



**EXPLORING THE INFLUENCE OF TRADITIONAL HEALING PRACTICE TO SPACE AND  
FORM: A design towards a traditional healing centre in KZN.**

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A Dissertation in partial fulfillment of the  
Requirements for the degree of Master of Architecture  
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# **DECLARATION**

I declare that this dissertation is my own unaided work. All citations, references and adopted ideas have been acknowledged. This document is being submitted to the school of Built environment and development studies, University of KwaZulu Natal, Howard College, in particular, fulfilment of the requirements towards the Master of Architecture degree. This dissertation has not been submitted before for any degree or examination at any other university.

Signed 2019

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Siyabonga.W Khuzwayo

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# **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this body of work to my uncle M.W. Ngcobo, *Mapholoba, wena masiya amahle engathi azoshumayela*, who assumed a fatherly role throughout my upbringing. Your health challenges for the past few years inspired me to conduct a research study towards alternative healing methods, because it was clear that the current medical systems were failing us. I wish you all the best on your journey to recovery, and I hope you live to witness the impact of this research.

# **ABSTRACT**

The World Health Organization defines traditional healing as ‘health practices, approaches, knowledge and beliefs incorporating plant, animal and mineral based medicines, spiritual therapies, manual techniques and exercises, applied singularly or in combination to treat, diagnose and prevent illnesses or maintain well-being’. Furthermore, this holistic type of healing, which is also loosely referred to as folk medicine, ethno-medicine or native healing is the oldest form of healing in which Nguni healers relied on to treat diseases long before the era of civilization. However, due to the discoveries of African colonies which instigated regulatory laws, advances in modern technology and exposure to global trends, this form of healing carries a negative connotation of being regarded as irrational, uncertified and a perilous alternative form of healing in the contemporary era.

This body of works intends to focus on deciphering the notion of traditional healing, with the aim of ascertaining how architectural design can pose as a medium for furnishing the traditional healing entity with meaningful spaces and built-form that relates to the contemporary era and also investigate how architectural design can be utilized as a tool to change the negative connotation that is associated with the realm of traditional healing in the contemporary era, whilst preserving the African indigenous values, cultures, and beliefs.

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# **CHAPTER ONE**

## **INTRODUCTION**

## 1.1 INTRODUCTION

### 1.1.1 Background

In the early Zulu kingdom, dating back to the 1820s, traditional healers had a dominant political and influential role in society. The healers worked very closely and were noble and highly trusted by the king and chiefs of a tribe. Moreover, a tribe had various types of healers who specialized according to their gifts and callings. The healers performed multiple functions such as 'bringing rain, identifying witches and criminals, doctoring armies, negotiating with the ancestors and using herbs and surgical procedures to heal the people' (Flint, 2008). Abdullah (2011) further stresses the crucial role that is played by traditional healers by mentioning that, in indigenous African societies, traditional healers were known for treating people holistically as they attempted to find equilibrium on the patient socially as well as emotionally. Moreover, the holistic approach of traditional healing is also found in other indigenous societies globally; for example, in Asian Indigenous healing practices (Lemonnier *et al.*, 2017).

With that being said, it is important to note that during the late nineteenth-century when traditional healing was losing the status of being regarded as a prominent form of healing, Africa was undergoing colonialization (Mokgobi 2014). The arrival of the Europeans resulted in a turning point for the African tradition and culture. Furthermore, the introduction of the Western cultural systems lead to a cultural-ideological clash which then brought about uneven power-relations (Abdullah ,2011). In addition, this culture clash was extremely highlighted when traditional healers rejected being introduced to the Western healing practices, with concerns that the British colonisers were against the growth and character of the African tradition. Moreover, Abdullah (2011) further stresses that colonialism played a role in the descendant of indigenous knowledge systems, believing that Western invasion was a major setback on the African knowledge development in most areas.

Flint (2008) further asserts that in 1879, when the British colonies later defeated the Zulu kingdom, colonialism was in full motion. The instigation of the colonial era transformed and impacted the political, social, and economic factors in society. The magnitude of the radical transformation was highly expressed in the event where traditional healers transformed from being influential political leaders of a community who threatened colonialism into privileged capitalists competing with the Western doctors

and pharmacists for patients and tuff. This competition then resulted in colonial regulatory laws altogether banning traditional healers from practicing.

Abdullah (2011) further asserts that the South African Medical Association, accompanied by the Witchcraft Suppression Act of 1957, outlawed traditional healing in 1953 and also classified the entity as an entity of wickedness and witchcraft. This stigma engraved a negative connotation on the indigenous healing sphere. Even in this contemporary era, traditional healing is perceived as an unreliable and unsafe form of healing. This connotation is further perpetuated by the current economic status, which carries a burden of unemployment, therefore increasing the number of practicing traditional healers who are charlatans. From the text above, it was highlighted that the supremacy of colonialism aimed at overriding the African culture, traditions, and customs. In addition, the occurrence of this phenomenon can also be traced in the spaces and forms within the urban fabric. Therefore, a deliberate assumption that can be made for this study is that the traditional healing architectural built form needs to celebrate and express the African cultural traditions and customs while still responding to the contemporary setting. This study seeks to establish a built form typology that will cater to traditional practices and express an indigenous architectural narrative.

### **1.1.2 Motivation of Study**

The motivation for exploring this study is driven by the fact that, in the contemporary society, the traditional healing entity still prevails as an alternative healing method in the African context. Besides, there is an ever-growing demand for the indigenous healing sphere to be documented globally, for instance, research reveals that a ratio of 40% to 60% of the Western Pacific population is resorting to traditional methods for treating illnesses and diseases. Locally, the traditional healing trade contributed 2.9 billion in the South African economy (Abdullah, 2011); however, this method of healing is perceived as unreliable due to its informal nature. 'According to a recent United Nations report, the U.S. government health agencies alone have spent more than \$8 million since 1986 to collect thousands of medicinal plant species in more than 22 countries' (Barsh, (1997: 28). This notion suggests that the formalised Medical sector is using the same ingredients for healing that are used by the traditional healers, however, due to commercialisation and exposure to scientific knowledge, the biomedical method of healing is perceived as superior compared to the indigenous practices of healing. Furthermore, traditional pharmacopeia has yielded not only a large number of drugs effective against cancer, but also

heart disease, parasites, and neural dysfunction (Durie, 2004). This research intends to focus on deciphering the notion of traditional healing, with the aim of ascertaining how architectural design can pose as a medium for furnishing the traditional healing entity with meaningful spaces and form that relates to the contemporary era while preserving the African indigenous values, cultures, and beliefs.

## 1.2 DEFINITION OF PROBLEM, AIMS, AND OBJECTIVES

### 1.2.1 Problem Statement

Even though traditional healing is the earliest form of healing within the African continent, it is regarded as an unreliable and hazardous form of healing in the current urban South African context. Furthermore, the traditional healing sector has received limited attention over the years, leading to an apparent decline of the civic society's trust, belief, and confidence. As a result, the factors mentioned above play a significant role in influencing the decision-making process of society's health-seeking behavior, especially amongst the educated elite, youth, and urbanites. The primary problem at hand that this research will focus on is the lack of prosperity and underdevelopment of the traditional healing sphere. Traditional healing, like many other indigenous systems, is a victim to previously known oppression and the incursion of culture that was brought upon by the colonization, urbanization as well as globalization. This phenomenon then led to a revolving trend, where individuals migrate to urban areas in search of better opportunities where they become part of a multi-cultural society. As a result, the challenge then becomes the fact that the urban fabric is derived from an autonomous western ideology, which often overrides ethnic customs. In addition, the current built form found in the urbanized areas does not accommodate and facilitate indigenous traditions. Traditional healing, like biomedicine and religion, has played an influential role in a society's well-being. This notion, therefore, fuels the need for this research to develop, dignify, celebrate, preserve, and educate the greater public about the traditional healing sphere through the development of a building typology that is shaped by an engaged understanding the traditional healing entity.

### 1.2.2 Aims

The aim of the study is to generate an architectural typology that is accessible, culturally bound, responsive, and governed by a thorough understanding of the principles as well as the layers of the traditional healing practices and forces that are acting around the traditional healing entity

### 1.2.3 Objectives

The key objectives of the study were to:

- Attempt to change the negative connotation that contemporary society has towards the traditional healing practice and relink traditional values, customs and beliefs of the society
- Evaluate the influence of cultural dynamics on the societal perception of traditional healing.
- Evaluate the current infrastructure that facilitates the traditional healing practice.
- Establish a building typology which encompasses space and form that is influenced by the African cultural identity.
- To uncover the layers and principles which make up the traditional healing entity. This will involve an understanding of traditional healing practices in order to establish a typology that will complement the traditional healing realm.

## 1.2 SETTING OUT THE SCOPE

### 1.3.1 Delimitation of Research Problem

While Moodley *et al.* (2008) asserts that, in comparison to Western healthcare systems, traditional healing practices are perceived differently as spheres with different models of illness and healthcare systems which are operating within a different world view. Moreover, there is a growing trend in the Western community to seek alternative, complementary, and traditional healing methods as a reaction to Western biomedicine. Asuni (1979), on the other hand, denotes that the integration between professional healthcare and traditional healing results to issues, in a sense that some traditional healers lack knowledge of the side effects that the potions they use for healing might have on their patients. This research aims to dwell upon the informality of the traditional healing community with aims to develop the traditional healing community but still maintain its authenticity. The scope of this research will only be limited to exploring the traditional healing entity within the Nguni tribe and will also dwell upon the concept of the healing of the body, mind, and soul (Shamanism). The research does not seek to examine traditional healing in contrast to the Western healthcare, but the study seeks to explore methods to equip the traditional healing community as informal as they are, with basic needs for them to be in a competitive state with the formal Western biomedical healthcare sector.

### 1.3.2 Definition of Terms

**Ancestor:** A person, typically one more remote than a grandparent, from whom one is descendant.

**Culture:** The way of life, especially the general customs and beliefs, of a particular group of people at a particular time

**Development:** The growth of something such as a business or an industry

**Diviner:** A person who claims to be able to say what is going to happen in the future using special powers or abilities; soothsayer; prophet.

**Ethnic Group:** A community or population made up of people who share a common cultural background or descent.

**Ethnography:** The scientific description of people and cultures as well as customs, habits and mutual differences.

**Formal:** An entity that complies with the usual requirements and is authorized by the government and other statutory bodies.

**Herbalist:** A dealer in medicinal herbs.

**Informal:** An entity that is not perceived according to the approved or official

**Mold:** The growth of something such as a business or an industry

**Nguni tribe:** The Nguni people are a group of Bantu people who primarily speak Nguni languages and currently reside predominantly in Southern Africa. The Nguni tribe includes: Xhosa, Zulu, Ndebele and Swazi people.

**Practice:** The actual application or use of an idea, belief, or method, as opposed to theories relating to it.

**Traditional healing:** A holistic entity which involves the restoration of the mind, body, and soul through the use of indigenous knowledge

**Western Biomedicine:** A system in which medical doctors and other healthcare professionals such as nurses, pharmacists, and therapists treat symptoms and diseases using drugs, radiation, or surgery.

### 1.3.3 Stating the Assumptions

The currently unrecognized and unregulated traditional healing sector can advance and thrive should the factors as mentioned earlier change, and should the entity be equipped with a suitable and appropriate platform to operate in. Space and form can be explored as a matter of appropriation for growth within the traditional healing community.

The current urban built environment within the Central Business District of Durban does not have an architectural typology that is informed by the traditional healing practices and customs.

### **1.3.4 Hypothesis**

Deciphering the healing culture by uncovering all the layers, forces and systems it entails, can assist in generating a responsive and accessible typology that will play a significant role in the development of the traditional healing community.

### **1.3.5 Key Questions**

#### Primary Question

How can the underlying principles of traditional healing assist in shaping a responsive and meaningful architectural typology?

In attempts to prove the hypothesis and answering the questions mentioned above, this study will expand the key question into two related sub-questions. The research intends to execute this by outlining how healing, as a phenomenon shaped by culture and native traditions, can be utilized to generate a responsive built form, which will, in turn, develop the healing practice.

#### Secondary Questions

- What is the role of traditional healing in a society, where and how did the practice originate?
- What were the key influences around the traditional healing practices and how have they influenced the development of the phenomenon?
- What are the underlying principles of traditional healing and how does built-form accommodate for it?
- How does built form respond to a specific society and how are the variations identified?
- How has the building typology adapted to the cultural evolution attached to modernization and globalization?

## 1.4 CONCEPTS AND THEORIES

### 1.4.1 Introduction

In an attempt to verify the hypothesis and respond to the key questions, the following theories and concepts were selected to respond further to the secondary questions to assist in deciphering the healing phenomenon, as a guide to creating a meaningful and responsive architectural typology to cultural traditions.

### 1.4.2 Theories

#### 1.4.2.1 Living Patterns and Systems

The theory of living patterns focusses on the notion of comprehending essential relations amongst elements of a particular system and also provides a medium for managing and organizing complexity. Furthermore, advances in man's enlightenment of how patterns portray the complexity of nature have resulted to a breakthrough within the discipline of computer technology that fuels economic development and growth, not just within the discipline but also in every sphere of society (Salingaros, 2015). Salingaros (2015) further asserts that patterns of human behavior progress over time due to being subjected to constant repetition. Moreover, any patterns that are influenced by the evolutionary selection of the descending generations becomes complex in such a way that the patterns cannot be understood in simpler components. These patterns are then referred to as living patterns since they are a mechanism of comprehending how nature functions. In addition, Salingaros (2015) denotes that living patterns can be hybridized with other systems that reflect an even higher level of beneficial relationships.

The sub-segment of living systems can be understood as systems of the entire world, including all forms of life, where systems can be understood as any set of related and interacting elements. The argument discusses a matter as anything that has mass, and energy is the ability to do work, which can be understood as mass and energy.

#### 1.4.2.2 Spatial and Temporal dimension of human behavior

The theory of spatial and temporal dimensions of human behavior dwells upon the scrutiny of people's daily functions. Lawrence et al (1990) denote that the development of theories focusing on

anthropological concern within the built environment dates back to as earlier as the conceptualization of cultural evolution during the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Even though data collected on earlier cultural constructs as well as shelters accommodating living structures was gathered as evidence to back up the notion of evolution, questions pertaining the exact relationship between culture, society and the built environment still persisted. Moreover, these relationship dynamics between man, culture and built form are interactive in such a way that individual's behaviors are greatly influenced and shaped by the surrounding built environment they interact with. In addition, the inclusion of the built environment within anthropological research can be linked to the development of social and cultural theories in the discipline of ethnography (Lawrence, 1990). This consideration was fueled by the perception that built form and collective human behavior holistically reinforce and complement each other. Furthermore, within the exhibition of cultural dimensions, the built environment was perceived as a component of complex traits that allowed a group of individuals to coherently adapt to the natural environment (Lawrence, 1990).

### **1.4.3 Concepts**

#### **1.4.3.1 Pattern Language**

Leitner (2015) asserts that the pattern theory was developed to comprehend better the tangible structures that make the surrounding environment inviting to individual beings. Moreover, from this investigation, two crucial dimensions were drawn, one being the moral capacity to produce an existing structure, the other being the generativity of an organism, and its capability of producing coherent wholes. Around the 1970s, the theory was used as a medium to generate buildings that were meant to cater to people's needs. However, the issue at hand was that the produced structures lacked profoundness. Leitner (2015) further denotes that in the architectural field, the most profound surrounding structures that human beings interact with on their daily lives are the ones with spaces that generate a pleasant feeling in space habitats. Contrary to that, human beings are living in 'a period where perhaps the most noticeable and most challenging feature of our world is, that feeling has been removed from the world' (Alexander, 1999). In addition, the structures which are being produced are more fragmented and lost. As a response, Leitner (2015) suggests that 'if there really is a way of looking at structures which both deals with the real functional structure in the ordinary technical and practical sense, and simultaneously has its roots in human feeling, this will be a very huge and positive site' (Leitner, 2015).

### **1.4.3.2 Symbolic Representation**

The symbolic approach is used to interpret built form/environment as a representation of culturally shared belief structures and processes, a generating tool of profound architecture. Lawrence et al. (1990) assert that the symbolic theory interprets built form as physical evidence and a representation of a non-physical explanation of cultural processes. In addition, cultural processes become the root of the physical built form. According to Lawrence et al. (1990), in the event of cultural expression, *'built forms may be seen to play a communicative role embodying and conveying meaning between groups, or individuals within groups, at a variety of levels.'* Furthermore, Lawrence et al. (1990) assert that the built form, which is derived from the cultural expression, has the ability to strengthen that particular culture's values, structures, and processes. Symbolic representation usually pivots on narrating how the built environment responds to conceptions of social, political, and religious life (Lawrence, 1990).

Lawrence et al. (1990) denote that five theories are used to unpack the symbolic representation concept vividly. The most common one being social symbolism, where one focuses on the social representation approach, which is expressed in the built form to communicate the social or political status. According to Lawrence et al. (1990), symbolically, sites in which buildings are situated portray definite meaning(s) and values, and they contain key elements of communication used to articulate social relations. Furthermore, another theory that makes up symbolic representation is the structuralist approach. The linguistics culture heavily influences the structural approach theory, moreover, the theory suggests an underlying unconscious mental structure that is comprehended in numerous socio-cultural manifestations and capable of creating patterned social behaviours and thoughts. According to Lawrence et al. (1990), semiotic approaches are linked to the built environment. The built environment, in turn, is connected to the language as well as the formal characteristics of the building. These characteristics include sign systems or codes. Similar to structuralism, in attempt to make implicit meanings, semiotic approaches may seem superficial by comparison. The superficial nature of semiotics is instigated by the fact that semiotics renders limited systematic use of culturally elaborated cognitive or symbolic structures to interpret the architectonic code. Another theory which can be traced in the event of symbolic representation is the primacy of a metaphor as a cultural expression. It is through metaphors that humans argue over the appropriateness of rules, plans, and world views

and thus make means to create order in the universe. The use of rituals that activate meaning to built form is one of the approaches that man resort to, to create order in the universe. Another theory which is presented by symbolism is the phenomenological consideration approach. This theory encompasses both domestic and nondomestic elements of the built form. Apart from providing the basic human need of shelter, Rendell (2009) stresses that balance between private space (household) and public space (place of politics) along with semi-public/private spaces which are the in-between spaces, is needed in urban landscapes. This phenomenon then perpetuates an understanding of the complexity that is present when dealing with multi-cultural societies.

## 1.5 RESEARCH METHODS AND CASE STUDY

### 1.5.1 Introduction

The study took place in the province of KwaZulu Natal. The research was done with an aim to highlight the importance of traditional values between the rural society and the urban society, which then further assisted to understand what influenced the perception that the society has towards the traditional healing practices. The study derived its research from both the rural and the urban context to understand how traditional healing is accommodated architecturally. The city of Durban was the focus urban context where the study took place together with the proximate rural areas.

### 1.5.2 Research philosophy and strategy

#### *Philosophy*

In the investigation of the discourses that revolve around the traditional healing entity, an interpretivism approach was utilized. An interpretivist perspective considers that the social world is essentially relativistic and can only be understood by interpreting the activities and patterns which are to be studied (Blaikie, 1993). The interpretive method of research is based on the assumption that man's knowledge of reality is a social construction by human actors and researchers. Therefore it can be regarded as a subjective matter (Blaikie, 1993). From an interpretivist point of view, there are significant differences between the research object of the natural and the social sciences (Blaikie, 1993). The study of natural phenomena requires the scientist to invent concepts and theories in order to describe and explain nature (Blaikie, 1993). Moreover, by using those theories, the natural scientist decides about what is appropriate

to the problem under investigation. On the other hand, the study of the social phenomena requires an understanding of the social world where people produce and reproduce through their continuing activities (Blaikie, 1993). Since people are constantly involved in interpreting the world they exist in (social conditions and behaviour), they develop meanings for their activities and ideas about what is relevant for making sense of those activities (Blaikie, 1993).

### *Strategy*

Due to the nature and cultural sensitivity of the research, the data sampling method that the research incorporated is the Snowball sampling, which can also be referred to as the chain-referral sampling. This form of sampling is a non-profitable sampling technique that is used when the characteristics to be possessed by samples are rare or difficult to find due to lack of exposure. Meaning that the research sampling relied mostly on referrals from the few known sources. The data analysis method that the research use was the coding method, which is a data analysis method that relies on categorising and grouping similar data for better analysis (Blaikie, 1993).

Furthermore, the sampling method that guided this research is a Purposive sampling. The population group sample that was explored for the purpose of this research was dependent on the number of members that the chosen institution has. Moreover, since the research aimed at interviewing only ten percent of individuals within the selected case study establishment, the sample size for spiritual healers that this research interviewed is 1 per case study, mainly because the chosen institution for the research has a total of 11 practitioners. In addition, the samples will be extracted from urbanites as well as rural dwellers. For the urban interviews, the sample was extracted from Shepstone Building within the University of KwaZulu-Natal, the reason for the choice of the building was because of the diversity of individuals with diverse backgrounds (urban and rural). The other sample was selected from The Workshop Shopping Centre and the Early Morning Market, the reason for the choice of the building is because the building is located in close proximity to the anticipated site locations. The sample size for the urbanites dwellers that this research interviewed was limited to between 10 and 15 individuals in each of the establishments.

### **1.5.3 Secondary data collection**

### *Precedents studies and literature reviews:*

The type of research that this document explored is Qualitative Research. The methods of data collection techniques that was explored for the document include Secondary data, which was gathered by analyzing literature that is presented by specialists. This literature was sourced from books, newspaper articles, magazines, and journals as well as precedents, which comprise of examples of completed buildings that respond to the notion of traditional healing. Precedents of international structures was analysed, with the aim to highlight the similarities of challenges found within the field of traditional healing both in rural and urban contexts. Asian traditional healing practices was examined, as their society shows dedicated cultural and traditional values preservation given the exposure to globalization.

#### **1.5.4 Primary data collection**

##### *Case Studies and Interviews*

The research design that this document explored is the abductive reasoning method, which is a type of an experimental design. The experiment tools utilized in the design in order to test the feasibility of the hypothesis includes the use of primary data, which was extracted in the form of case studies as well as interview schedules. With the exploration of case studies, the study focused on extracting information from establishments situated within the South African context. This study collected data from establishments headed by traditional healers who are governed by the Traditional Health Practitioners Council (KZN).

Another data collection technique explored for the document includes Primary data, which was extracted in the form of case studies as well as semi-structured interviews with space occupants within the traditional healing community. The research interview schedules was broken down into three forms. The three forms focused on interviewing experts about the spatial and cultural requirements that are associated with the healing of the body, healing of the mind as well as healing of the soul. Members from the selected institution were interviewed in accordance with their specialties. The interviews that were conducted for the research are in the form of one on one interviews whereby there was a physical interaction with the interviewee and the interview schedule was a standardized interview schedule whereby there would be a set of identical open-ended questions to be asked to all interviewees. In addition, the research also interviewed the general public about their views on the traditional healing imperatives.

### **1.5.5 Research Materials**

Research materials include all types of equipment utilised in the scope of the research. The research materials utilised for data collection included a cellular phone device that was used for recording during interview schedules as well as a camera device that was used for photographic documentation. The materials that were explored for data storage are online data storing platforms such as google drive and dropbox.

### **1.5.6 Research Analysis**

In this research, qualitative data analysis was utilized, in attempts of seeking to narrow down and make sense of the vast amount of information collected from all the literature and precedents highlighting the topic at hand. The study went through a systematic process of deriving descriptive information and offer an explanation or interpretation.

### **1.5.7 Summary (Matrix Attached)**

Objectives	Research Question	Data Collection Questions	Data Source	Sample Size	Data Collection Methods	Data Analysis Methods	Data Presentation Forms and Style
Attempt to change the negative connotation that contemporary society has towards the traditional healing practice and re-link traditional values, customs and beliefs of the society.	What is the role of traditional healing in a society, where and how did the practice originate?	Do you come from a family that practices their traditions?  What is your view about traditional healers and what influences them?	General Public, Published Journals and Books	30	Interviews	Systematic Analysis	Maps, Pictures, Text and Narrative.
Evaluate the influence of cultural dynamics on the societal perception of traditional healing.	What were the key influences around the traditional healing practices and how have they influenced the development of the phenomenon?	What challenges have you come across as a traditional healer or in the traditional healing field?	Key Traditional Healing Practitioners	11	Semi-structured interviews	Descriptive interpretation	Pictures, Text and Narrative.
Evaluate the current infrastructure that facilitates the traditional healing practice.	How has the building typology adapted to the cultural evolution attached to modernization and globalization?	Do you think the setting and location has an influence on the thriving and success of the traditional healing practice, if yes please elaborate how?	Key Traditional Healers/Practitioners	11	Semi-structured interviews, Observations, Case Studies.	Descriptive interpretation	Pictures, Text and Narrative.

Establish a building typology which has space and form that is influenced by the African cultural identity.	How does built form respond to a specific society and how are the variations identified?	Do you think you would thrive in your practice should you be equipped with better infrastructure?	Traditional Healers/Practioners and General Public	50	Semi-structured interviews, Observation and Case Studies	Systematic Analysis	Pictures, Text and Narrative.
To uncover the layers and principles of traditional healing. This will involve understanding traditional healing practices in order to establish a typology that compliment.	What are the underlying principles of traditional healing and how does built-form accommodate for it?	What is fundamental in a working environment for a traditional healer?	Traditional Healers/Practioners, Precedent Studies	11	Interviews, Observation	Descriptive interpretation	Pictures, Text and Narrative.

### **1.5.8 Conclusion**

This chapter highlighted the key tools which will be explored in order to make the research study feasible. Furthermore, the primary research sources, secondary research tools as well as research materials that the study intends to explore in order to carry out the research, specifically the field work aspect as well as data storage options that the research intends to use were also expressed. Furthermore, this chapter also outlines a strategy and philosophy that will be used in the study in order to decipher the gathered information.

### **1.6 CONCLUSION**

The key challenges/problems for the study have been highlighted in this chapter, together with the aims and objectives underpinned by critical and relevant questions to assist in seeking for the right answers. The key concepts and theories selected will assist in the process of synthesising related literature, which correlates with the same study. This chapter also highlighted a research method structure that guides the selected study and outlines to ensure the feasibility and effectiveness of the study.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

**TRADITIONAL METHODS OF FINDING BALANCE AND THE SYNCHRONY  
OF THE WHOLE: Healing of the body, mind, and soul.**

## 2.1 INTRODUCTION

Traditional healing can be defined in many ways; this is evident in how several terms such as ethnomedicine, folk medicine, native healing, and contemporary or alternative medicine are used to define the phenomenon mentioned above in current literature (Abdullahi, 2011). Abdullahi (2011) refers to traditional healing as the oldest form of a healthcare system, that is culture bounded, and has stood the test of time, and which people relied on, since the ancient Egyptian times to sustain wellness and to eliminate illnesses and diseases threatening man's wellbeing. The World Health Organisation (2009) cited by Abdullahi (2011) defined traditional healing as "*the sum total of the knowledge, skills and practices based on the theories, beliefs and experiences indigenous to different cultures, whether explicable or not, used in the maintenance of health, as well as in the prevention, diagnosis, improvement or treatment of physical and mental illnesses*", which is deemed as the most accepted definition of traditional healing (Abdullahi, 2011). Moreover, Okwu (1979) further stresses that the base of most African value systems, thinking patterns as well as general attitudes to events such as the concept of life, death, and diseases is rooted in the belief of the unity of the arts of creation. Meaning that there is a level of synergy between the mental state of a being and the spiritual sphere, the being, the non-living as well as the animate. This notion further stresses that reality is not only limited to things that individuals visualise or touch. Therefore, members of the supernatural world are regarded as a fundamental part of the material world. Furthermore, the concept of the unity within the body of beings denotes that everything exists in cosmic order and harmony (Okwu, 1979: 19).

Within this chapter, the focus will be shifted into analysing three dimensions of healing. These three dimensions of healing includes the healing of the body, healing of the mind, and healing of the soul. These forms of healing will be examined through the lens of holistic healing. According to Erickson (2007), within the medical discipline, there is a belief that the human being is composed of the body, the mind as well as the soul. These cohesive components function as an inseparable 'whole.' Furthermore, there is a belief that the cohesion of these entities is continuously interacting with the universe as well as other organisms and species that exist in the universe. In addition, Erickson (2007) argues that the health and wellbeing of an individual depends on maintaining a balance between these entities, and therefore healing is a journey towards holism. Furthermore, it is argued that the form of body-mind and spiritual integration within the traditional healing entity is a significant component of the healing process (Moodley et al., 2008:154).

## 2.2 THE HEALING OF THE PHYSICAL BEING: THE BODY

In the event of the healing of the body (Moodley et al., 2008:158) denote that many of the therapeutic systems of traditional healing involve direct contact with the physical body. Furthermore, the physical body is regarded as an essential part in terms of obtaining information, execution of treatments as well as the actual manifestation of healing. There is a strong belief that the body is a container which channels the energy for healing. In addition, traditional healers regard the body as a machine in which patients can use to excavate the underlying causes of man's problems. This notion is communicated in a sense that the body becomes a record of every event that an individual has ever encountered in their lives. These records include events that are currently taking place as well as the events that are yet to take place in the future, from the minute detail, up until the grandest level (Moodley et al., 2008:158). Moreover, there is a strong belief that the healing journey should be performed through the body because the body is the source that stores everything and through the body, the healer can be able to detect the symptoms that the patient is suffering from (Moodley et al., 2008:158).

It is also essential to note the causes of illness before dwelling deeply into forms of healing. The causes which activate illness can be divided into two main categories: one being instigated by natural causes which are infectious, and the other forms of illnesses being instigated by supernatural evil spirits. 'Good health is usually understood in terms of the relationship with one's ancestors.' In addition, in the event where cultural beliefs play a role, an example of the Nguni tribe can be used whereby the Nguni's firmly believe that when ancestors are not pleased, they punish the living with diseases (White, 2015:2). The most common aspect within the notion of the healing of the body is the use of indigenous herbal medicines. Depending on the type of disease that the traditional healer is expected to heal, the healer would prescribe herbs to the patient.

These herbs would be dispensed with specific instructions on how to prepare the herbs, the dosage, and the time frame in which the herbs can be used (White, 2015:4).



*Figure 3.1: illustrating a range of herbs that Nguni healers use. (Source: <http://www.ssenherbalandtherapy.co.za>)*

Moreover, in some cases, the traditional healers also resort to using white clay. The clay is used in conjunction with a mixture of herbs for the patient to apply over their bodies for several days. This mixture is usually prepared for patients with skin diseases. The theory behind this belief is derived from biblical reference denoting that the human body was molded out of clay. Therefore, the belief is that if the human body is derived out of dust or earth. The healer would then have to use those same resources in order to restore the body. As mentioned earlier on that in order to maintain balance and wellbeing, the three dimensions of healing need to act holistically. White, (2015:5) further stresses on the notion of this holism by denoting that the white clay is sometimes used for preventative rituals.

This process is carried out as a measure of preventing the spirits behind the illness from attacking the patient or healing trainees.



*Figure 3.2: illustrating a Nguni traditional healer and a healing trainee covered in white healing clay. (Source: <https://www.google.com/>)*

Furthermore, in the event of maintaining holistic balance: a spiritual entity plays a crucial role in order to ensure that there is a connection between the patient and the healer. Moodley et al. (2008: 158) asserts that when traditional healers undertake the journey of healing the body, the healers spiritually experience the agony and suffering of the patients. These healers possess body consciousness that allows their energies to connect and experience the patient's needs. In addition, this notion of embodiment is executed through feeling, touching, and massaging the body in order to be in connection with the mind, body, and soul of the patient holistically Moodley et al., (2008: 159).

### 2.3 A STATE OF TRANCE: MATTERS OF THE UNCONSCIOUS MIND UNITING WITH THE SOUL

In order to fully comprehend what healing of the mind entails, and to further expand on the previously mentioned state. This state being the occurrence whereby the healer spiritually connects with the body of the patient, healing of the mind as well as matters of the conscious and unconscious mind. The phenomenon of healing will be viewed through the lens of shamanism. Winkelman (2000:1) denotes that, for the longest time, the anthropological study of consciousness has been connected to the phenomenon of altered states of consciousness, which can be described as the notion of shamanism and possession. Furthermore, a systems model is used in order to define the concept of consciousness scientifically. The properties of these systems include self-representation, motivation, and others. In addition, these scientific systems are linked to experiences and practices of the altered state of consciousness and shamanism.

Winkelman (2000:1) further stresses that in the event of the altered shamanic state of consciousness, the focus is shifted on the adaptations of the internal environment of a being (the body, mind, and soul), cultural systems of meaning and other. In addition, the phenomenon of altered shamanic state of consciousness pertains picturesque representations of prominent emotional memories and the representation of self, emotions as well as motivational systems central to self and other, and it, therefore, plays a crucial role in illustrating the vital aspects of consciousness as well as the relationship between mental and physical levels of reality (Winkelman, 2000:1-2).

Another form of healing that is essential in maintain balance and synchrony within the holistic spheres that make up life form are medical herbs. These medicinal herbs are known to possess psychoactive or psychotropic substances that, when ingested, affect the mind and its mental processes. These herbs instigate chemical substances that are used for the modification of intellectual, emotional as well as behavioral functions in humans (Sobiecki, 2008:1). To name just a few: there is a herb referred to as *mlomo mmandi* in isiZulu, which is translated to sweet mouth in English. This herb is well known for its stress-relieving properties (Sobiecki, 2014). Furthermore, Sobiecki, (2014) denotes that the *mlomo mmandi* plant is suspected to be a plant known as *Glycyrrhiza glabra* or Licorice in Western civilisation.

The Licorice plant in European and American cities is well known as a tonic plant which is used for fatigue, adrenalin exhaustion as well as improving energy levels within the body (Sobiecki, 2008).



*Figure 3.3: Showing an example medicinal licorice (Source: <https://www.ebay.com> )*

Within the Nguni culture, it is nearly impossible to isolate the spiritual healing of the soul to that of the mind. To further stress on the spiritual healing, White (2015: 2-3) asserts that spirituality plays a crucial role in the identification of diseases. The healers undergo a process whereby they consult with their ancestral spirits to identify the cause of disease within the sick individual or investigate whether there was a violation of an established order from the patient. This whole process is administered through the scattering of animal bones, cowry shells, and other elements. The bones possess a very powerful representative connotation of all forces that affect human life (White, 2015:3). This process is regarded as a channel to access information that is not accessible to the conscious mind.

According to Okwu (1979:21), the definition of the soul within the African context can be described as the seed of being or existence; it is ‘the spiritual, non-dying part of men.’ It is believed that after death,

the soul returns to the ethereal world to await reawakening. Okwu (1979:21) further denotes that no one knows the exact location of the soul in the body, nor the time of entry within the body is known. Regardless of its unknown location, the soul is still regarded as an integral part in holistic healing. Within the Nguni tribe, it is crucial to note that the soul is a vital part in which healers use to connect with their ancestral spiritual spirits; this term is referred to as *possession trance*, according to Greenbaum (1999). Greenbaum (1999) further denotes that possession trance is a widespread phenomenon amongst African nationalities. However, even though there are multiple manifestations of this notion. There is a common belief that individuals experience a change of identity during a state of trance since an individual tends to behave in a manner of the inhibiting or possessing spirit (Greenbaum, 1999).

In the previous text, it was stated that natural herbs play a crucial role in the native traditional healing of the body and mind. In addition, other types of natural herbs also play a significant part in the psychoactive spiritual ceremonies that healers perform. These herbs include plant species such as *ubulawu*. Sobiecki, (2014) denotes that within several plants that are dispensed for spiritual healing within the Nguni traditional healing entity, there are mutually inclusive plants which cater for the holistic therapeutics of the body, mind and spiritual sphere such as the case of *ubulawu* plant mixtures (Sobiecki, 2008). The term *ubulawu* is derived from the plant's properties, which are: purifying the body and bringing luck (Sobiecki, 2008). The preparation of this plant includes raw ground roots or stems which are infused with cold water. The mixture is then stirred to produce foam, and it is believed that both the foam and liquid version of *ubulawu* cleanse the inner body. However, there were no proven cases of the plant bringing luck (Sobiecki, 2008).

Contrary to that, Sobiecki, (2014) further asserts that the plant brings luck in the sense of 'enabling the user to attain a positive frame of mind that comes from the feelings of wellbeing and clarity of thought resulting from the consumption of psychoactive chemicals contained in the plants and the use and effects of emesis therapy'. .in addition, the plant is also recognized for acting as a gateway to connecting with ancestral spirits. Sobiecki, (2012:217) further denotes that there is a multifaceted psychospiritual healing process that gradually discloses for Nguni healers. Furthermore, this process entails a progression in dreaming, healing, foretelling, and developing psychic sensitivity. The use of the plant of *ubulawu* is vital in these processes 'by opening the initiate to the teachings of the ancestral spirits, to learn the healing arts, and achieve personal psychospiritual healing integration' (Sobiecki, 2012:217).

A similar herb like the ubulawu plant is used as a gateway for healers to connect with the ancestral world. This herb is known as impepho. This herb is known to belong to the Helichrysum plant family scientifically. The use of this herb entails the burning of the plant's dried leaves and stems. The burning of this plant invokes ancestral spirits while inducing divination for patients (Sobiecki, 2008). In addition, (Sobiecki, 2008) further emphasises that the inhalation of the impepho's psychoactive chemicals instigate a relaxed and calm state of mind that is conducive to religious and spiritual rituals (Sobiecki, 2008).

#### 2.4 SYNERGISING THE THREE ANTHROPOIDAL DIMENSIONS OF HEALING WITH NATURE

In the previous text, it was highlighted that herbs, which are derived from nature, play a significant role in the healing and divination realm of the Nguni tribe. This stanza will further dwell on how other elements of nature play a significant role in the holistic healing of the mind, body, and soul. Orr, (2010:15) further stresses on this notion by denoting that this phenomenon of the symbiosis of holistic healing and nature is referred to as ecotherapy, in which Orr (2010:15) describes the term as an entity which initiates healing that is rooted in man's affinity with the natural world'. Furthermore, Orr (2010:15) expands about a book which was written by Clinebell (1996), in which Clinebell (1996) deciphers the notion of ecotherapy. Moreover, in the book, ecotherapy is explained as the healing and growth that is instigated by healthy interaction with earth (Clinebell, 1996). Furthermore, the notion of ecotherapy is also known as 'green therapy' as well as 'earth-centered therapy.' The term ecotherapy presents a new dimension of treatment that 'acknowledges the vital role of nature and addresses the human, nature relationship' (Clinebell, 1996).

The term further considers the scientific understandings of the universe in relation to the most profound indigenous knowledge. 'This perspective addresses the critical fact that people are intimately connected with, embedded in, and inseparable from the rest of nature' (Orr, 2010:18). Orr (2010:18) further asserts that grasping this circumstance shifts man's greater understanding of how to heal the human psyche and the current unhealthy human-nature relationship. Furthermore, biomedical professionals such as eco-psychologists and eco-therapists suggest that the pathway to healing an individual from stresses and depression that is induced by the advances of the world can be achieved through reconnecting with natural

elements that nature provides such as animal and plant species which play a significant role in the healing sphere (Orr, 2010:20).

In addition, Reese et al. (2019:54) support this statement by asserting that ‘individuals who experience greater nature connection tend to engage at a higher frequency of pro-environmental behaviors, which have also been linked to perceptions of wellnesses. Nature, therefore, has the ability to make people feel restored, and in today’s society, ‘green therapy’ is regarded as an increasingly important phenomenon. Furthermore, this phenomenon encompasses activities such as care farming, animal-assisted therapy, social and therapeutic horticulture, facilitated green exercise as well as healing gardens (Summers et al., 2018). Summers et al. (2018) further stress that ‘humans also need interaction with nature and its ecosystems to enhance cognitive, emotional, spiritual, and aesthetic development.’ Reese et al. (2019:55) further stresses that the feasibility of ecotherapy is dependent on three factors, such as access to nature, environmental identity as well as divine existence. Furthermore, these three entities were further expanded to six factors, such as (1) Physical Access, which can be described as the ability to engage in or with one’s nature definition physically. (2) Sensory Access; which is the ability to experience nature through one’s senses in the absence of actual nature contact. (3) Connection which encompasses pleasant thoughts and feelings inspired by one’s association with nature. (4) The protection: which is triggered by feeling operative when traversing or interacting with natural environments. (5) Preservation: which is instigated by having a sense of environmental agency or feeling like one can make a difference by

positively impacting nature. Lastly (6) spirituality: which is the tendency to feel connected with one's life source or life-guiding principles when feeling connected with nature (Reese et al., 2019:55).



Figure 2 Figure A, B, C & D 2.4 illustrating a therapeutic healing centre that incorporate nature as part of the design (Source: www.archdaily.com)

## 2.5 CONCLUSION

Through this chapter, it was demonstrated that the phenomenon of holistic healing could be viewed as a multifaceted system that encompasses entities that are different, yet these entities can act in harmony with each other and are analysed holistically. The healing of the body was vividly discussed. The chapter further discerned that in the event of healing, the body is an integral part, which is like a machine used for obtaining information and also used for the execution of healing. The chapter also dwelled upon spiritual healing, such as healing of the mind and soul. Moreover, the notion of an altered state of consciousness, as well as herbs, which are key in healing the mind and triggering the state of unconsciousness, were discussed. In addition, the chapter focused on nature's role in the sphere of healing. The chapter also highlighted the notion of holistic healing, which is fused with maximizing on elements that nature provides; this phenomenon is referred to as ecotherapy.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **NARROWING DOWN TO THE SUBLIME INDIGENOUS CULTURAL SYSTEMS OF THE NGUNI TRADITIONAL HEALING REALM**

### 3.1 INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter, a broader spectrum of principles of the traditional healing entity, as well as systems that make up the traditional healing sphere, were highlighted. Therefore, in this chapter, the argument will be shifted towards dwelling upon a contextual understanding what the notion of traditional healing entails. Moreover, the content of this chapter will be guided by Struther et al. (2004) 's scrutiny of the entity, which employs an anthropological approach. This chapter also aims to contextualize the notion of the traditional healing entity to a specific ethnic group. Struthers, at al. (2004) assert that within the native Nguni ethnic group, traditional healing is understood as an ancient, complex and holistic healthcare system that is practiced by indigenous people, which is profound and culturally rooted. In the attempt to understand the Southern African Nguni's ethnic groups (which will be later discussed in figure 3.1), the theory of 'spatial and temporal dimensions of human behaviour' will be used. The theory will also be used as a framework to comprehend the definition of traditional healing further and as well as contextualize this study. Through the use of the framework mentioned above, this chapter aims to highlight the significance and the influence of the healing phenomenon on the socio-cultural aspect within the Nguni civilization across three periods in time, which are pre-modern, to modern, and finally to current post-modern period.

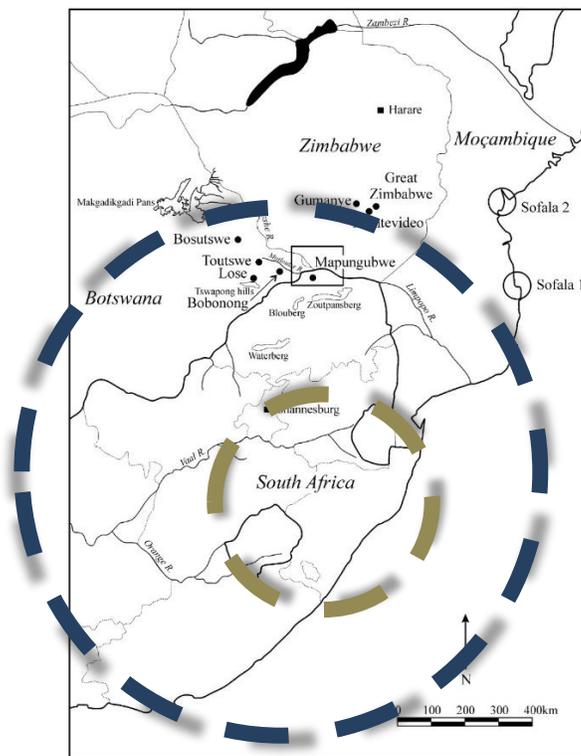


Figure 3.1: Marking the Nguni's decedent territory leading to KZN as the focus of the study. (Source: Thomas N. Huffman 2008, *Journal of Anthropological Archaeology*)

### 3.2 TRACING BACK THE ORIGINS OF THE NGUNI CIVILIZATION AND THE HEALING CULTURE

In order to understand the fundamental principles of the Nguni civilization and the healing culture within the Nguni tribe, it is crucial to *note the processes* that are brought upon by this entity's existence (Jacobs, 1961:442). The Nguni ethnic group, like many other indigenous ethnic groups, was formed through the concept of civilisation. According to Ellman (2007), civilisation '*is the state or condition of persons, living and functioning together, jointly, cooperatively so that they produce and experience the benefits of so living and functioning jointly and cooperatively.*' The term civilisation originates from the Roman expression for "city". In addition to Ellman's (2007) definition of civilisation, the author further implies that a society is made up of a cluster of cities. In turn, the cities involve people who are living in symbiosis with one another. Wei (2011: 1), on the other hand, defines civilisation, in a traditional sense, as a way of thinking or a way of life and a spatiotemporal, long term, dynamic living structure. Wei (2011: 2) further compares civilisation to the culture of writing, art, music, legality, economics, social institutionalisation, military, and other. Moreover, these sub-elements are viewed as fundamentals of civilisation; therefore, one can roundoff that civilisation gives birth to culture. Contrary to the notion of civilisation (Ellman, 2007) asserts that there is a phenomenon of individualism, which is associated with rugged independence. Moreover, the consequent survival of the fittest is a contentious issue that is instigated by the phenomenon of individualism. In addition, the notion of individualism can be related to the inception stages of life form, which includes the state of animal-related behaviour, primitive conduct, or barbarism. During this era, men were deemed unable to function in any form rather than competing for resources in order to survive (Ellman, 2007).

According to Huffman (2008), Mapungubwe and the Great Zimbabwean civilisations, archaeologically represent the early development of the Bantu speaking indigenous ethnic group of the Southern African region known as the Nguni's, who form part of the Bantu language speaking clan (Adekoya, 2015). Pikirayi (2013) asserts that the evident socio-cultural patterns that dominated Great Zimbabwe are based on the principles found 300 km to the south of the state-based Mapungubwe. These principles include Mapungubwe's landscape that incorporates extensive valley systems that are located perpendicular to the junction of the Shashe and the Limpopo rivers (refer to figure 3.2).

Furthermore, these landmarks are surrounded by the plateaus of Botswana, South Africa, as well as Zimbabwe. Moreover, the demise of Mapungubwe, which later gave rise to the mainstream development of Great Zimbabwe, resulted in a population of 18000 inhabitants.

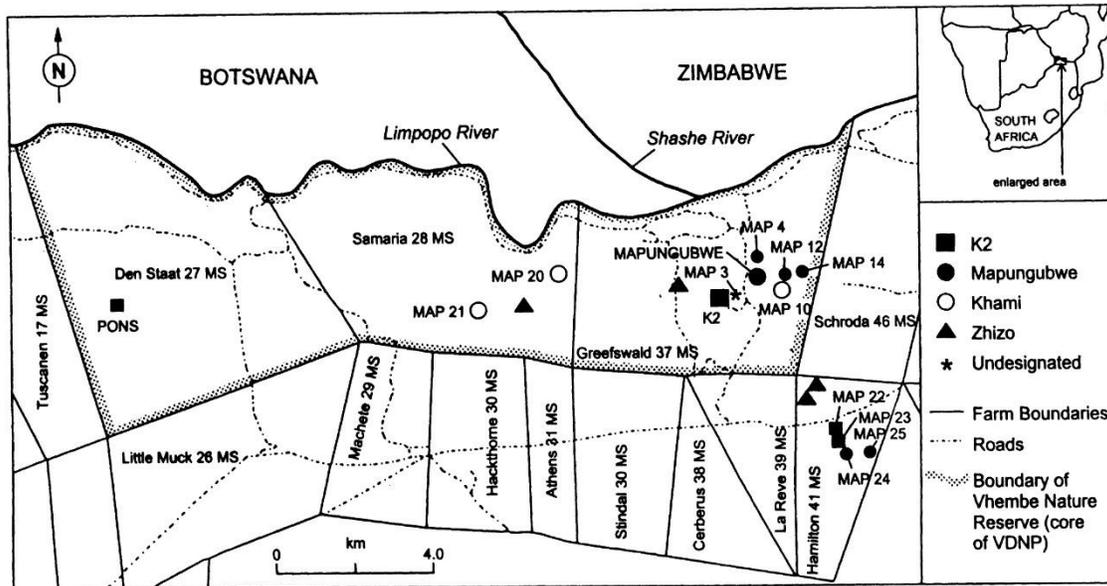
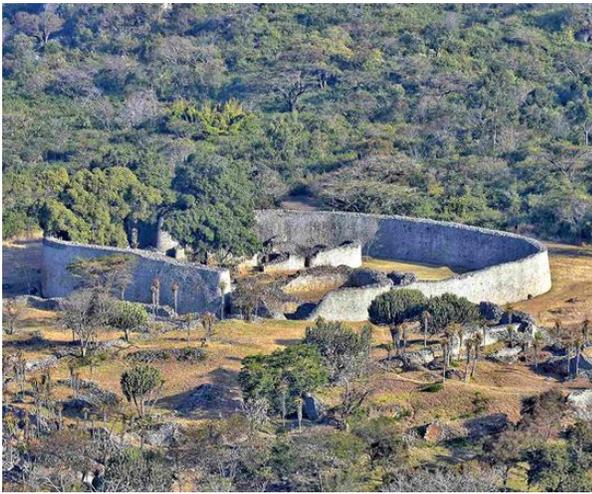


Figure 3.2: The relationship of Mapungubwe to surrounding later Nguni tribes  
 (Source: Meyer, A (2000), [www.jstor.org/stable/3858042](http://www.jstor.org/stable/3858042))

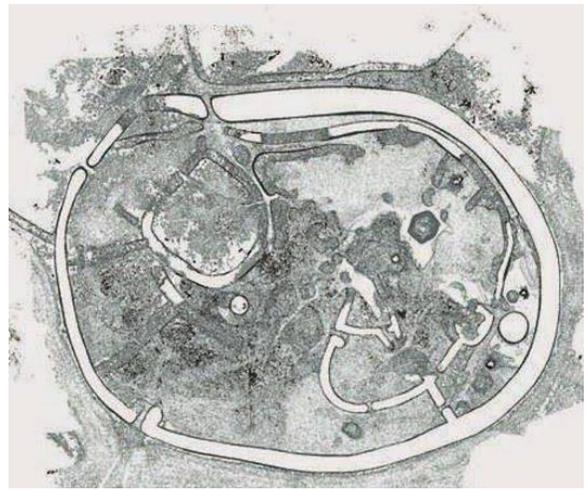
Furthermore, the demise of Mapungubwe is said to be caused by either climate change or/and a transformation associated with the Iron Age trade of gold and other. (Meyer, 2000). In attempts to further back the information presented above, Pikirayi (2013) asserts that the transformation of trade was derived from kin-warranted domestic corporations. These types of trades mainly relied on the exchange of land and cattle to long-distance traders, this phenomenon, therefore, instigated a foundation of a multifaceted urban state centre.

The wealth that was accumulated from the trade, which was taking place in the Great Zimbabwean state, assisted in the construction of the symbolic stone monuments (refer to Figure 3.3 and Figure 3.4). These stone monuments symbolised a prestigious social status but still preserved the spatial socio-organisations which are found in Mapungubwe's civilisation.

Years later, the stone monuments are still present and have crucially assisted in tracing the historical origins of the Nguni culture and descendants across the Nguni ethnic groups (Pikirayi, 2013).



*Photo 3.3: The remains of the Great Zimbabwe stone monuments (Source: (Photo by Innocent Pikirayi, with permission from National museum and monuments Zimbabwe, 2012)*



*Figure 3.3: Plan of the Great Zimbabwe stone monument (Source: (Photo by Innocent Pikirayi, with permission from National museum and monuments Zimbabwe, 2012)*

In addition, Huffman (2008) asserts that the spatial organisation under the Central Cattle Pattern (CCP) concept, (outlined in figure 3.5) is related to a specific socio-organisation model and is a product of a specific worldview. In the Nguni context, the CCP is viewed through the lens of 'rank-based societies'. Furthermore, this notion is guided by a patrilineal concept that dwells upon ideas of 'procreation', with a preference for 'bride-wealth' in cattle and a 'masculine genetic headship'.



*Figure 3.5: illustrating of the Nguni Central Cattle Pattern concept on its application (Source: T.N. Huffman/Journal of Anthropological Archaeology 28 (2009) 37–54)*

The CCP can also be associated with a solid belief relating to the 'role of ancestors' in an individual's everyday life. With the mentioned five features found in the CCP concept, the worldview of leadership is thus considered sacred, where there is a spiritual association between the leader and the land they live in. That link is related to the leader's connection with their ancestors and God (refer to Figure 3.6)

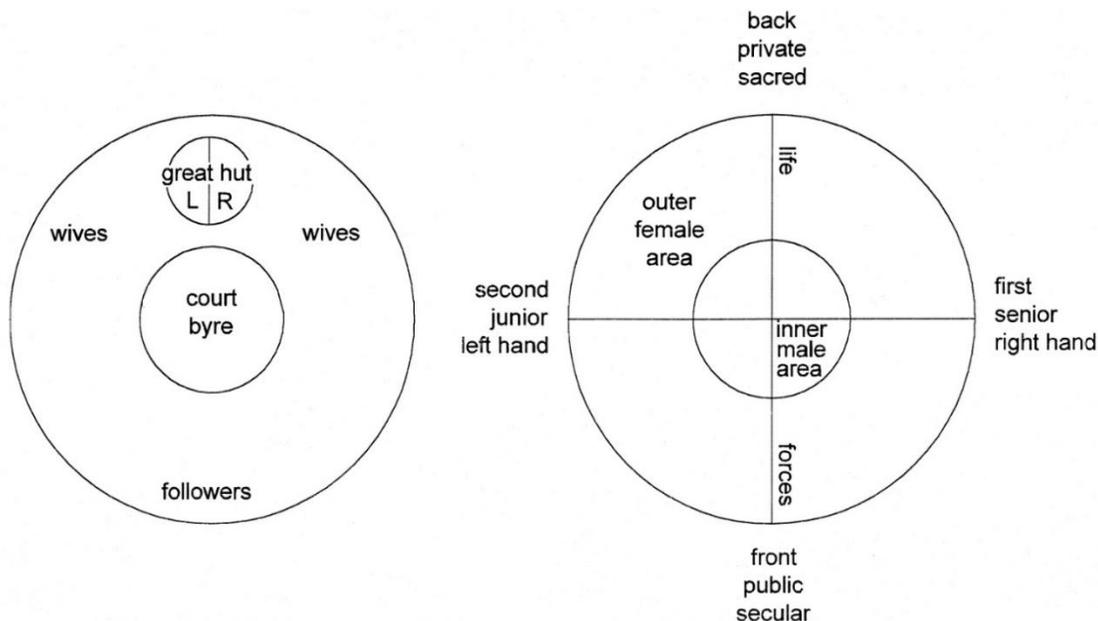


Figure 3.6: illustrating of the understanding of Nguni Central Cattle Pattern concept (Source: T.N. Huffman/Journal of Anthropological Archaeology 28 (2009) 37–54)

The cultures of farming and trade were critical factors for the well-being and development of the Nguni civilisation (Mbeje, 2017). Furthermore, diviners established a strong relationship with the leaders of the tribe. This relationship was motivated by the role that diviners played in facilitating the development and well-being of a tribe through their unique gift and ability to communicate with the ancestors. Huffman (2008) asserts that the relationship between diviners and leaders is even spatially communicated, whereby the placement of diviners, within the CCP spatial organisation (refer to figure 3.6 above), is located towards the sacred section of the establishment. In this context, the role and duties of diviners included: the ability to bring rain (rainmakers) as well as maintaining the health (healers) of the leaders, armies and the general public at large. The rainmaking rituals were part of the agricultural cycle. Therefore, during this time, diviners used to be extremely busy preparing medicines, which were vital in the calling for rain rituals and combating evil spirits that could cause misfortunes sent by enemies.

### 3.3 THE LIVING STRUCTURE OF THE NGUNI TRADITIONAL HEALING PRACTICES

Yankuzo (2014) cited Mbiti (1970), who expressed in their observations that every African village has a 'medicine man' who is within reach and has a strong relationship with the community. In turn, the 'medicine man' is accessible to every individual in the community. In almost every individual's lifetime, every member of the community is bound to be treated or examined by the 'medicine man'. Rinne (2001), on the other hand, discusses the notion mentioned above in reference to the 'Yoruba' culture. In the argument, Rinne (2001) asserts that the Yoruba culture, which also forms part of the Bantu clan, have one or few diviners/healers residing in a village or within a compound. If not, the diviners reside within the outskirts of the village. This setup was done deliberately to allow the healer to be familiar with the patients and their family affairs to ensure that the healer is aware of the holistic condition of the family structure (Rinne, 2001). Besides, KwaZulu-Natal being the emphasis of the study, Flint (2008) further argues that, during the ancient era, a healer's role did not end with maintaining the health of a tribe. In the argument, the author makes special reference to the periods called '*Muthi*, Healers and Nation-building' within the Zulu kingdom. In this period, the 'power of the *muthi* rule', brought healers in close proximity to the leader and the community. This power was politically manifested and directly linked to the leader's success in favour of the community, where the stronger the '*muthi*', the stronger and powerful the ruler is deemed (Flint, 2008). Yeboah (2000) adds to Flint's (2008) regarding the role of healers by denoting that African traditional healers played an essential role in educating the community about traditions, culture, cosmology and spirituality. Furthermore, Kanfer & Cooper (2005) stress that healers served as social workers, councillors, psychotherapists and as well upholders of indigenous knowledge systems.

The World Health Organisation (2009), cited by Abdullahi (2011), defines a traditional healer as a person recognised by the community in which the healer resides with. The World Health Organisation (2009), further describes a healer as someone who has a gift and wisdom in the health care and uses '*plant, animal and mineral substances and other methods based on social, cultural and religious practices.*' According to Sobiecki (2014), the southern African region, known as the Nguni civilisation, has two types of traditional healers with intertwined specialties. These specialties include a notion where one is the diviner (known as *isangoma* in isiZulu; *Igqirha* in isiXhosa, *mungome* in tsiTsonga, *selaodi* in Sesotho). The second specialty is the herbalist (known as *inyanga* in isiZulu, *ixhwele* in isiXhosa, *nyanga* in tsiTsonga, *ngaka* in Sesotho). Yankuzo (2014) has a much

extensive list of traditional healing practitioners, which some are beyond the scope of this study. The list includes specialists like bonesetters, *herbalists*, midwives, *diviners*, magician-healers, oracle men. Diviners have supernatural powers, and they are considered to be spiritual specialists. These special abilities are used to diagnose patient's illnesses, diseases and misfortunes. Therefore, the duty of the diviner entails giving counselling if needed, and prescribing medicines (herbs), and recommending or giving instructions for ritual ceremonies (Sobiecki, 2014). Contrary to that, a herbalist, on the other hand, is someone who has developed, over the years, an extensive scope of indigenous knowledge about diseases affecting indigenous people and treatments of various conditions using medicines that are sourced naturally. (Sobiecki, 2014).

Hund (2004:69) describes traditional healers loosely using term 'witchdoctor', with a blurred line of distinction between the two entities mentioned above. In the argument, Hund (2004:69) denotes that *inyanga* is simply a herbalist or a diviner and *isangoma* is someone who possesses a clairvoyant and is subject to a calling from their ancestral spirits. To further highlight the distinction between the two entities, Hund (2004:69) states that all *sangomas* are herbalists and diviners, but not all herbalists (*nyangas*) are *sangomas*. Hund (2004:69) further goes on to describe the training or selection process to become *isangomas*, which involves a period whereby an individual undergoes a preliminary phase called an apprentice *sangoma*. *During this phase, a trainee gets affected by an illness called intwaso* (Hund, 2004: 69). In addition, Podolecka (2016: 150) states that the illness (*intwaso*) manifests as daydreams and hallucinations, hearing voices, talking to unknown or mythical creatures, physical exhaustion, and goes on to denote that no one becomes *isangoma* by choice. During the training period, the selected candidate called *ithwasa*, gets trained on how to prepare herbal medicines, interpret dreams, communicate with spirits, and diagnose illnesses and acquire the knowledge of tribal history, mythology, and sacred rituals (Hund, 2004: 69). The term 'witch doctor' is more appropriate in defining the *igangoma/diviner* because these specialists spend a majority of their time disputing curses (*ubuthakathi*) placed upon patients by witches, therefore, the term mentioned above describes the function the diviners perform. On the other hand, Truter (2007), states that an apprentice *inyanga* spends several years going through a mentoring process. The trainee becomes trained by their father, who is an accredited *inyanga* within a community. The accredited specialist then grooms the son to uphold the family's legacy. *Izinyanga* have a wide range of curative expertise. This expertise entails preventive and prophylactic treatments, performing rituals and communicating symbolism as well as preparing fortunes

and fidelities. Some izinyanga treat specific conditions and become known to have mastered the treatment of particular diseases or conditions. These conditions include medicine for rainmaking and being a specialist in the treatment of conditions on organs such as the heart, lungs, kidneys, and others. (Truter, 2007).

### 3.4 THE INFLUENCE OF CULTURE SCAPE ON INDIGENOUS HEALING PRACTICES

#### 3.4.1. Introduction

According to Ellman (2007), only civilisation has the potential to provide an improved quality of life that necessitates security, material abundance, art and culture and the possibility of individual fulfilment and happiness. Ellman (2007) further denotes that, in order to sustain a civilisation, absolute cultural values must be carried through. In most case, these set of values become embodied in a belief structure which influences men's behavioural patterns (Wei, 2011:2). Lakhiani (2016:9), on the other hand, believes that society has created a new world that is layered on the top of the current one. In addition, Ellman (2007) stresses that this notion is expressed '*in the vast structure of beliefs and practices that men have developed for navigating the world*'; therefore, the society has been living in two worlds ever since. These two worlds are interpreted through the understanding of truths, where the physical world is understood to be absolute truth with the law of gravity as an example. The other 'world' is the world of relative truth, which is the mental world. This 'world' consists of ideas, construct, myths, patterns, and rules that individuals have developed and passed from generation to generation (Lakhiani, 2016:10). Furthermore, Van Niekerk (2012) uses three domains to understand the phenomenon of the truth: which are rhetorical (debate), mythical (belief and religion) and empirical (research). The rhetorical notion is widely utilised and formalised by social institutions like the parliament, the court of law, journalism and others. The mythical truth is where the traditional healing entity is categorised because, in some scenarios, it cannot be supported by the empirical truth, such as scientific research findings (Van Niekerk, 2012).

From the previous text, the study has highlighted the importance of culture scape within the traditional healing practices of the Nguni civilisation. Furthermore, this section will discuss the evolution of the culture scape, explicitly focusing on the global culture, which is greatly influenced by modernisation. The study also aims to unpack the direct impact that modernisation has on the healing culture and then assess the relevance and profoundness of traditional healing in the post-modern era.

### **3.4.2. The evolution of culture and the direct impact on traditional healing Practices**

Lemonnier (2017) traces healing/medicinal practices back to almost four millennia in ancient Egypt, stating that explanations and treatments of all sort of illnesses and disease were based on mythical, sacred and spiritual beliefs. Later, in the antiquity of the Greek civilisation, the notion of the divine casualty was rejected by Hippocrates due to the fact that it did not abide by standards of an empirical approach, which was adopted and developed based on scientific observation of the physical body (Lemonnier, 2017). This notion demonstrated the first split between the science-based (empirical) and religion-based (mythical) medicine (Lemonnier, 2017). The science-based medicine was primarily distributed around the world, during the later centuries, by explorers, missionaries and merchants following the path of trans-continental history and human migration events, and more recently through the industrial revolution and the globalisation of the pharmaceutical market (Comaroff, 1985). Furthermore, specialists such as Galen, a renowned Greek physician, contributed to the spread of Greek medical knowledge into the Roman city, which became dominant for a millennium. After the demise of the Roman city, science-based medicine did not evolve much; instead, it remained religious-based. Later during the medieval times, traces of the science-based medicine were spread amongst the Arabic medical system and were brought as far as the Indian subcontinent by the Mughal invasions. However, most parts of India, especially the remote areas, stuck to the religious-based medical system (Lemonnier, 2017).

Before cosmopolitan medicine was introduced, traditional medicine was a dominant medical system available to millions of Africans equally in rural and urban communities (Abdullahi, 2011). Flint (2008) highlighted the first interaction and the cultural exchange between the European and African medical practitioners, particularly in the Zulu kingdom. Flint (2008) further asserted that the exchange yielded both positive and negative outcomes, where competition, race, and professionalisation played out. This interaction resulted in a need for the licensing of healers, the peak of rural poverty, urbanisation and the rise of consumerism culture. These factors significantly transformed the traditional healing entity (Flint, 2008). Moreover, the exchange of knowledge between the wealthy and successful native healers and the overcrowded biomedicine markets resulted in a rhetorical and commercial competition between European and African medical practitioners in the twentieth century (Flint, 2008). In addition, Flint (2008) also highlights the interaction between the African and Indian medical practitioners, who initially came as a labour force for the Europeans, asserting that the cultural exchange was mutually beneficial

because of the similarity of their world views and approach towards their healing systems. When the Zulu kingdom was defeated by the British in the 1870s, the colonial rule was in full motion (Hund, 2004:67). The racial and competitive interaction between the two ethnic groups, which were mentioned in the previous stanza, led to prejudice government legislations that restrained the practice of traditional healers. Furthermore, these legislative restrictions included an introduction of laws such as the Suppression of Witchcraft Act of 1957.

The primary purpose of the law was to outlaw *izangoma* (diviners) because of the perception that the diviners practiced harmful witchcraft activities (refer to figure 2.6).

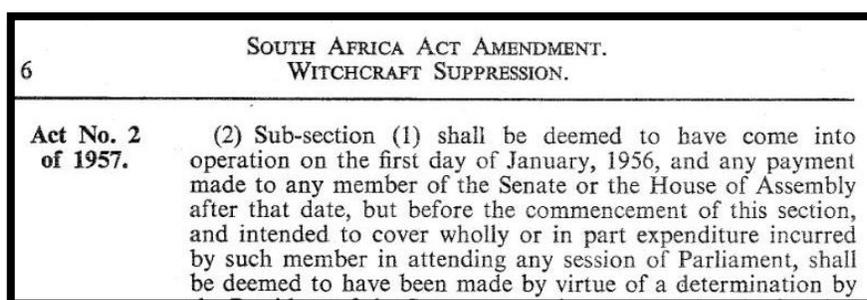


Figure 3.7 Illustrating a section from the legislation during the apartheid period

(Source: [https://www.gov.za/sites/default/files/gcis\\_document/201505/act-3-1957](https://www.gov.za/sites/default/files/gcis_document/201505/act-3-1957))

The Suppression of Witchcraft Act of 1957, along with the Group Areas Act of 1950, automatically limited *izinyanga* from practicing in the urban areas freely (Hund, 2004:67). Croucamp (2001:3) argues that negative perceptions that were evoked about traditional healers then influenced society as a whole. Since the sangoma's (diviner) powers were taken away, social issues occurred, which separated communities in African societies. For example, in situations where a member of a community was suspected of practicing witchcraft, the court of law (rhetorical domain evidence-based) was not equipped with enough cognition to dealing with such matters. This phenomenon resulted in incidents where the community took the matter into their own hands (Hund, 2004:68). These prejudicial views about traditional healers also filtered into mass media; for example, the term "*Witchdoctor*" was taken out of context in it's literal form, whereby diviners were known to be notorious doctors that performed wicked tricks in society. This stigma affected the perception of diviners globally (Croucamp, 2001:3).

Moreover, there was a glorified focus on the abnormality and magical rituals of bloodletting and animal sacrifice, which was taken out of context and was scrutinised without a profound engagement and an

indigenous understanding of traditional healing practices (Sobiecki, 2014). Croucamp, (2001:3), further states that colonial attitudes towards the southern African traditional healing entity came across as invalidating and distorting the traditional (mythical) realm in the public domain. These attitudes played out clear through the degradation of a diviner, where a regular comparison between the Christian religion and the traditional approach of worshipping ancestors was usually made, and conflicting ideologies were highlighted (Comaroff, 1985). Comaroff (1985) touches on a fundamental phenomenon that has shaped the upbringing of the present African culture, where the author mentions that Christian missionaries served as the vanguard of colonialism. Furthermore, Comaroff (1985), describes Christian symbolism as a *lingua franca* that was introduced as an alternative school of thoughts and practices that counter-engaged the indigenous social systems, which in turn triggered a cultural transformation.

### **3.4.3. The relevance of traditional healing in the modern era**

According to Wei (2011:2), in the global context, there is an interaction of multiple cultures, which is instigated by globalisation. This global influence becomes beneficial to cultural groups that remain grounded and committed to their cultural identity. Yankuzo (2014), supports the statement by denoting that over the years, there has been a growing concern in the way the world is being flattened into a monolithic space. This monolithic space is now referred to as 'a global village'. Most countries who are in the developmental state are being forced to subscribe to the ever-changing global interconnected socio-cultural issues and economies in the management of their national affairs (Yankuzo, 2014). In addition, Yankuzo (2014) further stresses about the homogenization and domination of the traditional African culture that is brought by the multi-cultural interaction. According to Abdullahi (2011), the western religion, education, urbanisation and globalisation phenomena in Africa affected the use and relevance of traditional medicine, usually among the educated elites, youth and urban dwellers. As the Western founded education system, Christian ideologies and an amplified interaction with the global society become integral parts in moulding the current communities, traditions and customs have been affected and, in some instances, abandoned altogether (Abdullahi, 2011). According to Kealotwse (2014), the clash that took place regarding ideologies between western customs and traditional customs is highlighted through the teachings of the church. These teachings were introduced through the concept of salvation; this concept preached ideas of abhorring what is 'evil' and clinging to what is 'right'. (Romans 12:9b)), which is sourced from the bible, had been one of the attributing factors to the abstinence of most African Christian societies from using traditional customary healing methods. On the

other hand, Ernst (2002) highlights that the 'health for sale' discourse, exclusion by the legislation, the quackeries, consumerism and the internet are other factors that negatively affected the traditional healing realm.

Given the challenges present to traditional healing, there is a strong indication that this entity is still in use till today, not only in Africa but across the world at large (Ernst, 2002). According to Abdullahi (2011), the growing demand for traditional healing in Europe, Asia and America have also been documented. Struthers, R. *at al.* (2004) assert that traditional indigenous healing has increased popularity due to the new age, holistic approaches of living (shamanism), and alternative medicine shift and movement. Due to these phenomena, several groups and organisations have found a great interest in examining the holistic healing methodology (Struthers, R. *at al.* 2004). According to Winkelman (2009), patterns of behaviour involving spiritual healing are found in societies worldwide. The alternative method of healing involves a Shaman concept, which is widely believed to be the most ancient form of spiritual healing. Furthermore, the shamanism concept have been widely used by religious leaders, healers, mystics, prophets, political leaders and performance artists across cultures in diverse areas such as art, dance, healing, hunting, music, politics, spirituality, and many other phenomena in the ancient and contemporary world (Coale, 2007).

#### **3.4.4. Conclusion**

Taking the latter example made, which made reference to the Japanese conventional belief system that was preserved till the present day, has a direct link to Wei's (2011:3) statement regarding cultural values and beliefs having a potential to sustain a civilisation. Rinne's (2001) example of the pluralistic medical system that is found in Nigerian also ties to Wei's (2011:3) statement since Nigeria as a civilisation gained its independence in 1960, thirty-four years before the independence of the southern African civilisation (Deji, 2013). Furthermore, in this sub-chapter, it was highlighted that, if traditional healing practices are not allowed to develop to the level of self-actualisation, there cannot be positive any interaction between the biomedicine and traditional healing medicine. The sub-chapter also highlighted the evolution of culture and the direct impact that this notion placed upon the cultural healing system. Moreover, the sub-chapter vividly expressed that in an era where global influence is glorified, the global influence only becomes beneficial to cultural groups that adopt the influences but remain true to their

identity. Therefore, a conclusion that can be drawn is that the Southern African Nguni civilisation needs to self-actualise and reconnect to its cultural values and beliefs in order to move forward and strive as a civilisation. This phenomenon will then open channels for pluralism in the medical domain to be explored.

### 3.5. CONCLUSION

The chapter was an attempted to highlight the underlining principles of the Nguni traditional healing principles and the surrounding forces that shaped this entity's existence from the beginning of the Nguni civilisation to current times. The chapter further expressed the origin of the Nguni civilisation, whereby it was highlighted that the earliest development of the Nguni ethnic group was traced from Mapungubwe and the great Zimbabwe. Furthermore, the chapter also dwelled upon the different types of healers which that found within the Nguni healing realm. In addition, the socio-cultural aspect was highlighted as a significant role player, which was subjected to evolution and is a result of a civilisation present today. Moreover, this phenomenon is interconnected to the global cultures, whereby cultural and racial clashes are manifested. Regarding the traditional healing sphere, Yankuzo (2014:30), argues that the liberalisation and globalisation policies of the United Nations Institutions passively affected the developing counties.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **ESTABLISHING THE COHESION BETWEEN HEALING, CULTURE, SPACE, AND FORM**

## 4.1 INTRODUCTION

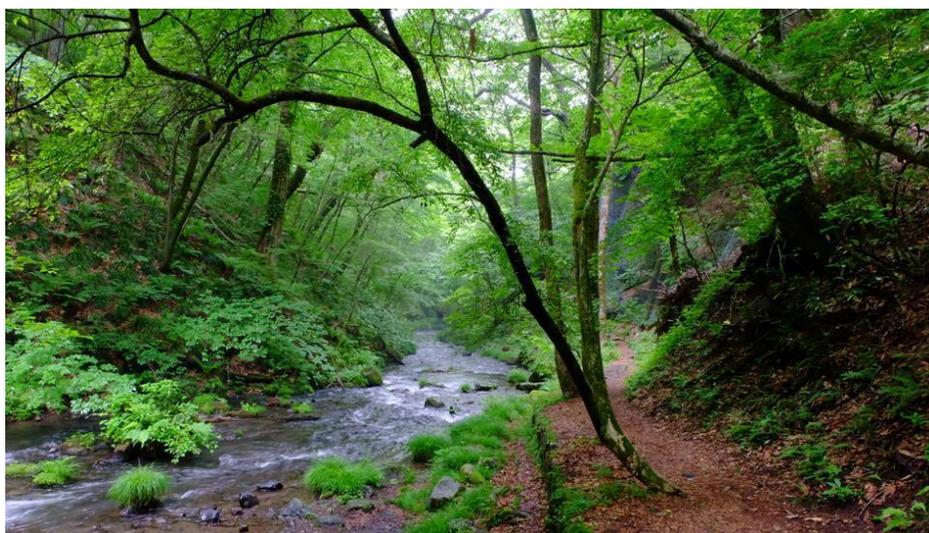
The previous chapters discussed the underlying principles defining the Nguni traditional healing practices. Moreover, the chapters highlighted the generative factors that influence the traditional healing practice, such as sociocultural influences etc. In this chapter, the focus will be shifted towards the discussions and illustrations of how the findings, as mentioned earlier in the previous sections, are communicated in architectural design. According to Lawrence et al. (1990), an individual's behavioural patterns are greatly influenced and shaped by the surrounding built environment in which the individual interacts with. Moreover, Churchill (1965), cited by O'Toole (2007:161), states that people mould the built form and, in turn, the built form moulds people. In addition, Rapport cited by Lawrence (1990) further supports the statement by denoting that different cultural group's lifestyles are the influence of the variety of structures that are expressed within the urban fabric. This notion takes place because of the integration of multiple cultures, materials, spiritual and social aspects. Therefore, underlining a pattern language in the built form will assist in pinpointing the design principles used to evoke and communicate influential meaning to the society and specifically to the traditional healing practice, across various cultural backgrounds. The investigation aims to broaden an understanding of how design principles can be applied in building structures and interpreted in numerous ways. In addition, this chapter will also decipher the symbolic representation that is expressed in built form and also highlight the role of symbolic representation in influencing the cultural traditions, customs, identity and values etc.

## 4.2 HEALING SPACES WITHIN THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Schweitzer (2004), cited in Salingaros, (2015)'s argument, asserts that the ambiance of a space has an effect on space occupants. Therefore, a well-designed building with adequate consideration of the natural rhythms of human neurobiology can result in a great deal of happiness to the space occupants. According to Zetterquist (2009:1), *'human beings have an inner connection with the environment by physical, mental, emotional and spiritual means. This connection can create a dynamic life that people can thrive from in every aspect. Through work, ageing or learning, people are able to participate and contribute to this connection with the natural environment'*. Therefore, design patterns that resonate and actualize humanity, which are advocated in the *'living patterns'* book by Alexander et al. (1977), have played a significant role in the creation of buildings and spaces that are geometrically coherent and have shielded space occupants from environmental stress. Zetterquist (2009:1) further asserts that humans interact with

the environment or surroundings but often don't realize the influential power they have on their surroundings. This power, which is found in the built environment, can either influence an individual's life in a positive or negative sense, stressed or relaxed sense in every physical, emotional and spiritual way. Furthermore, Day (1990:111) supports the statement by expressing that surroundings have multi-level influences on an individual's life, and some are unseen.

This influence is communicated through '*all senses, on all levels of man's being and at the three levels of social scale such as, personal, cultural and universal*'. In addition, Pallasmaa's (2005:41) asserts that healing can be experienced through a multi-sensory experience. An example that the author refers to is a phenomenon such as walking through the forest (refer to figure 4.1). The notion evokes an invigorating feeling which induces healing. This feeling, therefore, triggers all the other senses in the body to respond, whereby the eyes firstly react to the information received and then communicates with the rest of the senses found in the human body.



*Figure 4.1: demonstration of a natural environment that interact with all the senses. (Source: <https://www.hindustantimes.com/health>)*

Architecture is an extension of 'nature that is human-made' and provides a dimension to experience and understand the world (Pallasmaa, 2005:41). On the other hand, Schweitzer (2004) perceives architecture as a response to the core need for an individual's well-being, such as safety and comfort. Therefore, being surrounded by building forms which express a certain quality, tends to work into the soul and highlights the difference in characteristics that different individuals portray. According to Day

(2004:10), *'Often men's experience of buildings is not as free-standing objects, but of boundaries of space. The quality of this boundary is a major ingredient of the quality the place will have'*. Therefore, the physical appearance of the space or boundary affects the experience and senses of the occupier. When a boundary appears to consist of unrelieved straight lines (like it is portrayed in figure 4.2), it is considered harsh and lifeless, and Pallasmaa (2005) refers to these boundaries as machine-made boundaries consisting of scale-less sheets of glass, enamelled metals, and synthetic plastics.



Figure 4.2: illustration of the paper design and machine-made spaces. (Source: [www.domemilano.com/en/blog](http://www.domemilano.com/en/blog))

In continuation, Day (2004:10) denotes that *'if lines, shapes, forms, and spaces can be given qualities of movement, life, harmony, gesture, and furnished with the resolution of dynamic forces, they can bring a life-influence to the place a building bounds'*. Therefore, the imperfections and the natural state of the boundary or space (like it is expressed in figure 4.3 and 4.4) have the ability to evoke a certain feeling to the individual experiencing the space (Day, 2004:10).



Figure 4.3: demonstration of the interior natural state of materials used in building spaces. (Source: Christopher Day, 2004)

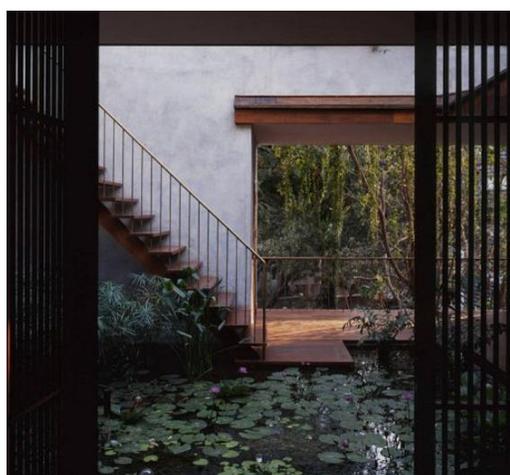


Figure 4.4: demonstration of the exterior natural state of materials used in building spaces. (Source: Christopher Day, 2004)

Day, (2004:10) asserts that the natural state of the individual's environment, when in harmonies, allows for the body to be in a healing and healthy state. On the other hand, Pallasmaa (2005:6) expressed concerns regarding the suppression of other senses in architecture in relation to Steven Holl's notion, which denotes that the way an environment feels, smells and sounds, has an equal effect on the way it looks. Sommer (1969) acknowledges that designers have the power to shape people, and that is achieved through designing buildings. Therefore, it is the designer's responsibility to ensure that the structures in which the designers shape responds to the entire sensory organs of a being. Picking up on Pallasmaa's (2005) point, regarding the impact architecture has on the senses, Schweitzer (2004) asserts that buildings with natural characteristics such as natural daylight and views of natural elements tend to have a healing capacity.



*Figure 4.5: demonstration of an internal space that is connected with nature. (Source: <https://www.yellowtrace.com.au/studio-mumbai-copper-house-ii/>)*



*Figure 4.6: demonstration of an external space that is connected with nature. (Source: <https://www.yellowtrace.com.au/studio-mumbai-copper-house-ii/>)*

Contrary to Pallasmaa (2005)'s multi-sensory argument, (which is communicated in figure 4.5 and 4.6). Schweitzer (2004)'s notion of healing spaces is based only on the visual senses and utterly disregards the sensation of the other sensory organs. An example that perfectly expresses Schweitzer, (2004)'s notion is communicated in figure 4.7, whereby the image shows an apartment within a dense urban context with unobstructed views of nature infested cityscape. According to Schweitzer (2004), this notion has the capacity to evoke an uplifting feeling of endless opportunities and stimulate the individual to work hard.



Figure 4.7: demonstration of city penthouse with views, a space with no sense of life. (Source: <https://www.cityrealty.com/nyc/luxury-condo-apartments>)

Therefore, it can be noted that figure 4.7 is an example that dominantly stimulates the visual sensory system above all senses. According to Pallasmaa (2005:41), all touching experiences of a space or boundary are multi-sensory. Moreover, the quality of a space is measured equally by the eye-visual system, ear-audio system, nose-smell, skin-feel system, tongue-taste system, skeleton and muscle-energy and strength system. Furthermore, the most coherent space is the one that considers all the four nourishing elements such as substance, flow, mood and spirit, which are linked to universal holistic underlying principles of nature, such as earth, water, air and fire (Day, 2002:29). Ultimately, Pallasmaa (2005:41) denotes that, '*Architecture strengthens the existential experience of one's sense of being in the world, and this is essentially a strengthened experience of self*'.

#### 4.3 SOCIO, CULTURAL-FUNCTIONALISM AS A GENERATOR OF IDENTITY ON SPACE AND FORM

According to Crowe (1995:29), it is crucial to understand how the built world is conceptually complete and is of significance to self/individual. Therefore, to fully comprehend this notion, it is of great importance to first investigate how the first settlements emerged, how did the structures visually appear, how the structures influenced the occupier's thoughts and behaviour, and what social effects were generated. Crowe (1995:30) further elaborates on the phenomenon pertaining to the social aspect of the origins of a civilization, which was briefly discussed in chapter two. The author affirms that building structures emerged due to the fact that hunter-gatherers were in 'need' of settlements, which then

transformed the hunter-gatherers into farmers, who were able to consciously manipulate the natural order to better position themselves in the surrounding world (Crowe, 1995:30). In addition, Crowe (1995) further asserts that the evolution of men's human culture with advancements in the use of fire, domestication of animals, managing crops and the invention of writing assisted the development of civilizations.

The evolution influenced the emergence of permanent shelters. These shelters made reference to the nomadic tent, which marked the first human-made 'world' and instigated the origins of the development of architecture (refer to figure 4.8).



*Figure 4.8: The first man-made built form, which was utilised as means to hide from elements  
(Source: <https://ecemekren.wordpress.com/2018/10/03/vernacular-architecture>)*

Initially, architecture was an invention of an archetype that was developed to protect men from the unpredictability of natural forces. In addition, Lawrence (1990:457) further supports the statement by denoting that man constructed built form with the intention to shelter, define and protect. Therefore *'Dwelling with fixed and permanent domiciles allowed direct control over the immediate environment through the purposeful rearrangement of nature's materials such as wood, stone and earth, to suite mad alone'* (Crowe, 1995:30). Through the evolution of humankind, which was driven by the social, cultural, economic and political forces, architecture evolved as a result. Furthermore, the relationship of the

advancement which took place within men and built environment was interactive, where men created built form, which was guided by forces mentioned above. Thereafter, built form, in turn, contained men within these forces (Lawrence, 1990:458).

The introduction of modernisation and exposure to global culture, which was part and parcel of the driving forces of modern built form, increased the production of structures that lacked profoundness. Thereafter, Lawrence (1990: 453) highlights that in the 19th century, there was an architectural pattern, whereby designers derived their influence from the indigenous society and built environment, on how they constructed and identified to their surroundings as means to address the lack of profoundness in modern built form.

The issue of profoundness abandonment evoked underlying questions regarding the true nature of the relationship between society, culture and the built environment. Such as: *Why are there differences in built forms? What is the nature of these differences, and what kinds of social and cultural factors might instigate the variation?* (Lawrence (1990: 453). Mahomed on Tedx Talks (2016)'s argument deviates towards a structural-functionalism approach, whereby the author argues that true meaning is generated by a functional association of space, or built form that is derived from cultural belief, values and behaviour. Lincoln *et al.* (2004:2) assert that the functionalist approach in cultural identity is sourced from a concept by Durkheim called ‘collective representation,’ which in turn, strengthens the social structure. According to Mahmood (2016), an example which best expresses the notion that is mentioned above is the original Al-masjid An-Nabawi mosque. This structure depicts a built form that the Islamic society identifies with through the standard customary functions (refer to figure 4.9 and 4.10).

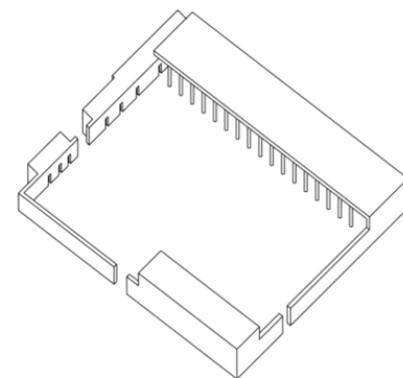
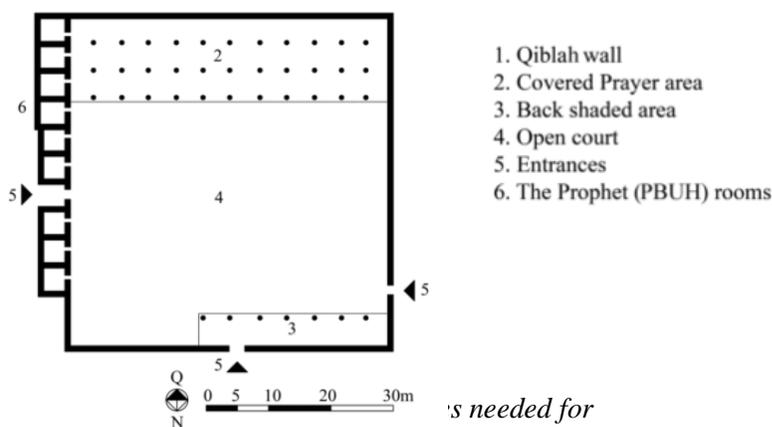
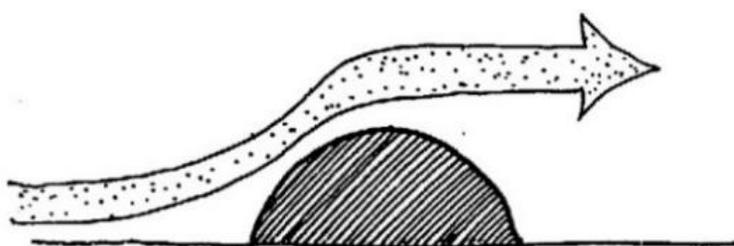


Figure 4.9: 2D Illustration of basic spaces needed for purely functional purposes. (Source: <http://arorehe17.pitstop.ru.net>)

Figure 4.10: 3D Illustration of basic spaces needed for purely functional purposes. (Source: <http://arorehe17.pitstop.ru.net>)

According to Lawrence (1990:457), the explanation of the differences in cross-cultural built form can be sourced from a structural-functionalism approach. This approach also considers the interplay of ecological aspects such as the climate and the sourcing of construction materials and methods, social organizations such as (households and community), as well as symbolic factors that are cosmic and meaningful. In the event of the conceptualization of space and form, which is influenced by cultural identity, traditions, customs and values, Mahmood (2016), further supports Lawrence (1990: 457)'s statement by denoting that built form played a significant role in the adaptation of humankind to the natural environment as well as in the maintenance of the natural environment. Furthermore, Mahmood (2016) further asserts that the primary function of built form was to provide shelter to men against elements. Thereafter, variations in forms emerged as a response to specific elements that these forms were exposed to. In addition, the forms were now used as an identifying symbol that mirrored the cultural group who created it and, therefore, in that way, the group's identity was generated.

Rapoport (1969) further supports the statement by asserting that responding to climatic conditions such as temperature, humidity, wind, rain, radiation and light, which are natural elements, influences the variations found in built form. Rapoport (1969) makes reference to the Eskimos dwellings, stating that exposure to extremely low temperatures and harsh winds resulted in Eskimos establishing a built form known as an igloo (refer to figure 4.11 and 4.12).



IGLOO

Figure 4.11: Illustration of an architectural typology that is influenced its climate. (Source: Rappaport, 1969)

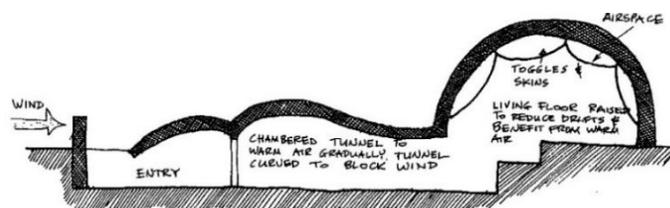


Figure 4.12: Illustration of a section with strategies that is influenced by climatic conditions. (Source: Rappaport, 1969)

Similarly, regions exposed to such weather conditions have generated built form expressing responsive strategies. A typical example can be derived from the built form that is found in cold and windy locations. These structures typically express a defensive form, hiding from driving winds using the hill as a shield and facade the southern orientation to take advantage of the minimal solar heat (refer to figure 4.13 and 4.14) (Rapoport, 1969).

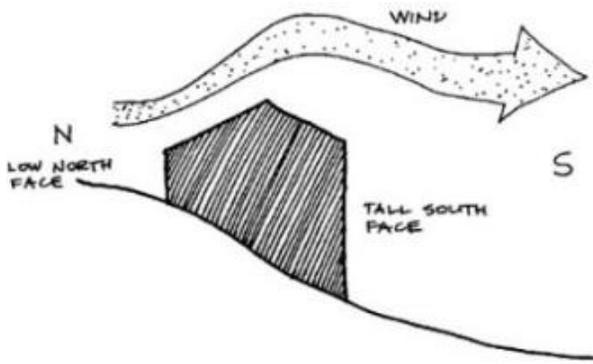


Figure 4.13: Illustration of an architectural typology that responds to wind. (Source: Rappaport, 1969)

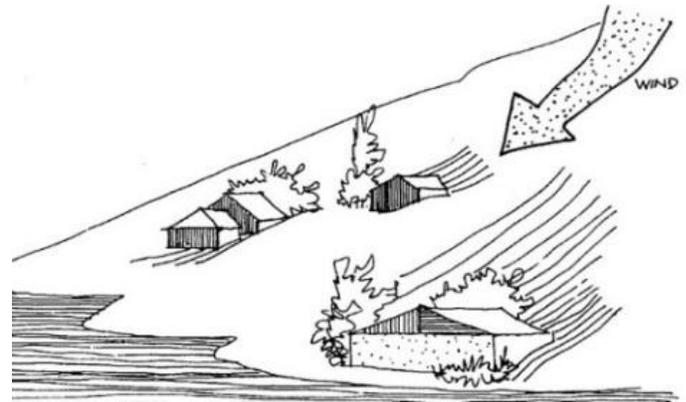


Figure 4.14: Illustration of a response that responds to wind. (Source: Rappaport, 1969)

Moreover, structures that are exposed to extreme heat, windstorms resulted in built form that prioritised in protecting the occupants from the harsh solar heat and prevailing winds and adopts design principles such as thick or double-layered surfaces (refer to figure 4.15). In addition, in response to the passive cooling strategy, which keeps internal spaces desirable. Structures are arranged in clustered settlements with narrow streets, to creates shade, block harsh winds, and allows for ventilation (Rapoport, 1969). (refer to figure 4.16)

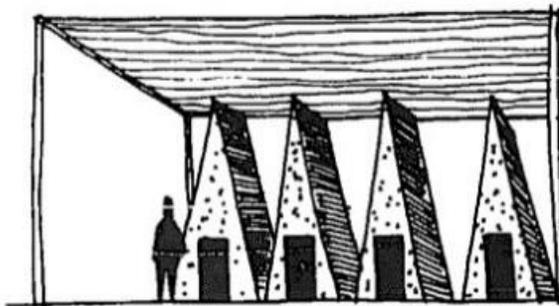


Figure 4.15: Illustration of architectural response to the climatic conditions, e.g. hot conditions (Source: <http://arorehe17.pitstop.ru.net/>)



Figure 4.16: Illustration of urban response to the climatic conditions, e.g. (Source: [http://arorehe17.pitstop.ru.net](http://arorehe17.pitstop.ru.net/))

While on the notion of climatic conditions, Rapoport (1969:104) adds that construction, material and technology have significant influence in the variation of built form. For example, regions that experience a lot of rainy seasons tend to have built-forms constructed in pitched wood-frame-structures as primary materials combined with technological methods because of the abundance of the material, which is favoured by the climatic conditions (Rapoport, 1969). Therefore, one can hypothesise that the built form of a particular group is firstly influenced the climatic conditions; the built form then influences the behaviour of that society. In addition, the author also mentions an example of structures that emerge due to societal practices such as migration. This migration, in most cases, is instigated by the change of climatic seasons, and that way, temporary structures are constructed (Rapoport, 1969). According to Lawrence (1990:), circular forms are considered temporal and challenging to maintain structures, which encourages migration activities (refer to photo 4.17 and 4.18). In addition, this phenomenon can be traced back to the argument, which was discussed in chapter two, where it was highlighted that climatic conditions influenced the immigration patterns of the Nguni tribe descendants, from Mapungubwe to Great Zimbabwe, and later to KwaZulu-Natal, because of the farming activities.



CENTRAL POSTS ( ONE DIMENSIONAL )

Figure 4.17: Regional architectural response, with abundance of a particular material. (Source: Rapoport, 1969)



Photo 4.18: Early Nguni architectural response to climatic conditions. (Source: <http://arorehe17.pitstop.ru.net> )

The notion mentioned above is further supported by Lawrence’s (1990:456) statement, whereby, the author analyses the habitual patterns of an indigenous household and community spatial organization in relation to form. The author further denotes that “*the early approaches sought to explain the purposiveness of built forms by referring to what they contributed to the maintenance of the society as a whole, by accommodating or expressing social organization, social structure, cosmology, and the*

like". Therefore, cultural meaning can be archived through functional accommodation, irrespective of the period.

In addition, Lawrence (1990) comments on the socio-cultural organisations and built form positioning in polygynous societies, where sleeping and cooking huts/spaces are associated with maternal beings and children, while men, guests and animals occupy other built forms in a typical homestead. Moreover, in some cases, the structures are mud huts, which are constructed from recycled materials and are adapted to various purposes. Therefore, the hierarchy of function is expressed based on the use and occupancy. Kent (1984:189) asserts that the customary use of a space defines architectural form. Furthermore, Morgan (1965) further supports the statement by arguing that the form of a dwelling is an expression of a cooperating group that resides in it (refer to photo 4.19). Lawrence's (1990:456) denotes that, *'human groups seek to adapt their buildings to their behavioural needs or functional requirements; when the built environment ceases to accommodate behavioural requirements, people seek to correct the problem through construction, renovation, or moving to a different building. Conversely, people also change their behaviour to fit the physical environment, especially when it presents limitations'*.

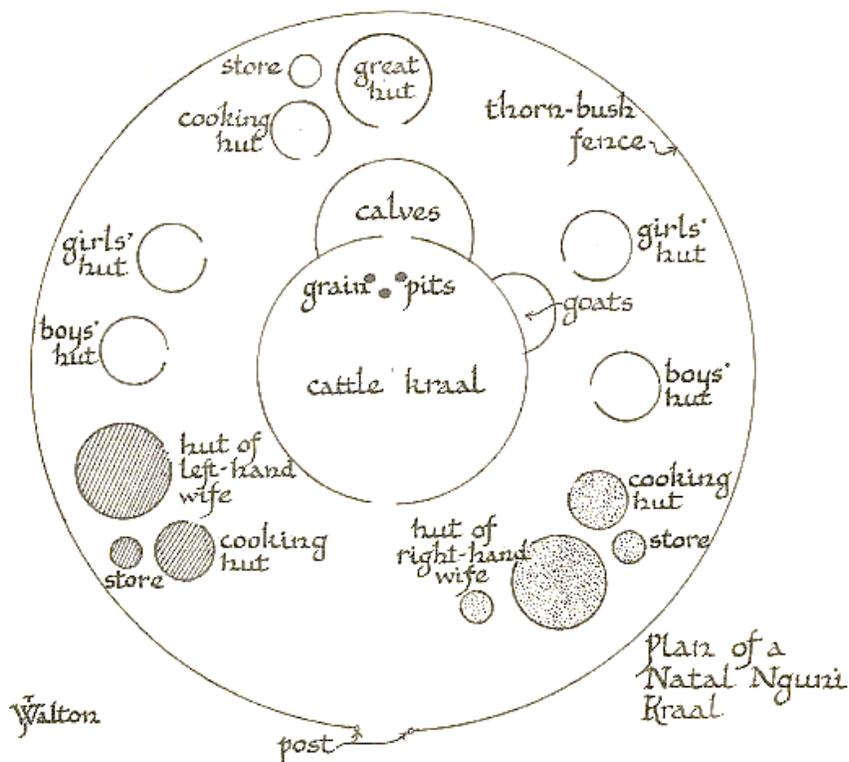


Figure 4.19: Regional architectural response, with abundance of a particular material. (Source: <https://digital.lib.sun.ac.za/handle/10019.2/560>)

#### 4.4 TOWARDS A NARRATIVE OF SYMBOLISM AND REPRESENTATION IN BUILT FORM

According to Bhengu (2015) cosmology is a set of ideas and actions of a particular group. Therefore, Crowe (1995), highlight that the geometry found within the early built form expressed ideas and actions with intentions of being in harmony with nature's order. Furthermore, the expression of a symbiosis between built form and nature was based on the perception of a human mind relating to the natural environment. Moreover, Crowe (1995) stresses that *'the domicile and the settlement would become metaphorically a new nature, one that is determined and shaped by the hand of man'*. A typical example can be traced from the granaries, whereby the barns served as an alternative nature for giving men abilities to harvest up until the dead of winter. Another example which can be taken as a reference is a hut which protected the group from the cold and summer rains, these built environments are given a sense of appreciation and are celebrated since they fulfil the purpose of humankind (Crowe, 1995:30). Nute (2017) makes reference to Heidegger's (1993:348) theory to stress the importance of the concept of dwelling to men. The author denotes that *'to be a human being means...to dwell, and men are insofar as they dwell...we attain to dwelling ...only by means of building'*. Therefore, as a means to appreciate and relate to buildings, it is of importance to consider certain aspects. These aspects include the language of the building, metaphors, codes and messages, signs as well as signifiers, which generate profound meaning within a specific group (Bonta, 1980:340). In addition, Bonta (1980:340) perceives architecture as a semiotic system, which is a system of meaningful signs. Furthermore, intentional organisational features found in the built environment need to be analysed to highlight meaning and profoundness in built form. These features consist of principles regarding the sequence of spaces, their axis, the elements used to distinguish the spaces, their relationship to the entrance, and the placement or positioning of a staircase and other (Bonta, 1980:340).

According to Lawrence (1990:466), meaning in built form is derived by a symbolic expression of a shared cultural structure and processes. Therefore, in attempt to explore the concept of meaning in the built environment, it is crucial first to have an understanding of what does built form symbolises, and how is that symbolic meaning expressed or represented in relation to a particular ethnic group. Crowe (1995) stresses that symbolic meaning in structures is expressed through recognition of the orientation of the built form. In most ancient civilizations, orientating the building towards a specific or sentimental direction was considered as a crucial part which brought profound meaning in built form. Furthermore, this notion was executed through alignment with an orientation that was believed to be in deep

connection with 'the heavens' or important topographic features like mountains or sacred places. Furthermore, Bonine (1990:50) highlights that in most pre-modern cities like the Islamic Middle Eastern region, the concept behind glorifying the orientation of the building was applied through the design of mosques. The mosque, with its significance to the Islamic society, was based on the core organisational principle, which is to pray facing towards Ka'ba in Mecca. This phenomenon was deliberately done because Mecca is considered to be a sacred direction; therefore, the rectilinear shape of the mosque and its orientation would then influence the structures surrounding the building and orientation of the streets (refer to figure 4.20) (Bonine, 1990:50).

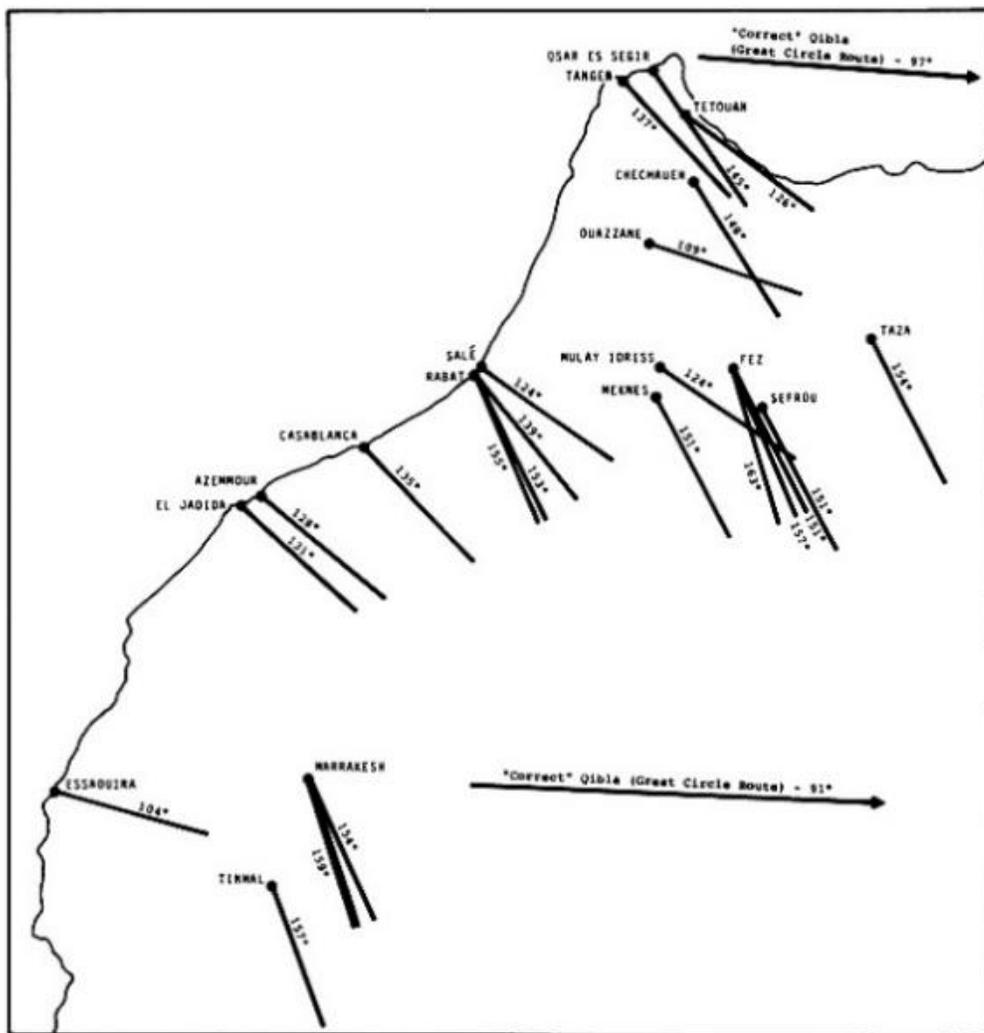


Figure 4.20: Illustration of built environment relating orientation as symbolic representation. (Source: <http://forum09.faithfreedom.org/viewtopic.php?f=20&t=13319>)

This notion can also be traced within the structures of the Nguni descendants. According to Huffman (2008), the Nguni traditional customs, orientated their building structures towards landscapes or features which has socio-cultural significance. This can be observed in the African built form expression with the concept of gathering in the process of place making (refer to figure 4.21 and 4.22) (Huffman, 2008).

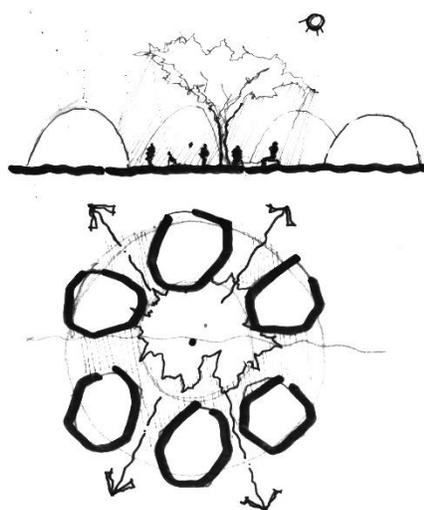


Figure 4.21: Illustration of gathering of built form (Source: author)

Figure 4.22: Illustration of a village growing from a central feature (Source: <https://kwekudee-tripdownmemorylane.blogspot.com/>)

For example, *insimu* (the farming fields), *isibaya* (the kraal) are crucial landscape features that the building is orientated towards (refer to figure 4.18). In addition, the hierarchy of spatial arrangements is of importance, where *esokhohlo* (left) is associated with wives and *esokudla* (right) associated with children. The sacred or main hut is considered to be a prominent structure since it is used for accommodating the ancestors, as well as hosting important political and cultural ceremonies. In attempts to highlight the prominence, the built form expresses strict organisational principles, where firstly, its located at the highest point of the homestead, and in axis to the main entrance of the site (refer to figure 4.19). Furthermore, internal spatial organisation consists of sacred areas called *umsamo* and *iziko*, where *umsamo* is considered divine and believed to be a gateway between the ancestral spirits and the material world, and *iziko* is a fireplace used to keep warm when there is a congregation. Both these

spaces are located in axis with the entrance of the hut and main entrance (refer to figure 4.23 and 4.24), to protect the homestead (Mhlaba, 2009:116).

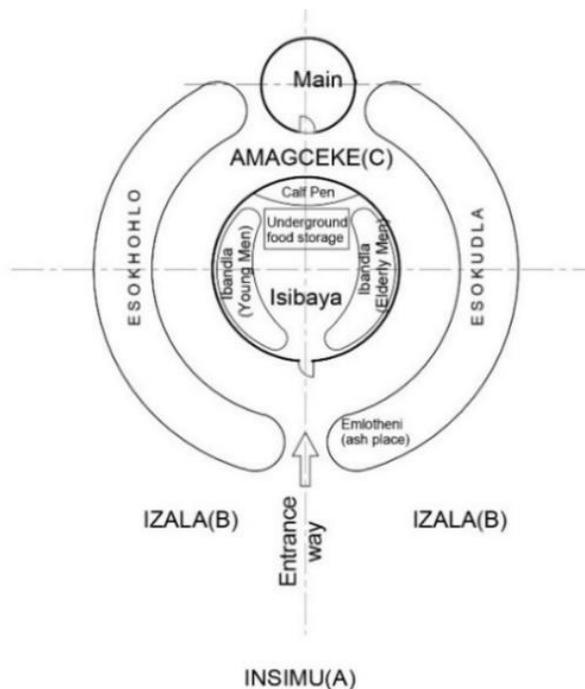


Figure 4.23 Illustrating the site spatial arrangement Zulu homestead design (Source: Mhlaba, (2009) Thesis)

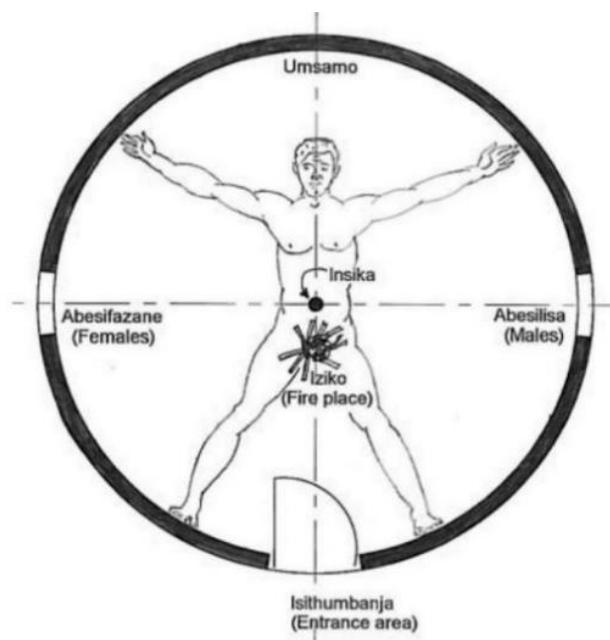
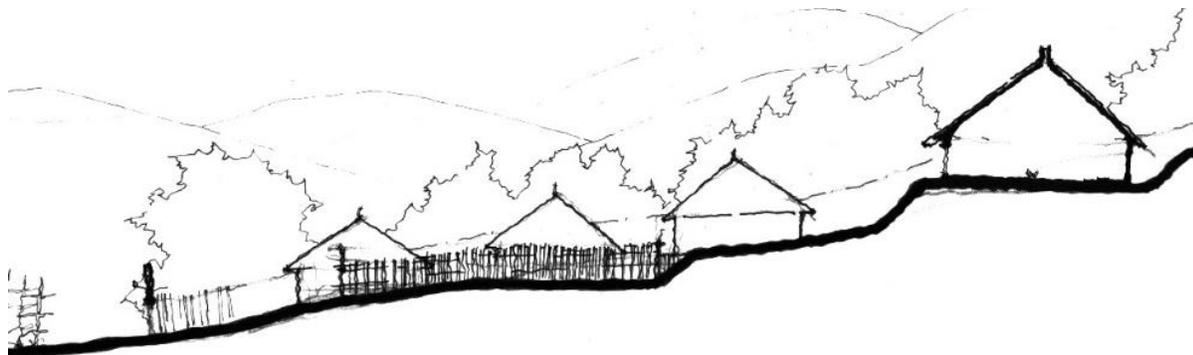


Figure 4.24 Illustrating the site spatial arrangement of a Zulu main hut (Source: Mhlaba, (2009) Thesis)

According to Heidegger (1993), 'to 'dwell' meant to 'preserve the fourfold': to save the earth, receive the sky, await the divinities, and escort fellow mortals on their journey through life'. In the attempt to highlight symbolic expressions in built form for particular groups, Nute's (2017) examines the Japanese interpretation of meaning in traditional architecture to test the validity of the above statement. The *Shinto's* recognition of natural and unusual locations such as mountains, waterfalls, and eccentrically shaped rocks and trees in their architecture, were believed to be markings of places where *kami* (gods) temporarily ascended to the physical world. These spaces were considered to be a gateway between earth and heaven. Therefore, the example mentioned above backs up Heidegger's (1993:) conception of 'things', 'which provide a space for the gathering of the primal 'fourfold'; such as earth, sky, divinities and man, albeit, in the case of the *kami*, can be regarded as a fleeting gathering'. This notion becomes men's participation regarding the collection of the fourfold elements of the natural world. Furthermore, the symbolic meaning given to the gate of a shrine represents

separation from the everyday world and the divine world. Moreover, it is believed to poses a divine connection between the earth and the sky (Heidegger, 1993). The main hut hosts the aforementioned role, therefore, the hierarchy is expressed through the positioning (refer to figure 4.25).



*Figure 4.25: Illustration of socio-organisational hierarchy within the Nguni built form. (Source: Author)*

#### 4.6 CONCLUSION

The previous chapters have highlighted that traditions within the healing entity are influenced by the spatial arrangement dimensions, cultural beliefs and values of a particular society or tribe. Therefore, space and form are then generated as a response to the cultural and religious requirements of a specific society or clan. Day (2002:9), further highlights the notion of the consumption culture, denoting that the excessive use of technology is good for an economy but not necessarily sustainable for humanity and nature. Therefore, to ensure sustainability, a new way of thinking should be adopted, that is aligned to a naturally driven process of doing and morally inspired. That way, architecture as an entity can be considered as an alternative healing method like other known healing therapeutics. Furthermore, the chapter also dwelled upon the relationship between society and built environment, whereby it was highlighted that *'people both create and find their behaviour influenced by the built environment'* (Lawrence,1990: 456). Therefore, architecture plays a significant role in the well-being of an individual and possesses an ability to reinforce a sense of belonging, dignity and identity, which are vital aspects of the healing process. The next chapter will be analysing key precedents, in order to ascertain how various spatial dimensions and cultural beliefs have influenced space and form and how that phenomenon accommodated healing traditions.

**CHAPTER FIVE**  
**PRESERVATION OF HERITAGE AND ARTICULATION OF HEALING SPACES IN BUILT**  
**FORM**

## 5.1 INTRODUCTION

The precedent study expressed below was selected from a range of existing buildings across major civilizations globally who have managed to maintain their cultural values and beliefs within an urban context. The building depicts an Asian example of how culture, traditions and healing are understood, incorporated and preserved in modern structures. An Asian example was firstly explored because of Asia's world-renowned sophistication in its traditional built form. Moreover, an international example was selected to see how other societies deal with the notion of the preservation of heritage and traditions, especially within the healing sphere. Even though this precedent may share similarities with the local example, which will be later discussed in the following chapter, however, the two examples do not share a similar selection criteria.

## 5.2 Weihai Hospital of Traditional Chinese Medicine

**Architect** - GLA (Giving Life to Architecture)

**Location** - Weihai, ShanDong, China

**Year of Construction** - 2018



*Photo 5.1: The genius-loci of the traditional Chinese medical centre.*

(Source: [www.archdaily.com/weihai-hospital-of-traditional-chinese-medicine-GLA](http://www.archdaily.com/weihai-hospital-of-traditional-chinese-medicine-GLA))

### 5.2.1 Project Background

The Weihai National Hospital is located in a small rehabilitated coastal *Pinus Thunbergii* forest, in the East New Town, which is currently going through major urban development (Shuang, 2018). Initially,

the site consisted of abandoned traditional bungalows, which were dilapidated and beyond repair. The site was chosen due to the need to preserve the *Pinus Thunbergii* forest, as well as the Chinese architectural heritage. This notion was in line with the aims and objectives of the East New Town urban development vision (refer to figure 5.2).



*Photo 5.2: Illustrating how the built form has nested into the forest landscape.*

(Source: [www.archdaily.com/weihai-hospital-of-traditional-chinese-medicine-GLA](http://www.archdaily.com/weihai-hospital-of-traditional-chinese-medicine-GLA))

The available land area for the project was 29,400m<sup>2</sup>. However, due to building regulations, the development could only make use of a ratio of 0.27 of the site. Therefore, the overall building area ended up being constrained to 8000m<sup>2</sup> (GLA, 2016). The establishment is a comprehensive modern health care facility consisting of a variety of facilities such as the programme exhibition centre of the East New Town, Kangyang Yile Sanatorium and Medical Care Houses (Architizer, 2019). The provision of these facilities is derived from the Chinese notion of traditional healing practices, and customs that

adopt a holistic approach to healing and wellness. These facilities, therefore, fed off one another and functioned as a multifunctional cluster.

Photo 5.3: listing of a diverse accommodation and provision of multipurpose facilities (Source: [www.archdaily.com/weihai-hospital-of-traditional-chinese-medicine-GLA](http://www.archdaily.com/weihai-hospital-of-traditional-chinese-medicine-GLA)).The establishment is a comprehensive health care facility consisting of a variety of facilities such as a programme exhibition centre of the East New Town, Kangyang Yile Sanatorium and Medical Care Houses (Architizer, 2019). The provision of the facilities is derived from the Chinese notion of traditional healing practices and customs which adopt a holistic approach to healing and wellness, therefore these facilities feed off one another and function as a multifunctional cluster of healing components (refer to figure 5.3), (Shuang, 2018).

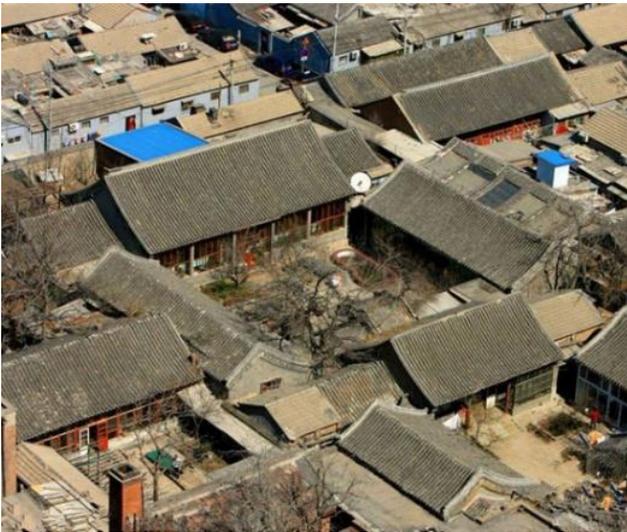


Photo 5.3: listing of a diverse accommodation and provision of multipurpose facilities (Source: [www.archdaily.com/weihai-hospital-of-traditional-chinese-medicine-GLA](http://www.archdaily.com/weihai-hospital-of-traditional-chinese-medicine-GLA))

## 5.2.2 Contextual Responses

According to Day (2004:12), 'in a situation where the relationship that architecture has toward its context is seen as an object, that object's form has a responsibility not to offend its surrounding'. The phenomenon, stressed by Day (2004:12) in his argument, can be traced from the Weihai Hospital. This notion is communicated through the adaptation of the hospital, with the architectural language of the

surrounding, pre-existing establishments, which are located beyond the forest. These pre-existing structures constitute of mostly traditional Chinese bungalow-style structures with courtyards and decorated gable roofs. The design of the hospital derives its reference from the surrounding context, this notion then renders the hospital design responsive, since it perfectly adapts to its context by adopting the architectural style and language (refer to figure 5.4 and 5.5).



*figure 5.4: Illustrating of a traditional northern-Chinese architectural style. (Source: [www.bambubuild.com](http://www.bambubuild.com))*



*Figure 5.5: Illustrating an imitation of a traditional northern-Chinese architectural style. (Source: [www.archdaily.com](http://www.archdaily.com))*

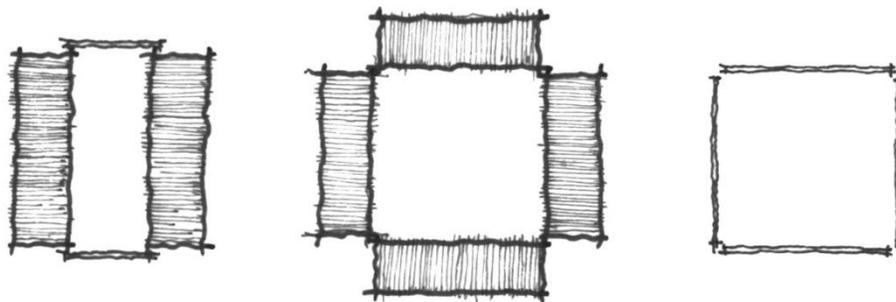
The establishment situated at the core/centre of *Pinus Thunbergii* forest, therefore secluding and isolating the building from the rest of the surrounding buildings within the city. According to Flint (2008), it is customary within Asian culture for one to seclude themselves from the rest of the society and family when they are ill. That action is believed to be crucial for the healing process to take place effectively. On the other hand, with the intention to preserve the forest, the design scheme only has one access to the site. The access to the site is through a narrow two-way street, and this was done as means to minimise hard surfaces within the forest. In addition, the forest also acts as a buffer, with its thick layers and layers of vegetation that shield the hospital from the busy, noisy and surrounding urban context. The development nest itself into nature, to take advantage of the healing properties in which nature provides (refer to figure 5.6) (Shuang, 2018).



*Photo 5.6: Illustrating response to the immediate context. (Source: [www.archdaily.com/weihai-hospital-of-traditional-chinese-medicine-GLA](http://www.archdaily.com/weihai-hospital-of-traditional-chinese-medicine-GLA))*

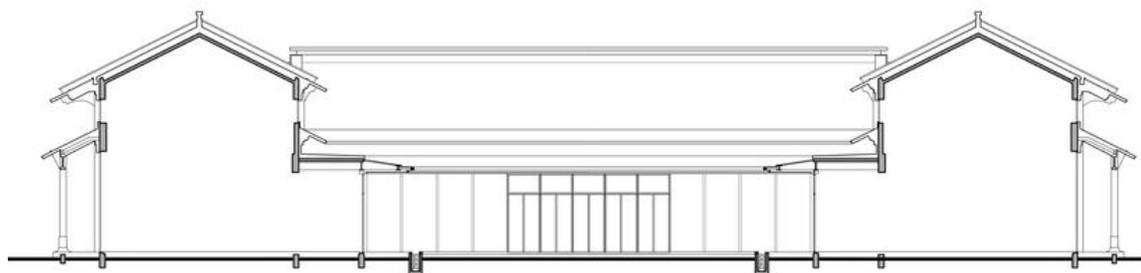
### **5.2.3 Spatial Organisation**

Given the requirements from the client, the suggestion to not directly imitate, but derive influence from the traditional Chinese architectural style, presented an opportunity to incorporate traditional Chinese design elements into the project (Shuang, 2018). Elements such as screening walls and building blocks arranged in a courtyard (refer to figure 5.7) (Shuang, 2018).



*Figure 5.7 A, B&C: Illustrating a variety of courtyard principles in traditional Chinese architecture. (Source: [www.archdaily.com/weihai-hospital-of-traditional-chinese-medicine-GLA](http://www.archdaily.com/weihai-hospital-of-traditional-chinese-medicine-GLA))*

The expression of the traditional architectural elements allowed for a modern interpretation of the architectural principles without restricting the design, as opposed to mimicking them precisely as they were in the olden times. In that way, the design scheme remains authentic by preserving cultural traditions and also maintain profoundness, in relation to the modernised society. The modern interpretation is executed through the use of screens and blocks arranged in a courtyard spatial composition. This notion was derived from the Chinese belief, influenced by the previously mentioned Japanese concept of the germ theory towards well-being. The hierarchy generated by the series of courtyards reinforces the germ theory (Flint, 2008). Moreover, the arrangement of building blocks and screens provides a multipurpose function by protecting and act as a buffer for a particular space, as well as keeping the harsh natural elements such as driving winds and wild animals out in order to provide a safe sanctuary. In addition, the notion of healing is then induced through having peace of mind of being aware that as a patient, one is subject to safety, privacy, and being in control of one's environment.

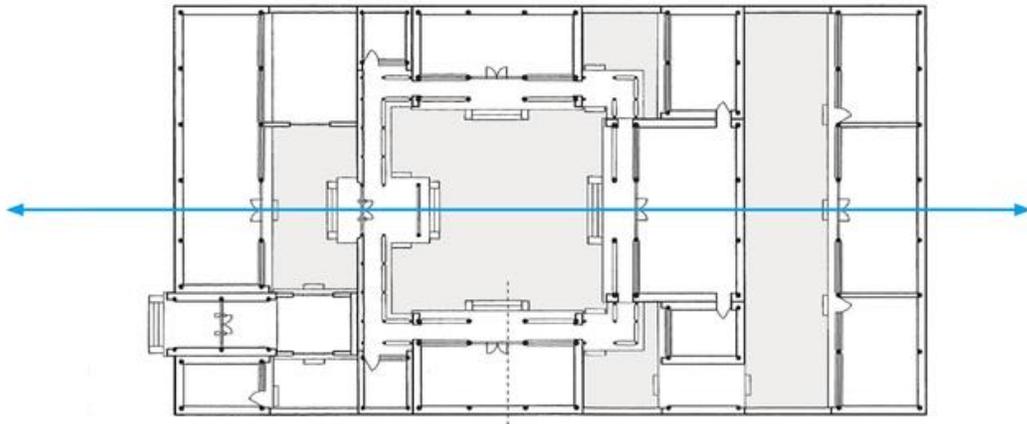


*Figure 5.8: Illustrating a quality of space as a result of scale and enclosed courtyards. (Source: [www.archdaily.com/weihai-hospital-of-traditional-chinese-medicine-GLA](http://www.archdaily.com/weihai-hospital-of-traditional-chinese-medicine-GLA))*

With the final decision made, which was to inherit the composition of a typical Chinese style courtyard, the architects arranged the scale, sequences and framework in a typological manner as follows. The composition was communicated through a series of Chinese influenced courtyards, such as *a courtyard with four walls, a courtyard with two walls and two buildings facing each other's counterpart, and a courtyard with four buildings on each side* (Architizer, 2019). The varying types of courtyards were then connected by corridors using the north-south axis and the east-west axis. This phenomenon, therefore, preserves the well-known sense of a layered experience of the building and overlapping perspectives found in traditional architecture (Architizer, 2019). The Chinese principles of orientating the built form

towards sacred topographical features were considered. Furthermore, connection with nature is executed by taking advantage of the context, where the cluster of courtyards are strategically placed around the garden, which is open on one side, therefore, framing, celebrating and welcoming the *Pinus Thunbergii* forest. The central garden has differing widths, which separates the garden into two and ensures progression and sensitivity to scale and proportions when moving from public to semi-public and semi-private to private spaces (Architizer, 2019).

The different courtyards surround different natural features according to the use of the space. For



*Figure 5.9: Illustrating an adaptation of traditional principles to suite the new development.*  
 (Source: [www.archdaily.com/weihai-hospital](http://www.archdaily.com/weihai-hospital))

example, the patients' housing yard is surrounded by a water feature, and the gymnasium and classrooms are gathered around a garden. This notion provides the occupants with 'a rich spatial structure experience' (refer to figure 5.8, 5.9 and 5.10) (Architizer, 2019).



*Figure 5.10: Main courtyard*  
 (Source: [www.archdaily.com/weihai-hospital-of-traditional-chinese-medicine-GLA](http://www.archdaily.com/weihai-hospital-of-traditional-chinese-medicine-GLA))



*Figure 5.11: Inner courtyard.*  
 (Source: [www.archdaily.com/weihai-hospital-of-traditional-chinese-medicine-GLA](http://www.archdaily.com/weihai-hospital-of-traditional-chinese-medicine-GLA))



*Figure 5.12: common courtyard.*  
 (Source: [www.archdaily.com/weihai-hospital-of-traditional-chinese-medicine-GLA](http://www.archdaily.com/weihai-hospital-of-traditional-chinese-medicine-GLA))

### 5.2.4 Architectural Expression

The decision made by the architects, to adopt the traditional Chinese architectural style was carried through into the extrusion of the three-dimensional form of the building (Architizer, 2019). The heights and widths of the building blocks were articulated in a manner that respects the humanistic scale. This notion was achieved by keeping the building floors to a maximum of two stories, and the clustering the building blocks, to ensure that space occupants have a short travelling distance from space to space. *'As for the choosing of the building materials, there was a use of contemporary materials such as up-right lockrand of aluminium-magnesium-manganese, steel and wood binding components'* (Architizer, 2019). There was also the use of natural materials such as stone, whereby *'stones with better weather ability are used to replace traditional grey tile, grey brick, and wood'* (Architizer, 2019). The reason for choosing modern construction materials arose from the realisation of the need to strike a balance between the experiential worth, found in the traditional Chinese structures, which express the placemaking concept and to ensure that the design keeps up with the modern times. With primitive materials being substituted by modern materials, the attention to detail was maintained. The scheme also portrayed an interplay of orthogonal patterning on walls, which are fundamental and always have been part of the traditional Chinese decoration and patterning. The detailing on the roofing imitates the traditional Chinese dwellings, with vertical stripes and detailed ridges and facias, and the facades with symmetrical order and decorated doors and windows seals.



Figure 5.13: Illustrating of old materials(Source: [www.archdaily.com](http://www.archdaily.com) )



Figure 5.14: Illustrating modification and substitution of materials and style to imitate the old (Source: [www.archdaily.com](http://www.archdaily.com) )

The vehicular access point leading into the courtyard is paved with dark grey stone and is located at the same level as the grass and the pedestrian walkway. The pedestrian walkways, on the other hand, are separated from the vehicular driveways by the timber pillars, supporting the covered walkway. The choice of natural materials, for example, the timber and stone reinforce Pallasmaa's (2005) notion, which denotes that space or boundary that interacts with all the human senses has the ability to stimulate healing. The chunkiness of the pillars symbolises structural stability as well as the hierarchy, which is

maintained across all floor levels, with the ground floor being strong enough to support the first floor. Shuang (2018) further stresses that *'the pillars also form a scenery with plaque, pine and metal blinds screens when passing by'*.



3Photo 5.11: Illustrating humanistic approach to and application of pattern language. (Source: [www.archdaily.com](http://www.archdaily.com) )

Access to most traditional Chinese establishments, either public or private, had always applied elements that communicate meaning and symbolism (Shuang, 2018). This notion is usually articulated through elaborate decorations and even the creation of a framed entrance. The entrance demarcates that one has entered a sacred space, coming from the outside, which is considered 'dirty' (Flint, 2008). Furthermore, to enter a space, present an opportunity to be cleansed and purified (Flint, 2008). The hospital's entrance preserved the principles mentioned above by incorporating them in a modern minimalistic and straightforward manner.



Figure 5.12: Illustrating attempt for symbolism, cosmology and metaphors in architecture.(Source: [www.bambubuild.com](http://www.bambubuild.com) &[www.archdaily.com](http://www.archdaily.com) )

### 5.3 CONCLUSION

This chapter further analysed the underlying design principles found in traditional Chinese built form as an international example. The built form analysed, presents a modern interpretation of the traditional architectural principles. The objective of this chapter was to understand and highlight the modern methods and strategies used to develop a building typology influenced by early traditions. This example vividly expressed how built form can be influenced traditional principles but still belong and fit in with the current times without losing profoundness, authenticity and meaning within the Asian society. Principles used for healing purposes in space and form were also highlighted. This chapter aimed to scrutinise and comprehend how to respond appropriately using a building example that educates, celebrates and preserves the cultural narrative of the community that it is intended to. The next chapter will focus on analysing a local example that expresses the notion of responsive and sensitive architectural execution.

**CHAPTER SIX**  
**THE ACTUALISATION OF CULTURAL EXPRESSION**

## 6.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter will be analysing a South African example of a built form that expresses an indigenous cultural narrative. The key elements which aimed educating, celebrating and preserves the cultural narrative will be highlighted. Moreover, the motivation for site selection, incorporation of traditional built form principles, the use of symbolic communication and the use of technological advancement are fundamental principles that the study is seeking to extract from the selected example.

## 6.2 Freedom Park and Hapo Museum

**Architect** - Mashabane Rose Associates, GAPP and MMA Architects

**Location** - South Africa, Pretoria

**Year of Construction** - 2011



*Photo 6.1: The approach.*

(Source: [www.archdaily.com/297713/freedom-park-phase-2](http://www.archdaily.com/297713/freedom-park-phase-2))

### 6.2.1 Project Background

The three previously mentioned firms were appointed in a joint venture to design the freedom park and the Hapo Museum. The inspiration behind the two projects encompassed ideas which were derived from a rural architectural expression, traditional African homesteads as well as Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKS) (refer to figure 6.2, 6.3 and 6.4). .



*Figure 6.2: Storytelling of the indigenous knowledge systems (uMsamu) (Source: Author)*



*Figure 6.3: Storytelling of the indigenous knowledge systems (Weapons) (Source: Author)*



*Figure 6.4: Storytelling of the indigenous knowledge systems (South African history). (Source: Author)*

The team was further given the command to limit their precedence scope to structures and urban interventions from sites across the Southern Africa, Mapungubwe as well as the Great Zimbabwe (<http://mashabanerose.co.za/freedom-park>). The main objective of the project was to represent African architecture through the use of appropriate symbols. This scope of work then influenced the team to work closely with a well-known traditional healer who lives in Kuruman in Northern Cape. Therefore, the visits to the Healer's homestead became a turning point in the design of the Hapo building (Mashabanerose, 2011).

Located on the significant koppie hill, which overlooks the Tshwane city, the main vision driving the design of the freedom park scheme is to become 'a leading national and international icon of humanity and freedom'. Furthermore, the scheme's mission 'is to provide a pioneering and empowering heritage destination that challenges visitors to reflect upon South Africa's past, improve the nation's present and build on the future as a united nation'. Another mission that guides the scheme is reconciliation and nation-building, which is executed through the use of spirituality, history and culture (Seda, 2016). In addition, the concept behind the scheme is derived from the symbolism of reeds, 'which gave the hill-top site its vertical element'. The idea arises from an African tale of creation, which suggests that the 'reed was a conduit to life and could be used as a sculptural element within the *sikhumbutho* to express a connection between the earth and the sky'. Visually, the execution of this notion answered the problem of not having a bulky visual weight and communicated attributes of a lyrical and significant

expression (Mashabanerose, 2011). Seda (2016), further supports this statement by asserting that the scheme is carved from a landscape which is conceived initially as boulders and metamorphosed layers of rock that emphasises the concept of creation (refer to figure 6.5).

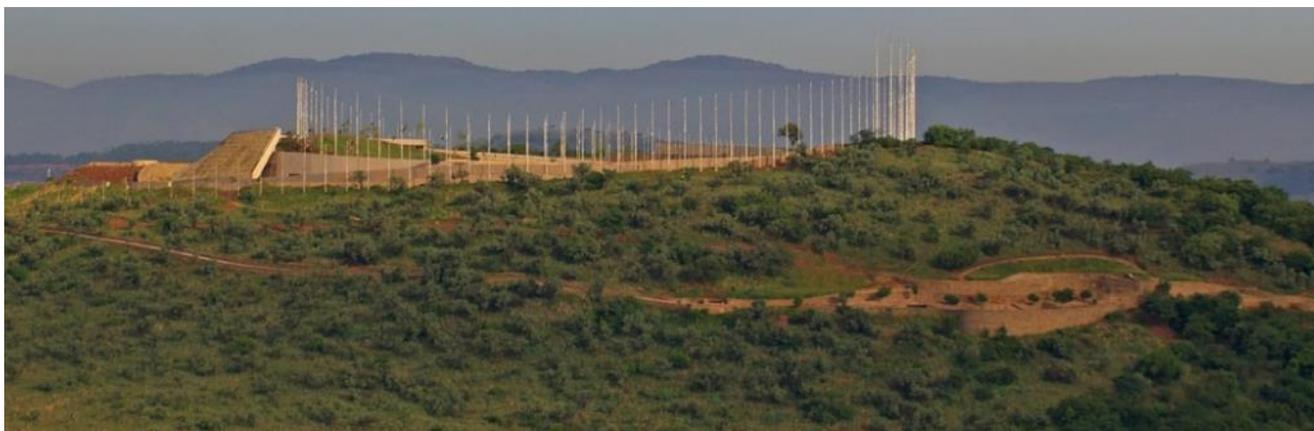
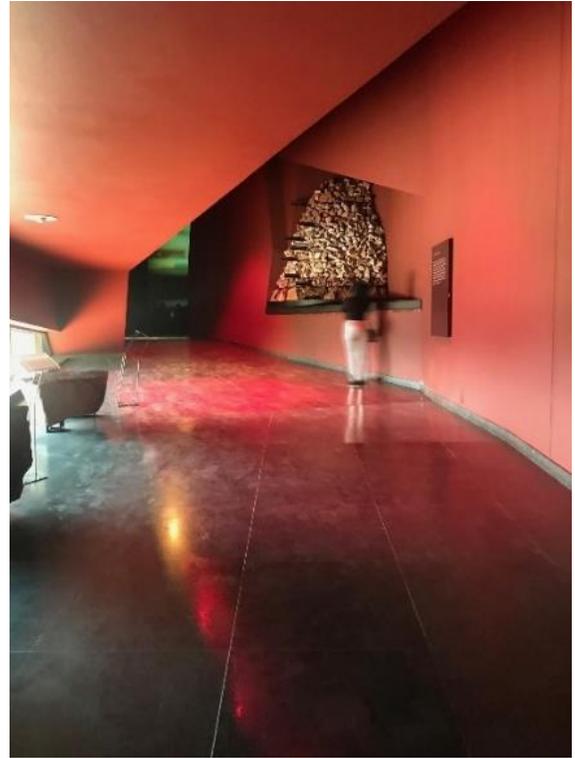


Photo 6.5: illustration of the memorial building appropriately blending with the site.(Source: [www.archdaily.com/297713/freedom-park-phase-2](http://www.archdaily.com/297713/freedom-park-phase-2))

The word Hapo is a Khoi term, which means Dream. The brief for the Hapo museum encompasses exhibition spaces that adopt the concept of storytelling, which is a traditional African way of communication. Another concept which was explored in the scheme is the use of openings that mimic cracks and crevices found in the rocky outcrops (Mashabane Rose, 2011). Furthermore, 'a more sinuous wall concept emerged in the second scheme design, which was based on a long winding wall line that leads a space occupant through the different storytelling spaces around a courtyard carved into the hill with planted roofs'. This notion then subconsciously gives an impression of the building being carved into the hill. Therefore, blurring the demarcation between the structure and the landscape. In addition, 'framed views of significant places around the city are marked on the spiral path (Mashabane Rose, 2011). The Hapo museum is the first point of arrival for visitors to Freedom Park. This spatial arrangement was deliberately made in order to introduce visitors to the freedom park scheme. *newla.co.za* supports the statement by denoting that 'it is in this space that the visitor needs to be introduced to the character, nature and context of the experience that will take place at Freedom Park'. The museum is the inception site whereby visitors begin to experience the journey which spirals up the Salvokop hill. While walking up the hill, the user also gets to experience a series of garden spaces that are strategically placed along the site, Hapo, being the first of these gardens (NLA, nd).



*Photo 6.6: Illustration of how the building seek to be park of the landscape. (Source: Author)*



*Photo 6.7: Internal Hapo as the preparation and introduction of the site experience through storytelling. (Source: Author)*

### **6.2.2 Contextual Response**

The site lies on the Southern side of the city. Moreover, the 52-hectare site comprises of a 'natural quartzite ridge of significant ecological value and forms an important visual, natural and strategic gateway to the city' (Seda, 2016). The schematic composition of the case study is arranged in such a way that the primary elements of Freedom Park are juxtaposed in a sequence as one approach the hill. The Hapo museum, which is situated at the lowest point of the site, acts as an element that defines the main entrance. The museum further connects the site with the Salvokop village and the city at large, through a public square, which is also the first point of arrival. The square, used by visitors as a meeting-up space upon arrival and after visiting the Freedom Park, subconsciously acts as a symbol for the narrative of reconciliation. In attempts to connect the Hapo museum with the existing Voortrekker monument, a new road was built, therefore connecting the historical content that both museums offer. This connection was deliberately executed, to allow visitors to appreciate the divisions of the past, and embrace the social cohesion that the present era and the future have to offer (Mashabane Rose, 2011).

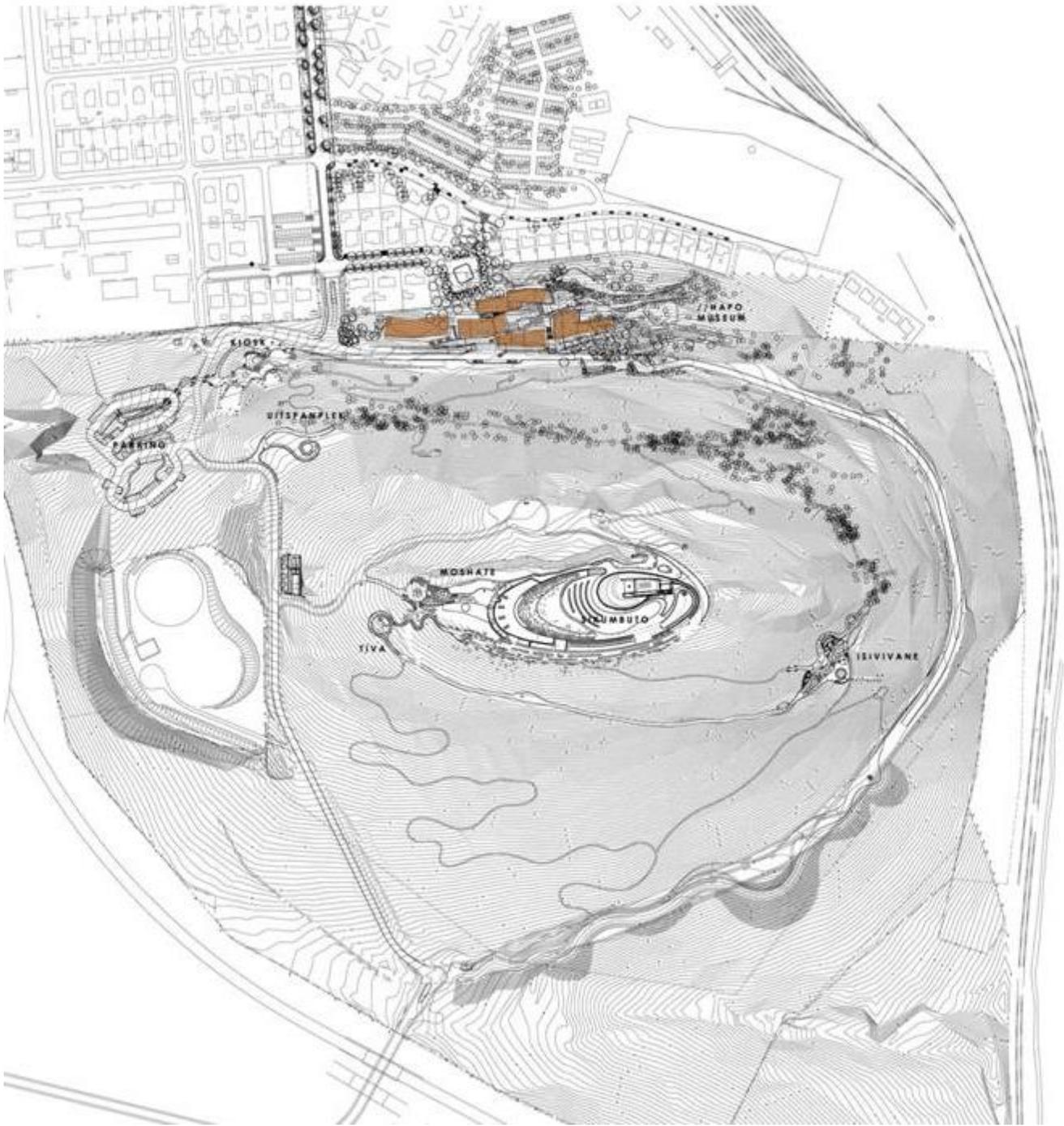
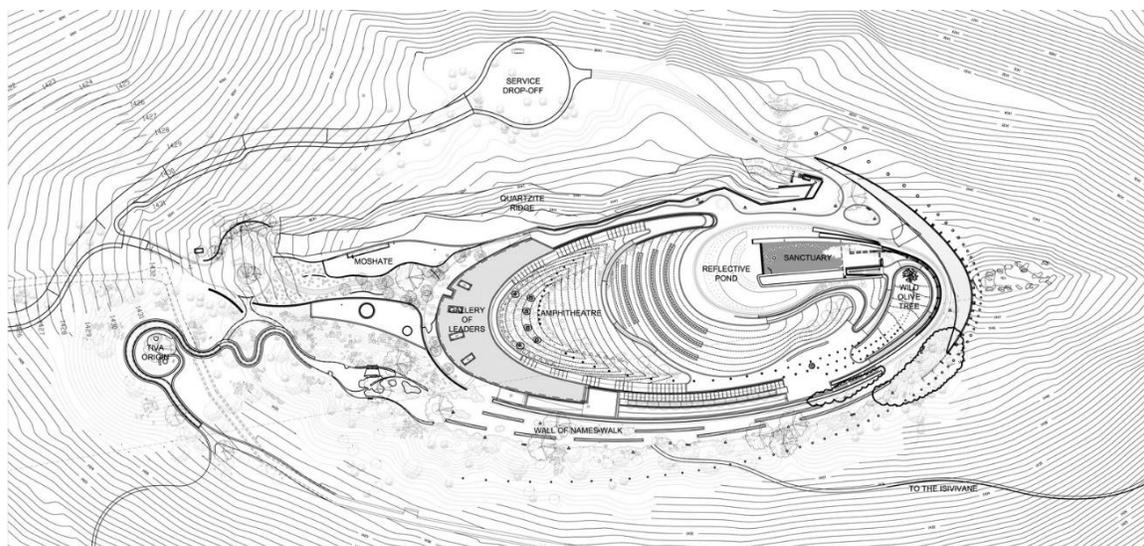


Figure 6.8: Illustration of the site in relation to context.

(Source: [www.archdaily.com/297713/freedom-park-phase-2](http://www.archdaily.com/297713/freedom-park-phase-2))

The Sikhumbutho, on the other hand, serves as a counterpoint to the dominating hill-top structures of the Voortrekker monument and the Unisa Campus, which surrounds the structure. In addition, the journey, ascending to the names of the fallen freedom fighters, which is located in the apex of the site, presented designers with an opportunity of developing a spiralling path. The path directs visitors up to the highest point of the hill. Furthermore, placing the Sikhumbutho and the memorial on the highest point of the site was a preordained decision in this landscape since the surrounding context is primarily dominated and surrounded by politically charged buildings, which are located on the surrounding hills.



*Figure 6.9: Isikhumbuto building situated at the apex of the hill.*

*(Source: [www.archdaily.com/297713/freedom-park-phase-2](http://www.archdaily.com/297713/freedom-park-phase-2))*

The scheme serves to be recognised as a new significant national symbol, therefore its location required for the development to be situated in the capital centre, right next to politically-charged buildings such as union buildings, the Voortrekker monument as well as the Unisa campus (Mashabane Rose, 2011). The relationship, Freedom Park has with the surrounding landscape, the shape of the hill, as well as the connection with the Voortrekker monument, is a prominent feature which can be traced in this scheme. In addition, the Freedom Park is strongly affiliated with the nationalist regime, and the union buildings are part of the dialogue and experience of Freedom Park. This relationship forms a journey that can be experienced throughout the site (Mashabane Rose, 2011).

### 6.2.3 Spatial Organisation

The spaces inside the buildings are arranged in a manner that renders the landscape design as a narrative. The narrative journey begins from the point of arrival. As the visitor enters the site, the visitor is channelled through a vividly defined pathway to a gathering space, as mentioned above. Furthermore, the movement direction of the visitor is directed eastwards along a pathway that directly leads to the three core external spaces of the Hapo Museum. These external spaces are referred to as the '*Gardens of Indigenous Knowledge*' or '*Healing Gardens*'. In addition, the execution of the Healing Gardens entails an articulated channel of water that steers the visitor into a quiet, contemplative space that projects eastwards over the city towards the Union Buildings (Mashabane Rose, 2011).



*Figure 6.10: The healing garden concept. (Source: [www.archdaily.com/297713/freedom-park-phase-2](http://www.archdaily.com/297713/freedom-park-phase-2))*

Furthermore, the visitor is encouraged to explore the space cut into the earth. The series of gardens strategically placed around the site compels the user to engage with the rich embroidery of medicinal plants, where water and the pathway merges. 'Indigenous knowledge is an all-pervading aspect of Africa', through this entire scheme, the theme of Indigenous Knowledge systems is well executed from the conceptual stage up until the spatial arrangements on the site. Accordingly, the use of medicinal plants in the garden and on Salvokop is extensive, and the selection and location of species to plants that are found on site was guided by the knowledge provided by traditional healers who have extensive

knowledge in this area (NLA, nd). The secondary core space which is found on the scheme is the *Sentlhaga*, which is known as the children's garden. This space is located in the epicentre of the Healing Garden as well as the Boulders. The *Sentlhaga* comprises of a series of cascading walls which serves a function of providing refuge for plants and also sparking interest into a child's imagination. Moreover, the space also has a grassed amphitheatre and movable props, which can be used for outdoor storytelling (NLA, nd).



*Figure 6.11: The children's garden, with water sprinkles. (Source: Author)*

In addition, because the spatial arrangement of the museum comprises of a series of spaces arranged along a timeline comprising of interconnected historical events, this then presented the opportunity of clustering the Boulders (form of the building) in a circular arrangement, to cater for cross ventilation between the exhibition and storytelling spaces. This arrangement then gave rise to a central courtyard, which is regarded as a third core external space and the heart of the Hapo museum. The nature of the space is populated with vegetation, and the vegetation that is used for the space refers to the first plants that started growing on earth (NLA, nd).



Figure 6.12: *Illustration of building blocks arrangement, broken down to allow ventilation.*  
(Source: [www.archdaily.com/297713/freedom-park-phase-2](http://www.archdaily.com/297713/freedom-park-phase-2))

The accommodation schedule of the museum also includes a library, seminar rooms, administration offices and commercial facilities such as a book shops as well as a restaurant.

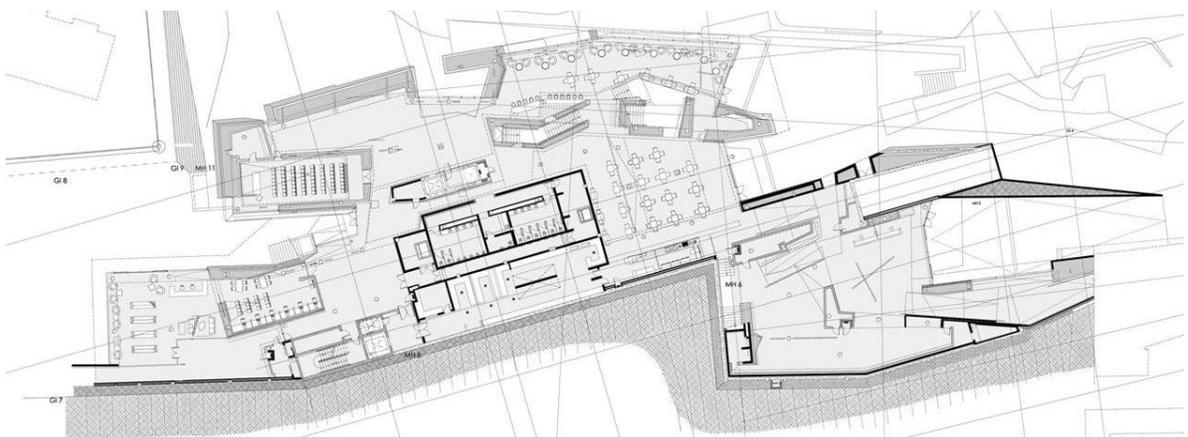


Figure 6.13: *Illustration of various floor levels, accommodating a range of activities.*  
(Source: [www.archdaily.com/297713/freedom-park-phase-2](http://www.archdaily.com/297713/freedom-park-phase-2))

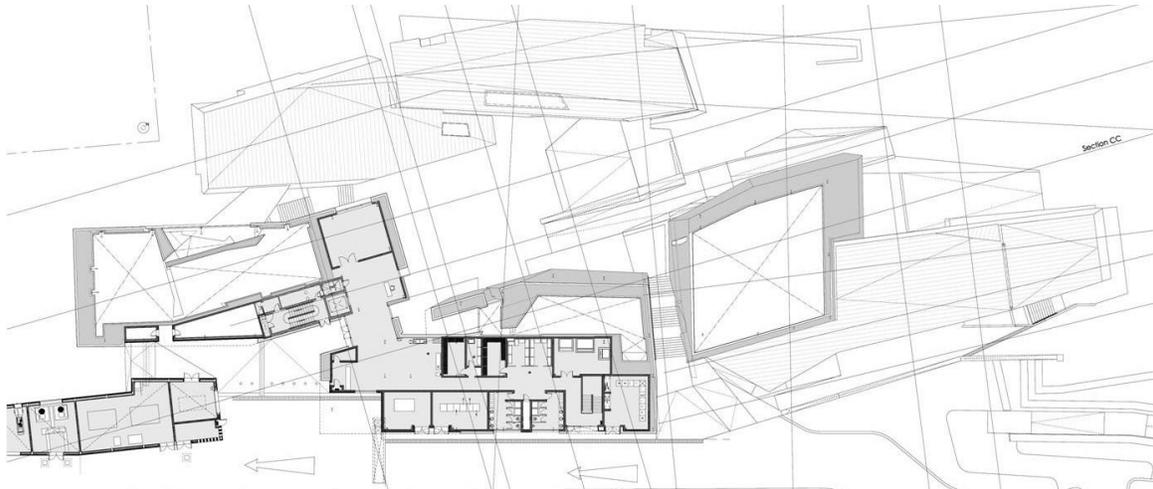


Figure 6.14: *Illustration of various floor levels, top floor.*  
 (Source: [www.archdaily.com/297713/freedom-park-phase-2](http://www.archdaily.com/297713/freedom-park-phase-2))

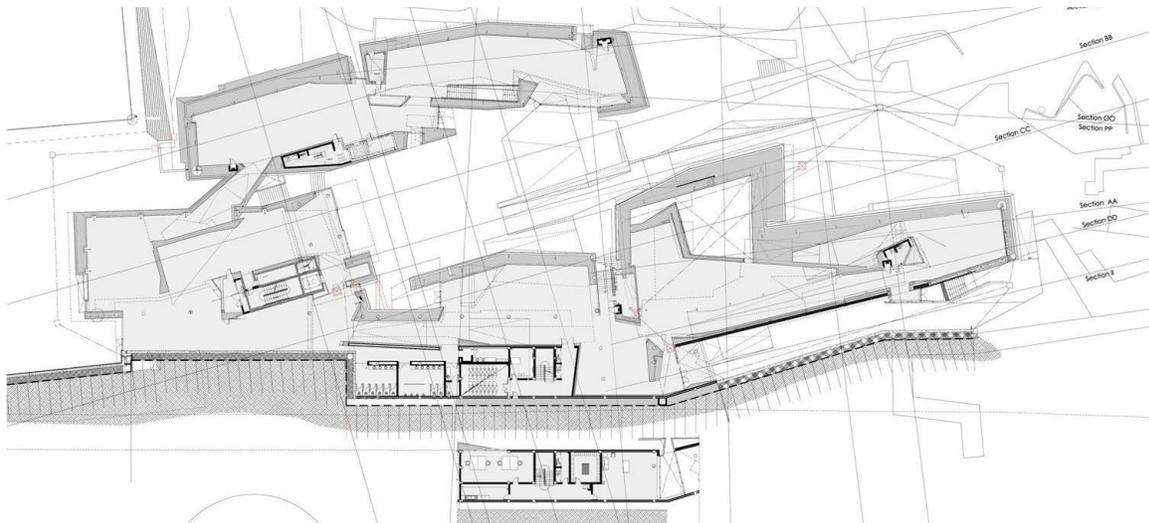


Figure 6.15: *Illustration of various floor levels, middle floor.*  
 (Source: [www.archdaily.com/297713/freedom-park-phase-2](http://www.archdaily.com/297713/freedom-park-phase-2))

#### 6.2.4 Architectural Expression

As mentioned in the previous chapters that symbolism plays a crucial role where the narrative of traditions and culture are involved. Though this precedent, the symbolic, final resting place for the late freedom fighters was designed using African cosmic principles derived from the Indigenous Knowledge Systems. The symbolic execution in the design of the *Isivivane* involved a circular arrangement of

boulders, which subconsciously protects the space. Misting sprays were also incorporated into the design scheme in order to create a sense of spiritual presence of the fallen heroes.



*Figure 6.16: Sacred spaces and the use of African symbolism.*  
(Source: [www.archdaily.com/297713/freedom-park-phase-2](http://www.archdaily.com/297713/freedom-park-phase-2))

Furthermore, a circular rock wall, the boulders and the rock garden initiated an architectural language that influenced the architecture of buildings that were developed at a later stage. The architectural elements that are used for the scheme are sourced from natural materials. These elements include stone, water, fire as well as indigenous trees and plants.



*Figure 6.17: The use of water features.*  
(Source: Author)



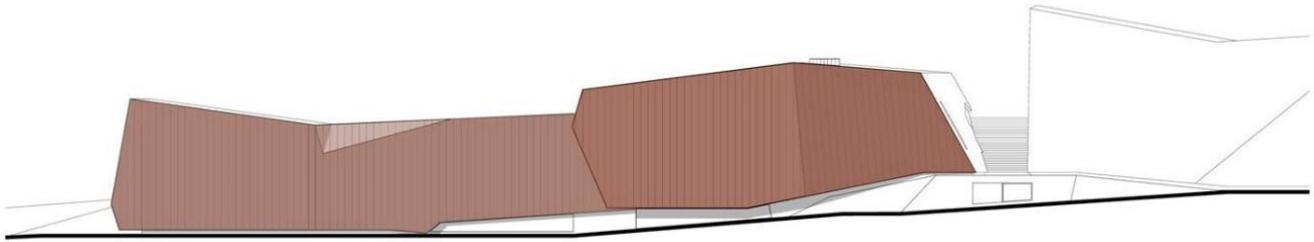
*Figure 6.18: Amphitheatre.* (Source: Author)



*Figure 6.19: The use of natural materials and elements.* (Source: Author)

A concept of arranging a series of boulders that are surrounded by healing plants was explored throughout the entire design of the Hapo scheme. In addition, the form of the building ended up

conceptually resembling a multidimensional boulder with cracks and crevices, which are expressed in the form of openings to allow natural lighting to penetrate the spaces and create luminous volumes.



*Figure 6.20: Articulation of the façade using the boulders concept.*  
 (Source: [www.archdaily.com/297713/freedom-park-phase-2](http://www.archdaily.com/297713/freedom-park-phase-2))

In order to flawlessly execute the boulders theme, a discoloured metal material that mimics the physical properties of rocks was chosen. The intention was to clad both the wall and roof structure in order to create an illusion of rocks protruding from the setting and create a 'continuous amorphous rock surface'. A copper sheeting material was a favourable material due to its colour changing properties when exposed to element and the fact that it is locally produced (Mashabane Rose, 2011).



*Figure 6.21: Contextual Material.*  
 (Source: [www.archdaily.com](http://www.archdaily.com))

*Figure 6.22: Relating to nature, the building imitating nature.*  
 (Source: Author)

*Figure 6.23 Relating to nature, the building imitating nature.*  
 (Source: Author)

### 6.3 CONCLUSION

This chapter highlighted the African traditional and historical narrative, which is highly influenced by the cultural processes and background encoded in built form. The analysis further deciphered the

narrative and the thought processes behind the space and form making of the Freedom Park/ Hapo museum. Furthermore, It was highlighted that cultural processes, traditions, customs, together with the geographical location, have a strong influence on space and form. Therefore, one can conclude that the two examples which the study expanded on in chapter 5 and 6, precisely communicate the notion discussed in previous chapters which denotes that, in a traditional sense, healing can be regarded as a way of life adopted by a particular group, and all the processes of healing are rooted from the cultural customs, beliefs and values. Therefore, built form that is derived from a cultural understanding automatically accommodates the healing process.

**CHAPTER SEVEN**  
**INTERPRETATION OF FINDINGS**

## 7.1 INTRODUCTION

In pursuit of ascertaining a deeper understanding of the underlying principles that shapes the Nguni traditional healing entity, the study intended to explore interview schedules targeting experienced traditional healers, practicing in both the rural and the urban context. The traditional healers targeted specialise in both divination and herbalism. The set of questions that the study expanded on will assist in maintaining a thorough understanding of the processes and challenges that traditional healers encounter within the practice. UMakhosi 'A' is a member of the Traditional Healers Practice Council KZN. Another healer in which the study interviewed is umakhosi B (a leader of the Traditional Healers Practice Council KZN). Furthermore, to understand the relevance of traditional healing within the modern era as well as the perception that modern society has towards the traditional healing practice, the study also explored interview schedules targeting the general public residing within the urban context, regardless of the individuals' background. The sample for the second interview schedule was sourced from the general public present in Durban's major civic and public institutions such as the workshop shopping centre, Shepstone building (UKZN Howard College) and around the Impepho Market (Warwick).

## 7.2 INTERVIEWEES' DEMOGRAPHICS

The first interview schedule targeted experienced traditional healers who have been active members within the healing industry, with a thorough background regarding the challenges of the industry and, finally, healers who have a thorough understanding of the traditional healing processes, native, customs and beliefs. The questions asked focused on, firstly, the background of the practice, with the aim to highlight the challenges healers are facing within the industry, from the past to current times, secondly, the processes and procedures that make up traditional healing, as well as the role of a traditional healer, and thirdly, the required infrastructure for healing to take place and develop. Moreover, the interviews served as a tool to find answers for the core questions regarding the traditional healing entity, with hopes of ascertaining the background forces that act upon the traditional healing entity. In response, Makhosi A, firstly highlighted the challenges faced by healers who preceded them. The main challenge was the lack of knowledge regarding newly introduced illnesses and diseases like HIV and Aids, for example, there were incidents where healers would practice traditional procedures that lead to spread and transmission of diseases without knowing. The other challenge faced by healers, is the fact that traditional healers were not recognised by the department of health and the country's constitution, leaving

the practice in the dark ages for a very long time, and due to this, the development of the practice as a whole was hindered. The setback led to traditional healers having to be forced to refer their patients to the mainstream healthcare system, because of the lack of resources to perform intricate procedures, e.g. blood and water transfusion and so on. In addition, the neglect of the profession by the government has further resulted to exploitation and deformation of the practice, where scammers and unqualified individuals posed as healers, therefore putting people's lives in great danger. Furthermore, the exploitation of resources, where there was an unregulated harvesting of endangered and valuable healing plants. This phenomenon will soon lead to extinction of the species, therefore causing a strain within the biodiversity.

In addition, Makhosi 'B' supported Makhosi 'A's statement by denoting that the biggest challenge that healers face is being acknowledged by the commercialised healing institutions. UMakhosi 'B', further stresses that this lack of acknowledgement happens to a point whereby patients are even discouraged to consult with practitioners from the Traditional Healing entity. The literature highlighted that the traditional healing entity is regarded as unreliable, therefore in hopes to find out how one can distinguish between a legitimate and charlatan healer, the study asked questions regarding the processes that one needs to undergo to be regarded a healer. UMakhosi 'A' and 'B', highlighted that becoming a healer is a calling and it is up to the ancestors to choose a specific member of the family, clan or community from generation to generation to take over the healing role. However, there are cases where individuals take the role of healing by choice. Individuals who become healers by choice are called *izinyanga* (herbalist) and they acquire training through learning from a qualified healer, and they are drawn to the profession by passion and interest. Moreover, they have a limited scope of services when it comes to the healer's capabilities.

On the other hand, it was highlighted that to graduate as a holistic healer (diviner), the chosen candidate has to go through a process called *ukuthwasa* named after a plant called *intwaso*, which is consumed during the training process. Furthermore, *ithwasa* (candidate) does not choose a healer to train them, the candidate is directed by their ancestors to the chosen master, through dreams. The candidate has to report to that specific *umsamo* (sacred space within the homestead) to connect with their ancestors.

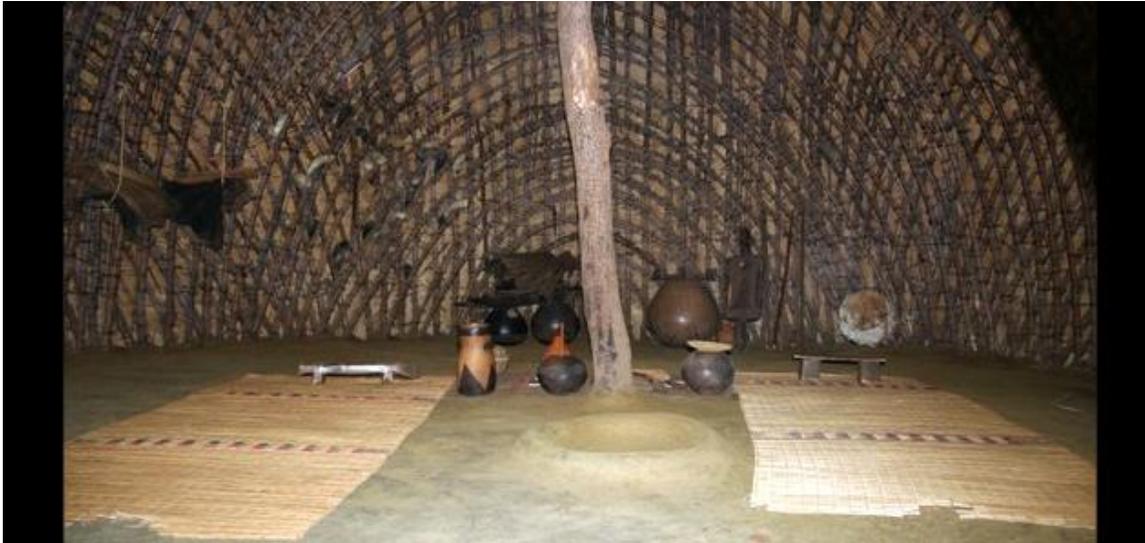


Figure 7.1: Demonstration of Umsamo. (Source: <https://umsamo.org.za/>)

According to traditional customs, in the beginning of the training process, there is a welcoming ritual/ceremony and another one at the end of the training period and the candidate is released in exchange of a cow offered by the family of the candidate for a cleansing ritual/ceremony.

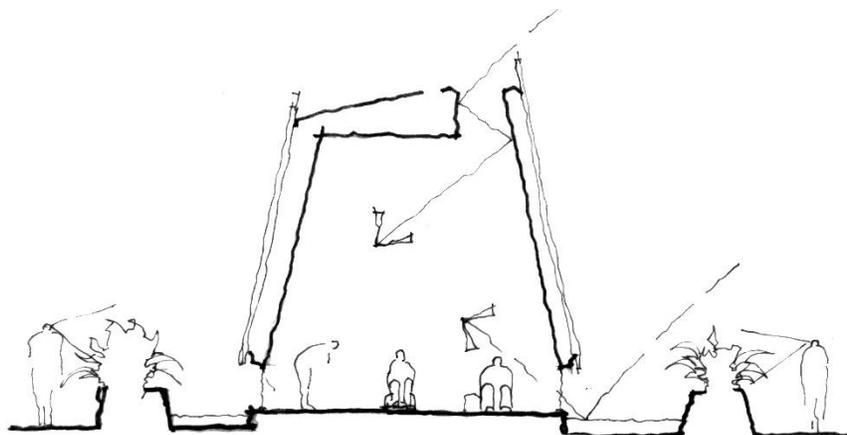


Figure 7.2: Graduation ceremonies/ritual. (Source: Author)

Makhosi 'A', went on to mention that healers are chosen for various purposes, for instance, there is *ukuthwasa* under *uThokoza*, in this case the healer is equipped to connect and deal with all the health and wellness issues of any decedents of the Nguni clans, and then there is *ukuthwasa* where the candidate is chosen as a sacrifice to resolve health and wellness issues specific to their family. The healer who responds specifically to the family issues can only communicate through *umsamo* of that particular

family. Therefore, only the *uThokoza* healers can work outside of their homestead. uMakhosi ‘A’, further asserted that, because the *uThokoza* healers can relate any *umsamo* under the Nguni clan, there is a possibility to create a central *umsamo* where all the *uThokoza* healers can create a secondary central *umsamo* as a network for healers as a catalyst for transferring of skills and for accessibility. This *umsamo* can be located central to all the healers who are willing to subscribe

The study also aimed at finding out what type of infrastructure as well as the setting and location that the healers are currently practicing in, with aims of investigating if the structures are adequate and allow the healers to thrive in their profession. Moreover, both healers denoted that they practice in their homesteads and the healers also stressed that they have been practicing for 5 years and more. Makhosi ‘B’, further denoted that the structures in which they practice from are limiting healers in their profession since the structures are ‘not equipped in a manner that is suitable to accommodate patients with different ailments, especially those who need stay in for a longer period’. Makhosi ‘A’, on the other hand asserted that access to his homestead becomes problematic since the homestead is situated in rural areas. Furthermore, Makhosi ‘B’, highlighted that a conducive working environment is very important in maintaining harmony and balance, to allow the healing process to take place.



*Figure 7.2: Character of a suitable working space for healers (Source: Author)*

In the event where healers are practicing from their homesteads, the environment can be limiting, due to the lack of resources and working in isolating deprive healers from engaging and interacting with other professionals and the society in general.

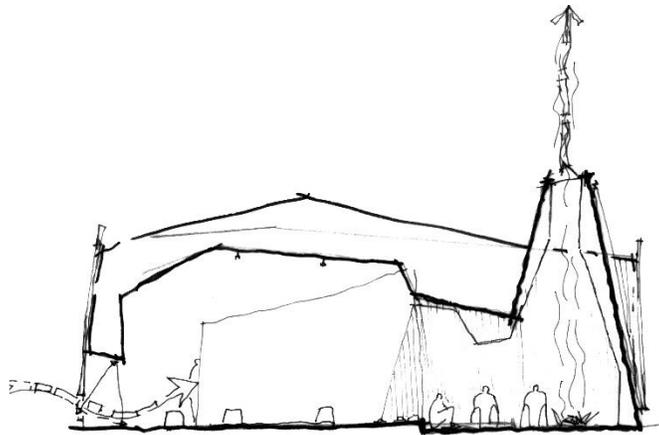


Figure 7.3: Character of a suitable consulting space (Source: Author)

In addition, technology is a necessity, and at the moment the profession is far behind, therefore, a facility with well-equipped *izigodlo* (practicing spaces) will create a network of healers where they can share their skills, knowledge and vision and will be a huge step forward for the profession.

The second interview schedule focused on investigating the views that the greater public, especially the youth, have towards the traditional healing entity. The questions asked, aimed at finding out if the younger generation is well educated on what traditional healing is, as well as ascertaining if in modern society, the youth still practices traditional customs. From the interviews that were conducted, it appears that majority of the interviewees are aware of what traditional healers are or the traditional healing realm as a whole and come from a family that practices their cultural traditions. The interview schedule also aimed at finding out if the youth has a negative or positive perception about traditional healers and if the youth consults with traditional healers. The findings highlighted that majority of the interviewees do not personally consult with traditional healers; however, they had consulted before mostly as a family, rather than as individuals. In general, a number of interviewees do not perceive traditional healers as bad per say, rather the concerns are sourced from the obvious lack of prosperity.



Figure 7.4: Current urban situation



Figure 7.5: Current perception about healers

### 7.3 INTERPRETATION OF DATA

The findings from the conducted field interviews can conclude that the information gathered is in correspondence with the literature presented in the document. This was vividly expressed within the first interview schedule, whereby the concerns that Makhosi 'B' raised whereby she denoted that there is a negative stigma and isolation of the traditional healing real. Makhosi 'B's remark supports the statement in which the research expanded on in Chapter three, whereby the literature expanded on the lack of prosperity and underdevelopment of the traditional healing realm as well as regulatory laws which were set in motion, to limit the growth of the traditional healing sphere.

The interview schedule also expanded in parallel with the concepts which were discussed in Chapter one, whereby it was highlighted by Makhosi 'A' that the structure in which traditional heals use to practice, is constructed using principles of symbolic representation of the unity of all spirits. The symbolic representation of unity is achieved through the arrangement of logs that all meet in one point. Furthermore, the interview schedules also highlighted the theory of living patterns, in which the study dwelled upon in Chapter one. The theory was expressed through Makhosi 'A's interview whereby, the healer expanded on the different spaces that make up *izigodlo* (practicing spaces).

**CHAPTER EIGHT**  
**FINAL CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

## 8.1 INTRODUCTION

The conducted research has provided a number of chapters consisting of primary and secondary data. The data was discussed within a framework of various concepts and theories, and each chapter presented their own conclusions relating to the finds. The findings have contributed on unlocking some of the key factors stressed by the research problem. With that being said, these findings were discussed independently but under one narrative. This chapter will then demonstrate how the research blends as one body of work that answers the main and secondary questions and provides a hypothesis.

## 8.2 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This research was conducted because there was a gap within the South African healthcare system, on how the traditional healing practice is not accommodated architecturally within the urban context. The urban context being the focal point of the study because of the anthropological aspects suggested by the theoretical framework. Therefore, given the fact that the traditional healing practice is largely influenced by cultural and indigenous knowledge systems, the challenge then becomes that the urban context, which is meant to facilitate the practice, is derived from a foreign built form ideology. In addition, professionals within the architectural field made attempts of introducing a building typology within the urban context, which caters for the traditional healing sphere, however, in most cases, the structures show a lack of deep understanding of what the Nguni cultural knowledge systems entails. The research intends to fill-in the gap identified in the current healthcare system, using architecture as a catalyst for change. Given the challenges mentioned-above, the main question modelled by the research is ‘how can the underlying principles of traditional healing assist in shaping a responsive and meaningful architectural typology?’

To respond to the main question, the research presented a main objective which was to unpack the influences and the underlying principles of traditional healing in order to establish a building typology that compliment and responds accordingly. In attempts to respond to the main objective, the research expanded on the notion of finding balance and the synchrony of the ‘whole’ in Chapter two. Moreover, the literature expanded vividly expressed the notion of healing in relation to three bodies which make up the ‘whole’. The three entities include the mind, the physical body as well as the soul. The Chapter expressed how these three entities are inseparable in the event of holistic traditional healing. Furthermore, the Chapter introduced the fact that even though all forces act holistically, the body is regarded as an integral part which is used for gathering information. The body instigates the process of

healing, and healers use the physical body to connect with their patients. The Chapter further highlighted the natural remedies that are used in order to heal the body. As mentioned before, that the body is used as a channel to gather information from the patient, the chapter, further highlighted the notion of the unconscious mind uniting with the soul. The research further expanded about the notion of shamanism, whereby it was highlighted that, in the event of the notion of altered state of consciousness, the focus is shifted to the adaptation of all the forces which make up a human being (body, mind and soul) as well as cultural systems of being. Moreover, the Chapter, expressed the herbs that are used to trigger the process of an altered state of consciousness. The herbs are known to possess psychoactive properties, which in turn connects the healer with their ancestors.

Another aim that the research targeted was generating an architectural typology which is accessible and culturally bound. In attempts to respond to the aim and understand the cultural dynamics of the Ngunis, the research was further narrowed down to the sublime indigenous cultural systems that make up the Nguni traditional healing realm in Chapter three. Traditional healing within the South African context, is very prominent within the Nguni tribe, therefore the research focused mostly in unpacking the cultural customs of the Nguni tribe. In order to vividly understand how the Nguni culture evolved over time, the Chapter expanded on how the Nguni civilisation originated. The Chapter further expressed that the Nguni civilisation's socio-cultural patterns were traced between the Great Zimbabwe as well as Mapungubwe. The chapter further expanded on an engaged understanding of the origins and historical role of traditional healing within the African society. An anthropological approach was adopted to highlight the role of traditional healing within an African urban context from the early formation of the Nguni civilization using a spatial organisation of the CCP design principle found in Mapungubwe and the Great Zimbabwe all the way to KwaZulu-Natal as a trace of descent. The study expressed that traditional healing has been regarded as the main and powerful form of healing since the beginning and have stood the test of time. Moreover, the study stressed that a traditional healer was a highly trusted and respected member of a tribe and played an influential role in decision-making to ensure wellness and sustainability.

Furthermore, the Chapter also elaborated on the introduction of scientific based healing. This type of healing demonstrated a split between empirical scientific based methods of healing and mythical religion-based medicine. In addition, the Chapter also expanded on the relevance of traditional healing

in the modern era, whereby, the research elaborated about the notion of multi-cultural influences that was brought upon by globalisation. Moreover, the objective of the study was to uncover and comprehend the layers and principles of traditional healing, in attempts to establish a building typology that compliments the traditional healing entity. This objective was unpacked on the literature found in Chapter four. The literature expresses the cohesion that can be maintained between healing, culture, space and form. The Chapter further expanded on the nature of healing spaces whereby it was highlighted that the ambience and the connection with nature have a positive effect on the space occupants. The Chapter also elaborated on the notion of identity as a generator for space and form, whereby it was expressed that the evolution and cultural systems of mankind, social forces as well as economic and political forces influences the type of built form that is produced.

Another objective that the research aimed at achieving is evaluating the current infrastructure that facilitates for the traditional healing practice. In order to compare how other international ethnic groups, express the notion of traditions and customs in their built form, an example of the Chinese Traditional Medicine hospital was used. Even though the project was constructed in 2018, the designers still used the principles of the traditional Chinese civilisation. These principles included spatial arrangements, the use of nature, which is believed to induce healing as well as the use of traditional Asian gable structures. Furthermore, another objective that the study aimed at achieving was investigating a building typology that has space and form which is influenced by the African cultural identity. The study went on to elaborate on the actualisation of cultural expression which was discussed in Chapter 6. In addition, the Chapter investigated a South African example of a building that expresses an African indigenous cultural narrative. The chosen building that the study explored was the Hapo museum, which is located within the Freedom park precinct in Pretoria. The Chapter further elaborated on the African cultural principles that the designers used to communicate the African narrative, from the concept of the building, the form of the structure, up until the spatial arrangement of the entire Freedom part site.

Furthermore, the study also had an objective of evaluating the influence of cultural dynamics as well as the perception that the public has about the traditional healing sphere. This objective was discussed in the appendices attached, whereby the study interviewed young students as well as the youth, in attempts to find out their views about the traditional healing entity. The study also interpreted the findings which were gathered from the interviews in the previous Chapter. Furthermore, the main question that the

research aimed at underpinning, how can the principles of traditional healing assist in shaping a responsive and meaningful architectural typology. The question was answered in all of the Chapter. In order to respond to the question, the study, firstly, expanded on the notion of traditional healing with aims of ascertaining what makes up traditional healing. The first Chapter then expanded on the concept of holistic healing which was then viewed through the lens of the theory of living patterns and systems. The chapter highlighted all the systems (body, mind and soul) that make up the ‘whole’. The chapter also unpacked how all these systems interrelate with each other. The study also further attempted to answer the question in chapter two, still using the framework of living patterns and systems, in order to unpack how the Nguni civilisation began as well as dissecting the spatial arrangements of the traditional Nguni homesteads. Moreover, symbolic representation concept was used in order to answer the main question in Chapter four, five and six.

### 8.3 FINAL CONCLUSION

The hypothesis of the study was ‘deciphering the healing culture, by uncovering all the layers, forces and systems it entails, can assist in generating a responsive and accessible typology that will play a significant role in the development of the traditional healing community’. The statements discussed in this Chapter are expresses that the hypothesis of the study which communicated above is crucial and feasible. The research findings which were elaborated in this Chapter will assist in the proposal of the design of a Traditional Healing Center, which will be located in the city center of Durban.

## **CHAPTER NINE**

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### 9.3 APPENDICES

#### 9.3.1 Interviews

##### **INTERVIEW SCHEDULE 1A: Traditional Healers**

###### BACKGROUND

Name of person : Makhosi 'B'

Position Held : Head of the Traditional Healing Institute in KZN.

###### QUESTIONS

###### **BACKGROUND QUESTIONS**

###### **1. What influenced your decision to pursue traditional healing?**

It is a response to a calling. I was honouring a gift that was given to me by my ancestors, to heal the nation.

###### **2. How long have you been a traditional healer?**

Its been 5 years now ( 2014 - to date).

###### **3. What qualifies an individual to label themselves as a traditional healer?**

It is the training you acquire to Devine, under the supervision of an experienced healer and the calling which enables one the ability to diagnose and dispense medicinal herbs to your patients

###### **4. What challenges have you came across as a traditional healer or in the traditional healing field?**

The biggest challenge that traditional healers face is being acceptance by other healing practices. Most of the time there are patients who are discouraged to use our traditional herbs, meanwhile, they need it. Also, the funding toward upgrading our healing practice.

###### **5. In what infrastructure are you performing your duties?**

We work in our shrines (indumba/isigodlo). Our huts which are suitable for our traditional healing practice.

## **INFRASTRUCTURE QUESTIONS**

**1. Do you think the setting and location has an influence on the thriving and success of the traditional healing practice, if yes please elaborate how?**

Yes, sometimes to work in our homes limit our services because our homes are not equipped in a manner that is suitable to accommodate patients with different ailments, especially those who need stay in for a longer period.

**2. Do you think that the space where you are executing your duties allows you to grow in your craft, if the answer is yes please elaborate how?**

Yes, however, it needs improvement to accommodate modern technological advancements. We also need training on modern technology to keep up with latest common ailments that need to be treated using latest technological solutions.

**3. If the previous answer is no, Do you think you would thrive in your practice should you be equipped with better infrastructure?**

Yes, it will improve a lot because it will allow us to work hand in hand with other healing systems in appropriate and dignified manner to respect patients right to privacy.

**4. What is fundamental in a working environment for a traditional healer?**

- Customer care
- Cleanliness
- Right to privacy (confidentiality)

**5. What is the relationship between traditional healing and technology?**

For now, the relationship is lacking. We would like all stakeholders involved to assist us as traditional healers to have access to training on new technological advancements, to assist us to perfect our craft as healers.

## **INTERVIEW SCHEDULE 1B: Traditional Healers**

### BACKGROUND

Name of person : Makhosi 'A'

Position Held : Member of the Traditional Healing Institute in KZN.

### QUESTIONS

#### **BACKGROUND QUESTIONS**

**6. What influenced your decision to pursue traditional healing?**

It is a response to a calling. This calling was passed down from generation to generation within my family, from my father, down to my great grandfather.

**7. How long have you been a traditional healer?**

**8. What qualifies an individual to label themselves as a traditional healer?**

Like any other regulatory body, it is the intensive training process that healers need to undergo, which is referred to as the stage of 'ukuthwasa' whereby an experienced healer grooms a trainee and equips them with skills of diagnosing and healing illnesses. This stage ranges from individual to individual, the duration of mine was ten years.

**9. What challenges have you come across as a traditional healer or in the traditional healing field?**

The challenge that traditional healers face is the extinction of plants that are crucial in treating illnesses as well as charlatan healers that mislead the greater public by promising impossible things such as 'giving them rats, that will bring in money on a daily basis'. Another challenge that can be noted is the lack of knowledge regarding newly introduced illnesses and diseases such as HIV and AIDS.

**10. In what infrastructure are you performing your duties?**

We work in our shrines (indumba/isigodlo). The shrines take the shape and form of a Zulu hut. The way the structure is constructed allows for the spiritual processes to take place. The structure symbolically expresses unity of all spirits, this is achieved in the way that the structural logs all meet in one point.

## **INFRASTRUCTURE QUESTIONS**

**6. Do you think the setting and location has an influence on the thriving and success of the traditional healing practice, if yes please elaborate how?**

Yes, the setting and location plays a significant role where spirits are involved, therefore, for the traditional healing practice to thrive, the activities should be conducted in a calm and private space

**7. Do you think that the space where you are executing your duties allows you to grow in your craft, if the answer is yes please elaborate how?**

Yes, but, because the space that I practice in is located in the rural areas, access becomes a problem to some individuals.

**8. If the previous answer is no, Do you think you would thrive in your practice should you be equipped with better infrastructure?**

Yes, the infrastructure would allow for an exchange of skills as well as networking with other traditional healers as well as educate the public about the traditional healing entity.

**9. What is fundamental in a working environment for a traditional healer?**

- A calm and quiet space
- Provision of 'Umsamu' the space where the prophecies are administered

**10. What is the relationship between traditional healing and technology?**

The traditional healing entity is expanding daily, however, there is not that much exposure in technological advancements. In terms of technology, within the media space, slowly but surely traditional healers in the modern society are using social media platforms to share about their craft.

## **INTERVIEW SCHEDULE 2A: General Public**

### BACKGROUND

Name of person : Interviewee 1

Position Held : Student at UKZN.

### QUESTIONS

**1. Do you come from a family that practices their traditions?**

Yes.

**2. What do you understand about the term traditional healing?**

Umm. In traditional healing you need to connect to the person who is healing you, and that person needs to go through initiation before that person is able to help people.

*(Interjects) so you mean that if a person has not gone through initiation, they are unable to assist people?*

Some can but it is customary to go through initiation (ukuThwasa) and your spiritual guide has to have gone through a similar process (ukuThwasa). Some are led by their ancestors to a body of water and they get them through the process spiritually.

*Can you say that this gift is inherited for instance like a will left for you by a late family member (iSigodlo or izikhwama)?*

Yes, you can inherit if you or any of your kin had the gift of the ancestors that were healers in the family, when they pass on, then the healing gift can be transferred to you.

**3. Have you ever consulted with a traditional healer before, if yes please elaborate?**

Yes, the time I was sick last year and consulting different doctors and they couldn't diagnose what was wrong. I consulted with different specialists and ended up staying in hospital for a long time and still they couldn't find what was wrong with me. I was first diagnosed with T.B of the Spine and other illnesses, until then my mom and I decided to seek traditional help. That is when the traditional healer revealed a lot of things about my background from my birth and the cause of the ailment, So I think it does help to a certain extent.

*So you are saying you went to a traditional healer because doctors were unable to help?*

Yes. It was the first time I went to seek traditional help with my mom to see a sangoma, but I think my mom has been to one before.

**4. Do you know someone who consults a traditional healer, besides yourself if you do?**

Yes, it is my mother, but she does not like going anymore, because some people in the long run can also be carrying the vision and power of their ancestors and then they do not see the need to go to a healer.

**5. What is your view about traditional healers and what influences them?**

I have a positive view but as mentioned before some people can take advantage of you or play games, as you know today it is all about money.

*So how do you see or know that you are being taken for a ride, is because you may also be gifted how can you tell?*

Perhaps you do have the gift or already are a *sangoma*. Let us say you go consult a Nyanga about why things are going wrong and they say that your neighbour is putting witchcraft spells over your progress or whatever. But then you already know that the problem is from your background, like for instance you never did a certain ritual e.g. *Imbeleko* or you are using your mother's surname instead of your fathers or you have not been dedicated to your ancestors. Sometimes you need to sit with the elders in your family and discuss whatever issues you have.

**6. From the above answer, positive or negative, what do you think can be done to develop the traditional healing field?**

I think it is important to conclude the stage ok *ukuThwasa* if you have inherited the gift from your late ancestors and not even miss even one process or step in of the initiation.

*How would one know and find out if they have completed the process or steps?*

Well, just like I mentioned before, if your grandfather was a traditional healer obviously there will be someone in the family that will know where to take you to or someone who is known to have completed the *UkuThwasa* process and they would be able to assist you with your ancestral gift and your ancestors can help as well. Again, I would also like to stress that yes there are people who take advantage of others because they did not complete or just because they are not gifted. However, my viewpoint about traditional healers is that I believe in them and not all of them are truthful or legitimate.

## **INTERVIEW SCHEDULE 2B:**

### **BACKGROUND**

Name of person : Interviewee 2

Position Held : Student at UKZN.

### **QUESTIONS**

#### **1. Do you come from the family that practice their traditions?**

Yes, because in my family there is the Khathi side and Mdlalose side. The Khathi side of the family does practice traditional healing, and the other side of the family which is Mdlalose side does not practice traditional healing. So, when my father was still alive, there was some time when the family practiced traditions, but now since my father is no longer alive, they do not practice traditions anymore.

#### **2. What do you understand about term traditional healing?**

I would say it is related to the African way of healing which involves religion, and evolution of black people, on how they used to survive back then before the colonization era. It also relates to ancestors and the religion of black people, basically in the past, traditional healing proven to be effective and efficient to most people. But personally, I have never experience it and I don't understand it, but I've seen it work for other people

#### **3. Have you consulted traditional healers before?**

No, I have not, but I have been advised by someone to go on the traditional healers, but I did not take that path.

#### **4. Do you know someone who consulted a traditional healer?**

Yes yes!!, I have a few close friends who have consulted a traditional healer and based on the outcome, it works for them, although I don't practice it, but I do believe it work for them and it has been working for them for years.

*So, would you ever consider taking the traditional healing route to treat any illnesses or for prophecies?*

Right now, my problem is that I grew up on my mother side of the family of which is the side that does not practice traditional healing, since we strongly believe in Christianity.

**5. What is your view about traditional healers and what influences them?**

I come from a family that believes more in God, but I believe it all links to one God, it is just that it is a different way of how other people consult with their higher power. My point of view is that there is no certainty in traditional healing.

*Is this thing of traditional healers, something like an inheritance or not , how do you view it?*

*Do you agree with the point that sometime, someone has been left with traditional bags by their grandfather or grandmother, so how can you trust that person.*

Mm!! for me I 100% agree with you on that, I believe it an inheritance that was left my father or mother, that how I preserve it, but I since come from the church that does not believe in ancestors, I believe more on the bible, which says that when someone died is no long with this world, so we only worship only GOD, so for me I don't think someone can be left with traditional back and it work for them

**6. From the above answer, positive or negative, what do you think can be done to develop the traditional healing field?**

I believe that there should be a museum, some place where people can get chance to be educated about the culture, and how it works. By doing that people will be equipped with the good understanding of the culture. And there must be people who can come to the workshop to testify how has traditional healing worked for them.

*So, you are saying there should be some sort of confession from the people who have previous used traditional medicine before?*

Yes, although I am not into traditional healing, however, it has positively worked for the people that are close to me, especial my friends from Mpukunyoni, eMtuba, they have shown me things that have happened after they have consulted with the traditional healer. Sometimes I even ask myself if this thing is done by GOD or is it an inheritance.

## **INTERVIEW SCHEDULE 2C:**

### **BACKGROUND**

Name of person : Interviewee 3

Position Held : Student at UKZN.

### **QUESTIONS**

**1. Do you come from a family that practices their traditions?**

Yes I do come from one.

**2. What do you understand about the term traditional healing?**

There many things that can relate to traditional healing (ukwelapha kwesintu), it just depends on the illness or ailment.

**3. Have you consulted a traditional healer before?**

Yes I have seen more than one before.

**4. Do you know someone who consults a traditional healer?**

Yes I do know someone.

**5. What is your view about traditional healers and what influences them?**

In my view I do not see any problem with or their work because they provide cost effective options for rural people and they are used a lot by individuals in those areas.

**6. From the above answer positive or negative, what do you think can be done to develop the traditional healing field?**

There is a lot that can be done, first is based on properly certifying and legitimizing traditional practitioners so they can also be able to work with a license. They can also assist in hospitals and other areas.

*Is there something else you would like to add?*

No thank you.

**INTERVIEW SCHEDULE 2D:**  
**BACKGROUND**

Name of person : Interviewee 4  
Position Held : Student at UKZN.

**QUESTIONS**

**1. Do you come from a family that practice their traditions?**

Yes, I do come from the family that believes in culture a lot

**2. What do you understand about team traditional healing?**

It is about culture as well as the use of traditional herbs (amakha)

*What do you mean by amakha?*

Traditional herbs (Amakha), is whereby one mix the herbs, as per instructions from Diviners and making sure you mix them in the way that it meets what you need for that case or issue.

**3. Have you consulted with a traditional healer before?**

Personally, I have never consulted with a traditional healer before but there have been instances where some traditional healers came to my home for other related family things.

*So, it is the family that meets the traditional healers?*

Yes, yes it the family, to make sure that they do their family duties, which sometimes for protection of the family members.

**4. Do you know someone who consult a traditional healer ?**

No, I only know my family,

**5. What is your view about traditional healers and what influences them ?**

No, I don't have any problem with it, but I don't believe that much onto it, there are some people in the members of the family who can attest that traditional healing works. Basically, I have heard from family members, saying that it works, but for me I have never noticed or seen it helps me. But I will

say I have never been in a problem where I found myself seriously needing the healer's services. I only do it because my family does it too. However, it is not my first choice since, I will prefer to be taken to doctors, if I am ill.

**6. From the above answer positive and negative, what do you think can be done to develop the traditional healing field?**

Well this thing of traditional healers is a serious problem, in the sense that there is no school for healers, in most cases you will find that there are not trustworthy because, most healers are now taking advantage of the public only because they know something about an individual, they use their power to gain financial freedom, not that he/she have skills for divination, but because the healer can mix few herbs and produce medicine. It becomes problematic in a case where one does not have knowledge about traditional healing, they will end up buying that fake medicine. Those few individuals paint a bad reputation about traditional healers. It so hard to find a gifted healer.

*What are strategies do you think can be used to find the legitimate traditional healers?*

Traditional healers must be tested if they can heal and know what they are doing a system of training and testing must exist. They must also create medical certificates for patients.

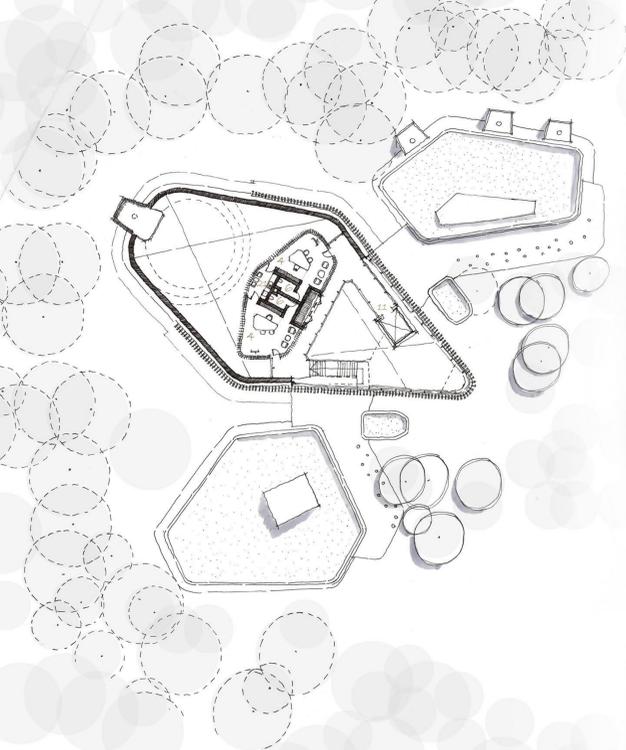
*As you know that testing on human beings can be dangerous, how do we prevent people from being harmed?*

The healers can combine traditional healing with modern methods, this will then create a system whereby there is a link between the traditional and modern medicine and knowledge can be shared amongst the two practices.

**9.3.2 Design Development Sketches**







APPROACH



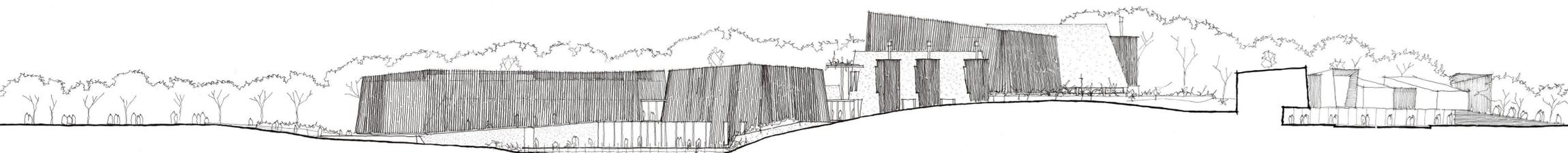
OVERALL SCHEME

- ACCOMMODATION SCHEDULE**
- |                               |                              |                                          |                           |
|-------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1- PUBLIC PLAZA SPACE         | 13- PRIMARY EXHIBITION SPACE | 25- INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE ARCHIVE LIBRARY | 30- WAITING AREA          |
| 2- ENTRANCE LOBBY SPACE       | 14- HEALING GARDEN           | 26- FOOD COURT                           | 31- LECTURE HALL          |
| 3- RECEPTION AND WAITING AREA | 15- GIFT SHOP                | 27- LABORATORY FACILITY                  | 32- CONSULTING ROOM       |
| 4- BOARDROOM                  | 16- CRAFT STUDIO             | 28- OUTDOOR PREPARATION AREA             | 33- EMERGENCY SICK BAY    |
| 5- GREEN PLAN OFFICES         | 17- CRAFT STUDIO STORE ROOM  | 29- NIGHT TRIBAL COURT/HEADQUARTERS      | 34- FOOD STALL            |
| 6- RELATIONS                  | 18- DIGITAL GALLERY          | 30- NIGHT TRIBAL COURT/HEADQUARTERS      | 35- SERVER/CONTROL ROOM   |
| 7- STAFF KITCHEN/LOUNGE SUITE | 19- DOUBLE VOLUME            | 31- NIGHT TRIBAL COURT/HEADQUARTERS      | 36- MATHS STORAGE/DISPLAY |
| 8- MINI BOARDROOM             | 20- RESTAURANT               |                                          |                           |
| 9- EXECUTIVE OFFICE           | 21- RESTAURANT KITCHEN       |                                          |                           |
| 10- FIRE ESCAPE               | 22- STORAGE/SERVICES         |                                          |                           |
| 11- LOBBY                     | 23- BASEMENT PARKING         |                                          |                           |
| 12- OUTDOOR SPACE             | 24- STUDY ROOMS              |                                          |                           |

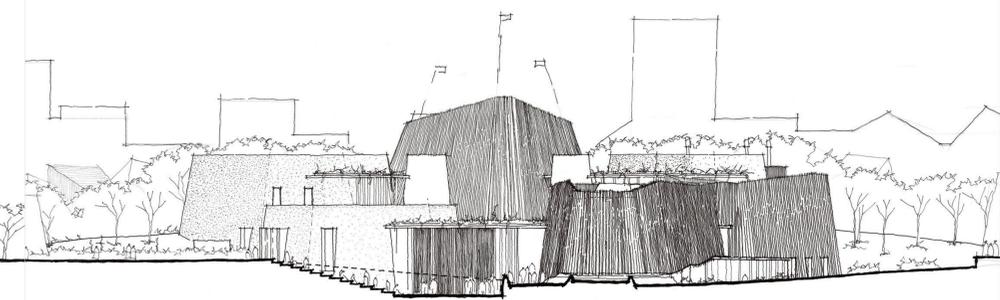
FIRST FLOOR PLAN  
SCALE 1:200



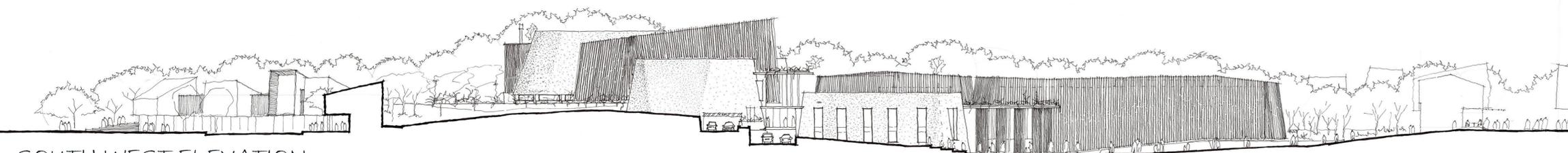
HEALING GARDEN



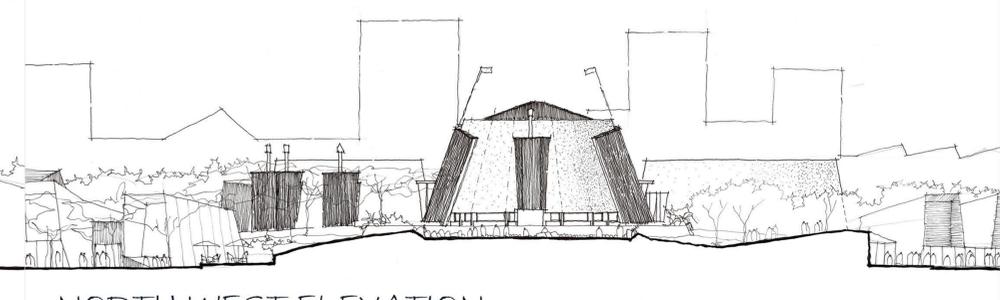
NORTH EAST ELEVATION  
SCALE 1:200



SOUTH EAST ELEVATION  
SCALE 1:200



SOUTH WEST ELEVATION  
SCALE 1:200



NORTH WEST ELEVATION  
SCALE 1:200