

# **The Moral Rearmament Activist: P.Q. Vundla's Community Bridge-building during the Boycotts on the Witwatersrand in the mid-1950s**

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## **Abstract**

In this article I examine Philip Qipa (P.Q.) Vundla's Moral Rearmament-inspired (MRA) politics with a view to explicating the previously hidden currents at work in his political activism. In my analysis, I draw on the theoretical frameworks of Paul Ricoeur and Homi Bhabha. In terms of these conceptual foundations, I investigate Vundla's involvement in two foundational events in the history of the South African struggle, namely the school boycott of 1955 and the bus boycott of 1957. The official history of these two events, written by social historians such as Tom Lodge, interprets them as the dawn of mass opposition against apartheid. However, I contend that a closer analysis of these two events via biographical material reveals a more complex history, implicitly connected to the person of P.Q. Vundla and his politics of negotiation and finding common ground between opposing ideologies. Vundla stands out within this context because he was a nonconforming ANC leader, who disagreed with the way the party leadership approached political activism. His approach was driven by MRA values, which sought political solutions through dialogue and aimed to benefit all communities within South Africa. Vundla can be seen as an early forerunner of the bridge-building politics of Nelson Mandela. It is hoped that, by examining the role of MRA values in Vundla's activism, a fuller, more complex account of politics in the 1950s can be arrived at.

**Keywords:** P.Q. Vundla, Moral Rearmament, Bus Boycott, School Boycott, African National Conference, Western Native Township

## **Introduction**

This article scrutinises two foundational events in the history of the South African struggle for liberation, namely the school boycott of 1955 and the bus boycott of 1957. These events mark the beginning of mass action politics in South Africa. The official history of these two events, written by social historians such as Tom Lodge, interprets them as the dawn of mass opposition against apartheid. However, I contend that a closer analysis of these two events reveals a more complex history, inextricably connected to the person of Philip Qipa (P.Q.) Vundla. Vundla was a nonconforming ANC leader, who disagreed with the way the party leadership approached political activism. His approach was driven by his spiritual connection to the Christian-inspired Moral Rearmament Movement (MRA), which sought political solutions through dialogue and aimed to benefit all communities within South Africa. The two boycotts serve as case studies to interrogate his MRA-inspired political activism.

P.Q. underwent a dramatic change in his personal life and political practice due to his encounter with the MRA and his adoption of MRA values. His non-confrontational style as a political activist, community and labour union leader, following his conversion to MRA thinking, set him apart from the dominant direction in ANC politics during the period. This article sets out to explain the growing disconnection between Vundla and the African National Congress (ANC) in terms of his MRA influence. Vundla still opposed Apartheid after his conversion to MRA principles, but in a non-confrontational and community-based manner. His main concern was to build bridges between factions that had previously been divided by Apartheid. In this regard he differed radically from other anti-Apartheid activists of his time, who were concerned with ideological self-definition.

My research into Vundla's MRA-influenced spirituality reveals a complex and ambiguous force in his life that established a new discourse in opposition to Apartheid. In order to frame this discourse, I draw on two theoretical positions, namely Ricoeur's concept of attestation and Bhabha's concept of hybridity. These two notions are used to explore the liminal

political space between colonial power and the opposition to colonial rule, and to argue that Vundla was an early forerunner of the bridge-building politics of Nelson Mandela, which focused on community and nation-building. The two boycotts serve as case studies to highlight Vundla's distinctively MRA values-influenced politics.

P.Q. Vundla arrived in Western Native Township in the 1930s with a set of values that derived from his childhood, his politically liberal-minded parents and his politicisation as a young black man. These values inspired him to become involved in politics, but because of his liberal ideas, he shied away from revolutionary methods. This led him to be ostracised, attacked by ANC Youth League (ANCYL) members and eventually expelled from the ANC. Nevertheless, he left an enduring mark on politics and community solidarity on the Witwatersrand. I argue that P.Q. Vundla's impact on the political landscape of South Africa cannot be fully understood without an appreciation of his involvement with the international MRA, otherwise known as the Oxford Group and the Caux Initiative for Change. When P.Q. Vundla encountered Nico Ferreira and the MRA in 1955, he was introduced to spiritual ideas with which he resonated, based on peaceful transformation through inner spirituality and dialogue across a wide political spectrum.

Ultimately, my research into P.Q. Vundla's activism reveals that politics and spirituality have an important intersection. Although the MRA is a spiritual movement, spirituality is intensely private and difficult to gauge from another person's account. Accordingly, and in line with my interest in the interface between the private and political, I am going to look at the (verifiable) impact of MRA principles on P.Q. Vundla's political activities. A close analysis of Vundla's MRA-influenced spirituality reveals a complex and ambiguous force in his life that established a new discourse in opposition to Apartheid. In order to frame the constituents of this discourse, I draw on two theoretical positions, namely Ricoeur's concept of attestation and Bhabha's concept of hybridity. These two notions are used to explore the liminal political space between colonial power and the opposition to colonial rule, and to argue that Vundla was an early forerunner of the bridge-building politics of Nelson Mandela, which focused on community and nation-building. The two boycotts serve as case studies to highlight Vundla's distinctively MRA-influenced politics.

Vundla's work in Western Native Township is captured in academic studies such as Lodge (1990) and Goodhew (n.d.). These studies highlight his

important role as an activist but are critical of his politics, and do not account for the influence of his MRA-influenced spirituality in shaping his peaceful social activism. In this article I argue, by contrast, that P.Q. Vundla's non-confrontational approach to conflict resolution bears traces of MRA spiritual values.

## **Theoretical Concerns**

My analysis draws on Homi Bhabha's concept of hybridity because it is relevant to Vundla's ambiguous and marginal position within the politics of the day. Also, Bhabha's concept of hybridity may help to explain Vundla's concern to integrate Christian-influenced MRA values with his political actions. In addition, Ricoeur's concept of attestation allows us to understand subjectivity in an expanded form, as including different dimensions of fixity — *idem* — and fluidity — *ipse*. My primary sources for the historical details of Vundla's life are his biography, penned by his wife, Nchibadi Betty Kathleen Mashaba (Kathleen Vundla) (Vundla 2013: 2) – *P.Q.: The story of Philip Vundla of South Africa* (1973); and Loël Ferreira's autobiography, *In case anyone asks* (2006). Secondary sources are interviews with family and friends of the key role players (including an important interview with Vundla's son, Peter), newspaper articles and social historical studies which, together with primary sources, form a lattice structure of evidence. Biographical source material is admittedly complex in that its intention is to represent history from one person's perspective, and the two women's narratives are no exception to this trend. I read them as instances of life writing, which is, according to James Olney, 'the validation [and] necessity, ... of writing one's life, of finding the words that signify the self and its history' (1998: 2). Olney describes life writing as the attempt to find words in order to shape and contextualise life experience. I realise that Kathleen's biography may well articulate an unrealistically positive view of Vundla, but it remains the most comprehensive source of information about his spiritual experience in the context of his political and community work. In this article I will disentangle sections of this biography that shed alternative views on social historical narratives. In order to understand Vundla's role as a social and political activist in the middle decades of the twentieth century in Johannesburg, my article focuses on the important contribution of biography in giving voice to disempowered people in history who might otherwise be

misunderstood. Kathleen Vundla's biography is a mediated rendering of her husband's life and therefore its narrative is filtered through her memory and interpretation. But, as P.Q. Vundla's wife, she shared his family and marriage space, together with his social context, which makes her biography a unique window into his private life and its impact on his social and political life.

A reading of Vundla's biography exposes four historical facets which contribute to an understanding of his development as an activist. These are: his early childhood in the Eastern Cape; his involvement in the labour union movement on the mines and the African National Congress (ANC); his involvement in the communities of Western Native Township (WNT) and Sophiatown; and his involvement with the MRA. P.Q. experienced a 'road to Damascus' experience when he met Nico Ferreira in 1955 and afterwards embraced an MRA-informed approach to political and social change. These four aspects of his life coalesced into a unique struggle against colonial racism, based on the MRA principles of prayer, forgiveness, trust and open dialogue or accountability (Boobbyer 2013: 32). His struggle against colonial oppression took place by seeking union and cooperation between communities who held mutual distrust and antagonism. By placing peaceful cooperation above personal ambitions as a community leader, Vundla believed he was able to avoid the increase of violent conflict in Western Johannesburg and the wider Witwatersrand. A close study of Vundla's life reveals the MRA practice of silent piety and seeking spiritual guidance, which led him to redefine his political ambitions and attempt to establish progressive politics informed, as Peter Vundla recalls, by 'caring' values of mutual understanding and acceptance (Peter Vundla interview; Vundla 1973; Vundla 2015: 15).

I aver that Vundla's MRA-informed spirituality was ambivalently conservative, while paradoxically giving shape to his brand of progressive politics, thus creating a liminal, or what Homi Bhabha refers to as hybrid Third Space (1994: 53) within the protest politics of the day. Bhabha's concept of hybridity refers to the fluid space inhabited by colonial identities due to the interaction between traditional and colonialist discourses. This results in the Third Space of enunciation, characterised by ambiguity and hermeneutical ambivalence (1994: 53). For Bhabha, this Third Space functions as a 'contesting, antagonistic agency ... which is a space inbetween the rules of engagement' (1994: 277). In my view, P.Q. Vundla's MRA-based political discourse occupies exactly this space.

The MRA placed silent piety at the core of its strategy for world peace. This strategy was a challenge to both the emerging secular modernity in the wake of the Second World War and the militancy of the political left, which aimed to raise public awareness of mass opposition of injustice to the detriment of individual and community concerns. Scholars who neglect Vundla's MRA influenced-spirituality fall prey to misrepresentations of his political involvement. Kathleen Vundla claims that this misrepresentation was influenced by antagonism towards him within the ANC due to his conciliatory politics (Vundla 1973: 41).

P.Q. Vundla is a uniquely complex figure in South Africa. His involvement with the MRA movement is intriguing in that it placed his politics in the ambiguous position of opposition to colonial power while also associating with colonial Christian narratives. In Bhabha's insightful writings on hybridity, he includes the idea of mimicry of the colonisers along Christian lines, which places the colonised in an ambiguous position of being '*almost the same but not quite*' (Bhabha 1994: 128, original emphasis). This *resemblance* between Vundla's spiritual discourse and the discourse of the coloniser undermined his political standing with the ANC. I argue, however, that his MRA politics also afforded him a political space to develop his own discourse of reconciliation due to his ambivalent position between colonial and anti-colonial forces. The Christian-inspired MRA movement opposed colonial narratives of inequality, but also did not follow prevailing liberation ideologies, preferring to seek guidance from the Holy Spirit (Boobbyer 2013: 100).

This study also demonstrates the way Vundla's personal beliefs impacted on his community work, as implied by Ricoeur's concept of attestation. Paul Ricoeur's theory of attestation, as described in *Oneself as another* (1994), provides a useful lens through which to read Kathleen Vundla's biography of her husband. The concept of attestation allows P.Q.'s MRA beliefs to be taken seriously as shaping his identity and social action, but allows for consideration of the subjective aspect of consciousness, which to some degree remains ineffable. But if seen in combination with Bhabha's theory of hybridity, Vundla's Christian-inspired MRA spirituality adds an important element of ambivalence to his protest politics. In researching Vundla, it is necessary to allow for the contradictions and ambivalences that emerge from the study of his life because they enable him to find a space in the political landscape to develop his own discourse of community develop-

ment and 'bridge building' across the political spectrum.

My emphasis on exploring contradictions and ambivalences within Vundla's life is echoed by Ricoeur's insistence that the articulating self should be understood as encompassing a totality of awareness, including affirmation, doubt, subjectivity and the encroachment of the object into the subject's consciousness (1994: 3 & 21). In contrast to a materialist reading of P.Q. Vundla's life, Ricoeur offers a framework of analysis that is not limited to categories of identity, such as race and class. Ricoeur's theory of attestation allows the biography to be read as giving voice to a marginalised person who achieved important advances in peacefully pursuing justice. It is not a purely subjective state of consciousness, but, rather, one that derives from complex relations between the sense of self in relation to the other and one's sense of self in relation to oneself (1994: 2-3). Attestation affirms the position of the articulator within this complex state of identity that implies an indelible connection to otherness (1994: 3). This, in turn, gives rise to hybridity, ambivalence and fluidity, in Bhabha's terms (1991: 277; 1994: 121). In this regard P.Q.'s complex political and social leadership can be understood as a means to find common ground between all political actors in the South African socio-political landscape. Ricoeur makes a distinction between two different concepts of identity: *ipse* and *idem*. *Idem* denotes a sense of a fixed permanence in time, whereas *ipse* points to an understanding of identity devoid of an 'unchanging core personality'. *Ipse*-identity, for Ricoeur, 'involves a dialectical complementarity ..., namely the dialectic of self and the other than self' (1994: 3).

As though to bear Ricoeur out, P.Q.'s concern to integrate MRA values with social/political action enabled him to find common ground with white and black economic, political and social leaders by exercising a fluid, *ipse*-identity. In fact, according to his son, Peter Vundla, he was even able to forgive people who despised him for his political beliefs (Peter Vundla interview and *Greenock Telegraph* 1970). Ricoeur's view of selfhood 'implies the other to such an intimate degree that one cannot be thought of without the other' in an *ipse*-identity frame (1994: 3). This claim is supported by an article on P.Q. Vundla in the *Greenock Telegraph*, which records that he sought forgiveness from the white Chief Official of African for his 'fiery hatred of whites' (1970). Ricoeur's notion of attestation overlaps with Nietzsche's understanding of anthropomorphised truth (1994: 186). From Ricoeur and Nietzsche's perspective, biography and autobiography express

knowledge and experience from sources other than the dominant narratives in society, giving voice to repressed, dispossessed and marginalised voices. This vantage point also enables us to appreciate alternative views of reality and find a meeting point for discussion. It also gives recognition to the role of spiritual values in shaping individual choices and life trajectories. Biographical research needs to be placed within the context of a broader framework of social and historical research in order both to contextualise the biographical narratives and, in some instances, to scrutinise biographical claims.

Biography is an important cornerstone of my argument because it gives a voice to the oppressed. Subjective accounts of history (Caine 2010: 16) are governed by specific economic and social contexts (2010: 18). These are micro-histories as opposed to histories of great people (2010: 23), and they combine the domestic with the public (2010: 24). I find P.Q. Vundla a unique thread in the political tapestry of South Africa. His life is not the micro-history of an activist resisting proletarianization or wage employment, nor does his story fit into other narratives where lower classes form strategic partnerships with the liberal middle class to further their political agendas. Rather, his story requires a different framework. Ricoeur describes this approach in his theory of attestation as the self-represented in the other and the other represented in the self. The theory of attestation arises from the realization that the perceived world is a composite picture in which self and other are interlinked, and identity is always in dialogue with the other. In this sense attestation is derived from integrated relationships with others and belief in the dialectical interconnectedness of selfhood, 'self and other' (1994: 3). I argue that Vundla's identity was inclusive of otherness in people and divinity. The MRA influence is crucial to his complex identity in that it formed the basis of his political discourse, and yet, that very discourse was ambivalently founded on a Christian colonial narrative.

## **The Boycotts**

All the threads I have delineated thus far come together in P.Q.'s involvement in the 1955 school boycott and the 1957 bus boycott. These boycotts occurred in the context of the Treason Trial (1956-61), the launch of the Freedom Charter (1955) and the Women's March (1956). The late 1950s was a time of political opportunity for the emerging black middle class, as opposed to the



traumatic oppression of the 1970s and 1980s. After the mine strike in 1946 and subsequent government repression, the ANC started on the road to adopting mass action. This initiative resulted in the Tram Fare strike in 1948 and the Defiance Campaign in 1952. But the passing of the Bantu Education Act in 1953, stipulating that lessons would take place in vernacular languages, and not in English, in line with Apartheid's program of indigenisation along ethnic lines, and the increase in bus fares on the Witwatersrand, provided important platforms to embark on mass action campaigns. Social historians such as Tom Lodge have provided comprehensive analyses of these two boycotts, which will be explored as examples of 'official history'.

### **Lodge's Account of the School Boycott (1954-1955)**

According to Lodge, the school boycott was part of the larger ANC 'Resist Apartheid Campaign', launched in 1954 (1990: 121). The decision to boycott resulted from protracted debates over many ANC and community meetings. Initially the ANC Executive favoured a week-long boycott, but this decision was overruled by majority vote in favour of an indefinite duration. It was to begin on 1 April 1955, coordinated at local levels by the Women's and Youth Leagues at the ANC Durban conference in December 1954 (1990: 121). While all the parties were unanimous about boycotting management and organisational educational structures, the Executive doubted that the ANC had the coordinating ability to manage the boycott. Reports of intimidation surfaced, resulting in the postponement of a general boycott in favour of a boycott of school boards and committee elections (1990: 121). Lodge observes that the postponement of the general boycott led to dissent from the Youth League. Members of the Youth League had influence with some members of the Executive and convinced them to hold another national conference in Port Elizabeth in April. The PE conference decided that boycotts should commence when regions had completed their preparations (1990: 120). The boycott began in the Western Areas of the Witwatersrand on 12 April and spread to the East Rand (1990: 124). There were reports of empty schools in Germiston and Brakpan, together with pupils leaving schools in the Western Native Township after being visited by the ANC Youth and Women's Leagues. By 15 April the number of boycotting students exceeded 10 000 (1990: 124) and regional ANC branches were making their

own decisions without consulting the Executive.

According to Lodge, P.Q. promised at a meeting in Orlando to 'withdraw his children from school' and expressed his support of the Youth League (1990: 123). But Verwoerd, then Minister of Native Affairs, threatened on 14 April that any pupils still boycotting classes by 25 April would not receive any further education. This led P.Q. to change his mind on his previous stance. Clashes between police and protestors became more violent and attempts at arson were staged at schools in Benoni and Katlehong (1990: 124). Lodge criticises Vundla's decision, saying that due to the threats from authorities,

... in Western Native Township 1000 parents resolved to return their children before Verwoerd's deadline. P.Q. Vundla, the most prominent local ANC leader, supported their decision – an action which was to earn him a beating-up by youth leaders and, later, expulsion from the ANC (1990: 124).

While the boycott continued and alternative independent educational facilities were set up in halls and churches, the boycott never reached mass oppositional proportions. Lodge comments:

... opposition to Bantu Education, though widespread, only developed into open political rebellion in a few areas. In fact most of the opposition movements of the 1950s were geographically isolated and sporadic: amongst a fearfully poor and politically rightless population a peculiar combination of factors had to be present before anger could be translated into active defiance (1990: 129).

### **Lodge's View of the Bus Boycott (1957)**

Lodge argues that the 'bus boycott is significant because it provide[s] promising material for testing ... the interplay between the behaviour of the organisation (ANC) and of the crowd' (1990: 154-155). According to Lodge, The Public Utility Transport Company (PUTCO), a government-subsidised public company, was under pressure to raise fares by one penny for a single fare between the townships of Sophiatown and Alexandra and central Johannesburg. The raise in fares was designed to increase dividends: the

company's need for revenue was compounded by the government's unwillingness to increase its subsidy. The fare increase had a massive impact on the slender budgets of working black families. Alexandra, like Sophiatown, was a freehold area, which led to more community identification in areas and more collective action (1990: 157). Lodge names seven stakeholders that were represented at the first Alexandra Vigilance Committee on January 2 1957 in response to PUTCO's announcement of a fair price increase: the standholder's committee; the ANC; the ANC-minded bloc; the ANC (Munya) Group; the Movement for Democracy of Content; the Tenants' Association and the Workers' League (1990: 158). The Alexandra People's Transport Committee (APTC) was formed from those who attended the meeting. The APTC organised a community meeting on 6 January 1957, where a vote was taken to boycott buses until the original fare prices were reinstated. 60 000 people stopped using the buses (1990: 160). The bus boycott lasted for three months and spread from Alexandra to Sophiatown, Evaton and Pretoria (1990: 158).

Liberal white organizations, in the form of the Liberal Party and the Congress of Democrats, also participated in the boycott by providing transport for commuters in conjunction with the APTC. Members of the white Liberal Party boycott sub-committee started dialogue with the City Council and the Chamber of Commerce. In addition, they established relations with the APTC. According to Lodge, the APTC's alliance with the liberals had a moderating influence: 'the boycotters' demands would not go 'beyond the preservation of pre-boycott fares'' (1990: 161). The Liberal Party and the Johannesburg Chamber of Commerce (JCC) sought to compromise with the APTC by offering to pay an extra shilling through their members as a transport allowance (1990: 162), but the APTC turned down the proposal. PUTCO responded with an ultimatum: if the boycott was not called off by 1 March, they would withdraw all their buses from the areas concerned. On February 20 the ANC, together with the APTC, voted to continue the boycott. But a faction of the ANC – the ANC National-Minded bloc and the Vigilance and Standholders association met PUTCO in secret to try to find a compromise (Lodge 1990: 163). They were responding to residents' concerns that the buses would be withdrawn. In addition, on 28 February, the JCC proposed a new offer from the APTC to employers to fund an amount of £25 000, wherein residents could claim a penny back on a cancelled ticket (1990: 164). The proposal was presented to the APTC at a

meeting attended by the Bishop of Johannesburg, Ambrose Reeves (who had close relations with the ANC), A.B. Xuma, former president of the ANC, and Liberal Party representatives (1990: 163). Ten members of the APTC voted in favour of the proposal, which was defeated by a majority vote. Despite this, Bishop Reeves and the liberals continued to negotiate with the JCC behind closed doors. Revolutionary elements in the ANC opposed the JCC proposal, sensing the political significance of the boycott to pressurise the government. In March Alfred Nzo advised residents to 'stay at home' (Lodge 1990: 165), against the advice of the more conservative Advisory Boards in Western Native Township, Sophiatown and Pretoria. Although militant ANC members wanted to exploit the boycott's political capital, it did not have the desired effect. On March 18 the ANC facilitated negotiations between the transport Committees, PUTCO, the JCC and the Liberal Party. A new proposal emerged: a coupon book would be purchased at the beginning of the week where the 5d tickets would cost 4d, and the JCC would make up the difference to PUTCO. The ANC rejected this proposal. The JCC then undertook to raise £25 000 to subsidise the fare increase (1990: 168). In the interim it was hoped that the Natives Services Levy could be raised once the £25 000 was exhausted. The ANC undertook to persuade the transport committees to accept the proposal. The ANC leadership, according to Lodge, were under pressure from the Liberal Party and Reeves (1990: 166). While resistance to the boycott continued from the Africanists and local ANC, two factors tipped the scales towards accepting the JCC proposal: first, the Minister of Transport's agreement to raise the Native Services Levy in May and second, residents were tired of walking to work (1990: 168). Radicals who preferred to continue the boycott had to decide whether to risk losing support from residents if they persisted in the call to continue the boycott. Lodge criticises the ANC's handling of the boycott because they 'did not attempt in any real sense to "institutionalise" the popular power, the popular political participation that had developed out of the boycott' (1990: 171). He concludes by asserting that 'although the ANC made a valuable contribution to the blossoming of the boycott movement, it can be contended that having picked it they then threw away the fruit' (1990: 171).

P.Q. Vundla does not feature at all in Lodge's analysis of the bus boycott. But Goodhew does mention his participation in the compromise deal with the JCC (n.d.: 6), although not prominently. In order to understand P.Q. Vundla's unique contributions to the two boycotts, we need to investigate the

origins and development of his political thought and spirituality.

## **Childhood Years**

It is important to see P.Q.'s development in the context of the social, religious and educational milieu of his time. P.Q. Vundla was born in Healdtown in the Fort Beaufort District in the Ciskei in 1904. Healdtown was a Methodist mission station that was home to a mission school and teacher training college (Vundla 1973: 11). As an African educational centre, it was also a spawning ground for political ideas of black emancipation from colonial rule (Bundy 1987: 83-84). There were two impulses at work in Healdtown, which in turn represented the whole of the Eastern Cape region. One was a liberal drive towards education, which was only offered in missionary schools. The other faction saw colonial education as a means of co-opting and neutralising the politicisation of Africans and therefore resisted it. P.Q.'s burgeoning political consciousness arose out of these two competing claims on him.

Kathleen Vundla describes P.Q.'s family as peasants (Vundla 1973: 14). Colin Bundy and William Beinhardt (1987) outline the rise and fall of the African peasantry in the Eastern Cape during the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early twentieth century. In the late 19<sup>th</sup> century Methodist missionary activity in the region allowed missionary-educated peasantry to gain access to colonial education and privilege, which enabled access to salaried posts. Bundy and Beinhardt (1987) describe a class distinction between the red (traditional) and school (missionary) groups, creating a distinction between the progressive educated class and the reactionary traditionalist red group. These groups were further subdivided along religious lines, with the school groups containing Methodist and Anglican Christians who associated with white liberals in the Cape. The red group consisted mainly of members of separatist Christian denominations vying for an Africanist stance, namely the Ethiopians and the African Methodist Episcopal Church. The missionary-educated group held to the ideals of education, progress and loyalty to the colonial government (Bundy & Beinhardt 1987: 226 & 228). Their ideology was an African variant of Cape liberalism, which enabled approximately 800 Africans to register as voters in the Cape in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. These missionary-educated Africans had strong links with Cape liberal politics.

P.Q. Vundla's parents and grandparents were missionary-educated and his siblings also attended the mission school (Vundla 1973: 14). African

educators in Methodist mission schools tended to espouse an agenda of social improvement combined with an endorsement of colonial structures and politics (Beinhart & Bundy 1987: 227). They therefore sought political and social advancement through educational advancement via the colonial system. Vundla's father was one of the first registered voters in the Cape Province and supported the South African Party under Botha. He ensured all his children received an education despite their poverty (Vundla 1973: 14). Although P.Q.'s family fell into the ideological mould of progressive mission-educated Africans, his experiences of racism in education led him to side with the growing resistance to Black progressives in the Transkei and Ciskei.

The 'council system' (or 'Bunga') in the Cape Government was driven by senior Cape officials from 1902 and was an attempt to retain white control of education and land. This was done through an additional tax on black citizens in the Eastern Cape. It sought to improve land management, schools and the salaries of teachers. But most crucially, the magistrates retained control of land allocations, which were reduced by rationing of land and land registration. The net result was a dramatic increase in poverty among peasants, including the Vundla family. This system had the support of the progressives, but antagonised the poor peasantry, who struggled under the new tax regime and saw the councils as puppet colonial governments. Opposition to the system spread from the traditionalists to sections of the progressives (Beinhart & Bundy 1987: 232), who wanted to maintain law and order in the district along colonial lines. The most radical opposition to the 'council system' came from the *Iliso Lomzi* group, who were in favour of African separatism (1987: 232). P.Q. expresses similar sentiments in statements such as 'The only good white is a dead white' (Vundla 1973: 16).

P.Q. was influenced by this politically charged environment from an early age. Although the classes at the mission school were non-racial, P.Q. observed how white children were favoured by the teachers and tended to win scholarships over their black peers. When he graduated from the Healdtown Institute, he was unsuccessful in obtaining a bursary to attend Lovedale High School. He was embittered by this turn of events and blamed the Governor of Healdtown School Board for denying him a bursary on the basis of his political views. This event strengthened his antagonism towards whites (Vundla 1973: 14). Such African nationalist views were common in the Eastern Cape during the early decades of the twentieth century. As Vundla

matured, his politics became more galvanised towards helping ‘his people’ overcome the poverty caused by colonialism, much to his parents’ chagrin. With no prospect of furthering his education, P.Q. had to leave Healdtown for East London to find work at the age of 18. He found a lowly job as a servant in a boarding house. With the Eastern Cape being a huge labour resource for the Witwatersrand mines, inevitably P.Q. was recruited into the migrant labour system (Vundla 1973: 17).

As a result of the political climate of P.Q.’s early years, he became a militant black separatist, critical of colonial structures and embittered by his encounters with racist injustice. This makes his later conciliatory approach even more remarkable.

### **P.Q.’s Early Adulthood (1920-1945)**

During P.Q.’s stay in Western Johannesburg, he experienced several significant life events. He married Kathleen and became increasingly politicised, largely as a result of his observation of the treatment of black miners on the Witwatersrand. But there is no evidence of spirituality during this period (Vundla 1973: 21). The Witwatersrand was the site of considerable population influx, especially during WW2, and hosted a concomitant rise in political awareness. P.Q.’s location in the hotbed of black urban political consciousness had a formative influence on his political thinking. Initially P.Q. was a mineworker, but he quickly became involved in the struggles of urban blacks.

P.Q. was also actively involved in community upliftment via the Advisory Boards in Western Native Township, despite their compromised connection to white Councils. He was elected chairman of the WNT Advisory Board, a position he held for many years. He fought for the improvement of salaries for teachers and led tram boycotts for lower tram fares (Vundla 1973: 26 & 27). This brief overview of P.Q.’s political activity between 1930-1955 reveals that even during P.Q.’s non-religious period, the seeds of his dislike for violence and his search for a non-military solution that would lead to the peaceful upliftment of black communities can be discerned.

### **The Political Period**

P.Q. was deeply involved in protest politics in the 1940s and early 1950s. His

political activism began in 1943 when he reported to the Lansdowne Commission on working conditions of black miners. He then resigned from the mines and joined the newly- formed African Mineworkers Union as a full-time organising secretary in 1946 (Vundla 1973: 28). P.Q. also formed political alliances with other foci of the struggle. In 1944 he was one of the leaders of the strike and march by black teachers in the city centre for higher wages (Vundla 1973: 27). Black teachers during that time were one of the most politicised groups struggling for recognition. In 1948 he was the Chairman of the Anti-Tram Fare increase Committee (Vundla 1973: 30). He also participated in the Defiance Campaign in 1951 (Vundla 1973: 34).

Despite his increasing political involvement, P.Q. remained on the municipal-controlled Advisory Council, to which he was elected in 1939 (Vundla 1973: 22). P.Q. continued to work for improved living conditions for communities on the West Rand, especially Western Areas and Western Native Township. He also organised a civilian guard in these areas to protect these communities from gangster violence (Vundla 1973: 31). But his membership of the conservative Advisory Council caused enmity against him from some members of the ANC. Suspicion of his political activities grew.

In 1952 P.Q. was elected onto the National Executive of the African National Congress under the leadership of Chief Albert Luthuli. At that stage the ANC was committed to struggle along constitutional lines, through protests, deputations and resolutions. A year earlier, however, P.Q. had been a field-marshal during the Civil Rights Disobedience Campaign. The failure of this non-violent protest led the ANC to consider more violent forms of protest. P.Q. only served on the National Executive for one year due to its increasing militancy. After this, he returned to journalism, writing for *The Buntu World* newspaper and as a freelance journalist for the white press reporting on Sophiatown politics (Vundla 1973: 34-36).

## **Sophiatown – The Turning Point**

In 1955 an incident occurred which was to change the direction of P.Q.'s thinking, away from confrontationalism to non-confrontational methods of inclusive change. The kernel of this incident is that P.Q. was brought into contact with MRA understandings of political processes. Kathleen Vundla explains that Sophiatown and Western Native Township, although sharing the same area, were divided by a fence (1973: 35). Sophiatown was a suburb of



Johannesburg and its inhabitants had freehold rights to their property. Western Native township was owned by the municipality: although its residents were relatively more wealthy than Sophiatown, they did not enjoy the same property rights as their neighbours. The Apartheid government had outlawed property rights for blacks in white areas in the first Group Areas Act of 1950 and planned to move residents to the newly built township, cynically called Meadowlands (Lodge 1990: 93; and Vundla 1973: 36). P.Q. was one of the leaders of the 'resist resettlement' campaign. He spoke at the newly named Freedom Square, encouraging people to resist the Government's attempts at bulldozing Sophiatown (Vundla 1973: 36). However, on the eve of the removal, P.Q. was visited by Nico Ferreira, a member of the Council's removal committee. The young Nationalist Afrikaner, who worked for the Native Affairs Department (1973: 36) and was temporarily working for the Sophiatown Resettlement Board, spoke to P.Q. about the need for a new transformative approach to South Africa's political crisis that involved whites and blacks overcoming their prejudices and meeting each other on equal terms of trust (Vundla 1973: 36; and Ferreira 2006: 18). Nico Ferreira had also spoken to Dr Xuma, the ex-president of the ANC, in his home in Sophiatown. Ferreira's meetings with Sophiatown community leaders aroused the ire of the Head of the Resettlement Board, resulting in his being sent back the Native Affairs Department in Pretoria (Ferreira 2006: 16).

The meeting should be seen with scepticism in terms of its timing. Indeed, the government's destruction and removal of people to Meadowlands did take place the next day. P.Q.'s association with a white Afrikaner, together with his continued membership of the Advisory Council, led to increased antagonism, particularly from the ANC Youth League. An incident where he was physically attacked by members of the ANCYL, causing him to be hospitalised. Nico Ferreira visited him in hospital, bearing a gift of grapes, which, according to Kathleen, meant a great deal to P.Q. because it suggested the beginnings of a genuine friendship between them and challenged P.Q.'s previous racist belief that he could not befriend a white person. Ferreira belonged to the MRA and invited P.Q. to speak at one of the MRA house party meetings in Johannesburg (Vundla 1973: 38). P.Q. returned from the house party a completely transformed man. Kathleen relates how he had lost all aggression towards the family and began prioritizing them. Then they observed him sitting quietly every day, waiting for spiritual guidance with a

pen and paper beside him (Vundla 1973: 39). According to Kathleen, P.Q. followed MRA spiritual practices and values for the rest of his life. Kathleen and P.Q. visited MRA groups and conventions in Europe and the USA on various occasions (Vundla 1973: 38). P.Q. and Nico Ferreira spoke on MRA values in Europe and the USA over the next 14 years, including such significant platforms as NATO (Ferreira 2006: 24).

## **The Spiritual Turn – MRA Background**

The Moral Regeneration Movement (MRA) was established by Frank Buchman between 1915-1921 (Boobbhyer 2013: 1). The movement had two branches, in the USA and in Oxford, England. It was named 'The Oxford Group' (OG) in South Africa by a train porter, for want of a name to call the visiting group, but until 1929 the group did not have an official name (2013: 148; and Duigan interview).

Buchman's core beliefs were quietism and group spiritual upliftment. The link between personal reflection, personal change and community growth was forged by the idea of listening to and following the Holy Spirit. Buchman was influenced by Robert Speer's distillation 'of Jesus' teachings into four 'absolute standards' for behaviour – honesty, unselfishness, purity, and love' (Boobbhyer 2013: 22). Grensted opens *What is the Oxford Group?* as follows:

You cannot belong to the Oxford Group. It has no membership, badge, rules, or definite location. It is a name of a group of people who, from every rank, profession, and trade, in many countries, have surrendered their lives to God and who are endeavouring to lead a spiritual quality of life under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

The Oxford Group is not a religion; It has no hierarchy, no temples, no endowments; its workers have no salaries, no plans but God's Plan; every country is their country, every man their brother. They are Holy Crusaders in modern dress, wearing spiritual armour. Their aim is a 'A New World order for Christ, the King' (Grensted 1933: 3).

Despite the desire to disengage with organised Christianity, the above quotation reveals the group's identification with central Christian tenets. When Buchman established both the Oxford Group and the Moral

Rearmament Movement, the interlinking principles of the Holy Spirit's guidance and community work were the central driving factors. The daily practice of sitting silently and listening for guidance from the Holy Spirit, with a pen and paper beside one, became the movement's central spiritual activity. But Buchman saw these two movements on the international stage, working towards greater understanding between countries and world communities (Boobbyer 2013: 14-34).

Buchman's followers went to Japan, South America and Malaysia in the 1930s and 1940s to introduce his ideas. After the Second World War Europeans from all countries were invited to the Caux Center in Switzerland to engage in open discussion and processes of forgiveness (Interview: Duigan, Boobbyer 2013: 133). The Oxford Group first visited South Africa in 1929. The initial visits aimed at building trust between English- and Afrikaans-speakers, by holding 'house parties' where influential people from different sectors of society (education, civil society, business and legal professions) were invited. Later visits addressed the racial tension between black and white communities by inviting white community leaders along with radical black nationalists (2013: 148). Among the black leaders invited were Dr William Nkomo, one of the founders of the ANC Youth League, and P.Q. (Ferreira 2006: 15; and Vundla 1973: 46). Kathleen describes P.Q.'s perception of that house party. The white people at the party explained:

We are not happy about things in the country. We feel change is needed. But how do we get it moving? The Africans are bitter against whites. We understand that. The whites are scared of the Africans and don't want to give way. So nothing happens. But suppose each person began with himself, because none of us is perfect. As far as we are concerned we are going to start changing ourselves and not wait for anyone else to begin (Vundla 1973: 44).

The central idea of the house party was to build conversation around personal testimony, reminiscent of Ricoeur's fluid sense of *ipse*-identity in his concept of attestation, which incorporates the sense of the other within the subject's identity framework, and Bhabha's understanding of the fluid Third Space of hybridity. Buchman's goal was not systemic political change, but, rather, change through personal transformation away from narrow selfish concerns: social and national change around desegregation was based on individuals

undergoing personal transformation. Buchman remoulded the Marxist concepts of ideology and ideological struggle. In his understanding, ideology referred to struggle within people between fear-based egoic ideas and ideas motivated by spiritual values of holiness and following a higher spiritual calling. Buchman's strategies in the house party system demonstrate similarities to the Communist strategy of deliberately influencing important people to bring about change (Boobbyer 2013: 111).

Nico Ferreira became an MRA member after attending an MRA conference in Lusaka and hearing William Nkomo talk about personal transformation as a prerequisite for political and racial transformation (Vundla 1973: 38). When Ferreira met P.Q. he asked for forgiveness for the arrogance with which whites treated blacks. His apologetic approach helped P.Q. to overcome his distrust of whites and led to a fundamental change in his politics (Ferreira 2006: 15 & 19).

Three outstanding features characterise Vundla's community leadership under MRA influence and can be upheld as important qualities in leadership for peace and conflict resolution. These are: recognition of the other through forgiveness; seeking conflict resolution through an approach to negotiation based on all-inclusive love; and finding a common ground as a basis for communication. Indeed Peter Vundla argues that his father was the first proponent of a multi-party Codesa-like discussion (P. Vundla interview). This idea is endorsed by Boris Wilson in *A time of innocence* (1991: 215). These three MRA values entrenched his desire for community healing, overcoming political conflict within communities and community development. PQ expressed his understanding of MRA values in a UK newspaper as a means for social transformation via the Christian roots of MRA values in terms of working towards a 'God architected multiracial society' (Greenock Telegraph 1970).

During this early period of MRA influence, P.Q. strengthened his previous political strategy of upliftment before political resistance. This strategy can be seen in his resolve to prioritise black education above protest in the 1955 school boycotts (Vundla 1973: 41). This course of action brought him into conflict with the ANC and the Youth League, who urged parents to boycott schools as a strategy of mass opposition to Apartheid (1973: 40). P.Q.'s all-inclusive political style ran against the grain of oppositional politics, because in this context the needs of black pupils were being disregarded. His MRA-influenced thinking recalls Dr William Nkomo when

he asserted: 'Any idea that excludes anyone else is too small for the age in which we live'. The ideas of inclusivity and finding common ground for dialogue became the guiding ideas behind P.Q. Vundla's politics after meeting Nico Ferreira and joining the MRA. For P.Q., political transformation is founded on personal transformation, based on following the guidance of the Holy Spirit, together with an expansive idea of humanity which transcends partisan politics (Vundla 1973: 50).

P.Q. started to believe that change begins with MRA values of forgiveness, self- transformation and unselfishness by cultivating the values of honesty, purity, unselfishness and love (Vundla 1973: 44). Kathleen also observes that P.Q. began to believe that the fight for transformation through personal change was not only directed towards correcting racial injustice in South Africa; he also shared the MRA view that personal transformation needed to be directed towards global change (1973: 44). It is difficult to assess Vundla's personal exploration of piety and personal transformation because he left no written evidence in this regard, but it is possible to discern the MRA's influence on his political strategy.

MRA principles became the guiding foci of P.Q.'s political activities after 1955 (Vundla 1973: 43). Once individuals in a conflict had made an unselfish commitment to change, P.Q. realized, it was easy to find points of agreement and compromise because the discussion was founded on flexibility rather than winning positions (Vundla 1973: 47). P.Q. first applied this approach of dialogue through inner transformation to the problem of warring gangs in Western Native Township and Sophiatown. Three gangs were fighting for ascendancy (the Co-operatives, the Headquarters and the Vultures, headed by Don Mattera). Kathleen recalls that after a battle between two of the gangs, P.Q. sought out Don Mattera to plan a 'peace conference' between the three gangs at the Western Area's communal hall. P.Q. explained to Mattera after the conference that conflict was not primarily between people or groups but between egoic self-will and spiritual guidance. Don Mattera observed that 'I have never forgotten this [P.Q.'s words]' and this statement most probably contributed to Mattera's conversion to Islam (Vundla 1973: 49)<sup>1</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> According to Glaser, Sophiatown gangs, such as the Vultures, did not survive the removal from Sophiatown to Meadowlands mostly due to the inconsistent and slow resettlement of people (1994:154).

On the Advisory Board P.Q. adopted a different mode of leadership from the competitive approach found in the ANC. He now aimed at cultivating trust and honesty, rather than winning political positions through any means, violent or otherwise. Kathleen recalls that he started gaining the trust of the political left and the white council superintendents (Vundla 1973: 50; Wilson 1991: 215).

## **MRA Influences on Social Forces**

It is at the seam between biographical and socio-historical accounts that the window of MRA influence on social and political life becomes apparent. P.Q.'s involvement with the 1955 school boycotts and the 1957 bus boycott provide two examples of the disparity between 'official' history and spiritual biography. 'Official' history is recorded by Lodge, who offers a Marxist, ANC-aligned account of the events as failed instances of the proletariat being mobilised towards revolution.

According to the biographical account, P.Q.'s involvement with the school boycott shows his shift from ANC politics to community politics influenced by MRA principles of communal trust. I argue that this shift represents a move from egoic politics, aimed at winning power, to unselfish, community-driven politics. Kathleen's account of the school boycott is initially in agreement with Lodge's account. She describes how the ANC agreed at the 1954 Conference in Durban to 'withdraw their children from school' and how later the Executive 'relaxed [the] boycott instructions'. She also describes how the Youth League continued to drive the boycott agenda and Dr Verwoerd's ultimatum for black children to return to school (1973: 40). But her account of the boycott differs from Lodge's, when she writes that P.Q. believed that it was more important for students to be in class than to not be in schools for a prolonged time<sup>2</sup>. The school boycott would weaken black education because it would imply that new schools did not need to be built. P.Q. argued, at a meeting in Western Native Township (Vundla 1973: 43), that boycotting the Bantu Education Act should happen later, once communities had ensured that they had schools.

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<sup>2</sup> Vundla's reasoning that more schools would be built if pupils attended classes was based on the premise of the Bantu Education Act which was to bring more black youth into the education system (Giliomee 2003: 507-510).

After the meeting P.Q. was attacked by members of the local ANC Youth League, stabbed in the head and hospitalised. After his discharge he called another community meeting and encouraged community members not to seek revenge for his attack but rather to forgive the attackers and ensure the community had schools which their children could attend, using his often-cited quotation, 'Half a loaf is better than no bread' (Vundla 1973: 43). While P.Q. had supported the upliftment of teachers in the 1944 strike for improved wages, eleven years later he was not prepared to jeopardize the education of students. The maintenance of the respect and quality of teachers meant that he upheld the importance of education, a value that harked back to his own education in the mission school system. But the prospect of no education was too much of a threat to the betterment of his community. In this position, I argue, he relinquished egoic concerns of maintaining his power on the ANC Executive by focusing on the concerns of his community.

P.Q. was expelled from the ANC after the school boycotts in 1955 because he had defied the Executive's call for the boycotts to continue in Western Native Township. While P.Q. participated actively in the mass demonstration preceding the school boycott, his change of approach towards the focusing on the needs of the community shows signs of MRA influence in its conciliatory approach towards his attackers in the Youth League and his prioritising the practical needs of the community.

Two years later, the bus boycott of 1957 provides an example of more developed MRA-informed politics, where P.Q. was able to manipulate the boycott proceedings by negotiating behind the scenes between stakeholders with diverse political leanings. This subtle political manoeuvring again displayed his MRA-inspired ability to bring divergent political parties into negotiation to meet the concerns of community over the coercive forces of party political influence aimed at mass action against Apartheid. Instead of insisting on the boycott, as did the ANC, to challenge the power base of the Nationalist government, he chose to promote the basic financial concerns of his community. His political strategy was to seek reconciliation and pragmatic solutions rather than conflictual politics. Kathleen Vundla records that P.Q., together with seven other black leaders, including William Nkomo and ten like-minded white businessmen from different political persuasions including the Liberal Party, and, later in the negotiations, the Government and the Johannesburg Chamber of Commerce, succeeded in halting the boycott by behind-the-scenes consultation and

negotiation. These meetings took place at the house of businessman Cyril Pearce, who professed to live by MRA values (Vundla 1973: 53; ILoël Ferreira interview; and Anthony Duigan interview). The solution was found in business raising £25 000 within twenty-four hours 'which formed the basis of the subsidy (of the fares) and later the Government, together with organized commerce, imposed a national levy' (1973: 53). Such a dialogical framework between divergent parties required a fluid sense of identity, as found in Ricoeur's concept of *ipse*-identity and Bhabha's concept of hybridity. According to Kathleen, this group continued to meet 'over the next few years' to find solutions to political and wage-related issues (1973: 53). I suggest that this event, which took place shortly after P.Q. left the ANC and joined the MRA, provides an example of a counter-history to the ANC version of events.

Although P.Q. had developed more subtle negotiating tactics than two years previously, he still saw the need to obtain the community's approval for halting the boycott, even if it made him vulnerable to more attacks from the ANCYL. His approach follows the MRA goal of achieving broad peace over smaller ideological victory. P.Q. called a meeting at Western Native Township to call off the boycott. At the beginning of the meeting he asked that non-Western Native Township residents leave the meeting. But no one left. Kathleen Vundla recalls that the ANC had sent lorries containing ANC members and Youth League members to the meeting. During the meeting P.Q. asked for a vote to end the boycott. A majority of women who were tired of battling to get to work voted in favour of ending the boycott. According to Kathleen, the ANC Youth League members threatened P.Q. and the people who had voted in favour of ending the boycott. P.Q. asked the women to leave the hall and a fight ensued with casualties (1973: 53). Buses started running again in Western Native Township the next day. Kathleen asserts that their ending the boycott was a 'crushing defeat for the (ANC)' (1973: 54). The ANC continued to threaten their family for the next few months, threatening their children, threatening to kill P.Q. and to burn down their house.

From Kathleen's account of the boycott and its resolution, it seems that P.Q. was motivated to improve the living conditions of his community, and he put those goals above the political motivations of the ANC. Lodge's analysis of the bus boycott focuses on the ANC's goal of politicizing the 'politically inert masses' and strengthening the ANC's opposition to the



Government. It is interesting that the Lodge terminology of ‘masses’ and the ‘crowd’ does not show sensitivity to community concerns and issues.

## **Conclusion**

In this article I have focused on the contribution of MRA values to P.Q. Vundla’s political activism. In addition, I have applied the theoretical frameworks of Ricoeur’s concept of attestation and Bhabha’s concept of hybridity to illustrate the effect of his spirituality had on his political context by placing him in a very fluid social and political context. Specifically, I examined the development of P.Q. Vundla’s thought, as influenced by Christian-MRA philosophy, in understanding his involvement with two boycotts in the mid-1950s, the schools boycott in 1955 and the bus boycott in 1957. Social history does not provide a suitable framework for revealing the impact of spiritual value-based beliefs on shaping social events. In addition a social historical analysis of P.Q. Vundla lacks depth and accuracy due to its inability to account for his spiritual beliefs and their influence on his actions. Biographical research provides added dimensions to our grasp of P.Q. Vundla’s motivation for contributing to social history. For this reason I have focused on biographical accounts of P.Q.’s life to provide a more intimate view of his thoughts and beliefs than is available from the official accounts. I am not concerned with the truth or falsity of his MRA beliefs, but rather what impact they had on his life and the influence he had on society as a community and political leader. Ricoeur’s theory concept of ‘attestation’, seen in combination with Bhabha’s concept of hybridity, is very useful in my analysis in that Ricoeur argues that a subject’s attested spiritual and political beliefs are a consequence of wrestling with subjective consciousness that draws in the other (both beliefs and people) as a participant in the reflexive process. In the process of drawing in Christian-based MRA beliefs, Vundla espouses Western ideas. This places his discourse in an ambivalent relation to colonial discourse: it is different, but also almost the same (Bhabha 1994: 122). But in this ambivalent political space I argue that P.Q. was able to instil a discourse of reconciliation into the political landscape. Reading Vundla’s biography in the light of Ricoeur’s concept of attestation and Bhabha’s concept of hybridity allows for a more complex tapestry of P.Q. Vundla’s life to emerge, and by consequence, a more textured understanding of the social forces within which he was involved. My approach has framed P.Q. Vundla

as a dynamic social actor and activist, as a person in process in the midst of a fluid social context, which has not been acknowledged up to now. My focus on the school and bus boycotts in the mid-1950s is significant because these are seen by social historians as crucial in the development of the anti-Apartheid mass movement because the size of the boycotts attracted the attention of the authorities (Lodge 1990: 165). In looking at the two boycotts, the growth of P.Q.'s influence can be observed from the WNT community (school boycott) to the Witwatersrand (bus boycott). During the bus boycott he was also able to engage with the concerns of a far more diverse body of stakeholders. Kathleen Vundla's biography of her husband reveals a man who overcame the dominating values of racial binarism and infused a gentler value system of non-dominating acceptance into his social and political praxis and thus enabled him to develop his own discourse within the broader discourses of political mass action and colonial oppression. His anti-authoritarian discourse drew the criticism and mistrust of political bodies such as the ANC, but also inspired gang leaders (such as Don Mattera) to inner creativity and to become constructive community youth leaders. In the final analysis, P.Q. has important lessons to teach us in 21<sup>st</sup> century South Africa and deserves to be better known because of his steadfast belief in the centrality of community values, finding common ground between opposing political forces and his avoidance of egoic identity politics.

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