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UCT trauma and forgiveness scholar to deliver inaugural lecture

LT2D, Robert Leslie Social Sciences Building, upper campus, 17h15 for 17h30.

University of Cape Town's Professor Pumla Gobodo-Madikizela, a researcher in the field of trauma, empathy and forgiveness and a former member of the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission, will deliver her inaugural lecture at the university on Thursday 11 November.

A member of the Department of Psychology in the Faculty of Humanities, Gobodo-Madikizela's lecture is titled *The Face of the Other: Human dialogue at Solms Delta and the meaning of the moral imagination*.

This lecture will focus on the 320-year-old Solms Delta estate in Franschhoek, home to the Museum van de Caab. The farm is owned by UCT colleague Professor Mark Solms, a world leader in the neuropsychology of dreams, who has dedicated the museum to honouring the farm's slave heritage and memorialising the individuals who lived and worked on the farm, from pre-colonial times to the present. "I have used Mark's story as a touchstone or representative story for recognising 'the other' in dialogue, and to demonstrate the importance of memory and memorialisation," said Gobodo-Madikizela.

The lecture also forms part of a three-part series of lectures, *Living Reconciliation*, co-hosted with the Institute for Justice and Reconciliation.

Professor Gobodo-Madikizela applies insights drawn from her work on the reparative elements of forgiveness and explores the transformative shifts that occur in the context of dialogue, what she terms reparative humanism.

Born in 1955 and schooled partly in KwaZulu-Natal, Gobodo-Madikizela spent much of her youth in Langa where her parents' home was open to UCT students and researchers such as Professors Monica Wilson and Archie Mafeje. Gobodo-Madikizela completed her undergraduate studies and honours degree at the University of Fort Hare, her master's in clinical psychology at Rhodes University, and her PhD at UCT.

A distinguished scholar and author, Professor Gobodo-Madikizela completed her undergraduate studies and Honours degree at Fort Hare University, her Masters in Clinical Psychology at Rhodes University, and her PhD at UCT. Her doctoral thesis on *Legacies of Violence: Interviews with Perpetrators of 'Necklace' Murders and with Eugene de Kock* offers a perspective that integrates psychoanalytic and social psychological concepts to understand extreme forms of violence committed during the apartheid era.

Her books include *A Human Being Died that Night: A Story of Forgiveness*, for which she won the Alan Paton Award, and the Christopher Award in the United States for "a book that speaks to the human spirit"; *Narrating our Healing: Perspectives on Healing Trauma*, as co-author; and as co-editor of *Memory, Narrative and Forgiveness: Perspectives on the Unfinished Journeys of the Past*.

Gobodo-Madikizela served on the TRC as co-ordinator of victims' public hearings in the Western Cape. Her study of the reparative elements of forgiveness and reconciliation in the aftermath of political conflict has received scholarly recognition internationally.

Research interests

- Conscious and unconscious dimensions of working through of trauma.
- Intrapsychic dynamics of forgiveness as an aspect of working through trauma (includes examination of psychological significance of apology).
- The use of testimonial narratives in working through trauma.
- Cross-cultural study of guilt, shame and blame in post-apartheid South Africa and post-World War II Germany.

Current Research Projects

- Psychoanalytic analysis of the relationship between, on the one hand, trauma and forgiveness and between empathy and forgiveness on the other.
- A research collaboration with partners based in Department of Psychotherapeutic Medicine and Psychotherapy at the University of Cologne and a scientific team of representatives from the Psychotherapeutic Study Group of Persons Affected by the Holocaust (with the German acronym PAKH). PAKH is a group of "second generation" psychoanalysts who are adult children of Holocaust survivors and descendants of Nazi perpetrators. The collaborative research focuses on the phenomenological study of empathy, emotions, and what the process of 'being moved' entails.

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