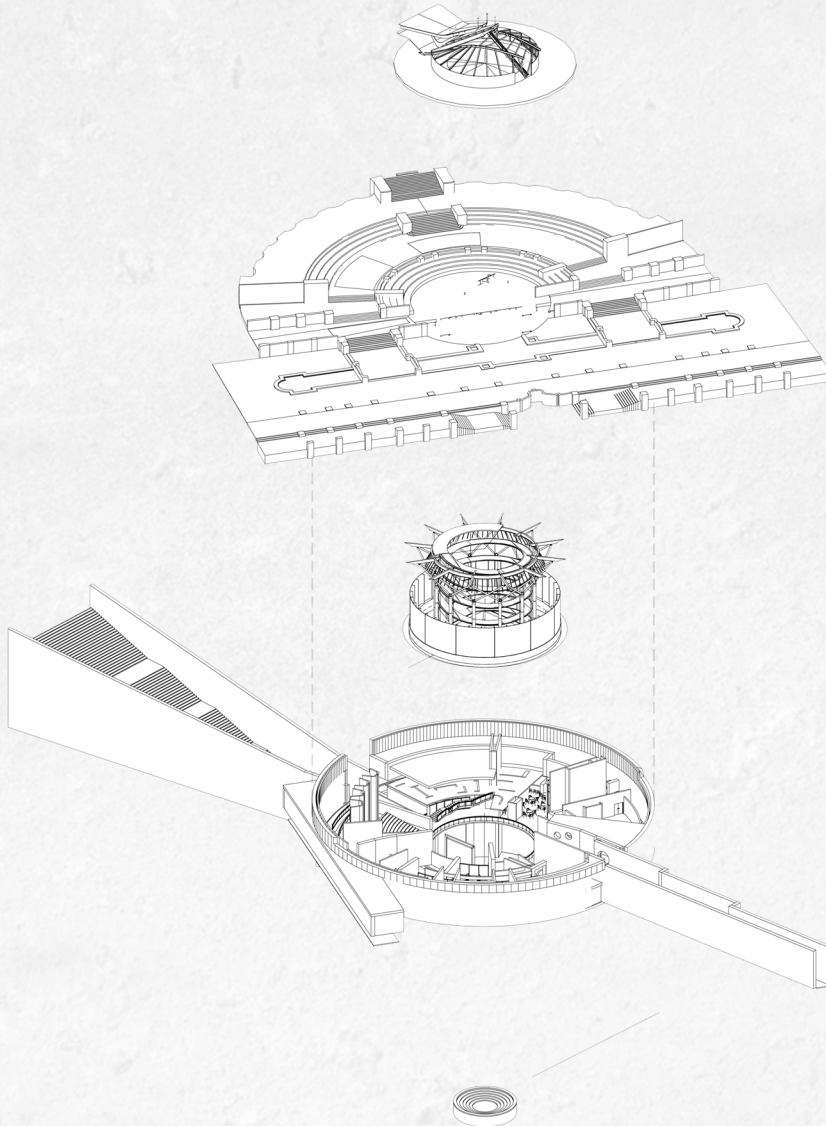


THIRD SPACE

Negotiating the third space as an emergent territory



by Arthur Lehloenyia

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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Architecture, MArch(Prof)

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As the initiates walked in their righteous path, the modern man traversed their path, conflict arose, a dialogue was initiated.

In a fragmented culture of strangers, wanderers and political heads, who has authority over who, who has the power, and who's heritage is it anyway? Mine or yours.

Dialogue and power

Figure 1.1: Collage showing initiate and modern man crossing paths (Author, 2015)



Figure 1.2: Image of Union Buildings ((Sahistory.org.za, 2015)

Acknowledgments

**For parents and friends
For the strangers wanderers and politicians
For me, for Self and understanding**

A special thanks to:

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Abstract

Place and identity are bound to one another. The places we grow up in and the places we inhabit in the city shape us and construct our identities. When humans are displaced from original habitat and into another, a change in mental construct occurs.

This dissertation explores notions of power and identity expressed in the Union Buildings, as well as change in political regimes and the representation of buildings under such regimes over the span of the Union Buildings from their time of conception to current day. This will be investigated in terms of the initiation school ritual using the backdrop of the Union Buildings as a study into the possibility of a new programme allowing for a new image within changing cultural beliefs. Whereas the current Union Buildings is representative of the two cultural/political groups as means of reconciliation preceding the Anglo Boer Wars, the proposed programme opens a new collective memory; one which represents unity amongst all people in South Africa.

The architectural intent seeks to explore the relationship of Self and Other, conceptually and physically, by confrontation or contestation of the existing boundaries and controls that occur in and around the Union Buildings. Furthermore, the architecture seeks to disrupt traditional notions of the 'plinth' and the 'boundary' and introduces a third space in which the users of the space can inhabit.

The project moves beyond representation of conflicted pasts in current museum typologies, and enables the platform for a new identity to be formed, both architecturally and in the selection of the programme. The proposed programme of the political school facilitates the interception of the structure into the Union Buildings by a forced interaction between the politicians and the public.

The narrative

This document serves as a recording of multiple narratives emanating from different environmental biographies and their encounter with the city and finally the Union Buildings. The narrative serves as a guide to some of the concepts explored as well as setting the context for the proposed building and its programmatic functions. It should be read as a guide to understanding the nature of Self and Other and the encounters they experience with one another.

The story consists of four characters: The politician, the tourist, the foreigner and the citizen. These are the characters that feature or play an integral part in the narrative of the Union Buildings.

The *citizen* who wanted his voice to be heard but was vocally incarcerated for having an opinion. Idi Amin once said, I paraphrase, ‘everyone is entitled to freedom of speech, what I cannot guarantee is freedom after speech’. (Falkvinge, 2014). The citizen goes onto a self-exploration, whereby he wants the politician answerable for his actions.

The *foreigner* who was not admitted in society because he was different, could not speak the same language as the citizen. He gives an account of his background [Lesotho], describes his journey from Lesotho to Pretoria, he describes how the colonial man was able to intercept his land and make him wear the commoner’s clothes, he begins to question his apparel; the blanket and the commoner clothes he wears inside. Is he himself or has he been covered by the colonial cloak. He questions his identity, Who am I? A masked colonial man myself?

The *politician* who had power and was unconsciously (or consciously) constructing negative narratives of how people should live their lives. He sets rules, buildings plinths so that he can watch the citizens below. He fortifies walls to protect himself and forgets that he too is a citizen and must be answerable to his actions.; as it was in the Roman and Greek times of the temples, where the

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agora was a place of gathering. The politician himself explores identity; 'here I am representing a democratic world, yet I sit behind my desk that a colonial man designed. Who am I?'

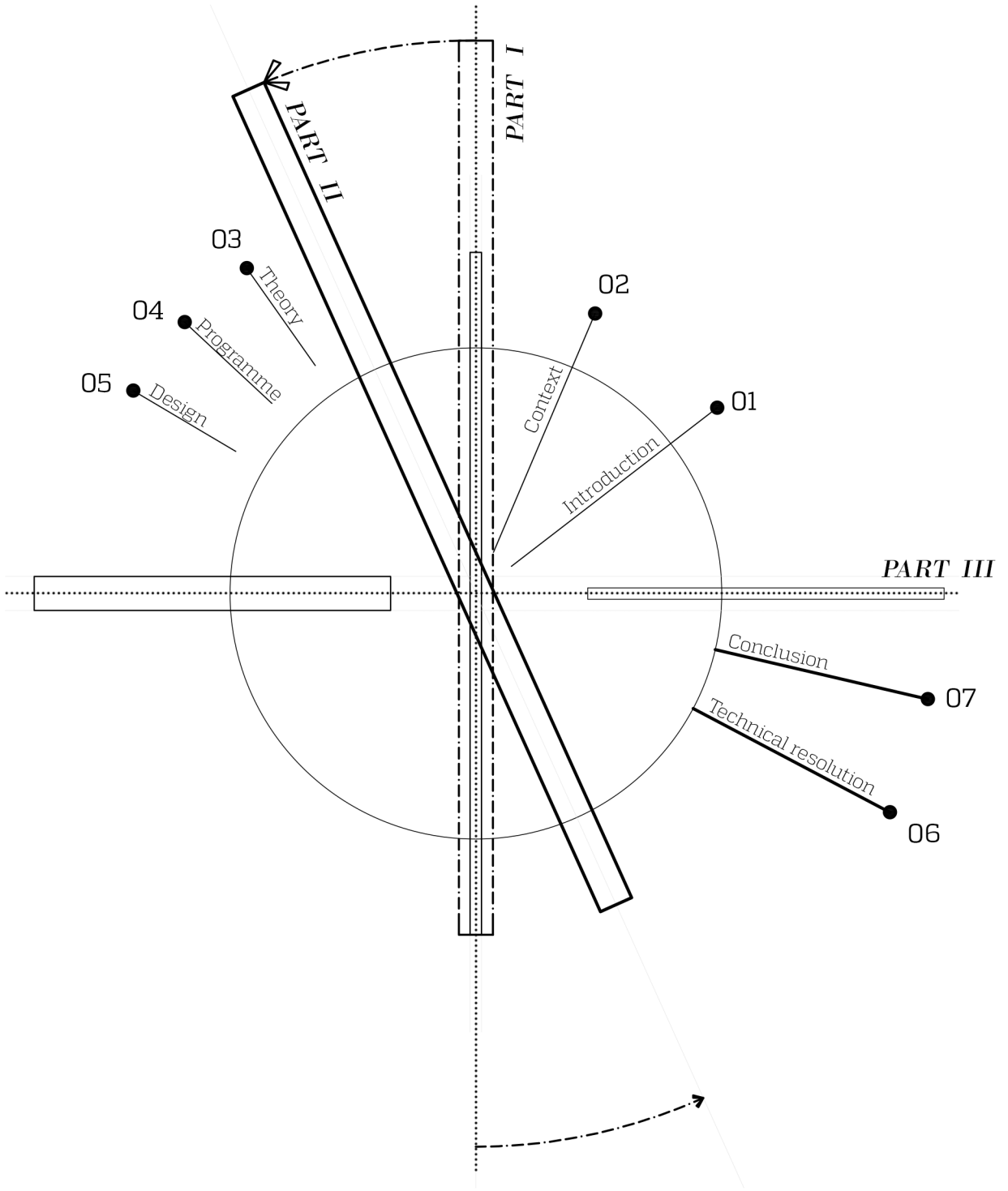
The *tourist* who was not bothered by the realities of South Africa and instead decided on the archive of images to globalise the experiences he went through. The tourist has fantasies of ruination. He wishes to gain access to building to reveal all its secrecy. The architectural residue of this monument offers him a pleasurable view, and the fragments of imagined narrations of place.

The story is not so much about capturing the citizen or the admittance of the foreigner in a foreign state but gives an overview of his wishes to see the Union Buildings transform into a more accessible building. The narrative should then begin to dictate the building and how it is designed.

The first component of the programme allows the structure to be a reminder of history and 'oppression' and secrecy. The second component of the programme is an act of forgetting, to forge a new narrative that includes Self and Other as Collective memory.

The narratives confront current notions of power and question the plinth as a negative tool in constructing barriers between the 'higher powers' and the public. It ultimately leads to the new dimension of space; Third space.

We realise the building as a colonial piece of architecture, but within changing cultural conditions, the author questions the static nature of the building; not being allowed to evolve or morph to current cultural conditions. It's no more about the colonial man, the apartheid oppressor or the masked democratic man who has no identity, but more about collectivism.



PART I [Context]

Colonial mimicry

- 00 Preface
- 01 Introduction
- 02 Context

PART II [Theory]

Confrontation

- 03 Theoretical discourse
- 04 Programme and precedents
- 05 Design development

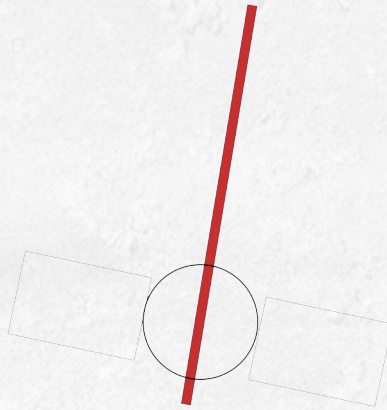
PART III [Structure/ resolution]

Initiation school

- 06 Technical resolution
- 07 Conclusion

PART ONE

COLONIAL MIMICRY



INTRODUCTION

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Client

Programme

Hypothesis

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Problem Statement

'We can learn about a political regime by observing closely what it builds' (Freschi, 2014).

The construction of South African spaces in the colonial era was represented through gestures of grand colonial imperialism that flourished the city. These gestures can be appreciated through the design of Church Square and its surrounding buildings. In the same manner the apartheid era witnessed the rise of modern architecture in the city by the widespread use of steel, concrete and glass. The democratic political ideology has not been able to seek its own identity regarding post apartheid public architecture; instead their power has led to the removal of past representations and memorabilia.

The conception of the Union Buildings was realized as the unification between British Imperialism (first face of power) and the Boer Republics (second face of power). In a changing society, where democracy has brought upon notions of collective identity and freedom to all, the third face of power lack representation and leads to the question; *Can architecture address changes in meaning of place of Union Buildings to accommodate the repressed identities in a post democratic society? With the change in political landscapes, can architecture address notions of alternative and marginalized identities?*

Classical architecture imbued itself through order and symmetry. The power that lies in the Union Buildings is exemplified in its strict ordering system, the symmetry, its location (through its visual prominence) as well as the concept of the plinth. How can architecture intervene to disrupt colonial notions of power and instigate a new ordering that represents that of collective identity?

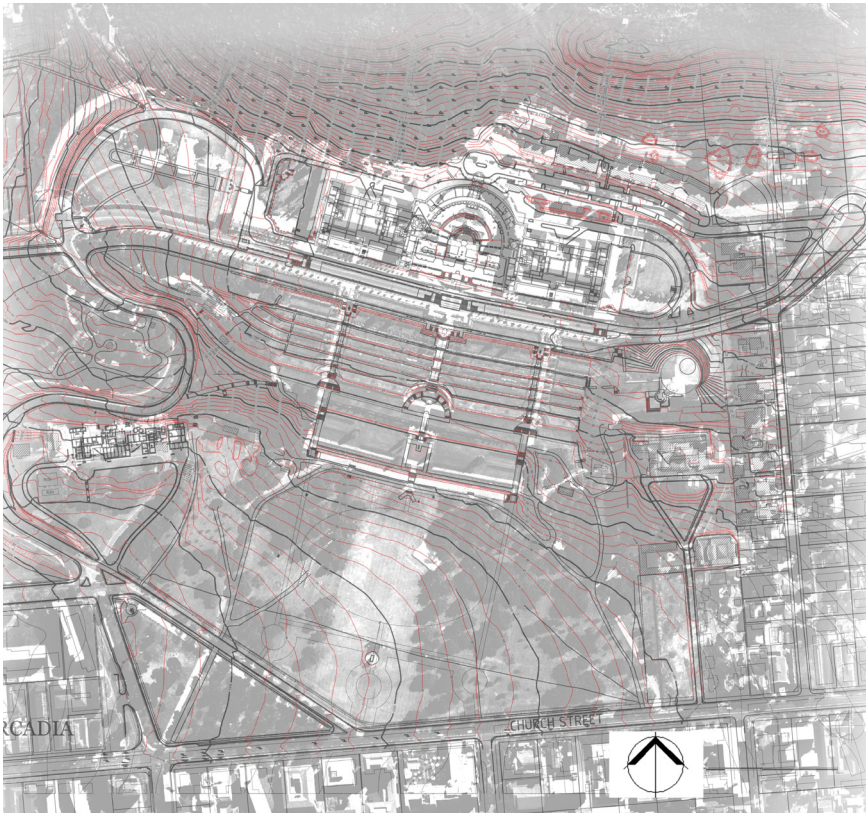


Figure 1.1: Site plan of the Union Buildings (Author, 2015)

Site

The focus of investigation is on the Union Buildings precinct (Pretoria) including the back of Union buildings and the terraced gardens that lie below it. An Urban Framework analyses the existing precinct and realizes the site as an opportunity to reconnect the grounds of the Union Buildings to the city, both directly and indirectly. The Union Buildings is currently used by the Ministry of Presidency and public access to the building is forbidden unless by invitation or prior arrangements. The access restriction initiated an investigation of building in order to discover latent opportunities for probable interventions with regards to entrance, connections, movement patterns

Client

Four user groups were identified that inhabit the site on a daily basis. The **politicians** are the authorities that are situated in the Union Buildings and have access to all parts of the precinct. The **citizens** of Pretoria are the residents of Pretoria. The **foreigners** include people not emanating from the country, who hold permanent residency and have foreign citizenship in neighboring countries. The foreigners seek employment opportunities and belong to all middle and lower economic class. The **tourists** are those who wish to feed their fetish of ruination in structures, and are present to document analyse and view the Union Buildings as a space of consumption. They are amused by colonial buildings, negotiated territories and are in love with the idea of secrecy revealed.

The four characters identified cross paths and form part of a concept of Self and other, whereby confrontation occurs, that leads to identities colliding, being apart and thresholds being softened to allow for the relationship of self and other to unfold.

Programme

The programme seeks to find appropriate strategies and interventions for engaging with the collective memory. The Union Buildings has undergone different and contrasting political ideals over its historical timeline. The current political system of democracy does however lack an identity of its own, one that represents the liberation and emancipation from colonial and apartheid rule. The proposed building looks at the formation of a new school for politicians by process of understanding the political narratives over the period of the Union Buildings from inception to current condition leading to a proposed intervention by introducing a new political ideology that aids in a new layering of the new ‘Union’.

The proposed buildings consist of four components catering to the four user groups identified; visitors’ centre, a museum of the courtyard, a market and a new political school. As a response to issues raised, confrontation rooms [booths] and new access of public in what was formerly private is reintroduced. The internal courtyard of the Union Buildings is opened to allow public access as well as the repressed identities to bear witness to what Herbert Baker dedicated to them. It should allow for continual learning and reinterpretation of ideals in a changing political climate. Furthermore the building should confront aspects of existing building by facilitating programmes that allow for continual learning, through architectural incision, play of light and darkness, volumes and proportions of spaces. The market should redefine the edges of the government road and breed new life on the streets for the sustenance of the local economies.

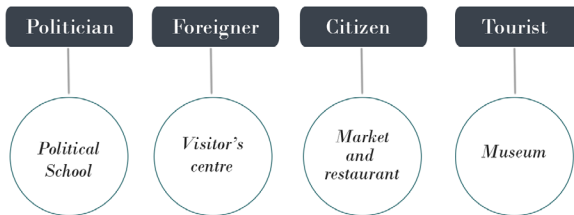


Figure 1.2: Diagram showing relationship between programme and user (Author, 2015)

Hypothesis

The current state of the Union Buildings is for the Department of Presidency. The project site currently exists in a state of monumentality. The redevelopment of the site as new grounds for a political school will enable a platform for new interactions between the public and private. The architecture will embody new meanings over time, and acquire a new historical layering of identity, in which a rejection of political ideals is accomplished, and rather the ‘collective memory’ (or identity) is considered as a kind of political regime.

Sub questions

What is the nature of the architecture? Where could the language of the new architecture stem from?

How can spaces tell the story of the new political school?

How does the architecture establish a linkage between the past and present?
How does the building contest current notions of power to form new power relations? And on what scale of sensitive to radical reconstruction does the intervention lie?

Methodology

The research methodologies were used in the design dissertation to inform the design process:

- To understand the historical narratives as means to identify new nation building techniques that give new identity to place

The study includes a phenomenological study engaging in photographic studies of the old and new translating the findings to an urban vision and design intentions. The experiences of the Union Buildings led to a political inquiry into the city and the Union Buildings. The framework thus addresses such needs and the journeys, thus analysing reflecting and translating the information.

Historical studies were undertaken through literature review to understand the heritage of the place and its significance. The study makes use of archive material to investigate the structure of the Union Buildings. The construction images reveal processes undergone by Herbert Baker, the labour men and the

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natives that worked on site. This assists in strengthening the argument for an imagined structure in the proposal.

Appropriate heritage charters were consulted to form a basis for the new architectural response. The charters are not strictly followed by offered a margin in which the design could take place.

Buildings of a similar nature to the proposed design and structure are used as inspiration for principles used within the dissertation.

Delimitations

The project's delimitations are an understanding of accurate drawings in the structure due to the state building being inaccessible by public. For example the state of the sandstone where the proposed intervention is initiated.

The study focuses primarily on the theoretical reasoning of a possible strategy for an intervention, and rejects certain charters which govern the long term preservation of the structure regarding heritage value. Instead the standpoint of the author is based on changing perspectives in cultural beliefs and representation of political ideals.

Limitations

Over the years of existence of the Union Buildings, the Union Buildings has slowly regressed forbidding people from entering the building, due to security reasons. The original plan by Herbert Baker allowed public to access the grounds, with stairs leading up to the level of the amphitheatre, leading to the back of the Union Buildings. Due to barricaded staircases and entrances, the project is limited in the respect of full analysis of first hand experience, taking into consideration the time constraint governing the research.

Furthermore, due to the Union Buildings attaining a high heritage value, it has become a pivotal project in which archival information is by formal application to Department of Public Works. Thus, the research limits itself in attaining accurate use of the building and its structure thereof. Photographic studies and interviews have however been made use of to understand construction processes, material usage and the genius loci of the place.

Terminology

Identity:

Identity is culturally bound and creates a set of conditions for human beings to exist in. Different groups assume different ways of living. The culture that one, or a group of people assume is thus a contextual issue and gives rise to personality formation, specific cultural acts to enhance or continue the ritual for many generations to come, rites of passage and affords communal experience. One realises that identity does not exist as a singular entity but is influenced by geographical location and socio historical conditions.

Collective identity (Collectivism):

Collective identity refers to a set of condition crafted by cultural group to create a common image which integrates them in a group existence. Within the current document it refers to developing a set of common interests among previously conflicting groups into forming the single image. The period before 1994 witnessed separatism amongst many groups in South Africa and aimed to resolve the issue in post-apartheid era by the creation of the collective identity through embracing differences and the design of accessible public spaces. Whereas identity is a singular entity, collectivism embraces 'identification', which is the realisation of an identity within a socio-cultural context.

Collective memory:

The memory of a group passed down from one generation to another. The knowledge transferred aids in cultural branding. The collective memory comprises of individual collective identities and enriches a cultural group. In South Africa, multiple narratives occur and force cultural tensions between groups. The collective memory accepts differences and merges narratives to form a singular narrative that aims in nationalism.

First face of power:

The term, coined by the author refers to the Union Buildings. It is representative of the Boer Republics. The conception of the Union Buildings by architect Sir Herbert Baker was for the unification of Boer Republics and the British Imperialists, as means of reconciliation. First face of power refers to the ideologies and beliefs governing the Boer Republics, in terms of its culture and political stances. First face of power is thus an image, or power struggle formed by the group. Through their knowledge and ideologies, a kind of power

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is formed that can become influential within its own context, and carry out specific political actions according to their manifesto.

Second face of power:

The second face of power is representative of the British Imperialist. Similar to the first face of power, their ideologies allow them to incept certain principles according to their manifesto which governs the narration of cities, policies and other implementation procedures.

Third face of power:

The third face of power is a different form of power, in which lies the proposed intervention. The third face of power focuses less on the idea of political manifestos and tends to power lying in the people (or citizens) of that particular context. Whereas colonial constructs or monarchical regimes look at absolute power, the third face of power is the group not represented, i.e. marginalized groups within the South African context. The idea of the third represents a collective identity, one that is not representative of the Boers or the British, but the other identities that exist in South Africa. The third face of power encompasses all groups to form a common identity. Within this lies the concept of the Third space.

First space:

Refers to primordial societal settings, in which identities are natural given and unchangeable (to a certain degree). The first space is a primordial setting, which has existed as long as the existence of that cultural group. It also referred to as the domestic environment where one identifies himself within people of similar traits and beliefs. It can be a village, a family or a place considered home.

Second space:

Second space is representative of institutional powers, or civic space where people from different backgrounds engage within one another.

Third space:

The third space offers a presentation of Self in everyday life. Life becomes a performance space in which Self projects his image of Self onto Other. The third space allows us to imagine new uses of space that are productive for the future. It is a place where oppressor meets oppressed. It is a hybrid notion that blurs the line between Self and Other, the physical and mental world. The spac-

es can be liberating, unprogrammed, non-racial, inclusive of all types of people and neutral in nature. It is also a social space.

Self:

A balanced unit, comprising of a family or home (First space). It is a person's attributes that allows him to distinguish himself from others. His image is a reflection of himself, which is branded from the first space in which he belongs in, where shared artefacts accumulate over time to create culture.

Other:

Refers to a person that is different from Self. Self can be Other in the image of someone that is different from him. The other can be an outcast, a foreigner and someone who practices different beliefs from the context of Self.

Citizen:

A resident of South Africa who belongs from the 'habitat', namely the city. The resident is in view of the Union Buildings and is directly influenced by the activities that occur at the Union Buildings, as well as those around the city.

Foreigner:

Someone who is not a citizen of South Africa, but through the interaction of the people in the city, wishes to be incepted into the city as one of them, so as not to suffer from any kind of oppression.

Tourist:

Emanates from a different country and is on a temporary visit to gain access into a different culture through his interaction with cultural buildings, significant spaces in the city. The tourist does not entirely experience the harsh realities of a city.

Politician:

A representative of the people who assumes office within a political system. He must be answerable to the people, listen to the people and make necessary changes which benefit the people of that city. Currently a politician is a glass figurine- untouched, impenetrable and containing himself in a box in which his voice is heard but has no physical interaction with the public.

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Marginalized identity:

Attaining a powerless position within a society. The seclusion of the person is eminent and has little to no say regarding the change of policies.

Suburban enclaves:

The barrier that exists between suburbs that leads to a heightened fear of another suburb. In some cases, physical boundaries are evident through fortified walls that inhibit visual contact. This causes urban islands resulting in lack of interaction with people.

Initiation school:

A form of institution that is practiced that results from a need to change in state from one state of being to another. Initiation school has three different stages; separation, liminal and incorporation, which can be summarised as the three stages of the rites of passage.

Cultural bandit:

A person who has disregarded his own culture and assumed a new cultural identity in a context different from where he grew up. This migration can be due to financial circumstances and other push factors that require him to leave his state and assume another. As this transition occurs, his culture gets questioned, and through a drain of his original Self, the cultural identity he was head is at risk at diminishing.

Secret space

An intimate space. A place of reflection. It is a peaceful sanctuary. The spaces are experiential with the use of natural lighting, which have connotation of the body being the mediator between himself and a greater force.

Incision of space:

A medical term used for the purposeful cut into human flesh. A direct interpretation can be made with built form, in which a new construction process cuts through an existing building to expose its internal structure, as an act of the healing. The cut is a calculated act, which aims to re mediate.

Amphitheatre:

In Greek and Roman architecture, it is the open circular buildings with a central space where drama performances happen. The amphitheatre is surrounded

by stairs allowing many spectators to view the acts.

Public space:

An open social space, accessible by the inhabitants of a city, in which various activities occur such as parks for recreational activities.

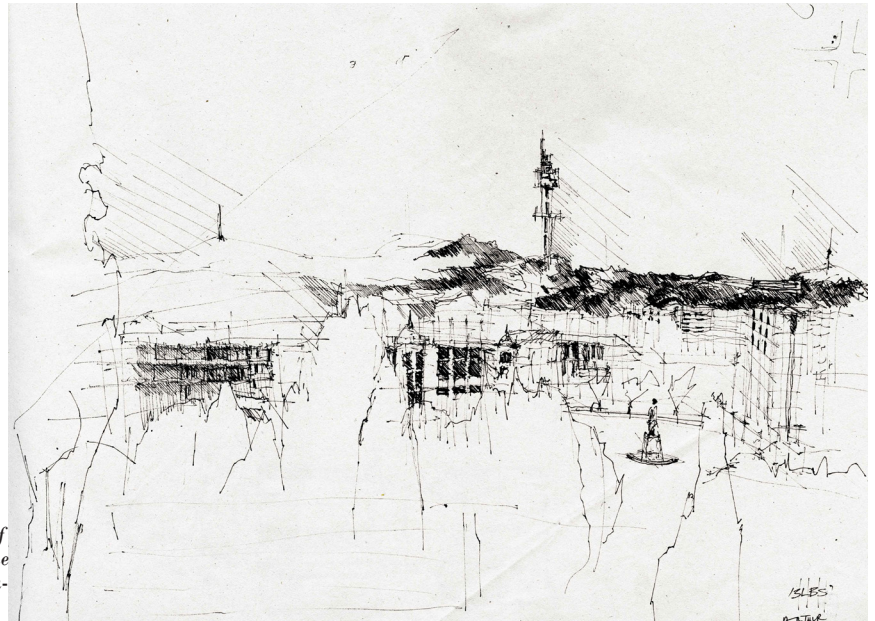


Figure 1.3: Sketch of the city drawn from the Union Buildings (Author, 2015)

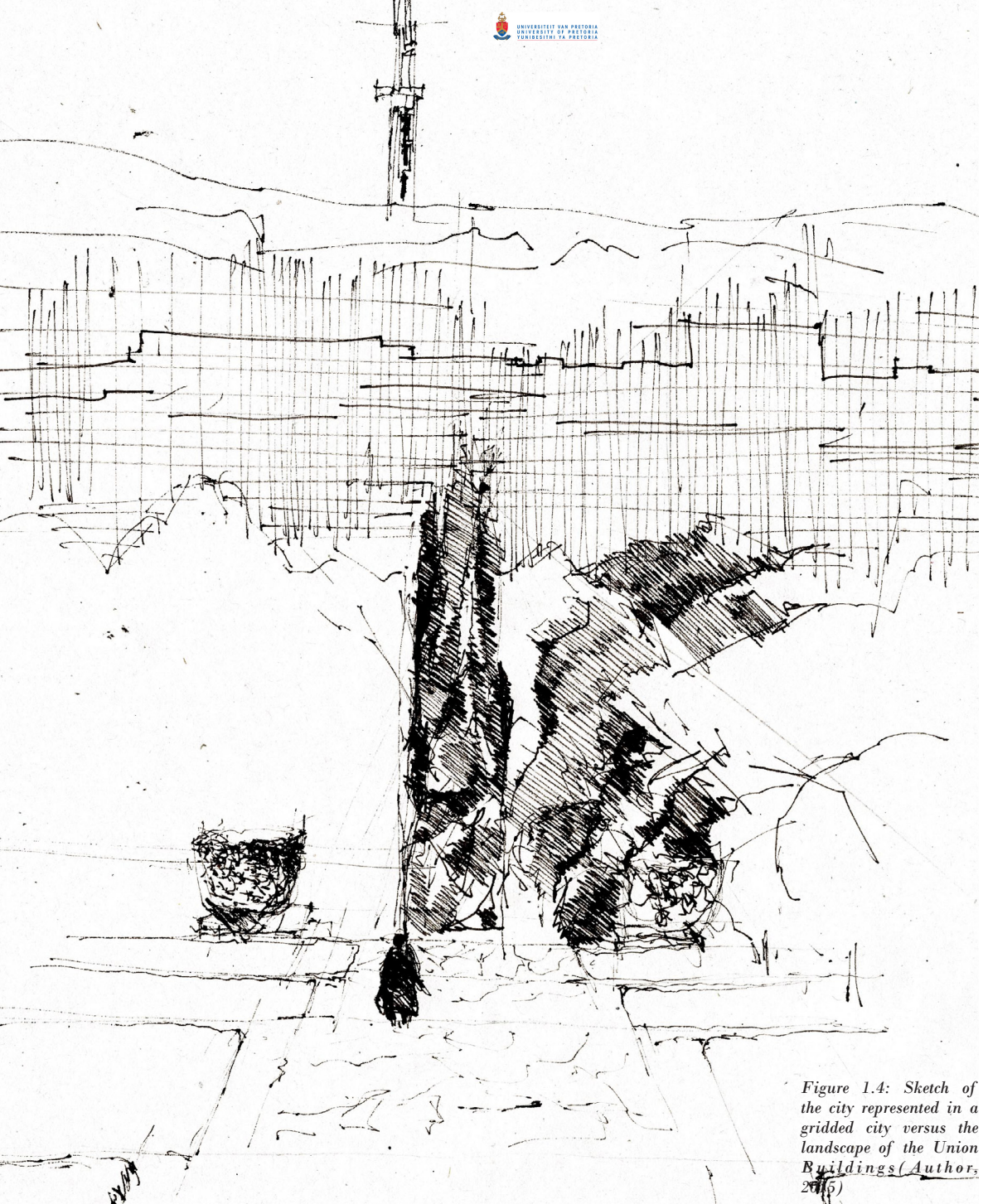


Figure 1.4: Sketch of the city represented in a gridded city versus the landscape of the Union Buildings (Author, 2015)

