

Report

Community Conversations Seminar
Khoisan Identity and LGBTI Rights
3 June 2017
Lagoon Beach Hotel,
Milnerton, Cape Town

The seminar was hosted and facilitated by the
Ruben Richards Foundation

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BACKGROUND

IFN Media has been mandated to capture the discourse and report on the first in a series of community conversations hosted by the Ruben Richards Foundation, a front-line social intervention initiative whose primary aim is rebuilding broken communities gripped in the cauldron of social, psychological and economic crisis.

Dr Ruben Richards, progenitor of the RRF foundation is a trailblazing social intervention specialist and an author of numerous critical texts of contemporary social problems, including matters of economic exclusion, perspectives on faith, identity, self-determination and social cohesion. Dr Richards is the author of a new (2017) text *Bastards or Humans – the unspoken heritage of coloured people*, which examines issues of origins, identity, culture and the challenges of peoples classified as coloured in South Africa.

The community conversations seminar series was expressly developed to facilitate healing, linked to identity in general and indigenous identity and heritage in particular.

The context and rationale for the community conversations seminar series relates to the fact that it is only since the advent of democracy in South Africa that the government has acknowledged the pain and trauma experienced by the indigenous Khoisan over many centuries of colonial and post colonial rule in South Africa.

The community conversation seminar series therefore is premised on the principle of creating a safe space to decode and grapple with the urgent issues related to and intertwined with this experience which have been actively ignored and consigned to the margins of identity and history formulation.

RULES OF ENGAGEMENT - GROUND RULES

The community conversations seminar series is structured around three core principles, namely, creating an informed framework for productive and constructive discourse, creating an environment conducive to respectful engagement, and the exchange of information in a non-judgemental, and supportive manner and methodically working through a structured, module-based seminar workbook, through which the essence can be distilled and crafted to solutions for broken communities which are trapped in cycles of despair and crisis.

Participants for the community conversations seminar series who have been carefully selected by the Ruben Richards Foundation are all prominent thought and community leaders who have distinguished themselves by their work at the coalface of their respective spheres of engagement and through intellectual contributions on matters of identity, self-determination, social cohesion and social and economic justice.

The primary resources of the community conversations seminar series are RRF community conversations seminar workbook and a presentation by Dr Ruben Richards who also serves as discussion facilitator.

The Lagoon Beach Hotel, situated diagonally opposite the Table Bay basin and Robben Island served as the site of intellectual excavation from which the participants could begin to unearth the narratives and issues underwriting the purpose of the community conversations seminar series.

METHODOLOGY AND APPROACH

The inaugural community conversations seminar was structured around the concept of adult learning methodologies which includes individual storytelling, a formal lecture and facilitated group interaction.

The Ruben Richards Foundation had envisaged that the first seminar would be comprised of four modules, namely, theory of culture and origins, socio-cultural history in perspective, reconstructing identity with fresh information and building a Human Rights culture.

The envisaged outcomes of the seminar included a better understanding of indigenous history and identity, an improved sense of self worth, a re-commitment to nation building and the rights of all as protected by the constitution of South Africa and a deliberate commitment of all participants to personal restoration and healing.

While the seminar created a vibrant platform for engagement and sharing between the participants, it was however not possible to cover the full spectrum of the seminar work module program.

Consequently participants were only able to cover the first three modules in depth, while incorporating the final module in the final part of the seminar within the reflection and feedback session between the presenter/facilitator and the seminar participants.

Notwithstanding the community conversations series effectively pressured under the tyranny of the clock, with a vast area of historical, heritage, cultural and sociological material spanning five centuries to be traversed during reflective engagement, it is apparent that this modest and enterprising project not only interrogated the width and depth of the intended terrain, but also revealed the value of engaging such an instrument.

It is further beyond any doubt, that the various resource materials employed by the speaker/facilitator, as also his candid, respectful and sensitive manner of engaging this

very carefully chosen leadership focus group has opened significant channels for deep and, qualitative and meaningful engagement of these foundational issues, for the purpose of deeper understanding, as also unlocking broader avenues for scholarship and action in search of solutions.

Finally, as the captured selected discourse of the community conversations series reveals, there is both a necessity for the continuation of this series and the necessity for translating the community conversation series into a more mass-based instrument of cultural, heritage and sociological pedagogy, as, based on the captured discourse, there is much of what emerged during the engagement that has been omitted from the broader mainstream discourse.

Significantly, interrogation of people and place, as reflected in the captured discourse, reveals that engaging the conditions and the place, where a particular group of people (officially still recorded as the Coloureds) CANNOT be properly processed or decoded if there is not a significant correction or addressing of the distortions, omissions and excisions from the official records which has consigned this very foundational section of the South African population from the epicentre of the development process, to the margins.

As stated by many of the participants, during and after the inaugural community conversations series, this event should lay the foundation for a deeper and wider conversation in the society that has been denied the richness of this narrative.

Herewith, the broad captured discourse, as reflected in the audio record of the inaugural event of the RRF community conversations series.

RECORD (MINUTES) OF THE DIALOGUE

Dr Ruben Richards: Welcomed the delegates, noting that “It is a Saturday morning, our minds may very well be elsewhere, I know I may be competing with family interests, but if I can get your attention for the next 3-4 hours, at least, I think it will be hours well spent, together.”

Richards went on to explain that “this session is not going to be talking and lecturing to you. That is not the intention. Intention is it should be somewhat interactive. To help the process I have produced a seminar workbook which is quite dense. Lots of content there and we will navigate a little through it. It is meant to be a takeaway for you. The intention is not to work on each of the exercises here today.”

This was developed further when Richards went on to state that “the four modules that make up the workbook are modules that can last a day or two on its own. So what I am

doing here is at a high level signalling to you the components of what I have called community conversations in the context of reconstructing identity.”

“That’s the theoretical and conceptual framework; we won’t slavishly follow each of the modules, but I hope I can engage you. You can read some of the detail in your own spaces, you are free to use the detail and the content in your own spaces, because we all come from organisations where we do certain things and if this is a useful resource for you to use in your space,. There’s no issue around your stealing my work for your workshops. Sometimes we think that way, not here. Please feel free to use the materials.”

ABOUT RRF

Vision

As the series was convened under the Ruben Richards Foundation, the speaker/facilitator provided background to the RRF.

“Our vision is to facilitate and bring healing to the hearts and minds and souls of traumatised communities. That’s what we want to do, that’s where our passion is.”

How do you do it?

“We create a safe space for people to talk through difficult issues; the other space that we had these conversations is where the book on gangsterism comes the conflict resolution work I do with criminal gangs. And for that work we did a couple of years ago, combined with the other pieces of work we do, counselling for pregnant teenagers at school; anger management, juvenile delinquents etc, the IJR conferred on me a very prestigious award called the National Reconciliation Award, and I am honoured that the head of that Institute is with us today, Stan Henkeman.”

“Our work is focussed in four areas, namely job creation, therapy, peace building and community development.

Focus of this seminar

This seminar has four objectives. If I would to ask you, what is your theory of culture and origins what would you say? “Well, I haven’t thought about that actually...”. I guarantee you’ve got it in your head, maybe you haven’t had the head space to articulate it for yourself, or clarify it for yourself, because we are all so busy. So part of the advantage and benefit of coming to a seminar like this, it helps to clear your own head; to think about certain things.

Dr Richards then explained that the group would examine “the theory of culture and origins” specifically examining whether “culture is dynamic, static; Is it a given? Is it primordial? What is it?”

He gave further context for the exercise, noting that “social, cultural history, reconstructing identity, particularly for this community that has been labelled, among other things coloured people and the reconstructing of that identity is an ongoing project, particularly given the Khoisan resurgence movement.”

“All of that happens in a constitutional framework called the new SA, a democratic SA that has a Bill of Rights. A constitution and a Bill of Rights which ought and does govern the way we live.”

“That is kind of our road map, as to where our thinking must go today. This is not a one way exercise, but that is more or less where we want to go. But first let us get to know who are here, do a quick round of introductions as to who is here and what brings us to the room.”

Selected responses from the participants

WANDILE KASIBE: “Thank you so much for inviting me to this very important meeting. I am the Public programs convener at Iziko. I am also a PhD candidate in sociology at UCT. My area of interest is around looking at the uncovering of, and the construction of race and bringing it to the front. “It is very much part of the way people, and their insights into colonial crime scenes.”

PRISCILLA DE WET: “I joined the Khoisan Resurgence Movement in 2000, and my whole being and idea of joining the movement was because the Khoisan could bring an alternative or different way of being on earth and our relationship with God.”

“I thought that the movement would bring this culture and this knowledge. Then I went to study because I realised the international arena is way ahead of us and wanted to find out what is happening.”

“I studied in a few places looking at my indigeneity and issues of identity, but then there were other issues at tertiary institutions that I couldn’t come to terms with, hence my PhD is just hanging there – so the reason I am here is because this is the kind of support I need in restructuring my own thinking.”

CHIEF ERNEST SOLOMONS: “Ek is hier om te praat en te hoor wat daar gese word oor ons mense wat in die straat is, want ons mens is opverdeel in ‘n klomp groepe soos Khoisan en gangsters, musiekmakers, maar die belangrikste rede hoekom ek is hier is omdat ons eie mense maak mekaar dood en hul verwyf vir ons, vir ander mense se

dade. Ek is hier om praat en te luister, ons net te luister na mekaar. Die gangers daar buite is nie net hier om mekaar dood te maak nie, hul soek hulp en die geleerders onder ons is die mense wat hulle kan help.”

“Dan is daar mense wat net dink die gangsters moet tronk toe gaan en hulle moet hangstraf kry en doodgemaak raak. Maar gangsters is amper soos ‘n kind, want ons kinders kry nie kans om regtig kinders te wees nie, hulle word sommer van kleintyd af soos grootmense behandel, en word gelos om self groot te raak.

“Dit is waarom die tronde so vol is. Ek is ‘n eks-gevangene. Ek het tronk toe gegaan in 1976, toe was daar nog 400 mense in een tronk gewees. Vandag is daar 10 000 mense in dieselfde tronk. Oor 20 jaar sal ons mense 300 000 mense wees wat in tronke is, waar hulle hou amper 100 000 mense in die tronk is. Ek het laas gehoor daar is 300 mense wat life het in die tronk. Die getal is seker nou al 400 mense wat life gekry het.”

Daar is nie ‘n budget, of ‘n skool, of daar word nie gecater vir ons mense op grondvlak nie. Ons moet die mense vang in en hulle in die tronk sit. Daar vind geen rehabilitasie plaas nie. Kyk soos ek: Ek was iemand wat in die 70s tronk toe gestuur is, ek ken ‘n person wat nou al vir 37/38 in die gevangenis is. Ons het saam begin, hy steeds in die tronk. Nou daar word nie vir sulke mense gecater nie, en daai mense wat in die tronk is is ‘n gevaar vir ons mense wat buitekan is, want hulle bou ‘n “grudge”. Julle wil nie vir ons help nie, so ons gaan nie vir julle help nie. En as hulle uitkom, wat maak hulle hier buitekant? Hulle doen nog erger dinge. Nou ons cater nie vir hulle nie, of ons dink nie aan hulle nie. Ons dink net aan onself hierbuite kant, ons moet survive.”

“Nou ons is besig met die culture, ons is Khoisans, moet ons nie byvoorbeeld werkswinkels vir hulle hou nie. Ons dink net aan onself en ons kinders. En vir diegene in die tronk sien ons net as ‘n nadeel vir ons kinders, wat deur hulle verlei kan word. Hul kom uit die tronk en ons wat nog nie in die tronk was nie, wil graag sy storie aanluister.”

“En soos ek sy storie aanluister, raak hy my hero, en dan wil ek ook dieselfde dinge doen as hy. En dan gaan ek ook gevangenis toe en so gaan dit aan. En as die persoon dan tronk toe gaan, draai sy eie mense teen hom, maar hul weet nie aan die einde van die dag is hul die oorsaak van die daad.”

“Groot need in die gemeenskap vir sulke werkwinkels. Ons was al tot by Plato, het goed op die tafel gesit, maar hul aanvaar dit nie, want hul is mos politicians en ons is net gewone mense, daar word nie gecater vir gewone mense nie, maar vir die politicians en ons bly en lei daaronder.”

LUCELLE CAMPBELL: My focus is particularly around museums, heritage and culture. I think I started off when I discovered Anna de Koning at Groot Constantia Museum – that was 1998.”

“I realised for the first time that that museum was owned by the most ruthless colonialist Simon van der Stel. This topic, the Healing of Memory is for me on top of the list, because I take this very serious, it is very personal.”

“My own healing, coming from a molested past when I was a child and then finding out the reason why I was molested at that time. And I realised at the time children shall be seen not heard.”

“Now I think that is a crime, because if you think of the children and the women are the most vulnerable of the oppressed people. And all of this stems from the genocide of our indigenous people. And the way they we systematically turned today into an oppressed people – the most oppressed people. That is a very personal topic for me.”

DR RUBEN RICHARDS: “I think, what we will begin to feel, as we begin to tell our own stories, is that our story resonates with other people in the room. And when you are in a safe space where you tell your story, you get the audience to saying, yes, I feel that too; I can empathise and identify with that.

“That is part ... shall I call it a benefit, maybe even the power – the restorative power of a small meeting like this. You may wonder why I only invited 23 people. I must disclose, that is my call; this is my organisation; I made the call – and i had budgetary constraints. I had discussions with some trusted advisers and people, and we’ve decided that this level of pitching a community conversation, at this level of leadership, is where it should start.”

“We are not on a political bandwagon where we want to call the masses together and say look what we are doing for the Khoisan people. No. That’s not what this is about. We are taking a leadership view on that. We are wounded healers and leaders.”

“There is a level at which our woundedness almost cannot be shown out there. We must be strong when we are out there. We cannot show our weakness, but we also must not be arrogant and in denial about it, so this is a space where we are going to deal with that, when you get out there in your constituencies.

“Mr Lorenzo Davids here is probably one of the most influential people – if not in the country, certainly in Cape Town – around how we can facilitate and assist in developing our communities.”

“Stan Henkeman is in the room. He has been part of not only a South African, but pan-African picture around justice and reconciliation.” So suddenly there are not only a lot of coloureds in a room... This is in appreciation for who is in the room and how we can network and strengthen each other, what we call leverage off each other. That is part of having a think tank group, and I am unapologetic about it.”

BEACHFRONT BREAKAWAY SESSION

As part of the community conversation there was a breakaway session at the beachfront in Milnerton, where comments on video were captured:

Setting the scene

DR RUBEN RICHARDS: Robben Island right in front of us over there. Straight over there. The first political prisoner on Robben Island was a coloured man. On the left we have what we today now as Port of Cape Town, Table Bay. Far left around the corner is Salt River. If you think of the Liesbeeck River, the name Salt River comes from the salt pans of Cape Town. The water from the Indian ocean, Muizenberg, comes as we all know along the M5 (highway) - think of the M5 as a water channel – it is the shortest distance from the Indian ocean and the Atlantic Ocean here where we are standing right now. And it meets the Atlantic ocean through Liesbeeck Parkway through the Salt River.”

“That is where in 1510 the Portuguese landed under Francisco D’Almeida with their ship and decided to try and take the children and cattle from the Indigenous People, and where they met their match (hul gat gesien). They got slaughtered on this beach by people with stones and sticks only.

“ So much so, I argue that the Portuguese never, ever tried to colonise SA. So this is the beach where it all happened.”

“In 1806, I want you to imagine the British landed here for the 2nd time, they first landed in Muizenberg in 1795 and when they landed the second time which was more permanent – they landed here on this beach with 60 ships, between Robben Island and this beach with 60 ships and 5 000 soldiers to capture the Cape, in 2 hours from the Dutch.”

Comments:

LUCELLE CAMPBELL: “Just been standing here, thinking... this is absolutely beautiful, thinking that this is our ancestral land, this is our land, because we were here...”

“I get goose bumps; I am standing in the shoes of my ancestors, and it makes me angry somehow, it is difficult – I guess we have to forgive and forget, but it is difficult and challenging.”

CHIEF ERNEST SOLOMON: “Alles het hier begin. Dit is **die** plek waar ons se mense verneder geraak het. Die vernedering is nog steeds by ons se mense, die Khoisan mense. En die letsels van ons se mense le in die gevangenes, en ek hoop vir ons se mense dat

daar is wat gaan belangstel om nie vir ons mense te noem as criminals nie, maar as die slagoffers van die misdade van Jan van Riebeeck.”

“Ons voorouers het ons eintlik vandag na die plek geroep. sonder ons kan gevoel kry wat hulle deurgegaan het hier by die see en vir hulle te help en hulle te genees. Maar ons is nog nie klaar nie. Dit is nog maar net die begin. Ons se nageslagte gaan nog terugkom en naderkom en vir hulle herleef.”

“Ons mense het ander mense wat van die see gekom het, gehelp en hul gesond gemaak, maar toe het daardie mense vir hulle gesond gemaak het, vir hulle doodgemaak. Maar ons wil nie dieselfde doen nie, wil net vra, hoekom het julle die ding gedoen aan ons, nou is julle die oorsieners van ons se erfposies.”

RESPONSE ON FIRST PART OF THE SEMINAR:

Ron Martin: “I think the CSI moment (scene of the crime) in this context is probably of utmost importance. A lot of us, like me personally, I grew up just down the road in Kensington.”

“We all liked Milnerton lagoon for different reasons. But when I took a walk down the beach just now I saw that Milnerton lagoon was filled with water, I see it tends to do the same thing it was doing for a long time and that is to wash up all the rubbish that gets dump overboard by all the ships that was in the bay. It’s been like that for years.”

“We used to come with our bicycles and sometimes walked, but there’s that advert that comes on the history channel now and again, Know where you are that shows the guy sitting at the bus stop where the Berlin Wall used to be for instance, and for me this is a moment like that, walking on the beach and having known the beach for different reasons.”

“It was the only beach where you as coloured *lalties* (young boys) could swim without being hindered by the police. And now you look at Lagoon beach and think *ja, nou het hulle die ook weg gevat van ons.*”

“Having that emotion and at the same time looking at it from a different context, just down the road as Dr Richards had pointed out, the port of Cape Town, and the mouth of the Salt River, there’s also Woodstock beach, where a lot of people we know used to fish. And that was up to the ‘70s before they built the railway line that actually cut off the access to the Woodstock beach, from Salt River, Maitland, those areas where prominent families used to fish for subsistence, to sell to their community, sometimes even give it away. So these aspects of your social fabric and social make up comes flooding to you

again, you can imagine, and all of a sudden your mind gets flooded and filled with these screaming narratives. And you try to make sense of it, but it is difficult, as we are not of those people that can compartmentalise, it's not in our genetic make-up, *ons was net uit*, it's just the way we are."

"The facts, the dates, the events that are outlined in our history books – and those left out – it has its place in the built up to your experience of the narrative and coupled with the tangible, the physical, touching and the feeling of experiencing of the actual place and space and if what the two together, what it actually unlocks in you as a person – it gets very heavy."

"It also makes you realise what responsibility we have. We are experiencing it first hand, we are given the opportunity. I feel humbled to be in the company of all of you that is also experiencing what I'm trying to explain together. The responsibility aspect is What do we do next and how do we carry it over?"

"Now I know that the day is still long, so maybe it will get unlocked as we go along, but what I just articulated now, is exactly how my journey evolved from 1991 when we started something called the Khoisan Awareness Campaign." "Prof. Hillary Deacon (Stellenbosch) and Prof Jatti Bredekamp (UWC), getting a band of youngsters together, (I think it was in my late 20's), getting us together to clean graffiti made from charcoal from a fire – not realising this part of our heritage is actually mine and then the gradual awakening from there – being in that tangible space, just like the wall where my forefathers painted that painting as part of their cultural expression."

"And then awakening to the fact that this is not the heritage of them, of some extinct being or person, that same person's DNA runs through my veins – so today's experience is a microcosm of the experience that I've been walking since of the journey I had been walking since 1991 and I'm glad it's happening today and in your presence because I think we really just need that, that knee-jerk again to get that jump start that boost to get up to the part where it all began."

CHANTAL BRUCKNER: "There are so many people in our movement that disagree with each other, but that does not make them our enemy. And then walking out there to the beach and the 60 ships that passed by and I take myself back and try to think in that space of what happened, like people walking on the bay minding our own business and then other people came and start shooting, and looting and taking and we did not know – our forefathers did not know what they were after, what is happening?"

"Our whole civilisation, our whole knowing who we are, the whole peaceful era just ripped apart – not knowing. And then these people came with their ideas and imposed it on us and created a whole other world that our people did not know or were aware of."

“And centuries later we sit and disagree over the smallest thing not knowing it was created in that way and so we can sit traumatised never healed from that experience and no one took notice of it. Now today we got all the names, what they say about us. But we never knew... and no one will come like those ships did if there was nothing here. And they succeeded until this far.”

STANLEY HENKEMAN: “There are so many thoughts flooding my mind. I often ask the question when I interact with people and there is something that is put on the table. What are your instincts.”

“We can also ask the question “What is confirmed?” And this confirmation is what I want to say something about. I’ve always wondered why the view of Table Mountain from here – and everybody says it’s the best view of the mountain – but there was something more significant about this view, and I did not know why...”

“This morning the penny dropped, and I think you don’t have to live through something to feel the connection with a human being. And just this morning we had a massive confirmation of things we think about and don’t even realise why it is significant for you. It leaves one a little bit emotional.”

WANDILE KASIBE: “There’s an important question I wanted to pose, to go into the historical holocaust, the place of the occurrence of history. We often walk there and reconnect to those historical moments and there is something that going back to the site, that takes us to a history that we know less about.” “Sessions like these open the door, or rather a paradigm through which we view our history, and the question is whose paradigm are we viewing history from, because historically we’ve been viewing history through the prism of the West or the prism of the occident and it is important that we get a perspective from the horse’s mouth.”

“When I say horse’s mouth, I mean through the paradigm of the people whose histories are basically embedded in those occurrences. And for me it is such an eye opener and an also an affirmation of the kinds of narratives that you don’t actually find in the public domain.”

“In history books and text books you don’t actually get to hear about the Khoi/D’Almeida confrontation of 1510, neither do you hear about the Khoi–Dutch confrontation in 1659, because these narratives actually say local inhabitants of the time had the strategy to respond to attacks.”

“They were not just savages, because we know that D’Almeida abducted one of the Khoi children, and of course people now responded to this military threat and they needed a

strategy to respond to this threat and it also goes back to the earliest interaction between the indigene and the occident and the occident fails to barter or fails to negotiate, and then they resort to violence. And that then begins the narrative of the encounter between African people and Western colonising powers.”

“It starts with a sense of violence – that they come and parachute violence into a society that is peaceful, that deals with things through a different kind of diplomacy and then that violence becomes an intergenerational grief that gets passed on from that generation onto the current generation and we seem to be actually in a continues mode of this colonisers, who are still refusing to let go of that property they stole from African people.”

“So moments such as these for me are extremely important and the question is how to we get this narrative in the public domain, because *I can tell you now that there are millions who do not know about what we heard here today* and how do we get that narrative into the mind and the site affirmation and that leads to the question where to from here, which is a very important question.” “This is where we need different layers of unravelling the objects that were found in the Khoi/D’Almeida confrontation, whether there are tangible artefacts that people can make reference to. We know it took place and how do we got resources of a nation to invest in that actually boost the morale and identity of a people, that people that we actually able to respond and defeat a Western power, who actually defeated Francisco D’Almeida and he actually had to retreat, because the indigenous people could stand up to a much more advanced civilisation.”

DR RUBEN RICHARDS: “The then world power, that wreaked havoc wherever they went. The 1510 saga involves a person called D’Almeida. He was not just another Portuguese guy; this was the celebrated warmonger of the Portuguese empire. This was the guy that met his demise at the hands of local people; The local people responded, reactively to their sense of abuse by this foreign power.”

HILARY-JANE SOLOMONS: “I want to show you my scratched sunglasses. I have lots of others to wear but I choose these because it reminds me of an event that happened that I have no control over know I almost toppled over.”

“I turned around, where we were co-hosting a big function, a big event and it was if something or somebody just pushed me over. Now I am a tall girl, but I know my balance and then the next thing ... you know these round concrete things like at the parade etc, I toppled over that, and I broke the fall, and these sunglasses hit into my eye - the intention was to destroy my sight, but it only has a scratch...”

I was standing there now outside looking at the sea, and I was saying... you know I talk to the Lord and I said, Father we all focus on entry points, but this one... very few have taken stock of this one.”

“Because the scriptures are clear that why He made the seas – not to come in and take over and destroy a people made in His image, so they took that which was intended for good purpose and for livelihood and for trading, they came and they came on attack and intention. Now if you look at the Portuguese time, the Dutch, the English, with every dispensation of theirs it became more intense to take over this place. And for me, in the way I live my life, I always go to the entry point. Why was this allowed and why did they come with this intention?”

“So as I stood there, this was my prayer: “Father, this blood that is still crying out there, today we can stand up and say, no more, because we know who we are. We know who we are.”

LUCELLE CAMPBELL: “I’ve been on my own journey, regarding my own healing and I think that is why I am here today. But I am also here today to make a connection with the people that is in the movement. I think Chantal mentioned something early on, I think this is very pertinent with regards to taking this forward; people, like ourselves here that can take it forward. Now if we think about the resurgence currently, my personal opinion is it is failing the people. It is failing the very people that need this information. That need this history of the people of Cape Town.”

“In my experience – I am also a tour guide – in the beginning I did slave tours in the city, but after a while I started to think there is an emptiness here in my slave route tours in the city and what I discovered was that there was an absence even in my own consciousness regarding my history, the history of the Khoi and San people.”

“So what I did, I started doing research and afterwards I realised this story fills my story about slavery. It makes it more real, because many times people, even before the Dutch occupation a lot of explorers came pass this area and said to other people these people are cannibals. So they already started to depict the local people.”

“Later on I discovered the science that was used on indigenous people. These are all things we need to talk about because it is part of us, it is under our skins. And I realised that museums are also colonial places that need to decolonise. Currently, as far as I know, there are over 700 bone specimens of our indigenous people in museums.”

“I think the root of the healing needs to start with these bones needing to be de-accessioned. Because as long as the bones are lying in the museums it is part of the collection which makes it highly immoral.”

“I don’t know if anybody is doing anything about saying, but these bones need an honourable burying. This is not happening. But it came to mind to me this morning especially around the bones. I think that is something that must come up.”

SEMINAR FEEDBACK:

PRISCILLA DE WET: “In my experience in academia and having to write, I find that what is lacking and what we should perhaps consider is some kind of group support, because once I started in this reading, hate to say academic, but research work, there were times that the things you were reading and unravel and comes to term with as an ordinary lay person, without the skills to deal with these emotional upheavals that you are confronted with.”

“I mean I would be the reading the text, then not knowing that I’m crying I just wonder what’s the dots here on the page. So for me the writing was very traumatic, so traumatic that I just left it.”

“So when you say that writing is our responsibility as those with knowledge, I would like to ask with that there should be some kind of support.”

LUCELLE CAMPBELL: “With regards to the kind of responsibilities that we have, I see us as leaders – heritage and cultural leaders – you are sitting with all this research, it is your passion, you know at the end of the day this is the root, this is where we need to start.” And it gets to you, because you are so filled up with this, and you feel sometimes hopeless, you know you try you feel you cannot – you try to speak to young people, in my case you speak to foreigners and tourist, etc. But at the end of the day you feel as if you are not doing enough.”

“What I’ve learned through today is that I am not alone in the struggle and that I feel a lot better. But also, as Priscilla says, there needs to be support in this process of healing.”

“We need more people and a broader audience, and particularly those of us who live in the townships – like myself who lives in Elsie’s River, there needs to be a lot more healing, but also consciousness of actually transcending this kind of constructs that we have been placed into coming from the genocide of the indigenous people, slavery.”

“I can see this is what we need, seminars like this where we can come together and share and what I like to end off with is: we need each other, and we need to ask, how can I help you? It is very basic I think, how can I help you, so that we can become a serving

people. That is our root, that we are a serving people, but not in a derogatory way. Not as servants.”

WANDILE KASIBE: “This takes me back to the time when we as young people sat down to conspire how to remove the statue of Cecil John Rhodes. That came out of the pain of being traumatised by the statue of the colonialist par excellence; colonial masters located at the heart of the university that is meant to produce African leaders.”

“There must be a point in their history when the colonised people realise who their colonisers are and what they did to them, how they can actually themselves as an oppressed people can restore their dignity of themselves and their ancestors and the people who came before them.”

“This is the time for a people to resolve within themselves that decolonisation is an idea whose time has come. And the question is what is the role of young people in the rewriting of history? In making those historical nuances in basically re-inscribing the narrative that was meant to be there in the first place. In applying intellectual archaeology in the mind of the writers of the histories and the writers of the narrative.”

“The time now has come where these kind of conversations are beginning to help us to look at history through a different perspective, so that we are able to know what was actually erased, because when they wrote history they erased certain histories.”

“How do you go back to the histories that were basically erased? I think that this site is beginning to tell us that history was basically retained by those who actually conquered our people. How do we then begin to decolonise history?”

CHANTAL BRUCKNER: “We must not forget that we come from a very deep spiritual people. It was alive and real, even up to today.”

“There are misconceptions around the church and being spiritual amongst our people, and the influences of the church still have on our spirituality and how we conduct that spirituality in ways that is acceptable in a Westernised world.”

“There was one thing you said we must think about one thing that shaped how we think about things. We always used to blame Jan van Riebeeck. He came with the Bible. We closed our eyes and he sits with the land and we sit with the Bible.”

“But it is one thing that a person sees that there was one thing whoever Jan van Riebeeck was when he came here, he also came with a covenant from God himself, but he couldn’t hand the covenant over, or make the covenant within the other; the first

people of the land, because they came with the covenant the healing commandment from God the father and the land?”

“So I changed my perspective, that made it easy for me to go into a church and not conform to the idea of church, but bring my spirituality, which is a mandate from the Father.”

“I was also subjected to criticism, such as you are not a church person but you are in a church? And I say, but how do we influence that sector of our community. People will go to church and they will believe what comes from the pulpit, how do we then influence that in our communities and use it to make the next generation see that you cannot separate God from the first people, because he is the one that made is, so that is a big thing in the communities and restoring that traumatised communities.”

YOUR SEMINAR TAKE AWAY

Participants were asked to identify one thing they would take away from the seminar.

HILARY-JANE SOLOMONS: “As an individual we have a story to tell; as a community there’s another story. For me it’s about a narrative that needs to be woven cohesively. And most of the pointers here we can fill in, because we work with it according to history. A well coerced, put-together narrative, a cohesive one, becomes a restorative one. It should be because in healing you are restored back to the place that was ordained for you. That then becomes a redeemed narrative, because within each of us is that ordained identity. Ordained identity versus inherited identity. I can tell you about it, but you think about it...”

STANLEY HENKEMAN: “A modern day theologian that kind of influenced some my thinking in the ’80s was a gentleman with the name of John Stott. He wrote a book about Issues facing Christians today. He makes a very interesting point and it kind of resonates very strongly with what happened to me here today. He talks about the need for a vision and he quotes a translation that says we there is no vision the people perish. But what struck me and what stayed with me was the way he unpacked the concept of a vision – how it consist of two parts. One, in order to have a vision you must me dissatisfied with the status quo. That’s where it starts.”

“Then the second part, which really makes it a vision, is the quest for an alternative. And for me the challenge is, how do I bring that into my work. Because we do it very well in the country at the moment – the dissatisfaction of the status quo. The challenge for us is the quest for an alternative. I think that is where our efforts, where my efforts certainly should go.”

LEONORA SOLOMON: “I am very humbled to be around people around the table here today. My critical thinking is around what methodology was used in the past regarding history and how that affects how our people think today. And secondly, will the methodology that will be used conscientise our people in the community, otherwise the critical thinking can be easily misinterpreted.”

LESLE JANSEN: “History is not dead, it is alive, but it is just up to us, as coloured people, to keep it alive and make sure it is there for the next generation. And that is a question we need to speak on and there is so much to explore.”

“The second thing is, as we do these markers what I am looking for now, I’m finding it easy to find trauma points, but where are the positive points of who we were. The positive points, like we find that the cattle were there and it was endless, but what is the story around and behind it. I also want to know who were we? I think it is also what we must more consciously find out. Who were we in terms of our systems, our way of living, our knowledge?”

CHIEF JACOBUS JOOSTE: “Ek glo waar ever ons vandaan kom is daar soortgelyke geskiedenis soos hier by Milnerton en daar in Mosselbaai, en wil vra dat die RRF soortgelyke seminare hou in al die verskillende plekke.”

RON MARTIN: “I am going to end off with what wasn’t said, and taking a little bit of what the previous wrapper-uppers said. I take heed of what Priscilla said about being isolated when you are reading. I think about how Krotoa must have felt, she was the translator, the negotiator.”

“How isolated she must have felt. If she wasn’t as isolated and shunned by her own people for being seen as a traitor and by Dutch as seen as an outsider – how different history might have been if she was actually treated with the proper respect as a person in the context of her time – and how that relates to other people who married Khoi women.”

The work that we do especially within the context of today’s society – it is a changing society yes, it is exciting, but I know that the Khoi resurgence movement is being discussed in the corridors of power – let’s face it – it is probably the hottest topic in the corridors of power whether we like to believe it or not, because the corridors of power is trying as hard and as far as possible to stifle things like this.”

“This is the context from which we exert how presence and assume our responsibility as people who are trying to get the message out there. You only have to look at recent events to see what is happening. Look at what happened Ennerdale, outside Johannesburg, and Freedom Park, these are our communities rising up. What happens then?”

“There are protests taking place in other communities, but as soon as there is a protest in our communities the police use sharp ammunition. They respond immediately with violence. They don’t allow the protest to develop. That has to be quelled immediately. Look what happened at Helenvale outside Port Elizabeth, that laaitie was sommer shot dead an hour after the protest started. The same thing at Beaufort-West; Prince Albert. You notice each place is getting closer and closer to Cape Town. Imagine another uprising on the Cape Flats. We know what another uprising on the Cape Flats can do – it can bring down the country, the government, because that is what happened in the 1980s.”

“Just contextualising it like that and the way I’m speaking – it is very emotional, because I realise the enormity of our responsibility – of my responsibility, because first of all we should do what chief Solomon said, the message should be gotten to the right people, to the people most affected by what happened in the past and the time has never been more critical. The time is now. We must get the message of this narrative and the cumulative effects out there before the uprising of our people because too many people are going to die, when, not if, the uprising take place against the current status quo of this government, our free government.”

“The constitution’s preamble speaks about the principal of healing, but the concept we know goes entirely against it, especially the part about the cut-off date of 1913 etc. There are so many people that stifle that same healing process that are spoken about in the preamble – you can see the enormity of our task, so this is a multi-pronged exercise that we have to embark on. We’ve embarked upon it already 20, 30 yrs ago, but I don’t think it has become more critical than this time, than now. Because contextually things are happening outside that is going to spike out of control if we don’t do something, if we don’t assume our responsibility.”

PRISCILLA DE WET: “Something has awoken again in me when you spoke about your writings. What I came across was the constructs of Europe – when we write and think and do our critical thinking around deconstructing history and all that, what framework to we use to look at it to deconstruct it? I mean the terms advanced; civilised; developed; progress – these are all constructs of Europe – as oppose to primitive, backward.”

“My argument is that in the constructs of Europe primitive was made primitive – primitive was just another way of being on this earth. And as you spoke about your place and your relationship to your geographical, physical, social environment, primitive was a construct made by Europe to make our way of being. And what was a truth for us wrong and backward and outdated.”

LORENZO DAVIDS: “What I take away from today and sessions like these would be that we were lazy and naïve with regards to history. We’ve given the validation of that story to others, to white institutions to validate history and heritage for us, and we’ve allowed our history to be time-lined not to us, but to others. And what has happened – and this is where these kind of dialogues helps – you go back to the 1400s, you go back to the 1300s and there was organised societies, there were a vibrant culture, there was heritage and history being lived out already; it was not started as we know from the Diaz story.

“The Chinese were here in 1401 navigating around the Cape, trading, replenishing – so organised culture were here long before we even as ourselves begin to recognise society, community, the migration of people.”

“So today’s dialogue begins to connect us to our own validation. We need to validate that, we need to recognise that the history is much broader, longer more expansive than we ever imagined. And it is that that we must take away from these kinds of dialogues. And the richness of diverse voices in the room helps to frame that process for us. Hats off to the RR Foundation to pioneer and bring together the story telling, but I do want us to be aware of time-lining in narrow confines.”

“We have to understand this goes back many centuries before the 1400s and that there is a richness here that we still ourselves don’t know. But please don’t export validation, we must never do that. We have to own our own stories. We have to tell it, we have to own it, we have to validate it, we have to say this is our history. The moment we give that away, we are giving away the cultural, historical, heritage assets that people are born with. You are beginning to betray your own ancestry within that process. So this validation must remain ours.”

CLOSING COMMENT

DR RUBEN RICHARDS: I think that is an appropriate note to end on from my side. Thank you for being a willing audience, thanking for sacrificing your Saturday morning.”

ends