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YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA

THEORY

02

2 THEORY

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter is an exploration of the underlying themes of the proposal, the interwoven theories and ideas that have helped shaped the theoretical grounding of the project. A synthesis of the proposal and the analysis of the urban condition, supporting theory is selected to help clearly define the theoretic angle of the project. The Theoretic investigation looks at the intricately woven ideas that address African Urbanism, everyday urbanism and the understanding of the formal/informal relationships of the daily and the traditional rituals found in the township of Mamelodi. The theory looks at how genders inform and influence the use of space and how space is informed by social rituals. The theoretical readings selected are all interwoven into the design decisions and influenced and strengthen the architectural intentions and responses.

Figure 2 -Collage of character leaving the village for the city (Author) 2016.

2.2 NARRATIVE : HINGES AND FRINGES

In a quest for new identity, meaning and definition Agatha left her home for the city. The city had been going through a long and exhausting phase of post colonial rupture characterised by severe social and economic crisis, political turmoil and violence (Trefon 2009:15) it was no place for a young woman like Agatha. She had imagined new constructs of time and space as she left her rural life behind with her hopes and dreams of achieving a new life in the city. She found herself pushed to the Fringes of the city of Pretoria, in the Peri- Urban township of Mamelodi, 20km East of the urban core of Pretoria.

In the peri- urban townships the urban dwellers resided in a state of limbo: having left the village world while not yet having quite ascended to the urban paradise they imagined the city to be. The township of Mamelodi falls under a peri-urban area or a "Fringe" area because it lies both at the edge of the city and the rural with blurred boundaries. Here Agatha found the gap between what she had left behind and what she found in the city to be very narrow, the attitudes and behaviours of the city dwellers she found here overlapped increasingly and she could no longer distinguish between the two worlds.

The linkages of her rural life and her city life were quite tangible as she navigated her way through her new world. The dependence on peri-urban agricultural produce and small life stock was vital in the township of Mamelodi, the need for wood be it for cooking or building zozo's to live in or rent out and a number of other agricultural products to eat, heal and perform ritual ceremonies were vital in the daily and traditional rituals Agnes had to perform. The linkages in these peri-urban townships also took on many intangible forms. Peri- Urban spaces are geographies of psychological transition, hinging village to a neighbouring city and sometimes beyond (Trefon 2009:17) where urban dwellers hold on to their cultural practices through intense indigenous cultural expressions despite being in the city/ peri-urban context. Ties to the ikhaya realities were not completely severed and as Agatha moved between the three geographies, between the city through the daily pendulum migration for work and the peri- urban township going about her daily rituals, and her rural homestead she could sense the forces of urbanisation. The urban/rural push and pull factors became evident to Agatha on the slightest subconscious level, she realised why she had left home and why she was here in the Peri-urban township of Mamelodi.

"The hands want to see, the eyes want to caress."

J.W. von Goethe

"The dancer has his ear in his toes."
Friedrich Nietzsche

2.3 AFRICAN URBANISM

One of the main defining characteristics of social evolution has been the massive rural-urban migration resulting in the break up of extended families and its replacement by the growing importance of the nuclear family. People leaving their Ikhaya, their homesteads for the city.

Official policy during the apartheid state was that Africans in towns were migrants and not immigrants i.e. they are temporary sojourners rather than permanent residents, who had to reside in segregated townships away from the white parts of town (Schapera 1947).

From an urban design point of view the legacy of apartheid planning is one of concentrated downtowns, sprawling sub-urbs and scattered but dense dormitory towns (Joubert 2009 : 14). According to Edgar Pieterse and Abdoumaliq Sim-one in a publication on African urbanism called Rouge Urbanism, Africa has the fastest rate of urbanisation compared to other regions and this has resulted in cities and towns marked by profound crisis. Africa will more than double its urban population over the next two decades from 294 million in 2000 to a staggering 742 million in 2030 and 1.2 billion by 2050 (Pieterse and Simone 2013:20). This is unimaginable considering the amount of people residing in substandard living conditions currently, cities marked with informality, insecurity and most importantly invisibility.

The question is why does urbanisation takes place despite the unbearable conditions found in the city?

There are two distinct sets of forces that encourage urbanisation. Firstly the urban pull forces: such as the better eco-nomic opportunities, the attraction of the urban lifestyle and better access to amenities, particularly education, transport, and recreational facilities (Schapera 1947). These factors have drawn people toward the city in the hopes of access to OPPORTUNITY, an African love affair seen in cities all across the continent, with the pull and push factors of all that is urban: with the "Big City life".

City after city one can witness an incessant throbbing pro-

duced by the intense proximity of hundreds of activities:

cooking, reciting, selling, loading and unloading, fighting,

praying, relaxing, pounding and buying, all side by side

on stages too cramped, too deteriorated, too clogged with

waste, history and disparate energy and sweat to sustain

all of them and yet they persist. People move to the city in

the hopes of attaining better livelihoods for their fami-

lies they arrive and are pushed to the peripheries of cities

into these fringe areas which become huge intersection of

bodies in need with desires in part propelled by the sheer

number of them

(Simone 2004:3).

They find themselves in the The low grade urban tissue of the townships exacerbated by the informal settlements and the repetitive housing units on individual plots. People find themselves in a frontier for a wide range of diffuse experimentation with the reconfiguration of bodies, territories and social arrangements necessary to recalibrate technologies of control (Simone 2004:2). The second set of forces that encourage movement to the city are the rural push forces. Examples off these are increasing poverty in rural areas, population growth and hardships in rural life and in some instances social obligations. On the other hand, we the urban push factors that discourage urbanisation. Firstly the urban push factors such as those arising from the poor social conditions found in cities, the lack of accommodation, overcrowding and unemployment as well as factors that arise from legal or social frameworks. Secondly we find the rural pull factors such as the attraction of one's family and the familiarity of the countryside sticking close to your ancestral homestead in order to maintain strong ties. When the combined impact of the urban pull and the rural push factors is greater than the urban push and rural pull factors urbanisation takes place was people from the rural areas relocate in the towns and vice versa (Nattrass 1983: 7).

Because we want to develop our own culture,

Because we want to overcome stereotypes,

Because we refuse to have 'equal rights' in a corrupt society, Be-

cause we want to survive, grow, be ourselves...

We took over a building to put into action with women those things

essential to women —health care, child care, food conspiracy, cloth-

ing and book exchange, gimme women's shelter, a lesbian rights cen-

ter, interarts center, feminist school, drug rehabilitation.

We know the city does not provide for us.

Now we know the city will not allow us to provide for ourselves.

For this reason we were busted.

We were busted because we are women acting independently of men,

independently of the system…In other words, we are women being

Revolutionary.

On New Year's Eve 1971, 75 women took over an abandoned building

on Fifth Street owned by the City of New York. They issued the

following statement on 29 January

(Rendell, Penner and Borden 2003).

2.4 EVERYDAY URBANISM

Selectively rejecting the legacies of colonialism, the people of Mamelodi combine global approaches to local problems while blending 'traditional' belief systems and behaviours with their own unique forms of 'modernity' in order to survive in the township.

In an interview with Edgar Pieterse Mokena Makeka is asked about the contribution of architecture and urban design in understanding informality and emergent urbansims in Africa. Makeka discusses two ways of addressing the problem of informality and emergent urbanisms in Africa as The 'urban real' and the 'urban imagined'.

He explains how the 'urban real' is the everyday lives of people, the experienced conditions of people based on the ideas of the philosopher Henri Lefebvre. An account of everyday life ranging from the daily rituals to the extraordinary, hidden in the ordinariness of everyday life. Where the city is an intersection of all these actors consumed by its patterns of production and socio-cultural behaviour, the inevitability and the embodiment of its physical characteristics, and how everyday life plays itself out spatially (Pieterse and Simone 2013:445).

In a complex web of cultures, religions and languages under emergent conditions the average person is daily engaged in the negotiation of their personal existence within the urban reality and therefore often intervenes at that level of in-terest with little sense of their systematic role or agency (Pieterse and Simone 2013:20). The role each person plays is taken for granted and the physical space where public activity between the home and place for work and the institution is what Lefebvre calls the ' common ground' or connective tissue which binds daily lives together- The daily Ritual.

The Urban Imagined is where we as architects operate within addressing the possibility, the search for a post apartheid identity that represents and accommodates multiculturalism. A closer look at transforming the segregated city into an edge(or Third city) through creative densification and the encouragement of spontaneous urbanism (Joubert 2009:14) that cultural catalytic spaces could increasingly facilitate.

Addressing the small narratives and the roles of each actor being important in the peri -urban townships development is how we start to define and shape a new layer of identity. It is vital to recognise the continuum between the urban real and the urban imagined, in the context of Mamelodi, the role we as architects can play in creating spaces that enrich and add value, creating spaces that are preoccupied with the texture of cultural practices which are unique to the Afro-centric reality found here.

"Design plays an important critical role in the democratisation of space into place". Mokena Makeka
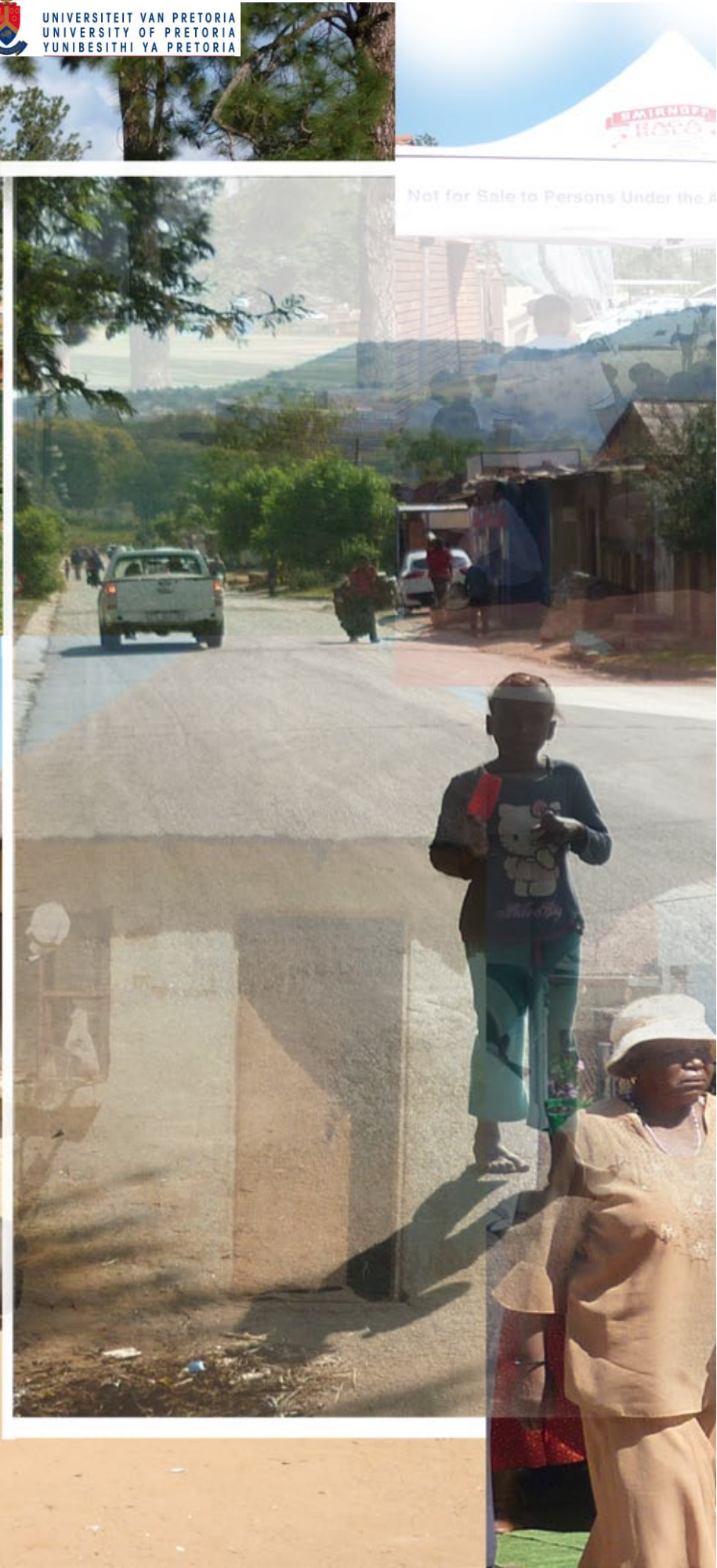
Figure 2.2 Daily Ritual : Everyday Urbanism Collage (Author) 2016.

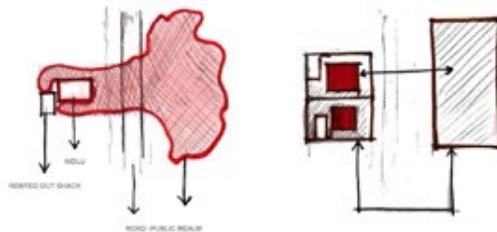## 2.5 THE WOMEN OF MAMELODI RE-CLAIMING PUBLIC SPACE

The Women of Mamelodi are rising up as a collective, in re-claiming urban space. In creating a space where they can begin to view the Peri-urban township as their ikhaya a space where they can carry out their cultural practices and expressions. It is vital to recognise that the absence of these spaces that cater for vital cultural practices which actually dictates and orders activity in the city, marking the texture of its afro-centricity (Pieterse and Simone 2013:445).The women have long been denied a place in the public realm of Mamelodi and have been assigned to domestic private spaces. Beside the churches the women have no where else to gather but in their homes. The spaces the women have or don't have access to or are denied has rendered them powerless voiceless and invisible. The public gathering spaces the women have created for themselves has been in their back yards where they gather for stokvel meetings and social events. The experiences of women living in between and often invisible to the state and community, challenges assumptions about governance and invites us to rethink urban social categories and relationships, by looking from the ground up, yet another reality and perspective of the city emerges, one that draws our attention to the complexity of urban relationships (Pieterse and Simone 2013:435). It is time for the silent clients voice to be addressed, through an 'urban real' space that caters for her social,economic,emotional and ritual needs. A space that allows for her to intensely carry out her cultural expression, spaces where the nature of the activity taking place here define its character as completely and holistically afro-centric.

1- [RE-LINK]

Difficulty configuring the use of left over space, lack of yard spaces to connect with Ancestors or practice traditional rituals in the urban context. Severance of communal ties, at odds with communal nature of African cultures.
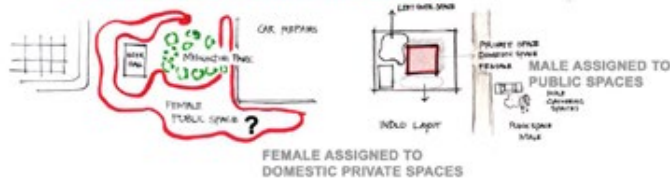
THE PROBLEM :TRADITION AND CULTURAL PRACTICES DIE OUT WHEN PEOPLE MOVE INTO THE CITY DUE TO A LACK OF SPACE TO CONNECT WITH OTHERS AND THE ANCESTORS. WOULD PEOPLE REGARD THIS AS THEIR IKHAYA IF THEY WERE ABLE TO PRACTICE THEIR RITUALS?

2- [RE-CLAIM]

Investigating how the women of Mamelodi can reclaim public space through architecture.

THE PROBLEM : WOULD WOMEN REGARD THIS AS THEIR IKHAYA IF THEY WERE ABLE TO PRACTICE THEIR RITUALS IN A SAFE, ACCESSIBLE PUBLIC SPACE? A PUBLIC SPACE FOR FEMALES WITH A COLLECTIVE EXPERIENCE TO BENEFIT THE URBAN ENVIRONMENT IN MIND.

MALE ASSIGNED TO PUBLIC SPACES

FEMALE ASSIGNED TO DOMESTIC PRIVATE SPACES

THE SITE STARTS A NEW DIALOGUE

3- [THE OTHER]

Investigating how ARCHITECTURE can enhance Traditional ritual practices in the urban context. Through the exposure of the other/ to the other.
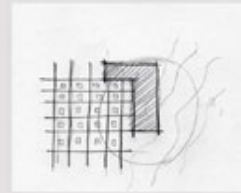
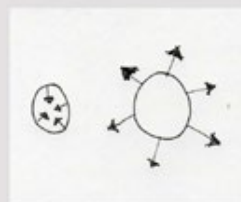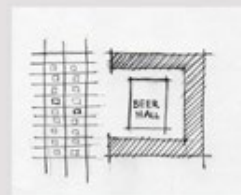THE PROBLEM : TRADITIONAL PRACTICES ARE SEEN AS BACKWARD AND NOT OF THE CITY

INFORMANTS

[RELINK]

[RECLAIM]

[THE OTHER]

Figure 2.3 Daily Spatial configurations (Author) 2016.

2.5.1   THE SENSE OF SELF AND "MULTIPLE-SELFS's"

The process of reclaiming Public Space is a process rooted in phenomenlogy, of the lived experience of the women of Mamelodi a process of continuous culture of lived experience. The space addresses the different stages of the woman's life from. The time she is yet to be born and is seen as part of the ancestors to the time she is born going through certain rituals that protect her as a baby. She then moves into a stage of growing, bodily adaptation and the way she responds to interpersonal experience as she shares it with her peers. She then reaches an age where as a peer group they are ready for initiation and through the process they form a bond. On the time line they enter the most crucial part of the journey INITIATE : LEARNING RESPONSIBILITIES AND GROWN UP VALUES.

This point in the journey is so important in fostering the qualities and values that form the principles of Ubuntu upon which African societies are based on. By creating these bonds the group is strengthened resulting in a stronger group of women moving into the next cycle of the journey.

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Occur resulting in an innate knowledge and intuition. This lived culture; first-

ly as a single person within the continuous change of a physical body and sec-

ondly the association of interpersonal experience and the way she share it with

        other persons became better understood and meaningful in the study.

                            Kammeyer (2010:99)
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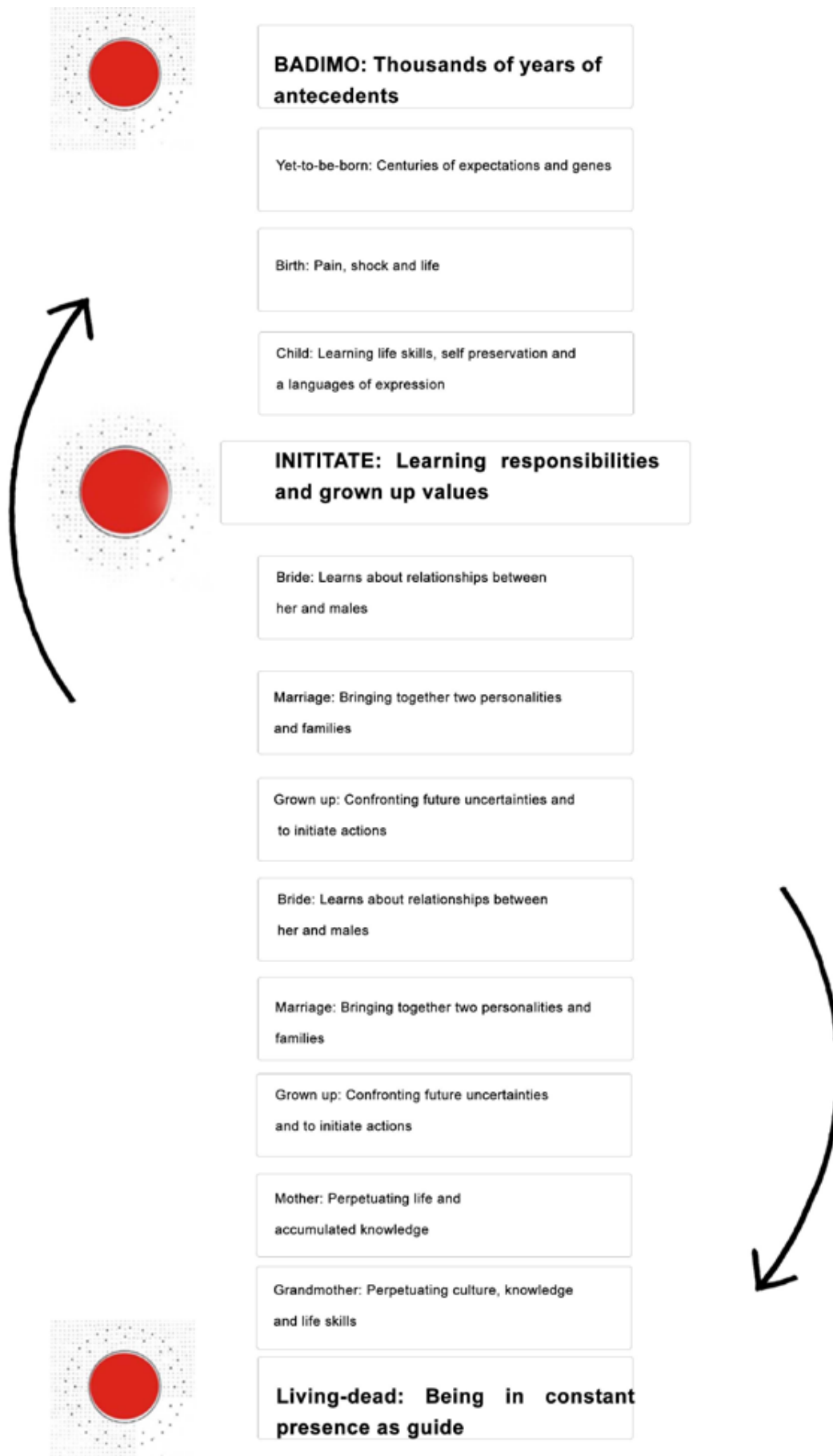
BADIMO: Thousands of years of antecedents

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

Birth: Pain, shock and life

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

INITITATE: Learning responsibilities and grown up values

Bride: Learns about relationships between her and males

Marriage: Bringing together two personalities and families

Grown up: Confronting future uncertainties and to initiate actions

Bride: Learns about relationships between her and males

Marriage: Bringing together two personalities and families

Grown up: Confronting future uncertainties and to initiate actions

Mother: Perpetuating life and accumulated knowledge

Grandmother: Perpetuating culture, knowledge and life skills

Living-dead: Being in constant presence as guide

Figure 2.4 Timeline of Multiple self's in the process. Adapted from Kammeyer(2010:99)

2.6 THE CENTRAL CATTLE PATTERN

Is a framework that represents the relationships of the tangible components of the Nguni and Sotho-Tswana Cultural groups. It was a guideline first used in the Iron age by the Nguni and Sotho-Tswana Cultural groups to order their immediate environments and societies. The Central cattle Pattern is a synthesis of the settlement patterns of the Eastern Bantu people who utilised the pattern as a means to order their spaces. Humans divide their spaces in order for certain activities to be carried ranging from private to public through a series of thresholds. The spatial organisation has had social significance as it has allowed illumination of the values, ideals and the beliefs of the past of the cultures of the Eastern Bantu people. Huffman (2001: 19) states that the spatial organisation is a useful theoretical approach because it provides a framework for investigating the relationships, that the central cattle pattern represents. Empirical evidence indicates instead that the complex internal organisation of a settlement is most likely the specific product of a specific world-view. (Huffman 2001:20)

The central Cattle pattern represents the relationships between the physical components of a settlement. It is the series of thresholds and uses of spaces in a settlement based on the world-view of the certain cultural grouping. The centre of the settlement is where the men are found, the domain of the men, this is where they resolve disputes where decisions are made for the community. Important people are also buried here in the cattle byre where cattle for bride wealth is kept, grain bins for long term storage and public metal works take place at the centre of the settlement. The outer residential zone is where the married women and their children are found. The outer residential zone of the cattle byre incorporates the private sleeping houses, kitchen, grain bins and graves of the married women.

The central Cattle pattern is derived from world views and is a reflection of the societies world views yet is not restricted to a specific identity group or to one type of environment. The Settlement pattern is rooted in four inter-related principles that form the core of the settlement Pattern. The pattern is not tied to environment or a certain cultural grouping but to these four principles:

—A patrilineal ideology about procreation

—A preference for cattle as bride wealth

—A male Hereditary leadership

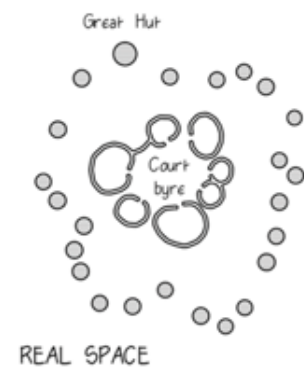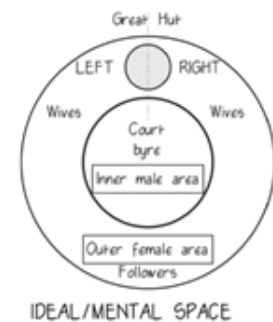—Certain Beliefs about the role of ancestors in Daily life.

Figure 2.5 Central Cattle pattern Huffman (2001:13)

These Four interrelated principles are the core of the Eastern Bantu Settlement patterns and variations have been found in the pattern as it is not used to describe or define the daily behavior and dynamics of a society. Most Daily behavior then can only be fully understood in terms of broader cultural regularities such as the central cattle pattern(Huffman 2001:25)

The Central Cattle Pattern and its application to the Design

In contrast to the West, the evidence indicates that Iron Age societies tended to value continuity and tradition; dynamic daily life took place against a background of cultural norms(Huffman 2001:32).
African societies accepted changes in their traditional value systems and this has ensured continuity in their cultures, even in the urban context the central cattle pattern ideology has been carried out right through. By taking the central cattle pattern as one of the informants in the design i have inverted the order of the pattern in order to place women at the centre of this pattern. The women become the focus and the central point of the settlement pattern, by doing this i question the role and ideology of the society of Mamelodi. The proposed space has its focus on women and the young girl of Mamelodi who goes through the initiation process to earn her rite to live as a woman of the tribe.
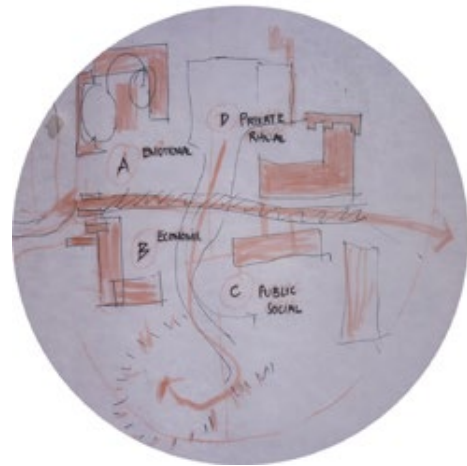

Figure 2.6 The Ideal/ Mental Space
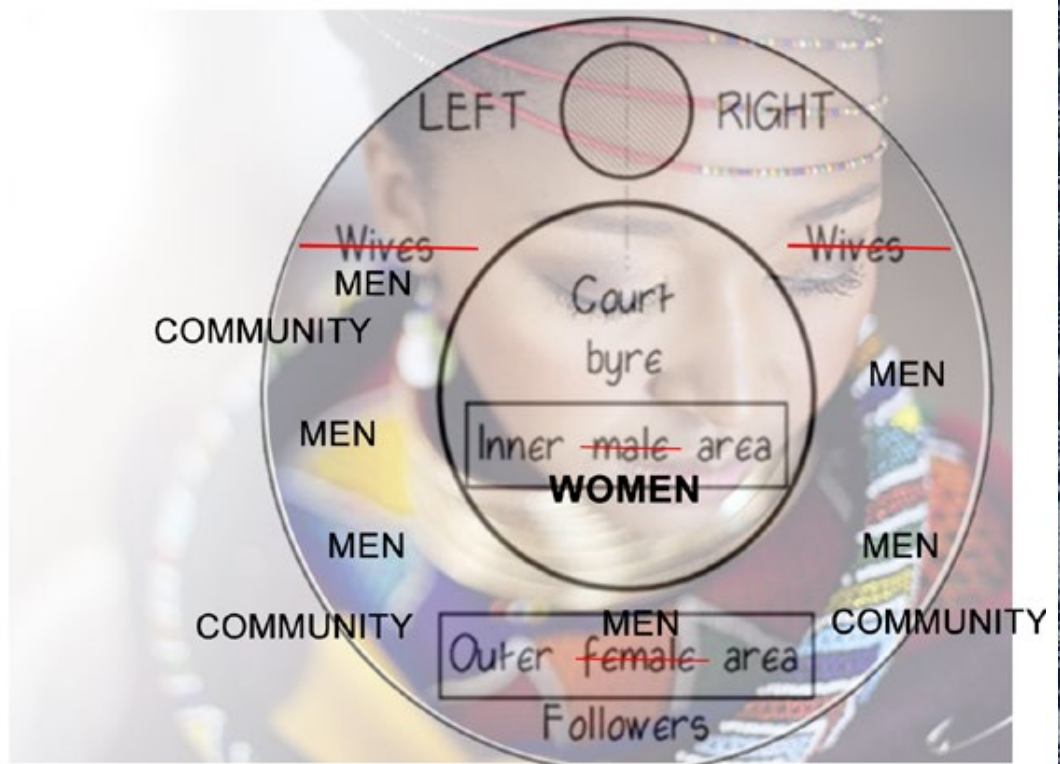Based on quadrant of needs (Author) 2016

Figure 2.7 The ideal/Mental space for the Women of Mamelodi based on the inversion of the Central Cattle Pattern (Author)

2.7 Chapter 2 Synopsis

The chapter starts at the urban level investigating how women will reclaim their space in the community by creating a space where on a broad level they have a place dedicated to the women of Mamelodi *(a Kgotla)* . The project then moves to the very specific journey of a young girl going through the very private ritual of A RITE OF PASSAGE of Initiation into womanhood within a very public context. The project looks at this intersection where a very private ritual meets a very public context.