CULTURAL IDENTITY AND PHYSICAL PLANNING IN BOTSWANA - CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

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Abstract
Culture as an aspect of human societies is manifested both in tangible and intangible forms. It involves a set of values, beliefs, traditions, rituals and customs defining the society's identity. Tangible manifestations of culture entail how these cultural aspects are portrayed in physical forms. As such culture of a specific group/society can be expressed in the arts, language and the built environment. In the built environment, it is mostly evident in the architecture and space organisation or planning of a settlement. Although Botswana has a rich and diverse culture, settlement planning in Botswana seems to disregard this aspect. Every village's, town's or city's spatial layout is similar. These hegemonic development plans are based on Eurocentric models which seem to totally disregard the cultural identity and urban grain of local communities as expressed in their customs, rituals and practices. Using empirical evidence from settlement development plans from Molepolole, Tlokweng and Mogoditshane, and other guiding documents, this paper argues that current planning and space organisation models fail to adequately embrace the country's rich cultural identity. The paper concludes by suggesting pathways for more culturally sensitive urban planning in Botswana.

Key words*: Cultural Identity; Settlement Planning, Space Organisation, Botswana*

1 INTRODUCTION

Settlement planning in Botswana has experienced major shifts in terms of models that govern and guide space organisation. The changes revolve around two contending space organisation models, namely the indigenous model and modernist model. Indigenous models are in the country's urban villages where they are more pronounced in the oldest and usually central parts of these settlements. For their part, modernist models are found normally on the urban village peripheries and are the most prominently used in the expansion areas of these villages. Of interest to the present paper is how cultural identity is embraced or factored into the two models.

The relationship between cultural identity and space organisation is a widely recognised phenomenon in settlement planning. Space organisation provides the media through which communities imprint their culture and identity as a people (King, 1990; Silva, 2015). Cultural identity has been defined as a society's sense of belonging reflected in the shared values, language, beliefs, traditions, practices and rituals of a society (Diop, 1991; Hauser, n.d.). Settlement planning on the other hand refers to the way functions and land uses are organised in an area for a particular community. "It is the allocation of resources, particularly land, in such a manner as to obtain maximum efficiency, whilst paying heed to the nature of the built environment and the welfare of the community" (Ratcliffe, 1981). Settlements are planned and organised with the objective and hope that they will enhance the lifestyle of the society it is inhabited by. At the root of this objective is the premise that spatial organisation will depict the culture of that community. As affirmed by Silva (2015), "it is an established fact that planning and plans; and by extension architecture should reflect the diversity of values, beliefs, attitudes, institutional frameworks and legal traditions."

The main argument advanced in this paper is that current settlement planning and space organisation models in Botswana do not adequately embrace the country's rich cultural identity. Using case studies from Molepolole, Tlokweng and Mogoditshane, it provides a critical analysis of the interplay between cultural identity and space organisation. It is argued that Southern Theory perspective provides a framework within which planning models that are more culturally sensitive can be developed. The contention is that 'southern theory' offers an opportunity to understand different settlement genres in Botswana and the corresponding, indigenous planning methods rooted in local realities.

The paper is arranged such that following section 1 which is the introduction, section 2 explores the conceptual framework, where the subject of cultural identity and its influence on space organisation and the built environment is examined through a southern theory prism. Drawing from the conceptual framework, the third section discusses how cultural identity is impacted under each one of the two models of settlement planning found in urban villages; while the fourth section explores a discussion of the challenges and opportunities that arise from these models. The final section proffers possibilities for more culturally sensitive settlement designs in Botswana.

2 CULTURAL IDENTITY AND SETTLEMENT PLANNING: A VIEW THROUGH SOUTHERN THEORY PRISM

The relationship between cultural identity and settlement planning can be drawn from Henri Lefebvre's concept of space. Lefebvre distinguishes between conceived, perceived and lived space (Lefebvre, 1991). Conceived space is about how authorities formulate and produce spatial plans and schemes to order and regulate society; perceived space refers to how people experience and utilise space; and finally as lived space it refers to how people use and inhabit space by appropriating it to their everyday needs. Within these different levels, it is important to note that all of them relate to the issue of how society inhabit space, hence the relationship between space and society is interdependent (Haas, 2012). Essentially space is shaped by society, but at the same time society is shaped by the space they inhabit. As aptly captured by Lefebvre, 'space is no longer merely a container for social relations and means of production, but it is also shaping them…" (Haas, 2012).

The foregoing observation is endorsed by Massey who defines "space as the sphere of relations and encounters" (Massey, 2005); and stating that "space is a product of relations…a complexity of networks, links, exchanges, connections, from the intimate level of our daily lives…to the global level of financial corporations" (Massey, 2009). The fact that space is a product of social relations also implies that it is continually evolving as well as always in the process of being made. "Space is always in the process of being made…always under construction…as there are always relations which are still to be made, or unmade, or re-made" (Massey, 2009). King (1990) also states that, "there is always someone who constructs culture, produces space, and makes history". It can therefore, be concluded that space, and in the process place, are not fixed or innate but are rather created and re-created through the actions and meanings of people.

From the foregoing discussion, it can be argued that the production of space is both a social and political task (Massey, 2009). Emergent from this then, is how space can be a political medium to either control society; exert dominance; or suppress some aspects of society. This can manifest in different ways such as spatial segregation on the basis of race, gender, age, etc. (Ruddick, 1996). Ruddick (1996) argues that "the representation of public space is deeply

implicated in the process of othering [creating differences]… it is deeply constitutive of our sense of community – who is allowed in, who is excluded, and what roles should be ascribed to "insiders" and "outsider"" (Ruddick, 1996). The other manifestation of space and power is through formulation and implementation of spatial ideas conceived in the minds of those in power…" (Haas, 2012). This is further echoed by King (1990) who states that space, as articulated in the built environment through forms and shapes of cities, represents the "culture of those with power, those who own and control land, plan grids, determine the distribution of resources, lay down rules and the means to interpret and implement them".

The foregoing discussion shows that in addition to cultural identity, space organisation also depicts the loci of power within any given society. This has significance in relation to space organisation in settlements that experienced colonialism. It has been argued that space organisation and settlement planning in general introduced in the colonies were part of a package with its attendant economic, social and political objectives (Molebatsi & Kalabamu, 2016). These objectives had spatial manifestations that defined the general layout or morphology of colonial cities and settlements. The introduction of the planning values of the metropole in the colonies was also based on the alleged civilizing mission of colonialism. The principle of universalism resulted in the claims that standards were the same everywhere (Natrasony & Alexander, 2005), and that some standards and values represented civilisation and any departure from this reflected backwardness and barbarism. This view has been under tremendous critique of recent. One of the enduring critique of universalism and the civilisation claims of the colonial project is the subject of what has been dubbed Southern Theories (Comaroff & Comaroff, 2012; Connell, 2013). Because of the significance of Southern Theories in proposals given in this paper, it is important to briefly look at the theory.

Southern theory is an emerging theory that challenges the universalism claims in dominant urban thought. At the core of the southern urbanism thought is the view that, instead of universalistic claims, the dominant theories were in actual fact founded on intellectual traditions that developed in the lived experiences of people in the global North. These were now used to understand and even guide policy interventions in populations located in the global South. This universalism has been viewed as inappropriate, inadequate and in most cases denigrating when applied to other cities. Adherents of southern theory draw attention to the fact that Western intellectual traditions and practices had subalternised non-western ways of thinking and forms of knowledge (Molebatsi, 2014). Consequently, there has been a search for theories or perspectives that could provide a wider spectrum on urban theory. "In order to challenge and contest the global pattern of universality there must be an assertion of alternative knowledge systems" (Connell, 2013). The essential argument to note is that "Southern theory is not a fixed set of propositions but a challenge to develop new knowledge projects and new ways of learning with globally expanded resources" (Connell, 2013). These methods of theory production and assertion of multiple and conflicting rationalities is further elaborated by Ananya Roy in arguing for what she called "new geographies of theory" through a discussion of the different geographical areas and various empirical and theoretical structures that underpin how each of these different cities are viewed and conceptualised by authors from those regions. Southern theory is essential for a refocus and critique of dominant models in planning and cautions against the blind and unquestioned acceptance and utilisation of western planning models by planners in the south (Watson, 2009).

Two major issues emerge from the discussion in this section namely the relationship between cultural identity and space organisation / settlement planning. Secondly, settlement planning and space organisation is a political undertaking in that space organisation reflects the power

structures as dominant groups exert their dominance through the organisation of space. Urban planning is important in this regard. This brings to the fore a context in which cultural identity in urban villages can be studied through the two models which coexist in urban villages; and the impact on cultural identity. Drawing from Southern theory the paper identifies the effects on cultural identity (discussed under challenges) and charts a way forward of how inclusive settlement planning approaches can be culturally sensitive. The way forward involves an understanding of the cultural context and the culture-space relationship from an indigenous perception. Colonised spaces within these villages attest to the inappropriateness of adopted models. It has been argued that "cultural resistance to colonisation can be found in the spatial appropriation and maintenance of indigenous spaces" (Low, 2010).

3 SETTLEMENT PLANNING IN BOTSWANA

This section critically analyses how cultural identity is reflected or expressed in Botswana's settlement planning models identified earlier as the indigenous model and the modernist model. The discussion focuses on the following aspects of cultural identity commonly reflected in space organisation – cultural rituals (social gatherings such as weddings, funerals and other traditional ceremonies/gatherings), beliefs, norms and values (social and community relations) and daily practices.

3.1 Indigenous Model

A historicised account of Tswana settlements is central to an understanding and appreciation of space organisation of these settlements. At the initial contact between Tswana polities and the European traders - c. 1801, Tswana polities lived in nucleated settlements (Molebatsi, 1994). Nucleated settlement patterns distinguished the Tswana from other peoples of southern Africa who mostly lived in dispersed settlements. Hardie (1980) would even contend that in Africa as a whole few indigenous settlements would rival the indigenous Tswana urban settlements in terms of size, density and organisation. Attempts at explaining the nucleation in Tswana settlements refer to centralised concept of government that focused on the central office, that of the *Kgosi* which found spatial expression in large, dense urban settlements (Hardie, 1980). The physical layout and social network-based aspect of the model also facilitated and emphasised the socio-political interdependence.

One of the distinguishing factors of these settlements was that unlike similar settlements elsewhere in Africa, the indigenous Tswana urban settlements were not commercial centres, instead, the inhabitants of these settlements were farmers engaged in both arable and pastoral farming (Molebatsi, 1994). Another distinguishing characteristic was the land tenure system used for land allocation. Within this model land was communally owned, and land allocation was controlled and handled by the Chief, assisted by headmen and ward heads (Molebatsi, 1994). It was not allocated on an individual basis, but in blocks of land to the different wards who will then divide it amongst households. It is important to note here that the wards were based on kinship and blood related individuals; and finally there was no restriction on the number of structures within the plot; one was allowed to build several structures within the compound as was needed by the family.

3.1.1 Principles

The physical layout of Tswana settlements was to a large extent a reflection of the socio – political structures that characterised Tswana societies. Tswana polities held a centralised

concept of government that focused on the central office, that of the Kgosi, and found its particular spatial expression in large, dense urban settlements (Hardie, 1980). According to Rev. Mackenzie "in laying out a [Bechuana] town, the first thing is to ascertain where the chief's courtyard with the cattle-pen is to be placed, then everyone located themselves relative to that in order of status until the whole town is laid out" (MacKenzie, 1871). This was further affirmed by Kgosi Kwena Sebele (personal conversation October, 2017) that "the first step was to locate the main kraal, then the chief's homestead would be placed directly opposite but facing the kraal with a big open space (patlelo) in the middle and finally the chief's relatives would locate themselves in order or seniority/lineage on either side of the chief's homestead" (Fig. 1).

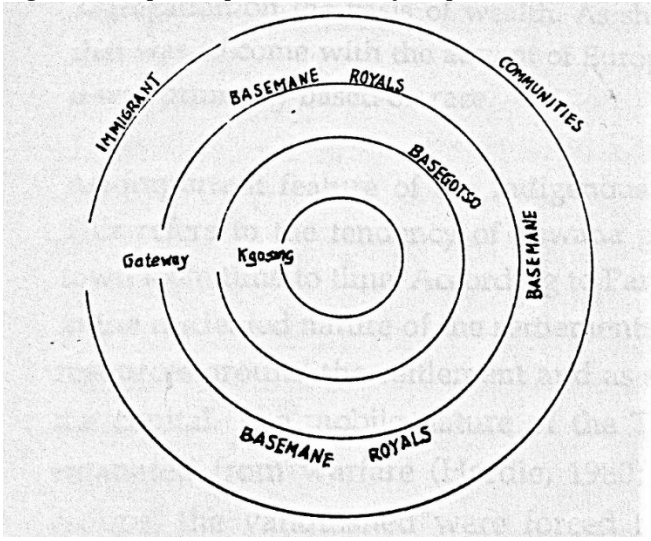
Figure 1: The main kgotla showing the chief's compound opposite the kraal

Source: Lethugile, 2017

Central to the layout of a Tswana town was the ward - the basic political and administrative unit in a Tswana society. According to the model (Fig. 2), at the centre of the town lay the royal wards with the *Kgosi*/Chief's ward (depicted as Kgosing in the diagram) occupying the most central part of the town. After the royal wards came the non-royal or commoners' wards arranged according to the service the groups rendered to the Chief. Closest to the royal wards were those commoners who ran the Chief's errands and "spied" for him (Tlou, 1984) (depicted in the diagram as *Basegotso*). This was followed by the wards of other commoners collectively referred to as *Basimane ba Kgosing*. Commoners were made up of groups of people who had been conquered and successfully incorporated into the Tswana groups. The most peripheral

part of the town was occupied by immigrant groups. Tlou (1974) contends that the general layout of the Tswana town was designed so as to accord maximum protection to the chief.

Figure 2: Graphic depiction of the layout pattern of a Tswana town



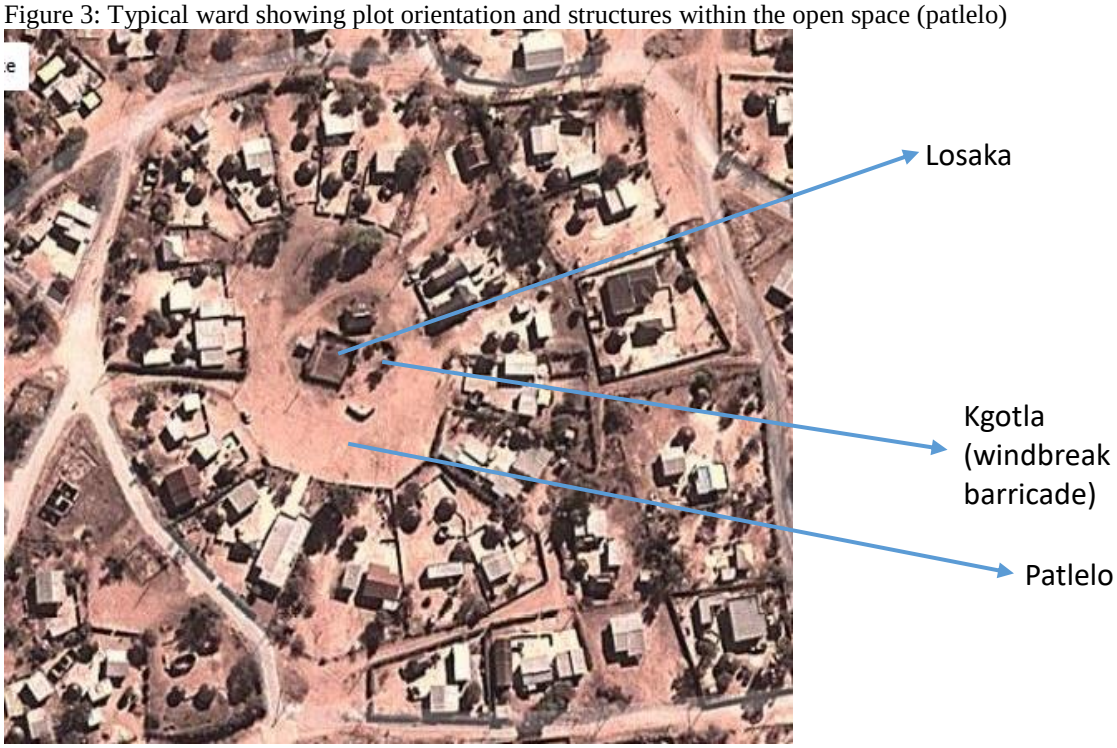
Source: Tlou, 1974

An important element of the Tswana town was that the location of each ward reflected the social and political position of a particular ward's members in relation to royalty. According to Schapera 'the village itself may move from one place to another, but its general plan remains the same throughout'. This means that the members of the ward could seldom choose a site themselves; they should always have the same neighbours, lie in the same direction from the Chief's kgotla no matter where the village happens to be (Hardie, 1980).

3.1.2 Structure, geometry and physical layout

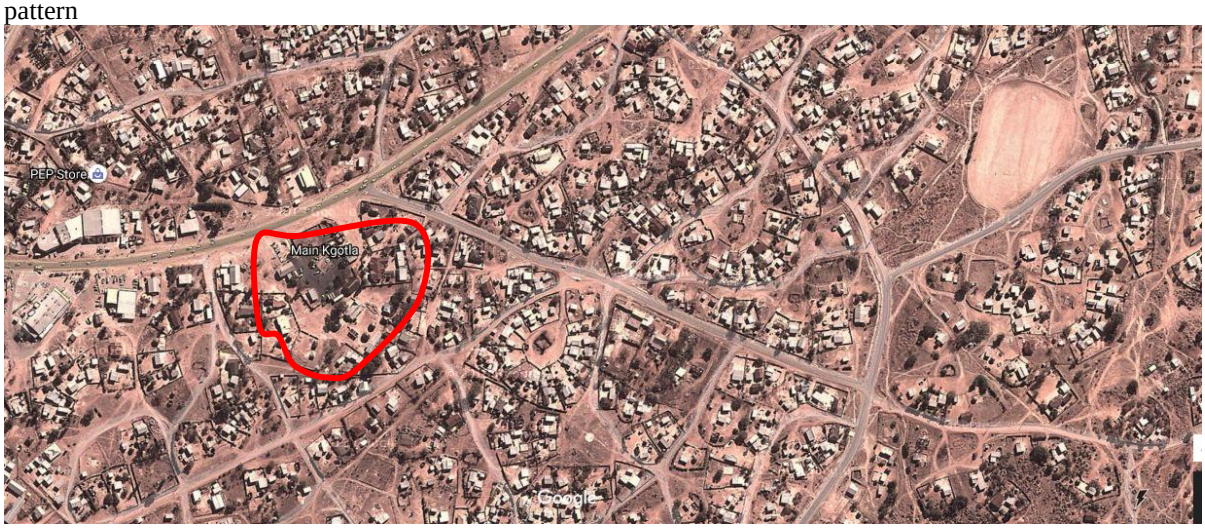
Commenting on the general layout of a typical Tswana town, Hardie (1980) observed that the town was not organized geometrically according to physical elements such as roads, central square etc., but rather its form was generated from the conceptual model of the society following traditional rules and precedence. It should be pointed out that each zone contained a number of wards, and the principle governing the layout of the entire town was also used for the general layout of the ward. Thus individual homesteads or residential plots within each ward were arranged around the Headman's plot. The plot arrangement in each ward adopted the "horse shoe pattern" resulting from a variation of rectangle-derived forms which had shorter front lengths and longer rear lengths in order for each of them to face into the open space known as the *patlelo* (Fig. 3). This was replicated throughout the entire village (Fig. 4). The pattern consisted of adjoined residential plots facing the open space in which was located a *losaka* (cattle-kraal) and the wooden windbreak (kgotla barricade). The *patlelo* served several functions ranging from playground for children, gathering place for ward members during cultural activities like weddings and funerals; as well as traditional games and entertainment activities (songs, poetry, etc.).

Figure 3: Typical ward showing plot orientation and structures within the open space (patlelo)



Source: Adapted from Molepolole maps-streetview, (2017)

Figure 4: Molepolole Village layout showing the main Kgotla and other wards with the prevalent horse-shoe pattern



Source: Molepolole maps-streetview, (2017)

Larsson & Larsson (1992) and Hammami (2012), provide a perceptive interpretation of space organization in Tswana settlements. The authors view the living environment in Tswana settlements as operating through a network of social ties, with each tie having a corresponding physical place in the spatial structure (Hammami, 2012; Larsson & Larsson, 1992). These were identified as the *kgotla, patlelo and lolwapa.* As discussed below, these spaces all embrace different socio-economic and political functions and are locally perceived as nodes for networking cultural allegiances and political commitments (Hammami, 2012). Moreover, these spaces are arranged hierarchically, with the largest at the village level and the smallest found at ward level and sub-ward levels.

3.1.3 Kgotla, patlelo and lolwapa

The foregoing detailed description of the indigenous planning model shows that the way traditional settlements were planned was to facilitate and enhance social interaction as well as the cultural way of life. The analysis has identified three main spaces that form the backbone of these model – *kgotla*, *patlelo* and *lolwapa*. These spaces depict the predominant relationship between everyday cultural activities and the use of space. Each space links indoor and outdoor spaces through values of privacy, function, gender, and age (Hammami, 2012).

The *kgotla*, loosely interpreted as a shared open public space is found at village, ward and sub-ward levels. Structures, found in the *kgotla* are a semi-circular windbreak barricade made from wooden poles and a cattle-kraal (Fig. 3). Both structures are situated within an extensive open space, *patlelo,* which accommodates those attending whatever activities that are taking place at the *kgotla*. As pointed out earlier, *dikgotla* (the plural of *kgotla*) differ in size with the biggest or largest being the main *kgotla* followed by senior wards, and the smallest *dikgotlana* at sub-ward levels. For example, Molepolole has four (4) main *dikgotla* namely, Kgosing, Mokgalo, Tshosa and Ntlhayatlase. Under each of these, there are sub-wards which developed as a result of village expansion. According to Kgosi Kwena Sebele (personal conversation) the sub-wards were allocated according to the next senior male person within the family and would normally be known by his name; and normally developed through population expansion hence the person would be allocated a block of land outside the immediate area but within the village.

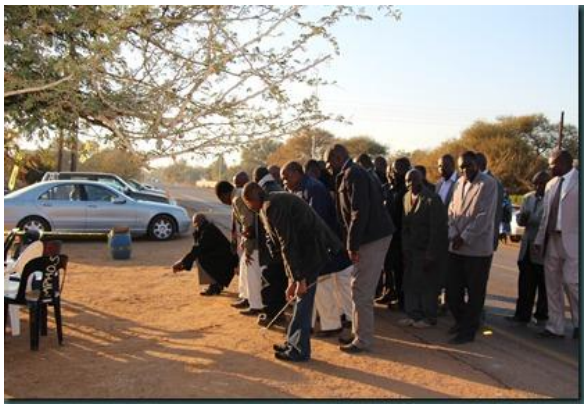
The main *kgotla* served as the main focal point of the village and was presided over by the *Kgosi Kgolo* (Paramount Chief). As depicted in Figure 5, the *Kgosi Kgolo's* residence and administrative offices were located at the main *kgotla*. Because of its centrality, both physically, symbolically and administratively, the main *kgotla* noticeably cemented its place as the main focal point of the village. Social functions that took place at the *kgotla* included any public meetings or gatherings that concerned the whole village and were presided over by the *Kgosi Kgolo*. Cultural activities marking the beginning of the ploughing season; thanks giving for bumper harvests (dikgafela), and registration of *bogadi* / dowry were some of those activities. Attendance for these activities was drawn from the entire village. Administrative functions of the kgotla were replicated at the ward and sub-ward levels under the auspices of the *Kgosana* and ward head respectively.

At ward and sub-ward level the *patlelo* accommodated more diverse social activities that range from public meetings where discussions focused more on issues relating to the ward or sub-ward - local issues, wedding ceremonies, funerals, etc. At ward and sub-ward levels the gender delineation for cultural gatherings in the kgotla was more apparent. For example, the windbreak barricade (sometimes also called *kgotla*) was where men would gather separately from women during *lobola* / dowry negotiations and meetings for funeral arrangements (Figures 6 & 7); whereas women gathered in the *lolwapa* (courtyard). This was also practiced through the choice of burial places for men and women. According to Kgosi Kwena Sebele (personal conversation), men were buried within the *kgotla* while women were buried in the *lolwapa*.

Figure 5: Molepolole main kgotla showing administrative spaces and modern developments

Source: Lethugile, 2017

Figure 6: Lobola-Traditional Wedding negotiations (Men gathered in the kgotlana while Women gather in the Lolwapa)



Source: Lingbeek, *(2017)*

Figure 7: Lobola-Traditional Wedding negotiations concluded by everyone gathering in the lolwapa

Source: Lingbeek, *(2017)*

At compound or residential plot the equivalent of the *patlelo* was the *lolwapa*, the final and most public social space in the hierarchy of spaces in traditional Tswana settlements. It is a courtyard surrounded by low walls which also linked the individual structures within the compound. Being the first point of interaction between family members, the *lolwapa* was vital to the entire progression between the plot and the ward. It allowed for outdoor living, receiving guests, food preparations, family meetings, wedding negotiations etc. In terms of privacy levels, this was the most private social space of the three spatial hierarchies. Due to its semi-private nature, it was used for practices and daily occurrences that concerned only family members and households. Regarding structure and geometry in the compound, structure's/huts were arranged such that they normally faced the same direction, even though they were linked by the *lolwapa*. The geometry of the structures was mainly round-shaped huts with entrances facing the main entrance of the compound and the *patlelo*.

3.1.3 Growth pattern and Inherent Dynamics

Even though this settlement model looks rigid, it still allowed for growth and changes of the settlement. "…the continual movement of the capital allowed for the settlement pattern to be dynamic, accommodating changes in the internal organisation as they became necessary" (Hardie, 1980). Changes within the settlement could be influenced by the appointment of a new kgosi (chief) either through succession or following death of the current chief. The incorporation of immigrants within the settlement was also a factor that influenced changes within the settlement; as well as the death of a senior male within the ward and inheritance of

his social status by the eldest son. Generally changes evoked by these factors could only be rectified by the settlement moving to a new location (Hardie, 1980).

The growth pattern, however, was normally determined by the availability of land for expansion due to population increase. As noted, when wards of commoners became too congested and no land was available for the expansion, rather than the whole ward moving together to the outskirts of the town, a portion of the ward remained at the centre to maintain their presence at the centre and their position of status (Hardie, 1980). The growth was such that the social status of each individual member as well as the geometry and structure of the wards was maintained even on the village's outskirts.

Emergent from this analysis of the indigenous model, is the fact that cultural identity was the main factor that determined space organisation. Cultural identity in the form of daily practices, social norms, principles and values influenced how settlements were planned and spaces organised. Traditional settlements' form and structure recognised the importance of socio-spatial relationships in establishing their villages. Through organising spaces around the three hierarchical levels based on socio-spatial relationships and functions, traditional settlements successfully infused cultural identity in the settlement plans.

3.2 Modernist Planning Model

The previous section dealt with the traditional model of space organisation in Tswana settlements and depicted how they infused cultural identity; this section discusses another model of space organisation, modernist planning, which is also found in Tswana settlements, mostly on the peripheries (new development areas). As practised in Botswana, modernist spatial planning in Botswana is sanctioned by the Town and Country Planning Act 2013. Both this Act and its predecessor, the Town and Country Planning Act 1977 are derived from the British planning system and legislation, more specifically the British Town and Country Planning Act of 1947. In order to better understand the Modernist planning model, it is worth discussing its principles, characteristics and structure.

3.2.1 Principles

This model is based on 3 main principles – specialisation, standardisation and mass production. The three (3) principles established the model as an economic and efficient model as well as the perception that it could solve all of the problems that had arisen out of the industrial revolution. Its evolution was based on the City Efficient movement which perpetuated Le Corbusier's belief that the city was a machine that could be planned the way an engineer plans and designs any machine. "Central to the City Efficient movement is the belief that 'good city planning is not primarily a matter of aesthetics, but of economics'" (Ley, 1989). Hence the development of the 3 principles in order to guide planning of an efficient city. With the principle of specialisation, came the concept and belief that only specialised professionals, planners, could plan the city. The general public was perceived as having no intellectual comprehension of how a city should or could work. "Walter Gropius felt the masses to be too 'intellectually underdeveloped' to consult with his plans for housing, whereas… Le Corbusier was of the opinion that city planning was altogether too important to be left to the masses" (Natrasony & Alexander, 2005). Consequently, the planning of any city was left to the planner as "planners were seen as possessing professional expertise and objectivity" and they are bestowed "an image of the heroic, professionally trained, all knowing and above all 'objective' planner" (Natrasony & Alexander, 2005). This idea of specialisation was also cascaded down

to how the city itself was planned which manifested in the strict zoning and separation of land uses as well as specialised functions for streets – streets became strictly for motor vehicles; and to facilitate the efficient and fast movement of cars they were kept straight and with less intersections. Ultimately every city aspect and area had to have its own specific and dedicated function; land uses could not be mixed.

The principle of mass production also projected the efficient city perception as city elements were seen as elements that could be replicated over large areas. This included city blocks and streets which created a grid-like structure. The easier and quicker a pattern could be replicated, the more efficient the planning and implementation process, or so it was assumed. Hence the prevalence of the grid-pattern within neighbourhoods. The result of a true geometrical layout is repetition…standard…uniformity (Wilkie, 1997). This was further exacerbated by the last principle of standardisation as once a product is standardised for all it can then be produced in large quantities. Society was to be more egalitarian via standardized products produced for all (Ley, 1989). Hence, a series of standardised codes, setbacks, plot ratios, road patterns and principles of open space ratio was developed and used to guide development of new neighbourhoods.

In order to achieve these principles, planning control increasingly became concentrated in planning offices, engineering departments and municipal bureaucracies – individuals answering to political leaders (Wilkie, 1997).

3.2.2 Characteristics and Structure

Just like the indigenous model, the modernist model has its own characteristics that emanated from the 3 principles discussed above. The first discernible feature is the use of standardised grid pattern made up of vehicle-dominated streets and plots grouped into blocks (Fig 8). Generally, the streets were kept relatively straight, wide and long; and laid out at right-angles to each other to facilitate efficient movement for the cars. As a variation and to minimise speeding, slight turns or curves were used as a mitigating factor. The use of dispersed uses and strict land use zoning is another characteristic which is prevalent in the modernist model. The strict separation of work, home, marketplace and social life resulted in single-use central business districts, uniform housing tracts, and dispersed shopping centres and recreational facilities (Natrasony & Alexander, 2005). Consequently, cities and settlements planned in the modernist model end up with no discernible focal centre. The prioritisation and predominance of automobiles as part of the driving force for city design, as well as the strict dedication of the streets to automobiles is another feature of this model. This was facilitated by the reduction of frequent intersections and removal of multi-functionality of the streets. For the modernists, frequent intersections created obstacles to the speedy flow of traffic (Natrasony & Alexander, 2005).

Due to the geometric layout of the streets, public open spaces had to be allocated based on the number of plots within a particular neighbourhood (a specified ratio of plots per public open space). The resultant structure was a dispersal of public open spaces which seemingly have no relationship to the plots/compounds they are supposed to serve (Fig 8). Moreover, due to the need to ensure the development standards are adhered to, this model uses statutory and legal documents to govern development. In terms of structure, the resultant grid/gridiron within the city was made up of specific land use blocks with a series of different size streets. The different land use blocks are differentiated by their size, e.g. within the residential blocks plots are relatively equal and smaller compared to commercial and industrial plots.

Within the residential blocks, plots are grouped together but permeated by a series of relatively different size open spaces located intermittently within walking distance to most plots. However, the open spaces are either located at the end of the block or in the middle of the block, but with no specific relation to the plots surrounding it, aside from close proximity.

Figure 8: New layout of Mogoditshane showing residential blocks punctuated by streets

Source: Mogoditshane Planning Area Development plan

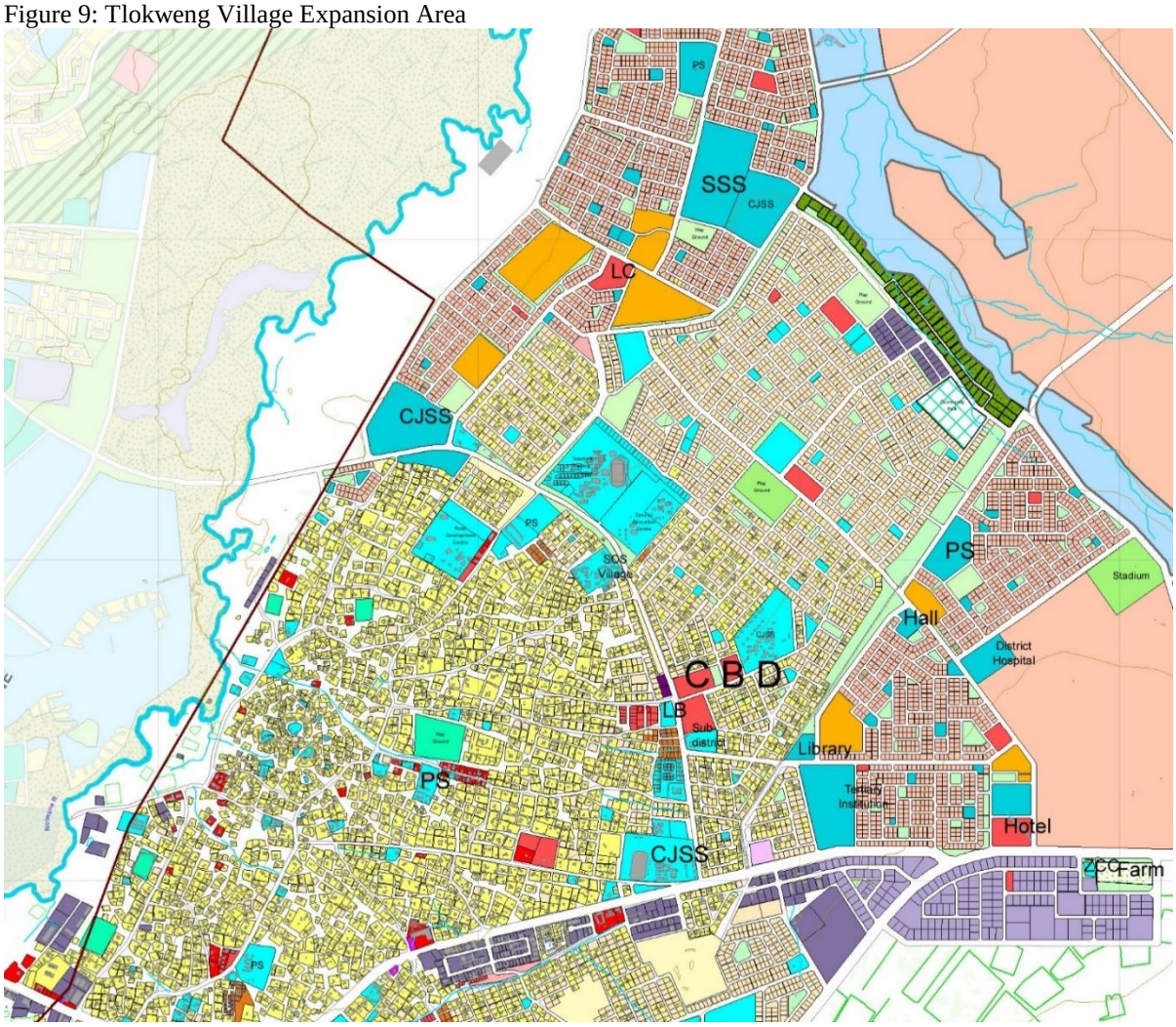
3.2.3 Modernist planning and the planning process in Botswana

As previously stated, spatial planning is controlled by the Town and Country Planning Act of 2013 which replaced the Town and Country Planning Act of 1977. Its main objectives are to regulate and control space organisation, planning and development as well as dictating how the planning process and preparation of space organisation plans (regional and local plans) should be undertaken. This objective is achieved through a clearly set protocol backed by political and administrative institutions. The first step is through bestowing planning and decision-making powers on a politically appointed minister. Within the Act, Part IV Section 15 of the Act empowers the Minister responsible "to declare by order published in the Gazette, areas of land in Botswana to be planning areas" (Molebatsi & Kalabamu, 2016) and further provides for the effecting of the T & CP Act from the date to be set by the minister. The plan is prepared in accordance with the planning and design standards and regulations that provide a detailed interpretation of the Act on how areas should be developed. These range from the Urban Development Standards which target design of an entire settlement; the Development Control Code for regulating development within a plot and Building Control Code which regulates the construction of buildings within plots. These are applicable to all settlements that have been declared planning areas by the minister, hence they are applied uniformly regardless of the differences in locality of the areas to be planned.

Emergent from the Act and its supporting planning and design standards as well as the centralised system which decides on the space organisation model is the subsequent physical layouts of the homogenous plans. Just as the statutory and legislative documents used to guide

space organisation plans, the physical layouts also seem to be adopted from the same British planning system by virtue of the physical resemblance they bear to urban layouts in British towns and cities. The most evident characteristics being the use of the grid/gridiron layout to order land uses (evident at village level, Fig. 9 – top right). Literature shows that this grid layout was inherited from the Roman Empire during its colonisation of the British. Figure 9 also clearly shows the huge contrast between the traditional planning model and the modernist planning model; and the awkward interaction of the two.

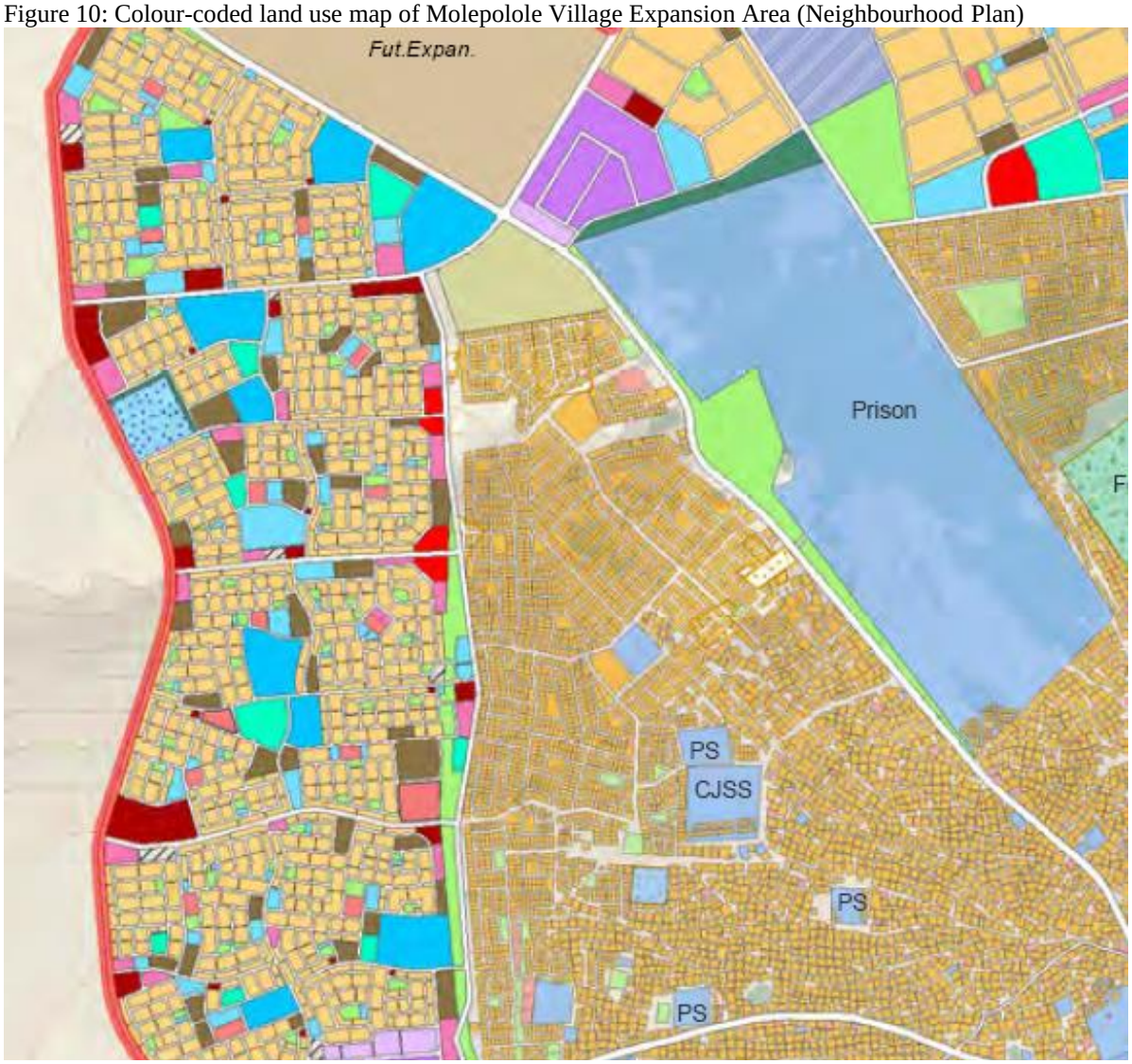
Figure 9: Tlokweng Village Expansion Area



Source: Tlokweng Development Plan

As already discussed, the modernist planning model also emphasises distinctive land use zoning usually dispersed within the settlement (Fig 10). This emphasis results in lack of a centralised civic/ public space and a village or neighbourhood centre as community spaces and functions have been dispersed across the village with huge distances between them; thus lack of a central organising entity for the village. The evident dispersal of public open spaces and lack of relationship between these open spaces and the compounds they are supposed to serve is distinct in Figures 9 and 10. According to the Development Control Code 2013, these spaces are usually allocated strict functions based on size, and multi-functional use is not permitted. The Development Control Code also limits number of structures within a compound at plot level (Figures 11 & 12). Consequently, this results in inadequate and unsuitable spaces for social gatherings within plots, especially if one builds a big structure for the whole family.

Figure 10: Colour-coded land use map of Molepolole Village Expansion Area (Neighbourhood Plan)



Source: Molepolole Development plan (2015-2036)

Figure 11 & 12: Molepolole & Tlokweng Village plot developments, respectively (Plot level)

Source: maps-streetview, (2017)

4 THE CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES OF THE MODELS

The widespread adoption of British-based planning models of space organisation, however, brings with it challenges and conflicts when applied to Tswana villages. First and foremost, these new planning models and layouts result in changes to the settlement form and structure; changes which although seem economically feasible, totally disregard the reality of the context. It is worth reiterating that social activities form part of Tswana cultural identity hence traditional settlements recognized this important socio-spatial relationship as an integral part of space organization. However, modernist planning models contravene these aspects, thereby suppressing the inherent culture, and by extension cultural identity, of these places. Table 1 outlines a comparison between the traditional model and the modernist model of space organisation:

Table 1: Comparison between indigenous and modernist planning models

Indigenous Model	Modernist model
• Horse-shoe pattern	• Grid layout
• Mixed land uses and multi-functional spaces	• Dispersed uses and distinctive land –use zoning
• Major focal centre for the village – the Kgotla (centrality)	• No focal centre for the settlement
• Hierarchical organization of public spaces	• No hierarchy in the organisation of public spaces (usually dispersed)
• Pedestrian-orientated	• Predominance of motorised traffic
• Public open spaces with plot-frontage	• Limited public open spaces with no plot frontage
• Several structures/huts within a plot	• Limited number of structures within plot
• Use of traditional set-up and network of social ties to organise space	• Utilisation of legal documents (planning and design standards) to organise space and govern its usage

The use of grid layouts and distinctive land use zoning that characterises modernist models assumes and encourages predominance of motorized traffic and negates the implied social interaction that is enhanced by a horse-shoe layout. This is tremendously divergent from the mixed land use and pedestrian-dominant models associated with traditional Tswana settlements. These factors constitute subalternisation of the Tswana culture and practice as mixed land use models of traditional villages is deemed non-compliant and unsuitable in areas declared Planning areas, according to the planning and design standards. The standardised grid layouts lack a major focal point and hierarchical organisation of public and community spaces/functions that organise and identify the village the way a traditional Kgotla was used to organise the village structure. This lack of centrality of a major public space, which was a

cultural principle, is another way that cultural identity has been suppressed. Besides the grid system, the land tenure system further disregards the traditional values and principles as plot allocation is no longer based on close relations and plot orientation does not enhance socio-spatial relations of the inhabitants.

With the grid system there are very limited open spaces; and those that exist within the neighbourhood are limited to a few compounds/plots adjacent or connected to them (normally there is about 2-3 plots maximum depending on the location of the open space but with no connection). This approach of incorporating open spaces but not having plots fronting onto them is a major departure from the way public open spaces were designed in the indigenous set-up. Therefore, it renders them unusable as they cannot be used for social gatherings due to lack of plot frontages and connection, resulting in lack of ownership. This further demonstrates how modernist planning principles disregard the socio-spatial relationship and the cultural agency of tribal families. Tswana living environments are traditionally developed through the cultural agency of tribal families, whose social knots form the basis for spatial organization and cultural coherence (Molebatsi, 2014). In the old parts of urban villages, public open spaces are oriented in front of the yards, giving them sense of ownership to the space; therefore during weddings, funerals and other social activities, these spaces become the gathering spaces for such; and an extension of the compounds.

The use of planning and design standards and other legal, strategic and policy documents that govern developments in these areas exacerbate conflicts. These conflicts manifest in different ways, for example, the new By-laws now forbid people to keep small livestock such as chickens within villages once the area is declared a planning area. Any person who does so is deemed to be non-compliant and may be fined. This also arises from the insistence on separation of land use zones as per zoning regulations. This constitutes subalternisation of cultural practices as traditionally mixed land use was the norm. As a way to make a living people then resort to informal trading by setting up a small table with a shade or under a tree and selling small goods. However, this is also considered a violation of the standards as it occurs in an area not zoned for commercial use whereas informal trading is considered commercial.

The use of the Development Control Code based on modernist principles further expresses the cultural repression. The Code limits the number of structures within the plot to about 2 structures. Further, exacerbated by the size of the plot, this results in limited space within the plots as buildings occupy the majority of the space within the plot. This creates conflict during large social and family gatherings such as weddings and funerals as people end up spilling over into the adjoining plots and the street. The cultural practice of gender delineation during these social gatherings is also subalternised as the community (especially men) end up improvising by constructing a semblance of the windbreak barricade, *kgotlana*, at the front of the yard (on the street) to accommodate cultural requirements; or sometimes holding the lobola discussions on the street. As Hammami asserts “other space-related values like privacy, gender, and age are essentially undermined by modernist layouts” (Hammami, 2012). With the use of modernist planning systems, there is also a call for the removal of the traditional windbreak barricade and the kraal or *losaka* that is usually found in the *patlelo*. As was made evident in the previous discussion, these played (and still play) a critical role during cultural activities and gatherings. Thus by calling for their removal, the modernist system attempts to erode part of the culture of these villages.

4.1 Challenges

The use of modernist planning models has not only brought changes to the settlement form and structure, there are also challenges that have emerged from their utilisation. The top-down and prescriptive approach of the modernist model further exacerbates these challenges as it fails to recognise and appreciate the context within which it is being applied and the cultural variety. One of the challenges lies in what is generally considered violations of the legal requirements, planning standards and regulations. Of these, the most common include continued rearing of small livestock and prevalence of informal trading in areas not designated for such. This contravenes the distinctive land use zoning regulations, according to the planning authorities. Lack of awareness and knowledge of the requirements for planning and building permission (and sometimes the unaffordability of such) contributes to more violations as villagers are used to being able to commence and complete construction of their houses without having to seek permission, something that the indigenous model recognised. Others still continue to erect more than one structure within their plots.

Another challenge is the inadequate space for cultural rituals and practices such as weddings, funerals, etc., resulting from the rigid grid layout as well as insufficient and inappropriate/misplaced public open spaces. This results in these activities being undertaken in the streets; thus inadvertently closing the streets. Albeit temporary, this is still an inconvenience. Moreover, this causes conflicts in the use of space; and compromises the way cultural activities are carried out. For example, the gender delineations and privacy requirements that are traditionally inherent with weddings and funerals are compromised as they often occur in the open street.

4.2 Opportunities

Although these modernist models seem to bring about a lot of challenges, there are opportunities that can be learnt by drawing from southern theories and the indigenous model. One of these is by learning from and acknowledging how the society has appropriated these spaces to their needs and daily lives; as well as understanding the successes of the indigenous model in incorporating cultural identity. Instead of viewing these space appropriation actions as violations, they should be viewed as learning curves of developing new hybrid models of space organisation – models that will be suitable for the Tswana settlements. For example, the mixed land use and multi-functional use of spaces such as the patlelo as well as location of informal trading. Rather than a top-down approach, these promise a participatory and inclusive planning model that seeks co-production with residents who know their context.

There is also need to acknowledge that cultural aspects, especially social gatherings, activities and rituals such as weddings, funerals, etc., and the value Batswana place on these, are an inherent part of Tswana cultural identity; therefore they should be planned for. These should be accommodated for when developing and designing settlements. An in-depth study of how people are appropriating the spaces allocated; and their response to new planning models will also provide a template of how new areas can be planned and developed to successfully infuse cultural identity. The continued persistence of mixed land-use practice within Tswana villages (even those declared planning areas) also demonstrates the importance of this practice in Tswana cultural identity; hence lessons can be drawn from these and appropriate models developed.

5 CONCLUSION

Cultural identity and a sense of place is one factor that should not be taken for granted when it comes to settlement planning. Worldwide, planning systems have been continuously transforming and evolving from a purely centralized top-down to one with bottom-up elements. However, the reverse could be said for Botswana. The government's system of spatial planning that was formulated brought structural changes to the traditional way of settlement and urban planning making the system to remain central under the Ministry of Land Management, Water and Sanitation Services. Moreover, the new system's use of modernist model with its top-down and centralised approach means there is minimal contact with people who are actually affected by these plans. The result is then an inappropriate plan that totally ignores and subalternise the context within which it is implanted, as has been discussed in this paper. When these models were applied and their plans conceived, minimal focus was made on the cultural context of local areas and their ways of planning; hence culture was not made a priority as it is evident in the case study used in this paper - Molepolole. There was no attempt to look beyond the provision of basic infrastructure and services and no consideration for the cultural distinctiveness which could inform built form and space organisation.

Although Botswana has a rich and diverse culture, settlement planning in Botswana seems to disregard this aspect. Every village's, town's or city's development plan and planning layout is similar. These hegemonic development plans are based on current planning systems which are those based upon Eurocentric models. The models seem to totally disregard the cultural identity and urban grain of local communities as expressed in their customs, rituals and practices. These seemingly homogenous plans that are implemented are totally divorced from the way traditional Tswana villages were planned; and from the culture of the people; consequently, they tend to bring conflict when introduced to Tswana villages as they negate the cultural aspects/identities of Tswana towns and villages, as discussed in the paper.

It is evident in the old areas of traditional villages that space organisation and culture were intertwined; both in terms of hierarchy, activities and other cultural practices and beliefs. One could easily see distinctions of hierarchy at political, spatial, social and community levels. This distinction allowed different cultural activities to take place based on these different hierarchical levels and gave traditional settlements a definite pattern. With this merging of culture into settlement planning, it gave the traditional settlements a more defined pattern related to culture and gave the place a sense of character and identity. However, with today's prevalent modern urban planning models, the relationship between cultural activities and space is contested. A lot of conflicts have arisen resulting from some cultural practices being deemed non-compliant as they are not allowed in some areas.

Through Southern Theory, it is evident that there is need for a balanced urban theory that recognises the significance of the uniqueness of these different rationalities. Current planning models subalternise and denigrate the cultural practices which give Tswana villages their identity; whereas indigenous planning models were more culturally sensitive to the culture of these areas. Instead of imposing modernist planning methods, there should be exploration of the issue of Cultural Identity, sense of place, culture, social norms, principles and values and how all these can influence settlement planning in Botswana to develop a model that celebrates the country's cultural identity. This calls for research that explores this issue extensively; explores traditional settlements – their deep structure, form, principles and traditions. The research needs to involve all stakeholders involved with spatial planning. As Molebatsi (2014) succinctly stated "Through dialoguing with traditional leadership, VDCs, Land Boards, business community and others involved in the transformation of urban villages, it is possible that more accommodative and inclusive planning models could be formulated for urban

villages". Moreover, there is need for a critical review into the top-down approach of planning traditional settlements as well as how culture is viewed in the context of Botswana.

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