

CHAPTER 5: BASOTHO VERNACULAR ARCHITECTURE

Introduction

The essentials of what was taken from the previous Chapters into this Chapter

Due to the phenomenological research in Chapter three an interactive network of interactions was elaborated between an evolution of females along a timeline of existence, simultaneously both of cognitive and physical body. Cognitive preparation for place-making needed to be recognized but, during a necessary private development, it was intended for place-making to be effective. It was achieved with in-practice training; matured into an able *BaSotho* maker. Induction proved to be a valued form of reasoning as well as be a guide to structure the rest of the research in Chapter four; lived experience of hermeneutics assisted reciprocity to be validated. Its accumulation partly rendered the requisite confident intentions but mobilized abilities to act out place-making within her spatial geometry of boundaries. The quality of reciprocity was dependent on the extent to which knowledge was applied during the process of making, which was interpreted by users as valid, and became her accumulation of effective valid responses, to be retrieved, when required, from her cognitive realm into her informed reality of actions. This gave existential phenomenology a deeper meaning.

This Chapter coupled historic examples of vernacular buildings-as-artefacts as further references of responses to a base of interactive knowledge within an inflection, hermeneutic phenomenology. Induced from this precedent the past women's timeline also generated many evolutions of mental and physical interactive reciprocity. If reciprocity was obvious in the present acts of making it was induced that it existed in the past because excellence of logic coupled with trained skills were tied up into these historic examples. They also have been the makers who appeared to their peers only through their actions, carrying with it approval, praise and recognition. Induced from this was proof of their lived experience of reciprocity.

The past, a theatrical milieu for the actions of people allowed the present maker-woman her time for reflection and for testing her own home-as-artefact as a continuum of her past into an evolved contemporary vernacular architecture.

Home is a container made for people to live their life's experience in. Synonyms as such were; shelter, house, dwelling, abode, and habitat all attached symbolic meaning beyond the pure utility of the artefact. In the proposed study of *BaSotho* vernacular culture, home does not only mean the main living container, but includes the space around this container, between it and the other containers for the rest of her family, as well as containers for grain, firewood, maize cobs, cairns of cow dung used for slow fires in winter, live stock and chickens.

The open space contained between these vessels was an integral set of compartments, each capable of being grasped or imagined and with the desire to perform an action; place-making. Unity of a coherent home is evident in its appeal to the senses; a composition of diverse sounds, visible perceptions of its vivid endearment, ensuing from the fire its smell of smoke and food, the mouth waters with favourite associated tastes. All the senses also perceived the presence of problems; a mixture of neglect, silence, smells of decay that compelled a mental search for possible causes and solutions.

These homes-as-artefacts were followed by the description of historic *BaSotho* vernacular architecture in a general development over time starting with the archaeological, historic and in particular the forces acting on making, other determinants of making, the process of making, the act and actors during the process of making and existing use of building-as-artefact. It must be stressed that these historical examples still occurred in contemporary settlements.

HERMENEUTIC PHENOMENOLOGY: its specification applied

1 Reflective writing which studied persons and their activities

Hermeneutics is the art of interpretation applied to any linguistic utterance, physical action or symbolic act. Paintings, *litema*, sketches, buildings and written works formed a single unified and homogenous progress of a project. Hermeneutics was moved from being an interpretation of only text to using buildings as devices or mechanisms for connecting and coordinating the functions of different components that served human habits as exemplified in historical interpretations of executed projects by **Hertzberger**; the author and architect, but equally by the *BaSotho* makers of past and contemporary buildings-as- artefacts; to have had in mind their intentions to design or destine built components for purposes that came as natural to human habits of seeking comfort, or to watch and being watched; their executed works were the embodiment of hermeneutics as no

longer being only a matter of textual interpretation but also an interpretative sensorial mode of being in the world and orientating oneself to it. Macey, (2001) **A cultural reciprocity was experienced as a continuum of physical and general reasoning, characterized by subtlety of thought in hermeneutic phenomenology**

2 Uniqueness of each human act

Unconstrained creativity used restrictions and dictates of material available as challenges. Her deftness of the hand executed an acquired knowledge. If at first her artwork was inspired or copied, it revealed her own unpredicted quality by being modified during the process- an enlightened visual temperance informed her mental insertion, which resulted into her remarkable diversions. A mother's home mentally and physically was hers, different from all others on earth. When she left or died this home only became the empty shell of a nut, her home-as-artefact lost its intention.

3 Actions and interventions articulated implications

Beyond the outcome of explicit utility, the act and process of making artefacts and buildings-as-artefacts, constitutes a mechanism, reciprocity, shaping the identity and sense of self of the maker. However, the evolution of the building-as-artefact and the evolution of the woman-builder, described as parallel and reciprocal processes, could not be proven other than by induction.

Since childhood she experienced and observed past behaviour by users of congenial places. Habits of behaviour shaped her moral attitude of re-instating such places. Her process of doing expressly asserted the value of adaptable utility, present (or lacking), in a home-as-artefact which not only necessarily articulated space but encapsulated her terms of reference. It was deliberately used to signify the woman maker's intention to shelter, to embrace, her arms as the infolding walls of her dreams, the enfolding walls of the 'clay pot' she made, not only to contain but also to be beautiful, as if wrapped in her special 'blanket'. Her home implicitly contained comfort; it provided shelter to its users against the forces of nature or other dangers with a roof to dream under and a floor as platform of actions.

4 Looked at the affect of her position in her societal construct when success is recognized

By having looked at their executions of intentions, and interpretation of forces, in historical vernacular buildings-as-artefacts of the *BaSotho* woman, there were three main ways in which she gained reciprocity – firstly, by being part of a tradition of innovation; secondly, by having established herself as a woman amongst women, who, thirdly, even in a patriarchal society, they controlled the home environment; through the making of the home-as-artefact in all its aspects, not just its built reality but also the joy of expanded lived experience.

Its built fabric invited use. A low wall intended as a boundary initiated its convenience as seat. As human beings they were fond of company. Her sociable manner pre-empted the artefact-as-home to become renowned and being well thought of by others for its hospitality; it caused enjoyment. Her place was frequented by those users who needed company, given freely to replenish news with opinions, her collection of gregarious places ensured appropriate comfort.

RECIPROCITY

Logically, reciprocity has been a phenomenological experience over centuries and not only a latter day occurrence. Intentions often generated and invited a multiple number of unintended evolved conveniences, solutions resulted from the imponderable. In its recognition built action enhanced lived experience, hermeneutic phenomenology. **When observed by the maker-women they were surprised at this unintended positive use, but it became part of their future vocabulary, their satisfaction and recognition became their reciprocity.**

Because of their social construct, *Botho*, made it impossible not to be makers, it was thus impossible for reciprocity not to evolve. As the dreamers of similar evolved artefacts-as-homes, they constructed and often reconstructed, till the dream was well constructed; they made their memories and further improvised ideas they had accumulated during their individual lived experiences. **It is true to say that in *BaSotho* culture the women took pride in following a tradition of being builders, their inclusion into continuum engendered reciprocity.**

LANGUAGE

In the human will to power, there occurred the truly creative reciprocal acts in the creation of visual grammar within the ability to think, implying an initiation into the mastery of the world in

such a way that as humans they could outdo linguistic with made and built grammar. “So there is no reason to assume that the capacity to express oneself in a personal way in form is essentially any different from the capacity to express oneself personally in language”. (Hertzberger, 1963:110)

LEARNING

The women did not seem to be perturbed by the time spent learning and time spent doing, during the production of buildings, or doing their *litema*. It was a slow process and mistakes were easily rectified. Values related to an inborn ability to produce and maintain gave rise to a relaxed atmosphere, albeit that the posture and balance of weights sometimes must have strained muscles, nerves and the essential knowledge attained over time. This aspect of making resulted in innovation of processes and tools needed for the execution, contained in the body of past and present solutions.

Learning from existing solutions

Recording the history of mental evolution was found in buildings-as-artefacts. Studies of the existing body of accumulated knowledge, vernacular, were approached as a made discourse. Vernacular studies were used only as an anchor for the research to verify the making processes, and served as the sources of acts of past as well as future makers. Although the study of vernacular architecture has often taken approaches, too many to accurately reflect, dominant ones had been identified. See for example: Prussin, (1995); Rudofsky, (1973); Frescura, (1981); Denyer, (1978); Rapoport, (1969); Norberg-Schulz, (1980) in Chapter two.

FORCES

The purpose of making homes-as-artefacts remained as protection and counter action to shelter its users against negative forces but also to exploit the positive aspects.

Social life forces

Durkin; explains, “Knowledge of other people, means of communication, the possibility of alternative points of view, the necessity for rules of conduct, the benefits of collaboration, the significance of social categories, the transmission of ideas and beliefs; all of these fundamentals of social life, and much more, would be absent from the innocent isolate’s life” (Blackwell, 1988:39)

Affiliation

Freedman; notes, “Man is born with genetically determined characteristics, among these is the tendency to seek out and congregate with other human beings. Mankind’s social behaviour is attributed to instinct and the basic dependence on fellow man, especially during infancy, to survive” He further stated; “the needs for achievement, love, appreciation, comfort, respect and power, although not innate, are sought by most men [humans]”. (Freedman *et al.*, 1970:7)

Social interaction

It was vital to transform knowledge and ensure that a collective human intelligence was inherited and passed on, this process allowed society to evolve over time. Social intelligence added functional complexity to the predominantly physical and sensory human experiences.

Social comparison

Festinger’s theory of social comparison stated; “People have a drive to evaluate themselves; and in the absence of objective non-social means, they will evaluate themselves by comparison with other people” (Freedman *et al.*, 1970:17). This evaluation of others easily translated into judgement. Individuals therefore found themselves drawn into different forms of affiliations. They concurrently felt the pressure of being negatively judged by others, which could lead to fear or rebellion. This led to a complex series of emotions and reactions and formed the basis of society. Individuals who were judged to display any sort of atypical behaviour would quickly be singled out by a society that attributed both fear and judgement to its core of *Botho* values

Climatic forces

Each site dictated its own microclimate. She had to assess orientation in terms of solar geometries, particular wind directions and slope of the land. Macro topography such as within the mountains or on the savannah plains severely affected micro climate which demanded an astute response to all the climatic forces. With a history of exploiting or counteracting the effects of extremes of these forces an anthology of affective built solutions and habits were recorded in the executed responses.

An example of this was the habit of sitting during the morning against an east facing wall, out of the cold wind, at noon the moved to the opposite.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL REFERENCE; Spatial organization of *BaSotho* settlements

Huffman; an archaeologist derived from vernacular customs as an analogy, theories of use and meaning. 'Human societies divide their spatial environment into a system of distinct locations where limited ranges of culturally related activities are permitted' (Huffman, 1981:131) He confirmed that the physical signposts of these activities constitute a society's 'expressive space'. Huffman, (1981)

A point of agreement with Huffman was that he emphasized that a society can be read through an examination of its spatial organisation. The underlying assumption is that space and form are texts, precisely because of the interdependence of parts and whole. His study of the Great Zimbabwe was relevant to this study through his interpretation of settlement as a spatial culture. "The spatial organization at Great Zimbabwe results from the articulation of two main dimensions; attitudes about status and attitudes about life forces. These dimensions obviously operated simultaneously; but for the purposes of exposition it is convenient to describe the town in terms of these dimensions separately, rather than by the complete spatial code of each building or idea in turn" (Huffman, 1981:131)

In a follow-up study Huffman refers to the 'the Southern Bantu Culture System' incorporating interconnected attitudes about the political role of men, the spiritual role of ancestors, and the importance of cattle as the main sign of wealth, acquiring wives and children and through this power success and status. Qualities almost exclusive to the domain of the male. Huffman, (1982)

Huffman concluded by arguing that this spatial pattern was not limited or specific to any ethnic group or political community, but was found only among Bantu speaking societies who used cattle as dowry. If the ethnographically derived pattern was correct, the presence of that pattern in Iron Age archaeological record was evidence of a distinctive Bantu Cultural System; "for the purpose of this review I shall call the system the Bantu Cattle Culture" (Huffman, 1982:140-141)

Maggs; found that this cattle cultural principle was expressed in settlement patterns found throughout the Southern Highveldt, also at the specific archaeological sites of Maggs, (1976) and therefore identified for further interpretation and field study. The main characteristics of the patterns were; the central cattle kraal with underground grain storage pits and graves, the men's domain which was either adjacent to the kraal or was within the kraal, an arc of homes surrounded the kraal arranged to the right or left according to seniority with the home of the chief upslope of the kraal. On the inside of

the woman's home a division of right and left, male and female, at right angles to the front to back axis with at the back, a secular and sacred shelf.

Continuum of historical prototypes into contemporary types

It was interesting to note that the historical evolution of the building-as-artefact in *BaSotho* vernacular architecture was not as distinct stages, buildings known as examples in the oldest records of prototypes were still being built presently. This is not to say that there had been no innovation in the history of *BaSotho* vernacular architecture. Throughout history, clan, materials available and changing climatic forces defined evolution of the buildings-as-artefacts. **Reciprocity was evident in the *BaSotho* women's need to adapt vernacular architecture to these changing circumstances.** Adaptation of prototypes generated by availability of materials was evident visual material could be seen in paintings as well as existing prototypes.

PROCESS OF VALUING BUILT INTENTIONS INFUSED WITH THEORY

Recording history as a typology of physical reciprocity

Hertzberger's phrase; 'place-capacity' (indicated hierarchically as red in the following text), solidified the habits of humans to linger, observe and sit; his as well as the *BaSotho* women maker's intentions were to provide additional places of everyday conduct at an intimate scale within spaces. It was this extended capacity of place that linked buildings-as-artefacts back to life. The places which people used had an intimate relation to their lives. Living necessarily involved the organization and physical arrangement of space into places: to work, to rest, to be seen, to be a spectator, places which are 'mine', places which are 'yours', places that are warm, places that are cold, places that protect, places which are pleasant. Or else when it became unpleasant – was no longer frequented and lost its qualification of place. (Van Eyck's placelessness). Unwin, (1997)

Spatial organization of *BaSotho* settlements

The most ancient types of place were those which had to do with the fundamental aspects of lived experience: keeping warm and dry, acquiring and keeping food and water, fuel and artefacts, cooking, sitting while eating, defecating, sleeping and procreating, defence against enemies, asserting military or political and commercial power, fighting and competing, worshiping and performing rituals, exchanging goods and services, story-telling, dancing and acting, teaching and learning, discussing and socializing, suffering, enjoying life and dying.

A mosaic of interrelationships called for a language of spatial organization in which built form and exterior space were not only complementary and therefore reciprocal in forming each other, but also softened the sharp division. If you entered a place gradually, the front door was divested of its significance as a single and abrupt moment; it became an extended threshold that was executed to form a step-by-step sequence of areas which were not yet explicitly inside but also less public. Sometimes this degree of accessibility was a convention, which was respected by all. Hertzberger, (1991).

Gradations of territorial claims with attendant feelings of accessibility were evident in the referenced information, graphic and photographic. Legal boundaries of properties did not exist in Southern Africa, land was allocated by a chief and territorial tensions were not present as rights being encroached, be it from the private domain into the public or it's opposite.

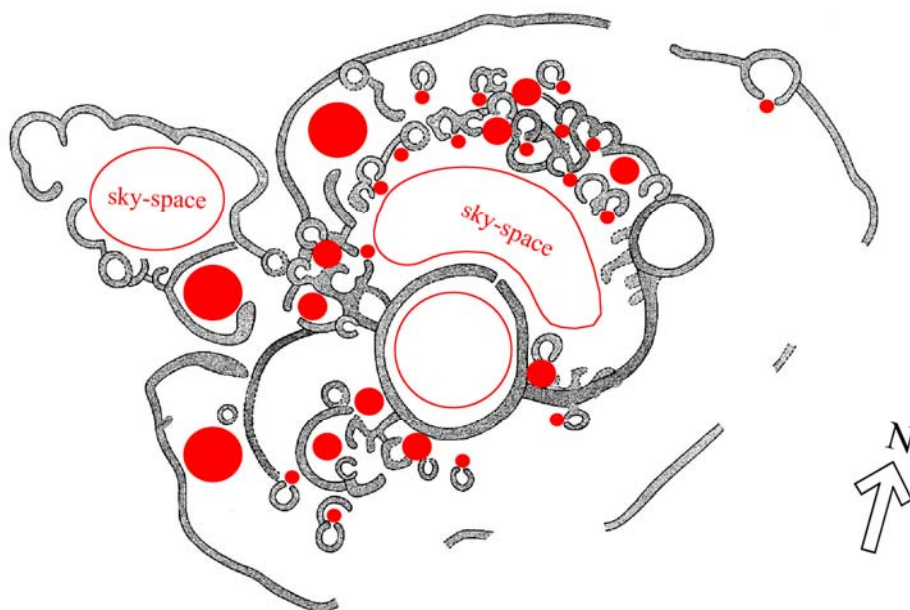


Figure 5.1 Place-capacity plan of the settlement at Ntsoana Tsatsi dated 1400 to 1600 AD

Maggs, (1976)

The large circular structures are animal kraals of stacked stone; the smaller circles are *lolwapa*, areas with *mohlongoa-fatsi* homes-as-artefacts. Mythical sources maintain that this settlement was supposedly the area of origin of the *BaSotho* when they emerged from a lake. (Maggs, 1976:45) A place-capacity plan (Hertzberger, 1991: 197). One could measure a floor-plan according to the capacity it had for creating places, and with that an impression was obtained of the potential of the

floor space for accommodating more or less separate activities. The old articulated arrangement had offered more stimuli for the creation of distinct places, each with its cultural tradition and dynamic change of use dependant on the occasion or climatic forces; especially the constantly changing direction of often very cold winds, or in summer getting out of the sun and into a place with cooling breezes funneled through.



Figure 5.2 An axonometric interpretation of part of the settlement at *Ntsoana Tsatsi*

Cover; Maggs, 1976

Enclosures are for the protection of humans and represent all the emotions and most importantly its use associated with the concept of precincts of homes. Due to the *BaSotho* cattle-culture the *kraal* was also used as *kgotla* for the exclusive sphere of action and societal thoughts of males.

Precincts of homes were fields of activity or interest, its roles focused on the private concerns of a family, an area for which a mother claimed responsibility, she with others like her, bestowed the nest of precincts with a presence of group care, a nearness essential as a feeling of belonging. In

the first place, **this reciprocal feeling of belonging together revolved around everyday social interactions**, such as children playing together out in the open space, caring for each other's baby, sitting with each other, keeping in touch concerning one another's health, in short, all those cares and joys that perhaps seem so self-evident that one tends to underestimate their reciprocal value.

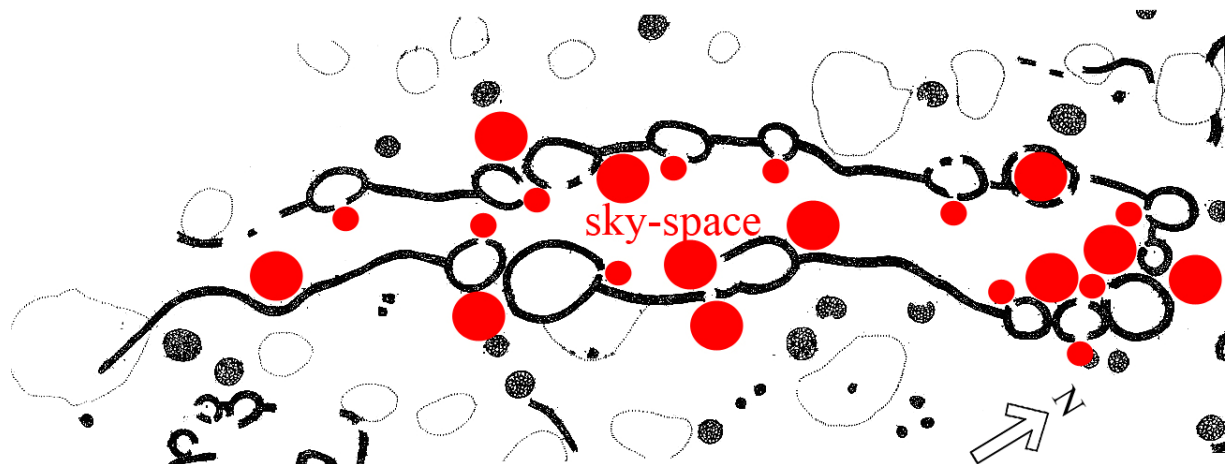


Figure 5.3 Settlement pattern at *Tlokoa* dated 1600 to 1800 AD (Maggs, 1976: 176)

Evidently the possible large concentration of people and the 'sky-space' implies that an important chief held office at this settlement.

The quality of an active 'sky-space' not only required the accommodation of day-to-day social interaction; a pedestrian geometry crossing this space, but also for more special occasions, so that both communal activities and those of importance to the community at large can take place there. It is the setting for celebrations that give the space its added dimension beyond only that of protecting livestock. Perhaps people will even be more inclined to put the public space to new uses if the opportunities for doing so are explicitly offered. People in this study area were in the habit of living outside. This sky-space served as catalyzing agent between local and neighbouring clans.

Dwelling units lining the edges of a sky-space functioned better if their open public places were sited to function as an extension of the life in the sky-space; that in turn depended especially on how receptive the occupants were, i.e. upon whether the atmosphere inside the homes did spill out and blended with the communal atmosphere of the outside sky-space. The concept of a 'sky-space' was based on the idea that its users had something in common, that in a reciprocal sense they

expected something of each other, even if only because they were aware that they needed each other. If the homes were private domains, then the open ‘sky-space’ was the public domain.

Having paid equal attention to home precincts and ‘sky-space’ alike meant treating it not merely as the residual space between precincts, but rather as a fundamentally complementary element evolved and organically expanded on behalf of the community it served, its form was capable of adapting itself to a variety of functions and appearances. The shorter the duration of a particular change of function that did take place the less permanent the nature of the extensions or adjustments could be, and in the case of daily usage they might disappear completely from one day to the next. Hertzberger, (1991)

The visual appearance of this public domain changed continuously because of the *litema*, special occasions created reciprocal opportunities for the women makers to prove their dexterity.

These cohesive place-capacity plans no longer exist in contemporary settlements due mainly to changes in social structures. The order of home to ‘sky-space’ is more fragmented. Sense of belonging is however still essential. Nearness is not only a physical dimension but also mental

Reciprocity repeated itself not only in every instance with each of these homes-as-artefacts but also in its sense of belonging.

Articulation

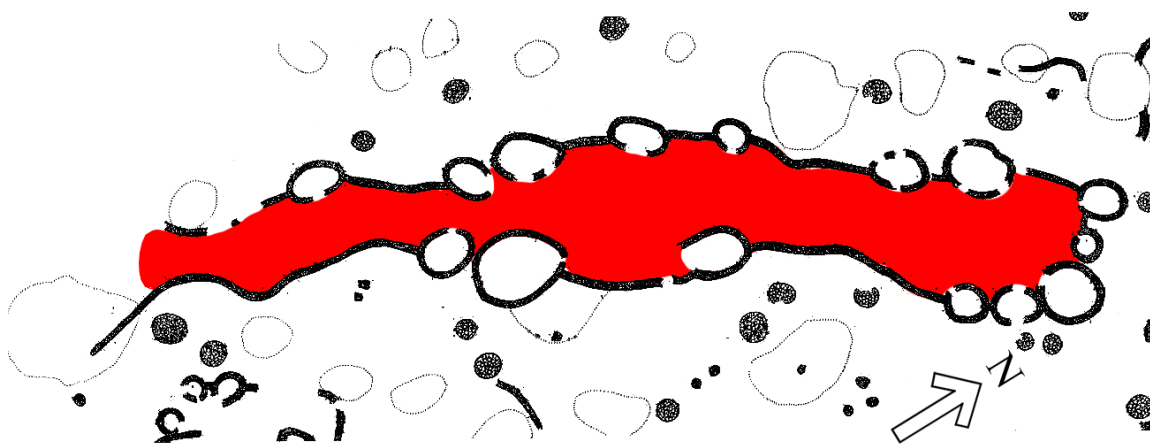


Figure 5.4 Articulated sky-space at Tlokoa

Maggs, (1976)

Space should always be articulated in such a way that places are created, spatial units whose

appropriate dimensions and correct measure of enclosure enable them to accommodate the pattern of relations of those who will use it. How a space is articulated is a decisive factor; it will determine to a high degree whether the space will be suitable for a single large group, or for a number of small separate groups and the more centres of attention there are the more individualizing the overall effect becomes. Hertzberger, (1991)

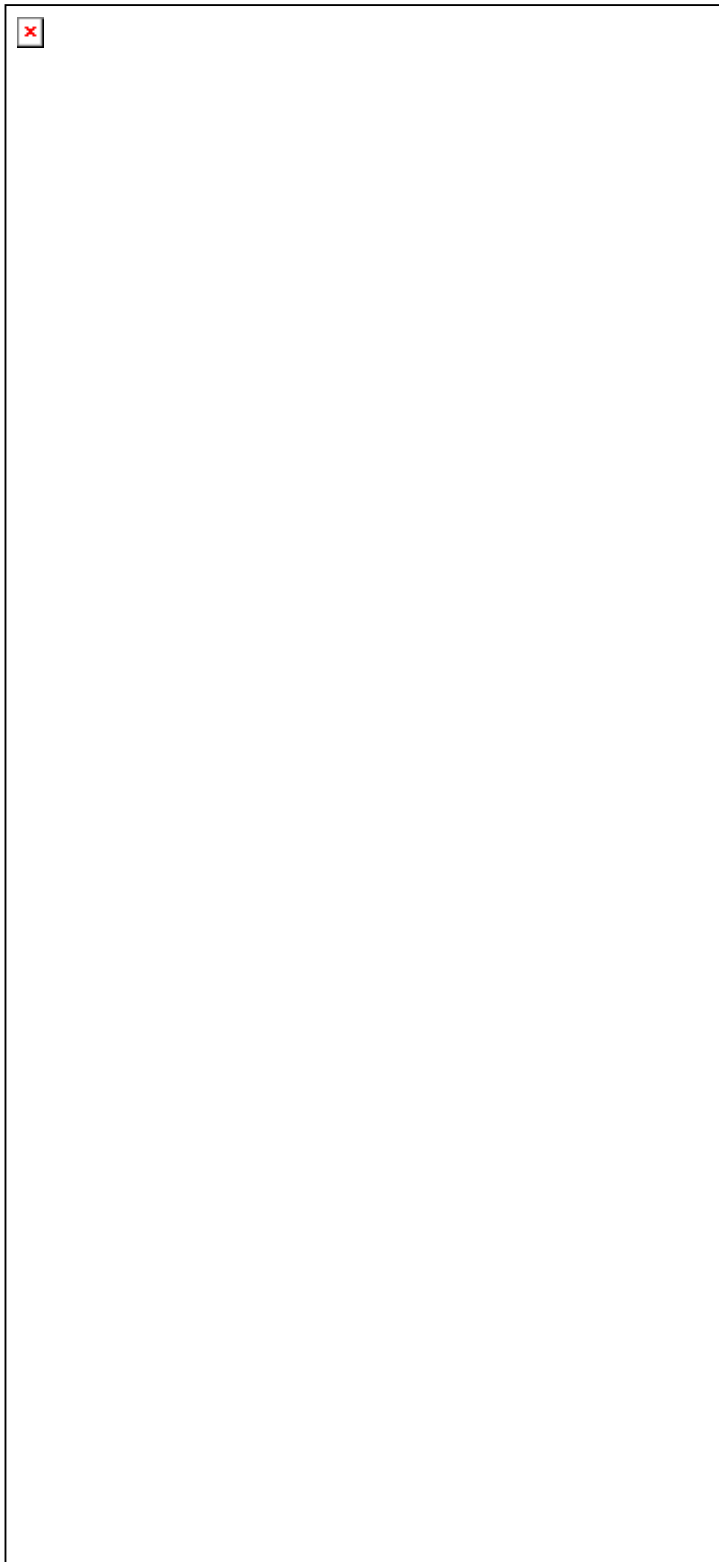


Figure 5.5 Excavation of the *Tlokoa* site

Maggs, (1976)

Several overlays of hut foundations were found indicating prolonged times and different areas of settlement. For the trained reader archaeological excavations became a script or narrative of everyday lived experiences of people who lived there. Functions and intentions could be induced, associations of emotions, strife and well-being became evident in this legibility.

Buildings-as-artefacts had to be capable of accommodating all those different situations which affect the way a building is understood and used. Not only must it be capable of adapting itself to changing weather conditions and different seasons as well as being suitable for use during both day and night, it must be deliberately designed to respond to all phenomena.



A motloanyane hut

Figure 5.6 Three possible alternative huts at Tlokoa

The woman makers had to take into account all different types of usage, as well as the feelings and wishes of all sorts of categories of people: of all ages, each with its specific patterns of expectations, own possibilities and restrictions. The definitive design had to be attuned to all the intellectual and emotional data imaginable and it also had to relate to all the sensory perceptions of the space. The perceptions of space consisted not only of what is seen, but also of what is heard, felt or smelled – as well as the associations thereby evoked. Thus architecture is also capable of showing that which is not merely actually visible, and of eliciting associations not she was not previously aware of. If this was so layered that the diversity of realities were embedded in the different layers of consciousness it needed to be reflected in the design, then the architectural environment will moreover visualize those embedded realities and will thus tell the reader something of the world within which users performed duties, individuals and groups were actively living life.

Hertzberger, (1991)

The predominance of round circles in the excavation was proof of the value placed on the circular plan as sound structural building practice; a curved wall is less likely to fall over. It also resolved the roof structure as either a cone as in the two examples of bilobial huts as proposed by Maggs, or a dome as in the *motloanyane* hut, at the time of these buildings thatch was readily available although prone to the dangers of fire caused by lightning or aggressive raids.

The round plan also had a resolution in section; not only of tight sensorial enclosure, but also of use, the space close to the wall could only be used by small children or adults on their knees or in lying down while the central space was high enough for adults to stand. This section therefore differentiated use that became an axial ritual. The round plan occurred over centuries throughout Africa, its adaptability of size and use allowed for a nesting pattern in plan with a network of open space between units used as movement; either private, semi public or private. In each circumstance its ‘place- capacity’ resulted in a rich living experience. All three of these huts could have been built simultaneously to form the settlement excavated by Maggs, evident in present patterns. No present examples of the bilobial huts were found. **Differentiation of the immediate space around the home precinct into its ‘place –capacity’ was a recurring reciprocal phenomenon irrespective of the ethnic group.**

Historical paintings as records

The paintings by Willcox 1880, Samuel Daniell 1775-1811 and Casalis 1861 are the oldest graphic records of *BaSotho* homes-as-artefacts. It is important to note that the historical evolution of the building-as-artefact is not distinct, some of the buildings shown as being part of the oldest records are still being built in the present settlements. Distinction is more defined by clan, materials available and climatic forces. The evolution of the building-as-artefact and the evolution of the woman-builder, described as parallel and reciprocal processes, cannot be proven other than by induction.

Painting by Willcox

The painting shows the typical cluster of huts built by the women of that time threshing grain on a round platform. It can be induced that the cluster is from a northern area, as the trees used to build the perimeter columns have a greater diameter than the indigenous trees of the study area, which also have a totally different geometry. The building method would have to have been adapted to

local materials, such as an abundance of thatching grass, evident in the *mohlongoa fatsi*, described later. The floor acted as bed, table, workshop and public place, the sky-space.

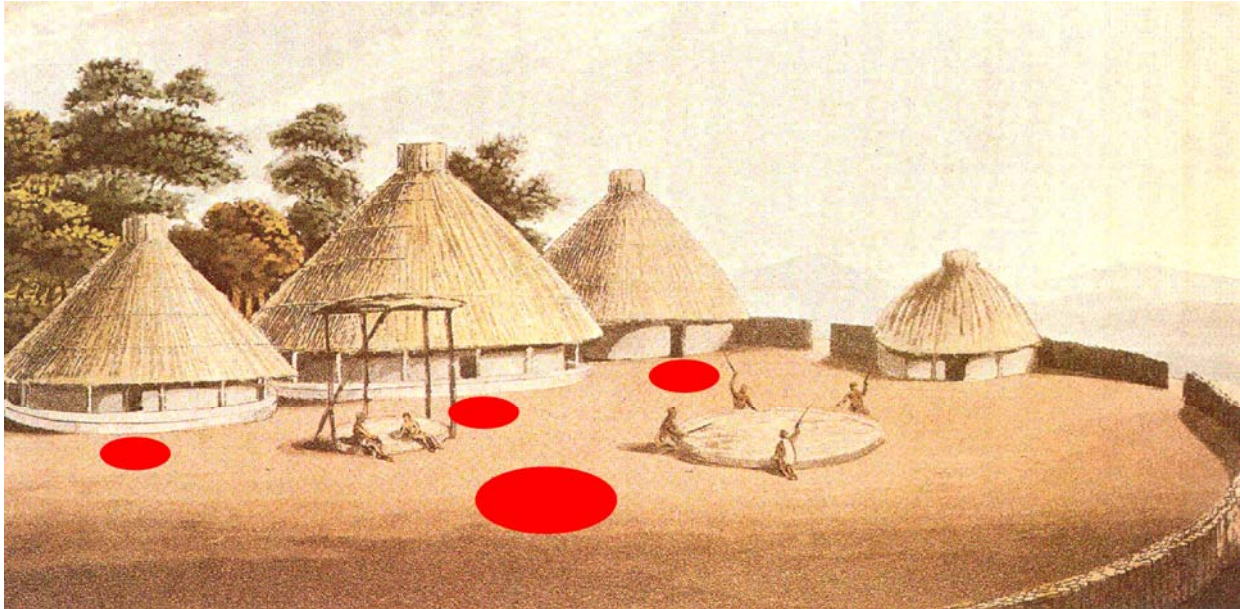


Figure 5.7 Homes and a *lolwapa* (yard)

Painting by Willcox, 1880

Although the use of columns as roof support was associated with *BaTswana* it could have influenced the *BaSotho*. The lack of timber and abundance of building stone affected *BaSotho* techniques. The examples shown here were usually specific to the region of settlement.

Here Willcox shows the typical cluster of huts built by the women of the time. It must be from a northern area as can be deduced from the timber perimeter columns where trees were available to be used as well as for a hut in the central position with a big diameter and consequent tall roof structure, this is not typical in the study area where indigenous trees have a totally different geometry and the building method had to be adapted to local materials such as an abundance of thatching grass, hence the adaptation to the *mohlongoa fatsi*, described later.

Important messages on reciprocity are legible in the painting; adherence to social obligations as expected from the living-dead. The *lolwapa* is swept clean, with no loose objects lying around, the myth being that bad spirits in the form of snakes, and other strange shapes will affect the members of the household. This is still today the custom and pride of any woman in the *BaSotho* social structure and also a telltale to her peer group of self-esteem and their reciprocity infused with

hermeneutic phenomenology. Although the men are lying on the floor, in the shade of the *khotla*, the women are working at threshing the grain, most likely *mabela* that will soon be ground up for and cooked as porridge. Reciprocity is evident in the group working rhythmically in unison. They are most probably singing in rhythms to the work in different voices, evoking spirits. Song is a way of uniting everyone, along with mutual acting and working. They might also be talking about matters of concern. These rituals of common concerns bind the women into a community where nobody feels alienated. There is little that brings a community together like this; rhythmically carrying on and on, not ceasing until the task is done. **This resulted in reciprocity through inclusion and cohesion between peers, kin and built fabric, hermeneutic phenomenology.**

Reciprocity of group values resulted from a group working rhythmically in unison, most probably singing in rhythms to the work in different voices, evoking spirits of the *Badimo* to assure endurance and success. The rhythm determined the pace of work and it again was determined by the work at hand but most valuable was the unison of effort, sound and reciprocal cohesion of each individual to all of the others in the group working-as-one:



Figure 5.8 The rhythm of singing and working synchronise the effort

A song sung while working

*Mmamati mpelegele ngwana
ke a lema
ke lemakele nasi*

The locust can you take care of my child
because I am planting [working] alone

Repeat on and on

or

*Maina – mainama
Mae (mmagwe)
ke moloji wa busio*

Bender – bender I am getting up
her mother is a witch at night

Repeat on and on

Performance place

A performance requires space; whether religious ritual, making music, ceremonies of marriage or death, also when the initiates come out of their withdrawal with their rite of passage into their new roles as grownups. This *lolwapa* provided the platform for such a multiplicity of events. The ring of spectators attracted by the performance contributed to the identification of place. A dynamic differentiation of space used in such an impromptu theatre was due to a reciprocal respect of traditions. Such a performance place needed to be only a clearing in a veldt or a ring of trees.

Painting by Danielle



Figure 5.9 *BaSotho* settlements; from Campbell's Travels, Second Journey

Painting by Samuel Daniell, 1775-1811

The painting shows the building-as-artefact more familiar to the study area of the Southern group of *BaSotho*. The woman as builder had to adopt clay walls as load bearing, with consequent innovation necessary to fix the roof to the wall to ensure it not being blown off in a high storm wind. This was obviously a process of inventing new details and trial and error. This not only broadened her understanding of the forces of nature but also possibilities and limitations of the materials she had at her disposal. This process of discovery had as its main aim a long lasting solution and as she saw her success she must have had a feeling of success, translated by my experience, reciprocity. This feeling of reciprocity must have been enlarged as her solutions were adopted by her peers. It is an honour to some creative thinkers to be copied, as she obviously also learnt from those who have gone through the same evolution.

As influence to the *BaSotho* bending latte (saplings) from trees is already quite an advance in method. Bushmen used this method to form a rigid frame (similar to modern steel structures) for their nomadic existence, but covered it with thatch and animal skins carried as clothing while travelling. The *Khoi* used woven mats made from river reeds to cover a dome made of bent saplings. They already had developed a culture of animal husbandry from their countless knowledge of heritage, so did not need to carry loads over big distances, rather, from sketches, neatly packed (balanced) an ox when they moved to new pastures. Both of these nomadic cultures respected the marginal nature of the veldt and reciprocated with temporary use of resources.

The woman as builder had to adopt clay walls as load bearing, with the consequent innovation necessary to fix the roof to the wall. It ensured that the roof was not blown off in stormy winds. This was obviously a trial-and-error process of inventing new details and not only broadened her understanding of the forces of nature, but also knowledge of the possibilities and limitations of the materials she had at her disposal. This process of discovery had as its main aim a long lasting solution she generated her success. **She, with others involved in a creative act, must have experienced, observed, discussed and enjoyed a reciprocal feeling of success.**

Her reciprocal experience must have been increased as her peers adopted her solutions. It was an honour for some creative thinkers to be copied, as she obviously also learnt from those who had gone through the same evolution of a continuation concepts, not only in the abstract, but also

its reality. **A continuation of lessons discovered or gleaned from others, was applied in future implementation and experimentation, this interdependence resulted in reciprocity.**

In making the point about women, specifically women builders, being an integral part of a peer group and community, it must be reiterated that building is not only done by women. The specific home-as-artefact is a manifestation of the woman's obligation, strength and ambition to nurture not only her kin but also homes that are 'designed', built and maintained by her. Men usually built the buildings that were meant for communal and ceremonial use.

What were especially remarkable were the intentions for these buildings-as-artefacts; quite ordinary, significance that transcended the ordinary. All too numerous then are the values securely embedded in the homes-as-artefacts which relied on life behind the walls and screens, people in informal situations, even though there were societal structures and gender differentiations. The multitude of historical but also contemporary makers' concerns were with the way in which men and women, visitors, children and pets co-exist does not give the impression that differences in social structure affected their shelters other than in mythical, cosmological, *Botho* and hierarchical space delineations.

STONE AS ABUNDANT BUILDING MATERIAL

A drawing by Baines of a *Ghoya* building-as-artefact



Figure 5.10 A *Ghoya* hut that was the predecessor of the *BaSotho*

Drawing by Baines, 1876

Men built the stone corbelled huts, the remains of many are still dotted along ridges in the study area and especially at Winburg, on the western edge of the study area, but these are also found at many localities all over the Highveldt. Walton, (1951) ascribes these buildings-as-artefacts as of the *Ghoya*; a possible phase in the evolution of the *BaSotho*. The major technological evolution was the use of a stone lintel to enable the inhabitants to enter the home.

Having seen the remains of these huts with no sign of clay as plaster, in or outside, to give a user a friendly surface to touch or as weather protection, especially wind, the possibility exists of covers of animal skin as used at the time by the Bushmen does exist, it is also hard to imagine that precautions such as of clay plaster were not used on the in- and outside but that time has taken its toll in washing it all away. The tectonic marvel was the use of flat stone slabs to form a dome for protection where little alternative material was at hand.

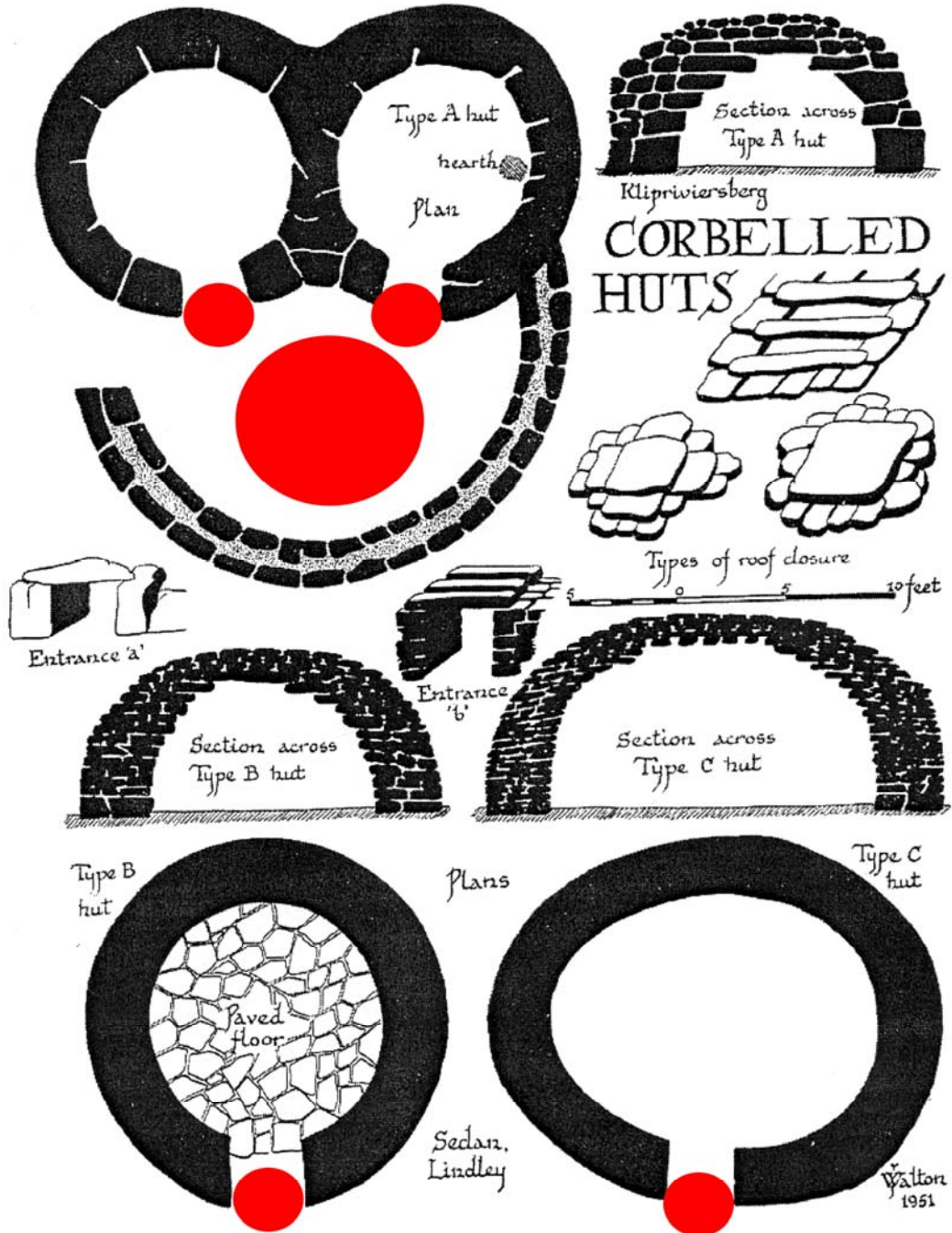


Figure 5.11 A contemporary *Ghoya* hut still occurring in Lesotho

Photo; FitzGerald

The roughness of the thatch might be a symbolic gesture of this as male domain or else that the roof is temporary, its roughness does not make it water repellent. As a means of creating shelter the roof would have been thatched properly with the same pride expected from the *BaSotho* construct of *Botho*.

Place-capacity induced within the *Ghoya* shelters



The Tlapin Settlement

Figure 5.12 Examples of the *Ghoya* buildings-as-artefacts

Source; Walton, 1951

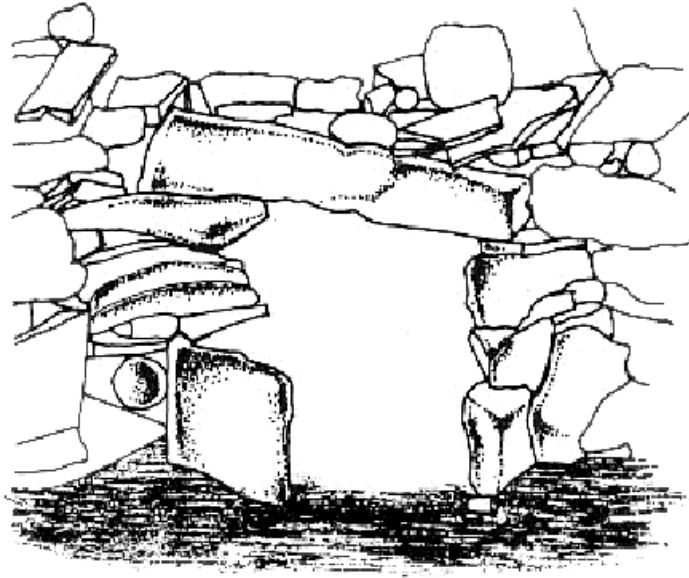


Figure 5.13 Threshold; the use of a lintol was a technological invention Maggs, 1976

The dotted markings of hands touching the rock indicate the haptic quality of the hand remolding even the stone.

Communal building types



Figure 5.14 The animal kraal and *kgotla*; walls were also of dry packed stone

Photo; McElroy

Dry packed stonewall technology was used in the building, a technology learnt from the *Ghoya*. This was a rare occasion of a building type other than the home-as-artefact occurring in the study area. The roof was added to shelter livestock against frequent snow. Although winds within the peaks of the mountains came from all directions, the most prevalent at this location was from the back, hence the solidity of that wall backed against the mountain slope.

Adaptations of the *Ghoya* home-as-artefact

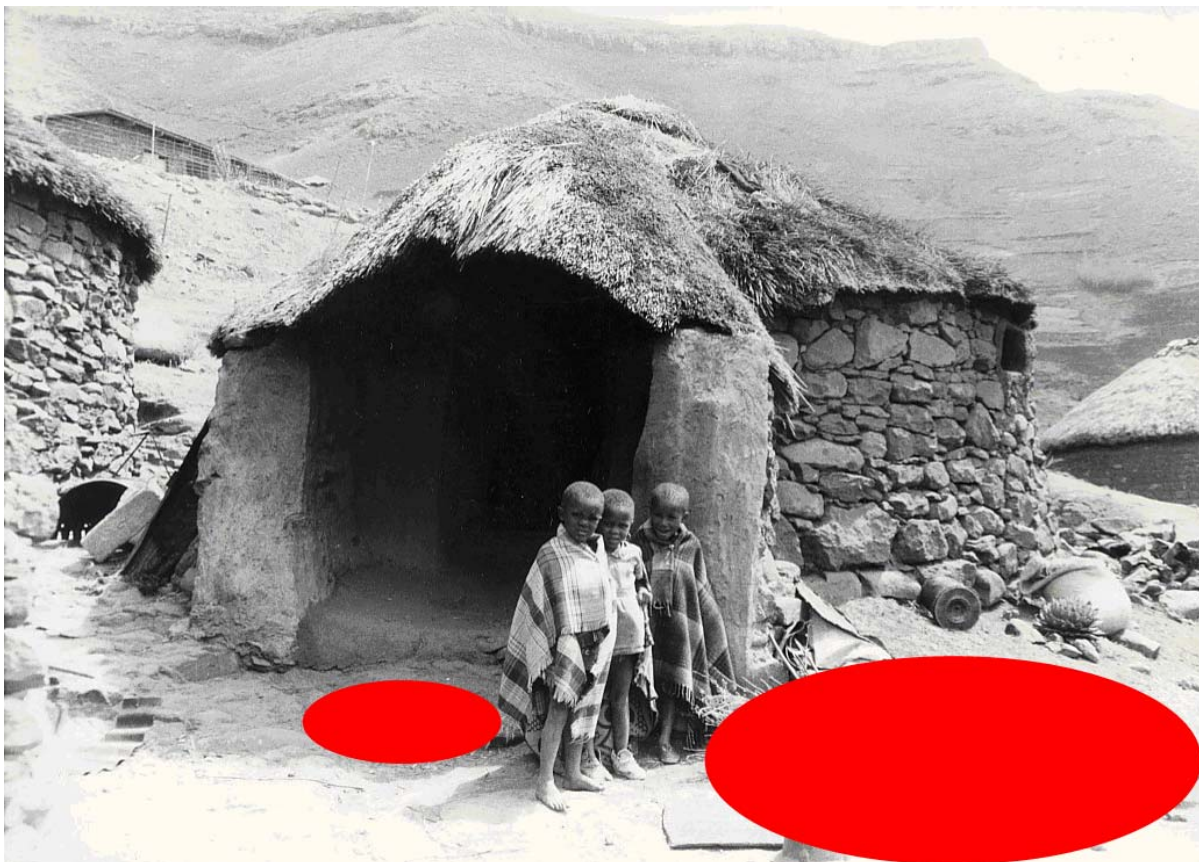


Figure 5.15 A *motloanyane* home close to the *Moluti* peaks

Photo; McElroy

Stone as the only available building material and extreme climatic forces dictated the evolution of the *Ghoya* artefact into this type to achieve the required comfort. The wall was also constructed of dry packed stone with the inside plugged with earth plaster, doctored and finished to make the touch of the hand pleasant and also to make the home windproof. The plaster as inner placenta comes to the outside to further the quality of layered protection. Small stone wedges, the telltale sign of dry stacked walling, balanced the individual stones. **Inaccessibility combined with abject poverty resulted in**

isolation with little social cohesion implied a minimal experience of reciprocity.

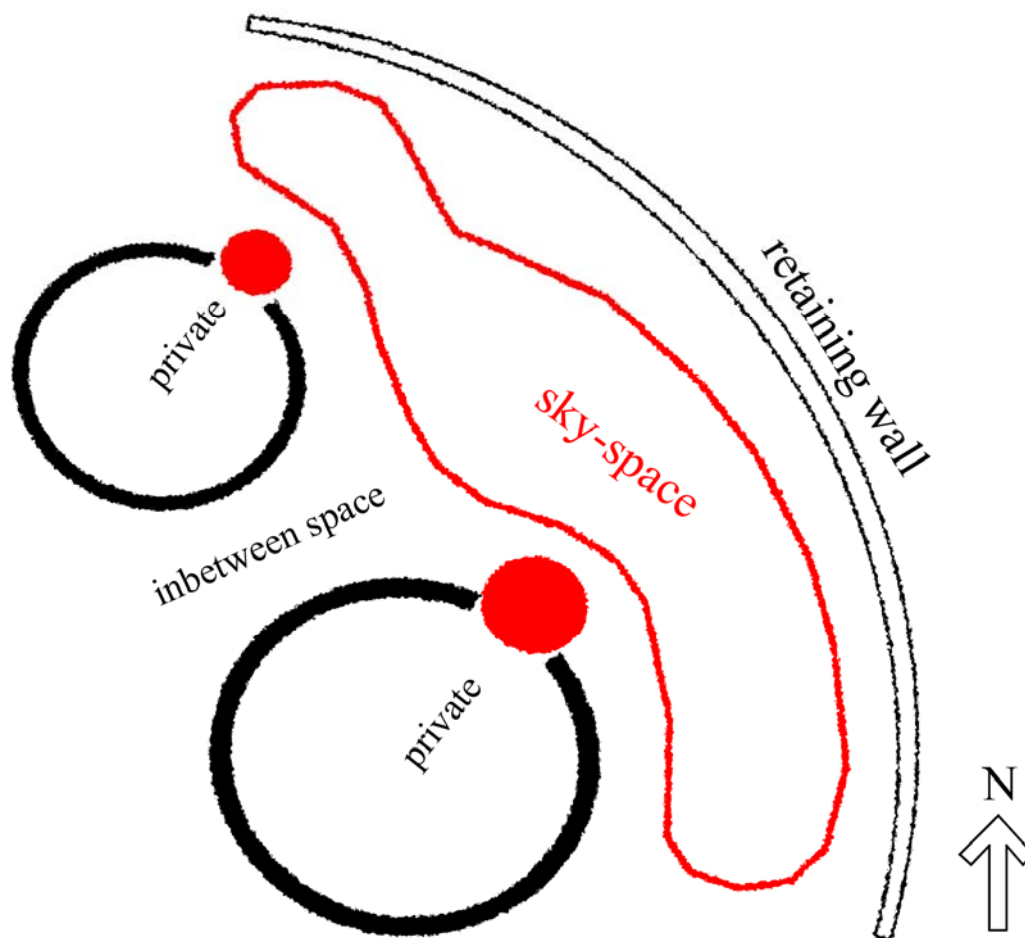


Figure 5.16 A home-as-artefact perched like a vulture's nest on a mountain slope

These makers of homes-as-artefacts maintained the use of the most legible form, from traditional associations and appropriate co-incidence between form and function. The round receptacle of human life was used for centuries due mainly to this appropriateness, a form with the greatest expressive force, and its associations of home. It was the most practical abstraction of form to still accomplish a multitude of activities, this complexity of tasks were contained in minimal spaces represented several dutiful realities simultaneously, all those realities had to be accommodated as aspects within the cylinder, they constituted a multiple programme by way of a richly variegated requirements as 'design brief'. From personal experience, wind velocity could get so fierce, as well as often freezing cold that everything of value had to be kept inside. Lightning and thunder with torrents of rain forced makers to ensure that life continues in extremes of nature. **Reciprocity resulted from her role to maintain a continuum of life.**

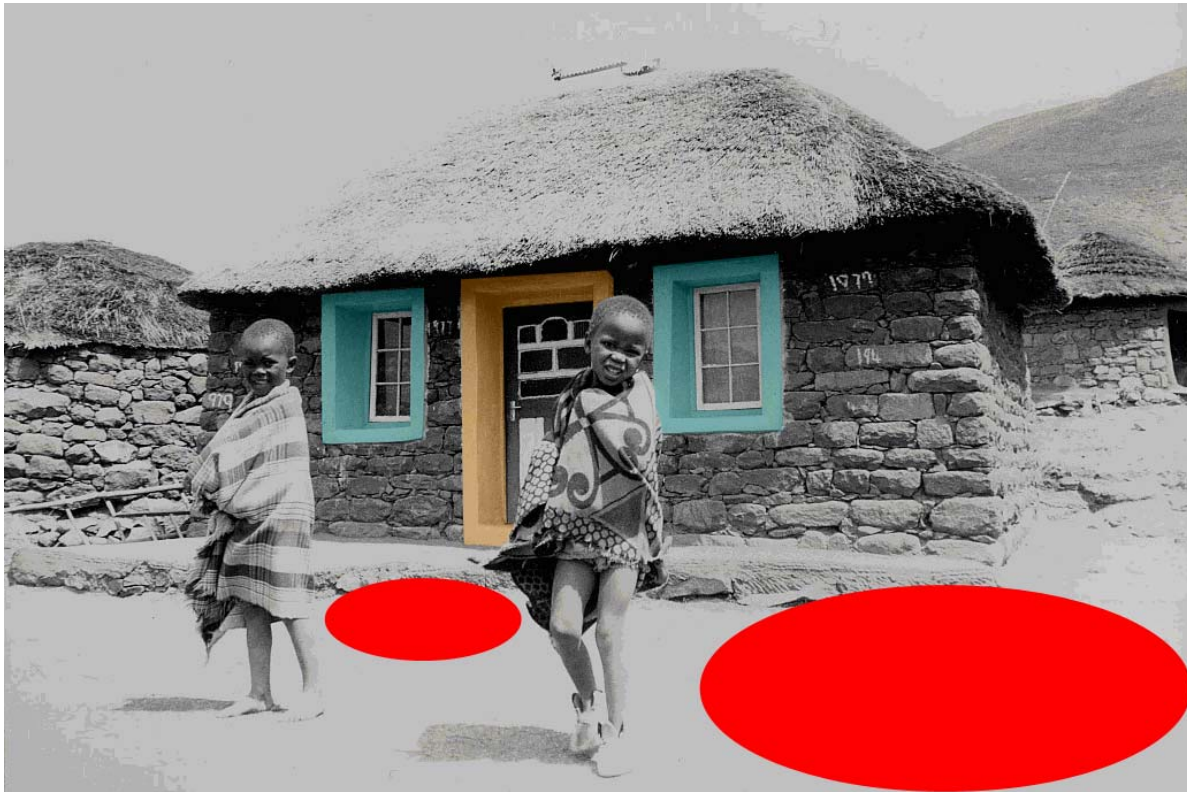


Figure 5.17 Deep in Lesotho

Photo; McElroy

Small, sometimes round, sometimes square, brightly painted windows, with steps in clashing geometries. The wedges in the walls of both huts are distinctly that of dry packed stone to stabilize the stone although its detail relays the personalities of the different builders. Even within these human battles against physical constraints place-capacity was still present. Some male friend built the home-as-artefact. The stone walls were of the same colour as the background, her only contribution and means to express her creativity was to plaster the inside walls and pull this plaster through and beyond the windows as frame and then **to the paint the reveals in special personal bright contrasting colours, a sign of joy as the only minimal but possible expression of reciprocity when turning these frames into expressions of place-making;** strikingly obvious over distances within a grey and bleak background, little jewels (likened to Van Eyck, (2000), his small mirrors at the Amsterdam orphanage). Being part of and belonging to the concepts of *Botho* was vital to leading a life under these circumstances. The only reason for inhabiting these mountains must have been that they were livestock farmers and had to be close to food sources. Proximity of neighbours was across a vast landscape. **Reciprocity resulted from independence**

due to isolation but close relationships of sustainability within the family group.

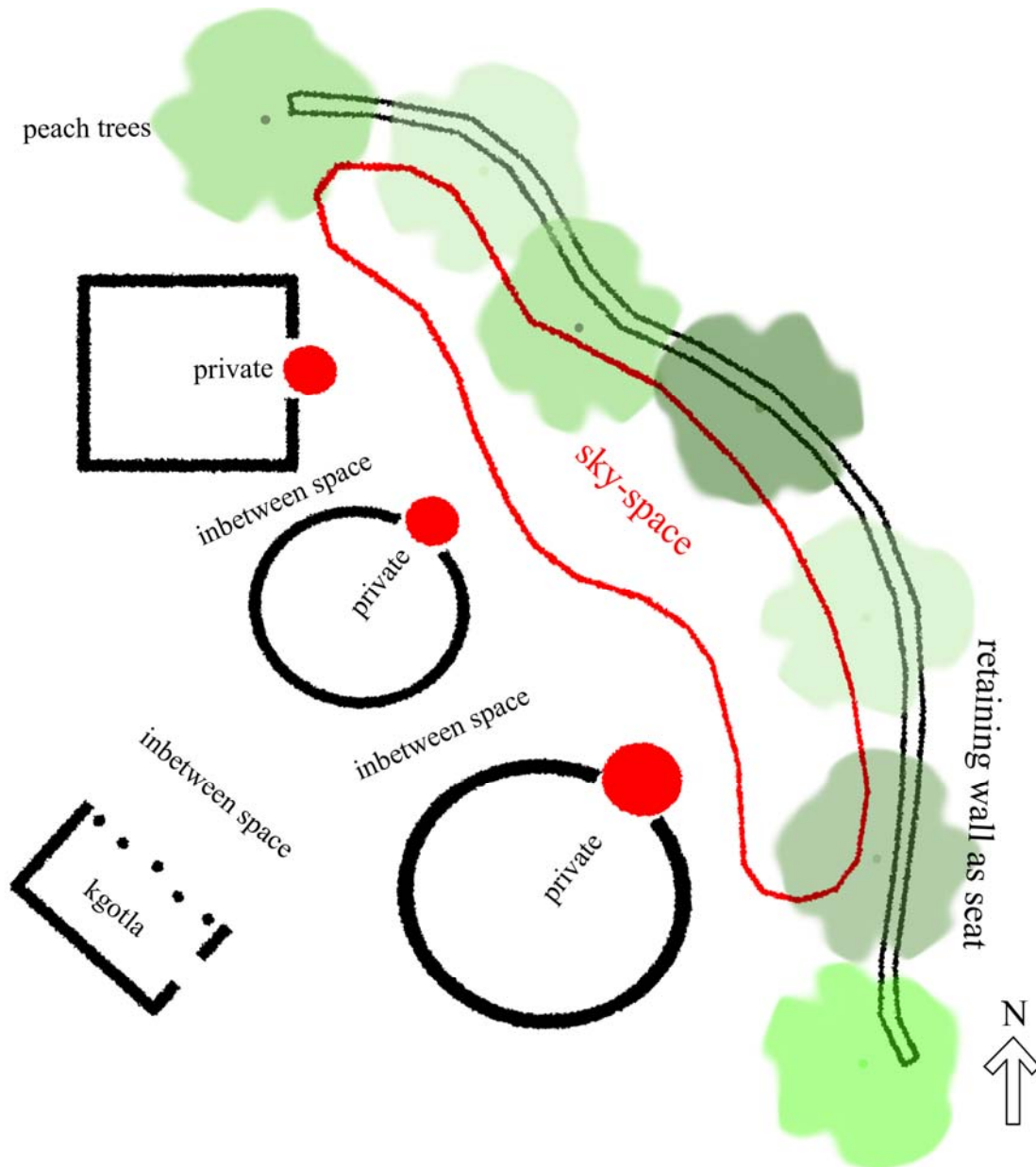


Figure 5.18 Place-capacity also has a dimension of seasonal time

In the barren landscape on the steep mountain slopes isolated settlements nestled on a terrace contained by a retaining wall. This wall doubled as seat along a sky-space with peach trees planted close to the wall delineated the edges of place capacity, life as well as the nature of nature. Being deciduous the skeletons of trees signalled winter when barren trees allowed the terrace to become a sun drenched lived in place, dark branches traced the edge of use within a blanket of snow that obliterated the familiar. Observed from afar in stark contrast the branches were revived, rich in

life, bright pink blossoms announced spring as the critical turning point of human tolerance, they expressed a revived relation to place, time and manner of life. Humans passed the critical hostile point of nature. A green crown of leaves provided fruit but also shade in summer, this green slowly turned to an autumn yellow and then back again to skeletons. Each year this was the cycle of lived experience, each cycle an hourglass.



Figure 5.19 The evolved stone home

In this case dressed sand stone is found especially in low lying areas of Lesotho, a mixture of sand and cement was used as binding, sealing and plastering material.



Figure 5.20 Surrounds to openings were a haptic necessity

Hands touching the rock have given rise to the need to soften the touch of hands. This innovation of plastering an earth doorframe solved this problem, but in the same manner a window surround.

It indicates the haptic quality of the hand resurfacing the stone and molding the earth. These were usually brightly painted.

It is true to say that in *BaSotho* culture the women took pride in following a tradition of women builders. **Acceptance of their work by peers who shared a respect for their traditions was a form of reciprocity.** This is not to say that there has been no innovation in the history of *BaSotho* vernacular architecture. Throughout history, clan, materials available and changing climatic forces, has defined evolution of the building-as-artefact. **Reciprocity is evident in the *BaSotho* woman's need to adapt from vernacular architecture to these examples.**

The more levels of experienced design aspects that were taken into account the more associations could be made, and therefore the wider the range of experiences for different people in different situations could be gleaned. **Each new experience within herself but also within the users had its own perceptions, these validated her reciprocity.**

GRASS AS THATCH AND REEDS; ABUNDANT BUILDING MATERIAL

Buildings-as-artefacts specific to the *BaSotho*

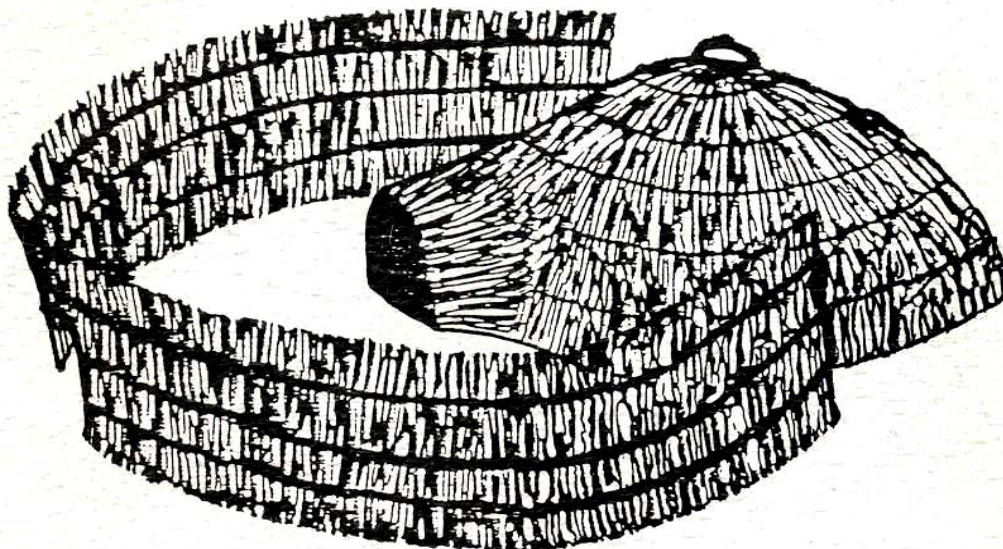


Figure 5.21 A thatch *mohlongoa fatsi* home with a reed screen

Casalis, 1861

This is the *BaSotho* variation on the *Nguni* (Zulu) hut by the addition of a 'wind foil' to prevent cold winds from entering the shelter. It was prevalent in the study area but now is mainly found in Lesotho

and used for ceremonial purposes such as initiation. It was especially built as part of the chief's complex as respect to and consultation with the *Badimo*. Shown above is the *mohlongoa fatsi* hut with its *seotloana* (reed screen). It is still built today as the ceremonial dwelling of the *Badimo* and is still built for initiation of both girls and boys.

It pre-empted the other adoption of the mud walled hut. Women did not make this hut, but men did; they were the experts working with thatch but also with grass because of their embodied knowledge accumulated during their years of herding cattle in the veldt.



Figure 5.22 Long section through the *mohlongoa fatsi* hut Drawing; Casalis, 1861

The wind foil was illustrated by Casalis as an add-on, onto the eastern side of the hut and can usually only be entered on hands and knees, for protection from evil or enemies who cannot attack, but remains vulnerable against anybody standing upright inside, with a weapon. This was an ancient form of hut but because of its associations with the past it was still at present built and used for rituals such as initiation and is seen as an abode for the *Badimo* if needed. A technical drawback was that the thatch started at ground level and caused ants, rain splatter and mud to rot the thatch.

A cosmological reciprocity was not only applicable to this type of hut, but applied to all such types of home-as-artefact that functioned as the personal place of living of the *BaSotho* woman, even in contemporary huts. The primary function of a shelter is to provide a comfortable private bed chamber for sleeping or withdrawal.

The wind foil was an ingenious solution to prevent cold winter winds from blowing into the home-as-artefact, especially during winter nights when the interior was nice and warm from body heat or the hearth but someone had to go out to urinate; then an inevitable cold blast of wind nullified this comfort zone with everybody inside woken up by the sudden wasteful loss of heat.

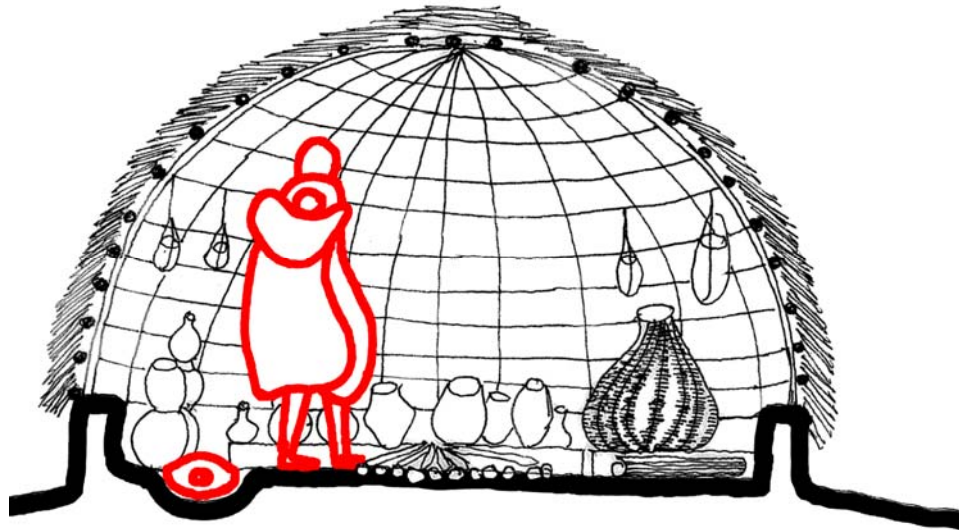


Figure 5.23 Cross section of the *mohlongoa fatsi* hut showing how height controlled place

The semi circle dictated height restrictions. The edges of the plan logically could only be used for lying down or when she was on her knees whilst the central space was for activities when erect.

Place-capacity in plan

The earliest homes-as-artefacts were, till fairly recently, only bedrooms with most of the other activities associated with dwelling taking place outside.

Her place for the hearth

The centralized place of a fire contained within a circle of stones and scorched earth. The fire was fuelled by cow dung; slow burning flames giving warmth and soft light against the enclosing ‘womb’ giving the semi circle of structural latte an imbued reflection of shelter. The hemisphere of warmth from the central fire made dressing or undressing during cold nights bearable.

Her place for her bed

Her own particular place that affirmed and accommodated her life of privacy, mental acts of thought and enfolded her human characteristics. Anticipated rest after a strenuous day of action or emotional stress had its own rituals of getting prepared for withdrawal, private enough for sexual togetherness or to be ill and cared for.

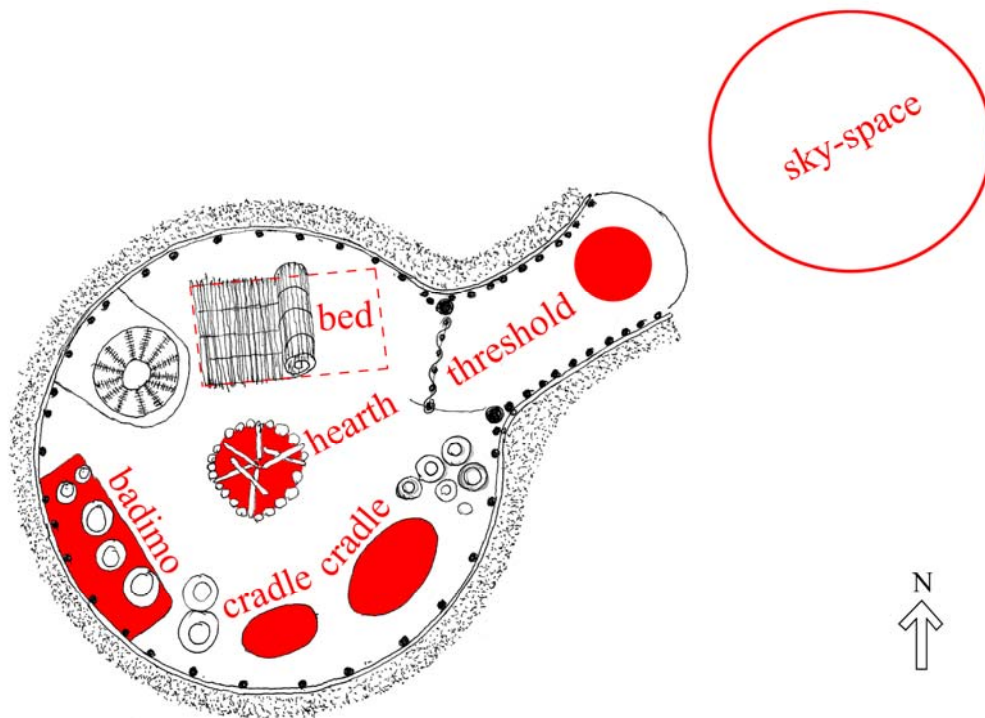


Figure 5.24 A plan of the *mohlongoa fatsi* hut

Each evening when going to sleep was a repetition of returning to a womb, a womb of grass, **this associated reassurance of being restored but also reinstated, even when embroiled in adverse circumstances, turned this animal necessity of withdrawal into an actualized reciprocity of life.** The fundamental act for building the home-as-artefact was to make a secure place to sleep. Her bed was just a grass mat unrolled on the floor for no more than a sleeping creature to occupy.

Her place for the beds of small children

The need for mother's care and conscious proximity evoked care and re-assurance. The moulded floor snuggled and contained their bodies. **Hearing rhythmic breathing gave the sense of lived reciprocity, mother to children, children to mother.** Proximity of mother's breast for feeding prevented anxieties.

Her place for the shelf of the *Badimo*

Her mental but also physical peace was due to their constant presence. **Her practical life concerns were eased by this presence but reciprocated by her subliminal trust.**

Her place for the threshold

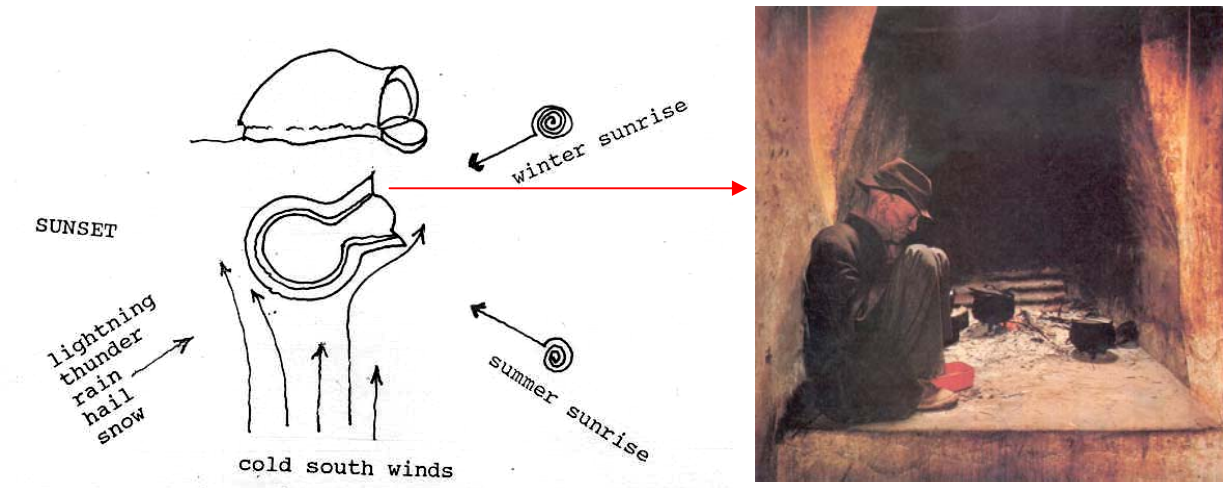


Figure 5.25 Optimizing climates by the orientation of the hut

Photo; source unknown

This is a sub-place to the main place, the home-as-artefact, a place to bask in the sun after a cold night, a place to get out of the cold wind, a place just to do nothing, but with other sub-places such as other huts such as for cooking or older children and storage places remains a cohesive precinct.

Her place for an external cooking hearth



Figure 5.26 Cross shaped walls orientated to counter wind direction

Regardless of the direction of the wind there remains a sector to make a fire. The backyard, although visible, was the frequented domain of diligent women cleaning, washing clothes and pouring milk,

with the smell of food, being prepared, pervading the senses with their associations. The scene was an absolute denial of the distinctions between formal and informal. Thanks to this tradition the *BaSotho* vernacular architecture neither to impress nor to oppress with a fairly down-to-earth attention to both people and the utilitarian aspects of things but an interrelated whole in which primary and secondary functions always remained interchangeable, dependant on their roles within the settlement of the organization as a whole, and hoe that role was appreciated.

Her place for internal cooking used especially in winter as living space

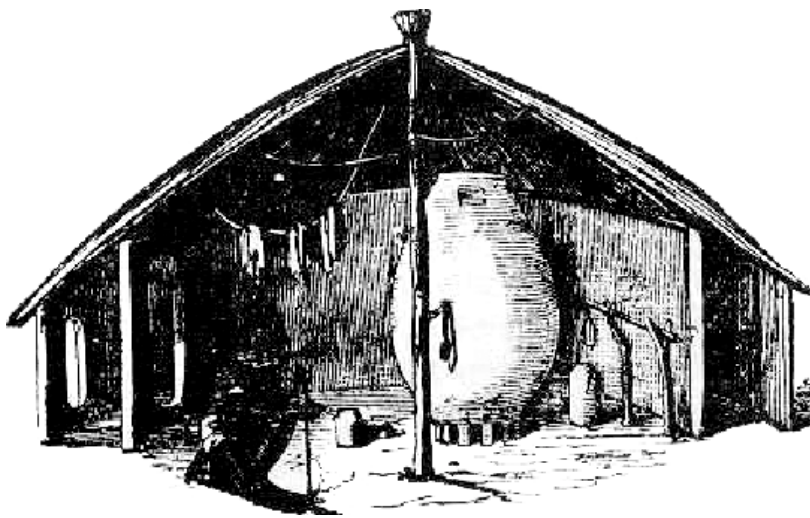


Figure 5.27 Cross section through the cooking hut

Drawing; Casalis, 1861

A clay pot, in this case two metres high, was used for storing grain. It was elevated above the floor to prevent the base becoming moist and through capillary penetration caused the content to rot. To make and fire a pot that size required centuries of accumulated technical knowledge, in some regions this container was made of grass. As her other primary focus, her kitchen, was suffused with a rich bouquet of aromas from divers centres and historical knowledge of food sources. She often had to cook within the protection of a hut because in winter her home could be covered in snow, if not, freezing winds limited external activities. These adverse climates could also occur in the middle of summer.

Her inspiration for organization came from her experience of her mother's kitchen but also from kitchens of other's yet ultimately her own procedures and storage of artefacts, she had to be receptive

to many things especially actions that were often accepted but she could recognize the opportunity for corrective and innovative actions. Correct size and reachable distance became a scope for innovation.

Her wish to create detail solutions and then its subsequent experience of successful active use, its interpretation generated reciprocity.

Evolution of the *mohlongoa fatsi* hut and renamed as the *motloanyane*



Figure 5.28 The *motloanyane* hut

Source; BCV brochure, photo M Becker

Due to the rotting of thatch touching the earth, ants eating it and rain, the solution evolved to lift the dome forming the hut onto a low earth wall. The arched entrance lintol was a legible form used to elaborate the visual sign of entrance. The moulding of clay inside the arch had the signs and section of the caressing quality of a hand. The thatch emulated the arch of the lintol, to further overlay the emphasis on the message of entry.

A wall was set back by a metre from the arched lintol to enclose the shelter. It had a smaller shaped opening, round at the top and wide for the body, the correct size to limit the span but also the door made of limited resources to close off the shelter. The space between the walls was seized as an opportunity to provide an extended threshold shaped at its open end with a single or series of steps, the number was dictated by the slope of land, but as in a previous example discussed became a place, for watching or being seen and included in a short passing of greetings.

The apex of the roof often had a ridge piece of thatch or depending on availability, galvanized iron with a decorative finial cut to be read in profile. A group of shelters, each with such a finial but each cut in its own pattern had an appropriate functional weathering reason that was grasped as an opportunity for decoration.

This type of hut with the roof on walls was so successful it became a recurring form and tradition, not only pragmatic but also incorporated aesthetic embellishment.



Figure 5.29 Showing another design of a threshold with the same associated meanings

She imparted her person into the material, earth, to hand mould and stroke the arch into perfection. Buildings were assembled out of such perfected components that evoked strong associations with the nature of her materials. Each material demanded its own attention to the smallest detail. The dream that such a wealth of solutions accumulated over centuries were within the reach of all and this not really that surprising either, for its delights did lie not only in the beauty of each solution as such, but was derived from the implication that it would be possible to be repeated. “So it looks more like the form of a technique than the technique of a form”. (Hertzberger, 1991: 239)

Place-capacity was identical to its description in the *mohlongoa fatsi*. It must be reiterated that although the description was of separate components arranged in such a way that the emphasis was not only on the actual places but equally on the space between them. In cases where the area of the unit was small and different places met or were touching the floor area of use was increased by rolling up the sleeping mat and storing it along the edge. Clothes were hung from hangers hooked onto the latte of the domed roof. Stored artefacts were placed in the left over spaces.

Civilized movement patterns of use became rituals of reciprocal habits. Such rituals reduced the scramble in executing daily tasks, the floor plane became a tabloid; it adopted a skilful placing of activity zones, areas of prohibition by taboo and left over areas of storing possessions a connected with sufficient manoeuvring space. **Reciprocity resulted from tacit or else prescribed use.**

Construction of the *motloanyane* and beehive roof

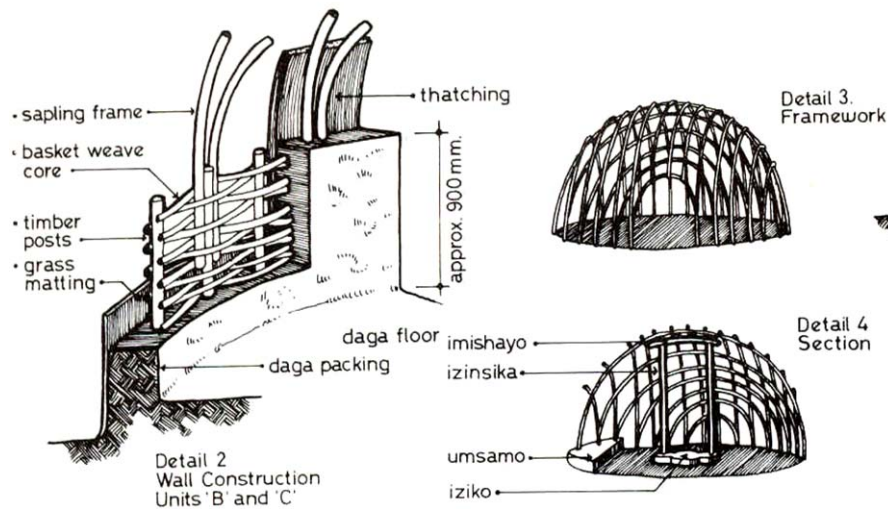


Figure 5.30 Construction method

Drawing; Frescura

The *motloanyane* hut with a wall built of earth to remove the thatch from contact with puddles of water and devouring ants was her act of innovation. A customary beehive hut is placed on top of the wall, although structurally integrated as can be seen in the drawing.

As with other developments this was not just the idea of one woman, but also the collective and creative effort of many. Each woman maker added her own special spatial touch as in the various figures shown. Some examples have a single hut with the horizon as boundary to the living space.

Others, as customary, have a cluster of three huts such as in Figure 5.20. The steps became an example of hermeneutic phenomenology; these steps acted as connected thresholds but more significant; as a living space connecting the functions of each hut onto a single open space the *lolwapa* (courtyard), the steps also became seats centralizing attention on the *lolwapa* with its own privacy boundary, the *seotloana* (reed screen). This screen was absent in some cases if the place as micro sky-space could be interactive with the collective community activities. In another case she carefully moulded the sidewalls and covered it with *litema* as her contribution to public space.

Each component in this integral system functioned independently from the others, but could be seen to perform its task within the whole. **Proximity of individual makers and their acquired but intended components were reciprocally separated by meaningful 'in-between' spaces.**



Van Eyck's 'threshold' was here her own innovation; geometry solved many design challenges, steps were shaped to be inclusive for loose conversation with guests facing each other (an intimate place) but also acted as stadium for watching acts of others while basking in the winter sun or catching the wind.

Figure 5.31 Typical cluster of *motloanyane* huts of one woman

Photo; M Becker

A cluster of huts of one woman with its reed privacy screen enclosing a place for interactive use. The huts have different functions, cooking, sleeping and guests. Entrance to the huts is emphasized with steps as threshold, again as social gathering and interactive place. This is the *BaSotho* built statement of Van Eyck, (1966); threshold as the 'in-between' of the realm of home, and also exists as his 'built home-coming'. The concept of Hertzberger; 'territorial tension' is evident. It must be emphasized that these implementations are derived from her innate intensions but also as a continuum of accumulated knowledge. **Reciprocity was a sequel from her translations and revival of cultural habits.**

On the level of form these steps derive their importance wholly from the uses to which they are put, these uses, although in the private domain, have an element of semi-public gathering but also a visual part of the public domain thereby giving the entire precinct

a spatial coherence and unity. Dark coloured reeds emphasize the entrance to the *lolwapa*.

This construct obviates the essential north orientation of a hut by optimising sun penetration into the lapa during winter. **Her reciprocity is due to a successful conceptual intention as response to climatic forces.**



Figure 5.32 A fragmented cluster combined as one home

The home-as-artefact grouped a *motloanyane* hut as bedroom with two other types with the same climatic response but different aesthetic solutions, all contained within a low screen wall.

Their buildings-as-artefacts aimed at quality on so many levels as are required to create space which did serve the exclusive rights of use to men but equal intense attention was given to places to serve all people. Their artefacts had to be both generous and inviting to all alike, it can be described as inviting if its intentions were as forthcoming to the outsiders of the bigger social structure as to members of their personal precincts and if it could be imagined applicable to other cultural contexts. **Cross cultural intentions became reciprocal when they were recognizable.** The unusual diffused and serene quality of light filtered through the small windows and door, evoked an extraordinarily peaceful and inclusive sensation. This quality was enhanced by the contrast between this inside and the bright sky outside. Small windows were dictated by earth.



Figure 5.33 Showing reeds and saplings in the aesthetic of a wall

This wall construction was not to allow for the interior of the home to be ventilated, it was pure and spurious rebellion. **Shamelessly blurring the boundaries of norms evoked her reciprocity.** In the last figure the square on its diagonal is purely decorative, but so consistent in applying rules of symmetry that the window on the right is therefore placed but blind. In this sense she derives pleasure in her vigour for change but also through the appreciation of the users will derive validity. In the process of creative execution she established her own roots of discovery. **Consequent rules guided her future experimentation; with successful resolution reciprocity was assumed.**



Figure 5.34 The threshold as hermeneutic living space

The pliability of thatch accentuated form and shelter of the threshold.

EARTH AS ABUNDANT BUILDING MATERIAL

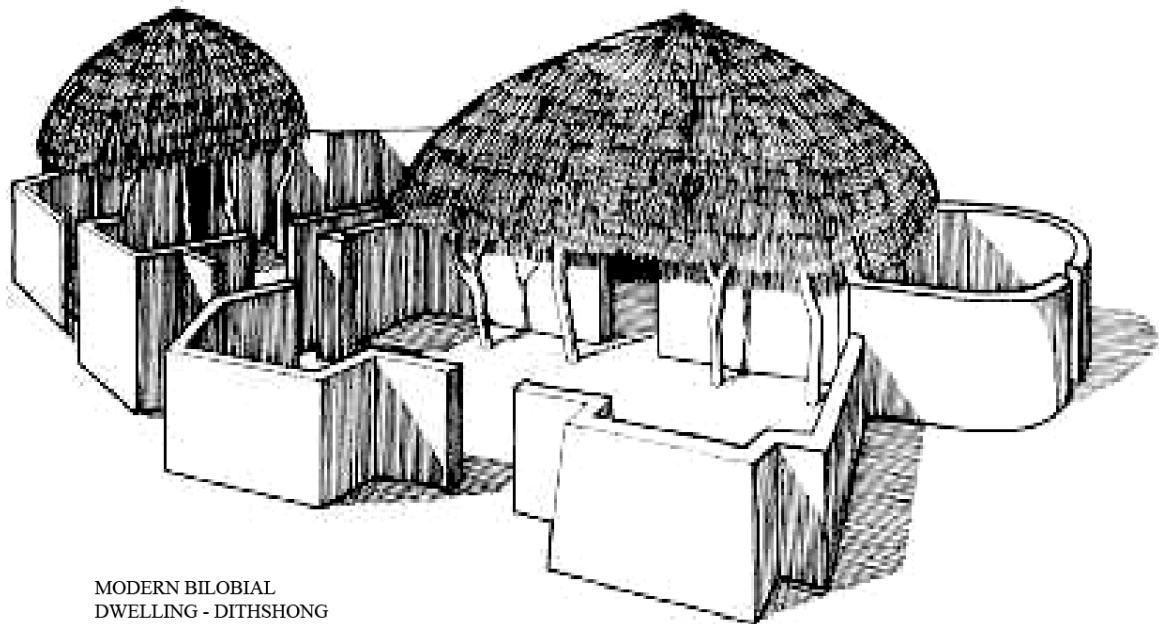


Figure 5.35 The contemporary hut with a multitude of courtyards.

Frescura, (1996)

The Euclidian geometry of the contemporary hut was influenced by the missionaries and colonialists. The women makers adopted but adapted the geometry to suit their intentions when implementing their cultural tradition. They assembled these rectangular plans into clusters of enclosed and open space. The main enclosed room had added and attached *lapas* into multiple solutions of place making. The successful result allows a complexity of new functions and future additions when required, be the open or closed rooms.

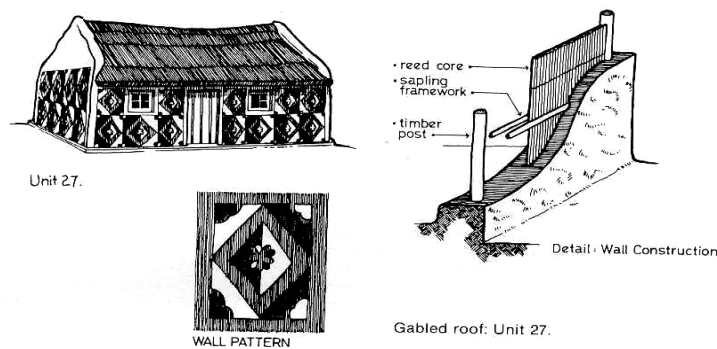


Figure 5.36 A contemporary *BaSotho* hut

Frescura, (1981)

Earth when wet could be used to fill gaps, the hand rounded off corners and problems of joints between seemingly incompatibly different materials became chances for design features. The facades became occasions for expressing individuality with the resultant reverie in making, and the consequent **reciprocity resulting from the appropriation and appreciation of the users.**

Lefebvre, (1991); spoke of this complexity in his sentences, ‘space as container of the affective domain’ as well as ‘space reads as embodiment of use and need’.

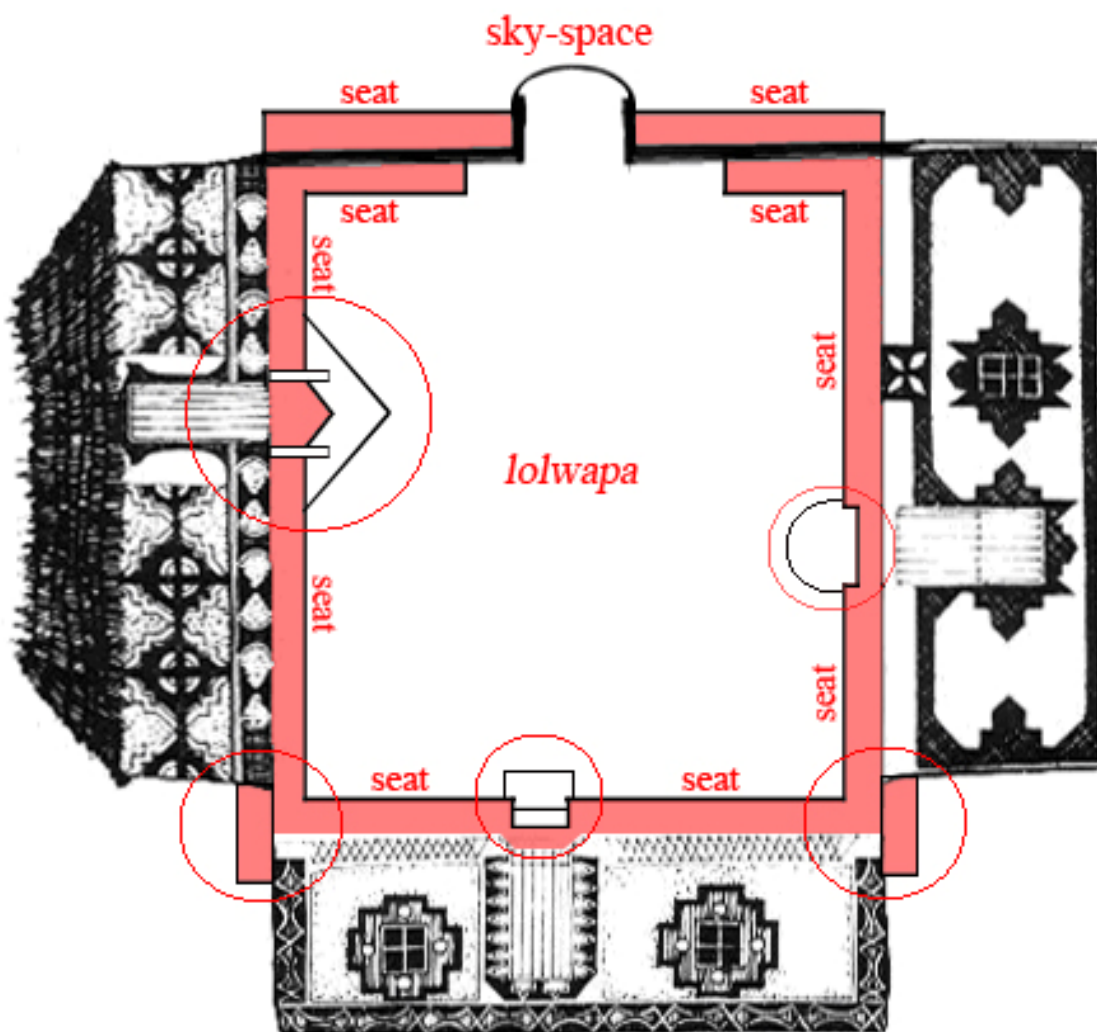


Figure 5.37 Place-capacity in a contemporary *BaSotho* settlement

Drawings of façades by Frescura, (1981)

By folding the façades upright a private sun-space resulted, its highly decorated walls added visual value to the room. It took on the quality of a rectangle of sky flowing out of the fourth boundary to a view of the horizon. The *lolwapa* was alive with the organization of everyday living routines.



Figure 5.38 A wall motive has inspired a pattern on a blanket and vice versa



Figure 5.39 A wall motive derived from a blanket

Photo; Van Wyk, (1998)

At the end of her effort of doing her *litema* she usually sings a song:

*My mother will like so much what I have done
That she will buy me a taffeta dress with a belt.*

This song was given by a *BaSotho* woman

EXISTING TOPOGRAPHY AS BUILDING MATERIAL

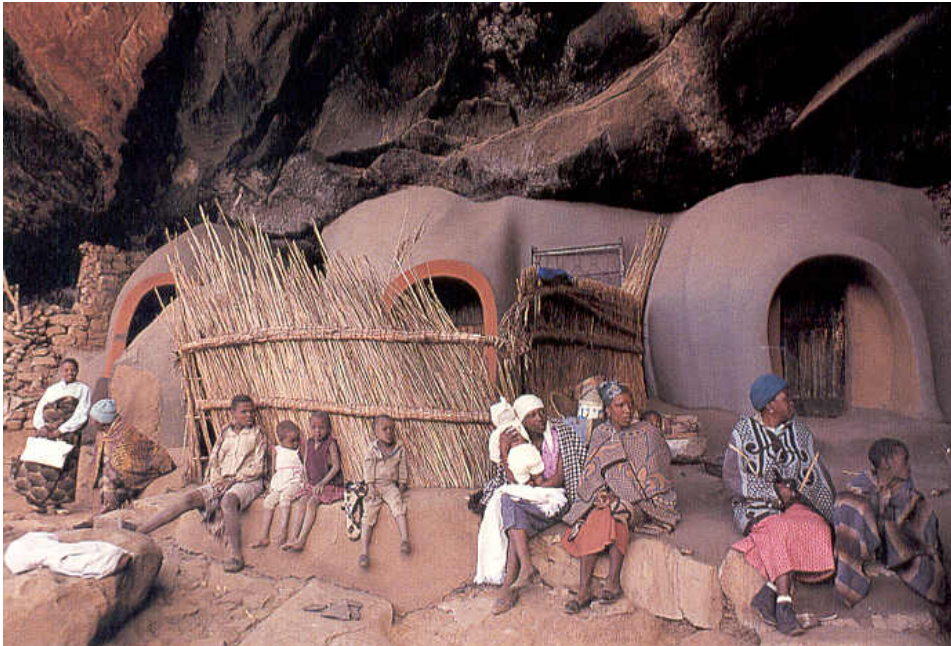


Figure 5.40 Some homes were built under the overhang of cliffs

Van Wyk, (1998)

A sandstone cliff obviated the need to use the traditional precautions against most of the climatic forces. An overhang facing east and if possible; out of the cold wind was a regular occurrence of Bushmen shelters as evident in sites of painted rock faces. Here the cliff face became a roof with the walls of the home-as-artefact as moulds; hollow containers into which the substance of lived experience was poured. Due to this the haptic quality of the moulds above was extended by the maker to evolve an artefact similar to a swallow's nest in method of making as well as in form.

The doors were again shaped and sized to the adult human body with an arch over; some were painted with a different colour of earth to reiterate the symbol of entrance; the only signs of applied decoration. The usual deep threshold has evolved into a terrace. Small entrances are still present. The seat and threshold spoken of by Van Eyck in Chapter two still remained as a

gathering place. The reed screen only provided privacy where needed. Place-capacity was again a hierarchical progression from public to private.

SHELF OF THE *BADIMO*

It acts as the typological threshold between physical and meta-physical reciprocity



Figure 5.41 The shelf of the *Badimo* in a long section

Drawing; Casalis, 1861

In the longitudinal section the shelf for the *Badimo* was clearly shown opposite to the entrance for the rising sun to strike it. The fact that this first light was named *Ikwezi* implied its special connotation within the cosmological life of the *BaSotho*. This was where the role of the woman became prominent; it was her sole realm of ceremony and council with the *Badimo*. The clay vessels shown on the shelf were for the exclusive use of the *Badimo*, she had to clean and care for them, as well as provide offerings to the *Badimo* when consulting them for guidance. Her clear responsibility of caring for the past, as well as through their guidance, the present and future, was to her a confirmation of her spiritual relevance and value beyond the purely practical, her cosmological reciprocity.

This was not only applicable to this form of hut, but applied to every type of building-as-artefact that functioned as her personal place of living, even in contemporary huts. The role of the woman became especially prominent – ceremony and council with the *Badimo* was the responsibility of the *BaSotho* woman. In the longitudinal section the shelf for the *Badimo* was clearly shown opposite to the entrance, the rising sun will strike it. The clay vessels shown on the shelf were for the exclusive use of the *Badimo*. The woman had to clean and care for them, as well as provide

offerings to the *Badimo* when consulting them for guidance. This responsibility of caring for the past and, through their guidance, the present and future confirmed to the *BaSotho* woman her spiritual relevance and value beyond the purely practical. **To realize such a design concern of hereditary continuity resulted in an expectation of reciprocity within *Botho* commitment.**

A new generation of sacred space for the *Badimo* was a display cabinet with the shelves made of earth mixed with horse manure, finished in glaring bright and contrasting colours of celebration to set off utensils of adoration, necessity, proximity and deference of the *Living-Dead*. It became the focus of the new rectangular house. Contemporary and urban homes further replaced this valued commitment with stainless steel cooking pots with its high gloss finish reflecting the sunlight.



Figure 5.42 A vertical shelf for the *Badimo*

Photo; Curtis and Strauss

The horizontal shelf for the *Badimo* was adapted within the contemporary hut to a vertical display of present crockery and utensils, the bottles of preserved peaches were for the *Badimo*. In this case the decoration of the edge of the shelf was from a newspaper was cut to finish off and bring a quality of beauty to the shelves. The fineries of the household will be displayed here, but never used. These

examples of the presence and consultation with the living-dead were firstly the internal and inward realm of reciprocity while the sanctity of the platform, shelf and vertical reflection of pots, to catch of everybody's eyes upon entry, displayed the internal and outward confirmation of her reciprocity.



Figure 5.43 A vertical shelf made of earth

Photo; Curtis and Strauss

In this case the newspaper was replaced by clay from an anthill mixed with horse manure to form variations of the decoration and bring a completely different quality of beauty to the shelves. The colour used to paint the back and inside of the shelves make for a rich aesthetic, especially as a contrast to the artefacts displayed. The intricate edge of the shelves were to resemble lace but made of earth from an anthill mixed with horse manure. The utensils and artefacts in actual use were kept in an adjoining room used as the winter living room, an 'interior *lolwapa*' but in fact the proper kitchen.



Figure 5.44 The stack of shining unused pots are for the *Badimo*



Figure 5.45 Interior of the actual kitchen showing the useable utensils

The shelf of the *Badimo* became a visual as well as physical representation of societal tact; a skill in winning expected *Botho* goodwill by doing the right things and to avoid giving offence to the living-dead. Validation was not embodied in the method of representation but in the intensions of acts of veneration. The glow of cooking pots was equivalent to all the other manifestations of compliance, in all these examples. **Utensils for everyday use represented a reciprocal depth of interaction between the living world with the previous daily existence of the *Badimo*.**

TYOLOGY OF ALLEGORICAL RECIPROCITY

A section of the chest of a human being read as a description in which the characters symbolized a deeper underlying meaning of the homes-as-artefacts. This is a graphic demonstration of the close correlation between the woman's body and her act of making a similar plan.

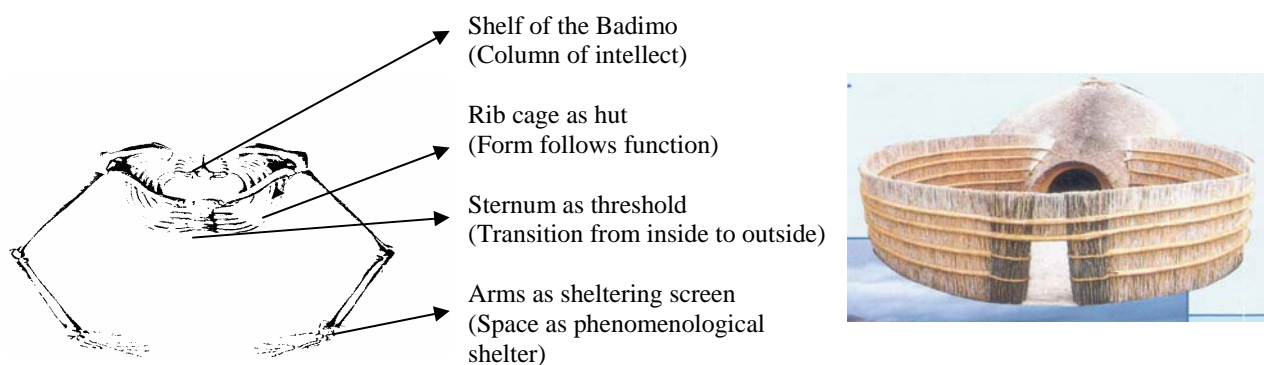


Figure 5.46 Bodily section read as allegorical plan of the hut

Skeleton; Mees, 1981; Photo; M Becker

Her knowledge of this section and its built parallel was coincidence, but it brought the insight of how her body and its actions were the essential medium of translation from idea to real home-as-artefact. **Reciprocity was achieved by realizing the deeper psychic act of making space.**

Perhaps the strongest realization of the correlation between the *BaSotho* woman and the home-as-artefact was seen when the skeletal section of the chest of a woman was read as a plan of the hut. **This realization, possibly subliminal, made her conscious of a deeper meaning behind the psychic value of the home-as-artefact, to her a reciprocal event.** Her gender roles and the

expectations of the traditions that precede and will follow on from her gave rise to her decisions and its proven validity.

Lived experience, phenomenology of reciprocity

In Figure 5.47 a plan assembly of skeletons of the cluster of huts as described in the figure above had the same intention as described, but graphically showed the fragmented yet unified and interactive nature of the assembly. Space between the huts as well as the *lolwapa*, open to the community and shy strangers became the main living space with the interactive connection to the enclosed huts. This interconnection created the completed home-as-artefact. Her constant use of every hut and movement in between created a dynamic similar to the her own decisions in the mental ideals while creating the cluster and imagining details and finishes, which gave her and other users the joy of involvement. This was the precursor to her own evolution, confirmation of her self-knowledge and her reciprocity.

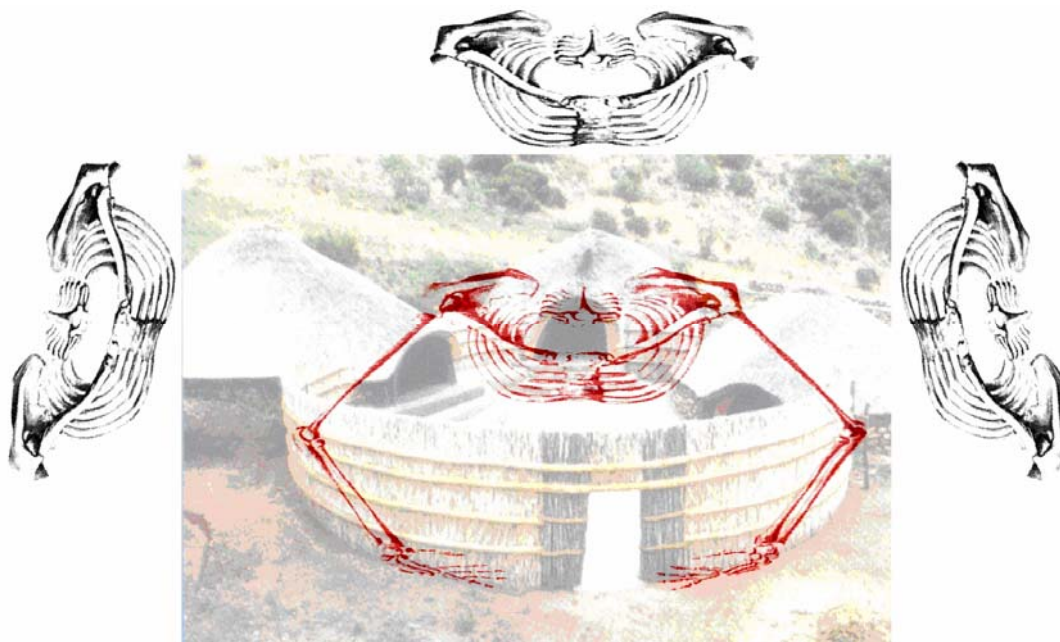


Figure 5.47 Bodily sections assembled as an allegorical plan of a unified home

Skeletons; Mees, 1981; Photo; Becker

The *lolwapa* was the place within each precinct acting as extensions to the big open sky-space where all the extended family interactions took place. They only withdrew into the hut to fetch things or escape from adverse climate. The use of space reiterated every single initial plan, with

ideas of what each of the homes were, and how it should be built; the ensemble worked because of the nature of its organic growth over time and each individual maker realized the concepts that were in her head. **Reciprocity resulted from the social cohesion but also the freedom of each individual to execute her intentions and make her personality visually obvious.** This obligation to give-and-take variety made co-habitation possible.

The male domain and kraal were uphill, a sign of the male hierarchical position. The male domain was not accessible to any female, food and beverage was brought to the opening of the enclosing privacy screen. Only men were responsible for the building of the hut and screen, hence its symbolic rough finish, even the thatch of the roof was rough to act as signal of the male domain.

The domain of the males



Figure 5.48 Females are prohibited from entering male domains

A symbol to outsiders is the roughly done thatch roof. Beverages and food will be brought to the entrance, but not beyond.

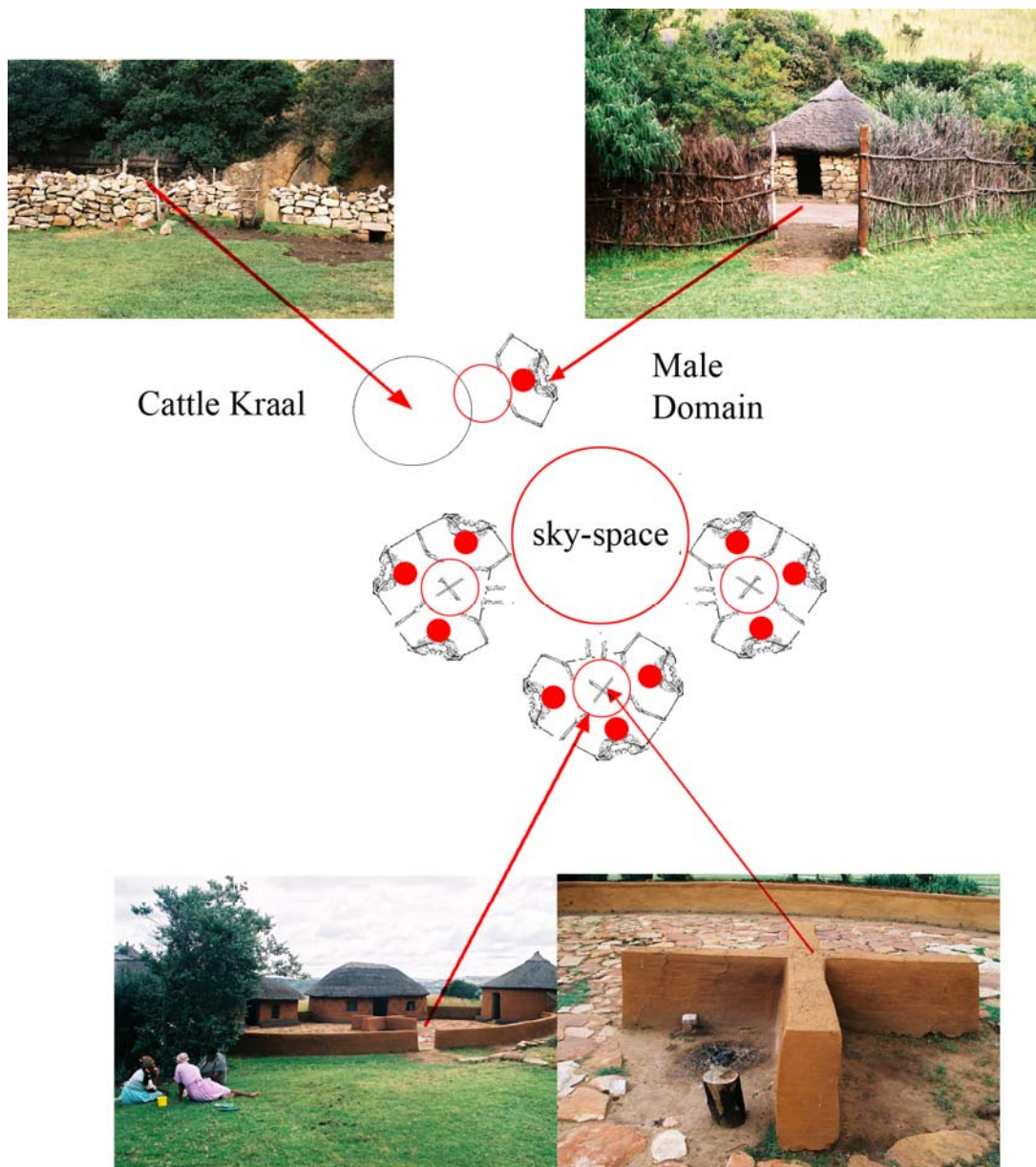


Figure 5.49 An allegorical layout of a settlement using skeletons as plans

Skeletons; Mees, 1981

Free access to a wife's domain was however also not allowed for the husband. A clay pot with its opening to the top was the sign of a welcome visit, when turned over, not. **This clarity of her control and privacy gave her identity, self esteem and the consequent evolution of reciprocity.**

Peripheral components as the assemblage of the home-as-artefact

The total settlement consisted of an assembly of homes; each within their own precincts, cohesion between the *lolwapas* surrounded by a collection of several other huts for male or female children as well as storage containers, chicken pens and stockpiles of cow dung . The total collage of these components was interactive with the in-between network of movement in open space, of equal value as the space enclosed. All acted within the innate need for affinity, all associated as home.

A characteristic aspect of fragmented macro scale of settlements and its micro homes-as-artefacts is the cohesion between all its components. Place-capacity was one such component; its strength was evident at all the scales of use and social interrelationships. Its wealth of interpretations in form and *litema* resulted in complexity of individual intentions but not done at the cost of immediate neighbours nor of the settlement. There was a communal agreement of symbolic languages built with the grammar of the same materials but without the monotony of strict compliance. Even the peripheral containers were integral parts of the whole and were not just additions done with minimal effort. **Reciprocity became a communal experience of making women.**



Figure 5.50 A storage space



Figure 5.51 Sunflower stalks contained maize cobs and cow dung as winter fuel

CONCLUSION TO CHAPTER FIVE

KEY ISSUES DISCOVERED IN THE REASONING

Chapter five coupled archaeological settlements and vernacular buildings-as-artefacts learning from historical interactive knowledge to present day users. Hermeneutic phenomenology was applicable because the women's execution of space making and its articulated 'place-capacity'. Secondary references confirmed that it must have formed part of past intentions, confirmed in contemporary ideals unified as a *BaSotho* evolution of social interaction as evident in the analyzed primary data. Past results of achieving reciprocity was induced from its present value as cultural phenomena.

Links and connection points between aspects of work, thought or ideas

This Chapter studied the buildings-as-artefacts already executed. Although an evolution of types was evident, these types were still built in contemporary settlements. It was dependant on personal choice or sometimes due to climatic, topographical or other forces. This body of executed

intentions provided a base for accumulated knowledge of practice to the new generation of subsequent builders.

INTERACTIVE COMPONENTS

Hermeneutic phenomenology

The research method used the inflexion of hermeneutic phenomenology which induced meanings by reading the buildings-as-artefacts as a process of reasoning. At the macro level this inflexion was aimed at a wider education, at the micro level the breakdown and explanation of each aspect was descriptive of individual participation at all the stages of a timeline. This inflexion was enhanced by Hertzberger, (1993) as author but also as prolific architect. His verbal emphasis on places of special meanings ‘place-capacity’ and its execution was directly descriptive of the woman’s physical implementation of these meanings.

This was further enhanced by visual material. With the *BaSotho* women an inherent subconscious understanding of hermeneutic phenomenology and its parameters enabled the women makers to emphasize in their built fabric the means to satisfy the needs for place-capacity and to provide physical solutions to actions of users.

Botho expectations were further described as was appropriate as described in Chapter two. This Chapter described women’s phenomenological or lived experience and how they have continuously added to inherited knowledge by experimentation with new intentions. These experiments were positive; if negative it would no longer exist but changed within the process of execution to become positive. Both negative and positive experiments became a body of knowledge that has influenced every decision a maker had to make along her timeline, her mnemonic influence spurred new innovations with the assurance that her intuition, consultation with her living-dead and social support guided her actions.

There were direct consequences to the phenomena; in the case of this thesis, reciprocity, but were only effective in application of learning and countering forces

to shelter from, but also to respect social constructs. Other authors articulated this inflexion with its interrelation to the hypothesis.

Reciprocity

Two results of reciprocity induced by present makers were from previously built examples as well as from discussions with role models from an older generation of makers confirmed that their internal being improved as an inward test of the extent of success and secondly; in the external world present makers lived and experienced successful places and saw the responses of users to the predecessors having been the comforters, brought delight, made beautiful artefacts, but most valued - created homeliness; a place to sleep .

These aspects influenced her actions of everyday. Their signs of success and outward tests of use became their extent of reciprocity. To achieve and substantiate reciprocity, sometimes unknowingly, the buildings-as-artefacts were used as mechanisms.

Language

Subtlety in detail of expression formed the core of *Langue*; practices of language, from verbal, symbols, body language to myths were applicable at every stage of historical development. This was particularly evident when present makers were able to enter into a subconscious discourse with past makers about intentions and methods of achieving their buildings-as-artefacts. The older mothers also played a role as teachers in this production or game of imitation, reiteration and application.

Learning

The fact that learning required a continuous responsibility from each individual became apparent in the application of lessons learnt from the existing precedent but also in its past innate application to hermeneutic phenomenology. The important root of learning, and of its application, started with the *Botho* expectations but it was an essential aim and concern at every stage of the woman's timeline to add to this body of knowledge.

Forces

Forces effecting space making and place-capacity was discussed, these were mainly; instinct, intuition, enjoyment and interdependence. Rituals, rites and myths

were also regarded as functions of affiliation and integration or acceptance, often done to achieve rites of passage within a continuum of kinship and innate knowledge. Forces, be they physical or intellectual interpretations influenced responses to respect social constructs, moral affirmation or inclusive shelter. Mother and home were in the past and present psychic anchors along each individual's continuous timeline. This was a reciprocal lived experience of hermeneutics also evident in the *BaSotho* cultural continuum.

Process

Recording history as a typology of physical reciprocity was a process obvious at a macro level of the time involved to achieve the evolution of typologies of solutions to achieve homes-as-artefacts. Actual living experiences also affected this evolution but the value of individuals in generating their development within a process of accumulating reciprocal confidence. Only through this involvement did discoveries generate new discoveries. It confirmed that through a process of acts in making a cultural continuum of lived experience was valued by present makers, but reciprocity was also achieved. By a continuous process of making from the past to the present humans were made.

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

From the precedent place-capacity was present as an essential component of lived experience, equally valid for group affinity but also a cause for reciprocal appreciation by individual users of her intended added value. In the two subsequent Chapters the principles for the existence of reciprocity was firstly used to derive implications from the actual acts of execution and possible evolution of her intentions, but secondly in Chapter seven to also test whether it followed that these actions created a communicative response of reciprocity from the users of a *BaSotho* woman's effort. Were her boundaries, symbols and mental intentions legible and useful?