like that because it was tense and he believe and as Nico said we were very proud of him but eh we care for him and eh we feel sad.

TREVOR: what make him to do according to you?

TREVOR: which belief?

ANNE MARIE: he says he talked to God and God lead him to change his life.

TREVOR: Is his Christian belief?

ANNE MARIE: Yes, change his life and go with the truth.

TREVOR: Did you see that in your father before he goes there, you guys knows him did you see this changes in his life before he goes to TRC?

NICO: To be honest at that time he was still in politics he was still very busy he was still not like I mean eh I had my own life we have not had that kind of close conversation or relationship of that matter my take on this at that time was that he felt he could not let the people who work for him the people who they were required to do certain things to apply the laws of the country he could not let them down. eh we did not really get down to a deep conversation in terms of what was the real drive behind that like I said people often ask at that point ask me about why is he doing this my normal answer will be he feel strongly about supporting the people he ask certain things to do and ya well that makes me very proud.

TREVOR: other people like PW Botha who did not support him how did you feel about other people who did not because there was a substantial number of people who felt like it was a betrayal?

NICO: look at the time we realise that things are changing and there is no turning back so in terms of others my view at that time was look they got to do what they should do my dad as far as I'm concerned he did the right thing and he is doing the right thing.

TREVOR: and I appreciate that and then your dad washes the feet of the black man I mean, and you know Frank Chikane eh what went on your mind because he did it secretly went to Frank Chikane and ask him then the next thing it was live?

NICO: That to be honest that was I would not say it was a shock it was an eye-opener that to me was probably the signs of he is a changed man things are really changing in his life eh at the time I personally felt that maybe he is really going a little bit too far now maybe is not because of washing a black man feet just the concept of washing feet I mean yeh to be honest at that time my feeling was no maybe he is pushing a little bit too far now too quick perhaps.

TREVOR: Do you know what the meaning of that at that time?

NICO: look he explained that to us that's from the Bible and eh he washed our feet as well so, but I was uneasy maybe to some extent.

TREVOR: why?

NICO: no, it remembers religion and deep root of belief that's a personal thing and I think he just went way too far he got moved that far so he was ready to do those things at that time I was it was just strange to me.

TREVOR: and then Did he also wash your feet as well?

NICO: ya I think he did, but I was not present then.

ANNE MARIE: We all went at Riaans house remember?

NICO: Riaans house?

ANNE MARIE: yes, with ouma.

TREVOR: With your grandma?

ANNE MARIE: Ja and.

NICO: I think he did it here.

ANNE MARIE: No, you were not here the first time.

NICO: Oh yes.

TREVOR: Tell me about the first time?

ANNE MARIE: Yes, he invited us to my younger brother house.

TREVOR: You have another younger brother?

ANNE MARIE: Yes and then he talked to us and he explained everything and he ask us can he wash our feet and he explained everything as Nico saying it was eh difficult because I feel I respect him and I don't feel he need to do that but in his heart he felt ja he wanted to do that so it was very special because he had eh tell everything and put your feet and very special emotional and I know is really special for him.

TREVOR: Who did he start with you or your grandmother?

ANNE MARIE: Granma.

TREVOR: it was Granma then it was you?

ANNE MARIE: me and my I don't think my husband was here and then my little brother and his wife and then Fina.

TREVOR: wow and how did Fina feel?

ANNE MARIE: her eyes was in tears very special.

TREVOR: you were all in tears?

ANNE MARIE: yes, very emotional to see my dad doing that.

TREVOR: it's beautiful and then tells me apartheid do you think there are still people who believe in apartheid I am talking about white people who do that today?

ANNE MARIE: Yes, white people definitely.

TREVOR: Why are you saying that?

ANNE MARIE: That's the people and I don't like those people because they are way out.

TREVOR: what do you mean way out?

ANNE MARIE: what ragsis?

NICO: Racist.

ANNE MARIE: Racist yes I don't like them because they like…when a black person sit there be like you black person you don't belong here I really don't like that leave it in its own everybody can share it does not bother me you are not referential because they are black people in the restaurant or I don't like it and there is its sad but most of the time they grow up like that.

TREVOR: because of the history?

ANNE MARIE: Ja because of the history the dad with the AWB that kind of people they are still around.

TREVOR: would you agree if I say there are still black people who are racist racism against white?

ANNE MARIE: Yes.

TREVOR: Nico tell me?

NICO: oh absolutely the whole thing is in terms of apartheid and racism you are not going to solve that in a generation it will take few generation of both sides working together and want to fix this up because apartheid created a big sense of hate within the black community, okay once we try to abolish apartheid and things changed I can understand there was sort of this reversed apartheid happening now that's in its own now create a lot of hatred on the other side now.

TREVOR: is like a reversed now?

NICO: exactly and it is happening I mean that's one thing I can't really comment objectively in terms of what happened in the last 20 years because I live overseas but when you read the papers and you see certain jobs applications white people don't bother to apply I mean really that's not helping at all eh again that is the product of apartheid now you see the different thing so there will always be as long as that goes on there will be components from both side.

TREVOR: that does not make it right.

NICO: no there will be components from both sides that feel the hatred that will be racist towards the other side I do believe that a smaller component.

TREVOR: okay.

NICO: absolutely but geez is going to take a generational of two to get rid of that to limit that at least to a large extent.

ANNE MARIE: Yes, the other thing is like eh discovery the medical aid going to give shares or open a bank only for the black members and Sasol giving shares in their company not to any white people but black and I think is not correct.

TREVOR: You think is another form of apartheid.

ANNE MARIE: I think so because the people working for them, let it be the same they are doing the same work and now the people eh are getting negative about that if I working for Sasol and do the same work as the guy he is getting shares in the company I will feel that's not really right so is something like that you see is nothing changed.

TREVOR: they call it empowerment they say they were disadvantaged.

ANNE MARIE: Is like Nico is saying.

TREVOR: a reversed yes.

ANNE MARIE: Yes Another thing I don't like is every time there is a talk or issue between people they go l ja you are a racist because I am black or you are a racist because I am white that you hear a lot everything every time there is a fight or just something on both side.

TREVOR: Annemarie are you hopeful about the future of this country?

ANNE MARIE: sometimes I don't want to be negative because people are very negative, I see every day more the people getting more negative but as my husband say this is our country we are going stay and eh because we are not getting conflict with racism, we don't tolerate that we.

TREVOR: Nico Are you hopeful about this country this is still your country?

NICO: Is still my country although I live overseas, I am not coming back to live here ever again.

TREVOR: Come on man why are you not coming.

NICO: my kids are there my grandchildren are there and eh my life is there I mean I have got a job there I am going to retire there to be honest I am not that hopeful in the short-term things will have to change on both sides. Of politics both sides of the colour spectrum I don't have the answers sometimes i say the best way we be to draw the line if it's possible and say what happened in the past stays in the past, now from here on we work moving forward together because my take on a lot of young people in this country they are actually quite optimistic they are actually quite positive both side by people I mean I include everyone the one thing that puzzled a lot of them is that they feel they are getting punished for the staff of.

TREVOR: sins of their forefathers.

NICO: Yes exactly that where why I am saying until well South Africans can fix that I am not that optimistic because now they are fixing it for the one side but that is really creating problem on the other side new hatred new … but now is just the opposite of what it used to be that's why I am a bit sceptical never say never it is possible but I don't think it's going to be anytime soon it's going to be a long time.

TREVOR: How do your kids feel about South Africa they were born here right?

NICO: They were born here but like I said my son when we went over he was six years my daughter was 8 years old they are not really involved in or knowledgeable about politics here all they know is what they read in the newspapers and papers are mostly just one sided don't report objectively they report only the highlight staff but normally the staff from South Africa is the bad thing only from whatever side a few years ago with a sport called poor on our system it was just reported yet I they must be called off they don't give you the whole context they don't give you so that sort of the knowledge that my kids grew up with I mean we have been out of the country that most of the staff that we have seen like I said to you earlier for the last 20 years is difficult for me to be very objective in terms of with what happening and all the progress right or wrong because I just was not here.

TREVOR: I just want to ask about reconciliation we are left with a few minutes as I have promised how to do you feel about reconciliation in this country, I mean your father is walking the journey?

ANNE MARIE: yes, definitely i don't have a problem clearly is a good thing but it must more people must get involved in that.

TREVOR: Why are the Afrikaans not doing it according to you very few people?

ANNE MARIE: yes, that's a I don't really know because there are some people who want to, but I can't really say why not maybe in their hearts they are not ready for that.

NICO: Look there is no easy solution there is no easy answer there is no simple answer to that there might be are a lot of reason from both sides I think trusts plays a big role I think equal opportunity play a big role and like I said I honestly feel that from the white people side now is a question of they sense a lot of reversed apartheid which I can understands from a black people point of view yes they need to be in power but.

TREVOR: They must be respectable?

NICO: Exactly but not at the cost of white people what is the answer I honestly don't know, you are talking of reconciliation I think that's the only way forward but it must be a joint effort from everyone it must be actually be initiated and led by the government my opinion and because the government is the one body that can create trusts among all of us all the sides is that happening I don't know there are so much talk about corruption there so much talk about all the wrong things that the government is doing that all the good things that they are doing you hardly hear about them they are doing the a lot of good things I mean from time to time my other family like my brother-in-law they do share on business like this we do talk yes there are a lot of good things coming through a lot of things but gees it just get over.

TREVOR: Covered.

NICO: ja by the bad things.

TREVOR: another thing before we close I wanted to ask you about church I mean your father is a Christian everything that he is doing he is propelled by that your own experience let's not bring your father what do you think about the church the Dutch Reformed Church or generally the black church or church what do you think about the church.

NICO: I think the church got a lot of work to do especially the Afrikaans church the one thing.

TREVOR: Why are you saying especially the Afrikaans?

NICO: Because they chop and change every so many times I mean look so many at how many we are there is great division within the Afrikaans community in terms of religion eh why would we have three four different Afrikaans churches why actually why do we have an

Afrikaans church we should have the church and no that's not happening and I am sure you know the Afrikaans history geez every time every time there is some problem and people disagree they walk away from each other and you get a another new church in form of a church yeh and to be honest the church the problem I have with the church is that so long ago the church said the Afrikaans church apartheid is good now they are saying different story so they just go with the flow.is that the right thing to do that means the rewrite certain.

TREVOR: They are led by politicians?

NICO: Exactly I question the trusts that some people will have in the church and you see all the time I see that in Australia as well. Lesbians for instance the church for a long time said no that's wrong now they changed they are adapting it because the people want that. I don't know so that means the people is actually still writing the Bible not really writing the Bible but they adjust it yeh and for me church of all I grew up in a Christian house I still am a Christian for me is about the values Christianity and for that the Bible can give you in terms of how to live your life a good life respect the next person and so forth that's how I see it.

TREVOR: what do you think about the church?

ANNE MARIE: There is other church that is more outgoing with live music they had the band some.

TREVOR: like a contemporary?

ANNE MARIE: yes, and older people can't handle that they don't like that they can't handle that like grandma she had the seat that her seat in church and nobody sit at her seat.

TREVOR: Is that so?

ANNE MARIE: At this church genuine everybody knows its ouma Bettys.

TREVOR: even if she did not come to church?

ANNE MARIE :That's her place and there are still people like that in the beginning we had to wear hats to church and I remember one time I could not find my hat and my dad was furious with me because I can't go to church without a hat and it's a long time is still people who don't like people standing up and sing and clap their hands they don't like it is a no.

ANNE MARIE: They did not grow up like that.

TREVOR: this is the house of God?

ANNE MARIE: Yes that's a problem young people moving to the newer different churches that is the thing why Afrikaans churches getting empty they go to more English because they are more relaxed the they are not like a deep conversation and a nice atmosphere what is a boodskap the message is more positive and much better conservative people they don't want

to hear new things they want to and they want to sing at the old songs like the first songs they don't want to change the songs.

TREVOR: what do you think about the black church?

ANNE MARIE: I did not I never think about it.

TREVOR: why?

ANNE MARIE: No is not like I have a problem with that because that is one thing Fina she went every Thursday she went to Bible study and Sundays she goes to church every day.

TREVOR: What do you think about government our current government?

NICO: It's very difficult for me because I am not living here I can only see basically what I have experience now is not a lot of staff that you hears from overseas on overseas media is very hard for me to be really objective every time there is a change in a president you become hopeful that this guy might really change things because most of the people that is going there is not stupid people they are bright people is really hard for me to be objective to say anything about this government I just don't know.

TREVOR: What do you think about current government?

ANNE MARIE: a little bit more positive because I think they really want to change corruption they really look like they are going to work on that because that's a problem I am a little bit more positive about that yes.

TREVOR: What do you think about the future of the country?

ANNE MARIE: about what.

TREVOR: Future?

ANNE MARIE: Future I am a positive sometimes I am negative because its stories and like the other day they talk about pension the government want to take some of the private pension funds okay I am getting old my dad getting old I don't want them to take a piece of that so I don't know if it's true or not true that is the main problem telling stories but you don't know if they are going to do that or only false they spread false stories but I am positive I am staying here.

TREVOR: about your dad and after that whatever you want to say about your dad and then we close anything you want to say about your dad?

NICO: oh yeh look In terms of I mean he is my dad eh I love him dearly eh I am very proud of what he achieved in his life…I do understand what he is doing now and I have got no problem with that I will like him to slow down…so that he can look after his health an d just enjoy.

TREVOR: Can you explain a little bit about slowing down?

NICO: Ja It's and then just enjoying the last few years of his life a little bit yes he explained to me many times that the way he believe the Bible message from God now he is not slowing down and I will respect that but from my personal opinion I would actually like him to slow down a little bit just for his health for the sake of his health in terms of us staying long there we don't have that much contact with each other but we do have a nice chat every time when we do so ja.

TREVOR: Nico your final word anything you want to say that is in your hearts you have a chance you are given a platform to South Africa?

NICO: No I will keep it closer than that thank you for the opportunity to for few words good luck to you we wish you well to be honest I wish South Africans well in terms of trying to figure out it's a big challenge it's not easy for no one regardless of who is trying to do that it's not bloody easy I hope South Africans can work it out amongst themselves and become the great country what is actually is it is damn great country.

TREVOR: Is good to hear that from another South Africans who are not here just your next door neighbour when we need you, we will go and take you by force if necessary. And then before we talk about your dad is there anything you want to say talk about your dad especially that part of slowing down?

ANNE MARIE: We are all concerned about him we asked him to slow in down, but we also understand like Nico is saying he explained to us he still wants to go because he don't like to sit down.

TREVOR: What is it that he is doing that concern you guys?

ANNE MARIE: He is busy he is going every Monday everyday he is going to fetch some food like sometimes like early in the ,morning its eight o clock in the morning and then maybe they are late at the a spar he is sitting there and waiting like an hour before they assist him he come back with the whole vehicle and then here there is somebody to unload because the fridges are deep so is up so is very bad for his back and we want him to slow down with that not let the food go we understand but we need to get somebody.

TREVOR: certain days?

ANNE MARIE: yes, certain days.

TREVOR: When you tell him that what does he say?

ANNE MARIE: He say no he will rest when he is.

TREVOR: When He is in heaven?

ANNE MARIE: yes, and you can't someone is assisting with looking after his health say he must take some meds and vitamins to get him going. Ya that's all that we can do to assist him and look after him that he eats healthy and but listen to us he doesn't want to listen to us.

TREVOR: Annemarie What is it that you like to get to the audience of South Africa two minutes what is it that you would like to say?
ANNE MARIE: I love my country I really hope my country will be better than it was and going forward peaceful country I wish that for everybody and for you good luck and thank you for interview I really enjoyed it.
TREVOR: Annemarie Nico thank you so much may the Lord bless you.
Thank you Wow
Thank you that was very nice.

APPENDIX 8.

MARTA STEYERS

TREVOR: Do you remember him (Vlok)?

MARTA STEYERS: You see this one neh, she was one year old the time we met Oupa (Adriaan Vlok), until she's this age now, she's eleven years old

TREVOR: So, you know him?

MARTA STEYERS: Yes, the time I met Oupa (Adriaan Vlok), I saw Oupa for the first time my daughter was one year old

TREVOR: How old where you, at that time?

MARTA STEYERS: Around 28, 29.

TREVOR: So, did you know him before that?

MARTA STEYERS: Yes

TREVOR: What, how did you know about him, what was is it about him?

MARTA STEYERS: I used to see Oupa (Adriaan Vlok) by the time he paid regular visits here at my home and the blue house there.

TREVOR: Before that? Maybe on TV or on radio?

MARTA STEYERS: I also saw him on TV

TREVOR: Doing what?

MARTA STEYERS: like he was (laughs)… Like I was the Minister of the Police, yes!

TREVOR: Has he changed?

MARTA STEYERS: Oupa, yes, a lot! And we love him so much.

TREVOR: Why do you say he has changed?

MARTA STEYERS: Cause is like we know Oupa (Adriaan Vlok) now for over eleven years and is a very good man. His is like our father, a family member.

TREVOR: Oh, oh, there are people who say no he hasn't changed

MARTA STEYERS: He has changed

TREVOR: I want you to convince those people, what is it that you can say his really changed, what you have seen

MARTA STEYERS: What I can say is that, as we have mentioned that he was a former Minister of Law and Order and I used to see him on the TRC long time ago. So now when I starting to see him here, I didn't think he is Mr. Vlok.

TREVOR: Why?

MARTA STEYERS: The way he treats this people here, the way he talks to people. Always help him, I mean I'm staying in this shelter. Sometimes I stay here when I come out, he just calls, I just come out and help get things (mainly food) inside the house. Sometimes he comes and visit us from outside shooting photos then I forget his Mr. Uncle Vlok. I always talk to Mr. Adriaan. He has really changed. Too much, too much!

MARTA STEYERS: All these kids you see they grow up in front of him, some of them they were not even born

TREVOR: Oh, I see that…

MARTA STEYERS: Serious I don't lie; it is not a story I make up I talk from what I know.

TREVOR: Can you tell us your full name? because I'm doing a research for a University and they would like to see Marta Steyers

(As I was trying to finish and close this meeting or gathering, an old-senior woman was watching but could not speak English. It seemed she was Marta's grandmother. She seemed keen to engage our discussion, I then asked her the following -)

TREVOR: Thank you so much. Is the anything you'll like to say Gogo (grandmom)

GOGO: No, this man (Vlok) is a very good man, we love him, and the kids love him, he helps us a lot

APPENDIX 9
DALI MPOFU

TREVOR: I am here with the famous and respected advocate in this country uTatu advocate Dali Mpofu. I will prefer that he introduce himself and then we take it from there.

MPOFU: Alright well my name is eh as you said Dali Mpofu. I am a senior counsel practising in Johannesburg.

TREVOR: I just want to know briefly how you ended up in politics. Give us this short faring back round

MPOFU: Okay well briefly ya I was born in East London in the Eastern Cape eh and I really gotten interest into politics at the very young age I had an uncle who like to read so in the mid-seventies I had already been reading books like cry the beloved country and that kind of fixture but obviously eh I was my awareness was sharpened with the events of 1976. In 1976 I was in form one in this day which is standard six and so we partook. Our we had our activities in support of the Soweto boycotts but obviously it was not as intense as what was happening in Soweto itself. I think by the time we had solidarity in actions maybe it was already round about August when the actions had already spread so we had a bit of activity and then the major turning point for me was in 1977 which was the killing of Steve Biko. Who he came from my area I think his home was maybe 40 or 50 kilometres from my home so that was very real, so I think the death of Steve Biko was devastating?

TREVOR: a combination

MPOFU: yes, eh another eh and then the burning of newspapers and all.

TREVOR: The world

MPOFU: Yes, the world the daily dispatch which was important remember the main newspaper for us was the daily dispatch which was edited by Donald Woods who was being friends with Steve…then fast forward 19.

TREVOR: Have you met him at that time or not yet

MPOFU: no I have not met him I knew of him as a political local political figure yes I have not met him physical eh then fast forward 1980 I am now 17 years old doing my matric so I became one the first members of COSAS if you remember COSAS was formed in 1979 and after 1976 really the next way of school boycotts was in 1980 so I was one of the leaders of those school boycotts in East London area. Eh and I was matric student so I think from about June around this time which is exactly 40 years ago we started eh boycott activities fast forward in August of that year in 1980 it was my first arrest I was arrested as a student leader charged

with eh arson and kept in detention under the Ciskei government they had something 90 day detention;

TREVOR: just to interrupt you your family background was also politically active, or it was only just you

MPOFU: No, it was just me

TREVOR: your uncle

MPOFU: Yes as I said the uncle but the uncle really had the influence on the whole family even my sisters we were reading the same books we were all politically aware my mother was a domestic worker and incidentally ,I saw the death of Steve Biko from the newspapers that she used to bring from the white people yah. Eh anyway so I was arrested in 1980 and kept in detention for about three to four months eh actually spent my 18th birthday in jail and police cell,

TREVOR: And the charge was arson

MPOFU: Ya ultimately after it was detention without trial and at the end of it then they charge us with arson and sabotage I think it was another charge which means I have I lost that year so I did not write 1981 while I was awaiting trial for arson and sabotage I was arrested again in 31 January for possession of ANC literature that time I stayed in detention until about April of that year of 1981

TREVOR: so, all in all it was for how long.

MPOFU: shun well in total I was detained for about six times.

TREVOR: You lost count

MPOFU: Ya but those were the two the first those first two were the longest and eh so when I was released for the second detention in April or May I think then I went for the trial for the original sabotage charge.

TREVOR: Oh

MPOFU: Ya anyway no it must have been before April because in April we were I think actually that is the reason they release me because I had to face the other trial but anyway we got acquitted they were four accused one left the country the three remaining we won the case, that's actually when I started having an interest in law.

TREVOR: I thought so obviously

MPOFU: Because we were represented by a very young advocate a guy called Pillay, he did a really good job. So, I was from my interactions with him he said I will make a good lawyer, so I got an interest eh

Anyway July of that year 1981 because it was now too late to go back to school so i had to look for a job so I got employed as a labourer at Mercedes Benz factory in East London and work there until the end of the year as a welder something called sport welder I got involved in the unions so I was the union organiser and then at the end of the year they retrenched some of our Comrades so in 1982

TREVOR: Including yourself

MPOFU: No, I was not retrenched and then in 1982 we in protest against those retrenchment I resigned and went back to school eh, so I went back to school in 1982 and finished in 1983 i came here to do a pre-engineering course.

TREVOR: When you say here you mean in Johannesburg

MPOFU: Ya in Johannesburg then in1984 I switch from engineering to law.

TREVOR: Why engineering

MPOFU: Well I was a science student and the only way I will not be sitting here if I did not do that because the only way I could go to university my parents could not afford I needed a scholarship there was a scholarship for engineers for the best science student and so on so while I was here I had that scholarship it was a very good scholar ship they use to pay us actually pay us stipends

TREVOR: What's the name of the university?

MPOFU: Wits

MPOFU: Then I used the money save the money to switch to law and then eh

TREVOR: Okay

MPOFU: In 1985 I was elected a president of the Black Student Society at WITS which was a UDF affiliate from that time that's where I would have interacted with all the people like Frank Chikane because I was the president of one of the UDF affiliate yah in between there was a smaller arrest

And then in 1985 I was arrested again for the first state of emergency

TREVOR: and that was the era of Vlok

MPOFU: eh I think it was Vlok I don't know I am not sure 85 whether if it was him or Le Granje but in 1985 it was eh we were arrested that was the 1985 state of emergency in 1986 then I know for sure it was Vloks era I was arrested again in the second state of emergency and I spent time in John Vorster Square firstly political confinement and then Sun City well when I was released in 1986 I then started doing my articles because I did not have money to continue so I was student but also working and the , incidentally I got my articles in the firm that represented political cases so it was actually a very funny situations because most of the

detainees under Vlok at that time were the clients of my firm because I actually I had met the person who was my principal later became the judge.

TREVOR: Judge who

MPOFU: Judge Sechuell, Cathy Sechuell she was the main person that's how I met her when I was a detainee so the funny thing was now I was doing my articles and representing the same people I was in the cell with so some of my comrades Chris Ngcobo and those kinds of guys who had not been released so I literally went back I will now be going back to Sun City as their lawyer

TREVOR: And you were comrades already

MPOFU: Yes, the same people that I was sitting in the same cell with okay so that went long for until 19 they stayed for quite long time it went until 1988 or 89 some of them stayed there for another two years. But I mean that will take us to your topic because what I really don't how I will approach my topic from my side is that firstly I was a detainees under Vlok obviously but now when I was now representing the other comrades my job really entailed visiting them liaising with their families but the most important thing is that we will do what we call in terms of the emergency regulations you were allowed to make representations to the minister on behalf of the detainee so that became my job so all our detainees I will do representations to say why they should be released and all of those were address directly to the Minister of Law and Order.

TREVOR: Was this done in writing or in the court

MPOFU: No, it was in writing.

TREVOR: Was is it directly or the document will go him or to

MPOFU: Yah I don't how but it was sent to him it says the regulations said you may make representations to the minister so I am sure Mr Vlok I have probably received hundreds of letters from me personally because well I don't know what happened on his site but we will write to him and all we know about is that all to him but we were just doing it to go through the emotions because all the answers were the same he will write dear so and so I have read your representations and I am not going to we are going to continue detaining Mr. so and so

TREVOR: So, it was like a template

MPOFU: Yah minister signed by him. We knew two or three months later we will write to him again

So, we were just doing it for so that there is some activity. Anyway, the most important things are like at some stage, the lawyers

We had a small group of lawyers who were doing a political work the main one that I can think on top of my head were our firm Cathy Sechuell then there was Ishmael Ayob and then there was Priscilla Jana actually she was the main person who represented most any detainees we meet with every second one will definitely be represented by her an there was Ben Dual and Holl then there was current judge Cachallia eh so we had our own network of lawyers who represent the detainees and we use to meet and , exchange notes and strategies and so on , anyway in probably

TREVOR: where were you based all along, I know you were in Joburg but were in Joburg was its Soweto or

MPOFU: No Johannesburg. Where did I live? In that stage I lived in Soweto when I was a student but at this stage when I was doing articles, I lived at the university residents remember I was a student

Eh anyway in 1989 I think in January that was the turning point because in our lawyers meeting the detainees started, I think in 1988 because there was clearly no way forward and people were getting sick. So the detainees started going on hunger strike long hunger strike and some of them were hospitalised but the turning point Vlok ignore all that the turning point was in 1989 i think it was in January we decided as the lawyers that we are going to go on hunger strike and that was unexpected by anybody so we call the meeting in central

TREVOR: So, it was for solidarity

MPOFU: Yes, solidarity with our clients we demonstrated outside the court at the central Methodist church we met there set there I still remember it was 1 o'clock from 1 o'clock on a particular day for me it was I remember because I was about to write exam

Young very young and writing exam on empty stomach but fortunately I was used to hunger strike because I have been to many hungers strikes when I was inside, so I was even advising this other guy how to deal with it. Anyway that became a big thing attracted publicity the lawyers are now in hunger strike not just the detainees only when that happened did Vlok then agreed to meet with the lawyers met the lawyers within a month or so few weeks if not or so detainees started getting to be released so that was an important thing . So Vlok really just responded to the pressure of the lawyers more than the hunger strike of detainees,

TREVOR Which year?

MPOFU: Beginning of 1989

Yes 89 anyway from that time releases started to happen and the as we all know by 1990 end of beginning of 1990 that was the unbanning of the ANC

TREVOR: release of Mandela

MPOFU: ya releasing of Mandela and now even releasing of some of the people who were sentenced who were in Robben Island so those were my major experiences with Vlok it was writing to him almost on daily basis

TREVOR: Have you personally met him?

MPOFU: Yes at this stage I don't know the guy he is just an apartheid minister eh okay so is just so happened that I was also I was a national executive member of another UDF affiliate called the release Mandela campaign led by Aubrey Mokoena who was with me in jail before in 1986 /87 so I was in my capacity I was then appointed to something called National Reception Committee, National Reception Committee which was chaired by Cyril Ramaphosa in 1989 we that National Reception Committee then was responsible for receiving the first group what we called the Sisulu group so Sisulu, Mlangeni and others were released in maybe August or so of 1989 though we were responsible for receiving them their upkeep and all that.

19 February 1990 after the unbanning that same National Reception Committee was now responsible for the release of Mandela because he was the only one left so that is why we went if you look at the picture of Mandela addressing his first meeting in Cape Town yah will see I am standing next to him and Sisulu then this side Ramaphosa is holding the mic for him because we were part of the national reception team so that was if you say the third encounter I had with Vlok first encounter was the correspondences second encounter was the hunger strike so the third encounter with him was now after Mandela was released there was clearly that time there was the highest form of violence in Gauteng in particular so-called black and black violence

So, Mandela was effectively in charge or asked by the ANC to liaise with the government mainly De Klerk about trying to deal with the violence.

TREVOR: If we pause there when will you say you joined the ANC I can see from the past like a formal membership?

MPOFU: well I joined the ANC maybe in 1979 in 1980 when I was a student the underground ANC because there was no formal membership. the first when the ANC was unbanned in 1990 we started that was the first time that we could have membership I was the I was elected as the deputy Chairperson of my branch which was Johannesburg and North West so on we were responsible but I was already working for the ANC but we were responsible for setting up the very first branches, new structures and then i got employed in the actually because of the unbanning I then left my practice to go work fulltime for the ANC the setup system, shell

house and the whole thing yah the whole machinery and that's when I become the Deputy Head of The National Social Welfare department of the ANC in shell house eh but before that the or around that time the main thing is that whenever there was flair up of violence people will come to Nelson Mandela house or to shell house and Mandela will phone De Klerk or Vlok or whatever so some of this time Vlok and Mandela will then I remember one time when Vlok and Mandela went to Protea police station so we were there together so then.

TREVOR: He also spoke about that?

MPOFU: yes, so all those activities I was always there because I was part of Mandela entourage so that's when I met the guy physically, he was not dealing with me he was dealing with>

TREVOR: let's park there or pause there we will continue. Your first encounter physically the other one is like correspondence how was he from a distance of course in retrospect.

MPOFU: For me I mean I probably I was negative towards him because of what he represented what my dealings with him as I was saying before when he was ignoring our letters when he had detained me personally for me he was just an apartheid guy so but he but his relationship with *ntate* Mandela was it was I suppose it was cordial it was fine.

TREVOR: Did he interact with you guys or it was just with Mandela?

MPOFU: we did interact because we will go together we interact with him or his entourage but for me he personally I mean for me I did not i was not even interested talking to him because I was a young activists and angry at that time so that would be the other interactions I don't remember how many times. But in those interactions via Mandela office we will have dealings with him sometimes maybe get a report of something that happened because we know that Mandela had access so we will would refer the thing to him and they would.

TREVOR: at that time, it was Inkatha colliding with the police ya?

MPOFU: Yes.

MPOFU: Ya he was the third force. The third force - Humphrey Khoza is it Humphrey Khoza no is not Humphrey Khoza yah something Khoza of the IFP Muyeni Musa Muyeni I forgot the first name of Khoza yes of course yes you are right this are the kind people we will interact with so it I just forget name of the other guy.

TREVOR: was its Suzan Vorse?

MPOFU: yes, Suzan Vorse of the IFP

So, there was I just forget the name Mandela will either phone De Klerk if there is a problem or Vlok and phone this other guy I think he was a police officer was the commissioner I forgot his name - that's my experience of the other guy from at least at a close interaction.

TREVOR: Van Der Merwe that is van Der Merwe?

MPOFU: Ya s Van Der Merwe yah that was my experience with him and the of course that period led up to the elections I lost contact.

TREVOR: It's there any particular moment where you have a meaningful interaction with Vlok?

MPOFU: directly No the one time that I know that we were the closest interaction I had with him was this time when we went to Protea station when there has been violence on that side and we went as the two entourages we almost spent the whole night there to resolving whatever the conflict at the police station. So yah I that was my interaction with him the next time I would see him would be during the negotiations because during the negotiation I was at that time I was a fulltime employee of the ANC so I was eh I called myself a bag carrier so I would be we were the background staff helping with the negotiating team eh so i will see him what do we call this place eh in Kempton park at the CODESA talk.

At the CODESA talk?

MPOFU: Yes at the CODESA talk yah my own view of the guy he was probably for you to be the minister of police in the apartheid government you must be one of the most trusted and very dangerous people because that was I mean the machinery of Law and Order as they called it was the main instrument by which to maintain apartheid which ought to destroy the resistance.

TREVOR: Because eh you said you cannot just have that position I would like you to unpack that because that's the core of my research because before we move to his transformation quotes whether it happened or not but for me that is important because people turn to cover that quickly without.

MPOFU: Yah no I think the guy was very a crucial instrument of what is called of the last leg of apartheid remember from 1985/ 86, onwards is probably the period of the most intense resistance against apartheid ever seen in the country that's what turn on.

TREVOR: It was the brutalisation and the militarisation of everything PW Botha.

MPOFU: Absolutely yah that when in my view that's when the resistance movement turned the situation around, so this was probably the biggest crisis faced by apartheid between 1985 and 1990 then they have never seen at that level.

Yes that's what I am saying so to be appointed to be in to be appointed to be in charge of the police in that period that means that you must be most ruthless person and he was because as I said to you when I talk about his cold responses to the letters and the representations remember this representations were not just I would say if you were the detainee I will say dear minister

here is this person whatever the circumstances his mother has just died whatever the condition is.

Yah he is suffering from asthma he has been there for a year or what most of the people were children - and the guy will just give you one line like go to hell basically he whatever you said and so he said I mean our interactions with him even though they were indirect shows that he was a cold and brutal person so he did not get just get that position easily he deserve it also remember that period of the third force between 85 and 90 is again in the history of South Africa there has never been a period where a more people died in so-called black and black violence if the was a third force he was the main person responsible so in 1986 for example people who were detained I was one of the detainees the papers said then then because they did a sweep of the country because clearly what they were doing in 1986 they wanted to control the unrest by declaring a state of emergency and then sweeping all the activists and putting them inside that time 1986 state of emergency they arrested about 10 000 people in the country including myself the majority of this detainees were kids so for all those detention orders were signed by Vlok. So, this the kind of person we are talking about.

TREVOR: Lets go straight to the TRC what do you think of because TRC is the one that says we are releasing; I mean the condition of the ANC terms were not necessarily remorseful - I just want to know what you think of that?

MPOFU: no, I don't know I am not a believer in the TRC myself.

TREVOR: Why?

I think it was look it serve some purpose but I think it was superficial it did not get into the issues for example you could have somebody like Vlok or even De Klerk you know dealing in broad terms with apartheid saying okay we were responsible generally but nobody asked them the real question like staff I am telling you about nobody will say to them why did you keep children in detention for two or three years, what role did you play in the third force How many people do you think the third force actual was responsible the deaths that you were responsible the deaths were killed the deaths of so-called terrorists who were killed by the police In that period. Eh the issues like the poisoning of reverend Chikane those some of the issues were dealt with but I think it was too easy;

TREVOR: *Tatu* Mpofu I am going to push you.

MPOFU: No problem that's fine.

TREVOR: you are a member of the ANC you guys came with the TRC concept actually Dullar Omar was the main person who was in charge with that.

MPOFU: Of course, yes.

TREVOR: I will like you to answer as ANC I know you are not now?

MPOFU: At that time.

TREVOR: Were you a believer of that?

MPOFU: I am not you must understand the ANC is they call it broad church so in the ANC I was the reason I am no longer in the ANC is because in the ANC I was always on what you call the radical wing of the far left the far left the people that I could relate to in the ANC would be the people who were regarded as radicals Chris Hani, Winnie Mandela, Peter Mokaba those were the people who were in my camp so in that camp we never believed that in the even in the negotiations to be honest we were sceptical about that whole process it is well recorded speeches that were made by the people I have mentioned we always said look we can't trust this people lets be careful but I can obviously you are right the main stream of the ANC pushed for all this that I remember I was personally in the meeting that decided to suspend the arm struggle eh I was taking notes there it happened in Mandela's house in Soweto we were for us it was.

TREVOR: Vilakazi?

MPOFU: No they already moved in the big house there we were that day for me it was not I always say to people if Chris Hani did not leave the ANC on that day he knew he was never going leave the ANC we had to he was away we had to report to him so imagine the decision to unban the I mean to suspend the arm struggle the decision is taken in his absence he is held up in Transkei people like Peter and myself were it was the ANC Knew I.

TREVOR: and you we were young during that time?

MPOFU: yah we were young and militant I was in the youth league at that time because in 1990 and 1991 I was in the Soweto Youth Congress by the way. And then we were part of transformation of South African Youth Congress to the ANC youth league so the youth league it was known by everyone by everyone that the youth league will never accept the negotiations never trusted people like Adriaan Vlok and Malan and so on.

So, you can see there is a contradiction if you look as the organisation as a whole but as for me, personally I always dismiss those people as untrustworthy so the TRC thing was eh.

TREVOR: so, let's talk about Vlok transforming in quotes as it is said washing people feet not only Chikane and others and eh what is your opinion?

MPOFU: ya look as I said I don't think he was genuine.

TREVOR: why?

MPOFU: I still don't think so because I think it was too convenient it is like De Klerk now tell us he is a man of human rights all they do now is talk about human rights human rights ,.what

about the human rights that they were trampling and abusing look its fine I suppose a person can believe that those people have changed for that to believe that you have to believe that the unbanning of the ANC for example the release of Mandela and all those things were done because this people had a change of heart but if you believe that then you can believe that they have changed but if you like me you believe it was not from a change of heart it was because they did not have option then You can't you believe that they have suddenly changed is not like one day they woke up and say then they decided that what we are doing is wrong no they were forced in to it so how can you then believe that suddenly now they are angels washing peoples feet.

TREVOR: Is like somebody can say Vlok is documented it is in the history records is the only person both from the ANC and the National Party who went to the amnesty section then from who went and say I want to take responsibility I am talking about the ANC the National Party say None .

MPOFU: Fair enough I think for that you can give him credit fair enough at least he was prepared to talk about it but again it was because remember Vlok and Malan were not just National Party ministers Vlok and Malan were the ministers in charge of the security apparatus those are the people who were in charge for the actual brutality of apartheid so is not surprising that he had to go extra mile than the other people because all this things the assassination happened under him the massacres happened under him so in that case there were specific issues for him to answer for unlike someone like let's say Pik Botha.

TREVOR: Roelf Meyer?

MPOFU: Roelf Meyer or Pik Botha you can say you are blamed because you were there its true but you cannot say Pik Botha you are responsible for the death of Mathew Goniwe he is responsible in a collective way but not in a specific way so I think that look maybe it's a hardened position but I don't believe in the bona fides of the good faith of all this people all of them from De Klerk up to eh just to digress I am currently involved if it was not for the Covid-19 thing I was about to when the lockdown started I was about to launch I started a new organisation NGO which is aimed at taking away the noble peace price from De Klerk.

TREVOR: Yes, I remember.

MPOFU: So that because I never believe in this people so when we were supposed to launch on the 18th May. We will probably launch it now in August because we were overtaken by this thing but the whole existence of that organisation is not so much about De Klerk as an individual it is to say people like De Klerk Vlok and all the others should not be allowed to get away with suddenly because the people who think that De Klerk should retain the noble peace

price are those ones who believe that they had a change of heart he is the man of peace well I think that just nonsense.

TREVOR: When I put this thing in writing should I put this as your views as *utatu* Mpofu or as a chairperson which I think you are no longer of EFF are these your views?

MPOFU: No this are my views, but you can say obviously which is true I am a member of the EFF I am former National Chairperson at this stage.

TREVOR: What is your current position?

MPOFU: in the EFF no I don't have a position I am just a member, but I am obviously the former official I get or accorded certain special treatment.

TREVOR: Should you have position let's say he was sitting here what will you say to him?

MPOFU: To Vlok?

TREVOR: Yes.

MPOFU: I will ask him specifically of all the things I am specifically speaking about I will ask him probably all the questions that he was not ask him in the TRC which are more specific at least the one I am personal in y involved in like I will ask him about firstly the 10 0000 children which were arrested, I will ask him about the cold responses to representations about specific cases and then of course about general the involvement of his government in the killings the specific massacre, the Alexandra massacre the list is endless and my questioning will be aimed at proving that that he has not had a change of heart, but eh I think look to give credit where is due I think at a certain time they themselves even though they had started the violence for example at a particular point when they wanted the negotiations to continue they probably genuinely wanted it to stop it.

TREVOR: they engineered the whole thing?

MPOFU: Ya, they did but it was difficult for them to stop it because it has taken its own life so when he came for example with us to intervene in specific situations I think they really wanted to stop the thing but by then it was eh it has gone too far. Because people were killing there were revenge killings and so on.

TREVOR: People use the expression Damascus moment. Do you believe in that?

MPOFU: I don't believe in that.

TREVOR: Do you think do you believe in God that God changes people?

MPOFU: yes, I do believe in God that God changes people, but I think that it is too convenient for when there is another explanation. If let's say in 1987 way back and Vlok said no I can no longer be part of this I can't be detaining children I am resigning, then I will say he had a Damascus moment.

TREVOR: It was too convenient, and it was too coincidental.

Yah how can they all of a sudden have all of them had a Damascus moment in 1990 it does not happen like that even God does not work like that he can't just visit them on the 2nd of February. All on the same day it was clearly a political decision not a moral decision someone if you want talk about Damascus moment you must contrast somebody like Vlok to Beyers Naude for example Beyers Naude that's a guy in the seventies he is part of the system there is no personal pressure on him there is not even a chance that the ANC will ever be unbanned but he himself talk to his God and then.

TREVOR: doing a House arrest?

MPOFU: Absolutely then he decides not to forget the house arrest because that is just the consequence the fact that he decided to say I cannot be part of this. That's the Damascus moment not some guy who they have a meeting and decide to have a Damascus moment no it does not work like that.

TREVOR: Are you optimistic about this country?

MPOFU: Yes, I am very optimistic I am big believer in people of this the country. I think we need to write books about them. Is not about the leaders is not about even us who are political leaders or commentators, but this country is going to be saved by the people ordinary people not the leaders not the organisations not. The people in the ground they have already done that is that just that people don't see it the fact that for example in the last two elections the ANC has lost serious ground major metros Johannesburg eh Tshwane Nelson Mandela which is used to be in my time was the strong hold of the ANC those are sign people not the leaders are beginning to say so I think that it going to change because of the actions of the ordinary people whose names we don't know who don't appears on TV like us those are the people who will change this country.