Phenomenological reduction: Eloff’s (2004) response converges with that of Barnard (2004). Chaos was recognised as a reality. It was managed by negotiating in privacy, and being inconspicuous. It would appear as if negotiators have to bridge an important dichotomy. The first aspect of the dichotomy that they need to bridge is that they have to maintain populist support by playing to their gallery when called upon or when it is appropriate to do so. It is often essential to present feedback to one’s constituency in order to ensure that there is a sense of progress, whatever the situation. The second aspect of the dichotomy is that the real negotiations took place, for the most part, in the private channels and outside the scope of public scrutiny, and were driven by experts. It was not a populist negotiation.


Coleman (2004): The context in which this occurred was one of daily violence between the main actors. Realising that common interests existed was a process of discovery. The realisation started dawning that South Africa needed everybody. Violence propelled, and it also catalysed, the need for consensus on how to move forward. The violence was frequent and horrific. There was so much counter-violence. It was increasingly debilitating. In 1991 you had the Boipatong massacre. The focus of violence was the hostels.

Phenomenological reduction: In this extract of the interview, Coleman focuses on the violence. In change processes of this magnitude, violence will often be a logical corollary. The challenge is to contain the violence and to set a process in motion to de-escaloate it. There were patterns of violence, as it moved metronome-like through the country. A core skill was to be able to identify the patterns and develop stratagems to de-escaloate it. The way this was done was by a combination of conversations, structured organisational design, enlistment, and project management.

Coleman (2004) stated that “[t]he realisation that common interests existed was a process of discovery”. The discovery of common interests was a key indicator that learning
amongst hitherto enemies had occurred. This matter is explored in Chapter 12. The learning came through the Forum Movement opening up the space for communication across all races, political parties and creeds. There was a switch from racial exclusivity to inclusiveness. This was a crucial and fragile change in South Africa’s psychographics. “Violence propelled, and it also catalysed …” Mbeki frequently cited Yeats who wrote in *The Second Coming* “the centre cannot hold” and inverted it to the question “Will the centre hold?”. This was a pervasive question and the ongoing violence more than anything else tested the resilience and resolve of the negotiators and the very fabric of South African society. Wise leadership allowed the violence to be catalysed into positive internal forces and resulted in Meyer (2004) and Ramaphosa (2005) engaging in a marathon series of talks after Mandela had suspended the negotiations in response to the Boipatong massacre. The chaos and the ambiguity of the situation led to the discovery of a deeper meaning and order. It is significant that Coleman (2004) observed that “the violence became increasingly difficult to ignore”. It became a vital obstruction to the achievement of peace in South Africa, and therefore had to be very carefully and wisely managed. The danger was that the pockets of intense violence that were erupting all over South Africa could ignite into an inferno. This is not hyperbole, but a sober assessment of the deteriorating sovereign risk profile that existed in South Africa at that time. The concept that “violence propelled, and it also catalysed” explains that the South African negotiation counterparts and hitherto enemies understood the patterns of violence, how they could escalate and de-escalate, and how to take a perspective on this violence. The fact that the violence was frequently horrific meant that the leadership could not become enmeshed and immobilised by it, but had to move on from it. One could argue that the huge funerals that took place throughout the country every weekend were in fact a ceremonial which contributed to the maintenance of the momentum to secure a political settlement. State violence therefore, instead of ensuring the retention of the status quo, ensured the abolition of apartheid.

**Coleman (2004):** The peace process then came into motion. John Hall, who was a CBM leader and was at Barlow Rand at the time, convened the peace process and facilitated an understanding of the flashpoints of violence. The fruits of our earlier
stuff came through. We were perceived as being objective. We kept a low profile, we were not written about in the press. That was the secret of our success. The ANC, IFP and NP helped to convene the peace process. Theuns Eloff played an absolutely crucial role in the peace talks. The parties were driven to find some solutions. Violence was counterproductive to the negotiations. Whose agenda involved stoking the violence? Was there a third force? The violence contaminated trust. The National Party government was at least centrally driven by a strategy of negotiation and war. There were many theories of transition in the country. A war was being conducted in the communities at the same time that you negotiate with your opponents. There were also signs of leaders losing control of their constituencies.

Phenomenological reduction: The establishment of the National Peace Accord was a precondition for the successful conclusion of the constitutional negotiations and the attainment of democracy. Its purpose was to convert escalating processes of violence into de-escalating violence. Its fundamental premise was to engender hope, in creating an all-inclusive and mutually desired future amongst a diverse coalition of hitherto enemies. The de-escalation of violence and deep-rooted conflict arose from new and deliberately formed coalitions which rendered previous racial prescriptions obsolete. The creation of the National Peace Accord was therefore an important exercise in coalition formation.

The Mass Democratic Movement, until the time of the signing of the National Peace Accord, had aligned itself around the process of mass action and “ungovernability” in order to get rid of what it did not want, which was apartheid. Boycotts, riots, violence, strikes were used as the means of achieving “ungovernability”.

The National Peace Accord created the space for the hitherto enemies to create a vitally important new space of seeking what they wanted – a desired future. Instead of focusing the masse’s energy on getting rid of what they did not want – apartheid – they could now begin focusing their energy on getting what they did want. The first step in this regard was to achieve the most modern and advanced constitution in the world. The National Peace Accord involved the creation of a grassroots-shared learning experience, which allowed ordinary people to take control of the factors that were inducing violence and
chaos in the country. It was empowering, and masses of people starting to learn new and positive ways of engaging and communicating with one another, specifically when they had been hitherto enemies.

If one assesses ‘lessons learnt’ it is probably fair to say that in any negotiations of this nature it is wise to factor in strategies to counteract a possible or probable, third force attempt to subvert and sabotage the entire process. It is also possible or probable that elements within the forces of law and order will feel sufficiently threatened to abandon their support for the prevailing regime and design a more effective sabotage and subversive strategy than the ‘hitherto enemies’ had ever contemplated. Because of their access to information, the discontented and threatened extremists within an old decaying regime will have had the time and space to conduct a far more focused study of the vulnerabilities of the “government of the day” than any revolutionary or opposition forces. Coleman (2004) makes an important observation when he stated: “The violence contaminated trust.” That was its purpose. The destruction of trust would mean that no moderate consensus on what ordinary citizens regarded as being a desirable future would be allowed to prevail. It would therefore be springtime for the extremists. Violence more than anything else could destroy this trust and therefore wreck the negotiations.

Coleman (2004) posed a question to himself:

Coleman (2004): Did you believe that the government was negotiating, or was its strategy one of divide and rule? Unless the pattern of violence was broken, it would be catastrophic for the country. This could become politically unmanageable for all. Rwanda ended up with one million deaths … Was South Africa going the same way? It turned on a dime, whether we went that way or not. We facilitated basic input into ANC/IFP and the government that led eventually to the signing of the National Peace Accord. This was one of the reasons that underpinned why the enemies came to terms with one another.

Phenomenological reduction: Coleman raises an important matter of ambiguity with his question: ‘Did you believe that the government was negotiating, or was its strategy one of
divide and rule?” It shows that a hardy optimism was essential to the favourable outcome. The answer to his question, is probably somewhere between the two poles. The divide and rule option became less effective the longer the negotiations progressed. Matters were delicately posed, the situation could so easily have spun out of control, but the conscious attempts of millions of South Africans of goodwill did not allow it to.

The statement that “[u]nless the pattern of violence was broken it would prove catastrophic for the country” shows how important Theuns Eloff’s role was in setting up the National Peace Accord. This broke the patterns of violence. The National Peace Accord was formally signed; this was a very important ceremony of peace. Coleman (2004) then offered the vital sentence: “This is one of the reasons that underpinned why the enemies came to terms with one another.” The establishment of the National Peace Accord is therefore an important forum that South African negotiators created, and is unique in the world. It can be understood as a negotiation construct.

Coleman (2004): It was a combination of pressure that was felt by society on the ground. The leaders tried to navigate these pressures because it was the determining factor of whether they were able to negotiate. They needed to be in the negotiations if they were to promote their own self interests. The IFP needed a semblance of decency. Brutal activism was a non-stratagem. The NP needed international and domestic ascription. We need to be seen to be in the peace negotiations. How do we manage the violence so that we can have movement? The National Peace Accord showed direction to the political leaders even though it was broken on the ground every day. This gave leaders the hope that there was a mechanism for taking the matters forward. The CBM was then requested to provide a secretariat to the constitutional negotiations called CODESA. I was involved in the daily management of the CBM, and was secretary to CODESA’s committee on Interim Government.

Phenomenological reduction: Coleman seems to be implying that adult learning took place because of societal pressure. One could argue that this pressure could become so extreme that the citizens are unable to learn. The alternative then would be to learn in a negative dimension, post-traumatic stress syndrome and a pathological type of anti-
learning process. Coleman’s (2004) comment that “people tried to navigate these pressures” is a recurring metaphor. The metaphor of negotiation being analogous to navigating down stormy seas occurred regularly. Some did not have the desire, confidence, or ability to come into the negotiations. This meant that they were excluded from a vital adult learning process, the rule-making process in the society. Involvement in the negotiation process also afforded the participants legitimacy and resulted in them being listened to and their voices being heard. This meant that, if you wished to remain outside of negotiations of this type, you should have an exceptionally good case. The danger of being by-passed as irrelevant was an ever-present risk. The IFP had damaged its legitimacy through its non-participation. The violent atavism of the war in Natali caused severe damage.

Coleman (2004): There was the scathing televised attack by Mandela on De Klerk in the forum of CODESA. There were high levels of symbolic frustration. Outside there was a whole lot of bite. The ANC became frustrated and Mandela reflected the mood. They went into technical teams. Then there was the Chris Hani incident, and the ANC’s decision to suspend the negotiations. The Chris Hani assassination caused CODESA I to collapse. It was a very dangerous moment.

Phenomenological reduction: Chris Hani’s murder was not an incident. It was calculated and indeed intended to ignite a racial civil war. Why does he refer to it as an incident? A possible reason is that there were so many violent occurrences that took place that he simply termed it as one of a stream of incidents. The attack by Mandela on De Klerk was scathing. Maharaj (2004), Van der Merwe (2004) and Meyer (2004) are all in agreement that this attack created an exceptionally risky situation. The situation was bubbling … there was a spectre of an escalating civil war. People were desperate. Mandela listened to the desperation of the people.

Coleman (2004): Why did the dogs not go to war?

Phenomenological reduction: “Why did the dogs of war not do the expected and go to war?” Maybe they were tired and weak and the counter-revolutionary scenario had
dissipated its energy? Maybe the “dogs of war” were rational and very calculating in what they pursued? Maybe they were not populist and were elitist?

Coleman (2004): There was a realisation from the National Peace Accord and CODESA that a clear-cut military solution was not possible and that most people wanted to stop the killing. The ANC also did not feel that an insurrection or military solution was viable. They knew that they had to engage with their enemy.

Phenomenological reduction: What could have stopped the military from both sides, SADF and MK, from engaging the other as the enemy? Perhaps it was the realisation that it would be too costly in terms of life and resources. Pride could have played a role in order to forestall outright military defeat, which the SADF at that time had the technical ability to achieve. There would have been a prolonged situation of conflict and violence. “They knew that they had to engage with the enemy” is significant. The term ‘engage’ means that the military of both the SADF and MK had to learn to understand the values and interests of the other. In other words, ‘engage’ means that they had to learn to understand their negotiation counterparts’ world view.

Coleman (2004): The interesting thing was that matters had to pause ...

Negotiations collapsed after Hani’s assassination. There was about a year of a vacuum.

It is true that there was a formal discontinuation of the negotiations, but the informal negotiations between Ramaphosa (2005) and Meyer (2004) continued in spite of Mandela’s retraction. The retraction could be interpreted as playing to his political gallery. It also sent out an extremely serious message. It was straightforward ... this country’s future was posed on a knife edge, and the constitutional settlement would be very difficult to secure. It could not be presented as a simple matter because, if it were, it would be deprecated as a superficial transaction. The learning scenario and negotiation scenario had reached one of a perceived stalemate. The pessimists would have regarded the stalemate as edging towards stasis and deadlock whilst the optimists would have been
positive and seen the negotiations as edging towards a settlement and in position of homeostasis (see Figure 2).

Coleman (2004): We in the CBM took stock and took note of what the critical leverage points were.

Hall (2005) played a vitally important role as chairman of the National Peace Committee and his commentary on the genesis of the National Peace Accord is offered below:

Hall (2005): I was involved with the CBM. It was there that I met Colin Coleman and Theuns. I represented Barlow Rand as one of the top 100 companies who subscribed to the CBM’s objectives to provide a facilitating role. I had two linkages into the process. The first was in terms of my role as president of SACOB. The second was in terms of my presidency of the CBM. It is chronologically true that after Mandela was released, violence escalated. This was because his release created the sense of greater political opportunity. The sense of opportunity was counteracted by the government, by greater counter-violence from the state. In short, conflict seemed to be escalating, and could easily have lurched out of control. There was the horrific train violence. It was hard to pin down who was responsible. But its source could be found in alliances that formed as a result of the social and political uncertainty combined with the certainty that the government’s power was diminishing. Change was in the air. But the government had not yet handed over power, and was in control of the apparatus of power. Those were very troubled times. De Klerk thought that it was prudent to call a peace conference because of the outrageous levels of violence. He called it with the major parties. The ANC, SACP, AZAPO and SACC boycotted De Klerk’s peace conference because they wanted an all-inclusive conference. The ANC wanted to call a similar conference but wanted to exclude the National Party. It was tit for tat. Very dangerous, very dangerous ...

The scene was set with the ANC and COSATU conferences that were in progress at that time. It was in this situation that Theuns Eloff called Jay Naidoo to set up a meeting to discuss participation in a National Peace Conference. Naidoo said that
this was acceptable, provided that it was chaired by a neutral independent body comprising business and the churches. I got a mandate from SACOB that I could attend that meeting. If I recall correctly that meeting was also attended by the Reverend Beyers Naude, Frank Chicane, and Brigella Bam. We agreed that we would approach De Klerk and say that we would offer to be the neutral conveners of a peace meeting. You might think that business and church could be regarded as strange bedfellows. But they were able to cooperate in this situation. Big business supported the CBM. They supported and put their money behind the changes. They were aware that we were cooperating across a broad spectrum of businesses in South Africa.

The CBM had a strong mandate from big business. SACOB was important because of the resources that they could bring to bear as the practical project managing of the negotiations became critical. They had financial resources that they could bring to bear as the process developed. These skills and resources would prove essential to deal implementation. We flew down to Cape Town and had a meeting with President De Klerk. Theuns Eloff and Frank Chicane were with me if I recall correctly. I think that Pik Botha and Sam de Beer were with President De Klerk. There were a few others as well. De Klerk was quite arrogant and tough. He said that it was the responsibility of the government to maintain peace and to protect the security of the citizens. This was a not happy meeting. He said that the church and business should stick to their respective lots. Yes, this meeting was an unhappy one. The violence was intractable, and our offer to act as the secretariat on a peace conference was peremptorily rejected. We were expected to keep this meeting confidential. When we came out of the meeting there were 30 to 40 journalists there. Someone had leaked the meeting ... I suppose that was done to ‘put us in our place ... to stick to our knitting’ so to speak. Anyway, the National Party’s peace conference took place without any fellow travellers. It flopped...totally. There were no representatives from the ANC and churches. So their meeting fell short and the violence continued inexorably.
Thereafter we had a ‘good-feeling’ meeting with the ANC on the matter of acting as the secretariat on a peace conference. But it fell short of expectations and the atrocious violence continued unabated. We then went back to De Klerk and asked whether he would be prepared to re-consider us presiding over a scene-setting peace meeting that would include the ANC and others. His response was more positive. That started the peace process. Eventually we got 69 parties to be interested in a peace conference, including the trade unions and traditional leaders, the amakosi.

The meeting was convened at Barlow Park on the 29th of June 1991. It was chaired jointly by Archbishop Tutu and myself. The agenda was straightforward. It was to establish what needed to be done to bring about a peaceful solution to South Africa’s violence. How do you control a meeting of 69 organisations who all have strong opinions? It was agreed that each person could have a maximum of five minutes to speak. I allocated scribes who had flip charts around the auditorium. After about half an hour something miraculous happened. We had achieved a consensus on what was required! Those groups broke into committee meetings and we synthesised the headings from the flip charts into what would form the constitution of the National Peace Accord. This soon became the National Peace Accord document. The plenary meeting would be the Peace Accord Committee. We broke for dinner and I arranged for a dinner where there would be no chairs so that people would be compelled to talk. I said to Archbishop Tutu that we might get problems in the working committees. He said, ‘Give them time’.

I saw Thabo Mbeki in action on that occasion. I saw him work the committees. He was brilliant. I saw him move from group to group who were tasked with developing the National Peace Accord. I saw the result of Thabo’s networking. It was amazing. I was asked if I would chair the steering committee. That committee worked very hard to get the draft agreement of the National Peace Accord established. Jay Naidoo also played an important role. After three or four months we had carved out the National Peace Accord. The process proceeded remarkably smoothly.

The Peace Accord was signed and provided space for three structures:
1. The National Peace Committee

2. The National Peace Secretariat

3. The Goldstone Commission

In other words, there were three legs to the peace process. The members of the National Peace Committee were representatives of the main political parties. The National Peace Secretariat was funded by the government. We appointed thousands of peace monitors wearing their ‘peace smocks’. You will recall them, Geoff. The secretariat was chaired by Antonio Gildenhuyse, a lawyer. I chaired the National Peace Committee and we had six lawyers. Judge Richard Goldstone chaired the commission which was entrusted with the prevention of violence and public intimidation. He had tremendous power, including the right to search and seize documents from the security establishments. Its voice was ‘the voice of public opinion’ and the public’s revulsion at the violence. The commission ensured that the political parties were on track. When they [the politicians] signed the National Peace Accord, I do not think that they took it that seriously because they could not have anticipated the enormity of its extent and coverage. But once they had signed it they were locked into the process. This educated the people on the ground that violence was not the solution and was unacceptable. It almost anticipated the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. Regional and local peace committees were established throughout the country to ensure appropriate implementation. There were always local reporting relationships.

Did the National Peace Accord stop the violence? The answer to that question is no, it did not. But it did put a lid on the violence and stopped it from spiralling out of control. I once said to Archbishop Tutu: ‘You know, you would think that the National Peace Accord never existed’. You do pick up a brief reference to it in De Klerk’s memoirs, where my name was alluded to. The reason is that no political party wants to admit that the church and business were instrumental in facilitating the transition. Tutu’s response was: ‘John, God knows’.
At this juncture, Meyer's (2004) reflections on how he learned from a situation that was chaotically disordered will be set out.

Meyer (2004): The substance of my understanding remains the same, and I speak for myself. I learned so much from the other sides. Undoubtedly we regarded one another as enemies before we started negotiating with one another. My problem was that I had made a very large paradigm shift in mind. In 1986 I served as Minister of Police and I was appointed by President PW Botha to manage the NSMs. I was chairman of an inter-governmental security group. This included senior representatives from the police, intelligence services, security, education and health. My instructions were to ‘resolve matters’.

We were in a state of emergency at the time. At that time few people had the opportunity to really observe what was really going on in South Africa. I made it my business to observe what was going on very, very carefully. I had the opportunity to go into the areas where there was serious violence and deep conflict. I took up these opportunities. I was expected to go out there, to understand what the conflicts were about and to resolve them. If it was a conflict about a lack of water supply, I had to address the problem. The UDF were at that time mobilising, with programmes of mass action. The general thesis at that time was that if we could resolve the presenting problem, we would resolve the problem. This was wrong thinking. So I was told ‘resolve this uprising and that uprising...’. My visits to these places of violence and conflagration gave me an understanding. I saw for myself that there was a lack of political representation. There were few in the Cabinet who were able to get an understanding of the reality of life in the townships, which were often places of horrific violence.

By the end of the 1980s, some fundamental changes had taken place in my own mind. That was a very important phase in the development of my own consciousness. This came from me being exposed to a reality outside of the Union Buildings and outside of the government itself. I took myself outside of a comfortable environment in an attempt to gain as deep an insight into ordinary day-
to-day life in the country as I possibly could. The issue here was about 'how do you handle this knowledge of reality that represented a castigation of everything that the party represented?' My real transformation came later. Let me tell you an anecdote. I was very close to Wynand Malan. He was a frontrunner in the reforms of the NP. We had offices across the corridor from one another. We had long dialogues...

Wynand left the National Party in 1987. I think it was out of frustration. He saw no progress. I stayed on. Maybe I was not bold enough. Looking back on it, my decision was the right one. The fact that I stayed meant that I could play a constructive role. The message that I discovered was that it helps to effect change from the inside. If you are in a position of authority, you can effect change. It does not help to lose your influence. The risks of losing effective influence inclined me to stay on. The second facet of my changed paradigm was that I was exposed to a person like Cyril. Cyril was one of the most visible opponents. He was running the biggest strike in the country's history. Part of my job was to control the fall-out from that strike. We were coming at one another almost as enemies.

Cyril and I bumped into each other at Heathrow Airport completely by chance. At this meeting when things were still very tough we agreed that we need to talk. This was an explicit statement. Sometime later, at a very early stage, this started to develop into a piece of chemistry. I am not sure what it was. It involved understanding, liking, and friendship. This helped us to get closer. We started to interact with each other from time to time. Cyril was initially not prominent in the negotiations. He only became prominent after he became the Secretary General of the ANC. Shortly thereafter I was appointed into Cabinet as the Minister of Defence. I then got placed into the negotiation team. Cyril and I got closer. The ANC started showing signs that they were serious about exploring constitutional matters. The question was posed: 'Can we talk?' That happened before the negotiations were directly conceived of.
We got together to build the process in October 1991. This period of interaction helped tremendously as far as my own insight was concerned. By the time I was appointed as Minister of the Constitution, my own transformation was complete.

Phenomenological reduction: Meyer refers to the notion of a changed paradigm in order to explain his evolving mental models (Kuhn, 1996). Meyer is talking about the evolution of his mindset and fundamental changes in his values. The change that he underwent represented his own pattern of learning, where the values of the legitimate system were juxtaposed against the values of the shadow system.

Stacey (1996, p. 10) offered a useful insight into learning in situations of complexity and non-linearity: “The science of complexity studies the fundamental properties of non-linear feedback networks and particularly of complex adaptive networks. Complex adaptive systems consist of a number of components or agents that interact with each other, according to sets of rules that require them to examine and respond to each other’s behaviour in order to improve their behaviour and thus the behaviour of the system that they comprise. In other words, such systems operate in a manner that constitutes learning. Because those learning systems operate in an environment that consists mainly of other learning systems, it follows that together they form a co-evolving suprasystem that in a sense creates and learns its way into the future.”

The first point that will be asserted is that the hitherto enemies were able to learn from one another, from other individuals and organisations, within the country and outside of the country as well. They learned from other governments and interest groups who were themselves actors in the suprasystem. They were able to co-create together a co-evolving suprasystem that learned its way into the future.

On Robben Island the political prisoners immersed themselves in studies and debates about the future political constitution of South Africa, and thereby eventually became the leadership echelon of the country’s co-evolving suprasystem.
Meyer (2004): The Boipatong massacre caused the negotiations to be put on hold and indeed they had visibly broken down. It was not five minutes after Mandela announced that he had suspended the negotiations that my telephone rang. It was Cyril Ramaphosa. He said to me, ‘Now that the negotiations have stopped we need to speak to one another more than ever before’. We had many meetings over the next couple of months, maybe as many as thirty.

Phenomenological reduction: The Boipatong massacre was an outrage and required careful management and guidance through what could have been a populist explosion. The suspension of the talks can be seen as an important funereal ceremonial. It was a rite of respect for the dead. This rite had to be incorporated into the heart of the negotiation process, and the negotiations could not be rushed, in spite of the crushing urgency. The rite presented itself as an important symbol. It tragically provided another martyr. The martyrdom was unifying to the ANC, and simultaneously provided the National Party constituency with the spectre of civil war which would await them if there were a failure to settle.

The rage within the shadow system seethed and resonated into the legitimate system and in a pendulum-like manner the one became the other as the negotiations moved on. The shadow system became the legitimate system and the legitimate system inverted to become the shadow system. The progress of the national transition suddenly rested upon the focused conversation and dialogue that took place between Ramaphosa (2004) and Meycr (2005). It provided an urgency for Meyer and Ramaphosa to discover solutions on how they could make progress. The meeting sequence is a classic illustration of the interaction between the legitimate and shadow networks. The fact that the formal negotiations had been officially suspended did not preclude Ramaphosa and Meyer from opening up their own negotiation channel. This had to be done in privacy and out of the scrutiny of the public eye. Had they been publicly exposed, both Ramaphosa and Meyer would have experienced difficulties in managing public credibility issues. They were living up to their personal agreement and code: ‘every problem has a solution’.
Meyer (2004): We did some very important exploring and made progress. Elements of talking came to us incrementally. It was not clear what the significance of the elements were at the time. Later on, we discovered what the significance of the elements was. We eventually realised that everything was relevant and had to be dealt with in a step-by-step manner as we moved towards a successful conclusion.

Phenomenological reduction: In their own privacy Ramaphosa and Meyer were able to start structuring negotiation milestones. This period of ‘time out’ from the formal negotiations was useful as Ramaphosa and Meyer were able to reflect on their situation without the pressures of other personalities. The negotiation positions were discovered. They were not known beforehand. This is congruent with the previous discussion on wicked problems where those vested with the responsibility for dissolving a wicked problem have to discover its solution. They had to manage their own personal sense of ambiguity. The social fragmentation between the political parties, that could degenerate into violence, was always more threatening to the negotiation process than the search for the technical constitutional solution.

Meyer (2004): Joe Slovo – It was through conversation that I developed a good relationship with him. We kept a close relationship to the end of his days. After his death, I was invited to a memorial service with his family and it was a very special occasion. His family gave him the recognition that he deserved for his life’s work. We maintained a good relationship.

Phenomenological reduction: Meyer held Joe Slovo in the highest regard, as did Barnard. He mentions the privilege of being invited to a ceremonial. The dignity and regard that he had for the wisdom and courage of his hitherto ‘enemy’ is manifest.

Meyer (2004): Joe played a tremendously important role. His role in negotiating peace amongst enemies was absolutely crucial. He introduced the notion of the ‘Sunset Clause’. Had he not done that and had that not been accepted by all, the civil service would have been at war. This was a masterstroke. Joe Slovo always provided good advice in very difficult situations and he was man of great personal
wisdom. This wisdom belied the ideology that you would have expected. It was not rigid doctrinaire stuff that you might have expected. In fact, I came to realise that Joe was not ideological.

Phenomenological reduction: The ‘Sunset Clause’ prevented a counter-revolution from developing. Slovo displayed great practical wisdom in abating the fears and mythologies of the white civil servants. He did this whilst simultaneously offering his support in a language that was acceptable to his own constituency. He was able to address the insecure white elitists and the angry black populists in a language that they both fully understood. This was a remarkable talent.

Heald: How did you read his wisdom?

Meyer (2004): He was a very close advisor to Nelson Mandela. Mandela really trusted him. People did not see him as a threat; this was because he was at a later stage of his life. He was not seen as a political threat. Joe was very pragmatic in his approach. He looked for solutions, for example his famous ‘Sunset Clause’. Joe introduced the idea of the Government of National Unity and brought about solutions.

Phenomenological reduction: The concept of the Government of National Unity was Slovo’s idea. He offered practical transitional arrangements. The ‘Sunset Clause’ and the Government of National Unity were concepts that became milestones in the negotiations and were imbued with energy and life. They were chrysalises for the change from the old regime to the new.

Meyer (2004): We were extremely lucky to have really good people. The relationship between Fanie and Mac was so important, constructive and stabilising. There were many other important relationships. The actual negotiations took place amongst very small teams and technical groups. These committee meetings required that minutes be taken and that government officials should be involved. Some of those involved are known and some are forgotten. But they were all important.
Phenomenological reduction: Successful negotiations require people of high quality and ability. Relationships were very important. The actual negotiations were not a public affair. They never can be. They took place in small manageable technical groups and amongst small teams. CODESA was a public event. The real negotiations took place in the channels behind that.

Meyer (2004): The negotiation channel basically emerged after the negotiation breakdown. The negotiations were led by Cyril and myself.

Phenomenological reduction: The design of the negotiation channels was a South African invention. A hierarchy of safety nets to the negotiations were created to manage the possibility of being overwhelmed by chaos and complexity. The first criterion was that the negotiation counterparts had to develop a code of conduct that guided their relationship and that they would abide by. Mac Maharaj and Fanie van der Merwe built up one negotiation channel. Obviously they had support groups, but their recourse would be the negotiation channel established between Meyer and Ramaphosa, if there was a need for rectification. If this failed there was a channel between Mandela and De Klerk. In essence they established a self-correcting system amongst themselves.

Meyer (2004): The ANC negotiators included Penuell Maduna, Valli Moosa and Mac Maharaj. Fanie was also vitally important. Nell Barnard was crucial. There were many other important officials. All of these people played a role in bringing in understanding amongst the enemies. Later those involved in the negotiations were expanded to bring in other technical groups. The Draft Constitution involved Arthur Chaskelison and Francois Venter.

Phenomenological reduction: There were many people who offered important contributions to the negotiation outcome and the learning that took place amongst hitherto enemies.

Meyer (2004): In certain ways they wrote the Interim Constitution. They were able to put into writing what had been agreed about at a political level.
Phenomenological reduction: The codification and distillation of the negotiations were done by technical groups.

Meyer (2004): There was a complete breakdown after Boipatong in 1992. This breakdown also occurred at a bi-lateral level. It was a desperate time. We had got half-way through the negotiation process and then at this advanced stage we had to go back into a pre-negotiation mode. Then it collapsed and we almost had to start again from scratch. Talks started between Cyril and I that were aimed at putting things back on track. We both shared a commitment to a peaceful settlement. We had a choice of keeping on talking or going back to the bush. From our side our choice was that we could talk, or use the armed force of the state.

Phenomenological reduction: Meyer is referring to and elucidating upon the events at Boipatong again. “Going back to the bush” in this context means going back to the veld to prosecute war. You learn at the edge of chaos – it was a desperate time. You have little choice but to learn. If Meyer and Ramaphosa had not been able to hold their despair and emotions in check at that time, the situation could have plunged into a war. This was an important reversal, and the negotiators could not afford to succumb to deal fatigue. It seemed as if they would have to begin from the beginning again, with all the energy that that would necessitate. But that was an illusion. Irreversible and positive progress had been made. They did not recognise this at that time. The negotiation scenario was one of homeostasis, a positive stalemate.

Stacey (1996, p.14) asserted that “[i]n groups we mostly operate in a state in which we utilise structures and processes, covert politics and game playing, to block anxiety-provoking complex learning and stay in the group’s stable zone. Alternatively, we find ourselves tipped into shared psychotic fantasies called the ‘basic assumption behaviour’ of dependency – fight, flight, and so on – the unstable zone for a group. But at the edge of such disintegration we are able to contain the anxiety provoked by complex learning. Then we are able to question the fundamental assumptions we are making about our world and engage in true dialogue, beginning an exciting journey of discovery.”
7.8 Conclusion: Self-organisation, schemas and new paradigms

The science of complexity offers a useful theoretical framework for understanding how hitherto enemies learned from one another in the midst of complexity, chaos and non-linearity. In this concluding section of the chapter the researcher will triangulate complexity theory with the lived experience of the hitherto enemies and offer some closing comments. Stacey (1996, p. 12-14) asserts that “the science of complexity theory and non-linear dynamical systems is predicated on the notion that systems can indeed evolve order out of chaos and, even more amazingly, this chaos, or ‘mess’, is essential to the process of creating new situations of deeper order”. It would seem that the lived experience of the respondents supports Stacey’s contention. There was a deeper order, and the presentation of a negotiation situation as having the status of being chaotically complex gradually converted into a scenario of organised complexity. The researcher’s view was that the transition from perceiving a negotiation scenario as being chaotically complex into one of organised complexity was attributable to the extraordinary wisdom and emotional intelligence of the negotiation counterparts, who were able to learn from the stress of this challenge. The matter was more complex than a change in perceptions. It involved a fundamental change in belief systems, economic outlook, aesthetics, ethics, values, worldview and political paradigm. It involved nothing less than a reformulation of themselves as human beings. Their personal ethics, aesthetics, politics, economic and scientific outlooks had to be re-configured around the new emerging worldview that they were creating. The intangible changes were tangibly manifest. The social construction of the South African reality was being changed by this process of re-definition. Stacey (1996, p. 13) asserts that “creativity lies at the edge of a system’s disintegration, and that it is only when we operate right at the edge of a system’s disintegration, in a kind of phase transition, between a stable zone of operation and an unstable or disordered regime, that learning comes about and that creativity is released.” It was on the edge of chaos that the hitherto enemies learned from one another. Barnard (2004) made the point that you only learn when you are totally isolated; when you have no one to run to for help and when your circumstances seem to be desperate. He maintained that it is often in situations of extreme degrees of stress, confusion, and ambiguity that key learning takes place. The science of complexity and non-linear dynamical systems have been applied to offer a
theoretical justification of this viewpoint that arises from the lived experiences of the respondents. Many negotiation and meeting scenarios have underlying patterns of ambiguity and irregularity, which might induce a sense of despondency that no progress is being made; a sense of bewilderment and hopelessness at the immensity of a negotiation challenge; deal fatigue, confusion about what should be done next; a failure to be able to locate or map where the negotiations are in terms of scenarios; being deeply perplexed about what constitutes the appropriate conduct, the sense of a loss of control; an experience of social fragmentation and very low levels of trust between groups of people that have been damaged by one another in conflict; and a sense of inter-group social fragmentation, to mention but a few. These types of micro-political negotiation scenarios might appear overwhelming. The learning process is essentially about how the individual acquires the wisdom to successfully master this life’s ordeals (Casti, 2000; Cohen & Stewart, 1994; Covency & Highfield, 1991; Klein, 1973 a, b, c; Davis, 1997; Priogine & Stengers, 1984). Complexity theory offers an almost opposite notion of the ideal preconditions for true learning to the sequential pattern encompassed in a regular didactic model. Complexity theory asserts that learning takes place amidst chaos, strife, stress, disorder, irregularity, mortal insecurity, threat and major ordeals. Pain, isolation, non-acknowledgment, rejection, anger, and the search for meaning often constitute the context for profound learning. The collapse of the tri-cameral political system and the imposition and retraction of the five states of emergency between 1985 and 1989 were clear signs that apartheid as a social system was imploding and at the edge of the system’s disintegration. This disintegration, although the cause of deep confusion, heralded that the society was mutating to a new order. This collapse opened up significant space for learning amongst hitherto enemies to take place. Creativity indeed lay at the edge of the disintegration of the tri-cameral political system and the various states of emergency that ensued. The respondents were comprised of experts who lived, operated, and directed the changes on the edge of this system’s disintegration. They were able to release considerable creativity on this narrow edge between order and chaos. Slovo released this creativity in his design of the ‘Sunset Clause’ and Eloff did the same in his design of the National Peace Accord.
Chapter 8: The Method and Methodology Used by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and its Focus on Learning and Reconciliation Amongst Hitherto Enemies

8.1 Introduction

This chapter is based almost entirely on secondary research. It offers a brief synopsis of the method and methodology of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC). It will be asserted that the methodology of the TRC was fundamentally phenomenological by its very nature, and forms an aspect of the theory base for the subsequent three chapters, all of which dwell on selected aspects of the burning question of how it came about that hitherto enemies were able to learn from one another during the national negotiation process.

The basic assumption of the TRC was that the hitherto enemies could learn from one another by a reconciliation process that would occur at the different levels of a damaged society, which would arise from a public ceremonial of telling the truth. This reconciliation amongst hitherto enemies was achieved by means of sets of structured conversations that were arranged under the ceremony of the Commission which was duly enacted by enabling legislation. The ethos of this legislation that was enacted by the TRC was not based on the Western ethos of Cartesian retributive justice. It was uniquely based on the African precept of ubuntu, which has at its very essence the ethos of restorative justice. Its purpose was to restore one’s humanity that had been lost through the perpetration of inhumane acts. The humanity and dignity of victims and perpetrators needed to be restored if the country was to heal itself from the perpetration of gross human rights abuse, and to move on in pursuit of a positive future.

The Commission interestingly designated different types of truth that needed to be pursued in the search for truth and reconciliation. This was part of the methodology that the TRC assumed. These different types of truth included factual or forensic truth; personal or narrative truth; social or dialogue truth; and healing or restorative truth. These different types of truth are, upon reflection, very similar to the phenomenological themes
that were discussed in Chapter 2, which related to the research method and methodology. It specifically relates to Giorgi’s (1979; 1985) five-point test for phenomenological reduction. The authors of the method and methodology of the TRC articulated its terms of reference in the language of jurisprudence, justice and reconciliation. These terms of reference were articulated in language that is consistent with Shriver’s (1995) ethic of forgiveness.

The ceremonial of the TRC were public and indeed purposively populist, in contrast to, say, the prison conversations, which were by definition private and secret. The TRC was an extension and logical corollary of the constitutional negotiation process itself, inasmuch as its terms of reference were imbedded into the post-ambie to the interim Constitution.

Chapters 8, 9 and 10 form a troika of chapters that explore the theme of how learning amongst hitherto enemies occurred. Chapter 11 synthesises these into the germ of a new statement of a very ancient philosophy. It also explores the sub-theme of this search, for meaning as invoking the risky process of a search for trust. The bridge to a search for meaning was the creation of an ethos of trust in the other.

8.2 Different levels of reconciliation

In the TRC Report (1998, p. 107) the testimony was offered that “[t]he reconciliation of victims with their own pain is a deeply personal, complex and unpredictable process. Knowing the complete picture of past gross human rights violations, or even the facts on each case, may not lead to reconciliation. Truth may in fact cause further alienation. The contribution of the Commission to reconciliation between specific victims and perpetrators was necessarily limited (by its time frame, mandate and resources). In some cases, however, the commission assisted in laying the foundation for reconciliation. Although truth does not necessarily lead to healing, it is often the first step towards reconciliation.”

In this regard the view of Villa-Vicencio (2005) is illuminating:
Villa-Vicencio (2005): There was another woman who said in the TRC to the offender, 'The fact that I have not killed you yet, means that I may have started on the process of healing and recovery.' I saw that ambiguity sometimes, about the readiness to move on. Sometimes there were those that had killed and were ready to kill. There was a French woman, I think her name was Madame De Stalle, but I am not sure. She said something that resonates with my experience. She said, 'If you don't want to forgive too much, you must not understand too much.' Learning amongst enemies means understanding what other people feared and other people experienced.

Phenomenological reduction: The truth could heal; it could also cause further alienation, and be too much to absorb. There was no guarantee that the TRC process of healing and learning amongst hitherto enemies was going to work. It could have failed and caused further alienation and conflict. This was accepted as being part of the risk that needed to be assumed when conducting a process of this nature.

8.3 Reconciliation at community level

Phenomenology specifies that the lived experience of the expert respondents is the primary source of data on which new knowledge and theories should be created. In this section of the thesis the remit of the TRC will be briefly considered in order to assess its fundamental pedagogical considerations as to how learning amongst enemies—reconciliation—was pursued.

In the TRC Report (1998, p. 107) it is stated that: "The effects of human rights violations were multiple, inflicting lasting damage on social relations. At a national level the main dimension of the conflict was between the oppressed black population and the former state. However, within and between communities, conflict played itself out in various, often insidious ways: internal divisions occurred between young and old, men and women, neighbours, as well as between different ethnic and racial groups." The point is that the conflict was multi-layered and multi-faceted amongst hitherto enemies. Learning
amongst enemies required comprehending this complexity. Learning from complexity, chaos and non-linearity is a theme that is addressed in Chapter 7.

If learning amongst hitherto enemies is to occur, the intended learning approach needs to come to terms with and assimilate its multi-faceted complexity.

8.4 Promoting national unity and reconciliation

In the TRC Report (1998, p. 108) it is acknowledged that “the experiences of the Commission illustrated the particular difficulty of understanding the meaning of unity and reconciliation at national level. They also highlighted the potentially dangerous confusion between a religious, indeed Christian, understanding of reconciliation, more typically applied to interpersonal relationships, and the more limited, political notion of reconciliation applicable to a democratic society. Many people within and outside the Commission warned against expecting too much, too soon, from the reconciliation process at national level. They were concerned about the imposition of a notion of reconciliation – associated with contrition, confession, forgiveness and restitution – on a diverse and divided society attempting to consolidate a fragile democracy. They argued that the most the Commission could, and should hope for, at least in the short term, was peaceful coexistence. Thus a healthy democracy does not require everyone to agree or become friends. However, a culture of human rights and democracy does require respect for our common human dignity and shared citizenship, as well as the peaceful handling of unavoidable conflicts. Others cautioned against accepting too limited a notion of reconciliation. They argued that the Commission should not underestimate the vital importance of apologies by individuals, representatives of institutions and political leaders coupled with forgiveness by those that had been violated.”

The danger that is alluded to in this tract cited from the TRC immediately above is that of being over-ambitious. The Commissioners also raised a potential dilemma developing between a personal and a Christian notion of reconciliation, and the wider notion of national reconciliation. These are parallel concepts to the ideas of individual learning and organisational learning. The former is narrow whilst the latter is broad in its scope.
The TRC Report (1998, p. 109) confirmed this view in its assertion that “[r]econciliation is needed not only at an individual level, not only between individuals, but also within and between communities and the nation as a whole. Another important dimension of reconciliation was emphasised by an unidentified thirty-nine year old man from Bongoletu, Oudtshoorn. What does reconciliation mean for a young person? Reconciliation means people forgiving each other and working together as one nation. It does not matter as to what one has done to another in the past. Well, at some stage it does matter. What would be ideal reconciliation for you? That is that the many people who do not have education are reached. Reconciliation starts with building up those people who are uneducated. Employ those who are unemployed. Train those who are not trained. Develop those who are not developed.”

The definition of learning amongst hitherto enemies that was offered by the unidentified thirty-nine year old man cited above asserted that a consolidated programme of education for work creation and self-sufficiency should be the essential purpose of making meaning out of the gross human rights abuses that were perpetrated under apartheid. In other words, learning amongst enemies required an effective reconstruction and national development plan. The TRC Report (1998, p. 110) contended that “[t]he road to reconciliation therefore means both material reconstruction and the restoration of dignity. It involves the redress of gross inequalities and the nurturing of respect for our common humanity. It entails sustainable growth and development of the spirit of ubuntu. It implies wide-ranging structural and institutional transformation and the healing of broken human relationships. It demands guarantees that the past will not be repeated. It requires restitution and the restoration of our humanity – as individuals, as communities, and as a nation. In the words of Ms Thenjiwe Mtintso, former chairperson of the Commission on Gender Equality and currently Deputy Secretary General of the ANC, at the opening of the Commission’s hearing on women in Johannesburg, 29 July 1997: ‘This hearing is the beginning of giving the voiceless a chance to speak, giving the excluded a chance to be centred and giving the powerless the opportunity to empower themselves.’"
Learning amongst enemies therefore meant giving the voiceless an opportunity to speak. In short, the TRC was established to fight against South Africa’s self-inflicted national autism, which had been enforced by the policy of apartheid.

8.5 Truth

The TRC Report (1998), in its deliberations, found four categories or notions of the truth to be very helpful in assisting to cultivate learning approaches amongst hitherto enemies. These four categories of the truth included factual or ‘forensic truth’, personal or ‘narrative truth’, social or ‘dialogue truth’, and healing or ‘restorative truth’.

The utility of these categories of truth extends beyond the research question into the philosophy of science. In substantiation, one could use this typology of different types of truth in assessing and categorising feedback from research interviews. The method assumed by the TRC was entirely consistent with the central concept of themes, which are basic to the philosophy of phenomenology.

8.5.1 Factual or forensic truth

In the TRC Report (1998, p. 111) it is posited that factual or forensic truth is “[t]he familiar legal or scientific notion of bringing to light factual, corroborated evidence, of obtaining accurate information through reliable (impartial, objective) procedures, featured prominently in the Commission’s finding process”. Factual proof will in many cases have an empirically provable ‘right’ or ‘wrong’ answer.

The pursuit of factual proof was regarded as imperative if the TRC were to make appropriate findings on the contexts, causes, and patterns of gross human rights violations. In this respect, the Commission was required to report on the broader patterns underlying gross violations of human rights and to explore the cause of such violations. To do this, the TRC (1998, p. 112) “had to analyse, interpret and draw inferences from the information it received. In this regard, it became necessary for the Commission to adopt a social scientist’s approach – making use of the information contained in its database and from a range of secondary sources.”
The TRC Report (1998, p. 112) makes the insightful observation that the concept of factual truth made “it impossible to claim, for example, that the practice of torture by state security forces was not systematic and widespread; that only a few ‘rotten eggs’ or ‘bad apples’ committed gross violations of human rights; that the state was not directly and indirectly involved in ‘black-on-black violence’; that the chemical and biological warfare programme was only of a defensive nature; that slogans by sections of the liberation movement did not contribute to killings of ‘settlers’ or farmers; and that the accounts of gross human rights violations in the African National Congress (ANC) camps were the consequences of state disinformation. Thus, disinformation about the past that had been accepted as truth by some members of society lost much of its credibility.”

8.5.2 Personal or narrative truth

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission was a practical enactment of what was effectively an enormous phenomenological research project.

At a hearing of the Commission in Port Elizabeth on 21 May 1996, Archbishop Tutu (TRC, 1998, p. 113) commented as follows: “This Commission is said to listen to everyone. It is therefore important that everyone should be given a chance to say his or her truth, as he or she sees it.” In the TRC Report (1998, p. 113) it is shown that “[b]y telling their stories, both victims and perpetrators gave meaning to the multilayered experiences of the South African story. These personal truths were communicated to the broader public by the media. In the South African context, where value continues to be attached to oral tradition, the process of story telling was particularly important. Indeed, this aspect is a distinctive and unique feature of the legislation governing the Commission, setting it apart from the mandates of truth commissions elsewhere. The Act explicitly recognised the healing potential of telling stories. The stories told to the commission were not presented as arguments or claims in a court of law. Rather, they provided unique insights into the pain of South Africa’s past, often touching the hearts of all those that heard them. By providing the environment in which victims could tell their own stories, in their own languages, the Commission not only helped to uncover existing facts about past abuses, but also assisted in the creation of ‘narrative truth’. In so doing, it
also sought to contribute to the process of reconciliation by ensuring that the truth about
the past or included the validation of the individual subjective experiences of people who
had previously been silenced and voiceless. The Commission sought too, to capture the
widest record of people’s perceptions, stories, myths and experiences.”

It is in the pursuit of personal or narrative truth that phenomenology has its raison d’etre.

8.5.3 Social truth or dialogue truth

According to the TRC Report (1998, p. 114), “[w]hile narrative truth was central to the
work of the Commission, especially to the hearings of the Human Rights Violations
Committee, it was in its search for social truth that that the closest link between the
Commission’s process and goal was found. Judge Albie Sachs, a prominent participant in
the debates preceding the establishment of the Commission, and now a Constitutional
Court judge, made a useful distinction between what he called ‘microscopic truth’ and
‘dialogue truth’. “The first”, he said, “is factual, verifiable and can be documented and
proved. ‘Dialogue truth’, on the other hand, is social truth, the truth of experience that is
established through interaction, discussion and debate.” In recognising the importance of
social or ‘dialogue’ truth, the Commission acknowledged the importance of participation
and transparency. Its goal was to try to transcend the divisions of the past by listening
carefully to the complex motives and perspectives of all those involved. It made a
conscious effort to provide an environment in which all possible views could be
considered and weighed, one against the other. People from all walks of life were invited
to participate in the process, including faith communities, the South African National
Defence Force (SANDF), non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and political parties.
The public was engaged through open hearings and the media. The Commission itself
was also subjected to constant public scrutiny and critique.

It is particularly important to emphasise that establishing the truth could not be divorced
from the affirmation of the dignity of human beings. Thus, not only the actual outcome or
findings of an investigation counted. The process whereby the truth was reached was
itself important, because it was through this process that the essential norms of social
relations between humans were reflected. It was, furthermore, through dialogue and respect that a means of promoting transparency, democracy and participation in society was suggested as a basis for affirming human dignity and integrity.”

The concept of social or dialogue truth is analogous to Husserl’s (1931) of inter-subjective validity, which has already been alluded to.

8.5.4 Healing or restorative truth

Healing or restorative truth is more closely aligned to the truth and meaning that emanate from a healing conversation. The concept of healing or restorative truth is much closer to the therapeutic notion of learning offered by Rogers (1989).

The TRC (1998, p. 114) rejected the commonly held notions that there are two categories of truth, “namely factual, objective truth or subjective opinions”. It was the Commissioner’s view that “there is also ‘healing’ truth, the kind of truth that places facts, and what they mean, within the context of human relationships – both amongst citizens, and between the state and its citizens. This kind of truth was central to the Commission. The Act required that the Commission look back to the past, and forward to the future. In this sense it was required to help establish a truth that would contribute to the reparation of the damage inflicted in the past, and to the prevention of the recurrence of serious abuses in the future. It was not enough simply to determine what had happened. Truth as factual, objective information cannot be divorced from the way in which the information is acquired; nor can such information be separated from the purposes it is required to serve. It is in this context that the role of ‘acknowledgement’ must be emphasised. Acknowledgement refers to placing information that is or becomes known on public, national record. It is not merely the actual knowledge about past human rights violations that counts; often the basic facts about what happened are already known, at least by those who were affected. What is critical is that these facts be fully and publicly acknowledged. Acknowledgement is an affirmation that a person’s pain is real and worthy of attention. It is thus central to the restoration of the dignity of victims.”