

01

INTRODUCTION



1.0 INTRODUCTION

South African cities reflect Apartheid policies of spatial segregation. They exhibit cases of sprawl, fragmentation and isolation, leading to partial thresholds and inefficiencies in social equity. The city of Tshwane is no exception. It has populations of marginalized and impoverished groups residing in remote settlements far from their places of employment. The 1994 adoption of a new constitution in South Africa opened new avenues to address and redress these spatial characteristics of apartheid planning, to create better urban environments.

This dissertation is a reaction to the 1994 constitution, exploring ideas of spatial integration and identity in the previously marginalized community of Marabastad in Tshwane. At present, Marabastad has a harsh atmosphere of crime, unemployment, homelessness and the lack of a sense of community. The prevalent issues in this community are the needs for social infrastructure and identity: an identity that reflects and accommodates the different cultural groups, and promotes re-integration of spaces within Marabastad and the Pretoria C.B.D. A social platform for expression is a means to address the lack of social infrastructure. This platform would encourage both spontaneous and organized events to activate the urban surface of Marabastad.

In addition, the platform becomes a transformed urban configuration promoting intercultural communication within Marabastad and the city of Pretoria. The platform's constructs attribute permanence and temporality, in an attempt to engage in social dialogue with the individual. In the publication "A study of forms and functions, 1969:ix", Labelle Prussin reaffirms that the identity of the individual is developed by validating their existence, therefore the idea of critical difference assists in informing the design. Critical difference accounts for the essential fact that individuals are not alike and their differences affect the lifestyle of the community in its entirety. This, allows the individual room for the transformation and evolution of their identity with time.

"Similarly, programming is an investigative task, which, when thoughtfully pursued in relation to the issue or topic identified, can produce new relations that are in turn supportive of contesting familiar functional spatial relationships", Coetzer, N (2004).Architecture South Africa, November/December.

The dissertation attempts to apply this investigative task to identify relevant programmes. The programmes take into cognizance existing social, economic and cultural relationships within Marabastad and the city, to facilitate an integrated platform that enables a conducive environment for growth and development of the individual. They re-addresses socio-economic and cultural issues bestowed on this community to provide pleasurable use of the urban space (instating social equity and infrastructure). The use of integrated communal social platforms is synonymous with South African architecture prior to colonial and apartheid rule. These platforms were efficient in utilizing South Africa's climatic conditions, whilst facilitating a sense of community.

1.1 LOCALITY

South Africa

Tshwane forms the Northern section of the Gauteng province, which is to a large extent the backbone of the South African economy, with Tshwane as the administrative capital city of the country.



Fig 1.01 Locates Tshwane in the Gauteng province in South Africa

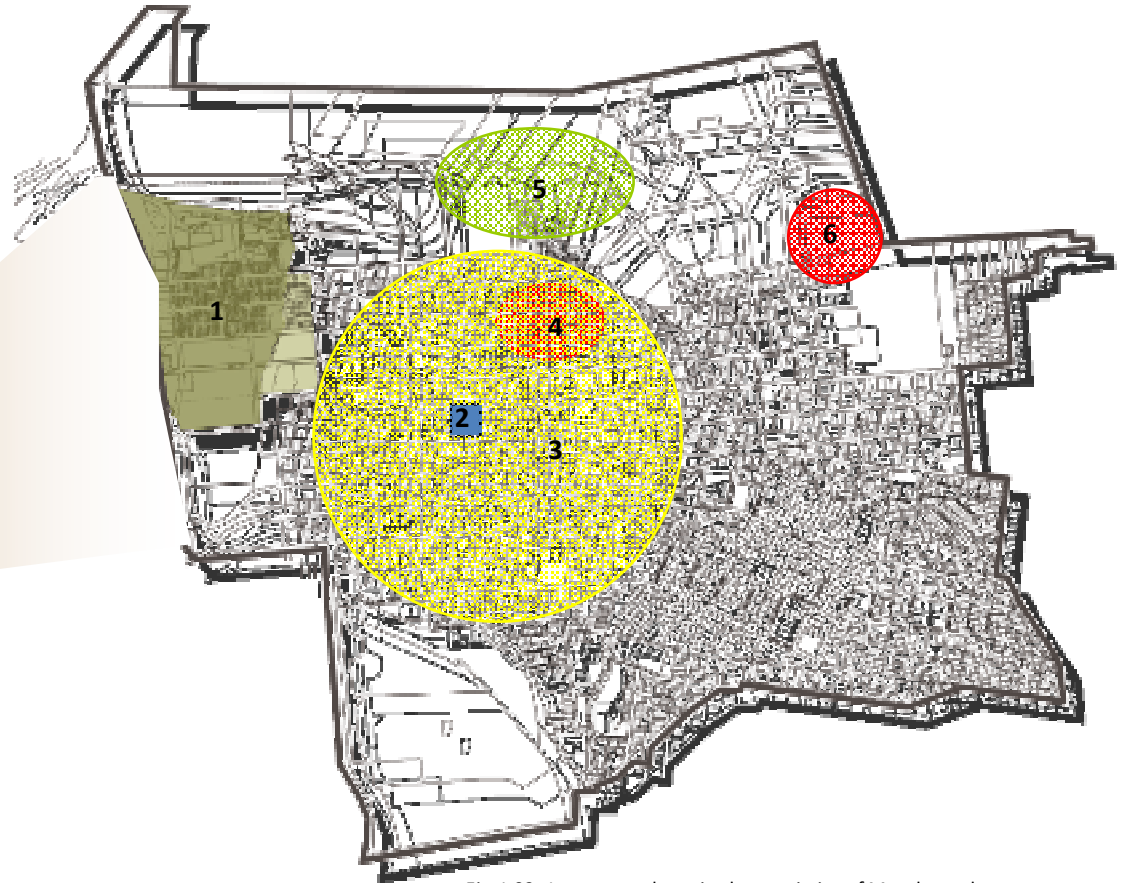


Fig 1.02 Important places in the proximity of Marabastad

1. Marabastad
2. Church Square
3. Pretoria C.B.D
4. Pretoria Munitoria
5. Pretoria Zoo
6. Union Buildings(President Offices)

1.1 LOCALITY

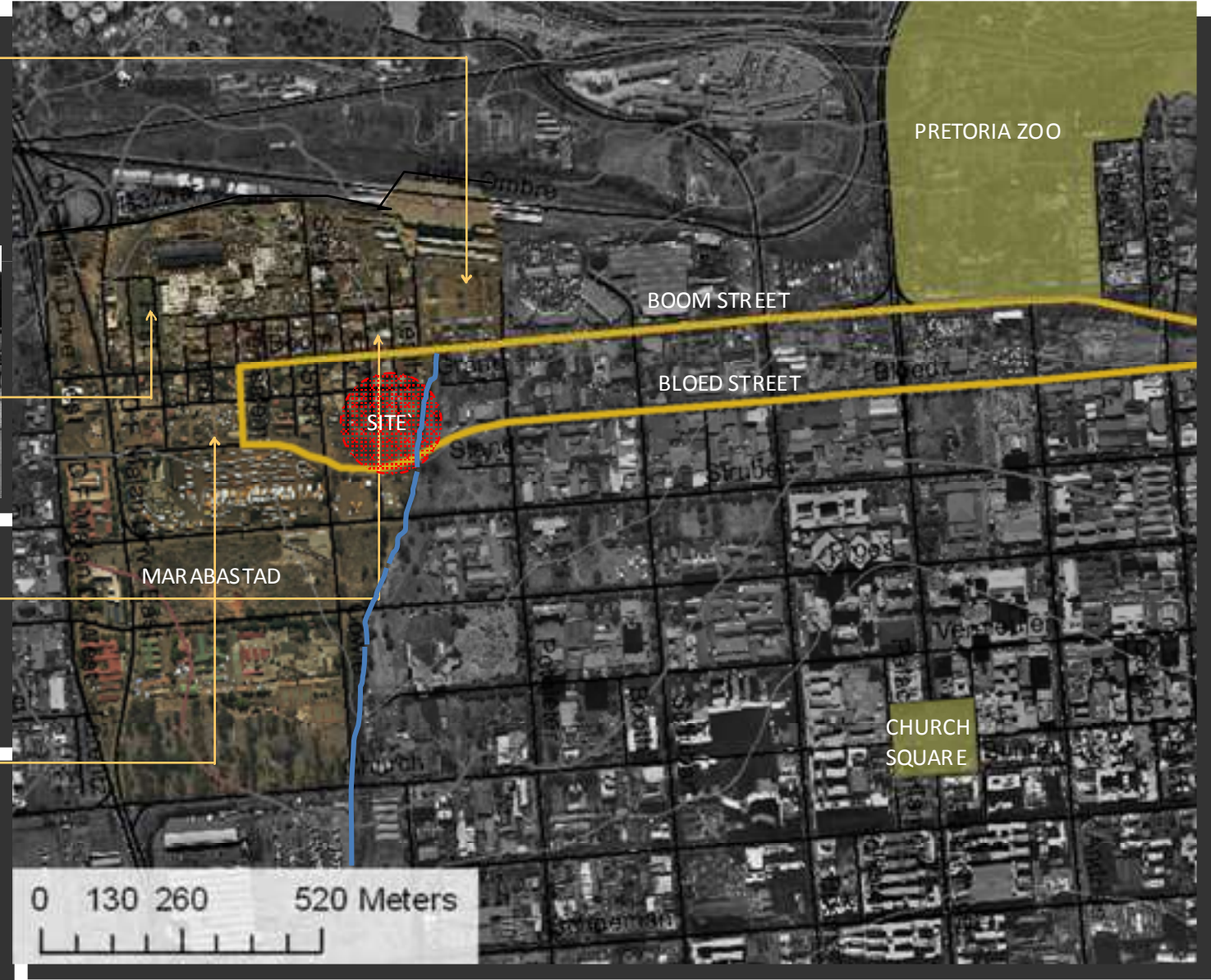


Fig 1.03 Electricity pylons with the city as a backdrop (2009/03/20)

Fig 1.04 Bus sheds used as markets (2009/03/20)

Fig 1.05 Daasport ridge north of Marabastad (2009/04/03)

Fig 1.06 Informal meat market (2009/03/20)

Fig 1.07 Marabastad in context (2008/03/20)



1.2 BACKGROUND

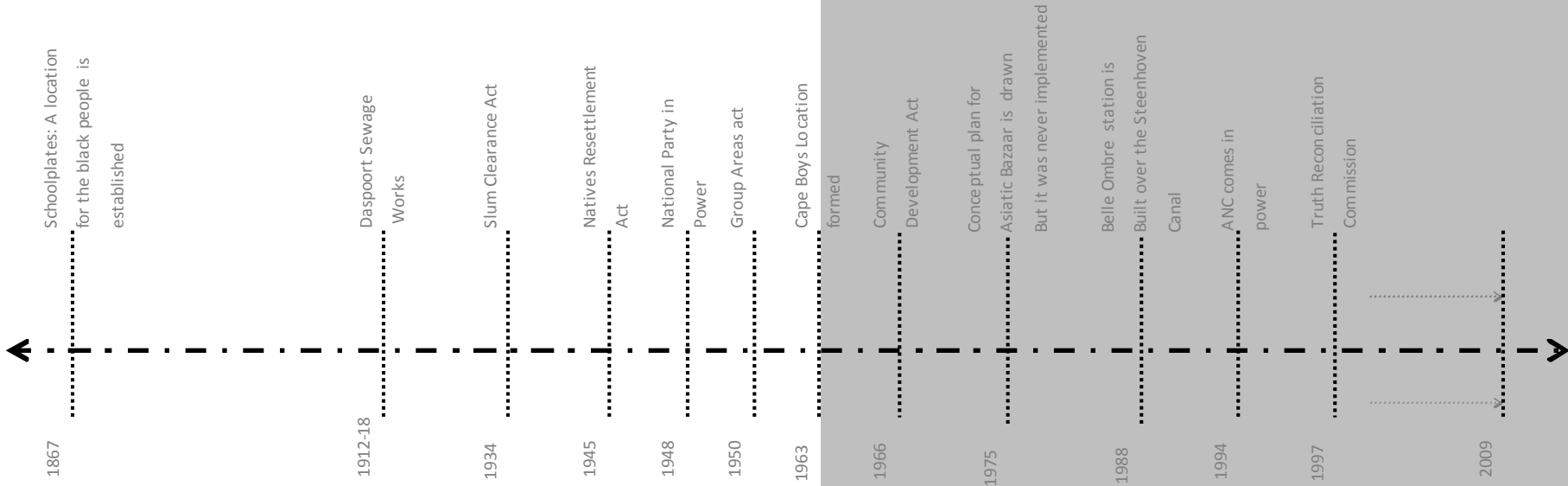
Marabastad has a narrative of collectively marginalized groups. Their struggle against apartheid policies that undermined their right to legal possession of land within the city dates back to the establishment of this community. It developed on Pedi chief Maraba's kraal as an informal location in 1867, housing black people not residing on the premises of their employers. Marabastad developed into a culturally diverse community with the inclusion of Asian and Coloured people who sought to exploit opportunities within Pretoria. The lack of land, unregulated services and growth to the community's population resulted in decay and unsanitary conditions. This compelled the institution of the Administrator's notice *no. 561* of 1925, which formally defined and imposed apartheid planning on Marabastad (Meyer Pienaar Tayob, 2002:34). The policy's racial classification and failure to address proper planning and service delivery did not hamper the vibrancy of the community. It rather stimulated a stage for political expression amongst the disenfranchised community.

In a move to further curb "black" urbanization, the apartheid government instituted statutory and regulatory policies. Amongst others, these included the Slums Clearance Act of 1934, the Natives Consolidation Act of 1945 and the Group Areas Act of 1950. These policies aimed to segregate races, disintegrating the cultural diversity through racially dividing the inhabitants of Marabastad, and relocating race groups to remote townships removed from the C.B.D and from each other. The Community Development Act of 1966 conclusively froze all development within Marabastad, disintegrating it from the C.B.D. Consequently the area deteriorated into a slum infested with crime, squatting, insufficient and poor service delivery, and unregulated trading.

Today, the once vibrant cultural hub is largely a transportation node with large bus, train and taxi depots. According to the City of Tshwane Integrated Transportation Plan 2006, an excess of 40 000 commuters distributed amongst these services pass through Marabastad daily, with the majority from Garankuwa and Mabopane (apartheid relocation townships).

1.2 BACKGROUND

Timeline of Events in Marabastad



1.2 BACKGROUND

1934

The figure ground is an illustration of a vibrant, functional and integrated society uninterrupted by apartheid policies. At this time Marabastad had a functional square which operated as a grid generator, framing the fine built fabric at close intervals to create dense intimate spaces that encouraged social interface.

Fig 1.08 Marabastad before 1934 removals, with a Functional square



1950

The demolition of the Northern segment is a result of the implementation of the Slum Clearance Act, the Natives Consolidation Act and the Group Areas Act. In contrast, the south west segment is densified with academic institutions that solely served the Asian community. Consequently, the once vibrant square is partially diminished largely to the community's obligatory densification in an insufficient space.

Fig 1.09 Marabastad After Slums clearance Act, Northern half demolished and square is also demolished.



1998

The figure ground is an illustration of the existing fabric in Marabastad, and is a result of the Community Development Act. It undoubtedly shows the disintegration of the grid system and the abolishment of the fine urban fabric to make way for large overbearing structures inappropriate in this context.

Fig 1.10 Current context of Marabastad.



006

1.2 BACKGROUND

Activities

The Displaced Community

Political: As oppression intensified in Marabastad, so did its status as a stage for political expression. This resulted in the founding of the Transvaal head office of ANC in Marabastad (Blueprints in Black and White, 2002:65). Simon Matseke, one of the founding members and later president of the organization was instrumental in placing Marabastad on the map through the organization of large demonstrations (Meyer Pienaar Tayob, 2002:35). In addition, the arrival of Mahatma Gandhi to Pretoria marked the beginning of long Indian resistance to unfair practices of the apartheid government. Through actively leading non violent campaigns, Gandhi managed to have several discriminatory laws rescinded or amended (Blueprints in Black and White, 2002:68). Upon returning to India, his work was carried on by Ama Naidoo, a Marabastad resident. She was actively involved in historic events such as the passive resistance campaigns of the 1940's and leading 20 000 women in a campaign against pass laws. She later assumed the posts of vice president of the Transvaal Indian Congress and the Chairperson of the South African Peace Council (Meyer Pienaar Tayob, 2002:53).

Artistic: Simon Matseke's son Thabang became an acclaimed artist advocating for the use of art as a therapeutic activity which could give the community the opportunity to fully express themselves creatively against an insensitive backdrop of politics. *"In so doing, he has left a cultural legacy rooted in a very particular South African historicity and African Consciousness..."* (Meyer Pienaar Tayob, 2002:37).

Concurrently, Es'kia Mphahlele and Can Themba, both from Marabastad, became prominent Journalists for Drum magazine (The first black African magazine in South Africa). They were also internationally recognized authors for publishing autobiographical accounts of their experiences in Marabastad. These shed light on the injustices and struggles of the Marabastad community under apartheid rule.

Marabi Culture: This is an early music and dance form orchestrated in Marabastad in the 1920's and 1930's. This culture resulted as a tool for expression against apartheid oppression. It evolved into a social and cultural ritual performed on *Marabi Nights* in Columbia Hall in the heart of Marabastad (Meyer Pienaar Tayob 2002:40). It also became a "place" to escape, to forget life as they knew it. Today *Marabi* music is an underpinning component of South African Jazz and is still heard in the sounds of the likes of Hugh Masekela and Miriam Makeba (Prominent South African musicians).

1.2 BACKGROUND

Activities

The Current Community

Currently, Marabastad is devoid of urban and social infrastructure resulting in sporadic social activities at street corner's, taxi ranks and trading stalls. An analysis of Marabastad reveals the abolishment of prior communal social activities such as *"Marabi nights"*, which have been replaced by broadcast media (television and radio). These target select groups (taxi drivers and informal traders), further marginalizing excluded individuals within the community. Larger social gatherings are accommodated in *"lost spaces"*, which often serve dual functions as dump sites and car mechanic workshops. These areas pose health and ecological hazards largely because rainwater drains filth into the Steenhoven spruit canal to the east of Marabastad. This canal pollutes into the Apies river which flows north and east of the C.B.D.



Fig 1.11
A group of people surrounding a TV (2009/04/25)



Fig 1.12
Illustrates lack of urban furniture. (2009/04/25).



Fig 1.13
Dump site next to a tent used as a barber. (2009/04/25)



Fig 1.14
Gathering node next to Steenhoven Spruit canal. (2009/04/25)

Relevance and Application

Identifying displaced socio-cultural activities and comparing them to current activities or lack thereof, clarifies existing problems that resulted from this displacement. This illuminates problem areas and design possibilities for re-instating social equity (impartiality) and urban infrastructure. The objective is to create a platform that promotes and facilitates social and cultural vibrancy which advocates an identity contextually relevant. This identity results from the use of the platform which comprises of hierarchies of spatial organization and thresholds.

1.3 SITE

Site

The proposed site is located on the periphery of Marabastad, making it a gateway to the CBD. It is an effective catalytic location for the re-integration of Marabastad and the C.B.D since it is easily accessible from either direction and is next to an arterial public transport network which is also largely used for pedestrian access into Marabastad. The proposed site is next the Steenhoven Spruit canal and is currently used as a dump site and taxi cleaning and servicing area. There is need to resuscitate the canal, to create a recreational and pleasurable route across the north to south of Marabastad.



Fig 1.15 Site location



Fig 1.16 Billboard post to the west of the site



Fig 1.17 Panoramic view of site in relation to the city



Fig 1.18 Cityscape



Fig 1.19 Views & pedestrian access



Fig 1.20 Dump on the site

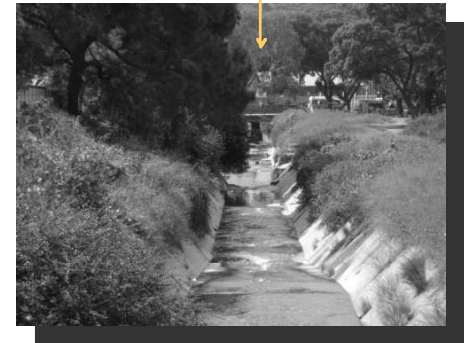


Fig 1.21 Scale of Steenhoven Spruit

1.4 CONTEXT



Fig 1.22 Illustrates the current scale at the periphery of Marabastad

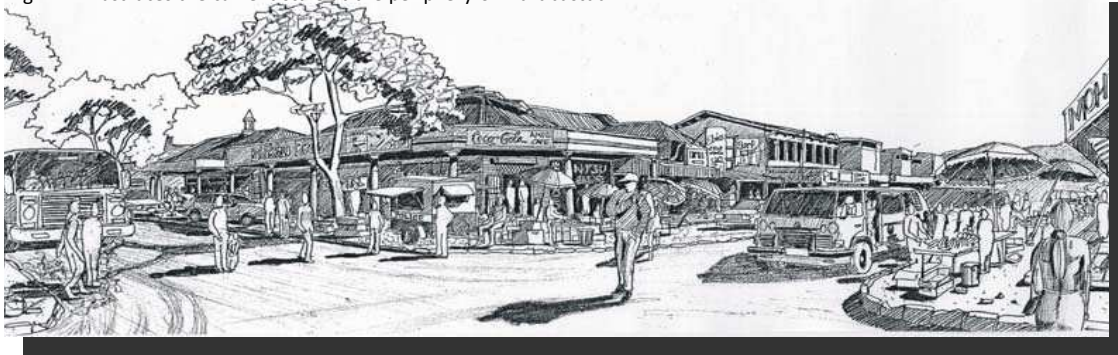


Fig 1.23 Illustrates the current scale of Marabastad proper



Fig 1.24 Illustrates the difference in scale and proportion between Marabastad and the CBD



Fig 1.25 Illustrates the scale and proportions within Marabastad proper

Scale

The scale of Marabastad is different to that of the C.B.D. The study area consists of mostly single storey buildings and occasionally two to three storey buildings which are later additions during the transitional period of government marred with confusion in policy. The train station and shopping centre built during this transitional phase have occupied large pieces of land, thus breaking the grid system. This has impacted on the circulation patterns with this community. Large land parcels were cleared to make way for a highway linking the west to the C.B.D, but this did not materialize. Today these land parcels act as buffers between Marabastad and the city.

Density

The density of Marabastad is unsustainable and underutilizes its potential, leaving large open pieces of land (Lost Space) and in some cases, transforming them into dump sites, taxi cleaning and servicing areas, and/or gathering nodes. This has created problems with hygiene and security

1.4 CONTEXT

Topography

The site is situated south of the Apies River which runs on the foot of the Daasport ridge

The proposed site falls at a gradual slope of 1:36 from southwest to northeast and it is 1300m above sea level

Watercourses

The Steenhoven Spruit flows from south to north along a small concrete stormwater canal. It is a tributary flow into the Apies river in the north of Marabastad.

Geology & Soil

- Marabastad is of Precambrian origin, and is part of the Gauteng province
- The area is largely of andesitic lava in alternate layers with other compounds such as shale and tuff.
- The stability varies across the area, ranging from shallow lying rock and andesitic soil commonly found in low lying areas.

Climate

- The temperature is relatively high throughout the year apart from the winter months of June and July where they are moderate to low. In summer the high temperature and high local humidity cause discomfort
- Summer rainfall reaches averages that surpass the 700mm p/a mark, with heavy downpours and thunderstorms...resulting in precipitation of up to 100mm an hour.
- Hail is common and often severe
- Cloud cover is 33% annually, 13% in July and 54% in December
- Humidity ranges from 57% early morning to 29% at 2pm in September and from 75% to 48% in March
- Prevailing winds turn from northeast in the morning, to north west in the afternoon. Cold spells bring winds from the south during winter

www.weathersa/climate/climastats/pretoriasats

1.5 DESIGN PROBLEMS OVERVIEW

South African spatial resource distribution between population groups is uneven due to apartheid social and physical planning policies. This imbalance impacts the daily lives of the Marabastad community, which lacks social amenities in the form of cultural and recreational facilities. As a consequence, it has necessitated disproportionate expenditure of time and money by the already impoverished community, further marginalizing and impoverishing it (Blueprints in Black and White, 2002:72). The lack of this infrastructure is evident in "lost spaces" where disparate activities of gathering and waste disposal share a common space. This poses both health and environmental hazards to the community and its resources. One such natural resource is the Steenhoven spruit canal.

The Steenhoven Spruit canal flows through the proposed site and it shows cases of pollution affecting the current flow. Sections along the canal are slowed down by litter and filth, leading to stagnant water ideal for mosquito breeding and flooding. Other sections suffer from direct human interference, such as bathing and excreting along and within the canal. This has deemed the canal unsafe and disposed it of its social and recreational potential.

This dissertation addresses the lack social infrastructure by proposing a piazza to meet the community's cultural and recreational needs. The design proposal resuscitates and integrates the Steenhoven Spruit canal with the social platform. It also investigates existing spatial organization and social patterns to create a stimulating environment conducive to intercultural interaction. Programming of buildings surrounding the piazza is supportive to the social activities within the piazza and these include a theatre, jazz club and exhibition, nursery school, to name but a few.

Research questions:

- Does the intervention enhance the environment, enabling growth to the community?
- Does the intervention respond to existing patterns of circulation and interaction?
- Can an intervention be developed to enhance Marabastad's resources?
- Does the design proposal address needs of the community as formulated by the Marabastad interest group?
- Would a cultural and recreational facility improve the quality of life of the urban users?
- Does the proposal fit into the urban context?

1.6 OBJECTIVES OVERVIEW

Social and Cultural

Migrants and immigrants create complexities in spatial ordering, but also offer opportunities, diversity and growth crucial to the development of a city.

- To create an integrated platform promoting social interaction and intercultural communication between the current community of immigrants, migrants from other provinces, and the re-integrated community. It is a communal social stage discouraging fragmented social gatherings around televisions and radios. A piazza forms a means to realize this platform. The community's identity results from community's use and the individual's transformation of the piazza. This transcends the piazza from an architectural intervention to a place of belonging which offers security, pleasure of use and ownership. Ownership is essential because it encourages the community to maintain, safeguard and preserve this platform. This process allows integration of fragmented spaces within Marabastad and acts as an initial phase in strengthening Marabastad's relationship with Pretoria C.B.D.

- To create continuity in urban fabric and efficiency in space utilization.

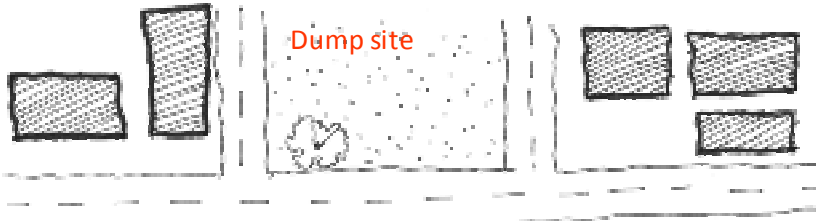


Fig 1.26 Current scenario showing open land parcels



Fig 1.27 Proposed scenario with building in fill to create continuity

- To create a socio-cultural destination in Marabastad that performs the dual function of a pause or holding area for people waiting to board taxis, buses and trains.

Environmental

- To reuse waste materials available in the community.



Fig 1.28 Abandoned concrete sewer pipes that can be used in the design



Fig 1.29 Plastics and bins on a dump site. These are considered as resources for building the piazza



Fig 1.30 Used tyres as a resource

- To make use of water harvesting to irrigate plants on site and to act as a backup water source.
- To optimize the full potential of the Steenhoven Spruit as an income generator for the Marabastad community

Economic

- To create opportunities for income generation through provision of infrastructure for formal and informal trade. This encourages vibrancy whilst preventing informal traders from setting up dilapidated market stalls. The informal trade sector of the piazza constitutes the temporary section of the piazza. It allows the individual to transform their stall, giving it an identity relevant for their business. The formal trade units are rented out. The accrued revenue is used for maintaining and servicing the piazza.
- The idea of flexibility is implemented to allow different functions such as weddings and birthdays to be accommodated within the piazza. The rental revenue accrued is used to pay wages and for further development of the community of Marabastad.
- The proposed programme such as restaurant, retail, theatre and exhibition act as means of generating income. Spontaneous performances in the piazza generate income for the participants, who often walk through the audience with a basket to deposit money. The organized events held within the auditorium are often charged and the revenue is used for payment of wages and maintenance. However, the auditorium occasionally holds free performances for the benefit of the community and the city.

Safety

- There is need to address issues of safety and crime in this community. Jane Jacobs' idea of "eyes of the neighborhood" is implemented to facilitate surveillance. This is achieved by overlapping programmes of day and night made possible through the provision of multifunctional spaces and mixed uses such as the jazz club functioning at night and the nursery school during daytime.

1.7 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY OVERVIEW

Qualitative

Historical Analysis

The dissertation analyses Marabastad's historic context to understand densities of the built fabric. This highlights spaces of gatherings which promoted social and cultural interaction. It creates an understanding of displaced spatial hierarchy and ordering sequences of space.

Local Analysis

The dissertation is supported by an analysis to capture the fundamental nature of the site. The aim is to understand how space and place impact on the user and vice versa. This includes the analysis of circulation patterns, visual links and qualities, and usage. The analysis also identifies materials, scale and densities of the urban space to give a better understanding of the context.

Interviews

Interviews have been held to facilitate understanding of the needs of the community of Marabastad. They clarify paramount issues to consider when designing socio-cultural spaces for previously marginalized groups. Professionals working with spatial organization in an African context have been interviewed to highlight problems encountered and successes in their own work.

Precedent Studies

Precedent studies have been evaluated critically to make alert the concerns that arise, the successes and failures. The outcomes are reinterpreted and applied to the Marabastad context.

Urban Design Principles

Research of urban design principles is done to identify and understand concepts to rejuvenate spaces within Marabastad.

Quantitative

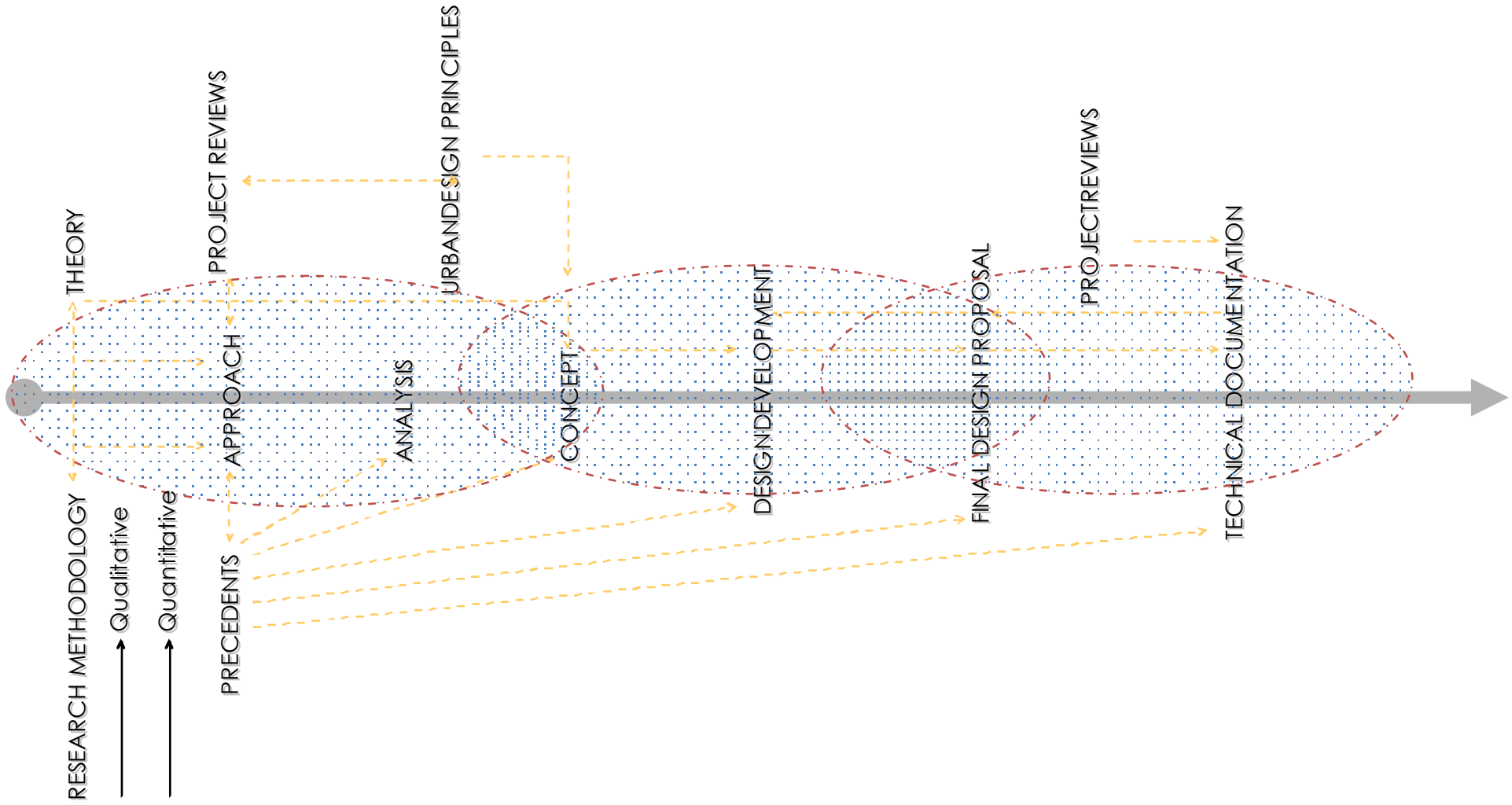
Physical Analysis

The dissertation is supported by an analysis on topographical patterns, geological constructs, watercourses, climatic and microclimatic studies. These inform the design proposal.

Contextual Analysis

The context is analyzed to create a better understanding of the current setting of Marabastad. It clarifies the needs of the community and their daily ritual patterns. The analysis also identifies materials, scale and densities in Marabastad, which have direct impact on the design proposal.

Fig 1.31



1.8 BACKGROUND & RATIONALE

Rationale

In warmer climates such as that of Pretoria, social and cultural activities infrequently occur within internal spaces defined by building, but in outside spaces and surrounding enclosures. This is evident in settlement morphologies of traditional African architecture which revolve around spatial organization of social, cultural and ritual patterns within a communal courtyard. In the publication “A study of forms and functions, 1969: 34”, Labelle Prussin reaffirms that the arrangement of architectural forms in traditional African architecture constitutes a definition of space inseparable from the architecture, the culture and the identity. Emphasis shifts from the technology of enclosing space to the nature and quality of the space itself. This utilization and definition of space unmistakably identifies the Zulu, Ndebele, Kasuliyili and Yankezia cultures, to name but a few, which all evolve around communal internal compounds for their daily rituals.

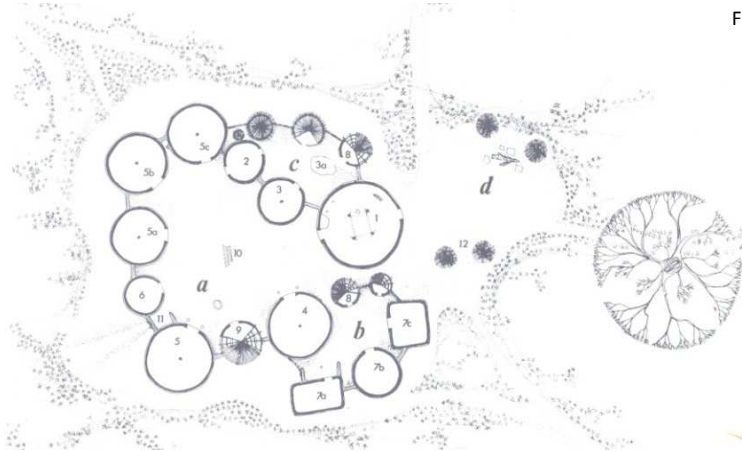


Fig 1.32

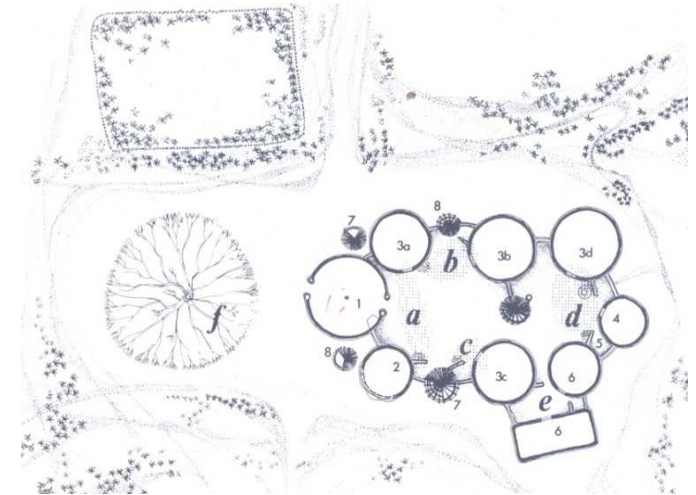


Fig 1.33

Fig 1.30 and Fig 1.31 show the similarities between The Kasuliyili and the Yankezia tribes respectively

The dissertation proposes a social and cultural node that not only considers available technology and social factors, but also environmental, when shaping space. The design proposal suggests an outside enclosure in the form of a piazza to exploit the climatic conditions of Pretoria and the natural heritage of Marabastad by interweaving them with the architectural response. The climatic changes regulate the patterns of human activity whilst the natural resources define the spaces within the piazza. Nature not only becomes an integral part of the daily ritual of the community but a component of the architecture itself. Resources such as trees become areas for congregation and performance of rituals, whilst offering shelter and shade for markets.. This addresses the needs of the community by facilitating a secure environment which promotes social and intercultural interaction. The surrounding building programme is supportive of the activities within the piazza. Amongst others, it accommodates multifunctional spaces such as a nursery school, formal and informal trading, theatre, exhibition and gallery and jazz club. These spaces contain the diversities and complexities that generate pre conditions that promote identity generation for the community. The idea of complexity carries through in the building form and materiality of the building fabric, thus, creating a unique environment.