Auschwitz, but were not there. Wiesel knows that he understands more than they do, those judging easily from the outside—for he, unlike them, comprehends the incomprehensibility of the Holocaust.

In similar vein, Lawrence Langer writes about the "bottomless layer of incompletion" of holocaust testimonies (Langer 1993: 23). He points out that no testimony can ever contain the event in its totality; it is indeed a bottomless well. He quotes Thomas Mann's novel *Joseph and his Brothers* (*Joseph und seine Brüder*) to support his view. It is interesting, though, that in spite of Mann's acknowledgement of the limitations of human knowledge and understanding in *Joseph and his Brothers*, his great work is permeated by meaningful ideas and structures. The novel suggests that much can be discovered, even though much more remains a mystery.

A strong objection against a search for the meaning of suffering could be raised by people unwilling to ascribe any positive aspect to intense suffering. They may fear that finding meaning in suffering may imply that "suffering is OK", that we should say "yes" to life in its totality, with its evil and its suffering, instead of improving the world by attempting to remove evil and suffering from it. Instead of saying "yes" to suffering, they would much rather say "no" to it. Those who have personally experienced the intense horror of trauma are not inclined to accept it placidly and regard it as a way of enriching their lives.

One should, however, distinguish between the causes and the effects of suffering. In the realisation that traumas can destroy people, physically and mentally, we should fight to remove, as far as possible, the causes of trauma: hunger, war, criminality, poverty, Aids, rape, and so on. But, in the realisation that suffering will always be with us, we should also work at softening the effects of trauma. Finding words to express pain and finding meaning in suffering (the themes of this chapter) are ways of healing their painful wounds. We do not maintain that suffering is all right—on the contrary, because it is so terrible, it is essential to gain some meaning from it to counterbalance the losses it causes. Being happy about one's own suffering is masochism; being happy about the suffering of others is sadism; it is not our intention to propagate either masochism or sadism, but to suggest ways to make suffering more bearable. The reality of trauma's destructive power can be balanced by the reality of human resilience, triumphing over adversity and creating meaning in the void.

African responses to suffering

Our argument is that one should not attempt to shut out all pain from one's life. It is a natural tendency, very marked in the modern Western world, to ignore suffering. Susan Sontag detects a

> modern sensibility, which regards suffering as something that is a mistake or an accident or a crime. Something to be fixed. Something to be refused. Something that makes one feel powerless. (Sontag 2004: 88)

On the other hand she also believes that it is

> a good in itself to acknowledge, to have enlarged, one's sense of how much suffering caused by human wickedness there is in the world we share with others. Someone who is perennially surprised that depravity exists, who continues to feel disillusioned (even incredulous) when confronted with evidence of what humans are capable of inflicting in the way of gruesome, hands-on cruelties upon other humans, has not reached moral or psychological adulthood.
>
> No one after a certain age has the right to this kind of innocence, or superficiality, to this degree of ignorance, or amnesia. (Sontag 2004: 102)

In a way that seems foreign to the modern Western mind, suffering is central to the African experience. The point is made by the character Blanche, administrator of a hospital in Zululand in J M Coetzee's *Elizabeth Costello*. Referring to the harsh life of Africa, she says:

> This is reality: the reality of Zululand, the reality of Africa. It is the reality now and the reality of the future as far as we can see it. Which is why African people come to church to kneel before Jesus on the cross, African women above all, who have to bear the brunt of reality. Because they suffer and he suffers with them. (Coetzee 2003: 141)

The African scholar Gabriel Setiloane makes a similar point: "to Africans, the crucified Jesus is irresistible" (Setiloane, quoted in Brand 2002: 67).

Gerrit Brand extensively discusses the debates around suffering and sacrifices in African Christian theology (2002: 147–194). "Sacrifice is one of the most widely discussed topics in African Christian theology," he maintains (147). Mercy Oduyoye, basing her theology on her experience as an African woman, points to the various ways in which ordinary people are senselessly sacrificed daily to the mighty and the rich. In contrast to this evil suffering, Oduyoye notes another kind of suffering, a praiseworthy suffering for the sake of others:

> "Living for others" might take the form of "dying for friends". In times of a crisis a sacrifice must be offered if the harmony and wholeness of life is to be restored … In Oduyoye's view … the Western (and Western feminist) ideal of maximal individual self-fulfilment, constrained only by the self-fulfilment of other individuals, is simply not a live option for African women and children … In a situation where people depend on one another for their very survival, "wholeness of life" will have to take the form of communal wholeness. This means that

> individual self-fulfilment can only be found in sacrificing one's personal interest for the community, and self-confidence only gained through self-denial. (Brand 2002: 163–164).

Oduyoye's ideas are echoed by the African theologian Manas Buthelezi, who distinguishes between "oppressive" and "redemptive" suffering. "Oppressive suffering" should be resisted; resistance against such oppression, however, involves the risk of another kind of suffering, redemptive suffering (Brand 2002: 166–167).

Oduyoye's and Buthelezi's opinions on suffering and sacrifice are closely linked to *ubuntu*, the much-discussed, many-faceted ethical concept developed in Africa. The following exposition is based on P H Coetzee & A P J Roux's book, *Philosophy from Africa* (pages 41 to 51). At the heart of *ubuntu* is the belief that "a person is a person through other people". *Ubuntu* is a humaneness that radiates into every aspect of life and finds its expression in a community where the individual lives for the community, and the community cares for the individual. It takes seriously the view that humans are social beings; it implies an obligation of the privileged towards the needy.

Ubuntu steers midway between the two extremes of individualism and collectivism. In contrast to individualism's belief that "self-preservation is the first law of life", it affirms that

> we cannot preserve self without being concerned about preserving other selves … The agony of the poor impoverishes the rich; the betterment of the poor enriches the rich. The manager's success at managing depends on the co-operation of the managed … Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly. (R Khoza, quoted in Coetzee & Roux 1998: 45)

Unlike collectivism with its disregard for the individual,

> *ubuntu* would seem to be broadening respect for the individual—respect for the individual and the rights of each person in the social unit—and purging collectivism of its negative elements. (Coetzee & Roux 1998: 45)

Although the concept is embedded in the African family and African kinship, it has been expanded to include the belief in a universal brother- and sisterhood. According to Khoza, *ubuntu* can never be racist, for it is based on respect for all human beings. The important point for the argument here is that *ubuntu* entails, on the one hand, a society of harmony and wholeness but, on the other hand, a willingness of individuals to suffer for the well-being of others.

Patterns of death and life

There is another kind of positive suffering, not specifically included in *ubuntu*; it is not so much directly linked to the needs of the community as to the growth of a person. "Is becoming always filled with pain?" (*Is alle wording pyn?*) asks the Afrikaans poet N P van Wyk Louw in one of his sonnets, and the rest of the poem suggests that growth (becoming) and pain are indeed inextricably linked, for growth often involves taking leave of cherished patterns and familiar securities. Just as biological life is characterised by the continuous formation of new cells and the dying of old ones ("death-life patterns"), a healthy inner life is characterised by continual letting go of the old and acceptance of the new; in contrast, the rejection of painful but necessary change leads to spiritual rigor mortis. This argument in favour of change seems to refute our previous argument in favour of continuity in life narratives—yet a good life narrative is characterised by constancy amidst change. Continuity is attained through ethical values that pervade the whole narrative—ethical values that are constant yet supple; remaining true to themselves, they can adapt to changing circumstances.

In a well-structured literary narrative, there is coherence between the story and its ending; the end in a way contains the whole preceding narrative. Similarly, in human life, the end is foreshadowed by what precedes it. A great trauma with its destruction is like a premonition of death. Trauma, however, can give rise to new meaning, just as a human life can continue, even after death, to spread its significance, as was discussed above with reference to Leopold's poem "Oinou hena stalagmon". Furthermore, people who are willing to suffer the "pain of becoming" and of "redemptive suffering", extend the death-life patterns mentioned above into their lives, like ripples from the great waves of trauma and death, creating coherence through the recurrence of a pattern. The death-life pattern transforms, in the formulation of Frank Kermode, the *chronos* of our moments into *kairos,* where *chronos* refers to passing moments that disappear, and *kairos* to "a point in time filled with significance, charged with a meaning derived from its relation to the end" (Kermode 1967: 47). The life narrative with *kairoi* consists of meaningful moments where new life continually emerges from the painful severing of the old; where every part has a place in a pattern characteristic of the whole.

An example of this death-life pattern is found in *Disgrace*, the novel by J M Coetzee which is analysed in chapter 5. The main character, Lucy, embodiment in the text of ethical ideals, has to go through two traumas: an "outer" and an "inner" one. Firstly, she is raped by three men, which temporarily drains the life from her; and after that she has to go through a complete inner renewal—she has "to start at ground level" (Coetzee 1999: 205), letting go of her previous

wishes and perceptions in order to ensure a place for her on the farm where she wants to be. Through this death of the old, she receives a new lease of life; she reaches peace and inner freedom, because she has become willing to be the person that she feels she should be. The second crisis is maybe just as painful as the first.

The fact that, in well-structured literary narratives and in human lives, we can find coherence between the end and the preceding events does not mean that literary narratives or human lives are like boxes of chocolates, with a clearly defined form and a sweet content. On the contrary: sophisticated novels mostly have "open ends", suggestions that various future possibilities exist, and that readers may never attach one final meaning to a story; similarly, it is impossible to interpret a human life finally when it has come to an end. Final closure evades us in the "reading" of human lives as well as in literary narratives.

Living the best of possible lives, creating a value-filled narrative from our lives, we have argued, necessarily entails pain—the pain linked to personal growth, the pain of being conscious of others' suffering, and the pain of sacrifice for the sake of the needy in the community. For the healing of individuals and societies, it is necessary to fight against "oppressive suffering", but to accept "redemptive suffering".

Paradoxical answers

The answers to our most profound questions often lie in paradoxes which can contain the contrasts and contradictions of life. We should fight pain, yet realise it is inherent in human existence; remove suffering as far as possible, yet face it as part of life; we should acknowledge the terror of trauma, yet try to transform it into something meaningful, thus balancing the loss with gain. Those labouring for the healing of society, are themselves "wounded healers", to borrow a phrase from Henri Nouwen (1972); hurt by their own pain and the pain of the world, yet with an inner wholeness, willing to do what should be done. In a society that is deeply divided, like the South African one, with its on-going conflicts, complete harmony is unattainable, yet we must work towards total reconciliation as if it were attainable, for without such an effort society will fall apart.

We should transform our lives into the best of possible narratives. We have to admit to ourselves that some of the gaps in our life narratives will never be closed, certain things will never be understood, and total closure and coherence is unattainable. And yet we have to search for the maximum of meaningful patterns—we must fill our existence with values that endure, even in times of agony and despair. We should resist the desire to make superficial romantic

comedies from our lives, and strive rather for a narrative containing the fullness of life, with its joys and its sorrows, reflecting a tragic optimism.

CHAPTER TWO

UNACKNOWLEDGED TRAUMA: BETWEEN SILENCE AND DISCLOSURE

As we enter the new millennium, it is disheartening to note that wars, genocide, and crimes against humanity have not subsided since the atrocities of World War II that inspired the cry: *Never Again.* Human misery that has resulted from gross human rights abuses across the globe is on the rise, and its extent has been made visible by the increasing number of people internally displaced within their own countries, and those forced into exile, fleeing wars and torture in their homelands. A survey conducted by the United States Committee for Refugees in 2000 estimated the number of refugees and asylum seekers world-wide to be approximately 14 million. The effects of trauma on individuals and communities—particularly human-induced trauma such as mass political violence—can be profound. Many of the people fleeing from extreme conditions of violence and abuse in their home countries bear indelible psychological scars of the traumas they experienced there.

Extreme experiences of trauma are overwhelming. They can be understood as experiences that threaten one's sense of emotional, physical, and social integrity. The overwhelming effect of trauma ruptures the multiple layers of the ego's protective organisational fabric. This organising matrix of the ego includes a number of aspects: the individual's basic assumptions about the world, such as belief system and sense of trust in others, physical aspects of one's body, social networks, and so on. The rupture of the organisational matrix has implications for the way the traumatic circumstances are remembered.

Early conceptualisation of trauma by Freud and Breuer (Breuer & Freud 1936) point out that traumatic affect, that is to say traumatic reaction to traumatic experience, is determined by "whether there has been an energetic reaction to the event that provokes [the traumatic] affect" (1936: 8). Thus, as Judith Herman (1992) has pointed out, when traumatic experience induces helplessness and powerlessness, the traumatic situation takes away the individual's ability to react and to take any action. Taking this further, it might be said that traumatic events that produce traumatic effects create a void. This state of absence is the condition that, in part, leads to the rupture and the

shattering of the self: what Susan Brison (1995) has termed "unmaking". This notion of the "unmaking" of the self is similar to early psychoanalytic formulations by Charcot, Janet, Breuer, and Freud, who argued that extreme forms of trauma lead to some kind of psychic rupture, a tearing apart of the integrity of the self. This rupture of psychic integrity affects the way that traumatic memories are encoded. Memories of trauma are not encoded in the same way as normal experiences. They are stored in dissociated and fragmented form, and often dominate the mental life of victims of trauma (Van der Kolk, 1989; Beveridge, 1998). Yet even as traumatic memories intrude into the lives of trauma victims, there is a struggle, simultaneously, to avoid the images of traumatic experience. Reisner (2002) argues that the pressure to avoid trauma "is the single most pervasive individual and cultural response to traumatic circumstances" (13).

This tension between intrusive memory and avoidance of trauma renders the traumatic memory difficult to assimilate. There is scholarly evidence that shows how traumatic memories, and difficulties in their assimilation, often return as behavioural re-enactment, both at the interpersonal level and within societies. The phenomenon of re-enactment and its centrality in the lives of people who have been exposed to life-threatening experiences of trauma is well established in traumatic stress research (Kernberg 2003, Laub & Lee 2003). These re-enactments manifest in acts of revenge, anger, and sometimes as violence against the self, and may seem unrelated and disconnected from the original trauma.

One might say therefore that re-enactments such as acts of revenge are symbolic acts or reactions, and suggest an attempt to fill the void created by the helplessness and powerlessness induced by the trauma. They continue to affect people who have suffered trauma, in part because the traumatic experience has not been fully integrated into the individual's psychic and cognitive schemas, and instead exists in fragmented and dissociated form.

The goal of intervention in the lives of people who have been traumatised is to help them integrate traumatic memory in order to *transform* the force of the traumatic memory into something positive. Language offers the possibility of the transformation of trauma into narrative. The significance of narrative lies not simply in remembering trauma, but in its transformation through language.

A state of being frozen

All traumatic narrative and description of traumatic events, Kyo Maclear observes, constitute "limits of remembrance" because the horrors being recounted "conjure an excess that cannot be retold" (1999: 235). Extreme trauma is "unspeakable" precisely because of the inadequacy of language to

fully convey victims' experiences. This is part of the reason why trauma survivors struggle with transforming their experiences into narrative. Many survivors of atrocities such as the Holocaust have commented on this tension between traumatic events they lived through and the language available to describe them. Primo Levi, survivor of the Nazi concentration camps, has expressed it thus: "our language lacks words to express this offence" (Levi 1985: 9)[1]. Yet despite its limitations, speech is necessary, not only to re-capture the traumatic event, but also to restore the victim's sense of self and to help him or her regain control over a self shattered by the trauma. Reconstructing the trauma into narrative form is one of the most crucial processes in the journey towards the victim's healing. "Bearing witness", as trauma scholars have termed the process of telling one's story of trauma, is an important part of "working through" trauma.

When people are overwhelmed by a traumatic experience, there is a silencing of the senses, a state of being frozen. The silencing is more than a lack of words; it is also a lack of understanding of what has happened to them. Trauma overwhelms the psyche; it contains no reference point in terms of one's former experience. The word "frozen" comes up many times in the story of women who have been raped, because they do not know how to deal with the experience; they do not have the resources to deal with it or the capacity to respond to it. It is an experience which they have gone through but which they cannot comprehend because it has not been articulated; they do not have the language to tell what they have experienced, and therefore they cannot understand. When people say, "I cannot explain it", and we as observers say, "It is unspeakable", it means precisely that: it is something for which we cannot find language because it is so overwhelming, so unreal, as if it had not happened. You cannot believe it, even as it is happening to you.

It is this "unbelievability" that makes trauma so difficult to articulate, to find words for. What is stilled, what is frozen, is understanding, the language to express it, and the emotions to feel it. When we remember the trauma, we remember it in fragments, in dissociated bits, and we have to piece these fragments together. Part of the struggle of healing from trauma is the struggle to find the appropriate language to narrate the trauma.

Under normal circumstances we know who we are and we know what capacity we have to respond to experiences, but when trauma overwhelms us,

[1] Paul Fussel, however, suggests that the challenge is less with language than what listeners want to hear. The English language, he argues, is rich in words and phrases that can adequately describe the horrors of atrocities. The problem, he states, "[is] less one of 'language' than of gentility and optimism [of listeners] .... What listener wants to be torn and shaken when he doesn't have to be? We have made unspeakable mean indescribable...." (Fussel 1975: 170).

we lose the capacity to engage and to interact. Trauma is a loss of control, a loss of understanding, a loss of identity—we wonder why we did not act in an appropriate way, a feeling of "that wasn't me". Trauma has profound after-effects: in our personal relationships and in specific situations, we respond in ways that we ourselves often do not understand. We do not realise how much our responses are affected by the unarticulated experience of trauma.

The relational aspect of narrative

The role that narrative plays in survivors' and victims' healing and recovery is well-established in the literature on trauma. Psychologists writing about trauma stress the importance of the *relational* aspect of narrative: in order for the trauma narrative to heal, one's trauma narrative has to be received by an empathic listener. Dori Laub, in his discussion of "truth, testimony, and survival" highlights the significance of others' presence as empathic listeners. "Bearing witness to a trauma," Laub observes, "is … a process that includes the listener" (1992: 70). The significance of the empathic listener for the trauma narrative is the possibility created for the victim of trauma to externalise the traumatic event.

Empathetic listening poses extraordinary challenges, as Erika Apfelbaum has pointed out:

> The only way to truly hear the survivor's narratives is to confront the world of radical otherness and to face the existential, epistemological and moral implications of its grim and frightful reality. Hearing then becomes a major challenge to our usual categories of thinking, to the logic, rationale and values on which our sociability has been constructed. It raises the question of our responsibility as citizens … In brief, true listening requires courage. (Apfelbaum 2002: 13)

When we come together to narrate our traumatic experiences, we invite others not only to listen to what we have to say, but to journey with us as we "re-find" ourselves and re-find the language that has been lost. So the journey of narrating, of being in dialogue concerning our experiences, is a very important one, because we need an audience—a person, or people, who will listen with compassion, with a desire to understand what has happened to us. The listener may be the person who caused the trauma, or someone who was present when the trauma happened, or who was not present but knows about the trauma. In the telling of the trauma, even at a stage where it cannot be articulated completely, the process provides the victims with footholds, so that in the words and gestures of those who are listening, they derive encouragement to re-find not just themselves, but also the language to talk about what has happened to them.

The collective sharing of the narratives of trauma is a critical sharing. When we come to the "table of dialogue" to share our traumas, we come with different kinds of trauma. The point is not to measure who was traumatised most, but to receive our varied experiences together so that in the listening process we are bound to each other. We create a common bond of humanity when we understand that we come to the table of dialogue with different kinds of trauma, all of which are important. The challenge is, how do we listen to each other and how do we navigate the path of telling our stories, so that we can hear, not only hear as in the organic process of hearing, but hear deeply, from a profound place, what each is saying to the others; to understand that we come from different paths, bringing our traumas and wanting to connect with one another through our stories. The challenge is to be bound by human sharing, by human moments that connect us as human beings who have been hurt in different ways. That is the importance of story-telling: to bring us together and to connect us, to allow us to listen to what the others are saying and not to judge, but to listen to the sound of pain in each of our hearts.

The remaking of the self

Susan Brison (2002) elaborates on the idea of narrative as a "remaking" of the self. Trauma, she argues, robs the self of its sense of autonomy and leads to loss of control of oneself—what she terms the "undoing" of the self. The act of transforming trauma into narrative, Brison informs us, and others' ability and willingness to listen empathetically "enables survivors to gain more control over the traces left by the trauma" (2002: 71). This entails regaining control over a previously shattered self; a process of "remaking" the self. Narrating traumatic memory therefore can be understood as a piecing together of a "dismembered self", an attempt at re-mastering traumatic memory. According to Brison, this involves:

> [a] shift from being the object or medium of someone else's (the perpetrator's) speech … to being the subject of one's own. The act of bearing witness to the trauma facilitates this shift, not only by transforming traumatic memory into a narrative that can be worked into the survivor's sense of self … but also by reintegrating the survivor into a community, re-establishing connections essential to selfhood. (2002: 68)

Carmella B'hahn (2002) agrees with Brison. Through telling and listening, "giving and receiving our life experiences" B'hahn writes, "we weave the human tapestry into a sense of community" which accelerates transformation of the self and "prevents the numbing pain of separation" (2002: 18).

The acknowledgement of trauma is well-established in psychoanalytic literature as an important vehicle for helping victims of trauma regain their sense of self in relation to others. Nicholas Rand (1994), writing in the introduction to *The Shell and the Kernel* by Nicolas Abraham and Maria Torok captures the issue of the recognition of one's trauma as follows:

> Explicit acknowledgement of the full extent and ramifications of the patient's suffering is one of the analyst's crucial functions. Whether with our own strength, with the help of loved ones, or with an analyst if need be, we must be able to remember the past, recall what was taken from us, understand and grieve over what we have lost to trauma, *and so find and renew ourselves* (Abraham & Turok 1994: 12–13, italics added).

This understanding of the role of narrating trauma and its centrality in the "reconstruction" of the self raises an important question: what happens when the audience, individual or collective, is not willing to engage as empathic listener to the survivor's trauma narrative? What is the form through which trauma can be told and listened to when the traumatic events are being denied by the listener? How can victims bear witness to events that no one wants to hear about? The notion of "unspeakable" in such cases is not simply a question of language limitations. The problem is that of unspeakable trauma vexed by hardened silence and secrecy: a trauma that has become "a secret that will not be revealed" (Moreiras 1996: 204). If, as Judith Herman suggests, the only thing that can help integrate traumatic experience and heal trauma is "the use of words" (Herman 1992: 183), how can the effects of trauma be transcended if its memory is banished to unacknowledged silence?

Between silence and disclosure

It is to the question of unacknowledged and unexpressed trauma that we now wish to turn. If narrating one's trauma is important for its integration into one's sense of being and one's recovery from its debilitating effects, what happens when victims' suffering is not recognised by others, when victims are silenced?

Early writings on trauma have speculated that the overwhelming nature of trauma renders it mentally and emotionally inaccessible to its victims. This insight has endured, and continues to be central in current conceptualisation of trauma.

The process of telling is daunting, even terrifying; it forces one to focus on one's feelings, but they are exactly what is unknown. When we are traumatised, we are not clear about our feelings, because they have in many cases been disassociated, split off, from the reality of the traumatic experience, and we talk around the trauma because it is so frightening. In the midst of talking about a

trauma people will often say, "You cannot imagine", and they break down crying. They break down crying because tears can take the place of words—the language of tears, the body language. Although the tears are an expression, they are not in the language of words—the fear of the unknown trauma remains. People who have suffered trauma have to confront the trauma, and their feelings around the trauma, but when that moment of potential confrontation comes, everything comes to a standstill.

When one invites a victim to revisit the trauma, one is saying, "Face it; here is that feeling that you ran away from. You have to confront it for your survival." Yet, paradoxically, it is also for their survival that the victims of trauma do not want to face the trauma. They are afraid, they do not want to open up, but at the same time they know that to begin the journey towards healing they need to find the words to navigate the trauma. Indeed, the process of healing trauma is directly linked to the process of finding language to narrate it. It is about telling the story so that it becomes part of one's identity and part of one's life narrative, so that it is told in the same way that we talk about ordinary events—so that one does not have to stop to say, "You cannot imagine", so that one says, by implication, "You *can* actually imagine it, because it happened to me and this is how it happened."

Scholars agree that the psychic imprints of trauma "cry out" for articulation even if they are not fully grasped, or indeed known, by those who experience them. What seems to be suggested by this is that "trauma will out" in one way or another, in spite of being silenced or denied. Cathy Caruth (1995) addresses the issue of the inevitability of this "outing" of trauma in her book *Unclaimed Experience*. Trauma, she argues, is bound to return to haunt the survivor; it "imposes itself" repeatedly in the nightmares and repetitive actions of the survivor. Trauma is "always a story of a wound that cries out" (Caruth 1995: 4).

The following South African story illustrates the ambivalence in the way in which victims and survivors sometimes approach the past: a strong pull towards forgetting, or rather a denial of memory, while at the same time there is a deep need to recall the details of the trauma.

A woman whose eleven year-old son had been killed by the police in the township of Mlungisi in Queenstown in 1986 confronted me when I (P G-M) was working for the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC): "Why did you come here? Why did you come here?" I followed her outside, where she began to cry, and continued to speak through her uncontrollable sobbing: "Have you come here to hurt us? Just tell me, have you come here to open our scars?" She continued to speak with a mixture of tears and anger and said that the TRC was "a pointless exercise", she had forgotten her pain and had "put grass over