

## **CHAPTER 3: *BASOTHO* WOMEN AS SOCIAL AND PHENOMENOLOGICAL CONSTRUCTS**

### **Introduction**

The content of this Chapter does not substantiate reciprocity but concentrated the research into the social constructs of the hypothesis. This started with a particular phenomenological report of *BaSotho* society and culture, value systems, gender roles, with a short discussion on the cosmological relationship to artefacts (this is a field of study of its own and beyond the scope of this research).

### **The essentials of what was taken from the literature review into this Chapter**

Through the review an interactive network was induced which became a valid form of reasoning as well as be a guide to structure the rest of the research. Lived experience assisted insight to be accumulated, the quality of this became dependent on the extent to which knowledge was applied during the process of making a language, interpreted as responses to various forces. This gave a deeper meaning to phenomenology.

### **This Chapter**

The actions of the *BaSotho* women pre-empt analysis. They select and take possession of a particular part of space but by activating its potentials turned it into a place. These experiments of action became her frame of reference for intended habitual use in their implementation of formal nuances in their built fabric. This Chapter studied how the acts, during a process of living, became symbiotic with learning, speaking and reading forces. Being prepared and re-enforced confirmed their roles as makers.

## **PHENOMENOLOGY; its specification in Chapter two applied**

### **The hierarchical order of the adjuncts was reversed**

#### **1 Study of lived experience**

A timeline (figure 1.7 in Chapter one adapted in this Chapter) describes key stages of female development and evolution with the essential interactive relationship between the key stages and expectancies elaborated as an evolutionary process. Key stages in this timeline started with the *Badimo* and ends with the living-dead, (*Badimo*), with a continuous moment to moment lived experience contained within each individual. Evolution of self was analyzed along each distinct stage of the

continuum of expected development but combined with the roles that needed to be played and accomplished. These stages are important in the evolution of women in *BaSotho* social constructs of *Botho* as phenomenology and *Botho* as a process of experimenting with social and physical challenges. These appear impossible at first but her innate perseverance of effort was to seek a potential or intrinsic style of interpretation of discoveries, this resulted in mastering such constructs. Such expectations of women of all ages to be active makers demands the prerequisite factor of continuous learning, starting in the womb and ends with her death as an unseen but known and respected presence. Her learning will include the value of language as key to communication, to expect and accept failure but keep on responding to forces that will affect her process of living her life.

## **2 Explanation of phenomena as they present themselves**

Place is a mindset appropriated by mood, satisfaction, association and comfort. Within the timeline of a human, this lived experience of place changes from in the womb, in the arms, the cradle, the bed, mother's home, warmed by the sun, staring at a fire, quietly sitting in an enclosing corner, the exuberance of a feast, the inclusion in ceremonies, participation in meetings, a discourse of opinions (agreeing or not), the solemnity of burials with all of those present enclosed in special blankets.

## **3 Study of essences**

During all the key stages of the woman's development described phenomena and occurrences were not always positive, her intuition, knowledge and experience informed appropriate reaction. These reactions became her accumulated references for future executions of inspiration, intentions and expectations.

These intentions and memories of the women to act as interpreters of the appropriate implementation of a variety of modes of action justified the reason for using Norberg-Schulz as architect in phenomenology. The women as subjects of this Chapter were busy with the exploitation of special qualities of use and comfort during their lived experience of place making as opposite to merely making space. He inferred and described those special qualities particular to place which correlates with the intentions of the *BaSotho* women. Their activities were not unique but became the continuation of knowledge.

#### **4 Description of the experiential meanings as she lives them**

The evolution of women in *BaSotho* culture derives from a continuum of cultural norms. Based on *Botho* expectations, doing becomes automatic without being asked nor instructed – but for sheer civility or reverie of making, personal gratification, reacting to fellow humans with gentility, making it a cultural principle not to display superiority or demand submission, recognition, encouraged by others in their abilities, accepting praise, living her status, being her status, acting her status, not to have to prove herself to others, accepting her choice, accepting her excellence.

#### **5 Study of phenomena within human science**

**Kuper;** stated that the general norm is a distinct gender division in her world as maker. These norms seem to be dynamic and possibly changed as circumstances changed. The act of *Litema*, working with earth and making clay pots were however specifically the roles of women. During visits to Lesotho observations made showed gender specific tasks to be interchangeable and depended more on availability of resources and time.

#### **6 Attentive practice of thoughtfulness**

Progressive proportions of time spent on production roles and tasks, actual and learning, influenced progressive proportions of decision-making responsibilities. Progressive change in mentorship of others in the production roles and such tasks resulted from this very process.

In this culture women of all ages are makers. The social structure makes it possible for everyone to be the maker of an artefact. It is not possible within this culture therefore not to be physically involved in a making process. Coetzee *et al.*, (2002). This starts in the womb with inherited and innate knowledge passed on in her genes, as newly born girl. She quickly learns that throughout her life her expectations are fulfilled by her actions. The young girl growing up learns about making through play, during initiation the ceremony prepares her for future obligations and responsibilities. She learns about the ceremony and her own future initiation. She will also help her mother to gather materials for building, especially special earth for *Litema*.

‘The art of earth’. Van Wyk, (1998)

The making of artefacts from girl to mature *BaSotho* woman is anchored to an extension of her moral obligation elaborated under *Botho*, in Chapter two and her social construct elaborated further under peer group pressure in Chapter four.

### **7 Poetizing activity**

*By virtue of what memory and anticipation signify, place acquires temporal meaning and occasion spatial meaning. Thus space and time, defined reciprocally (in the image of man [woman] emerge, humanized, as place and occasion whatever space and time mean, place and occasion mean more!)*

*Places remembered and places anticipated, dovetail in the temporal span of the present.*  
(Van Eyck, 1966:121)

### **8 Search for what it means to be human**

Humans have an affiliative tendency. This tendency toward togetherness has been with humans' since primordial times, the gregarious nature of humans is instinctual but it remains essential for humans to congregate in order to survive, Although people can stay alive in isolation, she has acquired, through early social learning, dependence on other people to satisfy many needs.

People also have a drive to evaluate themselves; and in the absence of objective non-social means, they will evaluate themselves by comparison with other people.

Factors affecting judgements are that the more similar people are the stronger the drive for social comparison. People then affiliate for reasons of social comparison with people in their own situation

They also know fairly well how another human will act or react to what she does , she is less likely to do something to annoy the other person but also – vice versa. Each learns to act to make their interaction free of unpleasant reaction. If somebody rewards them they share a rewarding experience, the positive aspects of the experience or the reward are linked to the other person. Humans are also more similar than normally accepted; the effect of similarity is seen most clearly with people who share gross cultural and demographic characteristics, attitudes, beliefs, interests and backgrounds. Kinship is a continuum culture. Freedman *et al.*, (1970)

## ***BOTHO***

Two dimensions of *Botho* have a direct bearing on this enquiry. The first dimension of the living – *motho* – makes speech and knowledge of being possible. The second dimension is that of kinship, from the yet-to-be-born, the beings of the future, to the world of the living, to those beings who have passed away and join the living-dead. Two of the dimensions; the yet-to-be-born and the living-dead are invisible, yet they are believable and because of this belief there is an inevitable influence on the lived experience of the living. Ramose (2002)

Further reference to the *Botho* or *Ubuntu* onto-triadic concept of be-ing is in Chapter two.

## **LANUAGE**

One hears their voices free, lively, and happy, one hears them rushing to say more, so happy to find the words to explain, re-establishing quite naturally a dialogue between women in collusion, a complicity in the discourse marked by a multiplicity of phrases such as ‘you know how to do it, right?’ and “you see”, “you understand”, I don’t need to explain that” It is a pleasure found in breaking the law of public silence, a pleasure in recounting the very thing that concerns the succession of days and hours, a pleasure in recounting one’s self, by thus authorizing oneself to be a woman, to take care of household making, and to finding them meaning, diversity, interest, and ingenuity. Each one of them is practicing unknowingly, yet all the while desiring to do so, despite the fear, boredom, or poverty, makes out certain inner masterpieces” (Giard in De Certeau *et al.*, 1998).

## **A voice**

The newborn baby instinctively communicates with the world by crying and will persist till satisfied. She quickly realized that sounds used are construed by mother as a communicative act and will be responded to by equally meaningful acts. She became accustomed to her voice and tested its nuances in space. Single words develop into an innate ability of syntax which will evolve along her life till complex notions can be expressed as mature woman when accentuation developed another dimension to her voice, its full eloquence in articulation by exclamation, gasp, whisper, tone and pitch. This range gets used to gesticulate emotions, real or manipulative. Her

eloquence reached third (space) and fourth (time) dimensions when her voice range can be to lull a child to sleep, or signals danger, fourth; when her voice combines with other voices in song evoking applicable emotions.

### **Ululating**

This is a common form of 'language' used by women to express enjoyment during ceremonies. Often the arms are over the head and rhythmically swinging to the same rhythm of the whole body.

### **Women singing while working**

The bodies of workers become united in the rhythm of the song. It creates a place with its boundaries the acts of making and the sound of voices in unison.

Source Cheryl Ramjake.

*Mmamati mpelelele ngwana*

*ke a lema*

*ke lema kele nasi*

*Maina – mainama ke a inamologa*

*Mae (mmagwe) ke moloji wa busio*

Translated by herself

The locust

can you take care of my child

cause I am planting alone

Repeat on and on and on

Bender – bender she is getting up

her mother is a witch at night

repeat on and on and on

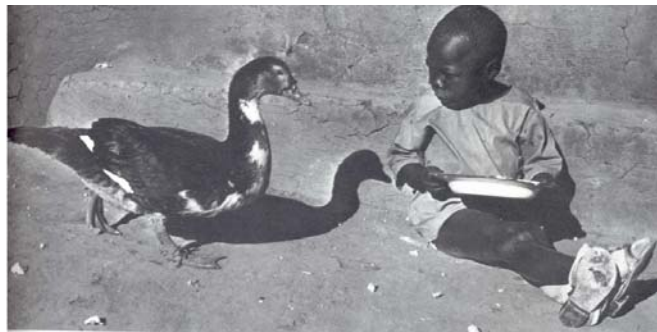
This poem and song is sung while a group of women work, in this case they are planting as part of the role structured obligation as referred to by Coetzee (2002) that is integral to everyone's 'Ubuntu' responsibility. The locust referred to is a metaphor of a totem, within the hierarchy of other totems; elephant (strength), hippo (rain) crocodile (danger).

Within her social construct she will not look up from her work in order not to place the curse on her mother of being a witch. Her confirmation comes through diligence and conforming to peer group pressure when doing her work well.

The important subliminal aim of this song is to maintain the rhythm of a body at work. This act becomes inherent in repetitive work such as hewing, mixing clay with manure to reach the right consistency and through this bodily knowledge she develops her own satisfaction and self esteem. The action makes the woman, the woman generates the action.

### **Body language**

Learning the languages of verbal and physical expression



**Figure 3.1 Her body language sets her own boundaries**

Her bodily language demarcates the boundaries of ownership. This self expression is by learning to set her own boundaries as safe realm and is the start of her future role as maker of actual boundaries with the walls of buildings-as-artefacts.

Perhaps the first confrontation she had was with an outsider, in the photo a muscovy duck intent on robbing her of her food but, in an eye to eye and her turning a shoulder as bodily reaction she is standing her ground and did not allow this. This body language also showed her confidence which is a sign of self knowledge, confidence and the beginning of her evolution towards her future role of insisting on the value of her own boundaries, mental or physical.

### **LEARNING**

All these senses will be acted upon as part of her application of lessons learnt. “The infant, then, is storing up every bit of positive [or negative] experience she has, no

matter what its sequence or how fragmentary its character. She must however at the end of her accumulating process contain the requisite minimum of any experience to use it as the basis for the next contingent experiences. Without the prior experiential quota being met, the next step of experiences may occur a thousand times without contributing to the maturing of the individual” (Liedloff, 1986:59)

### **Role of her social interaction**



**Figure 3.2 Peer group in their roles of social interaction**

Van Wyk, 1998

Peer group interaction had the major component of copying since everyone, a child or her mature social group all become role players, the most talented will be copied. She gets taught, even if at first it is through games, dancing or singing the consciousness of the agility of her body. Copying remains an integral part to play acting even when she is mature. From eventful ceremonies to everyday performances require correct dramatical languages which are learnt through copying other actors, when successful group approval builds confidence. Variation from the accepted is encouraged and can lead to a new interpretation. This process of evolution is synonymous to her role as maker of buildings-as-artefacts.

### **FORCES**

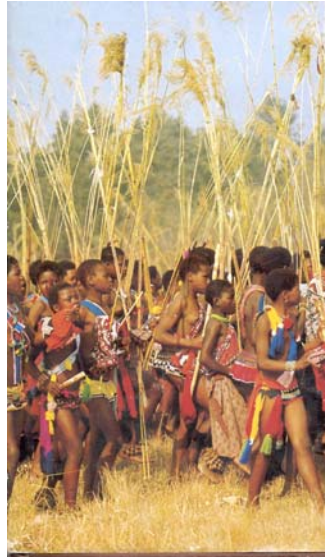
The change in responses to forces acting upon her in relation to her age, especially the way in which experience and self esteem allowed her to expand the techniques and understanding of expectations required within her social construct were elaborated.

### **Mythology**

Every culture has its fund of mythology. It is now commonly accepted that myth can no longer be discounted as mere fabrications of the fertile minds of primitive peoples handed down from generation to generation. In myth there is something of a



communal memory of the group as it has grappled with the questions of its and all human origins, life on this earth, being (what is the human person?) and even the hereafter (Setiloane, 1989: 3)



**Figure 3.3 Festival of reeds**

West *et al.*, (1976)

Myths purporting to explain the ‘origin of things’ including people on earth, abound in Africa. Prevalent mainly among the people, who occupy the Eastern coastal strip of Southern Africa – the Nguni, - is the myth that ‘the first people emerged out of a bed of reeds’. The location of this event is not identified. Nor does one find much elaboration of this myth. However, the idea is implanted and passed on from generation to generation by way of family and national ritual. Setiloane, (1989)

‘*Umhlanga*’, the festival of the reeds, is significant as a theological festival especially among the *Swazi* people, a subgroup of the *Nguni* and the *BaSotho*, enacting the event of the ‘first people coming out of a bed of reeds’. It occurs at the beginning of the agrarian year and, therefore, has undertones of a concept of fertility. Its principal event is the ‘passing out parade’ at the Great Place, of girls who have reached the age going on to womanhood when each young woman participates in the dance carrying a reed, creating the impression of a bed of reeds in the marshes moving in the wind.

It is significant that the *BaSotho* of the study area observes this myth. They even locate the ‘bed of reeds’ on *Ntsoana Tsatsi*, a hill near the town, *Vrede*, in the Free State within the area of the settlements of the study area.

Another ritual that recalls the myth is performed at the coming of every new life into this world. At birth the mother is confined to her hut for a period ranging from ten days to a month. There is a taboo for men, including the husband, father and some women to enter the hut. Only girls who have not yet reached puberty may enter the hut. To indicate this taboo to those not aware, a reed is placed across the entrance of the hut. The expression used is: *Ba ka mo lethakeng*, they are in or behind the reeds. So the coming of the child into the world is the occasion of an enactment of that first event of our 'first parents'. (Setiloane, 1989: 5)

### **Sweeping dirt**

A distinct area between the group of huts and the reed screen (if present) is often swept to keep it clean and spotless with no loose lying objects not just for cleanliness but also to prevent the snake representing the bad *living-dead* (fore fathers) from hiding and striking out at a bypassed and causing possible death.

Douglas defined "dirt" as "a relative idea", one element in a symbolic system through which the culture orders the sensible and sacred world of the ancestors, and both classifies and organizes matter, so that, dissimulated under this obsession with avoiding stains, of performing sacred purification rites, "reflection on dirt involves reflection on the relation of order to disorder, being to non-being, form to formlessness, life to death. This can be applied to the question of cleanliness of the surroundings of a building as artefact, provided one recognizes in the fabric of this symbolic structure the presence of parameters linked to a given history and geography. De Certeau *et al.*, (1998)

### **Evil spirits in the *Badimo***

The *mofifi* (a cleft sapling) is also hidden in the roof of a home to render the inhabitants invisible to evil influences; they are also buried around agricultural fields to ward off misfortune. A *mofifi* (forked stick) is stuck into the outside thatch roof of a hut to prevent the lightning (fire bird) from striking the hut. Myth is a bigger cultural force than proven knowledge, it was more important to conform to social opinions. The *mofifi* was also carried by the *bale* (initiates) to ward off evil spirits. Sweeping the *lolwapa* is still also regularly done to prevent evil spirits, as snakes, to hide behind loose rubble and strike the unfortunate victim.

## PROCESS

### Phenomenology remains a continuous culture of lived experience

Along the timeline from yet-to-be-born to the living-dead progressive bodily adaptation to dictates processes of evolution and possibilities of materials. Within her own evolution key roles will automatically occur resulting in an innate knowledge and intuition. This lived culture; firstly as a single person within the continuous change of a physical body and secondly the association of interpersonal experience and the way she shared it with other persons became better understood and meaningful in the study.

The reasons for being able to observe the evolution by this induction were that the subject matter exists. Identification of phenomenological patterns, regularities in methods, recurring patterns, themes and other commonalities or areas of uniqueness, in the making of the building-as-artefact became possible. The stages of growth and actual influence in development of the woman could be identified. The relationship between these could be connected.

### Timeline of the process

**Badimo:** Thousands of years of antecedents

**Yet-to-be-born:** Centuries of expectations and genes

**Birth:** Pain, shock and life

**Child:** Learning life skills, self preservation and a languages of expression

**Initiate:** Learning responsibilities and grown up values

**Bride:** Learns about relationships between her and males

**Marriage:** Bringing together two personalities and families

**Grown up:** Confronting future uncertainties and to initiate actions

**Mother:** Perpetuating life and accumulated knowledge

**Grandmother:** Perpetuating culture, knowledge and life skills

**Living-dead:** Being in constant presence as guide

### Figure 3.4 Timeline of the continuum of a learning culture

Each stage in this timeline was elaborated in terms of evolution of self.

### **BADIMO: Thousands of years of antecedents**

As the accumulated genes of the past has prepared them to do expectations within which the *BaSotho* women confront life are examples of extreme complexity and closely linked with natural tendencies in the infant like; to suckle, to crawl, to explore, but also to imitate. As what we expect in the way of treatment and circumstances becomes available sets of tendencies interact to capture and imbed the value of success. When the expected does not take place, corrective and compensatory tendencies make an effort to restore stability. Sets of intended expectations in humans interact to enable a complex store of experiences as our living dead have prepared them to do.

**Liedloff** ; “This human continuum can be defined as the sequence of experience that corresponds to the expectations and tendencies of our species in an environment consistent with that in which those expectations and tendencies were formed. It includes appropriate behaviour and treatment by other people as part of that environment. The continuum of an individual is whole, yet forms part of the continuum of the family, which is part of the clan’s, communities and species continua, just as the continuum of the human species forms part of that of all life. For many millions of years our ability to reason was managed by the infinitely more refined and knowledgeable areas of the mind called instinct, simply because it can make any number of observations, calculations, syntheses and executions simultaneously and correctly. Correct in this context does not imply unanimous agreement, but that which is appropriate to the ancient continuum of our species inasmuch as it is suited to the tendencies and expectations with which we have evolved. Expectation, in this sense, is founded as deeply in the human as its very design. Lungs not only have but can be said to be , an expectation of air, eyes are an expectation of light rays of the specific range of wavelengths sent out by what is useful to see at the hours appropriate for the species to see them; ears are an expectation of vibrations caused by the events most likely to be of concern, including the voices of other people, and one’s own voice is an expectation of ears functioning similarly in other people. A waterproof skin and hair - expectation of rain, hairs in the nose – expectation of dust, pigmentation in the skin – expectation of sun , respiratory mechanism – expectation of heat, one sex – expectation of the other, reflex mechanism – expectation of the need for speed in emergencies” (Liedloff, 1986)

In the surrounding mountains certain caves have been known as important locations for contact with the *Badimo*, the individual needing immediate proximity to the *Badimo* would, by entering the cave, enter the realm of the *Badimo*, inside the earth, depending on the severity of the plight would also go right up to the inner wall to bring an offering and request, in the case of the barren woman, to bear a child.

The *Badimo* and their graves are used for the same purposes, but more so for daily guidance, as well as protection during certain ventures such as undertaking a trip.

### **Plant imagery of the *Badimo***



**Figure 3.5** The plant *Boophane disticha* was associated with the female *Badimo*

As physical manifestation of the *Badimo* this plant became the intermediary contact with the *Badimo*, in the morning women will water the plant and talk to her *Badimo*, ask for advice on matters of concern but primarily created a mental place where ‘both’ feel included.

Drought and starvation were regular seasonal occurrences and cost the lives of loved ones as well as fauna and domesticated animals. Flora, edible or medicinal, also died off causing suffering, thence the belief in the *Badimo* and their interference to stop the misery and bring rain and relief. Their action was called on through dance and the

offering of prized cattle, where the blood of the animal during slaughter was deliberately allowed to flow into the earth to awaken the *Badimo*.

### **YET-TO-BE-BORN: Centuries of genes carrying expectations**

Conception is probably the most remarkable rite of passage to occur in the life of a person. Centuries of expectations of two gene pools, mother and father, are combined into one. It fulfils the roles of the yet-to-be-born as well as that of motherhood; to whom it is to bear children within the expectations of her social structure, and most importantly, to give birth to a son.

The role of the yet-to-be-born if a male is to perpetuate the name of the father and continue the family traditions. If a daughter is conceived it means that she will perpetuate the species, be help to her mother and future mother in law, but will bring wealth when she gets married the future son in law has to pay *lobola*, bride money.

During her time in the womb, the little human is still permitted to follow in a straight line from her antecedents' developmental stages from two single cells meeting, through an amphibian stage and on to *Homo sapiens* ready-for-birth without much happening to her in the womb for which experience the living-dead have not prepared her.

It is custom during pregnancy for the mother to be part of a ritual of offering prayers to the *Badimo* while the mother is covered in the skin of an animal and her face smeared with clay.

The foetus is nourished and protected in her mothers womb, kept naturally warm and jostled about pretty much as her predecessors were. She learns the sounds she hears are not very deferent, her mother's heartbeat, her voice and the voices of other people or animals. She also feels her mother's movements, hears her body digesting, snoring, coughing but is undisturbed, for her adaptations have taken into account over the millions of antecedent years. Due to their experience she is expecting and gets prepared for her anticipated experiences when born. Liedloff, (1986). This protection is the precursor to her successful experience of life. Through an innate willingness her mother will ensure that.

### **BIRTH: Pain, shock and life**

Coming into the world; a rite of passage for the new born baby. At the birth of a baby the home immediately becomes a sanctity an earthen womb to protect and shelter her, similar to her mother's. At birth a baby has developed far enough in her maximum security cell to emerge and continue her life in the enormously less sheltered outside world, the radical change from wet to dry, a lower temperature, no muffled sounds, the switch over to the infant's own breathing.

The new home acted as a built womb. It is not accessible to others than by specifically identified women. The artefact-as-home gets repainted with *litema*; it also gets ceremonial symbols to tell others of the event. A reed is placed across the entrance as reference to the myth of coming out of the reeds, this says to others she is in the reeds. Two reeds are also thrust into the thatch roof to avoid danger and bad spirits to hurt both baby and mother.

"Biological birth is a definitive act whereby the infant organism is presented into the world. There it is, a new baby, a new biological entity, already with its own ways, real and alive, from our point of view. But what of the baby's point of view? Under usual circumstances, the physical birth of a new living organism into the world inaugurates rapidly ongoing processes whereby within an amazingly short time the infant feels real and alive and has a sense of being an entity, with continuity in time and a location in space. In short, the baby becoming existentially born as real and alive follows physical birth and biological aliveness. Usually this development is taken for granted and affords the certainty upon which all other certainties depend. This is not to say, not only do adults see children to be real biologically viable entities but also they experience themselves as whole persons who are real and alive, and conjunctively experience other beings as real and alive. These are self validating data of experience." (Laing, 1971:41)

### **Song of a mother to her first born**

A poem from Sudan, translated by Jack H. Driberg, (Black African Voices: 60)

Although this poem is not by a *BaSotho* the sentiment is the same



- line 1 *Speak to me, child of my heart.*  
*Speak to me with your eyes, your round laughing eyes,*  
*Wet and shining as Lupeyo's bull-calf.*  
*Speak to me little one,*
- 5 *Clutching my breast with your hand,*  
*So strong and firm for all its littleness.*  
*It will be the hand of a warrior, my son,*  
*A hand that will gladden your father.*  
*See how eagerly it fastens on me:*
- 10 *It thinks already of a spear.*  
*O son, you will have a warrior's name and be a leader of men.*  
*And your sons, and your son's sons, will remember you long*  
*after you have slipped into darkness.*  
*But I, I shall always remember your clutching me so.*
- 15 *I shall recall how you lay in my arms,*  
*And looked at me so, and so,*  
*And how your tiny hands played with my bosom.*  
*And when they name you a great warrior,*  
*then will my eyes be wet with remembering.*
- 20 *And how shall we name you, little warrior?*  
*See, let us play at naming.*  
*It will not be a name of despal, for you are my first-born.*  
*Not as Nawal's son is named will you be named.*  
*Our gods will be kinder to you than theirs.*
- 25 *Must we call you "Insolence" or "Worthless One"?*  
*Shall you be named, like a child of ill fortune, after the dung of cattle?*  
*Our gods need no cheating, my child:*  
*They wish you no ill.*  
*They have washed your body and clothed it with beauty.*
- 30 *They have set a fire in your eyes.*  
*And the little puckering ridges of your brows--*  
*Are they not the seal of their finger-prints when they fashioned you?*  
*They have given you beauty and strength, child of my heart,*  
*And wisdom is already shining in your eyes,*





- 35 *And laughter.*  
*So how shall we name you little one?*  
*Are you your father's father, or his brother, or yet another?*  
*Whose spirit is it that is in you, little warrior?*  
*Whose spear-hand tightens round my breast?*
- 40 *Who lives in you and quickens to life, like last year's melon seed*  
*Are you silent, then?*  
*But your eyes are thinking, thinking,*  
*and glowing like the eyes of a leopard in a thicket.*  
*Well let be.*
- 45 *At the day of the naming you will tell us.*  
  
*O my child, now indeed I am happy.*  
*Now indeed I am a wife—*  
*No more a bride, but Mother-of-one.*  
*Be splendid and magnificent, child of desire.*
- 50 *Be proud as I am proud.*  
*Be happy as I am happy.*  
*Be loved as I am loved*  
*Child, child, child, love I have had from my man.*  
*But now, only now, have I the fullness of love.*
- 55 *Now, only now, am I his wife and the mother of his first-born.*  
*His soul is safe in your keeping, my child, and it was I, I, I who have made you.*  
  
*Therefore I am loved.*  
*Therefore I am happy*  
*Therefore I am a wife.*
- 60 *Therefore have I great honour.*  
*You will tend his shrine when he is gone.*  
*With sacrifice and oblation you will recall his name year by year.*  
*He will live in your prayers, my child,*  
*And there will be no more death for him but*
- 65 *everlasting life springing from your loins.*  
*You are his shield and his spear, his hope and redemption from the dead.*

*Through you he will be reborn, as the saplings in the Spring.*

*And I, I am the mother of his first-born.*

*Sleep, child of beauty and courage and fulfilment, sleep.*

70 *I am content.*

### **Value of being in the arms**

“The growth of independence and the power to mature emotionally spring largely from the in-arms relationship in all aspects. One cannot therefore become independent of one’s mother except ‘through’ her, through her playing her correct role, giving the in-arms experience and allowing one to graduate from it upon fulfilment”. (Liedloff, 1986:80)



**Figure 3.6 The essential developmental value of skin-to-skin contact**

Becker, 1979

Not only is the newborn fed till ready to be weaned, an immediacy of place making but cuddling her in the arms remains a continuous memory of lived experience in place-making, the daughter will always associate the intimate moment when mother slipped pleasant treats into her hand, making her feel special. Experiences such as this become subconscious nuances united in the future mother used when needed. She will intuitively re-enact these ‘places’ filled with concern while administering medicine with love. Most important, she developed a personal code of ethics with a faith to act. To perpetuate the values of her community throughout the life of her offspring she will expand and develop ways to prepare them to accomplish success when faced with the various social markers of development such as initiation, marriage, birth and death.

The infant growing into the stage of a child learns about senses such as sights, sounds, motions, smells and taste (the unusual taste will immediately rejected). It becomes a lesson in setting up personal preferences and boundaries, these will evolve during her life to define a particular person.



**Figure 3.7 Skin-to-skin contact of mother and an older child became a comfort**

Although not in-the-arms as in figure 3, this is as effective, leaving the hands free and even carrying objects on the head. The mother – child contact is maintained and further developed. The infant or child still hears the heartbeat, will fall asleep of her own will, sees a wide world of views, experience smells (pleasant or unpleasant and will learn to avoid the latter) all this forms her values in her own future. Liedloff insists on the essential experience of the infant of skin to skin contact during the in – arms continuum of expected senses, as they were repeated with frequency for thousands of years as the expectations of the *Badimo. BaSotho* women still carry their babies on their backs with the child tied to the mother’s body with the blanket, when necessary another blanket is used to cover the child and shoulders of the mother to shield the infant against the climatic forces, a way of place making on her back creating comfort and proximity.

When working, if the child becomes too heavy for comfort she will use the blanket to provide a special little bundle as a phenomenological place for sleeping but the baby is still conscious of her mother’s proximity and can still hear the mother singing while she is working. The blanket can also be wrapped in a circle to prop the baby up to teach her to sit up. A mother’s objective is to create a place of comfort.

### **CHILD: Learning about the virtues or limitations of her body**

Role of the child is to fulfil the expectations of a continuum of the *Badimo*. A way of coping is the elaboration of social co-operation required to sustain an extended childhood, with several consequences, some of basic biological nature, others more in the realm of important cognitive skills, such as innovation, creativity, making sense of the world through the spoken, written and made language. Curtis *et al.*, (2002). In this respect *Homo sapiens* is unique among animals. The daughter's expectation was to find a suitable environment, learn about it more and more precisely and act upon it, change it, with increasing efficiency. These expectations are sitting up, keeping the head erect and crawling and are embedded into the subconscious. It only needed to be acted out.



**Figure 3.8 Toddler overcoming gravity**

### **Role of the child becoming mobile and erect**

From crawling the next challenge is to stand erect, walk and run. She expects not only space and the freedom to move in it, but also to encounter and to respond to a variety of events. With the commencement of crawling and forays are made beyond the protection of the home, she is testing everything. She is measuring and expanding her own strength and agility. She is forming concepts and learning new associations of her home-as-artefact. She starts learning and making distinctions in time, space and form, day as time for action and night as time for sleeping. The baby girl becomes active. Her explorations of the wide world are reinforced by her sense of the mother's

constancy and the shelter of home while she is away and will return to mother for protection or to be fed. This constancy of mother and home will remain with her throughout her life .

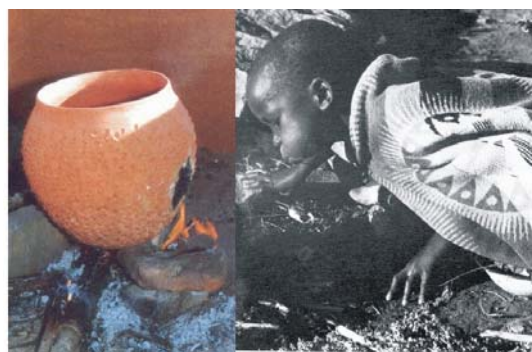
The child realises that in learning bodily growth, mobility, change and skills she will be praised. This sets a lifelong pattern in motion of earning her rewards, a rite of passage. One of the deepest impulses in the very social human animal is to do what she perceives to be expected of her, her social obligation.

### **Role of play as learning and making**

Child's play, evolutionary development and cognitive growth are perpetuated in a home based, food sharing and handcraft environment. This integrates the many aspects of human behaviour perpetuating what she started as a child of taking on the tasks and responsibilities expected from her evolution towards adult life.

### **Role of learning life skills, self perseverance**

Instinctive tendencies are as strong at the first as at the last moment of her life. Besides her tendencies toward experiment and caution, the child has, as ever, expectations. She expects the range of experiences her antecedents enjoyed. Aspects of human behaviour, social life, kinship, tasks shared with others and subsistence, making artefacts for use or as objects of vanity



### **Figure 3.9 She took on the tasks and responsibilities of her own expectations**

One of the functions a young girl had to perform was that of keeping the fire burning, it might have meant that she had to get up early on a very cold morning in winter and start the fire. The rest of the family will rely on her ability and conscientious act regardless of the discomfort and sometimes suffering to execute this expectation.

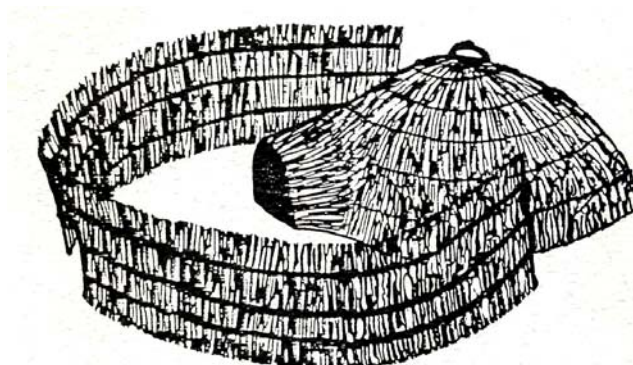
### **Role of the child's reverie of making**

Making enjoyment by entertaining viewers at ceremonies young girls will perform special dances accompanied by song, clapping of hands and rhythmic drumming. They add to the rhythm by clapping hands and singing. The agility of the dancers, who sometimes also danced on their knees, was impressive. Everybody praised the dancers through their enthusiastic response and especially the dancers were reinforced in their enjoyment of success with appreciation of the occasion. With the dancers the reverie by dancing was evident. The audience is appreciative but also critical; they recognize talent or clumsy performance and will make sure the necessary corrections are made.

Leadership emerges naturally among the members of the *BaSotho* society, and confines itself to taking initiatives only when individual experiments are impractical. The followers are the ones to decide whom they will follow and are free to change leaders as it suits their convenience. Liedloff, (1986)

### **INITIATE: An active process of ceremonial place making**

This is a rite of passage: Learning responsibilities and grown up values to pass from being the child and then to be regarded as adults. After the completion of this learning process they will have to play their appropriate roles and be responsible to execute actions expected by the *Badimo* and their societal *Botho* constructs.



**Figure 3.10** A *mohlongoa fatsi* hut sheltered the *bale* Drawing; Casalis, 1861

This hut acts as a reminder of the continuum of the expectancies of the *Badimo* which is perpetuated by the initiates. It is a special ancient form of hut. Sometimes a special space in a home is built for the female initiates with two sticks thrust into the thatch at either side of the entrance to avoid evil spirits from bringing harm to the group.



Women's initiation is gentler and they live in a hut within the village in contact with their families. They do not have to live in total isolation from the community like the males do.

### **Roles and sacred rites**

The women (*bale*) are instructed on their roles as women, wives, mothers and guardians and perpetuators of their culture and of the species. Part of the instructions will also be about the home, her built artefact and its *lolwapa* (courtyard). From childhood her cognitive understanding of her close relation to nature and its supporting or threatening context is confirmed during initiation as a constant future presence. Her *Badimo* are in a similar relation to her person, as guides, advisors and protectors. She believed in their presence since childhood with the faith that she can rely on their advice or guidance throughout her life.

### **Norms and myths**

Traditionally the start of the stages of transformation from child to young woman is timed by the lunar cycle. Through their bodies, the costumes and rituals of the *bale* have become metaphors of the home-as-artefact which are in turn cosmic metaphors of birth. The *BaSotho* initiate (*bale*) will paint her body in *phepa* (white clay) symbolising her pure state and the purity and calm of enlightenment that the novice will require for the ritual period affecting the transition she will undergo. It is also thought to deflect malevolence. Into the clay on the *bale's* legs *litema* (mural designs) is inscribed similar to designs painted on the doorpost of a home to draw attention to the woman's reproductive importance.

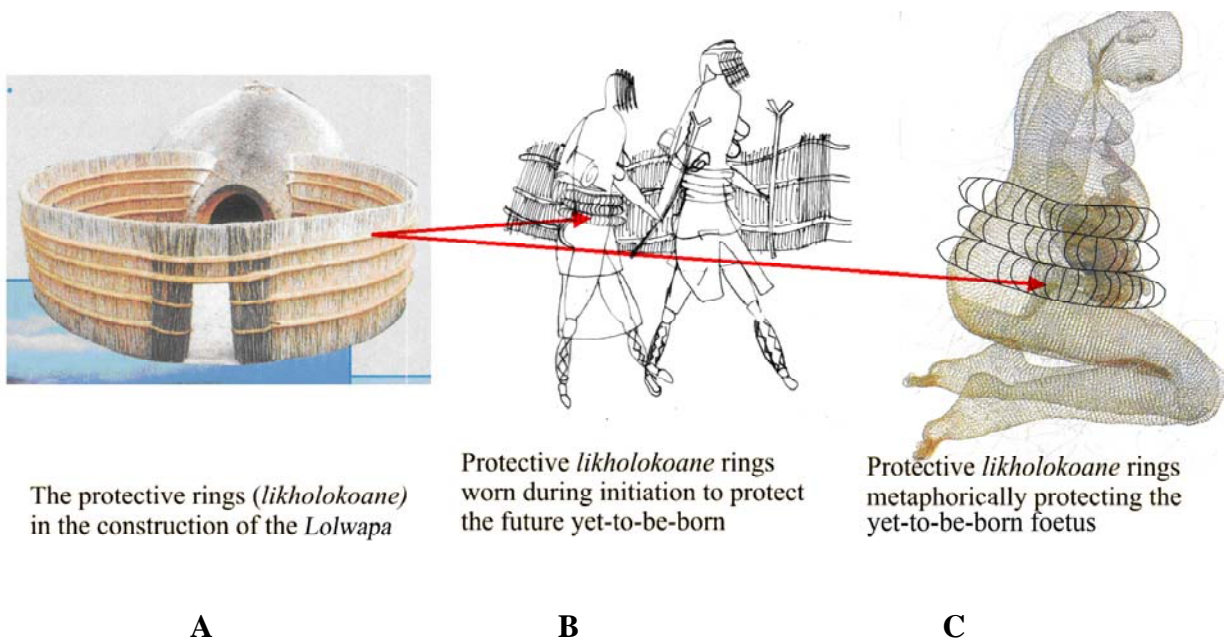


**Figure 3.11** She peered through a *lesira* (reed mask) covering her face

*Lesira* also means windbreak, it can also imply a screen between someone and the light, or a fire. When the *bale* removes this mask she is reborn as a woman. The *lesira* can also refer to the first *BaSotho* in her cosmological world, emerging from the earth, through the reeds in the water, into the light of the sun. The final element to complete the symbolic associations, small round earth beads made by the women elders decorated the *lesira*, today glass or plastic beads or bright wool ornaments are used. The *lesira* also carry an esoteric connotation of protection from evil, an alternative referent of the word *lesira* is a traditional medicine that prevents your enemy from seeing – an idea of protection that is one of the primary meanings of the root word. Van Wyk, (1998)

**Being the *bale* turns her life into a phenomenological scenario**

The costumes the novices wear have strong parallels to the home-as-artefact, the architectural devices used on body and construction reinforces this cognitive connection between spiritual, bodily and built contexts. Van Wyk, (1998).



**Figure 3.12 *Bale* wore rings of grass around their waists to protect their wombs**

Figure A Source: BCV Cultural Village photo M. Becker

Figure C Saturday Star: 22 October 2005: p.17 artist unknown



Elaborate bands of grass *likholokoane* are worn around the waist of the *bale* and serve as reference to the bands of grass that give structure and support to the *seotloana* (reed screen) protecting the *lapa* against prying eyes or hostile elements, by inference protecting her future child bearing womb. This is a reference to that band tying together the reed screen surrounding the *lapa*. Their bodies are painted with white clay similar to the *litema* decoration of a hut. To the *BaSotho* this is analogous to the *seotloana* (reed screen) around the *lapa* (courtyard) in front of her home, as well as the reeds she emerged from at the first appearance of humans through the waters at the lake when the *Modimo* populated the earth, at *Ntsoana-Tsatsi*, place of the rising sun.



**Figure 3.13 Correspondence between *kgare* as intention and figure**

**Self esteem, identity, ceremony is translated into bodily consciousness.**

These drawings are a direct lived experience (phenomenology) of her respect for ancient practices; to emphasize the display of meaningful aspects of her body being an extension and reference to the home as cosmological artefact. It becomes by metaphor the lacing (needlework) of the habitable woman.

The *likholokoane* is made of a grass core; with a repetitive cyclical motion. A plaited grass rope binds the grass together developing her mastery as a woman of plant materials. The word for spiralling or coiling has the same root (*hare*) as *kgare*, the grass rings used on the head for carrying loads as well as attached to the top of the thatch roof to bind the materials together and finish off the apex.

Rings and spirals such as the *kgare* or *likholokoane* emphasize the significance of eternal cycles. Another word for *likholokoane* (arranged order) adds a cosmological (sacred) meaning to the symbols of ancient traditions. These rings and spirals are said

to have no beginning and no end. The closed circles keep the evil spirits from entering.

At a bigger scale the *kgare ya motes* (sacred ring of the village) was traditionally secretly buried within the *BaSotho* settlement to serve the same mediating function for the community with the *Badimo*. The *bale* often carries *mofifi* (forked sticks) to protect them from harm.

### **Experience**

She will next be taught of the sensual pleasures of her body by the *mutinying oa maliba* (deep river snake) as metaphor to the phallus. In that the *bale* departs from her childhood, analogous to dying and she will paint her body with black earth to signify this death of childhood.

### **Role of proving hand dexterity**

Each of the artefacts used during the ceremony was made by the initiates, with help and advice from those who have been part of the process. Each will try to excel the expectations of everyone who will witness their efforts.

### **Initiate crossing the boundary to adulthood**

On the morning of their coming out the women assemble in the *lapa* where the ceremony is hosted. The relatives and friends attach gifts onto the marriage mats the *bale* has woven from reeds during their school. The mats become carefully structured montages, combining a wide variety of decorative, functional and symbolic items. Patterned facecloths, shawls folded into triangles, cakes of soap, combs, toothpaste and small mirrors, usually dominate the arrangement. Garlands of chocolate bars or sweets convey sweetness. Brightly coloured balloons are symbolic of inflated goat bladders and gallbladders that were attached to the heads of *sangomas* and *bale* after the animals have been sacrificed to honour the ancestors. The gall bladder is particularly important because the bitterness of its contents suggests the digestion of herbs used in healing and rituals of worship. Filled with human breath, it captures and renders visible the intangible air that epitomizes life and makes it possible. They also symbolize the swelling of the womb with spirit of a new life. Van Wyk, (1998)

The ceremonies that end the initiation are joyful public celebrations, particularly for the parents. A large *lelingoana* (public feast) celebrates the end of the initiation school. It is preceded after midnight by the *thojane*, where only unmarried girls with guests are waiting outdoors, covered in their ceremonial blankets against the bitter cold.

Until the leaders of the school decide to start the large ceremonial fire to mark that the time is right for the beginning of the rituals of coming out. The *bale* appear out of their hut into the fire light, avoid eye contact with relatives and friends, walk as stiffly as wooden puppets, silently and in file without bending their legs and leaning on wooden staves. Bare breasted, they wear cowhide skirts or fringed pubic aprons and bright *letsoku* coatings over their faces and down over the shoulders. Van Wyk, (1998)

The procession of *bale* snakes in the *tebuka* (slow stiff legged walk) out of the *lapa* and proceeds a short way toward the ravine in the bush where they met the *motanyane* (deep river snake) as a symbolic reminder of that event, and turn back to their *khoali* (initiation hut). They stoop to enter the low doorway, carrying their mats and have completed another symbolic cycle: they are fully formed women, symbols of homes and the return to the dark protection of the home where their evolution and formation took place.

### **Roles of the mother and grandmother of the initiate**

To the rhythm of song the crowd begins to dance clockwise circling the fire with the *bale* standing motionless without any expression leaning on their staffs, their mothers grandmothers or other female relatives often draw them into the dance.

This ceremony continues but the direct relation of body to home changes to her inclusion and acceptance within the social construct of the community that now adds a bigger dimension of shelter as only the home. Van Wyk, (1998)

The devices she will use are symbolically referring to physical metaphors of her ancestral past, but also linked to her present and future, like the protection of her womb for conception and the safety of the future child.

Her social construct is confirmed. This ritual is another life changing rite of passage.

**BRIDE: Learns about relationships between her and males**

Before she gets married, she is building experiences and learning more about her role as a female. She'll go through courtships with men. In her society it is normally not her choice who she'll marry. Men will come to her home – not the other way round. They will secretly be intimate, depending on how far the relationship is. This tests whether or not she is barren – critical to her life expectancies. However, promiscuity is taboo! More often the choice of becoming a couple is negotiated between families and their parents. It is important to note that a senior uncle negotiates and not a father. He negotiates for the bride's price in marriage, cattle or money.

At this point in her life she learns about relationships between her and males. More senior household chores, she takes charge of activities within the household, which frees her or the husband's mother up to do other things.

She can learn to build independently by assisting friends or relatives, to build a hut for when it is necessary. But she only builds when she moves out of home it after getting married. Her own creativity gets used now as with her own choices being made regarding building process.

While visiting a community in Lesotho, the coming into the new family of a young bride had a traditional ceremony for her to grind *Mabela* for making porridge to the accompanying song of the new family members, was performed. The song is;

*Come look uncle how well this young woman can grind the food,*

The lyric was sung in several voices led by different women.

The artefacts become directed to her interaction and juxtaposition with her husband, from the choice of most able male to father her offspring and who will provide food. The home she creates provides for their comfort with the past by rituals to please the *Badimo*, the present, and the future. This artefact-as-home also becomes the centre of concern, celebration, lived experience and grieving. She maintains the renewal of lifecycles as well as the memory of her *Badimo* and sacred rituals, the contact with the spiritual.

She sets her own domestic rituals in place, as continuum of learned cultural values or her own interpretation of these values. If she does not prepare food for the family or manage her kitchen well, it is taken as failure of her expected moral obligation within the *Ubuntu* social construct and can lead to community confrontation and possible rejection.

Fetching wood or water becomes an opportunity to share ideas with friends or daughters, and remains an important socializing event.

Domestic rituals and discipline, although time consuming and often a burden, she together with neighbours will turn the grinding of hard foodstuff into powder such as maize into flour. Subsistence farming is a responsibility she shares with her husband, each doing unasked for tasks but just from example will know what is expected, ultimately for the good of the family and the community.

Throughout life she remains the silent leader, gentle advisor, sympathetic listener, intuitive guide, societal anchor, cultural perpetuator, subtle messenger, controller of intimacy (pots turned over on veranda), and first domestic contact with ancestors, and by the performance of simple rituals can act as mediator.

Similarly, her need for containers will engender between a few women the communal participation in finding the correct earth clay, by the addition of water to the earth they prepare the material to a consistency that allows for easy moulding and removal of air from the clay, all of this making and working together in groups is accompanied by singing of poems or folklore. While they sit together, some will be doing beadwork at a distance sufficient not to get dirt onto their handwork but still united in space through the participation in song.

### **MARRIAGE: Bringing together two personalities and families**

This is a big occasion for celebration when their social construct approves the new bond. One of the many phenomenological scenarios she will experience during her life-line, parallel to the multitude of rites of passage, bringing special responsibilities.

The joyous occasion of the marriage talks of a future lifetime of dedication and sharing. At this point separation, perhaps through death, is not even contemplated. It is the bringing together of strangers into a new relationship of personalities that have to adapt and accept, not only the married couple but also new relations with often complementary or contradictory values. The new bond also insinuates a purpose; the bringing of new humans into life to perpetuate values and cultures.

## **GROWN UP: Confronting future uncertainties and to initiate action**

### **Sensory Impulses**

All emotions are, in essence, impulses to act, the instant plans for handling life that evolution has instilled in people. The very root of the word emotion is metered, the Latin verb 'to move' plus the prefix 'e-' to connote 'move away' suggesting that a tendency to act is implicit in every emotion. That emotions lead to actions is most obvious in watching people.

### **Memories**

In general humans make what their mothers taught them to make. The woman of this inquiry had been taught by her mother to make, like what she liked, do what she did. This is more indicative than to believe that the most reassuring memories, seasoned with tenderness and ritual which marked her childhood, got made. Making in fact, served not only to maintain the haptic creative urge of the body, but making concretised one of the specific modes of relation between the person and her world, thus forming one of the fundamental landmarks in space.

The perception, founded in the flesh of the woman, as maker, produce a realm of bodily ideas that are intrinsically hidden and hiding, a region in and through which subjectivities and objectivities are becoming reality and returning constructs.

“Ritual is a form of relief from the burden of choice-making. Speech and action are executed, using the mind and body in a predetermined pattern. The nervous system is busy, acting and experiencing, but no thought is required, no choice. One's situation is like that of an infant or another species of animal.

During the ritual, especially if one has an active part, such as dancing, singing, chanting or clapping, the organism is run under flag far older than that of the intellect.

The intellect rests; it stops its everlasting spurring of itself from association to association, from guess to guess from decision to decision. The rest refreshes not only the intellect itself but also the entire nervous system. It adds a quantum of serenity to the balance against unserenity brought about by thought.

Repetition has long and widely been used to the same end. Whether it is the steady beat of a drum, the monotonous chanting of a rite, a head lolling, foot stomping, mind blowing shamanic trance, the effect is 'purifying'. Equanimity is brought forward; anxiety is thrust back. All who for a time, hand over the reins of the intellect to unthinking being, the cause of greater well-being is served."(Liedloff, 1986:117)

### **Gender roles**

In this society being a female does not imply a negative mould. Her intensions are focused on executions that will increase the lived experience of her and of her dependants. Her acts are inclusive, individuals are made to feel welcome, be they family, kin or strangers, and she will however also exclude those which her instinct distrusts. She adds value to space, this special quality is a wilful assimilation of idioms she has encountered in her life, but also includes habits of use that will turn a specific location into a place of unlimited memories, often with a particular detail or response to the climate, wind or sun, of the moment. In this specific climate the sun remains in a constant route with the only changes of its itinerary being clouds, while the wind changes direction or velocity continuously.

She did provide a home-as-artefact that could be used as barrier against these forces she cannot control. The ultimate buttress for withdrawal remains the interior of her artefact and to escape the incensed thunder storm or wind, in summer this can be often. Enshrouded by snow in winter her artefact has been oriented to let the morning sun into a corner secluded from the freezing cold winds.

### **Her role in creating her own barriers and filters**

The 'making woman' in the split of gender roles has become the one responsible for the subjective realm of lived experience. She has been exposed to the making of the home by watching her parents especially her mother and other elders who have special abilities, her involvement as child in holding the other end of a plait of grass



rope makes her familiar with the process, limits of materials and special rituals and acts of continuity.

She similarly will be learning to make throughout her life, and after mastering the basics will bring her interpretation and application of cultural values and will extend through innovation the limits and possibilities of materials, and tools, adding to the body of communal knowledge, and innovation, because news spread quickly others will come to look to copy. She reconfirms and perpetuates the wetness of water as measure of her success. Water is normally expected to be a chemical but it is the actual wetness of water that makes the difference, gives it quality, and combined with dust helps the woman maker to build her monument.

### **Her role as teacher**

She is the perpetuator of culture of making and has an accumulated body of knowledge to be shared her daughters and those members of her social construct in need of assistance and eventually her grandchildren and the children of the community. She will impart special tactics, methods often forgotten and especially intentions that will make the artefact-as-home memorable.



**Figure 3.14 Her role as teacher**

### **Her role in making space habitable**

This study investigated the habitable space between her boundaries and its articulated use, by embellishment and ornamentation of those boundaries she collated new slang to experiment with discovered meanings, she has been learning and watching this



process since a baby. At her own first opportunity to apply this culture of making she will indulge her artefact with meanings translated from; members of her family, fertile memory and show it to her community, her chance to display. Her dream house still remained within the parameters of her cultural references and context.

Appropriate tools to achieve desired outcomes will result from experience and innovation, some tools may come into her life through contact with other individuals, communities and cultures. This she will either copy or remake to suit her demands and this ability ensures a slow but rapid spread of knowledge of procedures to be past on to the next generation. Maintaining this home was also not a negotiable option, her perpetual care for the home is almost at the same level of intensity as that of a child - after each thunder or hail storm she had to patch up the damage to the earth walls, plaster and decoration.

Every two years or for special occasions she will re-plaster and redecorate with absolute geometric accuracy the 'face' of her 'helpless child'. She also knows that the community reads her home as manifestation of her commitment to her social construct.

The further analogy is the regular remaking and redecoration, similar to a spring fashion parade, the artefact-as-home is shown to the world as her creation.

### **Her role as participant within a peer group**

In *BaSotho* social structures comment or actions generate reactions. Gossip as one of those reactions, however does not only mean being nasty but also has the benefit of imparting social and cultural ethics via discussion, it is also the carrier of positive myths and unfortunately the perpetrator of false myths. The community can use it as a means of punishment and putting pressure on non-performers.

### **Ceremony**

People need magical moments, times of feasts to celebrate and become spellbound but to bring enchantment to the everyday. Traditions and rituals are an integral part of living, in this ancient country, rich in its invocation of all the senses, traditions of rituals can give or bring consolation like nothing else. Dance is one of those rituals, it

is another form of language, such as the made object, full of meaning and messages. Each dance has a specific function and evokes different reactions, especially from the living-dead, as well as from participants and audience. Such ceremonies are for rain, funerals, weddings initiation and coming out of initiation, the sangoma, etc. as ritualised social interactions are traditions of a way of life that, if not yet gone, has surely been compromised by the modern world. Not necessarily in all cases:

### **Dance is a spatial dimension of mobility, agility, body**

During some dance rituals for especially rain the dance can become so intense that it becomes analogous to a poem by Rilke, a German poet, on a caged panther, its continuous circling within its inclosing bars, we can sense that the bars in motion are an immediate extension of the state of existence of the animal. “The external reality seems to converge upon the existence or the inner self of the panther. This is rendered on a concrete level by the gaze, which strives to link inner and outer reality. Rilke begins with physical motion and proceeds to relate this to an inner core; the circular movements of the caged animal replace. A particular kind of expressive human motion, the motion of the dance, the effect is an intensification of the 'symbolic' meaning of motion. The dance suggests the idea of aesthetic self-expression and thus shifts the focus, momentarily to build up a maximum degree of expression by simply projecting beyond the description of the object itself toward the general symbolism of motion“. (Jayne, 1972; 69)

Imagine how the dance by the peoples of the study region follows exactly a symbolic meaning of circular motion, also with rhythmic acceleration or slower motion. Dance is performed at all ages, from children to grandmothers for entertainment or ceremonies. Sangomas or the shaman dance to invoke the participation of the *Badimo* at initiation rites, fertility rites or hunting rituals but also to bless the seasons crops or mediate for the relieve a drought and plead with the god of rain (a hippo) to be generous, or infuse any of the other totems with benevolence.

### **Singing and ululating had a spatial dimension of sound**

The boundaries of festivities are expanded to include and possibly invite participation, this is an intentional sign that can include many participants turning an event into a prolific progression of movement, rhythms, emphasis and duration. Each member of

the occasion brought an individual movement of body and voice to satisfy innate desires or fantasies. Festive sound includes everybody within earshot of enjoyment.

### **Obtaining sacred salt**

Salt has through millennia been used for its medicinal as well as preservative values and has been sourced by the Sotho with salt pans located within sixty kilometres from their settlements. For centuries salt was a commodity to barter with and was often used the exchange for weapons but also as medicine.

### **Spatial knowledge of cures**

Due to the *BaSotho* daily life led in close proximity to nature an indigenous knowledge bank has developed with most plants endemic to the area of study had a use as cure for an illness or infertility.

### **Rituals, rites and the senses**

She and her husband have to maintain, through rituals, care and consultation with his *Badimo* (father and grandfather) by placing sweet berries and a stone on their graves, and on occasion blow smoke over the grave.

### **Her role as translator from her cognitive realm into reality**

This process of translation has a continuous effect on the genesis and evolution of form. The physical world she created had to reflect this. One of the ways this thesis will concentrate on is that she creates and reinforces boundaries that are physical or non-physical in nature. These boundaries define or demarcate her domain of values, decisions and influence. She allows and controls penetration. She also determines the quality of reception on her side of the boundary. That reception is her way of expressing welcome as well as comfort.

As the tool sits in the hand, she ensures that the 'hand' remains a caressing hand. The caressing hand is also the making hand; the act of making is the act of caress. She will invite or exclude penetration or participation (visitation) through a multitude of signals that rely on all the senses ranging from visual stimulation, facial expression, and tone of her voice, her smell, and her touch.

Her unique way of creating these boundaries is through rights, values, rules, decisions, edges, and walls. These boundaries create her, her strengths, dignity, person and self. She will protest when her rights, values, rules, or tradition is violated. Her social construct will re-enforce and support her protest. She will decide if and how much she reveals or hides behind these boundaries as well as on which side she can be found, depending on the occasion. Her act of making and placing that boundary speaks volumes about herself and the response she will elicit. With her consequent response she either reinforces or rejects. Permeability of boundaries, the habitable space between boundaries and the articulation, embellishment and ornamentation of those boundaries remains in her control. The response she received as well as gave was in its comfort. It is the same as the 'wetness' of water, added meanings were incorporated into everyday occurrences.

### **MOTHER: Perpetuating life and accumulated knowledge**

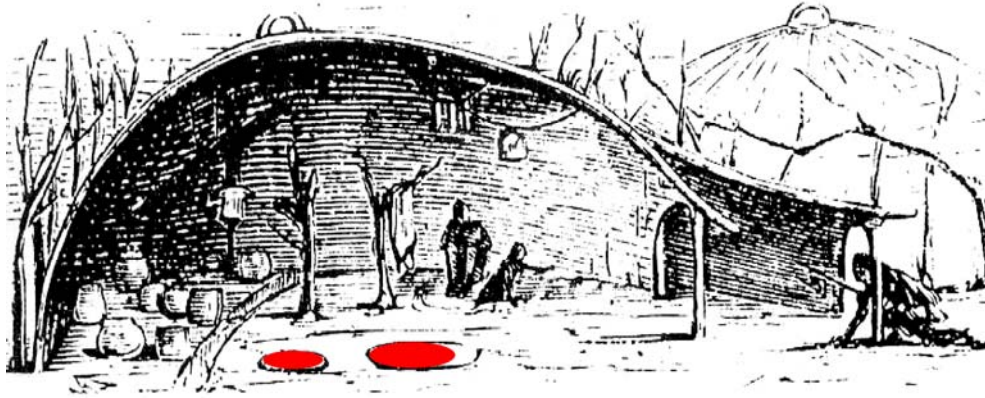
The *BaSotho* mother makes it her task to teach and involve her children, especially daughters to learn from her actions from a young age the various building materials, the characteristics of those, their location, suitability preparation, consistency and application.

### **Her role as intentional actor**

She becomes the one who loves and is the object of love; she sustains her home through a subliminal concern to provide. Her view of the future is also biased toward this concern by always ensuring provision of food into the future.

The making of the emotional home through the physical home remains her domain of action, creativity, and influence. What the women makers intended and succeeded to do and achieve was to become the performer in a stage play. They were seen to be acting out their purpose, acting was done with a purpose, not accidental, in order to have an effect of approval from their peer group as well as pride within each other; they not only achieved the purely utilitarian needs for shelter but also evocative space.

Their lived experience as performers encouraged information to be transferred in action immediately both to and from other performer as intended in a stage play.



**Figure 3.15 Cradles became the personification of place** Drawing; Casalis

The realm of the mother habitates the concepts Norberg-Schultz, (1980) wrote about. The two red ovals are indentations moulded into the floor of her hut for an infant and child not old enough to sleep on its own. The infant's cradle is closer to the shelf of the *Badimo* for their special care. A shelf for the *Badimo* is opposite the entrance. Her private domain is on the right of the entrance and its barrier which cuts the hut into two. This domain is only for her as a person with her own rites who will, at her choice, allow its crossing. To enter the hut she has to go on her knees as a physical manifestation of transition from the outside world into her personal inside world across her threshold. It remains the role of the mother to prevent decease and death but if she could not succeed the help of a Sangoma would be called for. The Sangoma would initiate appropriate action, be it dance rituals or what ever deemed necessary.

She will demonstrate her creativity and innovation and from the experience of making she is made into one of the participating members of a community that cares for the home or artefact, as its 'personality' requires the same responsibility and care as that of a child and will be 'buried' and left to decay in the event of loss through death of its inhabitant.

Her home becomes the habitable woman and the barriers she has created becomes the backdrop or stage set for the continuum of a play of phenomenology or lived experience of her domestic affairs. The accumulated homes of her peer group become the accumulated scenario of lived experience, the scenes in the act will move from her stage set to another depending on the ritual and time.

### **Her evolution and continuum construct in *BaSotho* culture**

Although through childhood and adulthood the continuum becomes increasingly adaptable and capable of maintaining itself uncompromized in a vast variety of circumstances, there are evolved limits within which it operates optimally. While to an infant it is largely the mother's caretaking behavior, which must fulfill the requirements, the growing individual needs more and more the support of her society and its culture to meet her innate expectations. Humans can survive in appallingly anti continuum conditions, but her well being, her joy, her fulfillment as a whole human must not be lost. (Liedloff, 1986)

Families are in close contact with other families and women have a sub-culture among themselves as men do. Each sex, during its working life, has the opportunity for companionship and cooperation. A woman is not left alone every day with her children because her social construct evolved to not allow her to be deprived of social stimulation, emotional and intellectual support.

### **Her role when things go well**

She is often the first to know when her husband or children have achieved, and her sharing their joy is the reward to them. Her approval is the ultimate reward. This was my observation and revelation at the enhanced level of encouraging response from peers as well as grownups during my visits to the study area.

### **Her role when things go wrong**

She knows through her sixth sense when things go seriously wrong with any of her offspring or husband. Through this sensual insight she reduces possible conflicts or harm

During field observations in the study area; her home is unfortunately the first to show the signs of things going wrong, the falling off of plaster, the flaking and decay of decoration, is read by the community and will either bring help or else rejection.

Her fear of masses of water during floods is not unjustified. She knows the destruction of everything valuable that water can cause. The opposite fear, the lack of water and of drought, reading the sky for a glimpse of hope, participating in the rain

dance and still no glimmer of hope: children suffering, animals dying and everywhere the smell of death.

Having to move in a state of weakness to find the land of plenty as described by fellow travellers, the dangers of the open veldt and the sorrow or joy of having to leave and abandon or demolish the home, to retrieve valuable building materials and the rest left to crumble, decay like that of a corpse.

### **GRANDMOTHER: Perpetuating culture, knowledge and life skills**

#### **Her role as perpetuator of culture, knowledge, life skills and care taker**

If a continuum of society is correct as usual with the *BaSotho*, generations share a common *lolwapa* to the advantage of all, as witnessed during a field study. The grandmother would help as much as possible, people at the height of their working powers do not begrudge support to their elders any more than to their children. But again, the truly enriching cohabitation of the generation's action of a catalyst fulfils their self esteem, personalities and not pulling at one another's emotions to satisfy leftover infantile needs for attention and care. She feels valued and respected.

#### **Her role as container to share knowledge**

The sharing was not only of knowledge but also of foodstuff in abundance that her household could not possibly use before rot sets in, she implicitly knew that others will again share their surplus with her

She also gathered around her the toddlers, other women making artefacts or preparing food accompanied by discussion and advice, or as with a man wanting to sell a hat to me, absolute reprimand because of the bad quality of his weaving the grass stalks found in the veldt while herding his cattle.

#### **Her role as advisor**

This is not the same as teaching but an expression of her opinion to her husband within a certain problem context, it also applies in relation to children, to grownups - and parents, to peer group and when required to her social construct within her ethnic group.



During visits by surrounding kin and the inevitable social discourse was one thing remarkable; the way everybody sat flat on mother earth while all the hands busy, with legs outstretched the dress stretched over to act as receptacle for small items that may slip the hand, a mobile table appropriate for its specific task where ever needed. The circumstantial sense of place was not only evident but also inviting.

### **LIVING-DEAD (*BADIMO*): An invisible ‘be-ing’ in constant presence**

#### **Her role as guide in the continuum concept**

Her grave returns her to the beginning of her life, where the in-arms phase are now the arms of the earth embracing her with her one most valuable wish that she is remembered and that her children secure her place on the shelf of the *Badimo* in the home for consultation, even in her afterlife these moments of being together becomes a place with ritual overtones. Her personal growth through reciprocity will become part of the gene pool of embodied knowledge to the future of her offspring.

A similar blanket to the one she has given to the child leaving home as the bond to her, she is buried in, taking into eternity her outward role as facilitator of the process of reciprocity in her continuum in the *ubuntu* kinship.

The term of Living-Dead is exactly that she is dead but still living and always present as guide and one to consult

#### **Emotion at funerals is the spatial creation of grieving**

The value of music and song had the intentions of sound as inclusive but also of a message of the grief at a funeral, when the appropriate solemnity and soft mournful song accompany the dead to her grave. The appropriate *BaSotho* blanket was worn as a symbol of unison of associations with the blanket and these associations being translated as respect to the dead in their afterlife, as well as the honouring of *Badimo*.

Ritual singing crossed mental boundaries from the reality of the present to the hereafter. Consolation in this form of departure was not understood as finality, but more of a transition from the living to the living dead, being included with the *Badimo*.



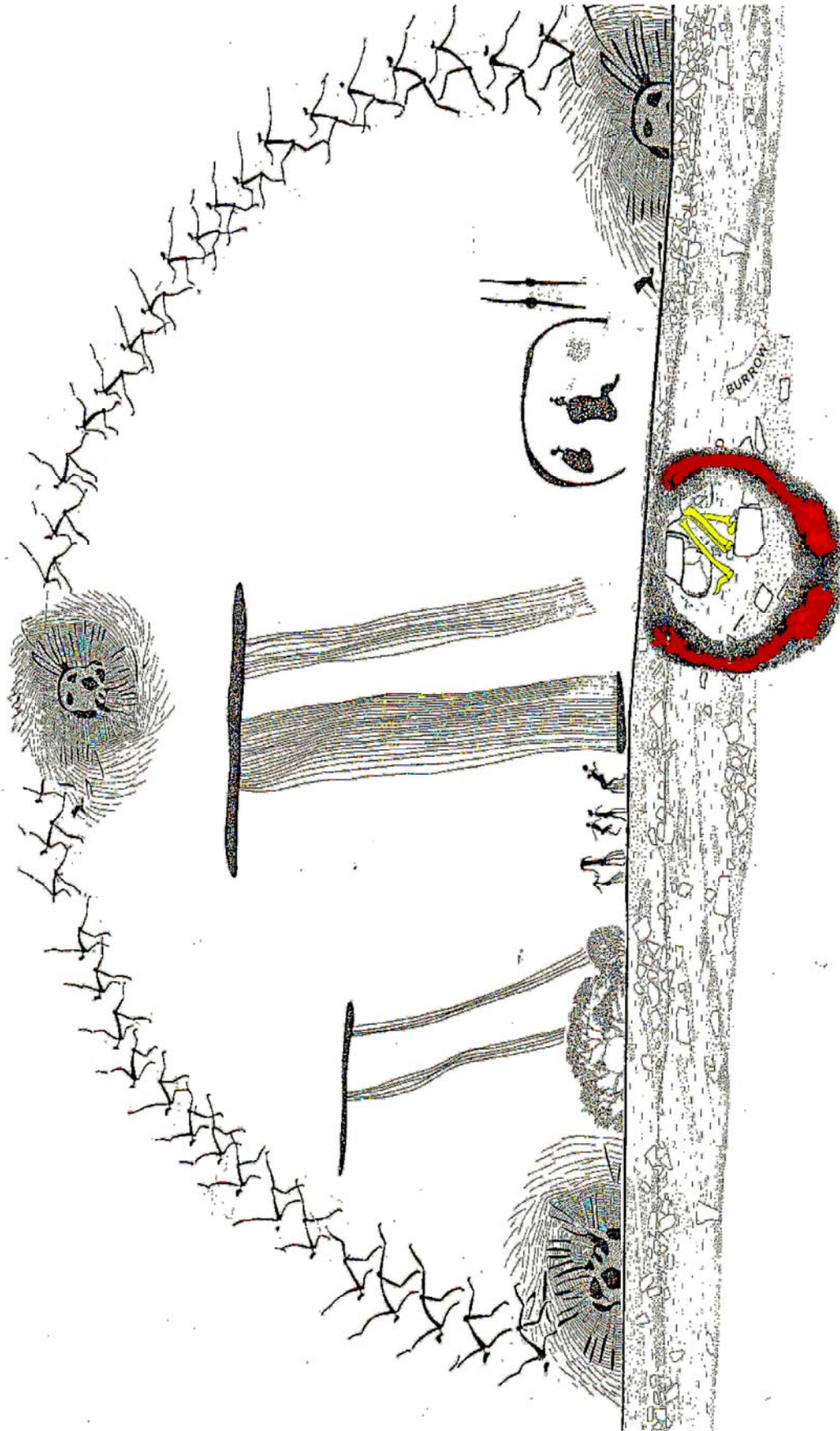


Figure 3.16 The earth received her and wrapped her in its arms

## **CONCLUSION TO CHAPTER THREE**

### **Reciprocity was not referred to in this Chapter but became a subsequent priority**

The complex network of interactive phenomena followed the time-line of *BaSotho* females within the lived experience of individuals as was shown in figure 1.7 in Chapter one. This Chapter studied how in an adapted time-line these acts became a symbiotic process with a continuity of learning, being conversant in verbal and symbolic languages and having read psychic forces instinctively knew how to counter their effect, however, knowledge of other physical forces had to be experienced and responses derived. Being prepared and re-enforced confirmed their roles as makers.

### **Key issues discovered in the reasoning**

References were recorded in Chapter two. Such authors were prescriptive of the method of reasoning which resulted in a personal evolution by application of its methodology and resulted in a conviction of phenomenology as the most appropriate approach to this investigation. As a method of reasoning it generated a wide spectrum of interactive enquiries seeking the deeper meaning of phenomena.

### **Links and connection points between aspects of work, thoughts or ideas**

This Chapter described a particular woman's phenomenological or lived experience of inhabited spaces within embellished boundaries. Osmosis of this environment prepared her mentally and physically for her eventual expectation of making her own environments. Along a timeline she has continuously added to inherited knowledge by existence. These experiences were positive and negative, both became a body of knowledge that influenced every decision she made. Her mnemonic influence spurred new innovations with the assurance that her intuition, consultation with her living-dead and social support guided her actions. She lived her life because of others.

## **INTERACTIVE COMPONENTS**

### **Phenomenology as lived experience**

Phenomenology was the most appropriate method for researching the deeper meaning of the hypothesis due to its reliance on inductive reasoning. Its emphasis on the actual experience of place-making, along her entire timeline added value to her intended execution of new experiences within her homes-as-artefacts. The research method used

phenomenology at a macro and micro level as a process of reasoning. The inflexion was phenomenology as lived experience elaborated by adding an inductive interpretation to each adjunct. Aspects of *Botho* as the *BaSotho* phenomenology of expectations, was referred to in each subsequent Chapter.

At the macro level the inflexion was aimed at a wider incursion into its plural social implications, at the micro level the breakdown and explanation of each adjunct was an inductive description of each aspect of the individual's participation at all the stages of a timeline. *Botho* with its expectations were further described as an appropriate pursuance of its discussion in Chapter two. This inflexion was enhanced by Norberg-Schulz as author and as architect whose emphasis on places of special meanings was directly descriptive of the woman's physical implementation of firstly place-making and secondly the application of these implications of meanings. Other authors articulated the inflexion its interrelation to the hypothesis. This was further enhanced by visual material.

### **Language**

Practices of language, from verbal, body language to execution were applicable at every stage of her development. This was particularly evident in being able to enter into a discourse with the subconscious as well as with other people. The mother played a big role as teacher in this production or game of imitation, reiteration and application.

### **Learning**

The fact that learning required a continuous responsibility from each individual became apparent. The important root of learning and its application started with the *Badimo* but it was essential at every stage of the woman's timeline to add to this body of knowledge

### **Forces**

Forces, be they physical or intellectual interpretations influenced responses to respect social constructs, moral affirmation or inclusive shelter.

Mother and home became psychic anchors along each individual's continuous timeline. Such forces were mainly; instinct, intuition and interdependence. Rituals, rites and myths were also regarded as functional forces of integration or acceptance, often done to achieve rites of passage within a continuum of kinship and innate knowledge. Along her timeline she was steeped in executing intentions and personal evaluation of its success, which required adjustments to her acceptance of the roles of being a thinker as well as a maker.

### **Process**

Process was obvious at a micro level; that the time involved in living out experiences affected the evolution of an individual in generating her development but also to build her confidence. It made her life became more effective. New solutions only became evident through her involvement in experimentation that leads to new solutions.

### **The essentials of what was taken from this Chapter into the rest of the work**

Lateral thinking induced the existence of a mental evolution of *BaSotho* females. This evolution was developed during a process of learning and the eventual execution of dwellings Principles were found applicable to this lived process, habits of action turned the unusual into accepted associated norms. Space making with place-making were examples of such principles, although it is a mental association, a diverse series of its disclosures were experienced during visits.

Subsequent Chapters used these principles for finding the working validity of the passage of change in the mind of the making women. Processes implied by the hypothesis, in a reflection on her actions she accomplished her intentions, it became evidence of reciprocity. It followed that the creator, a *BaSotho* woman, had to be prepared and ready for actions of making homes-as-artefacts described the maker's phenomenological expectation of executing her intentions.