



# **REDISCOVERING INDIAN IDENTITY THROUGH BUILT FORM IN DURBAN:**

A Memory Centre for Indian Culture

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# Abstract

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This research aims to investigate the means and method of rediscovering the Identity of Indians in South Africa. It seems that in times of change, where people are now located in different parts of South Africa as opposed to before, the identities of people are being re-assessed and progressing in the new places they belong to. Cultural memory is therefore investigated to find the means in which societies can remember and rediscover their once cherished identities. Place and time form a major part of the identities of people. This is looked at in relation to memory and architecture and how these links work together. This research aims, through the use of architecture and memory to locate the necessary theories, ideologies and tools to rediscover the Indian identity in Durban.

# Declaration

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I declare that this dissertation is my own, unaided work and carried out exclusively by me under the supervision of Mrs Bridget Horner. It is being submitted for the degree of Master in Architecture at the University of KwaZulu-Natal. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination in any other University.

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Nischolan Pillay

13<sup>th</sup> of March 2014



*Figure 1: Roster of Arrivals/Indentured Labour in South Africa who were identified by their numbers only.*



# Dedication

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***Dedicated to the Indentured Labourers of Natal  
1860-1911.***

# Acknowledgements

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## ***Matha Pitha Guru Deivam***

### ***Mother Father Teacher God***

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- **Appendix B:** Transcripts from Interviews conducted

# Abbreviations

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Abbreviations not applicable in this document.

# ***Part 1:***

# ***Chapter 1:***

## ***Introduction***

# **1. Introduction:**

## **1.1 Background Statement**

The History of Indian Immigrants to South Africa began in the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries. During the 1600's the Dutch Colony of the Cape Imported slave labour from India. These slaves arrived on Dutch Ships at the Cape and were captured or sold in bondage. They originated from Bengal, Bihar and Malabar or Coromandel Coasts; however records of them are unseen because they merged with the Malay community of the Cape (A 150-year African Indian Odyssey, 2010). On 16 November 1860, the first set of Indentured labourers arrived at the Port of Natal. This was a part of South African history that set it onto a new trajectory, with an introduction of a new group of people. With the influx of Indentured labourers, the country saw a new type of slavery take place. The conditions were harsh but the community remained strong and affluent in their rights and culture (Vahed, 2010b). There has been a passing down of knowledge but it slowly loses its vigour and authenticity as time progresses. An African proverb says, "When an elder dies a library burns" (Steven, 2001). This statement reaffirms what is currently happening within cultures globally.

Today religion, culture and tradition are celebrated in the same way amongst Indians as it was 150 years ago when they first arrived in South Africa. However this culture has grown and adapted to the context in which it takes place making it complex and leaving it with a host of different needs. The modern Indian now has a dual identity; one is of the South African individual who adapts to western culture and modern living and the second being very strong is the Indian culture that has been passed down by generations before them. This conflict in cultures has created a break in identity of the group as a whole. The strength of culture has been stripped and is slowly losing its identity in society. It is noted that a contributor to this loss in identity is lack of teaching and learning of cultural beliefs, traditions and a place in which this can occur (Vahed, 2010a). One could argue that through time Indian families have become westernized and extended families are on the decrease. Culture and Identity is closely linked to memory, memory is on the decrease and has a direct effect on culture and passing of traditions. This suggests that the current memory in which cultures remember beliefs, values, traditions etc. should be preserved. If something is to be preserved a whole host

of knowledge has to be gathered, the information has to then be stored or shared from a location that is accessible to interested parties.

It is now evident that a suitable architecture be applied to house this information and commemorate these memories. However in South Africa, a multi-cultural society, one has to take into consideration the location for such a Building. Another consideration would be if it is suitable and responds well to the context. Over and above the above mentioned considerations, the architecture should represent its use and also conform to the new trends of building. Just as how identities change and adapt, so too must architecture.

Indians arrived in South Africa in 1860 via sea on the S.O.S Truro from Madras, India shortly followed by the Belvedere from Calcutta, India. "They were transported as indentured labourers to work on the sugarcane plantations of Natal Colony, and, in total, approximately 150 000 Indians arrived as indentured labourers over a period of 5 decades" (Hub Pages, 2010). They made their home in South Africa, even with the struggles of Indenture. Apart from the struggles faced every day when they reached South Africa, The living conditions and treatments on the journey were questionable. Women were abused and raped on the ship by seamen. Men were assaulted if they did not comply with orders, food was docked for unruly behaviour and a whole host of other wrongs (Vahed A. D., 2010). Ashwin Desai portrays the hardships and struggles of the Indentured in his book titled Inside Indian Indenture. He describes the many wrongs that were imposed on Indians. This starts giving a clue of the loss in culture and identity, for example the partaking in eating meat by Hindu's (Vahed, 2010b). Most importantly, Indians followed a "Caste" system in India which did not permit inter mingling of people from different castes. Although to modern day Man, this seems like an absurd ideology of separating classes of people by wealth, surname, religion, language and in some cases region and job titles (Vahed, 2010b). The caste system also instilled values into different classes, the highest caste being the Brahmin and lowest being the Peasant. The Brahmin was a man of God, usually vegetarian and a person who performs Hindu rituals. A good number of Brahmins had left India for indenture in South Africa and a better life, although being of such high stature, the Brahmin caste was forced to mix with lower castes, sleep beside them and even partake in eating meat. This occurrence



clearly shows that no matter who they were in India, their Identities were left behind and they were all treated the same. This is one example but there are many more examples of loss in culture. Even before Indians settled in South Africa, culture had started to get lost. Colonialism in India is where the issue of loss in culture started, but continued intensely after indenture.

Some were promised a better life, some were deluded into indenture, some were desperate for a better life, some prospered and some lived in poverty, but many just endured the perils of indenture. Many, far too many took their lives, many returned home to India only to find that what they had was no longer there. Many were not welcomed back because of crossing the caste barrier and for most of them, economically unviable. The following poem gives an idea of the unjust and unfair system that was put towards the Indentured labourers.

Walker there is no path.  
You make the path by going  
And on looking back,  
You see steps you will never retrace,  
Walker there is no path,  
Only trails in the ocean.

**Machado Antonio** (Vahed, 2010).

The indentured, even with life's challenges still became successful. They collaborated with one another and made strives forward. Their ever willingness to work hard and succeed has been an instilled value in all Indian homes. This is a part of the cultural identity that is slowly fading away, hard work for some is instilled and important, however even this cultural element is slowly losing itself.

The main question to be asked is how can this cultural identity be rediscovered? What can be done to remind Indians of where they have come from and how important their cultural Identity is? A Memory Centre is the proposed built form, it will seek to house activities which can strengthen the already instilled values and remind Indians of their forefathers that fought in the struggle to be successful and gain independence, thus depicting cultural identity.

This Memory Centre will also celebrate the success of Indians in South Africa over the past 154 years; it is to commemorate an event that has changed life for Indians that arrived from 1860 onwards. It will take into account architectural theories to inform the design and give it true meaning. Many designs of the similar typology will be explored to learn how they have been successful in creating good architecture. This research aims to improve the existing cultural identity of South African Indians and to strengthen the already existing culture, a place to identify with and be proud of.

## **1.2 Motivation**

The re-discovery of the Indian South African Identity is the task at hand. South African Indians have created an identity in Durban and this is easily seen and observed. Today culture in South Africa is influenced by western ideals, shopping centres are the hotspot and people frequent these places because it is easily accessible and allows one to enjoy themselves without practicality or learning in mind. The Indian identity is full of great value, tradition and culture and this needs further reinforcement to show the rigour of its existence in South Africa. A main contributor to this decline in identity is the decline in memory. Memory serves to place identity in a framework of society. With regaining identity, the group as a whole becomes more powerful and their ideals, values, traditions, languages etc. become more prevalent amongst the societies in which they exist.

Another main contributor to this decline in identity is lack of character of a place or a sense of placelessness because of the trend of internationalism(Frampton, 1983). This is fast becoming the way in which the urban landscape is being formed. Communities are now being driven by shopping malls and convenience stores that work on profit generation rather than a place to help people live better. Architecture should be built with local traditions but follow international trends (Frampton, 1983). This architecture needs to address the needs of communities and societies in which they take place. A society where this is possible, can partake and contribute to the urban fabric. The way in which this problem can be tackled is through an intervention which can use collective memory as a tool to support the identity and culture of a group.

## **1.3 Definition of the problem, aims and objectives**

### **1.3.1 Definition of the Problem**

The problem this research focuses on is the decline of Indian identity in South Africa. The manner in which life is conducted is influenced by tradition, culture, values etc. Loss of identity is evident and is mainly influenced by the west. The old traditional values and traditions take a back seat and need to be reinstated. This affects the built environment on a global scale. By addressing the values and traditions our forefathers have left behind architecture can be responsive to others in society without undermining or infringing on their culture or compromising their comfort and identity. With this said, globalization plays an important role when it comes to identity. Because of the rush to rich's occurs identity is lost. Traditional architecture is not looked at, as it is not modern or has not evolved enough to support modern principles. With the two main separations in South African Indians being culture of Indians and culture of South Africans, Indian culture remains strong but is influenced by modern living. The question to be asked is how a suitable architectural response can link together the two cultures but rediscover the identity of a group of individuals whilst strengthening the overall cultural diversity of our city.

### **1.3.2 Aims**

The aim of the research is to find possible answers for the decline of the traditional identity of Indian South Africans, a few key points will be analysed:

- Collective and cultural memory and its relevance in the pool of Indian Cultural knowledge.
- Examining the relationship between recollection of cultural memory and Identity. What are the conditions for this collective memory to occur?
- Analysing the phenomenon of recollection of the past in commemoration and the value of this commemoration and recollection.

### **1.3.3 Objectives**

- To establish architecture as a tool to enhancing the well-being and lives of Indians through the design of environments that celebrate their heritage.
- To create a clear understanding of how cultural and social issues have an influence on the built environment through the collection of data research,

existing architectural projects and the analysis of principles and theories related to the topic.

- To bring awareness to architects and urban designers on the impact their designs have on the social, physical, emotional and spiritual bodies of the Indian community of today.

## **1.4 Scope of the Study**

### **1.4.1 Delimitation of the Research Problem**

This research will explore Indian Identity as a whole in Durban. This approach is being taken as Indian identity changes from place to place, but certain broader principles remain. The problem the proposal deals with is the sense of placelessness caused by rapid urbanization and effects on culture and identity for the people that use the city. South Africa is rich in diversity and the people are proud of this fact. The research aims to rediscover this identity by the use of built form.

The proposal will not in any way try to redefine culture, rather rediscover it and strengthen its identity. The research will examine the rich history and age old traditions of Indians and utilize these concepts in an urban framework. This will assist in establishing an identity for the Indian Identity in South Africa, therefore providing a positive impact on the society of the country as a whole.

### **1.4.2 Definition of Terms**

#### **a) *Tradition:***

Traditions can be the customs or beliefs passed on from one generation to the next by oral tradition, the use of artwork or pictures etc. Traditions can be created by religious practices, or even by social interaction (Vahed, 2010).

#### **b) *Culture:***

On a large scale, culture can be defined as the activities in subjects such as art and literature. On a more personal scale, culture is the logic behind how people live and the manner in which they do things. Culture is an element that is in constant evolution and can be affected by external aspects such as politics, economics and religion (Vahed, 2010).

#### **c) *Placelessness:***

Placelessness refers to the lack of a sense of place or character that is often found in the urban centres across the world. Often many urban centres today have a

homogenous character that is largely due to the rapid push towards urbanization and globalization (Schulz, 1980).

**d) *Identity:***

Identity is the obvious expression of character and opinion. Identity can be affirmed by the reflection of one's beliefs in a group of individuals of similar beliefs (Vahed, 2010).

**e) *Cultural Memory:***

Memory is a process where information is encoded, stored and retrieved. Cultural memory being a process in which one's culture is celebrated, observed or manifests in a society due to the collective memory of that society.

**f) *Indenture:***

Indenture is a system between bond issuer and bond holder which an agreement is adhered to in exchange for money and work. This system was said to be the new form of slavery in essence (Vahed, 2010).

**g) *Mnemonic:***

Mnemonic is a term given to a method in which a method of memory can be used for better retention of memory. Initially it was a technique in using objects, pictures and other physical objects to link to certain things to remember and memorize. With this the built form became a crucial part in the creating of a cognitive map in which these memories take place, both physically and mentally (Parker, 1997).

### **1.4.3 Stating the Assumptions**

The assumption is that Identity is instilled in everyone in some way or the other. It is also a unifying element that is important globally. Identity is significant as it carries one through the daily activities and interactions between people. It is important to create an understanding of identity as this is a base for reinvention and reinterpretation in the contemporary world. This will create an environment that is rich in content and valid in the context.

### **1.4.4 Key Questions**

The following questions need to be asked in order to fully comprehend the issues that

The proposal will look to attend to.

- What is Indian Cultural identity?
- How can Cultural identity aid in the development of social change?
- Why is it important that Cultural identity be used as a tool to enhance Architecture?

#### **1.4.5 Hypothesis**

It is of great importance that identity is acknowledged and understood in South Africa and the World. Learning the lesson from the forefathers of South Africa can teach us valuable lessons than can be applied to all walks of life. The utilization of these fundamentals can link traditional culture to contemporary culture. Meanings that are strong and vibrant have to be implemented into the urban fabric to counteract globalization. The richness of a rediscovered identity will stimulate a more socially interactive society which in turn will create a stronger, unified and more understanding society.

### **1.5 Concepts and theories**

#### **1.5.1 The Indian Identity and Cultural Memory:**

Memory has a significant influence on culture and identity in any society today. The way we perceive space and experience events are a true testament of a memory that has occurred, telling one to do things in a certain way. Many authors have debated the topic and have come to conclusions on how collective memory influences identity of people in place at a certain time. The concept Collective memory was first academically discussed by Emile Durkheim and his understudy Maurice Halbwachs in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. It was ascertained that collective memory is a flexible connection between past and present. The academic Egyptologist Jan Assman suggested that collective memory is based on a society's collective understanding in a particular context which relates them to the past (Assmann & Czaplicka, 1995). This theory will be used as it is an important tool to recall memories in the Durban context. By this occurring it will further reinforce the identity of the Indian community as a whole due to memory being exercised in practice of cultural events. It is also argued that there are two types of memory, collected and collective. Collected being memory of an individual and collective being that of a group. Both types will be used in this research as individual experiences form part of the larger network of collective memory. Memory through built form will be used as a catalyst in rediscovering the Indian identity in Durban.

#### **1.5.2 The Architectonics of Memory:**

The methods in which one navigates through built form and the manner in which societies form is mainly based on a spatial cognitive map that individuals and collectives create in their minds(Parker, 1997). There are many methods in which one realizes and

perceives the built form. The aim of this chapter is to investigate the methods of memory. Memory in the built form is a crucial tool in order to navigate, remember and continue. The built form is said to a manifestation of memory physically (Parker, 1997). The methods discussed under this chapter will include Mnemotechnics and the method of Loci, The Stock of Knowledge and Cognition. These methods are the most common and relate memory and the built environment. According to Parker, memory and architecture have similarities in that both are involved with the construction of large scale, stable environments which humans find personally relevant. This theory is termed Architectonics of memory as it is a poetic construct of methods that create a cognitive map of memory for the human mind(Parker, 1997).

### **1.5.3 Critical Regionalism:**

Critical Regionalism was introduced about 30 years ago to shift the focus of the postmodern debate. The Critical Regionalism theory was used to signify an approach to design that was marked by the identity of a particular dogma rather than a universal system. It was made in each local place according to local customs, with local materials and local knowledge but following international standards. By applying the local way of building using local materials and knowledge but by keeping an international standard in design that conforms to the modern day universal system. Critical regionalism can be linked to nature directly, it informs design to take heed of nature and this is what makes this theory particularly special. Critical regionalism also speaks about how one can be sensitive in design for example site excavations. Critical regionalism also emphasizes a tactile design that evokes the senses through other senses rather than just the visual. This approach is taken to engage the user in the building to experience the structure with all senses. Another approach critical regionalism takes is one that creates a poetic composition of structure. This is termed tectonics. According to Frampton, if the all the sense are not present, the tectonics or poetics of architecture is lost(Frampton, 1983).

### **1.5.4 Conclusion to theories and concepts:**

The above mentioned theories are chosen in order to form a theoretical framework for the design of a building. The theories will also form a base of knowledge to better understand the research. Collective memory and identity formation will be used to gain a knowledge on the social aspects of identity and memory, this is a crucial theory as it emphasizes the need for memory in forming an identity. The performance of cultural memory will also be looked at as it can be beneficial in the formation or continuity of a

cultural identity. The methods of memory will be investigated further as this forms a link between architecture and memory. This has been identified in need to understand the importance of memory in architecture. With a society creating the built form in which it exists, a type of architecture and environment is created in which that society can relate to. The last theory that will be visited is the theory of critical regionalism. In order for a certain society to define itself within a global platform, it must first adhere to the global phenomenon but more importantly showcase the special attributes that make it special in the context in which it takes place. This format is used as it links social and architectural theories to reinforce a common thread between them, being an identity for the people who exist in a certain context in a certain time.

### **1.6 Thesis Structure:**

This research is structured into eight chapters. The first chapter is an introduction into the research outlining the background and methods of research that are employed in this research. The 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> chapters consist of the literature review. Chapter two involves the works of South African authors that have written on the topics of the Indian Identity in South Africa, it also consists of author that have written about Collective memory and cultural memory. Chapter three consists of literature written on the Architectonics of memory, this is a connection chapter between the social aspects of architecture and pure architectural theory. The fourth chapter introduces a pure architectural theory critical regionalism. Authors such as Kenneth Frampton, Alexander Tzonis and Liane Lefaivre will be looked at to form a base for an architectural theoretical framework. The fourth chapter will look at precedent studies from abroad and one local example, these are fine works chosen as they have a link with the architectural theories in the literature review. The fifth chapter will consist of a case study of a local building according to an architectural and social guideline. This is done to investigate what is being done locally with regards to architectural style and the social aspects of the building in it environment. Chapter six is an analysis of data collected from interviews. This will link with the literature review and be compared with to prove the hypothesis. Chapter 7 will contain the conclusion and recommendations for the research. The eighth chapter will contain the bibliography and appendices for the research.



## **1.7 Research methods:**

### **1.7.1 Introduction**

The research is an exploratory and qualitative one, this is employed to investigate the current Indian identity in South Africa and form a basis of rediscovering this identity taking into cognisance the built form. The methods of research in this dissertation are divided into primary and secondary research. The primary data was collected from a local case study and in-depth interviews. This research was used to develop a deeper understanding through first-hand experience. The secondary data was collected in the form of a literature review and precedent studies to explore the current body of knowledge. In the secondary data theoretical and conceptual frameworks of identity, memory, methods of memory and critical regionalism will be explored, the precedent studies will focus on buildings that currently relate to these theories. Both methods aim to find a coalition between identity, memory and the built form.

### **1.7.2 Research Methods**

#### **Primary data:**

##### **Case studies:**

The Case study will be a physical observation of a local building that promotes culture and identity of people in a specific location. An analysis will be carried out to investigate how people use the facility and if the facility is useful in promoting an identity for the people of that area. The case study also aims to investigate the architectural approaches employed to design a facility that allows for public interaction. The architectural design will be compared against the literature review to form an understanding of social and architectural aspects of the research.

##### **Interviews:**

Thorough interviews will be carried out in order to form a deeper understanding of the research problem. These interviews will take place in Durban. The interviewees will be selected in terms of knowledge of the Indian identity in Durban. This approach is taken as the interviewees must have a working knowledge of the Indian identity in order to form a clear understanding of the research problem. 3-4 Interviews will be done, each one lasting about 30 minutes with focused questions. The interviews will be transcribed and a data analysis performed by the researcher.

## **Secondary data:**

### **Literature Review:**

The literature review will analyse and discuss the current body of knowledge on the research topic. Published references such as books, journals and newspaper articles etc. will be looked at as well as unpublished references such as websites and theses. The relevant references will provide an understanding into Identity in general, the Indian South African identity, memory, methods of memory and architecture in order to form a solid understanding of the research topic.

### **Precedent studies:**

Precedent studies will be looked at to analyse the existing built environment and the approach taken to create meaningful architecture. The buildings selected are of relevance to the research, including buildings that employ memory and show a fine example of critical architecture according to the place in which it exists. The precedents will be investigated further to ascertain methods other architects have used to create buildings that respond to people and allow this interaction to take place.

### **1.7.3 Research Materials**

- An Interview will be carried out that includes a formal set of questions directed at the interviewee. These questions are structured in order to give a better understanding of the points highlighted in this research.
- Informal interviews will be carried out at the case study to investigate how people use the building.
- Photographic evidence will be used by the author to analyse the case study.

### **1.7.4 Conclusion**

The analysis of the data provided from both primary and secondary research method can be used to deduce the answers to many problems the proposal puts forward. It can also give clues to how the environment became this way, what was the designer's thoughts and theories and how people use space and accustom themselves to it. The questionnaire will assist in drawing conclusions to create a facility that promotes the revitalization of culture through built form.

***Chapter 2:***  
***The Indian Identity and Cultural***  
***Memory.***

## 2.0 Introduction

Key authors of this research include Assman, Eyerman, Speck, Rapoport, and Cohen in the fields of Collective memory, Cultural Memory, Memory in Architectural spaces and Diaspora. This chapter of the research will also include South African Authors such as Goolam Vahed, Ashwin Desai, Dhupelia-Meshtrie, Brij Maharaj and a host of others in the field of Indian Identity in South Africa, History of Indians in South Africa and the Performance of Culture. Authors will be introduced in a manner that is suitable to the topic being discussed.

South Africa is relatively new to the concept of democracy but has handled it extremely well with regards to cultural diversity and accepting of the multitude of races presently residing in the country (Online, 2014). This dissertation aims to investigate the Identity of South African Indians and the impacts of their culture on the built environment. It also aims to establish what is suitable in the 21<sup>st</sup> century for this particular group and how their identity can be rediscovered through means of a Memory centre for Indian culture.

Since Indenture, Indians have been perceived as homogenous group. Since then, one recognises that the Identity of Indians was perceived just as a number. (Refer to figure 1) The Indian South Africans have had many labels put towards them such as; Arabs, Coolies, Girmityas and Calcutta men. It is in these names, one can see how the complex identity of Indian South Africans gets lost. It was only in 1961 that the Apartheid government recognised Indian South Africans as a permanent part of the population of South Africa (Southley.N, 2001). However, Some Indians stress their Identity and reason with being known but the 1970's saw Indian students joining the black consciousness movement and affirmed themselves being black (Dhupelia-Mesthrie.U, 2000). The question is always asked "Who are we", "What is so special about us?" It is argued by Govinden (2008), presently in South Africa the emergence of a *"new cultural politics which engages rather than suppresses difference and which depends, in part, on the cultural construction of new ethnic identities."* However it is argued by Dhupelia-Meshtrie that there's *"a growing desire on the part of Indian South Africans to find a South African part of their identity."* It can be deduced from both the authors' views, some type of Identifying Indians in South Africa is needed, and be it ethnic or cultural. Dhupelia-Meshtrie also uses an example of a small survey done by a local radio station

in 1999, Lotus FM (A primarily Indian Listener base) to dissect the terms “INDIAN” and “SOUTH AFRICAN”. It consisted of 26 callers, all Indian. 18 out of 26 saw themselves as South Africans, 7 saw themselves as Indian South Africans and 1 saw himself as Indian (Dhupelia-Mesthrie.U, 2000). However this survey cannot be taken as accurate, it still is significant in its findings.

From the above mentioned ideologies of Identity, two principle Identities come up for discussion, i.e. Cultural Identity and Ethnic Identity. However the scope of this research deals with only Cultural Identity as a basis. With cultural identity being the focus, the authors Assman, Eyerman and Matthews will be looked at further on in this chapter.

According to Matthews, Cultural Identity can be seen as an Individuals sense of cultural belonging to a given society, it is an individual's perception of who they are culturally (Matthews, 2000). However Assman argues that a Cultural memory is what makes an individual's Cultural Identity. Assman also states that *“the faculty that allows us to build a narrative picture of the past and through this process develop an image and an identity for ourselves”* (Jan Assman, 1995). It can be seen from both authors' views that a relation to a society which they belong to is what is important. According to Kenny A group feels that they are set apart from the rest by cultural characteristics that encourages a sense of commonality (Kenny, 2004). In the commonality a sense of shared experiences and memory rises to the surface. People recollect together and this information is passed on by performing cultural memory. A group is unified through a collective story (Eyerman, 2004). The concept of cultural memory and performing cultural memory will be further investigated in this chapter. It is important to keep the research in focus and the sections in this chapter will deal directly with the South African Indian Identity, Cultural memory and the Formation of Identity and performing cultural memory.

## **2.1 The South African Indian Identity:**

In South Africa, Indians form the minority of the population, as a result their identity is also on a smaller scale. However the strength of the minority has many factors that influence it, such as apartheid, isolation, a sense of common ground and the strong sense of anti-Indian sentimentality in South Africa.

South Africa is now home to a multitude of races and cultures. It is often called the rainbow nation because of this. History was marked by the arrival of the Indian Indentured labourers, which were to become some of the biggest fighters for freedom in South Africa. When the indentured arrived in South Africa, they were classified only by numbers. People considered as numbers with no identity (Vahed A. D., 2010). Apart from being classified as numbers Ebr-Vally states that three major losses in identity occurred (Ebr-Vally, 2001). The first loss was the Elders of the community in which they belonged, leaving behind the Elders meant that the extended family was destroyed and the passing of knowledge was almost ruined (Brij Maharaj, 2008). Even the living conditions in South Africa were much different to the ones in India, they were forced to live in shacks and extended families became nuclear families (Brij Maharaj, 2008). The second was the loss of the sub-caste system. The caste system was a means in which Indian people identified themselves within the physical and cosmic worlds. The caste system was also a means in which they related to their castes, one race many identities. However the emigration to South Africa meant a downscaling of the caste system because of the limited amount of Indian people in the country (Brij Maharaj, 2008). The third loss was that of the Brahmin caste. The Highest Hindu caste. The reason Brahmins didn't come to South Africa is because it was economically unviable and there was simply no need because they were financially stable, being the highest caste. The Brahmin is seen as the most purest, virtuous and cleanest of human beings, therefore they were the centre of the caste system. Unfortunately, their absence meant the tie in caste systems was broken and became weak (Ebr-Vally, 2001). However for a little while the caste system remained for marriage. This meant that brides had to come from India to be married. However caste systems have all but disappeared, the ideology still forms part of the identity of Indian South Africans.

Although Indians emigrated and a stripping of parts of their identity is deduced, they started to form new bonds amongst themselves in South Africa. This led to a belonging and group unity within their communities (Brij Maharaj, 2008). According to Maharaj; although the Indentured Indians came from different backgrounds, they still shared some sort of commonality that included defined family roles, extended families and more importantly culture and religion (Brij Maharaj, 2008). It is through an establishment of culture, one can see the bonding of a community. According to Vahed; *"While the*

*traditions, values and practices of migrants were important, community and identity were forged in the interaction of actual historical circumstances, political policies, social experience and the meanings accorded to these in daily practice and discourse in Natal*" (Vahed G, 2002). However according to Mac Maharaj, Political Activist; In his biography he states that although the Indian community was tight knit, it was also separated. The Muslims banded together, the Hindus banded together and the Tamils banded together (From the biography of Mac Maharaj, O'Malley.P, 2007). This illustrates the need to be careful in generalising an Indian Identity.

In a community that is seen as homogenous, (Vahed G, 2002) one can establish where the notion of one Identity comes into existence. However in a group that has been defined as Homogenous there exist stratifications. These stratifications include Religion, Caste, Language, Class and Place. The first difference between Indians are from Indentured times. Not all Indians came as indentured labourers (Vahed A. D., 2010). Many Indians came as free Indians or traders. From the two above mentioned types there was a difference in economic standing (Free Indians led to believe to be of a higher caste than Indentured Indians) which pointed towards a prejudice in the community. (Ebr-Vally, 2001). The second difference saw an elite group, the children of the indentured became educated and found themselves in good jobs such as teachers and shopkeepers (Frederic Landy, 2004). The third of the stratifications is the differentiation was the location that they originated from India. The north Indians saw themselves as greater than the south Indians because the south Indians had a background of Indenture and darker skin (Frederic Landy, 2004). The fourth type of stratification, one which seems to be a big marker in the Identity of Indians is religious beliefs. The two largest religious groups of the time were the Hindu and Muslim communities. Within these parameters, other issues such as religious identity, language, caste and village geographies played a major role in the identities of people who were regarded as a homogenous community (Ebr-Vally, 2001). It is noted that these differences in religion, geographic location and class are all markers of the multitude of identities in the Indian communities.

The following section investigates the Home and homeland with respects to discovering its role in Identity formation. This is done to ascertain what influence the Homeland (India) has on the current Indian Identity in South Africa.

## **2.2 Memory of Home and the Homeland:**

South African Indians, have two places from which memory is formed, this being the “Home” and “Homeland”. This section aims to ascertain the role of memory in the formation of Identity for South African Indians. Indo-African Diaspora was an amazing phenomenon that brought Indian workers to South Africa to work in the Cane and Tea Plantations of the then Natal province. This led to a carrying of traditions across the sea to a different land where these traditions are still practiced today albeit a slight variation thereof. This phenomenon also gave rise to a constant communication or learning ground with India for South Africans Indians. The following points will aim to explain this occurrence with regards to the subtopic of Memory of Home (South Africa) and the Homeland (India).

### **2.2.1 Home:**

South Africa is home to nearly 1, 2 million people of Indian descent. South Africa quickly became home to indentured Indians and their cultural identity became a part of the South African society. The indentured labourers spent approximately 10 years working in the cane and tea fields of Natal, thereafter some of them became traders. Currently Indians find themselves still trading. However something deeper happened when the move occurred, well over 90% of Indians regard English as their first language, tens of thousands have converted to Christianity, caste for marriage is not followed and cuisine, dress and other markers of “Indianess” have mutated (Vahed A. D., 2010). Even though this is the case, they are still classified Indian in South Africa. At the inaugural T20 cricket world cup that took place in South Africa, there was evidence that the connection of Indian South Africans to India as they supported the Indian team feverously. The final match took place between India and Pakistan and this saw many South African Indian supporters, however this angered South African supporters from other races to see them supporting India with so much of effort, “Go home if you are not proudly South African” was the message (Vahed A. D., 2010). But in retrospect this message has always been lingering in South Africa. It is from this statement that reinforces the perception that Indians could never truly be South Africans (Vahed A. D., 2010). However there exists an emotional attachment to India, the homeland, but South Africa will always be Home. The tracing of “Roots” back to India has become more and more prevalent. However a collective memory and myth of the homeland exists. In the Authors view it is this memory that reinforces the Identity and makes a connection to the homeland. For most South



African Indians, they have roots 4-5 generations deep in South Africa and the thought of emigration to the homeland is unlikely. Other countries have more value for people to go to and India is still seen as developing even though it has developed itself greatly. *“Auguste Comte remarked that mental equilibrium was, first and foremost, due to the fact that the physical objects of our daily contact change little or not at all, providing us with an image of permanence and stability. They give us a feeling of order and tranquillity, like a silent and immobile society unconcerned with our own restlessness and changes of mood”* (Halbwachs, 1950). In the Authors opinion the reason South Africa remains home is the fact that a collective memory has been created here and this keeps one in a comfortable space that is known. The following section will speak of the Homeland and its relevance in forming a collective memory for South African Indians.

### **2.2.2 Homeland:**

The occurrence of diaspora has left many people having an emotional connection with their homelands. South Africa is no different and has a multicultural and multiracial community. Indian South Africans from time to time visit India for many different reasons. Some take the journey for religious purposes, business, leisure and others to trace back their roots. The journey for religious purposes is one that is common amongst South African Indians. Muslims and Hindus visit various shrines and other Religious buildings in India, some even call this journey a pilgrimage. One can deduce that these journeys are some kind of connection with the homeland for religious purposes where people believe miracles can occur due to faith. This occurrence also allows for religious beliefs to be renewed and rediscovered through the journey. With large numbers of people making pilgrimages to India, a collective memory of religious beliefs is created amongst those who have visited and learnt from the practices related to the homeland. Many South African Indians also find themselves visiting India to trace ancestral roots (Vahed A. D., 2010). This journey is a one of curiosity; many find themselves visiting India not so much to re-link with homeland but more for finding out where their ancestors came from. This being said, the home land can be seen as a place where one can find their “Indian Heritage” The search for roots it seems there is a pride factor evident linked to an ancient culture, but no reason to settle in India. *“It is more about religious knowledge and experiences and sensory enjoyment like cricket, movies and music and dance”* (Vahed A. D., 2010).

The introduction of media in a modern day world is also a massive influence on the connection between home and homeland. The introduction of Indian television programs being broadcast in South Africa, this has had a major shift in the imaging of the homeland. For the first time the homelands image can be updated daily by television and the Internet. South African Indians are able to *“Recreate their own fantasy structures of homeland [though] the collapse of distance on the information highway of cyberspace and collective sharing of knowledge about the homeland”* (Mishra 2007, cited in Vahed A. D., 2010).

Identity and belonging raise to the surface when one speaks of the home and homeland. Events like the Independence of India in 1947 and the struggle Gandhi faced in an apartheid South Africa, Indians were still proud of their Indian Heritage. However South Africa is still home and India, Homeland. *“In 1947 Nehru made it clear that India was an independent nation-state part and parcel of the nonaligned movement and that Indians in the diaspora belonged to the countries where they lived. That was home”* (Vahed A. D., 2010). with this statement in mind, India obviously understood that diasporic Indians belonged and created their own Identity in the country of residence. However the connection to the pride of India is still needed to feed to the South African Indian identity, so long as they call themselves “Indian”.

### **2.3 Memory verse History:**

Memory and history are often confused as being the same. However these concepts differ greatly. The following quote gives an understanding of the two, *“...Memory is life, borne by living societies founded in its name. History is the reconstruction, always problematic and incomplete, of what is no longer. Memory is a perpetually actual phenomenon, a bond tying us to the eternal present; history is a representation of the past”* (Ben-Amos, 1999: Cited in Pillay, 2011). From this statement it can be deduced that Memory is subjective, in that it is a personal opinion of a person or collective and History is a solid science based on events that occurred based on solid evidence, making it objective. It is also important to note that Memory is an organic concept that informs our Identity through an active past whilst History is a past no longer important in our lives (Assman, 2008).

Cultural memory has relevance to architecture because unlike cultural history, cultural memory can be related to what a group finds relevant in the society of the present. Reaffirming the idea of collective memory being organic in nature. With history becoming a discipline, its connection with memory decayed as it became confined to rules of evidence and science (Eyerman, 2004). History itself, presently finds people not engaging with it because of how different it is from the present. Its locked time frames speak of the past as a moment not fluid and dynamic. It is this fluidity and dynamism that separates history from memory. History can also be said to define the past, based on the past. However history forms a big part in remembering cultures. It is history that allows an appropriate architecture to house cultural activities and archives of the past related to that culture. The culmination of a society's culture in a building has been going on since ancient times, an example being the Great Pyramids of Giza. The mentioned example, showing the way of life of ancient people at the time. However in current day Egypt, the history is celebrated on a memory of what happened, defining a part of their ancient culture. The basis of celebrating and expressing this culture is based on memory, rather than history. Much of this culture has been commercialised and replica artefacts, clothing and relics find themselves being marketed extraordinarily in Egypt.

Collective or Cultural memory exists in the present and remains a real part of a group's Identity. Unlike history, memory is subject to change accordingly with time. As time passes, traditions and cultures change to adapt to the present. It is important to understand this critical difference, as history is solid and doesn't change, its influence on Identity eventually becomes irrelevant. However history coupled with memory and its influence in the built environment is important. Some cultures are remembered within a space because of historical monuments and buildings (Speck, 2007). From the authors point of view these building or monuments hold emotional value within the culture. From this spark of emotion, opens up memory and people of that society or culture, collectively relate to it based on events that presently change and shape the identity of that group.

With the critical difference between memory and history, the research will turn now towards identity formation due to collective memory. The preceding literature aims to explain how cultural and collective memory influences identity formation.

## 2.4 Cultural Memory and Construction of Identity:

Cultural memory is an important theory that provides a group with a cognitive map that helps the individual understand their Identity, Location, Traditions, Values, their Purpose and most of all Direction (Eyerman, 2004). If individual memory can be seen as part of an individual's Identity, then surely a group's identity can be pinned to its retrievable cultural memory. However a relationship exists between Individual and cultural memory and Identity which makes individual memory reliant on cultural memory to give it credibility (Amos, 1999). A community will thus be discerning on what will be remembered in order to inform its identity through cultural memory, making its culture, tradition etc. known within a larger context in which it exists. This suggests that collective Identities are not static in nature and are open to change within the context in which they exist (Vahed G, 2002).

According to Vahed, Religious festivities play an important role in the formation of Identity (Vahed G, 2002). Also the congregating of a group strengthens the groups Identity. An example of this is The 'Muharam festival' that took place and all Indians participated in the festivities, although it was a Muslim based prayer and celebration. This was a festival that liberated people for that one day and allowed people to go out onto the streets and show their culture (Vahed G, 2002). However after apartheid this festival has become watered down and no longer occurs on such a grand stage as it used to (Vahed G, 2002). Currently the 'Muharam festival' either occurs with a small amount of people of the Islamic faith or it takes places in the Mosque where Muslims tend to take part only. It is from this we can deduce that through time and the change of situation, such as apartheid, a festival that defined a group has slowly disappeared from the streets where it used to take place to a Mosque where it is confined to that religious group. This shows how flexible Identity is. This springs the thought of a change in a group's identity by an event that changed traditions. The collective memory now exists within that generation and hasn't passed down (Vahed G.2014).

Cultural memory is seen to be a part of humans that guarantees a socials groups survival through time, it is what defines that group and ensures their space in a context. The following extract from Jan Assman's paper titled 'Collective Memory and Cultural Identity' clarifies this; *"According to Nietzsche, while in the world of animals genetic*

*programs guarantee the survival of the species, humans must find a means by which to maintain their nature consistently through generations. The solution to this problem is offered by cultural memory, a collective concept for all knowledge that directs behaviour and experience in the interactive frame- work of a society and one that obtains through generations in repeated societal practice and initiation”* (Jan Assman, 1995). It is through cultural memory that Identity is kept alive. In the authors view this is how memory and the built form creates an Identity for a social group in any given space at any given time. A group’s identity is seen through the personifying of spaces in which it exists (Jan Assman, 1995).

According to Packer et al culture is seen to be lost worldwide; *“Half the planet’s languages and cultures are held by 5% of its population–370 million indigenous peoples–the most marginalized, fractured and least represented. For every group dispossessed, urbanized or assimilated, a culture vanishes taking with it unique worldviews and ancient knowledge of the environment, irreplaceable skills, artistry and stories–the rich diversity of humanity. The digital revolution, rather than creating a “global village”, accelerates this worldwide cultural demise”* (Laura Packer, 2006). It is from this statement, validation of globalization leading to loss of culture is confirmed.

It is established that Cultural Identity is passed on from generation to generation through memory. Memory usually takes place through the spoken word (Jan Assman, 1995). Making it current and allowing it to change, not in essence but in which it is portrayed. For cultures that are orally based, storytelling forms a big part of that society. It forms the database for that cultures ways, traditions, medicinal practice etc. (Laura Packer, 2006). Cultural memory is seen as a building block for identity, but not only does it inform identity statically but it gives the idea of *“capacity to aspire”*, giving a group an opportunity to design their cultural futures (Laura Packer, 2006).

It is now seen that cultural memory and the built form influence the identities of the people which occupy that space. But can the destruction of a cultural memory have impact on identity? From the literature review thus far, cultural memory can be seen to form an explicitly important role in Identity formation. It is memories that are transferred from generation to generation that assist in the formation of Identity. From the author’s

point of view, the destruction of memory can change an Identity of a person and a group, because it no longer has a relation to a physical space. The Identity will morph into something different and a new Memory, with regards to space will be created. The following statement holds true to the author's statement; *"Culture as a legacy originates in locale, because it needs context in which to thrive: the context of the people and land that shaped it. While culture might be exported, without this context, it will decay"* (Laura Packer, 2006). It can be seen from this that statement the built form plays a crucial part in a groups culture, as mentioned before a culture can be seen through built form because it is personified through that cultural group. *"This suggests that the destruction of the cultural landscape affects cultural identity and the ability of a cultural group to communicate cultural memories to future generations. In fact he further suggests that tangible and intangible heritage are mutually dependent and that architecture and the built environment provide the physical hooks for the intangible and the stage to shape the play of cultural life"* (Rankin: Cited in Pillay, 2011).

According to Rankin; it also stated that a groups Identity can be seen without its physical context. This occurs though a narrative of the group's culture. Since narrative can be communicated through storytelling, plays, painting and text, it can be mobile and the culture can be moved. If this occurs, that means a group's identity can be moved to a different locale and through narrative the cultural memory can be kept alive. This can be clearly seen with the example of the Indian Indentured labourers in South Africa. Even though they were separated from the land that carried the Cultural memories, narratives passed on through generations have kept the culture alive, it has morphed slightly because of the context in which it occurs. The Identity has been forced to be reconstructed due to the many factors such as place, political structures, economics etc. Performing arts form a great part of cultural memory within a group and it is through this memory and culture is passed on. The following section will discuss the performance of cultural memory which reinforces the narrative in South Africa.

## **2.5 Performing Cultural Memory:**

The performance of Cultural memory is an important tool to pass on stories and memories of one's culture. In this section a few examples of Cultural memory performance will be illustrated. The idea that memory can be transferred through

Performance, Media, and literature, art etc. is vital in understanding its importance in any society's culture. It is these tools that allow cultural continuity within a space in which it exists. Performance of Cultural memory is also an unfolding of culture rather than a fixed reality. According to Laura Packer et al it was found that story telling is a powerful means of performing cultural memory. It is through this interaction that an immediacy of the essence of the story is achieved. The following quote is testament to this, *"Stories told by one person to another are more powerful than writing or videos because they include an immediacy of contact and response—the storyteller can respond to her audience in the moment, providing what will help convey the message and culture most effectively. Storytelling is at the heart of social and personal identity; the story we choose to tell tells the listener and the world something about our culture and ourselves"* (Laura Packer, 2006). This section will provide cases of festivals and events that lead to identity formation within the Indian Community.

The Muharram Festival will be looked at first as this was the one festival that brought communities together for one day a year. Although it is an Islamic festival, Hindus also attended and took part in the festival. The Muharram Festival is one that mourns the death of Imam Husain, grandson of the Prophet Mohammad. Imam Husain was killed in a battle on the Plains of Karbala in Iraq by the army of Caliph Yazid I on 10 Muharram 680 (Vahed G. 2002). The following extract elaborates the events that occurred within the time: *"Although denied water by the enemy, Husain's group survived for the first nine days of Muharram, the first month of the Islamic lunar calendar. On the tenth, the enemy's arrows killed Husain, whose body was left to rot in the desert sun, while his head was placed on a spear and paraded in Damascus. While Husain's martyrdom is doctrinally important to Shias with their belief that Husain and his father Ali are part of a line of Imams deriving from the Prophet, it also has a solemn memory for Sunnis who regard Yazid as a corrupt and unjust ruler"* (Vahed G, 2002). The reason for the festival is made clear by Dr Vahed and now the discussion turns to how this memory has played an integral role in the formation of identities for Indians in South Africa but more especially Durban. The festivals attributes and events will be discussed briefly.



*Figure 2 : The Muharram Festival Celebrated by the carrying of chariots in a Procession giving praise to the Imam Husain.*



*Figure 3 : Shi'ite Muslim men flagellate themselves during a Muharram procession ahead of the Ashura festival in Dhaka December 17, 2010. Ashura, the most important day in the Shi'ite calendar, commemorates the death of Imam Hussein, grandson of the Prophet Mohammad, in the 7th century battle of Kerbala.*



The Muharram festival was one of the biggest celebrations for Indian Indentured labourers. It was titled the “Coolie Christmas” and this saw an event and processions that lasted 3 days long. This festival was celebrated on a large scale, just like how it had been celebrated in India. The Muharram festival which was an Islamic commemoration also saw Hindus join in on the celebration. This was also practiced in India where lower castes of Hindus partook in its exhibition (Vahed G, 2002). It is through the memory of what occurred in India that allowed for this festival to take place in South Africa. The Indentured Indians wanted their Identity to be known and showed off as a part of them. (Vahed G, 2002).

Although Islamic in nature, the festival saw Hindu's join in. It was even Hindus that petitioned for the festival to take place. *“Although a Hindu, Ratansamy Pillay, presented the petition and while only nine of the 25 petitioners were Muslim, the festival was regarded as their ‘creed’”* (Vahed G. 2002). Indentured Indians saw this as a coming together of the community at large, a time to bond, congregate and celebrate their culture. However this occurrence took place in India as well, Hinduism and Islam were mutually reinforcing even though Hindus formed a larger part of the population.

The festival saw participants marching through the streets of Durban with large replicas of the mosque of Imam Husain, these replicas were called ‘Tazzias’. Apart from the Tazzias created, a Human hand like figure formed from sheet metal, decorated in flowers and garlands called the ‘Panja’ was an integral part of the festival. The Panja represented the right hand of Imam Husain. This is symbolic of a question Husain's wife asked: “When would we meet again” and he said “On the day of Judgement” (Vahed G, 2002). Therefore the Panja is symbolic of a great power. The Indentured Indians also believed it to have the cure for problems. This is the reason all Indians partook in the festival, it was symbolic of a common faith. This procession saw participants setting of the Tazzias and Panjas into the river on the 10<sup>th</sup> day of Muharram, marking the end of the festival. This saw a massive procession gather at the Umgeni River (Vahed G, 2002). In this occurrence it is seen that Indians asserted their need for Public space. A space that could mark their territory. The festival marked a time where Indians could come together and celebrate as a collective, passing down memories of the homeland and their collective cultures. It promoted their Indianess in Durban, making it home. This

festival not only was celebrated as a onetime event every year, but started to form an Identity for Indians (Vahed G, 2002).

Apart from the Muharram Festival, events like Diwali, Kavady etc. were celebrated. However prior to 1910 these festivals didn't get a "day off". Although they were important to Hindus, Muharram saw a much larger gathering of people which took full advantage of public space. The discussion of performance of cultural memory now moves onto other examples, this is done as a comparison to further reinforce the notion that performance of cultural memory has a direct impact on the public spaces in which it takes place.

In order for memory to be performed, it has to occur in a space. Be it storytelling, Plays, Festivals, etc. A distinguished space is needed, either a building or the public realm. The focus shifts now to Cultural memory performance in buildings. *"Performance plays a part in ritual and ceremony as well. Ritual and ceremony have the power to alter physical space to establish and reinforce territorial claims, which continue to endure post-performance"* (Tilley, Keane, Kuchler, Rowlands and Spyer, 2006: 384, Cited in Pillay, 2008).



*Figure 4 : Bharatnatyam Performance by dancer Sneha Chakradhar at India International Centre.*



*Figure 5 : Zwane's solo Bharatnatyam choreographies usually begin with the Shiva dance*

One of the praised memory performance in South Africa and India in the Indian culture is the Bharatnatyam Folklore dance. This dance is one that tells a story. It is through this dance powerful memories are transferred. Bharatnatyam originated in Tamil Nadu, India. The name Bharatnatyam, come from BHA- Bhava (Expression), RA- Raga (Music) and TA- Tala (Rhythm). From the formation of words, it describes a dance formation of expression through music and rhythm (Nandan, 2014). Traditionally Bharatnatyam was performed in temples by Devadasis (Community of temple dancers). However around the 1930's Bharatnatyam became commercialised and the legendary Balasaraswati (Famous Bharatnatyam dancer) was called to do a stage performance by the elite educated class (Nandan, 2014). The present form of dance has been documented by four brothers, Chinnayya, Ponnayya, Vadivelu and Sivanandam in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, these brothers are known as the Tanjore Quartet (Nandan, 2014). Their form of dance is what is largely practiced all over the world.

The Bharatnatyam dance is a dance performed in worship of Lord Shiva. It is a variety of Natya Yoga that divulges the spiritual through the physical and emotional body. According to Bharatanatyam.co.uk, *"Bharatnatyam has a divine origin. Devas asked Brahma to create a Veda that would be understood by the Sudras, as Kali Yuga was nearing: 'When the universe was overcome by desire, greed, jealousy and anger, when people became slaves of pleasure and pain, Brahma was moved to create a form of entertainment seen and heard and understood by everybody at the same time, as people could no longer understand the mystic and ambiguous scriptures'"* (Bharatanatyam, 2012). This gives insight into the origins and purpose of Bharatnatyam. It was a method of transferring the memory of the gods down to the people of earth. This is a powerful method of transferring stories as it is also entertaining and keeps the crowd constantly engaged. Figure 3 shows one of the stances that form part of the Bharatnatyam dance.

However in South Africa, due to the multicultural society this form of dance has people from other cultures performing it. An example of this is dancer and choreographer Nhlanhla Vincent Zwane. Figure 4 is a photo of Zwane performing the Shiva dance. Zwane an avid dancer that learnt the form in 2003, he is also a devout worshipper of Lord Shiva (Chatterjee, 2010). Zwane also states that he faced a difficult time during apartheid, as he was not able to perform dance forms practiced by other cultures; he also states that it prevented a world fusion of genres (Chatterjee, 2010). From Zwane's statement it can be deduced that in the new South Africa a fusion of Genres are likely to occur, one more especially the Indo-Afro genre. With this occurring it also adds to the Identity of the people of South Africa. It gives each Identity a space on the platform of South African Identities.

Now that a brief understanding of Bharatnatyam is established, one has to argue where an appropriate place to perform this dance is. As mentioned earlier it is found that this dance style was performed in temples. However, it is also found that this form of dance has become commercialised and can take place on a stage that draws a crowd to watch the beautiful dance take place. Because this form of dance calls for a crowd to observe it, an appropriate space such as a hall with seating can be used to host the dance performance. Although this dance can be performed in any given hall, the form also

requires props and other stage décor to set the scene. By this occurring, the space is personalised and in the view of the author can be seen as an event that will be committed to memory. The next section of this research will delve into the aspect of memories influence on the built form. This approach is taken because it is of great importance to understand the link between memory and the built form, as it is the built form that portrays a culture and personification of a space. It tells a story of the people that inhabit that particular space in that particular time (Rapoport, 1982).

The following chapter will delve into the Architectonics of memory and Architecture. Now that a social theory base is created, an architectural base needs to be created to form an understanding of creating a building that will fulfil the various social aspects of this research.

# ***Chapter 3:***

## ***Architectonics of Memory***

### 3.0 Introduction

In the late 1800's, Sociologist Maurice Halbwachs coined the term "Collective memory." The foreword question in his research was "How do we use mental Images to reconstruct our past?" (University of Chicago Press, 2010). This established Halbwachs as a major role player in the history of sociology. The following extract gives a better understanding of Halbwachs aim of his writings *"Halbwachs' primary thesis is that human memory can only function within a collective context. Collective memory, Halbwachs asserts, is always selective; various groups of people have different collective memories, which in turn give rise to different modes of behaviour"* (University of Chicago Press, 2010). It is from this statement it is made clear how memory takes place in a society. However memory is also influenced by architecture. Halbwachs does take the built form into account and its effect on an individuals and collectives memory. Although Halbwachs was not a trained architect, his views on memory and the built form will be taken into consideration, this will be discussed further on in this chapter.

Another Key author that will be used in this research is Rodney Douglas Parker. Parker's research focus is the architectonics of memory. This concept can also be explained as the structures that form a method of memory. Parker relates the theories of social memory and how they are used in a person's daily life. It is these structured principles that allows humans to create a cognitive map which guides them through the built form and enhances their ability to remember by association. Parkers work will be investigated to form an understanding the Architectonics of memory.

This chapter is structured such that key theories and concepts will be related. The first section will be based on Memory and architecture and the rest of the sections will be introduced in the chapter as it progresses.

### 3.1: Architecture and Memory:

Architecture plays an important role in evoking memory, it also goes beyond the point of memory as shelter and dwelling. To understand the architecture of memory it is important to understand physical reality and the role it plays in mental meanings (Jo, 2003). Memory and the built form go hand in hand evoking thoughts, meanings and memories. Aldo Rossi, an Architectural theorist used memory as a means of creating an architectonic structure that was rich in meaning and exploited thinking, reading and responding (Jo, 2003). This discussion will be led by Halbwachs theory of Memory and space to start the argument of architecture and its influence on memory.

*“Life is a continuous flow of experience; each act or moment of time is preceded by a previous experience and becomes the threshold for the experience to come”* (Bacon, 1967 cited in Jo, 2003). From Bacons point of view it is understood that memory is structured, a point of beginning and an end, however it continues with an new experience preceding from the last. However memory is evoked by what surrounds us. The built form allows for this to occur, a meaning in which people relate to things due to associating it with an object, an architecture, a city (Parker, 1997). This aspect will be discussed further on in this research. The French Sociologist, Maurice Halbwachs explains this phenomenon starting from the home, an intimate place where people form memories. According to Halbwachs, people form memories when they attach it to objects. It is when a person creates a cognitive map of their surroundings and thoughts as they recall memories (Halbwachs, 1950). In this framework; places, people and events are recalled because a memory is made up of these factors (Halbwachs, 1950). Halbwachs also states that in a scene of a house, change in that space becomes the topic of evaluation, time, new fashion trends, taste etc. Relates to what was and a comparative can be seen, the evolution of that space but also the people that occupy that space (Halbwachs, 1950). It is this change within a space that evokes a memory, from then to now and is a comforting image to the people who occupy that space, reminding them of their own continuity (Halbwachs, 1950). According to Jo, *“Since specific architectural form and style mainly depend upon the rate and pattern of human interaction in relation to the environment, life perspectives is deeply rooted in time perspectives, and thus our society has dissected humanity and the built for itself a mirror*



*for its own reflection and architecture reflect a society's views of time and change*" this gives a perspective of how memory through time creates an image in the users mind.

With the insertion of a group into a space, it not only changes its surroundings but the surroundings change the group. According to Halbwachs, a groups vision of its external milieu and its stable relationship with its surroundings, is important in the idea it forms about itself (Halbwachs, 1950). The surrounding objects thus shares the group's inertia (Halbwachs, 1950). Halbwachs further reinstates that even after a group is put into a new location, it rationalizes it with the memory of the past place in which it was (Halbwachs, 1950). It is through this memory and interaction of space that creates a memory, a collective one. These images of space is a cognitive collective memory in which a group relates to. Each space, each place in its environment is related to intelligently by the members of the group, for each space and place corresponds to a part of the structure and life of that society (Halbwachs, 1950). However it is also argued by Halbwachs that a great event in that space such as a destruction of its collective memory can alter the relationship of that society to the place in which it exists (Halbwachs, 1950). Halbwachs uses the an example; *"The family as a group may change size owing to death or marriage, or it may change location as it grows richer or poorer or as the father is transferred or changes occupation. From then on, neither the group nor the collective memory remains the same, but neither have the physical surroundings."* Halbwachs Ideology of a group and its surroundings helps understand the relationship between the two. Through a memory of a space, one is able to relate to it and form an Identity (Parker, 1997).

The following sections in this chapter will investigate methods of memory. There are many methods available, but only the methods dealing with the built form will be investigated. It is important to understand at this stage, the methods of memory play a crucial role in the memory process. It is through this method, memory can be linked to the built form and memories can be stored according to its link with the built form. Identity on the other hand is remembered through ones interaction with the built form, the triggers of the physical environment, put forward what the space in which a group inhabits is important and plays a crucial role in redefining and strengthening its identity.

### **3.2 Architectonics of Memory:**

This section of the literature review examines the architectonics of memory. This term is used to compile a structure of techniques and methods used in memory with its relation to architecture. This section also explains the importance of architecture in the recall of memory.

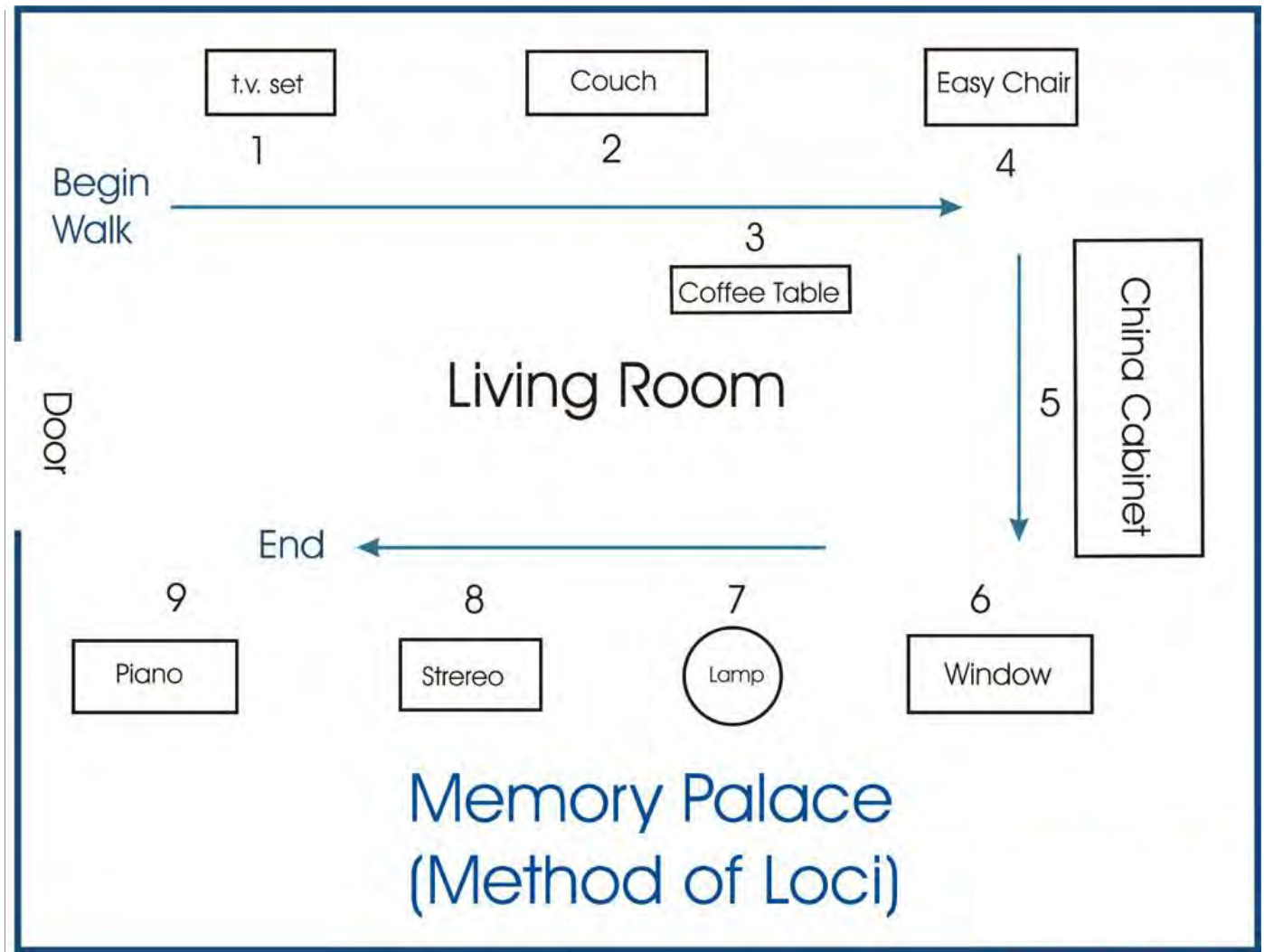
#### **3.2.1 Mnemotechnics and the method of Loci:**

Classical Mnemotechnics is used in this research as it is a means and foundation of how the theory of memory relates to built form and how cognitive maps are formed in the mind. It is a practical method of remembering and recalling, leading to how memory is formed by using physical objects to relate memory to it.

Mnemotechnics or the art of memory is a term used to group together mnemotechnic; *“organize memory impressions, improve recall, and assist in the combination and ‘invention’ of ideas”* (Andrew, 2010). It was considered an art form as there were a set of prescriptions that added an order and discipline to the natural activities of human beings pragmatically. Mnemotechnics originated in the middle of the first millennium, it is still practiced today and methods are continually developing. The art is closely related to Rhetoric or Logic but is also associated in other contexts of religion and magic (Andrew, 2010).

One of the earliest theorists of Mnemotechnic theory was Auctor as Herennium. A Roman theorist, he mastered the art of rhetoric and mnemotechnics. The Auctor formed a method in which the mnemotechnic theory would be applied (Parker, 1997). The method was used in theatre first and the orator would articulate mental Loci and in its place vivid mnemonic symbols. The Auctor had described the Loci or backgrounds, in stage theatre to be small, complete and distinct. The aim of this process was for natural memory to *“grasp and embrace them easily”* (Parker, 1997). The Auctor also reinstates that architectural examples such as a house, a recess, an arch, an intercolumnar space and the likes, are the best examples of loci (Parker, 1997). It is also noted that these scenes are preferably detached from their surroundings although these images form a network and should not be isolated from each other. The Auctor also reinstates that these images should form a sequence, thus the loci must belong to larger spatial framework, which have clear routes and must be in a fixed order (Parker, 1997). *“The*

*paradigm of architecture automatically provided the model of a familiar, physical context for new ideas, plus a familiar easy to understand framework that ordered them” (Parker, 1997). It is in this process, that architecture became the model for the method of Loci. This method is also called a memory palace. In which humans remember by association. The following figure is an example of this. The memory palace can simply be a room where objects are used to associate with what needs to be remembered.*



*Figure 6: An example of a Memory palace, a technique used to remember by association.*

### **3.2.2 Placing of Memory into Context-The Stock of Knowledge:**

In the ideology of Tectonics of Memory by author Rodney Douglas Parker another method or means in which people associate memory to objects is the method of order and structure of that retrieval. This method is a branch of psychology and was first identified by sociologist Alfred Shutz. In Shutz's work "The Phenomenology of the social world" he states that *"This stock of Knowledge comprises the storehouse of consciousness, where all meaningful past lived experiences are accumulated and retained for later use"* (Shutz, 1932 cited in Parker, 1997). This stock of knowledge is all the meaningful memories that has been stored in one's mind. Shutz goes on to explain that this stock of knowledge has to be well ordered so that it is easily retrieved so it can help to anticipate events in this world (Shutz, 1932 cited in Parker, 1997). Further on Shutz explains that new experience can be reflectively assessed and compared to past events for similarity, then retained in the memory for future reference (Shutz: cited in Parker, 1997). In this method, it can be seen an order must be created. This order, forms the cognitive map from which memories are accessed (Parker, 1997).

### **3.2.3 Cognition:**

It is noted that Schutz ideology on large-scale meaning contexts and schemata are now referred to "Cognitive Maps" in modern day psychology. It is this cognitive map that the method of Loci forms its architectural base (Parker, 1997). According to Ulric Neisser cognitive maps generally are *"relatively long lasting and yet easily modifiable"* (Neisser, cited in Parker, 1997). Cognitive maps are also used every day in the laying out of physical environment. According to Parker, people possess and daily utilize cognitive maps of their homes, neighbourhoods and towns. It is used to run errands, go to work, or take shortcuts to places (Parker, 1997). However it is also noted that these cognitive maps can change routinely, there may be traffic on the way home from work, which was not there previously, or a shop on the corner could have become a restaurant. Even though these changes take place, the larger cognitive map retains its coherence and permanence (Parker, 1997). Parker also makes reference to the physical world, it is understood that the permanence of this cognitive map is reliant on the world being mapped, *"that of streets, architectural works, elements of the landscape and townscape is itself relatively stable"* (Parker, 1997). If this is the case, the big "Map" can be used to anticipate any loci or place within it (Parker, 1997). From the point of view of the author; Cognitive memory is an important tool that humans use to navigate themselves though

the built environment, this coupled together with the other Architectonics of memory, structure a basis in which memory relates to the built environment.

### **3.3 Architectural implications:**

So what are the commonalities between architecture and memory? According to Parker, both architecture and memory are involved with the construction of large scale, stable contexts which are ordered in which humans find personally relevant (Parker, 1997). It can also be noted that memory and architecture reinterpret each other. According to Parker, architecture should be seen as not only the art of creating spaces, but also an art of creating places. These places in their built form will ultimately be able to preserve and symbolize cultural principles and values (Parker, 1997). It is generally assumed that buildings are motivated by societal value and it is this value that people subconsciously encounter when viewing the built form. According to Parker *“The intra-mental correlate of architecture can be termed architectonics”* (Parker, 1997). in the view of the author, architectonics is a method of building systems of thought, structured perfectly to correlate information correctly with a high sense of detail. According to Parker, architectonic process is used every day to build cognitive maps, relate to loci and relate memories to spaces and places in order to navigate the world (Parker, 1997). It should also be noted that as architecture is ordered in the real world, the mind tends to use this to order thoughts and thought processes related to the built form (Parker, 1997). It is from these points it can be conclude that the built form holds a groups memories and ideas, physically.

# ***Chapter 4:***

# ***Critical Regionalism***

#### **4.0 Introduction:**

Critical regionalism was a term first brought about in the 1980's. The Three main authors of the subject were Alexander Tzonis, Liane Lefaivre and Kenneth Frampton. Critical regionalism was used to describe a contemporary architecture which was not branded as the international style nor regionalism (Budd, 2007). The architecture of critical regionalism is rooted in the modern tradition but it is critical to location and culture. According to Frampton critical regionalism is an architecture of resistance (Frampton, 1983). it can be noted that critical regionalism; *"is to mediate the impact of universal civilization with elements derived indirectly from the peculiarities of a particular place"*(Frampton, 1983). It can be said that critical regionalism aimed to serve the constituencies in a specific location in which it was ground to create a place oriented architecture(Eggeneer, 2002). It is in this method that a resistance was created, *"decided reaction to normative, universal standards, practices, forms, and technological and economic conditions"* (Eggeneer, 2002). Critical regionalism was said to be hard to define and was found to be lacking in stylistic unity, the reason for this is that critical regionalism is a process rather than a product, this process varies according to the situation in which it takes place(Eggeneer, 2002).

The Key author in this Chapter is Kenneth Frampton. Frampton is known for his works in Critical regionalism and Critical Tectonics. The reason this author is being used is that the works contain concepts such as cultural, regional and climatic factors that relate to identity of the people who create the built environment. This theory also acknowledges traditional methods but also aims to implant this into a contemporary setting, according to Frampton's 6 points Towards a Critical regionalism (Frampton, 1983). A few other authors will be touched on but Frampton will form the basis of this chapter.

#### **4.1 Critical Regionalism and World Culture:**

30 years ago, the term Critical regionalism was introduced to move the focus away from the postmodern debate. Regionalism on the other hand was a set practice, rather than follow the international style. Regionalism is said to be accurate and explicit, making it critical in essence (Lefaivre and Tzonis, 2003). Critical regionalism deals with the issue of 'placelessness' and identity of a social group with regards to the context in which it occurs. Critical regionalism also acknowledges the universal system. The main concept of critical regionalism that it takes into cognisance the universal methods but respects

the local context in which it occurs. According to Frampton, architecture can only sustain itself critically if distances itself equally from the enlightenment myth of progress and a controlled distance from the architectonic forms of the industrial age (Frampton, 1983). It is further reinstated that a critical architecture must remove itself from optimization of advanced technology and from the nostalgic, historic decorative forms. Perhaps the architecture of critical regionalism has a cultural backbone. Architecture should be an “Identity giving Culture” taking into consideration a universal technique (Frampton, 1983). The key strategy of critical regionalism is to mediate between local and international trends, to avoid an overwhelming use of the international style in a particular place (Frampton, 1983). Taking Frampton’s points into account, it is noted that the architecture of critical regionalism must be progressive while taking into consideration the local values created in that local society. Frampton also reinforces the idea that critical regionalism must be critical in how it manifests taking local considerations such as light, tectonic structure and topography into account (Frampton, 1983). It is also noted that critical regionalism is by no means going back to the vernacular, since it is a progressive discourse (Frampton, 1983). The case that can be made is that critical regionalism is as cultural strategy, which reacts both to world culture and local culture, greatly keeping society in the loop of universal identity but maintaining its local identity. In the next section regions and identities will be discussed in order to form a basis in the understanding of critical regionalism due to the factors of society and the locality in which it exists.

## **4.2 Regions and Identities:**

Regional architecture can be identified easily as it is often associated with a particular group or place. A good example of regional architecture is the ancient buildings of Greece, the Greeks used architectural elements to identify themselves in a political context (Lefaivre and Tzonis, 2003). Vitruvius, the famous Roman architect reinstated the fact that people create a regional identity which shows in their architecture. He claimed that due to the factors such as climate, topography and other regional factors gave rise to the methods in which people built. These conditions would also dictate the type of building, window openings, roof slopes etc. Therefore these conditions and building styles describe the people of that location (Lefaivre and Tzonis, 2003). It is also notes that since the renaissance period, critical regionalism has been influenced by the



international style. However, regionalism was becoming advanced internally, it sought to engage globally (Lefaivre and Tzonis, 2003).

According to Lewis Mumford, regionalism is not a mere using of local materials and coping the traditional styles but an adapting to the needs of that specific region (Lefaivre and Tzonis, 2003). Mumford completely abandoned the idea of traditional building methods, rather he focused on the relationship between man and nature. His ideology's focused more on preservation of the wildlife and forests. Keeping an area less disturbed as possible (Lefaivre and Tzonis, 2003). Mumford's approach when it came to architecture was to use sustainable methods to make a building more optimal. He also stressed that for a community or society to move forward, the acceptance of the world culture is essential, rather than a monoculture created in that region which has no global future (Lefaivre and Tzonis, 2003). Mumford also argues that each culture is affected by other global cultures. These cultures have an effect on local traditional cultures and reshape the identity of regional practices (Lefaivre and Tzonis, 2003). Identity, sustainability, culture and nature form an integral part of the critical regionalist theory. It is important to note that for a region to compete globally, it must have the necessary tools so that it may stand in the global stand. These tools become available once it uses its approach combined with the universal approach. The next section will delve into the ideologies of culture and nature, a more focused look will be given to these topics as it forms an integral part of the critical regionalist approach to design.

#### **4.3 Culture and Nature:**

Critical regionalism has its roots deep in nature and culture, it involves a more direct resolution of with nature compared to the more modern abstract *avante garde* movement allowed. Critical regionalism aims to use a more natural approach to designing buildings rather than the modernist approach of destroying the natural earth with modern methods (Frampton, 1983). Frampton uses an example of the method in clearing a site for building. It is suggested that by bulldozing a site from natural to completely flat, encourages the ideology of 'Placelessness'. However if the same site was terraced, it would be more in touch with nature and less destruction would take place. In this way the site is cultivated rather than completely changed (Frampton, 1983). The topography of a site that has not been harshly damaged can form an important part

of the urban framework. It can be suited so that whatever lies in its context is not destroyed by it and works harmoniously with it. By doing this a building on that site can take full advantage of light and climatic factors. These two factors can in turn create a better environment. With regards to placement of openings and other building components, a critical architecture is able to react better and showcase the region better. An example of a window which is architecturally designed for that region can express both culturally and architecturally a design that takes into consideration the various factors for its conception. This is said to be a harmonious relationship between architecture and the context in which it occurs. Frampton also states that ventilation strategies reflect the culture of the context (Frampton, 1983). Location, history and agricultural values are the cultural aspects of the site. Regional issues of a site include climatic factors, people etc. Therefore the layering of a site taking into consideration the factors of culture and region are important. AN architecture that responds to the climate of an area, becomes sustainable and also has a certain aesthetic that is functional. According to Frampton, the governing principle of architecture should be tectonic rather than scenographic (Frampton, 1995). Frampton also stresses that architecture should express structure in a poetic form that combines Craftwork, material and gravity (Frampton, 1995). An example of this kind of architecture is the Tjibaou Cultural centre in New Caledonia by Architect Renzo Piano. This building follows principles of tectonic architecture and responds to the culture of the Kanak culture. This building will be further discussed in the next chapter. The following section deals with the aspects of how people perceive architecture and its influence on them.

#### **4.4 Visual and Tactile:**

The human perception of vision is an important and critical one that allows one to start creating images in the mind. However the human body also has other perceptions such as smell, taste, sound and feeling through touching. It is important to note that a human uses all these sense when it perceives the built environment. Frampton suggests that: *“The tactile resilience of the place-form and the capacity of the body to read the environment in terms other than those of sight alone suggest a potential strategy for resisting the domination of universal technology.”* (Frampton, 1983). It is from this statement it can be noted that human perceptions in the built environment are also moulded by the society in which it takes place. The tactile perception is an important

sense in the built form, apart from the overbearing visual. Frampton also states that moving through the built form is not merely a visual experience but rather a tactile one (Frampton, 1983). The sense complement one another in order to make reality. A good example of a building that uses sensory perception is Alvar Aalto's Saynatsalo Town Hall of 1952. In Particular the public circulation. It main stair case is built with brick, and the treads are finish in brick as well. Giving it a rough feel when walking up them. This feeling changes as one walks into the council chambers as the floor material changes to a shiny tactile wood finish. The chamber also states its presence though Sight, Smell and texture (Frampton, 1983). Frampton further reinstates that this type of architecture's tactile presence can only be felt by experiencing it first-hand (Frampton, 1983).



*Figure 7: Saynatsalo Town Hall in Finland, Architect Alvar Aalto.*

Critical regionalism is said to be a balance of visual and tactile experiences, so to it must have a balance between local and universal methods. Critical regionalism takes into account all the senses, rather than the westernized method of using sight as the forerunner in the perspective of the built environment(Frampton, 1995). According to psychology, perspective is seen as a visual tool and supresses the other senses (Frampton, 1983). This phenomenon is called 'Loss of nearness' (Frampton, 1983). In the attempt to encounter this loss, the tactile is in opposition with the scenographic, by this occurrence the true reality is covered and cannot be discovered (Frampton, 1983). The poetics of architecture get lost if all the senses are not present. The tectonic form is lost and returns to the architect for an expression other than sight. The tactile and tectonic together have the capacity to encounter the global identity by treating architecture as a means of interaction between the viewer and the physical.(Frampton,

1983) The next section will deal with cultural identity and how through critical regionalism it is made stronger and how it can compete in the global front.

#### **4.5 Cultural Identity in the built form:**

Cultural identity in the built environment is a means of exposing a society's influence on that particular place (Rapoport, 1982). The roots in which a society puts into a place are valuable, it starts to constitute an identity for that society (Day, 2002). A cultural continuity is present in most societies today, the lifestyle of people give queues to what occurs in that space. Culture and place together form the built environment, with each borrowing from each other and working together (Day, 2002). Most designers create space that that belongs in that locality to establish an identity. It is through architecture that opportunities are created for social interaction. Spaces ultimately dictate how people meet, if it is a diverse space it means that there are various users. The form of buildings, materials and scale dictate the type and purpose of that structure but also represent the people who use it, it identifies them. It is also noted that the built environment show a continuity of the people that use it (Rapoport, 1982). According to Pearson, cultural identity is an amalgamation of the past and present, this statement is further reinforced by Charles Correa who stated that: *"We have to know where we are coming to know where we are going"*(Pearson, 2000). From this, it is evident that a society's history plays an important role in its identity formation, however it has to be able to live in the present. This leads back to the discussion on memory and formation of identity. Whilst history remains in the past, memory has continuity and adapts. For a society to move forward it has to accommodate part of the universal system. Traditions are the foundations for society to live a certain way. According to Pearson modernity and trading cannot be regarded as two separate entities, it is like they are two sides of the same coin (Pearson, 2000). For a society to move forward, all these various factor have to take into consideration. Following on from Frampton's views on critical regionalism, it can be understood that for a society to move forward in a global world, it should to some extent allow for the universal method to be accommodated with a regions traditions, further reinforcing it, rather than destroying a rich history of traditions of that society (Frampton, 1983).

# ***Chapter 5:***

# ***Precedent Studies***

## **5.0 Introduction:**

The following precedent studies deal with buildings that have a strong relation to identity and culture with regards to place and the society in which they take place. These examples will be critically analysed to form an understanding of their purpose and how human interaction with the built forms a place for people. The objective of this study is to find out the influential factors that culminated in creating a building. The buildings that have been chosen are from three different continents. This has been done so that architectural style, context, environmental conditions, symbolic aspects, spatial organisation and sociocultural qualities can be established and compared. The buildings will be analysed using the following topics; Site and Context, Spatial organisation and functions, Architectural style and Environmental aspects, Symbolism, Socio cultural aspects and its association to theoretical frameworks.

## **5.1 Jean Marie Tjibaou Cultural Centre:**

### **Context and Environmental conditions:**

The Jean Marie Tjibaou Centre is situated in New Caledonia in the Pacific Ocean and is approximately 1600km east of Australia. New Caledonia is part of French territory in the South Pacific. The cultural centre is located in the islands capital, Noumea. The centre itself is positioned on a thin strip of the peninsula running almost 1000 feet on an east-west axis(Wikiarquitectura, 2013). The centre is located within a nature reserve on the island and runs along the coast surrounded by lakes, vegetation etc. On the protected lagoon side of the building consists of four modernist, flat roofed steel and glass pavilions are located. On the side of the bay, ten massive wooden cases are located. They were located there to take the impact of the prevailing winds, the cases were designed so that the winds move around it rather than against it.(Wikiarquitectura, 2013) The temperatures in New Caledonia range from 18 degrees in winter to 34 degrees in the summer. Hence the building has been designed to counter act the harsh tropical climate. Passive cooling is introduced through natural ventilation, micro climates and shading devices to supply the building with fresh air to cool the building and its occupants (Wordpress, 2012). Figure 8 shows the site plan of the development and figure 9 an aerial view of the project.



*Figure 8: Site planning, study on prevailing wind.*



*Figure 9: Aerial view of JMT Cultural Centre, New Caledonia*

## **Planning:**

The Tjibaou cultural centre spans a size of 8,550 square metres in size. It was created to form a link between the natural landscape and the local Kanak traditions. The Kanak people were removed from their natural habitat of the valleys and mountains and the building had to pay tribute to this aspect of their life, an art centre was created to showcase this history and tradition. According to Renzo Piano, the building had to be unique (Wordpress, 2012). The building is built on a 250 metre long ridge of the peninsula and is set into a landscape of great beauty. The building consists of 10 'Cases' of hut pavilions that are arranged in three groups also called village clusters. Each cluster has one Great Case, the tallest one being 28 metres high. Each of these huts are symbolic of the Great Hut of the Kanak Chiefs. The Cases are generated of the main axis of the building which consists of walkways, gardens and green spaces, outdoor rooms and office areas (Wordpress, 2012). The huts are spatially arranged along a main axis which is symbolic to the Kanak people (Wordpress, 2012). All the Cases are different in size and have different functions, but they all have a consistent form, which are shell like and resemble the traditional Kanak huts. The Cases are arranged along a curved path along the peninsula. The large Cases are built from wood and modern technology is used to construct the cases (Wordpress, 2012). The Cases are meant to represent the wood built huts. This example is a fine example of a critical regionalism theory in the conception of the design. The structures go further and tend to relate to Frampton's idea of sustainable methods. The whole structure is perfectly orientated to take advantage of the prevailing winds and sunlight. The structure is orientated so that the climatic factors can be controlled. Another impressive aspect about the design is the main axis that contains the circulation routes, these are open to one side to provide cross ventilation within the building. Louvre's and sun control devices have been used on this axis to protect it from the harsh sun of the tropical island (Wordpress, 2012). The Cases are surrounded by large Norfolk Island Pines that are as tall as the cases. The structures are also surrounded by beautiful landscape that further brings the project to feel like it is a natural setting.



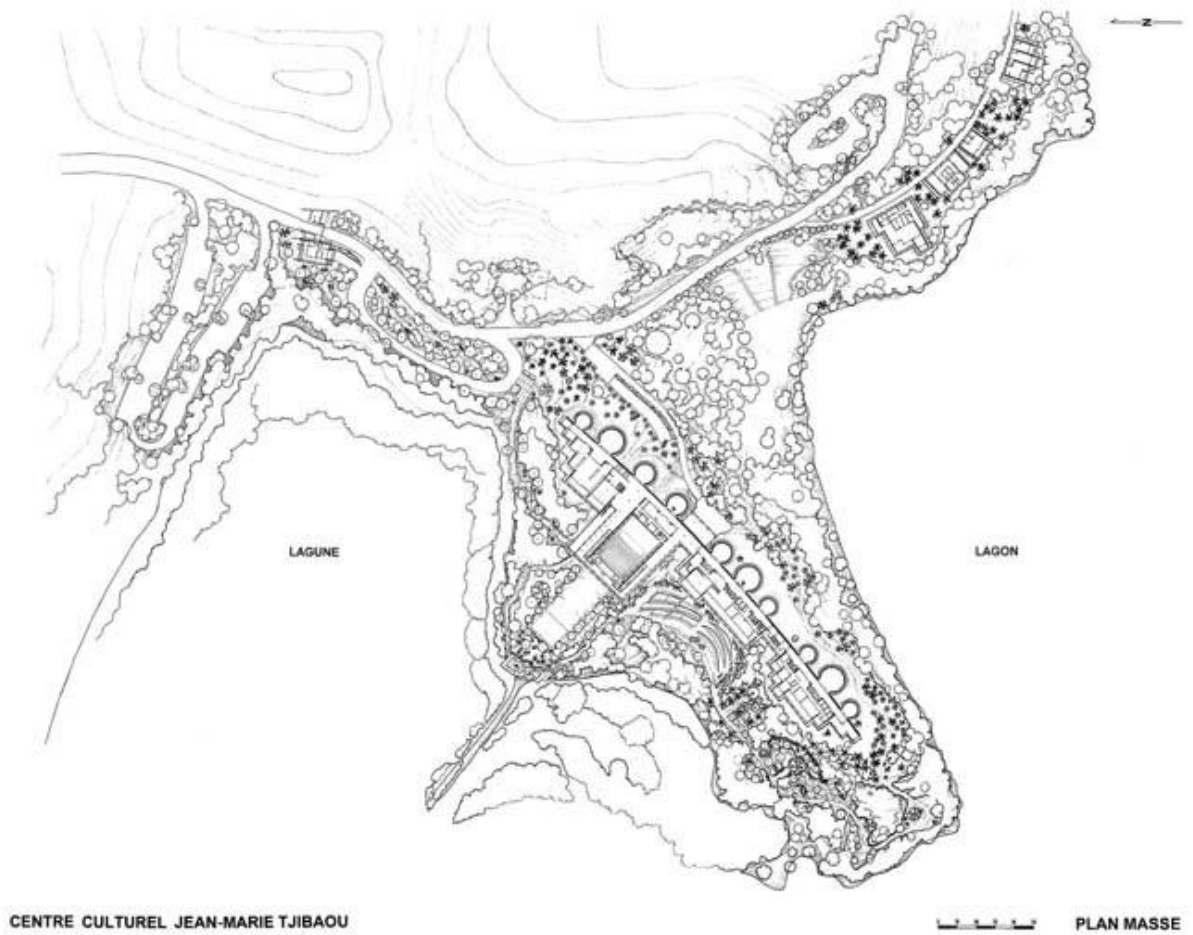


Figure 10: Master plan of the Tjibaou Cultural Centre.

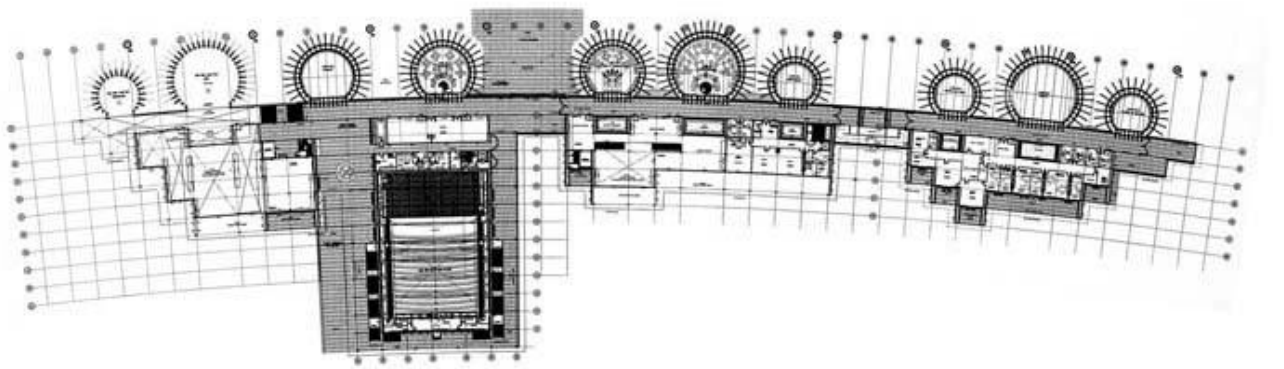


Figure 11: Floor plan of Tjibaou Cultural Centre showing central axis and 'Cases' placements

## Architectural Style:

The style of architecture with regards to the Tjibaou Cultural Centre draws inspiration from the traditional Kanak vernacular. The building also uses a large amount of timber which is also used in the traditional Kanak architecture. According to Renzo Piano : “*The spirit of the Pacific is ephemeral: traditional Kanak buildings are born in unison with nature and make use of its perishable materials; for this reason, the village’s continuity over time is not bound to the survival of each individual building, but rather to the preservation of a specific construction scheme*”(Piano, 2005). The Architect built upon this traditional form of building and their integration with nature. The building followed two main principles, one being the construction capabilities of the Kanak people and the other being the use of modern construction materials such as glass, steel, aluminium but also use the local traditional materials such a wood and stone. The centre draws from the inspiration of the traditional Kanak huts and uses this as an idea to form the 10 large Cases (Piano, 2005). The timber used on the Cases vary in sizes and are spaced unevenly to create an optical illusion. This also helps to create a variety of shadow patterns due to the irregularity. Iroko wood was used in the construction of the cases and this type of wood is resistant to termites and the harsh climatic conditions but also weathers to give a good finish (Piano, 2005). The inspiration behind the woven effect of the structures come from the woven construction of the Kanak huts. Although the Cases are the same they have been given different uses that makes each space different. The Cases that needed a transparent look for the buildings natural light and ventilation strategies are shielded by wooden blinds made of local wood. The Cases form a unifying element for the building (Piano, 2005). The Cases also relate well to the context and create a connection with nature. This building however modern, still uses the principles of the Kanak tradition. Its aesthetic value remains but using modern technologies to construct. Subtle elements from the Kanak vernacular have been utilized. The building can be regarded as one that complies with the principle of critical regionalist ideals. Apart from the connection between traditional and the universal system, the building is also extremely sustainable. The building also evokes all the senses, apart from a visual master piece its tactile qualities add to the experience of the building making the user more aware of the building. Tectonic form is expressed in this building and the structure forms a poetic experience throughout the design.



*Figure 12: Traditional Kanak Hut.*





*Figure 13: The Tjibaou Cultural Centre under construction, Timber panels created as the skin of the cases drawing inspiration from the Kanak hut.*





*Figure 14: The Cases representing the Kanak Huts, Cladded in timber on a Steel structure.*

### **Socio Cultural Attributes:**

The Cultural Centre was named after the Kanak Independence leader Jean-Marie Tjibaou who was assassinated in 1989. (Piano, 2005) The Kanak people are form a major part of the population in the Pacific region but are concentrated more in New Caledonia. In New Caledonia the Kanak People form 41% of the population. The New Caledonian Capital is Noumea and is a French territory. It is although gaining its independence (Piano, 2005). During the negotiations for independence the authorities requested that a cultural centre be built in dedication of the Kanak Culture. It was the then French President François Mitterand who commissioned the project and invited architects to enter a competition to design the centre, the winning architect was Italian Architect, Renzo Piano (Piano, 2005). The project brief was broad and the project had to be designed to honour the traditional Kanak Culture. It was also noted that the Cultural centre become a focal point for the Kanak Culture. The project was to be beneficial to the society in which it existed. The centre houses many activities such as music and dance performances, special events, lectures, teaching facilities etc. (Piano, 2005). According to Renzo Piano; *“the objective was to ensure that, despite its adaptations, the Kanak culture would not lose touch with its historical roots.”* (Piano, 2005) This centre also creates an identity for the Kanak people, it uses memory as a tool to teach the upcoming generations about the Kanak culture. The centre also includes activities such as linguistic and archaeological heritage that teaches people about the history of the Culture. The centre is seen to be a successful building as its purpose is fulfilled in creating architecture that represents a group of people and using this architecture to teach the people about their heritage, culture and history.

### **Memory and Identity:**

The Jean-Marie Tjibaou Cultural centre stays true to the architecture of its surroundings and context and is relevant to the people that use the centre. However the centre is true to evoking memory and identity in its context. The centre is designed taking the essence of Kanak architecture and applying it in a modern context, which makes it highly successful in portraying the identity of the Kanak people on a grand scale. The building apart from its aesthetic presence also serves a functional purpose. The aim of the centre is to evoke the memory of the Kanak culture. The centre does this and more, through linguistic practices, art, live performance and learning of literature through various

media. As previously discussed, performance of cultural memory is one of the most powerful tools in conveying the message of a group and its culture. This also strengthens the groups bond. By means of teaching culture and portraying it to the people that use the centre, it gives the users a pride of their heritage and a continual learning process to occur. The Jean-Marie Tjibaou centre places the Kanak culture and Identity at the forefront by first creating an architecture that is suitable to its context and relevant to the people that use it as well as offering various activities that strengthen the culture on a daily basis. The centre will for decades play an integral part of the Kanak community as it houses a cultural base for which new generations can keep their culture alive by learning and implementing various forms of performing arts, literature, fine arts and displays in their day to day life. The use of memory in this cultural centre is what makes it special in the formation of an identity or revitalizing of it thereof. However memory is only one tool used in this magnificent building. Architectural aesthetic also plays an important role in identifying the people that this building was built for. By the use of a critical regionalist method, the building is modern and high-tech but still shows of the true vernacular methods of the Kanak people.

## **5.2 Khalsa Heritage Centre:**

### **Context and Environmental conditions:**

The Khalsa Heritage centre is located in the Capital City, Anandpur Sahib, of Punjab India. The building itself consists of a museum which celebrates 500 years of Sikh history and the 300<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Khalsa scriptures that were written by the tenth and last Guru, Gobind Singh (Architizer, 2011). The Centre was designed by world famous architect and designer Moshe Safdie, also famous for his work on the Holocaust museum in Jerusalem (Architizer, 2011). The building sits on a 75 acre site overlooking the town. The centre is divided into two sections that go across a ravine. The two sides are joined by a 165 metre bridge (Inhabitat, 2013). This building is deeply rooted in the surrounding landscape and takes full advantage of regionalist architecture. The building is placed amongst the nearby sand cliffs and is clad with local sandstone (Inhabitat, 2013). This building seamlessly fits into the natural landscape and reads as an icon for the town and for the country. Figure 15 shows how the building fits into the site, with the pedestrian walkway crossing the ravine.



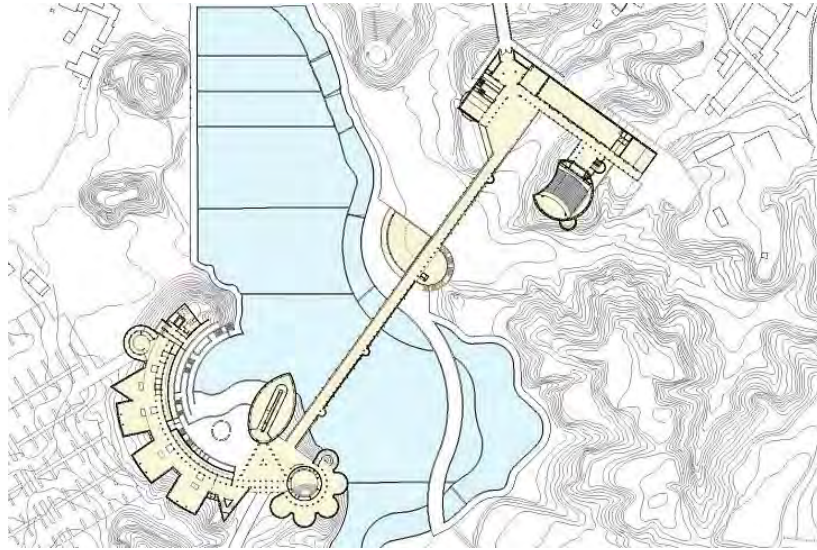
*Figure 15: The Khalsa Heritage centre fitted into the natural landscape.*

### **Planning:**

The Khalsa Heritage centre consists of two sections connected by a 165 metre long bridge that runs over a network of reflecting pools. The western section of the building is directly connected to the town and features a 400 seat auditorium, a two level library which overlooks a grand reading space, exhibition galleries and a store to keep rare archival material (Architizer, 2011). The east section of the centre features a permanent exhibition that showcases Sikh religion, culture and history. The building rises from the underlying cliffs and evokes the fortress cities of Gwalior, Punjab and Rajasthan (Inhabitat, 2013). The Galleries in the eastern section of the building are arranged in a group of 5. These galleries each represent the themes of the Sikhs; earth, mass and lightness, sky and depth and ascension are further represented by the Museums towers and reflective roofs. The architects worked closely with Amardeep Behl, the exhibition designer, of Design Habitat in New Delhi to form a successful integration between display and architecture (Architizer, 2011). The centres planning works well and creates a sense of great space and tranquillity. The building is of great proportions but careful



planning has led to its success, it does not overwhelm the visitor and fits naturally into its surroundings. Figure 16 shows the plan of the centre illustrating the two wings of the building with connecting bridge over the ravine.



*Figure 16: Plan showing the Khalsa Heritage centres east and west wings connected by a pedestrian bridge over the ravine.*

### **Architectural Style and materials:**

The Khalsa Cultural centre is styled in the regional ideology of the city in which it exists. This is an important aspect as the design does not feel like a 'white elephant' in the context in which it exists. The building is constructed from cast-in-place concrete and clad in local sandstones (Inhabitat, 2013). The columnar arcades are however left as bare concrete, giving it a tactile expression. The entire building is constructed from hard materials, this is to express the fortress inspiration based architecture. The materials give the building a safe feeling and makes it look structurally sound (Architizer, 2011). The roofs are sheathed in a stainless steel material and reflect the sky and light towards the town's temple. As mentioned previously the centre consists of five galleries and symbolize a fortress and strength of the Sikh warriors. The centre is tied up beautifully with a pedestrian bridge that connects the two sections of the building. The bridge also contains a restaurant half way through, giving the bridge a life and meaning. The complex is also adorned by large water gardens that create a serenity within the centre. This centre is a good example of regionalist architecture. It represents the Sikhs, through its symbolism of strength, creates a tactile feel to the structure which is tectonic in nature and keeps the Sikhs history and heritage alive.



*Figure 17: The Western section of the Khalsa centre showing its approach and entrance.*



*Figure 18: Photograph showing the sandstone cladded building, bare concrete walkways and stainless steel roofs that reflect the sky and light.*



*Figure 19: Photograph showing the restaurant in the centre of the pedestrian bridge.*

### **Socio Cultural attributes:**

The Khalsa Cultural centre represents the Sikh culture. It commemorates 500 years of the Sikh history and 300 years of the Khalsa scriptures (Inhabitat, 2013). This forms an important part in the Sikh identity and culture and reinforces this. The big bold building symbolizes the strength of the Sikh warriors, but also doubles up as a safe house for their rare archives (Inhabitat, 2013). This building fully represents the Sikh culture and this is seen in the 5 massive galleries. The complex is said to be the largest contemporary heritage building ever conceived in India (Media, 2012). This building also houses audio visual features that get the community involved. The centres library is also a centre point for locals and tourists to visit to learn about the Sikh culture and the Khalsa scriptures (Media, 2012).

### **Memory and Identity:**

The Khalsa Cultural centre plays an important part in the culture of the Sikh community. This cultural centre evokes memory very well with its magnificent display of artefacts, performing arts, scriptures and literature. As previously mentioned, for memory to evoke an identity of a group it must put forward triggers to activate the memory of the group or individual memory. This is done skilfully at the Khalsa Cultural centre by using various



artefacts, scriptures and live performances. It is through these triggers a stock of knowledge is built and easily accessible through the viewer's mind map. The building not only uses the displays and social concepts to trigger the memory of identity but the buildings massive scale represents the strong Sikh warriors. The 'Fort' like architecture forms a powerful boundary to the centre. This makes the building stand proud of the landscape and even though it sits within the ravine it marks its point in space. By this approach taken by the designers, it is clear that the identity of the building and this culture was set to stand out and represent its powerful glory. For any centre to be successful in teaching any culture, the centre must provide for activities that the community can actively engage in. This is true at the Khalsa centre as it evokes memory through the various activities within the centre.



*Figure 20: The grand reading space at the Khalsa Cultural Centre.*

### **5.3 Memory Centre: Memory Centre in South Africa, A new Typology Memory Centre:**

As previously discussed in this research, memory plays an important role in creating an identity for the people that belong to a certain society and a certain place. Many buildings take advantage of the memory concept. The whole built environment is actually a memory inspired one creating cognitive maps in the mind of users. However this is not mentioned for every building. The reason for this is that the buildings focus is not memory based. However Museums, cultural centres etc. evoke a memory of past experiences. South Africa is no different, there exists many cultural centres and museums across the country. In a developing country such as South Africa, one can also find a range of new typologies in the built environment. The country is building itself and the needs of the people have to be addressed. One of the new typologies that is currently blooming and taking full advantage of South Africa's rich history is Memory centres. This new typology is based on relaying information that constitutes a memory which is important in a certain place and a certain time. The memory centres contain much more than a museum to showcase artefacts and history but also include cultural activities to allow continuation of culture, heritage material, interactive spaces and a parts that relates to the people of the area. Apart from showcasing a culture of the area, the centres also allow public participation, making the memory fluid, dynamic and present. In South Africa two example have been noted, these examples will be discussed briefly to get an idea of what purpose the memory centre serves in their particular location.

#### **The Ray Alexander Simons Memory Centre:**

The Ray Alexander Simons Memory Centre of Workers & Resistance is based in Gugulethu in the Western Cape. The project forms part of an urban initiative to include the previously defined Gugulethu dormitory township to an integrated suburb of the city of Cape Town (Centre, 2014). The aim from an urban point of view is to deal with the destructive issues that apartheid created. The memory centre itself is a tribute to Ray Alexander Simons, a political activist in South African of Latvian descent. Alexander fought for the workers of South Africa who had no voice against their employers. (Centre, 2014) Alexander is honoured for her contributions to many political organisations such as the ANC, FEDSAW, SWAPO, the Communist party and the New Women's Movement. The centre design was conceptualized by famous South African Architect

Mokena Makeka of Makeka design lab in 2009. The project formed a joint venture between Makeka design lab and AVNA Architects. From Makeka's view the context is fragmented and the new building would aim to resolve this fragmentation giving a new shape to the area. (Makeka, 2009) The Project is made up of a cluster of buildings. The building is marked by a tower depicting the entrance, this tower also contains ancillary functions and is the access point for the scheme (Makeka, 2009). The purpose of the tower is to announce the memory centres presence in the urban scheme. The precinct also included an existing hall which was converted into a gallery space which is partially submerged into the heritage garden (Makeka, 2009). The hall also acts as a catalyst that draws in the public to the spatial experience of the precinct. When the centre is accessed through the tower it leads one into an underground journey where one can experience a virtual narrative of memory (Makeka, 2009). It is important to note that this scheme focuses on a journey through the precinct. The underground gallery is exited through a vertical tower where one is led into the floating galleries, the floating galleries double up as shading for the heritage gardens underneath (Makeka, 2009). The centre also includes other features such as a cultural centre for the development of arts and culture in the area, a Heritage square and the upgrading of 16 hostels into family units. The centre forms an important part in conveying the memory of the people of the area (Centre, 2014). Such a project helps inform locals and tourists of the rich history of Gugulethu and the struggles of the silenced workers (Centre, 2014). It is important to note that this centre uses the concept of memory as a backbone to portray the history of the area. This approach also allows memory to become collective and engages a common thread for the community in which it exists. The following images show the building's design and urban setting.



*Figure 21: The Urban master plan showing the memory centre within the heritage garden on the top and the 16 hostels converted into family units at the bottom.*



*Figure 22: 3 Dimensional rendering of the Memory Centre*





*Figure 23: A street view of the memory centre showing the floating galleries and heritage garden below.*



*Figure 24: The existing hall converted into a gallery space, image showing interaction of public with the urban space.*



# ***Chapter 6:***

## ***Case study***

# **Case study of Intuthuko Junction:**

## **6.1 Introduction:**

Cato Manor is one of the many townships in Durban to suffer from the inequalities of apartheid and the group areas act. This case study will investigate how this township has dealt with the social issues regarding the memory and identity of people that once inhabited this place. Has memory been utilized to restore the sense of community and identity for the area? If so how has architecture been implemented to intervene in the identity of the area? Key concepts and theories have been discussed earlier in this research and will be used to criticise the case study.

## **6.2 Justification of the study:**

Cato manor has a rich history of politics and culture. Cato Manor is situated 5km west of the Durban City centre. The district had been inhabited from the 1650's by small scale chiefdoms (2014). The community of Cato Manor however felt the unjust laws of the group areas act under the apartheid government. Africans were relocated to Kwa-Mashu and Indians to Chatsworth and Phoenix (2014). There exists a rich cultural memory in this area and it is seen as the melting pot of various social groups seeking better job prospects in Durban. The area is seen as one of many political battles between Africans and Indians (Edwards, 2006). Many Indian landowners rented out shacks to Africans because it was a better source of income than market gardening (Edwards, 2006). However due to many riots and violence between Indian and African people, the area was cleared out. However left largely vacant, many shops, the beer hall and Hindu temples remained. In 1992 after lengthy negotiations the Cato Manor Development forum was founded. In 1993 the Cato Manor Development Association (CMDA) was formed to redevelop the Cato Manor Area. (Edwards, 2006)

This association culminated in creating a building that housed the CMDA and other NGO's. The purpose of the building was to be the headquarters for the CMDA which is responsible for the redevelopment of the Cato Manor area. Intuthuko Junction as it is named, houses offices for the CDMA, HSRC, A Heritage Museum and Art Gallery and a Technology innovation centre. In this building, the various uses allow for community participation through skills development, Cultural Learning and Memory as a means in

which the community can collaborate. With a rich History that Cato Manor has, Intuthuko Junction allows for the community to learn and experience this memory of the area. Making it more intelligent and allowing growth and the celebration of heritage. It is relevant to investigate how Intuthuko Junction has helped the community to redevelop the area but also its impact on people's memory through a heritage centre.



*Figure 25: CMDA offices and heritage centre and Intuthuko Junction*

### **6.3 Historical and Social Context of Cato Manor:**

Cato Manor Township was established in Durban Kwa-Zulu Natal in the 1843. It was named after Durban's first Mayor George Christopher Cato. The land was given to George Cato as compensation for his work and personal dedication to community service (2014). However the area of Cato Manor was inhabited from the 1650's by small chiefdoms, namely the Nqondo clan and then replaced by the Ntuli clan 1730.

In 1914 Cato subdivided the farm into a number of small holdings which he sold to prominent residence which then developed country estates (2014). The land owners thereafter sold or leased plots to Indian market gardeners who were previously indentured labourers or their descendants. Indian Indentured workers inhabited Cato Manor shortly after their contracts expired on the sugar cane plantations of the then Natal province. It is also noted that the Indentured labourers were the first occupants of Cato manor (2014). The Indian gardeners also found it profitable to lease land to Africans, the Africans were prohibited from owning land (2014).

During World war two, Cato Manor saw an influx of people. Majority of the people being African labourers. After 1948 the number of informal dwellers rose to a staggering 30 000 people (2014).

Durban saw rapid urbanization and in 1920 it saw the arrival of African workers which had a great effect on Durban's economy (2014). This saw the erection of 500 shacks being erected and Cato Manor becoming part of the Durban borough. However tensions grew between the people and Durban's council as illegal beer brewing occurred. The beer brewing formed a major part of the income for African dwellers and was a significant part of the African tradition. (2014)



*Figure 26: Map showing the extent of Cato Manor.*

By 1949 racial tensions grew between African and Indian residents who lived in close proximity with one another. On 13 January 1949 an incident occurred on Grey Street that resulted in violent anti-Indian attacks that extended into Cato Manor (2014). An incident where an African boy stole from an Indian store owner and the store owner punished him for his wrong doings sparked the tensions between African and Indian

dwellers of Cato Manor. Africans started looting Indian shops, residences and business and Indians lost their properties to the African shack lords and traders. (2014)



*Figure 27: Rioting at Cato Manor due to force removals*

In 1952 the Durban council acquired land from Indian Landowners to set up an emergency camp for homeless African people, this site became known as UMkhumbane named after the local river (2014). The camps population reached mass levels and the municipality encountered various problems, one being the control of homemade liquor which was the only source of income for the local women. The camp was made official in 1954 by the Durban municipality (2014).

In 1954 the Group Area board suggested that Cato Manor be claimed as white area. After implementation of the group areas act, the entire population of Cato Manor had to be moved (2014). The Indians were moved to Chatsworth and the Africans were moved to Kwa-Mashu. By 1958 most of the residents of Cato Manor were moved out and the area was reclaimed as a white area. However the Natal Indian Congress helped

residence resist the removals(2014). In 1959 widespread rioting occurred against the removals. People also rioted due to the high amount they had to pay for rent. The people had acted out violently and the consequence being the death of 9 policemen, thereafter a rapid clearance of the area took place. By 1964 most of the shacks had been destroyed and people moved out. On 31 August 1964 the last shack in UMkhumbane was destroyed.(2014)

By 1968 Cato manor was largely vacant, only a few Hindu temples, the beer hall and a few residence remained. A section of Cato Manor called Stella Hill was built up for the whites. A larger remainder of the land was acquired by the University of Natal. (2014) In 1979 the few remaining residence set up the Cato Manor Residents Association (CMRA). The purpose of this organisation was to resist further removals from Cato Manor and the development of racially based housing developments.(2014) The CMRA demanded auctioning off of existing plots by the Durban city council and provide adequate housing for all income groups (2014). Thereafter previous residence made enquiries to regain their land. In 1979 one fifth of Cato Manor was de-proclaimed from being a white only area. (2014)In Many 1980, it was gazetted that Cato Manor become available for Indian occupation again (2014). In 1993 the Cato Manor Development Association (CMDA) was form to implement the re development of Cato Manor.

#### **6.4 Reformation of the Cato Manor Community:**

The Cato Manor project is the largest inner city development in post-apartheid South Africa (CMDA, 2006). The scale of development tin the Cato manor precinct is not the only thing that makes it unique, but the project aims to redress the wrongs of the past by introducing new infrastructure to create a new sustainable urban environment that meets the need of a growing metropolitan (CMDA, 2006). According to the CDMA the following opportunities were identified:

- *To significantly restructure the apartheid geography of Durban through the orderly settlement of low-income households close to the heart of the metropolitan area, allowing them easier access to established and potential economic opportunities (CMDA, 2006).*

- *To create a symbol of reconciliation and non-racialism for the whole metropolitan community by integrating it with surrounding middle and upper-income areas (CMDA, 2006).*
- *To establish technologies, systems, procedures, institutional and human resources which will be applicable to other urban infill and restructuring projects in the Durban metropolitan area and elsewhere in the country (CMDA, 2006).*
- *To restructure the region's transportation systems by establishing a new mass transit system linking the populace of Cato Manor with opportunities and facilities elsewhere in the region (CMDA, 2006).*

The above mentioned points are ongoing development strategies in creating a better community, one that is free of segregation. The project also aims to keep the cultural heritage of the area. The Intuthuko Junction is seen as the building that is creating these opportunities and keeping the cultural heritage and history of the area alive. The following section will study the Intuthuko Junction building to learn from its successes and failures in both architecture and social aspects. This is done to find a link between the two aspects and test the theories on the building, however this case study mainly looks at the architectural properties of the building, social aspects will be covered briefly.

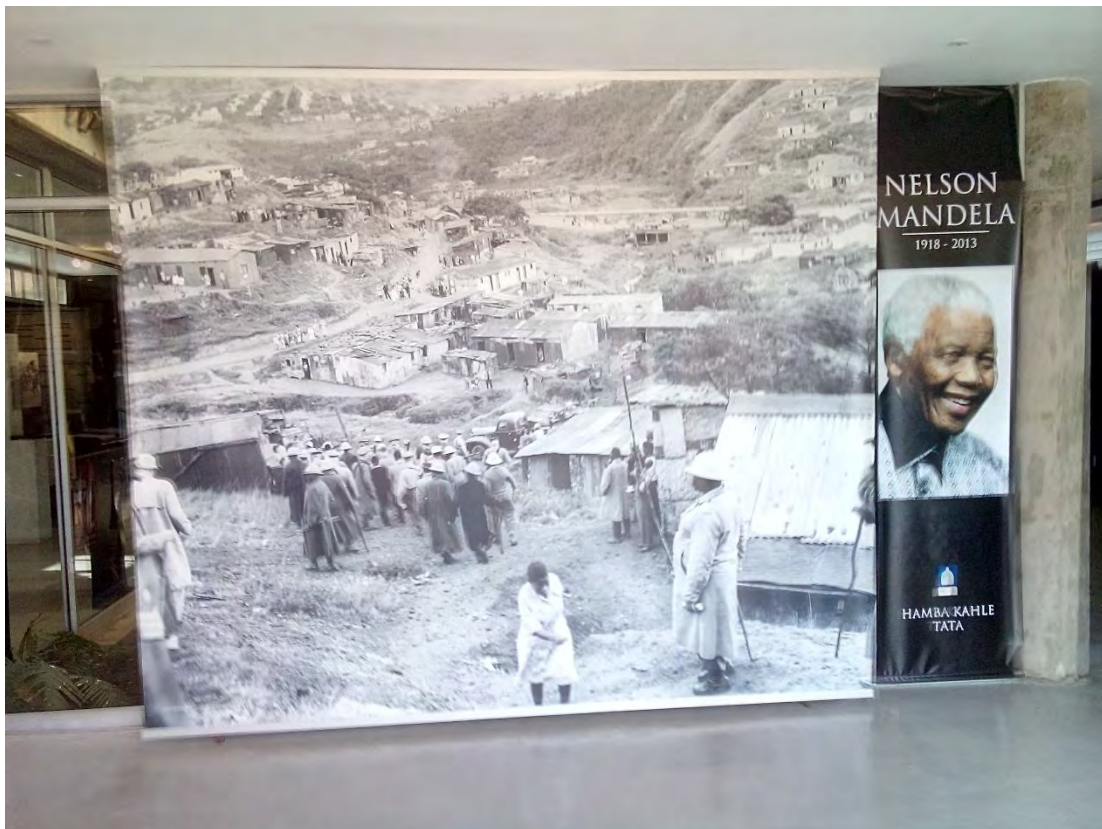
### **6.5 The Insertion of memory into space:**

One of the Key aspects in the design of Intuthuko Junction was the inclusion of a heritage centre for public use which is free of charge. This heritage centre stores the memory of the Cato Manor area from the times of apartheid to present. This facility is an excellent source not only for the people of Cato Manor, but also the general public and tourists. The centre stores large black and white prints of rebellions, removals, riots and suppression. This is an approach to dramatize the history of the Cato manor precinct. However in a small vicinity, the centre is said to move to a new museum site where it can have a larger collection. The municipality has acquired a piece of land from the University of Kwa-Zulu Natal and will erect a new museum which will form a key asset in South African history as well as Cato Manor History. The centre invites one through its large double doors that brings one into the first space with a picture of the Cato Manor settlement in the 1930's. This is used as a focal point into the cultural centre allowing the viewer to engage with the history first hand.





*Figure 28: The approach to the entrance of the Heritage centre*



*Figure 29: A photo of the focal Image at the entrance; Cato Manor settlement in the 1930's*



The exhibition pivots around a central courtyard which brings in light into the heritage centre. Through the exhibition, there are many photos, stories and newspaper articles surrounding the life and times of the Cato manor Precinct. The display is also chronological in order and allows the viewer to experience the history of Cato Manor as it progressed through the years. The large black and white images capture the viewer but also make it easier depicting the exact events without any distractions. The space is large and allows free circulation throughout the exhibition. However small, it does its job significantly well. The amazing part about visiting the Heritage centre is the learning experience, the staff are well read and explain the exhibition step by step. The heritage centre is also free to enter by the general public. The use of memory in this space is an excellent tool to inform the viewer of the past. Large images are framed in the mind of the viewer and this aids with easy recall of the image and memory linked to it. The heritage centre is therefore successful as a memory tool to transfer the story of Cato Manor and the people that inhabited it.



*Figure 30: Picture at the Heritage centre showing Indian residents being relocated.*



*Figure 31: Picture of banner showing the mass meetings held by the Natal Indian Congress to resist relocation.*

## **6.6 The Architecture of Intuthuko Junction:**

In this section, the architecture of Intuthuko junction will be discussed highlighting its pros and cons. Many aspects such as planning, architectural aesthetic, theoretical frameworks, environmental issues, public access and participation etc. will be looked at in detail. This approach is taken to find the core fundamentals of a working building that addresses issues of identity and culture. Also the architecture is investigated to find the means used to create an admirable piece of architecture that conforms to local context while it is able to compete on the global platform.



*Figure 32: HSRC offices and Technology Innovation centre at Intuthuko Junction.*

### 6.6.1 Planning:

Intuthuko Junction is true to an urban design that is appropriate to any block, it keeps hard edges while creating a soft secure core (Buckland, 2002). The building offers a great public-private interface. The office space are raised on pilotis and allow for additions to the ground floor commercial spaces. An angled serpentine wall snakes under the office space creating a barrier from the public pavement and the internal space of the development. The wall is punctured at various locations to allow for pedestrian and vehicular access. The project also address the corner of the development very well, including a public gathering area for meetings and events, it includes a pergola which can be covered. The building responds well to its surrounding creating an icon at the edge of the road.

Inside the development premises the building consists of 8 'Pods'. These pods are used for different activities, mostly office space for different NGO's, HSRC, CMDA and a Technology Innovation centre. These pods are irregularly placed, making reference to the informally aligned tapestry of residents in the area (Buckland, 2002). The pods are also irregularly aligned to the road frontages, giving the authentic feel of informality (Joubert & Bakker, 2009). The office blocks are generally 3 stories throughout the scheme and contain a central courtyard. This courtyard acts as a light well and assisting in cross ventilation. However this strategy is not being used to its full potential as the building contains air-conditioning systems. It was noted that the staff use the air-conditioning only when necessary. Although the courtyards still bring in generous amounts of light at certain parts of the day, they remain underutilized because of the damaged pergolas that give a threat of falling over. The Pods are all connected by circulation bridges which are distributed across the site, where there is no change in level access is gained through the ground. The two clusters of pods on the west and south of the building facing the main access roads are built up to the pavement, the other two pods are set back and help form the positive space in the centre of the development. This method is seen as drawing inspiration from the traditional informal settlement, a protection mechanism for the space within (Buckland, 2002). The building uses the ground floor as a means to allow social interaction with the public, however this is largely underutilized and the building has fell victim to some vandalism. This can be counteracted by allowing a larger range of commercial activities relating to the road



edges to activate the space better. The upper floors of Intuthuko Junction are occupied by private holdings, these office spaces work well and revolve around the central light well. Circulating within these spaces is easy and way finding is not an issue. The building is generally well planned and works well, due to lack of maintenance some spaces are inaccessible and these matters should be attended to so that the building can work to its maximum potential.



*Figure 33: Street elevation of Intuthuko Junction.*



*Figure 34: Ground floor plan of Intuthuko Junction*



*Figure 35: Second floor plan of Intuthuko Junction.*

### **6.6.2 Architectural Aesthetics and Environmental conditions:**

Intuthuko Junction serves to be a fine example of well thought out, traditionally inspired architecture that forms a crucial part of the context in which it is located. The massive facility constructed out of reinforced concrete and infill block work stands proud in the urban framework. The buildings are painted in bright colours giving it prominence and catches the viewer's eye. The building is also finished in other textured materials such as bare concrete and a textured serpentine wall that protects the ground floor. This building is said to resonate with the existing urban framework. (Lipman, 2002) The light weight roofs tend to represent the thin 'boulder weighted' roofs of the informal settlement, however these roofs are just an aesthetic representation their construction is solid (Lipman, 2002). An aesthetic that catches the eye of the viewer almost immediately is the various types of sun control devices on the west façade of the

building. These are constructed from thatching purlins and sit proud on the elevation, being aesthetically pleasing as well as protecting the building from the low west sun.

The architects also take full advantage of the free plywood from the docks or factories and use this to construct stairs, bridges, sun control devices etc. (Lipman, 2002). The architects also maintain their passion for using unconventional yet tested materials. The building is highly detail and uses many locally produced materials. One could argue that the poetics of construction in this building tells a story of the bold character of the culture of Cato Manor. The tectonic form is brought to life by the visual and tactile materials used to express the building in certain places. A tactile nature can be felt throughout the building, materials such as gum poles, concrete blocks, off-shutter concrete, textured plaster, aluminium roof sheeting used as vertical cladding, paved floors etc. make the user feel and experience the building on a more intimate level. Intuthuko Junction was meant to stand out in the urban context. From its sponsors, the EU and the city council an expression of confidence is felt when entering this building. The buildings 8 pods are all now let out and serve different NGO's and government organisations.



*Figure 36: The many types of sun screening used on the west façade of Intuthuko Junction.*





*Figure 37: The highly detailed structure and multitude of materials makes the form a powerful tectonic form with excellent aesthetic values.*



*Figure 38: The highly detail access bridge connecting the parking and offices.*

### **6.6.3 Connection to community:**

Intuthuko Junction forms an integral part of the Cato Manor district. The architecture responds well to the context and the building can easily be accessed by the public. Being an integral part of the landscape it forms the centre point for development in the area. Intuthuko Junction is very successful in promoting the identity of Cato Manor residence and keeping its culture alive. This building has and will in the future be an example of a built form that responds to the needs of a community as well as strengthen the community.

The next chapter of this research will focus on the Indian Identity in South Africa drawing from interviews from 3 respondents. This chapter will aim to clarify the Indian Identity and its impact on South Africa. The chapter will also look at memory as a tool for generating Identity and a built form which is suitable for conveying the message of a Cultural Identity.



# ***Chapter 7:***

## ***Empirical findings***

## **7.1 Introduction:**

This chapter of the research makes use of empirical data in the form of 3 focused interviews that last 30 minutes each. This method is used as the data needed to be thorough and usable. The interviewees are all from Durban, making it easier to understand the context and the problems faced with identity and culture. The interviewees were chosen because of their working knowledge on Memory, Culture, Identity and Diaspora of Indians. The interviews were all recorded digitally and transcribed by the author as a means of data collection. The interview questionnaire will be a means in which the data will be collated and analysed. The interview questions include the background of the interviewee and the family's background before and after indenture including the means of Arrival in South Africa. This is done to form a background of the interviewee in terms of origin, values and traditions. The next set of questions asked to interviewees is based on memories of growing up in Durban. This includes the schools they attended, social life, challenges and how ceremonies were performed then and now. The next set of questions revolve around the Indian Identity in South Africa, extracting the personal views of what the interviewees thought of being and identity for Indians in South Africa is crucial data in rediscovering the Identity of Indian South African Individuals. The last set of questions deals with a manifestation of the research into a building, this set of questions focuses on the need for a building to promote the Indian identity and by doing this rediscover it.

The views and thoughts of all the interviewees differ from section to section. This is expected as not all people are from the same background. Although many characteristics revolve around the same ideas. The collation of data will be presented at the outset of this chapter in order for it to be analysed and conclusions formed. This is done so that the reader is able to understand the data collected and it can be referred to during the analysis. This data is drawn from the transcripts that have been provided in Appendices B. The data will be analysed in terms of the questions asked in the interviews and be compared to find a common base and differences or thoughts of the subject matter in this research.

## 7.2 Summary of Interviews

### Interview with Dr Goolam Vahed:

#### PERSONAL DETAILS

Name: Dr Goolam Vahed

Telephone: N/A

Date of birth: N/A

Sex: Male

#### Research Interview A:

##### Ice Breaker:

1.0 So that I can get to know you a bit better, can you tell me some things about your background such as where you grew up, what your home life was like and what your schools were like.

- *Born in Durban, lived in the area of Pine Street*
- *Attended Crescent Primary school, then Orient High school.*
- *Attended University of Durban Westville for Undergraduate studies thereafter obtaining a Masters and PHD from the U.S.A.*
- *Became a Lecturer at the University of Kwa-Zulu Natal since 1996.*

##### Family Background:

2.0 Moving onto to the research at hand, I would like to ask questions based on the origins of your family and what life was like being in Indenture, Living conditions, Education, etc.

1.1 Which area of India does your Family come from?

- *Family originated from Uttar, Gujarat, India*

1.2 Did your family arrive as Indentured Labourers or Passenger Indians?

- *Grandfather and Father both arrived as workers, not indentured but worked for family in Shops.*

1.3 What did they do after Indenture?

- *Did not come to South Africa as an Indentured labourer, rather a passenger Indian.*

## Memory:

3.0I would like to ask questions related to memories of Durban from an Indian perspective. These questions aim to learn about life in Durban and how the formation of a South African Indian Identity was formed.

3.1. Where in Durban did you grow up?

- *Grew up on Pine Street in Durban.*

3.2. Describe growing up in Durban. (Experiences/Challenges).

- *Defined events throughout growing up.*
- *Saturday to Monday were dedicated to playing sport.*
- *Life didn't revolve around shopping, shops closed for the weekends.*
- *Large family Gatherings.*
- *Socialising with people, there was no T.V which meant more playing out on the streets, games, sports etc.*
- *Mother and Father didn't have much Education, mother didn't speak any English*
- *Father visited the market every day and was very well known.*

3.3 Tell me about how Ceremonies such as Weddings, Funerals, and Child Births etc. were performed and is it different from how it is done today?

- *Identities formed around Festivals.*
- *Festivals performed publicly.*
- *Difference in the way the family integrates into a function, in the past families would handle the preparation of the function, today the preparations are done by a caterer or decorator, the family bonded through the function, which is not a common occurrence today.*

3.4 Tell me about how cultural activities had an impact on Indians, How did these activities bring the community together?

- *Public festivals allowed for mass gatherings and observations.*
- *Festivals such as Kavady, Muharram, and Six foot dance would gather large amounts of Indian people of all faiths.*
- *Identities being formed around festivals.*
- *A way of defining their Identity through performance of festivals.*

### **Identity:**

4.0I would like to ask Questions relating to the identity of Indians in South Africa. These questions are aimed at understanding the concept of identity and how it is portrayed in the Multi-Cultural South Africa.

1.3 Tell me about Indian Identity in South Africa.

- *Indian South African Identity is formed from a multitude of situations.*
- *A case of multiple identities.*
- *Identity is described as a ripple effect on water.*
- *Indian South African Identity has many layers, not one specific one.*
- *Different Identities in different situations.*

1.4 Do you think that Indian Identity is being lost?

- *Not being lost, but changing and progressing.*
- *Identity is a fluid idea.*
- *Changes according to events that redefine it.*

1.5 What are your views on making the Indian Identity more prominent?

- *Community participation for festivals on a broader level.*
- *Family participation on an intimate level.*
- *Celebration of festivals on a Grand scale like previously.*

## Needs/Wants

2. In this set of questions I would like to know what your views on facilities are for Indian people. Should there be facilities to promote Culture and Identity?

2.1 Is a facility to promote Indian Culture needed?

- *Yes, an Interactive building.*
- *Place to celebrate festivals.*
- *Showing authenticity in festivals and culture.*

2.2 If such a facility is needed, what do you think is wanted in a facility to promote culture and identity?

- *A facility that shows appreciation of Culture.*
- *A cinema showing Contemporary Bollywood films.*
- *Activities to ensure the facility is used all the time.*

**End of Interview with Dr Goolam Vahed**

## Interview with Dr Kalpana Hirilal:

### PERSONAL DETAILS

Name: Dr Kalpana Hirilal

Telephone: N/A

Date of birth: N/A

Sex: Female

### Research Interview A:

#### Ice Breaker:

1.0 So that I can get to know you a bit better, can you tell me some things about your background such as where you grew up, what your home life was like and what your schools were like.

- *Born in Durban and grew up in Durban.*
- *Attended Gandhi Desai High.*
- *Attended University of Durban Westville for Undergraduate studies thereafter obtaining a Masters and PHD from the University of Natal.*
- *Became a Lecturer at the University of Kwa-Zulu Natal.*

#### Family Background:

2.0 Moving onto to the research at hand, I would like to ask questions based on the origins of your family and what life was like being in Indenture, Living conditions, Education, etc.

2.1 Which area of India does your Family come from?

- *Family originated from Gujarat, India.*
- *Paternal grandparents from Colvert.*
- *Maternal Grandparents from Navsari.*

2.2 Did your family arrive as Indentured Labourers or Passenger Indians?

- *Both Maternal and Paternal grandparent came as free or passenger Indians.*

2.3 What did they do after Indenture?

- *Did not come to South Africa as an Indentured labourer, rather a passenger Indian.*

**Memory:**

3.0I would like to ask questions related to memories of Durban from an Indian perspective. These questions aim to learn about life in Durban and how the formation of a South African Indian Identity was formed.

3.1 Where in Durban did you grow up?

- *Grew up in Central Durban*

3.2. Describe growing up in Durban. (Experiences/Challenges).

- *Socialized with Indians, in particular Gujarati speaking individuals.*
- *Made compulsory by parents to attend Gujarati school.*
- *Grew up in a strong traditional Gujarati Family.*
- *Part of the Rajput association or cast, define the socialization of cast members.*
- *Strong sense of community in terms of cast gathering.*
- *Student boycotts, became politically aware during final year of school and university.*
- *Very little contact with other race groups.*
- 3.3 Tell me about how Ceremonies such as Weddings, Funerals, and Child Births etc. were performed and is it different from how it is done today?
- *Ceremonies and festivals very family orientated.*
- *Sense of purpose was dominant.*
- *Ceremonies were more respected, now it has become materialistic.*
- *Meals at weddings are changed, people usually ate at a hall in rows of table compared to the westernized way of table seating that takes place today.*



• 3.4 Tell me about how cultural activities had an impact on Indians, How did these activities bring the community together?

- *Public festivals allowed for mass gatherings and observations.*
- *Festivals occurred within the community, with regards to the Rajput association*
- *Usually conducted at a community hall.*
- *Festival also occurred within the city, held by the larger Gujarati organisations.*
- *The whole family attended these festivals, not only the parents. Festivals were very tightly knit when it came to family.*
- *Festivals were reinforced by daily routine of religion and culture.*
- *Attire was important and the family would dress up in the traditional wear when attending functions*

### **Identity:**

4.0I would like to ask Questions relating to the identity of Indians in South Africa. These questions are aimed at understanding the concept of identity and how it is portrayed in the Multi-Cultural South Africa.

4.1Tell me about Indian Identity in South Africa.

- *Identity is shaped by the environment, beliefs, ideologies and sense of self.*
- *Identity changes and it is fluid, not set in stone.*
- *Identity also changes with time*
- *Indian South African Identity has many layers, not one specific one.*

4.2Do you think that Indian Identity is being lost?

- *No, but because Identity is fluid it changes.*
- *Identities change from region to region, Indian identity in South Africa is different from the rest of the Indians in other parts of the world.*
- *Culinary trends, attire and language are changing.*

4.3What are your views on making the Indian Identity more prominent?

- *Teaching and learning of Languages and the culture associated with those languages.*
- *A display of heritage to remember the past.*

- Family as the centre of one's life.

## **Needs/Wants**

5.0 In this set of questions I would like to know what your views on facilities are for Indian people. Should there be facilities to promote Culture and Identity?

5.1 Is a facility to promote Indian Culture needed?

- *Yes, a cultural centre*
- *Place to bring all South Africans together.*

5.2 If such a facility is needed, what do you think is wanted in a facility to promote culture and identity?

- *A facility that teaches vernacular languages.*
- *Theory and practice of Indian culture.*
- *Must be open to all race groups.*
- *Performing arts.*

**End of Interview with Dr Kalpana Hirilal**

# Interview with Anonymous

## PERSONAL DETAILS

Name: N/A

Telephone: N/A

Date of birth: N/A

Sex: N/A

## Research Interview A:

### Ice Breaker:

1.0 So that I can get to know you a bit better, can you tell me some things about your background such as where you grew up, what your home life was like and what your schools were like.

- *Born in Chatsworth and grew up in Phoenix.*
- *Attended schools nearby home.*
- *Attended University of Natal and finished off with a PHD, now lectures at the University of Kwa-Zulu Natal.*
- *Was not very aware of the impacts of apartheid, but felt that society was not free.*

### Family Background:

Moving onto to the research at hand, I would like to ask questions based on the origins of your family and what life was like being in Indenture, Living conditions, Education, etc.

2.1 Which area of India does your Family come from?

- *Specific area not known, However Dravidian roots are noted.*

2.2 Did your family arrive as Indentured Labourers or Passenger Indians?

- *Maternal ancestors arrived as passengers via Mauritius.*
- *Paternal ancestors arrived as Indentured Labourers.*

2.3 What did they do after Indenture?

- *Paternal ancestors continued working in Indenture.*

**Memory:**

I would like to ask questions related to memories of Durban from an Indian perspective. These questions aim to learn about life in Durban and how the formation of a South African Indian Identity was formed.

3.1. Where in Durban did you grow up?

- *In Phoenix*

3.2. Describe growing up in Durban. (Experiences/Challenges).

- *Seemed like a rather normal society at the time.*
- *Visited the movies, shopping malls etc.*
- *Long trips to Johannesburg.*
- *Vividly remembers giving a soldier a lift to Johannesburg, the soldier did not communicate the whole way to Johannesburg.*

3.3 Tell me about how Ceremonies such as Weddings, Funerals, and Child Births etc. were performed and is it different from how it is done today?

- *Grew up in a Catholic Home.*
- *Never attended other religious festivals due to being Catholic.*
- *Didn't comprehend with other Indian terms from the vernacular languages.*
- *Vividly remembers grandfather's funeral, the giving of a t-shirt and umbrella to the priest for performing the ceremony. Enquired about it and found that it was a traditional practice in the culture of Indians in India. The priests generally walked to the ceremony and would need new clothes and an umbrella to walk back.*
- *Previously ceremonies only consisted of one race.*
- *Today, ceremonies are multi-racial.*

3.4 Tell me about how cultural activities had an impact on Indians, How did these activities bring the community together?

- *Not much first-hand knowledge on festivals.*
- *Makes reference to Goolam Vahed and His literature on the Muharram Festival.*
- *Speaks of sports as a culture and generator for the Identity of Indian people at the time.*

#### **Identity:**

4.0 I would like to ask Questions relating to the identity of Indians in South Africa. These questions are aimed at understanding the concept of identity and how it is portrayed in the Multi-Cultural South Africa.

4.1 Tell me about Indian Identity in South Africa.

- *A case of a multitude of Identities.*
- *Believes that the apartheid categories should be removed, as we are South Africans and should not be racially divided.*
- *Argues the fact that looking a certain way does not create an identity.*

4.2 Do you think that Indian Identity is being lost?

- *Believes ancestry maintains the Identity of individuals.*
- *People should be categorized as South Africans rather than Indians.*

What are your views on making the Indian Identity more prominent?

- *Believes in the need to create a South African Identity rather than an Indian identity.*
- *Believes in creating a nation that is seen as one and not by racial terms.*

## Needs/Wants

5.0 In this set of questions I would like to know what your views on facilities are for Indian people. Should there be facilities to promote Culture and Identity?

5.1 Is a facility to promote Indian Culture needed?

- *Yes, a building to document the history of Indians.*
- *A centre to House documents relating to Indian History in South Africa.*

5.2 If such a facility is needed, what do you think is wanted in a facility to promote culture and identity?

- *Mainly Documentation of history or research.*

**End of Interview with Anonymous**

### 7.3 Analysis and Discussion of Findings:

In the previous section a summary of all the interviews are summarized and the key themes highlighted. This section aims to analyse and discuss the interviews completed and draw key ideas compared to the literature review. This is done in order to find a correlation of data from both primary and secondary sources. The data will be analysed in the key themes of Memory, Identity, Culture and a need for Built form with respects to expressing Identity. The study involved 3 respondents, namely Dr Goolam Vahed (Respondent A), Dr Kalpana Hirilal (Respondent B) and another individual who asked to remain anonymous (Respondent C) for the study. From the summary, the types of questions can be noted. The first section that will be analysed is memory.

#### **Memory:**

It is noted that all three respondents grew up in Durban and all have descended from India, also respondents A and B have ancestry that hails from western India from the state of Gujarat and Respondent C is of Dravidian descent. Both respondent A and B have forefathers that came to South Africa as passenger Indians and respondent C having paternal ancestry coming as Indentured Indians. However these respondents grew up in different parts of Durban which, in a way influenced their identities in terms of place. It must also be noted that each respondent grew up in a different time and this has had an impact on their identity. Although the times are just a few years apart, a sense of identity formation due to circumstances is noted. The second set of questions regarding memory posed to the respondents asked about their individual memory of growing up in Durban. Respondent A, speaks of sport, family gatherings, socialising more with the community and what his parents did for a living. Respondent A grew up in the late 70's and his memories generally revolve around the close knit community of Pine Street. From this, it can be noted that people were involved more at a community level rather than keeping to themselves. Respondent A also reinforces the idea of community. Respondent A believes even today people seek community, so that their lives can be shared and not lived in isolation from one another, the respondent also reaffirms that religion plays an important part in bringing a community together. People are now joining churches and other religious organisations to participate with community. Respondent B had a slightly different memory of growing up in Durban, a very close knit cast background. Respondent B affirms that her growing up revolved

around the strong Gujarati community in which she belonged. Respondent B also states that her parents were very influential in her growing up. From the interview it is also noted that respondent B grew up in a community of Indians and had very little contact with other race groups. Respondent B became politically aware of her surroundings at the end of her schooling career and the beginning of her University career. Respondent C had a much different upbringing from the respondents A and B in the sense that the respondent grew up in a much later in time, the tail end of the 1980's. According to respondent C, societal life was normal and never questioned. The respondent's upbringing also revolved around a close knit Catholic home, however the respondent states that it didn't revolve around culture. Respondent C vividly remembers socialising at the movies, shopping malls etc. A differentiation from the memories of the respondents is clear, particularly from Respondents A and B to C. It is noted that time is a huge influence on the memories of the individuals. But however a common thread of cultural memory is evident with respondents A and B and a more social memory is noted with respondent C. According to Assman; *"Memory is the faculty that enables us to form an awareness of selfhood (identity), both on the personal and on the collective level. Identity, in its turn, is related to time."* (Assman, 2008) It is clear that time plays an important role in identity formation through memory.

The next set of questions posed towards the interviewee's revolved around the celebrating of festivals and ceremonies. Each of the respondents belong to 3 major categories of religion amongst Indians in South Africa, namely Islam in the case of respondent A, Hinduism in the case of respondent B and Catholicism in the case of respondent C. This makes provision for a wide range of memories revolving around festivals amongst Indians in Durban. Respondent A has very vivid memories of the Muharram festival celebrated amongst Muslims in the Grey street precinct. This festival gathered many followers on the 10<sup>th</sup> day of Muharram, this festival is explained in detail in chapter 3 of this document. Respondent A affirms the fact that the Indian Identity of the time revolved around the festivals that were celebrated. It was a public display of religion for people but also a marker of identity amongst the Indian community. Respondent A also states that this festival brought other faiths to join in on the celebrations, it was more a meeting of community and celebrations rather than a strictly religious festival. Respondent A also makes mention of ceremonies that took place. The



interviewee affirmed that communities and families were tighter knit. The ceremony would bring the family closer together and the preparations would be done by the family and the community. The respondent states that it is much different in present times, where ceremonies are organised by a third party and seldom involve full family and community support. According to respondent B, festivals occurred within their Gujarat community. Events would take place at a hall and the whole family would attend, the respondent also states that compared to present times, families are not fully involved in attending cultural functions. It is the parents that would attend and children stray away from the functions. Respondent B also states that ceremonies were more respected in the past, it is also reinstated by the respondent that ceremonies are prepared by a third party and don't involve full family and community support.

An example that can be drawn from the interviews of both respondents A and B is: The eating at functions. Both respondents seem to agree when meals were served that the family members would prepare the eating area and serve the people. The food was also cooked by the family and community members. Drawing from this statement by both respondents A and B it can be deduced that ceremonies now revolve around an easy way out of hiring a third party to prepare for the function. Respondent C, however has a very small account of the abovementioned example taking place in the community which they belonged. Respondent C however speaks of ceremonies now involving a mix of races and cultures with regards to ceremonies. Ceremonies according to respondent C mainly revolved around the Church which they belonged too, but also a strong sense of community within that institution. It can be noted from the views of the respondents that a strong sense of community revolved around functions and this changed. As mentioned the respondents grew up in tight knit communities which were due to the group areas act of the apartheid era. Even though this scheme made racial groups bond more, it didn't allow for much integration with other racial groups. From this scenario it is noted that communities were closer because they lived together and had a common outlook. The respondents also stated that in the present, these ceremonies don't involve community or family support because people don't live together as tight knit as in the past, families are spread out more thinly and usually arrive to observe the function and leave. If this is the case, place also forms an important part of memory. The occurrence of a democratic South Africa meant that people could live anywhere they felt like. This

destruction of community by individuals moving to other areas is what caused a break in the previous communities. With reference to chapter 3 and the sections of home and homeland, Professor Ashwin Desai and Dr Goolam Vahed mention that the moving of people from their original communities changes their identity and that of their community. (Vahed, 2010) According to Halbwachs; *“The family as a group may change size owing to death or marriage, or it may change location as it grows richer or poorer or as the father is transferred or changes occupation. From then on, neither the group nor the collective memory remains the same, but neither have the physical surroundings.”* From this statement it can be deduced that “Place” forms an integral part of memory and the continuation of memory. Once the place is destroyed, the memory is destroyed and things change, not for the bad but in the new context which it takes place, which of course involves the time factor.

### **Identity:**

The next theme posed to respondents involved Identity of Indian South Africans. This method was used to explore what the respondents thought the Indian South African Identity is from a personal standpoint. Respondents were also asked if this identity is being lost in current times. The discussion then went further to explore if anything could be done to make the Indian Identity in South Africa more prominent.

The first set of questions posed to the respondents questioned what their thoughts on the Indian identity in South Africa. Respondent A describes identity forming from a multitude of situations that one faces in day to day life. Respondent A also states that identities change when speaking to different people. A very interesting comment put forward by respondent A is that the Indian South African Identity is not a homogenous one, it has multiple facets to it. Respondent B states the environment in which one belongs, belief systems, ideologies and sense of self define ones identity. Both respondent A and B are of the belief that Identities are not one imaginable facet but a multitude of identities depending on the individual. However common threads do occur for example religion, place and languages. Respondent C has a different approach to the identity of Indians, the respondent affirms the fact the Indians shouldn't be placed in a box of race. Rather everyone in South Africa should be considered South African, rather than categorized under the apartheid strategy of racial divides. Although

respondent C has this view and it linked to a more political nature, it brings about another theme, being the South African Identity which for the case of this research will not be discussed further. It can be noted that from all the respondents views that Identity cannot be strictly defined for Indian South Africans. This is due to the many factors that one finds in the rainbow nation. These factors include the education system, places, other cultures, politics, religion and a multitude of other themes.

The second set of questions posed under the theme of identity asked respondents if they thought that the Indian Identity is being lost. Respondent A stated that it is not being lost but it is changing, the respondent reaffirmed this by stating that identity is fluid. By referring back to the respondents answers on memory, it can be deduced that time plays an influential role in Identity formation. The respondent also mentioned that the identity is changing, as previously discussed due to the many factors that influence it. Respondent B also believes that the identity of Indians is changing and progressing and not being lost, however the respondent has mentioned that this identity changes from place to place. The respondent also mentioned that the trend in fashion and culinary dishes is also changing, not in a bad way but progressively just like the Indian identity. Respondent C holds firm to the belief that Indians should be treated as South Africans under the same umbrella as the rest of South Africa. However does feel that ancestry will always define the identity from which one cannot differ and cannot be lost. Form the views of the respondents it can be deduced that the Indian South African Identity is not being lost but rather changing and progressing with the various abovementioned factors.

The third set of questions posed to the respondents asked in what way the Indian identity can become more prominent. Respondent A suggested that communities become more involved in festivals. By doing this, a bonding of communities occur. Respondent A also stated that families participate more in communal and cultural festivals. The respondent also stated that large scale festival make a comeback, in this way all communities and cultures in South Africa can participate and becomes a part of the South African Identity. Respondent B reaffirms the need for whole family participation in cultural activities. In this way strengthening the intimate bonds with families and the community at large. Respondent B puts forward a need for the display of heritage, the interviewee stated that remembering the past plays an integral role in identifying with one's self. The

respondent also firmly believes that the teaching of vernacular languages and the culture associated with those language be reinstated. The respondent puts forward the notion of linguistics as a means to connect back to one's cultural memory and the identity of an individual. Respondent C however still reaffirms the need to create a South African Identity. An identity which many cultures come together but the people of South Africa be treated as Homogenous. From the respondent's views, it can be ascertained that the performing of cultural activities can make the Indian identity in South Africa more prominent. Not only will this make it stand out more, but it will respond to the Indian identity in which the different facets become more alive and prominent. Referring back to chapter 3, in particular the section of performing cultural memory it can be noted that this performances play an integral role in the formation of identity but also allow for its continuity within a society.

#### **Built form and its influence on Identity:**

The last theme introduced to respondents is what were the needs and wants in a building that offered an expression and remembrance for the Indian culture. All the respondents had many different ideas of what the building could contain. All the respondents agreed with a need for a facility to promote the Indian identity. Respondent A suggested that the building promote authenticity of Indian culture and Identity, the respondent also stated that a building of such nature be interactive to capture the user. The respondent also suggested that a building of this nature have a contemporary cinema space in which movies can be screened daily to keep the building in use. The respondent was very keen on a building that could be engaged with daily. Respondent B suggested the inclusion of all races for the use of the facility. In this way capturing the Indian identity and including it on the National platform of identities of South Africa. The respondent also suggested the need for facilities to teach the vernacular languages coupled with theory and practice of Indian Culture. Respondent B also suggested a space for performing arts where even other cultures could partake in the events. Respondent B also reaffirmed that this facility be one that any culture in South Africa can use. Respondent C suggested that the facility house all the heritage and artefacts pertaining to Indians in South Africa. The respondent put forward the need for documentation and the public use of this documentation. All the respondents had different ideas in mind and

approached the design for Cultural Identity differently. The respondent's thoughts and Ideas will be carefully considered in the design for A Memory Centre for Indian Culture.

Taking note from all the respondents' views and comments from the interviews carried out, the significance of findings will be discussed in the next chapter giving recommendations and concluding the research.

# ***Chapter 8:***

# ***Conclusion***

## 8.1 Significance of findings:

Through primary and secondary research, many themes, concepts and theories have been highlighted. In chapter 3, Identity and memory were investigated. Through this research it can be deduced that memory play a vital role in the construction of memory. Memory is an occurrence in the mind of humans and it is a source of past and present which informs the future. This source as described in chapter 4 starts to form an order in the mind of a human being. This order is called the cognitive map. With the use of the cognitive map that is created and the stock of knowledge, it is evident that this is referred to by the individual person to navigate through life. This cognitive map and stock of knowledge also defines a person, an event that occurred will be pulled up for reference when something sparks the memory, it will be compared again and stored for future reference, this occurrence is called cognition. So how does this relate to architecture? One may argue that both the cognitive map and the physical built world is one in the same. Our environments shape what is perceived in our mind. People create a world in their mind, a visual one. Therefore architecture can be seen as the ground for memory. If architecture is the ground for memory, can certain built environments influence the identity of the people that live in that space? It can be noted that different cultures do everyday tasks in a similar manner, however what differs is their beliefs and memories. Each society has their own special way of doing things, so too they have architectures created to suit their need. If this architecture is created from the needs of the society in which it belongs, it is deemed to be correct in that society. If what is around them has been created by them, then the cognitive maps that they build is related to that specific place, where memories are created and destroyed. If that society moves to a different place, their needs will change according to that place. Therefore it can be noted that architectures of a place influence the creation of memory and in turn influence the identity of the people which exist in that place. From the primary findings it is also noted that cultural activities play a crucial role in bringing back memories and rediscovering memories. This is an important tool used in many cultures to evoke the Identity of that culture. From the secondary findings it is evident that all the highlighted theories and concepts become relevant in examining the thoughts and ideas of the respondents. The respondents all answered memory related questions referring to a place. From this it is evident that 'Place' forms an integral part in memory retrieval of certain memories. It is

this place were events took place and were recorded in the stock of knowledge all within a cognitive map. The respondents also remembered cultural activities and ceremonies as an integral way of remembering their cultures. All respondents put forward the need for cultural activities in strengthening the culture of Indians, in a place that brings the collective together. When asked about the identity of South African Indians all respondents answered that identity is a complex, fluid process and is influenced by the environment, traditions, culture, language and a host of other factors. From these statements it can be deduced that Identity is not a static phenomenon, rather a dynamic fluid one. This can be related back to the cognitive map, the cognitive map cannot be destroyed, and rather it can change and be reconfigured through time. From the interviews it is also noted that time plays an integral part of the Identity of any culture or society. It progresses with time and the needs change. The respondents also viewed the need for a cultural centre as a necessity in today's society. Allowing people to respond, interact and engage with their culture and reinforce their identities. It can be deduced that the built environment behaves as a mnemonic device, storing belief systems, values, ideas and their Identity.

## **8.2 Conclusion and Recommendations:**

Throughout the research it has been found that memory plays a significant role in the identities of people and society. With regards to a group, memory relies on the communal remembrance of events. When this occurs, it is often activated by then phenomenon of transition, a formulation of an altered cultural memory which in turn stabilizes the group and its identity. From the research it is also deduced that identity is a fluid process, not a static one. Cultural memory can be seen as a means in which the past can be retained for the present and future, which can be altered to suit. With the means of cognition, it is observed that memories can be changed and stored in the stock of knowledge for later use. Thus creating a basis for an Identity for an individual or a group. Memories endure the test of time as it can be material or non-material in nature, however it requires and action. It requires performance, documentation etc. to strengthen its relevance to society. Memory is seen to be a very closely linked to the built environment. It makes use of image, culture and places in order to function. Architecture can be considered the physical manifestation of memory. When this architecture of a place narrates the development and values of a society it can be seen as a primary source for the Identity of that society. The conclusion reached in this



research serves to inform the design of a socio-cultural building that draws from the theories of cultural memory, Architectonics of memory and the making of place relevant to the society in which it exists to further rediscover its identity.

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# ***Appendices***



# ***Appendix***

## ***Appendices a***

# ***Example of research interview***

University of KwaZulu-Natal  
School of Architecture

## **Research Interview**

Nischolan Pillay

[nischolan@gmail.com](mailto:nischolan@gmail.com)

To the Interview participant:

I would like to thank you for taking the time in order to participate in this interview. This project is for my Masters Research project and the objective of my research is to find out what Indian People think of their Identity in South Africa. I would like you to treat this as a conversation rather than a survey. Feel free to tell me whatever you think is important in relation to these themes. If I ask a question that you prefer not to answer please feel free to tell me to skip that question, and you can end the interview at any time you like.

### **ALL INFORMATION IS OPTIONAL**

#### **PERSONAL DETAILS (OPTIONAL)**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date of birth: \_\_\_\_\_  
Sex: \_\_\_\_\_

**Research Interview:**  
**Ice Breaker:**

1. So that I can get to know you a bit better, can you tell me some things about your background such as where you grew up, what your home life was like and what your schools were like.

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### **Family Background:**

2.1 Moving onto to the research at hand, I would like to ask questions based on the origins of your family and what life was like being in Indenture, Living conditions, Education, etc.

2.2 Which area of India does your Family come from?

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2.3 Did your family arrive as Indentured Labourers or Passenger Indians?

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2.4 What did they do after Indenture?

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**Memory:**

3. I would like to ask questions related to memories of Durban from an Indian perspective. These questions aim to learn about life in Durban and how the formation of a South African Indian Identity was formed.

3.1. Where in Durban did you grow up?

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3.2. Describe growing up in Durban. (Experiences/Challenges).

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3.3 Tell me about how Ceremonies such as Weddings, Funerals, Child Births etc. were performed and is it different from how it is done today?

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3.4 Tell me about how cultural activities had an impact on Indians, How did these activities bring the community together?

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## **Identity:**

4. I would like to ask Questions relating to the identity of Indians in South Africa.  
These questions are aimed at understanding the concept of identity and how it is portrayed in the Multi-Cultural South Africa.

### **4.1 Tell me about Indian Identity in South Africa.**

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### **4.2 Do you think that Indian Identity is being lost?**

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### **4.3 What are your views on making the Indian Identity more prominent?**

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## **Needs/Wants**

5. In this set of questions I would like to know what your views on facilities are for Indian people. Should there be facilities to promote Culture and Identity?

### **5.1 Is a facility to promote Indian Culture needed?**

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If such a facility is needed, what do you think is wanted in a facility to promote culture and identity?

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***Thank you***

**INFORMED CONSENT**  
**REDISCOVERING INDIAN IDENTITY THROUGH BUILT FORM**  
**IN DURBAN:**  
A Memory Centre for Indian Culture

**Informed Consent Letter**

**Title of Study:** REDISCOVERING INDIAN IDENTITY THROUGH BUILT  
**FORM IN DURBAN:**  
A Memory Centre for Indian Culture

**Principal Investigator:**

Name: Nischolan

Department: Student of the Built Environment and Development Studies

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**Background:**

You are being invited to take part in a research study. Before you decide to participate in this study, it is important that you understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take the time to read the following information carefully. Please ask the researcher if there is anything that is not clear of if you need more information.



**INFORMED CONSENT**

**REDISCOVERING INDIAN IDENTITY THROUGH BUILT FORM  
IN DURBAN:**

A Memory Centre for Indian Culture

The purpose of this study is:

To explore the culture of Indians in South Africa and further reinforce cultural and traditional values as opposed to western culture. This research will aim to investigate how and why Indian culture is losing its identity and how this can be resolved in a modern context in which it exists. A very important factor to consider is where this reinstatement of culture takes place and if this is inductive of learning, teaching and experiencing. An aim of place that is conducive in the exploration of culture, tradition and identity.

**Study Procedure:**

Your expected time commitment for this study is: 30 - 60mins

Please answer the interview/ questionnaire provided. All responses will be kept confidential.

**Risks:**

The risks of this study are minimal. These risks are similar to those you experience when disclosing work-related information to others. The topics in the survey may upset some respondents. You may decline to answer any or all questions and you may terminate your involvement at any time if you choose.

**Benefits:**

There will be no direct benefit to you for your participation in this study. However, we hope that the information obtained from this study may,

1. To establish architecture as a tool to enhancing the well-being and lives of Indians through the design of environments that celebrate their heritage.
2. To create a clear understanding of how cultural and social issues have an influence on the built environment through the collection of data research, existing architectural projects and the analysis of principles and theories related to the topic.

3. To bring awareness to architects and urban designers on the impact their designs have on the social, physical, emotional and spiritual bodies of the Indian community of today.

**INFORMED CONSENT**

**REDISCOVERING INDIAN IDENTITY THROUGH BUILT FORM  
IN DURBAN:**

A Memory Centre for Indian Culture

**Alternative Procedures:**

If you do not want to be in the study, you may choose not to participate and leave your answers blank, or you may read quietly at your desk (for in-class survey research).

**Confidentiality:**

Please do not write any identifying information on your questionnaire. Your responses will be anonymous.

Participant data will be kept confidential except in cases where the researcher is legally obligated to report specific incidents. These incidents include, but may not be limited to, incidents of abuse and suicide risk.

**Person To Contact:**

Should you have any questions about the research or any related matters, please contact the researcher at [nischolan@gmail.com](mailto:nischolan@gmail.com) or 0780415527

**Institutional Review Board:**

If you have questions regarding your rights as a research subject, or if problems arise which you do not feel you can discuss with the Investigator, please contact the Institutional Review Board Office at (801) 863-8156.

**Voluntary Participation:**

Your participation in this study is voluntary. It is up to you to decide whether or not to take part in this study. If you do decide to take part in this study, you will be asked to sign a consent form. If you decide to take part in this study, you are still free to withdraw at any time and without giving a reason. You are free to not answer any question or questions if you choose. This will not affect the relationship you have with the researcher.

**Unforeseeable Risks:**

There may be risks that are not anticipated. However every effort will be made to minimize any risks.

**INFORMED CONSENT**  
**REDISCOVERING INDIAN IDENTITY THROUGH BUILT FORM**  
**IN DURBAN:**  
A Memory Centre for Indian Culture

**Costs to Subject:**

There are no costs to you for your participation in this study

**Compensation:**

There is no monetary compensation to you for your participation in this study.

**Consent:**

By signing this consent form, I confirm that I have read and understood the information and have had the opportunity to ask questions. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving a reason and without cost. I understand that I will be given a copy of this consent form. I voluntarily agree to take part in this study.

**Participant Details**

(Participant is 18 years and over)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Details: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Participant \_\_\_\_\_

Date:

\_\_\_\_\_

**Parent / Guardian Details**

(Participant is under 18 years)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Details: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Parent / Guardian \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# ***Appendices b***

## ***Transcripts of interviews***

# ***Interview A***

## **AUTHORS INTERVIEW WITH DR GOOLAM VAHED**

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N. PILLAY: Could you please state your name for the record

DR G VAHED: I am Dr Goolam Vahed

N. PILLAY: Ok today I am interviewing Dr Goolam Vahed from the University of Kwa-Zulu Natal. So Dr Vahed my first question is could you please tell me about yourself so that I can get to know you better, and where you grew up and your background.

DR G VAHED: Ok I lecture in the Department of History. I was born in Durban what was known as Pine Street in 1961. I attended the Crescent School and then went to the Orient High School and then to the University of Durban Westville and then my masters in PHD in History in the USA and I have been lecturing since 1996.

N. PILLAY: Ok let us move on to family background

DR G VAHED: My father was a salesperson. He worked in a shop in Grey Street and my mother was a home maker that's what I think they call it these days and I have two sisters. Neither of them had formal education. My mother had no formal education and my father must have gone to Standard Three.

N. PILLAY: Ok, Which are of India does your family come from.

DR G VAHED: Originally from a village call Uttar, in Gujarat

N. PILLAY: Did your family arrive in South Africa as indentured labours or as passengers.

DR G VAHED: My father came as a passenger. My father came as a worker.

N. PILLAY: So your father came down from India.

DR G VAHED: My grandfather

N. PILLAY: Ok when they did come down, what did they do?

DR G VAHED: As I explained to you. My grandfather who came he worked, he did a series of work as a salesperson in a shop and then he returned to India and I know I have a document with me which says he was a cook on a ship that went from London to ..... He used to work as a ship hand from India to London. My father was born in Durban but returned to India at the age of four. When he came back he worked in a Farm Store in Inanda and then he was working in different shops in Grey Street.

N. PILLAY: Ok and so he never worked as an indentured labourer.

DR G VAHED: No

N. PILLAY: He was just a Salesperson

DR G VAHED: Yes

N. PILLAY: My next question is based on memory. We already spoke about collective memory.

DR G VAHED: Yes

N. PILLAY: Let us start with memory. Tell me where you grew up in Durban

DR G VAHED: Basically I grew up in Pine Street that is in Central Durban. The way we grew up my memory would be around the fact that it was very different of course things keep changing but what I do know is that we had very defined things in our life. Like on a Saturday afternoon we would be playing sport. Sport played a very important role in our life. So that is a very important memory I have about sport from a Saturday morning to a Monday morning. The shops were closed. There were no shopping malls. Our lives did not revolve around shopping. I mean the other thing is that I remember is that we used to have very large family gatherings. That was very important whether it was to have a meal. We did not have televisions. Televisions only came out around 1976. So we had no television so our lives revolved around sporting, playing games, playing cards and those kind of things. I don't know if I told you about my parents. My father he was what you would call a passenger Indian. But they come as passenger Indians, the idea of passenger Indian being traders is wrong. Most of them came as

the working class. So he worked his entire life as a salesperson. My grandfather was the first to come and my mother was a home maker and neither of them had much education. My mother did not go to school at all and could not speak English at all. My father went up to Standard Three. That is what I remember. My father also I remember went to the market every morning without fail and when he died like half the market came to attend his funeral that was an important part. When it comes to festivals of that time and identity you see a lot of our ideas and our identities were formed around. Festivals played a great part and it was public festivals. The Muharams, the Hindus, the muslims everyone took part. You had Kavady, six foot dance in all of these aspects you will find our identities were shaped by festivals. These festivals were a very public thing. It wasn't confined to the church or hall or anything like that. That played a very important part and also we had muslim ....and the Durban muslim .... Or the prophets birthday you would find on the streets of Durban thousands of people will be on the streets observing, celebrating, participating that kind of thing.

N. PILLAY:

Yes

DR G VAHED:

Now when you move on to the question of identity we have to be fixed to understand that here in Indian South Africa identity there is not such a thing. You have to speak in the plural of identities. Politically yes, the government decided to categorise us in a certain way that is how we are but I will also accept for example my daughter went to hospital this week and an eighty year old woman was next to her. An Indian woman but I could relate to her very easily because we understood certain phrases terminologies and so on. We grew up like that the ways of speaking its way back. But also we need to accept that as individuals you know identity is like if you take a stone and throw it in the water you get these rings.

N. PILLAY:

Yes Ok

DR G VAHED:

Identity is like that we have many layers. We are not just one. We are not one. I can't pigeon hole you as one. You are different to the



lecturer, different to your friends, different to your guru and you are different when you in a night club.

N. PILLAY:

Yes

DR G VAHED:

Yes you are adopting different identities.

N. PILLAY:

Yes

DR G VAHED:

But we have changed in many ways. We have changed for example our food habits have changed. We have change example major festivals and so on. Some of us feel embarrassed to be participants in these kind of things. We have also changed where previously we had big families or where we used to love to live with big families because of poverty and now we can't stand it to live in nucleas. So we have changed.

N. PILLAY:

Yes

DR G VAHED:

We have changed for example in helping each other. Previously you found that one person in the family would go to work and others would I mean that everyone would work and make sure that one person would be educated and that person who got educated would then support the rest of the family. Now it is each person is for himself or herself. We have changed in our jobs, whether it man or woman it's the kind of things they used to wear, they moved away from that. If you take culture to be a broad definition and if we include all of these things we have changed in very fundamental ways but at the same time we find that there is a resurgent as you what you may describe as Indian culture.

N. PILLAY:

Yes

DR G VAHED:

Now that has to do with the factor as to my understanding the factor that we are having the post-apartheid period suddenly under apartheid. We knew our place. We knew if you grew up in Chatsworth there is all Indians there, who your neighbour's where etc. Now you move to Yellow Wood Park, you moving to Morningside, you moving to Sandton or Gauteng your neighbours can be black, white, Chinese or they may be anything there in

culturily in every way. You don't know where you fit in. You also have a problem because of affirmative action. It is creating a lot of uncertainty. We don't know what is happening there. So suddenly culture becomes a way to re-assert our Indian identity. To try and find who we are.

N. PILLAY:

Yes

DR G VAHED:

That is why I explained partially all these massive conversions to Christianity because people have lost extended families. They don't know where they stand or where they fit in. Just like amongst Hindu's you would find that suddenly everybody has to have a guru. Have you noticed that?

N. PILLAY:

Yes

DR G VAHED:

Right, amongst Muslim's the same thing. Everyone has to have a Shea. Amongst the Christian's everyone is going to the church. We are vacillating, we don't know where we fit in. To fit this cultural aspect becomes important. That is why you would find a lot of the festivals which had died down are now making a comeback. Because it is the way people because like Christmas they have this big public festival even like if you go to Chatsworth in Easter they have this public festival. So these things are making a comeback.

N. PILLAY:

So you saying that we are re-discovering our identity.

DR G VAHED:

One thing you must understand that if, don't mistaken what you see now as being the same fifty years ago. People are doing a certain practice and if they did it fifty years ago it doesn't mean the practice is the same and it doesn't mean that the meaning for the participants are the same. What the people fifty years ago why they did it would be different from why they doing it today. Outwardly it will look the same but inwardly we don't know. So I am saying a lot of this that you see our parents innovation may not have been so religious as what this generation was outwardly. People are rushing to the mosque, they rushing to the temple, they rushing to the church but inwardly I think our parents had much cleaner hearts.

N. PILLAY:

Yes

DR G VAHED:

They didn't have all this jealousy. Why do you think all these gurus are taking people for a ride? I mean Hindus, Muslims, Christians all of them. These so called religious people the a giving massive sums of money for somebody to give black magic or cast a spell on me because you know at the odd time you think you becoming religious but there is a lot of jealousy and venom in there as well. Be very careful about how this stands with and what meaning it is inclusive when we talk about we discovering our culture because it has always been there but things just keep changing and the way at certain point things make a fashionable comeback. It may have to do with our own needs. Like now we are trying to find a space for ourselves in the post South Africa.

N. PILLAY:

I just want to go back to the question when you talk about Muharram and how the communities come together. Can you tell me more about this and your experiences?

DR G VAHED:

Yes, I was never one for big participation in religious festivals and all. I used to just stand in the side and just look. But basically like when I was growing up you will find that the people would come with ..... Was this thing that they would be pulling and both sides of the street there will be thousands of people and so we marched through Grey Street all the way to the Umgeni River. Like ten thousand people would be marching and they will meet up at the river and you know like there was a lot going on food being sold and some people praying and some people just enjoying themselves and going around just out of curiosity but had a lot of meaning for participants. As I told you a very religious and auspicious day for the Muslims, others who were Hindus came there because they felt that if they contributed food or money it will help to make them better. People came for all different reasons but again that has now dying off. Now you find that Muharram they take the ..... the will take it now and put it on a cart and take it to

the Umgeni River you get a few hundred people coming but it's still observed as a day but in different ways.

N. PILLAY:

Okay

DR G VAHED:

Most people observe it in the mosque so you find in the mosque they build a Thalia and they leave it permanently in the mosque so the worshipers must come to the mosque. That is a money making scheme to because they coming there and then giving contributions and things at the mosque. So it is not so you see how it has changed. It's not that the people don't respect the Muharram but they are just observing it differently.

N. PILLAY:

It is interesting to hear you say how things have changed but from your point of view why does change happen.

DR G VAHED:

I think it is a natural thing. It's not that at certain point that people decided okay you know that I don't like being Indian. Remember our parents may have grown up in Mount Edgecombe and some very close knit community. They grew up in Cato Manor and they grew up on top of each other. We grew up in Pine Street where every night all the neighbors came into our house and sat with my mother to eat what you call beetle leaf (paan). You know the equivalent of men smoking. They will eat that and talk whilst my two sisters and I would have to sleep in the same room. We couldn't complain because it was taken for granted. That is how we grew up. So gradually we became educated, some people and up with mobility people could afford to have their own house so they moved into their own homes. Gradually it became value in their privacy then so as a result of those things, things began changing gradually. It is not that one day we got up and said that we don't like an aspect of our culture or our festival we going to be changing so it's not like that so it is a gradual process. Like inevitable in every culture. Even amongst the African population then eating habits it's what their parents used to eat and what their children eat it is very different. So that is just natural evolution. You can't say that people

decided at the moment suddenly by I think it is urbanization its education, its material upliftment, it's a combination of facts.

N. PILLAY:

Okay

DR G VAHED:

And then also you had like reform attendancies coming from overseas. A priest coming and telling you now that these practices are not working with the pole of the religion, the totally taboo. There's no reformat impulses like amongst Muslims you get a Thabut Janat coming, Aarya Samaj amongst Hindus saying that what you are doing there is wrong, eradicate those practices. So there is a series of factors there. Like as I told you for example a wedding now people got money now who wants to work the whole day in a family wedding doing the hard work you know serving for. Now you say no we got the money. We can give it to the caterer. We will go enjoy the wedding ourselves. We not going to be toying away the whole day. So that is how things changed.

N. PILLAY:

Okay, I just want to go back to the part where you said back in the days you said people used to do it themselves.

DR G VAHED:

Yes

N. PILLAY:

How is it different from today. A little part would be done by the people who's ceremony it is but back in the day how was it different from today?

DR G VAHED:

it was very different as I told you setting the table. The whole family did cooking, everybody did, every biscuit that you made you know for the whole wedding week. You had to make biscuits, you had to cook curries, you know everything you did somebody in the family made and brought it. Nowadays you just give it out. There is a lot of woman working from home. Ok can you make many biscuits, can you make so many samoosas, can you make so many pies. Everything is bought and brought there. Then on the day of the wedding like here there is a famous caterer known as Manjara. You tell Manjara right we want the wedding on this date and so many people. Right so Manjara will come and he will set up the tables, he

will cook the food, he will serve the food and he will do everything. You get one lady who does the décor. You tell her what colour scheme you want. She will come do the whole hall. So there isn't that family involvement which was in a way nice and not nice because it causes fights and tensions and when there is work things happen and also when you never enjoy your own wedding because you are so stressed about what working. Nowadays you pitch up there you the only stress you have to give one big fat cheque. You just come there and you sit and enjoy okay you eat and you go home. So it is very different but the other way also it built up community spirit and family spirit because I know there was a wedding in the family on this weekend and from the previous weekend or two weeks every one like your family would come home every day so you will be cooking every day and everyone will cook but you will be eating and enjoying yourself. So this was building up this community and the family spirit. Nowadays there is a very cold and detached and your very immediate family may come for two or three days before that. Everyone will pitch up at the hall, eat and go home. There isn't that camaraderie.

N. PILLAY:

I just want to go on to the needs and wants of the Indian community and because this is an architectural dissertation my end result is to have a building. Do you think that a facility is needed to promote Indian culture.

DR G VAHED:

I don't know what you mean by promoting Indian culture, if you mean say like a museum kind of institution where relics of the past are put on display so that people can come and see. Maybe you can have an interactive. You know something interactive and take part so that you can take photos and records of stuff. For example Kavady then to you will have it playing there all the time and you can show how it has changed and it will be something in the line but aside from and you can also have an expert in different fields to talk about what happened. But I don't know if that on its own is going to determine that okay now these Indians are going to re-start

this practice. I don't know if that is what you aiming or you want a more museum kind of building to store what you will call past practices of Indians I don't know.

N. PILLAY:

Basically because we having this identity crisis in South Africa the building aims to show people from where we came from and what we are now and what is the way forward from here so.

DR G VAHED:

Well one of the things you could do I mean is when you say identity crisis it may be in your mind that is an identity with most people they are happy. They don't see that there is an identity crisis. I don't think I am in an identity crisis Although we have changed I think I am different from my father but I don't see myself as having an identity crisis. But I think the idea is a good one but you have to be representative because one of the problems I think if you want to put a Hindu festival like Kavady then the Aarya Samaj is going to tell you that that is not Hindu. Then when you put Muharram then the Muslim reforms are going to tell you but that is not Islam. So you are going to have to deal with issues of representation and authenticity. What is authentic about that festival? What is authentic about that religion? So that is one kind but overall a theme of things I think if you house it in a place that is accessible because is there schools there right you have to give equal representation of different religions, you have to have something interactive so that people can you know there must be videos, there must be all kinds of photographs it must be done very professionally so that people don't see that some anacromy. It must be something they can relate to and understand and that way I think it has a purpose.

N. PILLAY:

I want to take you a step back and speak about places like the caz-bahs and cinemas that where there and stuff like that. That sort of communities coming together can you tell me about that.

DR G VAHED:

Well as I have told you now when you talk about Grey Street now that is where most of our festivals where played out in the streets. If we had the Durban Brigade it would march from one end of Grey Street right up and turn into Queen Street to the mosque then both

sides of Grey Street will be lined with people standing and watching but now you must not romanticize because with Grey Street area has example Warwick Avenue you had the dashins and then in Beatrice Street you had the young generation so there is a lot of gangs, you had taxi warfare going on but in between that you had a beautiful thing like as I told you we used to be playing soccer on the street, cricket on the street. It is a two sided thing but a lot of our lives was lived on the street. And so the people did came to associate and even now there is a lot of memory projects and so on taking place when they talk about the caz-bahs and what it means and how people enjoyed it and so on. So but I am sure if you go to Chatsworth it's the same thing where it's lived on the street and for that kind of thing you would probably can't do in Gauteng, Sandton, Westville where there is so many by-laws and so on, you can't even cut sheep there for example on the Muslim festival. You have to get permits and with us there is no such thing we just we lived in flats or even lived in gutters and we did our thing.

N. PILLAY:

Okay moving back from to our reason why from your perspective what do you want in a facility of this culture.

DR G VAHED:

Well as I told you what I think I would want if I was doing it what I have to make sure is: 1. I have to make sure that it is representative

2. I have to make sure that it is not scaring the people and making them feel that those are the people from the ice age.

It must be done in a way that shows and appreciation of that culture. So it must not be done only in a way because some of the things which like today kids look at this they think how could people dress and how could they look like that. So it's got to be done in an empathetic way which portrays the people as decent and dignified human beings. I also feel that you have to have experts coming to give regular talks so that the people can come and listen. Then I also think that you have to hold symposiums for example if you want



to talk about the role of women, talk about the changing Muharam, whatever you want to talk about you should regularly have experts coming in and chat and talking about the topic so that people can come and listen to that and then I would want to invite people from overseas as well and I have to make it a place for school children because I think that is what I don't think only Indian School children it can be everybody so that it becomes a relic of Indian culture in a positive way but it is more educational.

N. PILLAY:

Okay, What problems that we face when we designing museums and stuff like this people go there once, visited it and that's it you know so I was trying to include a cinema which brought back the old Grey Street vibes where people dress up and go to this place where they could be .....

DR G VAHED:

An actual cinema showing contemporary films attached to the center.

N. PILLAY:

The Bollywood films because reading on of the papers the identity of belonging I picked up there people relate back to the homeland and thats is how our identities are being shaped as well.

DR G VAHED:

Well I am sure because on the one hand you want to go back and recreate some authentic culture and at the same time Bollywood is very different it is no representation of any culture. Things are changing, it is modern India so the concept is right but to draw people I am saying you can do other things like you can bring people, visitors from India to talk but they have to be exciting maybe from one Bollywood film you can bring like Veeraj Koli to come and chat and you going to get more people there than to bring one expert on Hinduism. So I am saying that there are other ways of doing it. Attract people here so that they can come and visit your facility. So the idea is a good thing. That is the point I am making. You have to have things there all the time to make sure that the place is visited and it is not a dead monument. So whether it is a

current talk young actor whoever but you got to bring people all the time to draw the crowd and then you also have to have some kind for example something like diasporic so you can show sections to what is going on in Fiji, Trinidad places like that you know comparative culture it's a good idea anything to attract.

N. PILLAY:

From your side is there anything that you want to talk about personally.

DR G VAHED:

No, No I just think that you need to be aware identity and culture are not fixed thing and these are the things that change all the time. When you want to present and represent culture it's not a fixed thing our culture changes all the time. You yourself won't realize but whatever you were practicing as a Hindu ten years ago and now there are subtle differences.

N. PILLAY:

Yes

DR G VAHED:

Without you realizing. So we are changing all the time and what constitutes our culture is also changing. So we can't fix with something in the past and think it will never change. That is an important thing you have to remember and you exhibition to reflect those changes all the time. I like the idea that you have to have something that is going to draw people all the time. Like now you can be having something like the Indian election and how it's done and so forth and invites to.

N. PILLAY:

Thank you Dr Vahed

DR G VAHED:

Goolam to you. All the best and I am looking forward to your project.

# ***Interview B***

## **AUTHORS INTERVIEW WITH DR K HIRALAL**

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N. PILLAY:

Ok Dr Hirilal Just so that I can get to know you better can you tell me about your background, where you grew up, what your home life was like and schools.

DR HIRALAL:

I grew up in Durban, I was very involved in Durban. I lived during Apartheid time that lived within the confines of the group areas act and apartheid scenario. I was also raised in a very conservative Gujarati speaking family and to be honest that has played a very important role in constructing my own identity and my own sense of sight. Then I went to do formal study at the University of Durban Westville and was part of the student boycotts in the late 1980's and then went to do the Masters and a PHD at Natal and secured a position at the University of Westville campus in the Department of History. My research interest have been in diaspora in woman and gender studies and particularly I am looking at immigrant woman you know she's of agency identity and citizenship.

N. PILLAY:

Okay Lets move to your family background, I want to ask where does your family come from in India, where they indentured labourers when they got here or where they free indians.

DR HIRALAL:

My family was free Indians or referred to as passenger Indians a term that was called at the turn of the century for Indians coming on a non-indentures and non-contractual basis. They came from western india in Gujarat and all maternal and paternal grandparents came as free Indians, passenger Indians, they came from Colvert and Nasari in Gujarat.

N. PILLAY:

Alright I think that answers my question. Can you tell me what jobs they did when they came down to South Africa.

DR HIRALAL:

My grandfather on my paternal side when he came he was an ordinary salesperson. He was called by my great grandfather by one of his friends to come over to Durban and he did sell and then a laundry. He was a worker in a laundry. A laundry owned by a relative. So he did not come with any capital or lots of money which is often the stereotype but he came as an ordinary person. He worked in Durban, he worked for a couple of years and then having accumulated money he later set up his own store. He made frequent trips between India and Durban and in the same way my grandfather on my maternal side. He came to Durban and later moved to Transvaal. He often engaged in business and retail business.

N. PILLAY:

Okay I like to move on to memories that you had. Memory as a concept as I now I already asked you if you grew up in Durban. Can you describe growing up in Durban as a child or during the apartheid time.

DR HIRALAL:

Yes I went to a predominantly Indian school you must have heard about it the Ghandi Desai High and it was you know it is so different from today then you only socialized people of indian origin. It was more at the time Ghandi Desai was more in terms of its ethnic component, it was more Gujarati speaking not to say there was no other groups, there were and so I attended which was made compulsory by our parents to attend Gujarati school at the time. So in terms of education you know predominantly going to an indian school liasing but the one thing I realized at this point now thinking I grew up in a very strong traditional conservative Gujarati family and that was further reinforced by communal setting so we belonged to this so called cast organization. I belonged to this Rajput Association. It was a cast. From the time I was small the cast organization and the communal organization was so strong at the time that actually defined your socialization, constructed your

socialization so you liaise with people in that community, you married within that community. In apartheid South Africa to me growing up that was very strong traditional conservative Gujarati family that was further reinforced by communal setting. So we belonged to this so called caste organisation that was I belonged to the Rajput Association so from the time I was young the caste organization was so strong. When we were in matric and there were student boycotts I remember participating and then further it was entrenched moving to university. I think it was the tail end of the eighties and it was my first year you know being part of that political movement etc. So that's what it was growing up in apartheid South Africa and we had very little contact with friends because we lived in very urban areas. Very little contact with other race groups so ya.

N. PILLAY:

I like to move on to ceremonies & weddings things like that. Can you tell me about those ceremonies from when you were growing up and how is it different from now.

DR HIRALAL:

There are much differences. The ceremonies and weddings at that time in my opinion were more family oriented it had a sense of purpose in that it was done for a particular reason either religion or a defining or respecting the sanctity of marriage and respecting religious rituals etc. I am not saying that at this currently or presently it's not done in the same way but I think marriage in this point in time it's basically for some I think if they do re-enforce sanctity of marriage but I think now it has become a kind of show stopper you know youngsters the way they plan a wedding see what I've got. We are influenced by society and by peers and materialism. Years back I remember there used to be two hundred at a wedding and people used to eat outside the wedding hall, there used to be a dining hall but now it is so different. It has become so westernized and in the construction of dining you know. We are somehow looking that essence of who we are you know.

N. PILLAY:

Alright I want to move on to festivals that took place in the city. Can you remember about these festivals and how did they bring the community together.

DR HIRALAL:

I can talk from the perspective of being a Gujarati speaking Hindi and we belonged to this Rajput so called community. The festivals were done within the community so if there was a Diwali function we would attend this Diwali function in the Community Hall in Chatsworth. Then we were also part of the larger Gujarati organization and we would attend functions in town you know religious festivals and religious events what you call it a Khatha or Hawan was done at the hall. At that time the whole family went mother, father and child. Today it's only the mum and dad will go and kids are on their cellphones. It's very communal very tight knit. There was you know in some way that sense of endingness was quiet preservative because it was re-enforced in your tradition. It was re-enforced in your daily routine of prayer, your beliefs, your cultural beliefs so for example amongst the Gujarati you would adhere to certain cultural events or days in the calendar and you would do it. You know it was a must to wear a Panjabi on Diwali Day and Gujarati New Year. It was really I remember Gujarati New Year we used to go to family to eat you know and just be together. That is what I remember of those days.

N. PILLAY:

Alright I would like to go on to identity. In your opinion what is the Indian identity in South Africa. How is our identity so shaped now.

DR HIRALAL:

You mean in the contemporary period

N. PILLAY:

Yes

DR HIRALAL:

I think our identity in the contemporary period is shaped by our environment it is shaped by our beliefs; it is shaped by our ideology. What we believe in and it is also shaped by own sense our self but I think it is changing it's not something that defined its fruit definitely for me it is.

N. PILLAY:

Yes

DR HIRALAL: What I was ten years ago I am ten years different now. My identity and I am sure I will be different ten years down the line.

N. PILLAY: It is interesting to know that. Do you think the Indian identity is being lost in some aspects in totality. What do you think?

DR HIRALAL: It depends how we define Indianess. Who is an Indian? How do we define them? In the current sense we drew our sense of being Indian from our ancestors and our descendants. So we acquire that kind of identity and who we are from our forefathers and our descendants and with that also comes tradition and values and customs and so I think we have to be courteous of how we define a sense as Indianess. For many Indianess will be defined by region, culture, religion, where we came from so in this instance it would be the Indian sub-continent of India. Secondly it will be defined by cultural, religious constructs in the sense that there are certain beliefs etc. so as an Indian you could be different in terms of your linguistic groups. So you can be Hindi Gujarati. So that sense of religion. The way we the type of food we eat. Differences in culinary, culinary differences food diet so Indianess to me is a bit problematic because with the sense of being Indian the same for American Indian or Fajin or Australian Indian. I think it's a very there may be common things we can draw from being Indian but the whole notion of being Indian in the sense may be very subjective. You know I may say I am South African of Indian origin but how do I construct and define Indians to perhaps different from how you would construct it.

N. PILLAY: Okay that is also interesting to note. The next set of questions I am going to ask you about cultural centres. Do you think there is a need for Indians so it may teach people about their identity or their culture or is there linguistic needs or would a centre be vulnerable in the present South Africa?

DR HIRALAL: Off course I would be hundred percent in support of a cultural centre and why not. If people want to nurture their own identity, they can

be part of a larger broader South African identity by I, as an Indian want to nurture to my linguistic group, my own linguistic language or being the sense of Indian why shouldn't I. That does not make me segregated in my ideology. It doesn't make me narrow of conservative. I think it is subjective and an individual thing and if one wants to also nurture their own sense of culture then they must do it. I think in South Africa when people want to do a thing like that they see it as being a very conservative and bias etc. but if you go abroad and if you go to Sweden the San people are protecting the identity and culture, the Italian immigrants are protecting their language and culture. So too America, the Spanish, the Spanic are protecting their language. Does that make us less of an American?

N. PILLAY: I am not sure what to say about that

DR HIRALAL: You see I would definitely support it.

N. PILLAY: If a centre like this was to be built, what would you want in this centre?

DR HIRALAL: What would I want in terms of this centre? In terms of infrastructure in terms of what, in what way?

N. PILLAY: In types of activities that will take place in order to re-enforce the Indian identity to re-introduce or re-discover that Indian identity.

DR HIRALAL: Well for one you can introduce a curriculum based on theory and practice. In terms of activities so in theory you can teach them about the History of Indian South Africans and also the larger Indian diaspora but I will suggest also that there be a centre open to all race groups so that if there is an African or an Italian or Chinese who want to know the sense of Indianess who want to know about it you know be invited to the centre and be enrolled at the centre and through activities you can have cultural, eisteddfod's, you can have dance competitions and sporting activities a whole range of activities you know.

N. PILLAY: I just want to go further into this. You said dance items and singing and that I think we can define that as performance of cultural



memory. Do you think these dances and these singing groups as stuff like that does it re-enforce identity.

DR HIRALAL:

It depends in what form it takes. If you have a dance item in Tamil you are re-enforcing the Tamil identity and culture. Through Tamil music so I think in the same way you do it for the Gujarati music, the Gujarati language so in that way you re-enforcing the Tamil identity. So that is one way you can do it. So you can also recite a poem in the vernacular language, you can have house plays in the vernacular language. So in a way it does re-enforce the Indian identity.

N. PILLAY:

That makes a lot of sense. Thank you Dr Hirilal for your time and your valuable knowledge, that you have been able to give me.

DR HIRALAL:

Thank you very much okay

# *Interview C*

## **NISCHOLAN PILLAY'S INTERVIEW WITH ANONYMOUS**

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N. PILLAY: Anonymous just so that I can get to know you better, tell me where you grew up, your home life, your school life and just growing up generally.

ANONYMOUS: Ok I grew up in Phoenix actually I spent the first five years of my life in Chatsworth and thereafter moved to Phoenix and you are aware the group areas act residential areas was set aside for Indians. That was the only area that we could move to. I went to Primary School and High School that was close to my house. We were under the House of Delegates education system so I finished my matric under that system.

N. PILLAY: How was life generally like living in this apartheid time?

ANONYMOUS: I can tell you if I'd known then what I know now I would be different. I always say that we were very ignorant growing up. We knew something was wrong. We didn't live in a free society but speaking for me personally and possibly my friends and peers you know we didn't know the finer details of what was happening. When we saw a school being burnt on television we were told something like by adults look at this people how they are destroying their further education that the school provided for them and all that. Only now did we realize that was an action against the State and Bantu education. In fact I was so upset with my parents for not explaining more but they did not know more to tell you they went with the flow and so did the people that I interviewed for my research was also

that we knew what was happening but to avoid any trouble we just went with the flow. So our grandparents went with the flow, their parents went with the flow for example my parents did that because their parents did so you know it just past on like that. So we didn't become very critical. I know I didn't become very critical of anything until I reached university, as my studying progressed in University.

N. PILLAY:

Okay Alright I just want to move on to your family background. Where about in India do your grandparents come from? Where do you originate from?

ANONYMOUS:

I can't tell you specifically I was told that I have in driverdeen ancestry but I can't go into too much detail. I don't know for sure on the one side where it says driverdeen but I don't know the details specifically and on the other there is information by I can't tell you off hand now specifically where

N. PILLAY:

Right, Do you know if your grandparents came down as indentured labourers or passenger Indians.

ANONYMOUS:

On the one my mother's side my great great grandfather, he came down as a passenger Indian but he came via Mauritius. But he wasn't as a passenger as you would understand there were Gujarati merchants. He bought his own ticket. He came to work in the court house. He was able to translate from Zulu to English in the court cases. On the other side my father's side there was one that came was an indentured labourer but didn't work in the sugar cane plantation field. He worked in the wattle plantation that was wattle and coal and eventually went to a dairy farm so that was it.

N. PILLAY:

Do you know your grandparents that came as indentured labourers, do you know what they did after indenture?

ANONYMOUS:

Well the one actually lived until he was hundred so it was in the 1950's or something like that they had to move away from the dairy farm so because of the last thing he did they moved into Pietermaritzburg the area set aside for Indians and then he died after that. He did not go back to work. He did all kinds of jobs on

the dairy farm. They did from building houses to whatever was needed. Then he moved to Pietermaritzburg

N. PILLAY:

In the section called memory I just want to go back to Question 4 I know that I have asked you but where in Durban did you grow up.

ANONYMOUS:

Ok I was born in Chatsworth at the RK Khan hospital I think it was and I grew up in Phoenix.

N. PILLAY:

Describe growing up in Durban like your experiences and your challenges.

ANONYMOUS:

Okay I think for us at that stage it was normal but looking back it was very abnormal in the society we grew up as well. It was normal for us as a family we went to the movies. I didn't think back then that we were deprived of anything but when I look back now I see how much we were deprived of okay. Even in moving to different areas and the schools and the education we had so at that stage to me it seemed normal. We had a normal life. We went to events, we went to different malls and all those things that I remember. I remember also when we went on long trips when we were in Chatsworth I remember those long trips to Johannesburg. I even have one experience that during apartheid soldiers in the army they used to stand on the side of the road and we gave them a lift. Only now when I think back I didn't construct this soldier as white all I knew that he was a soldier we picked him up on our way to Johannesburg. I remember his ginger eyelashes and I would stare at him the whole way. He never spoke to us. He just accepted the lift from us. When I think back now to all those kind of things and how it would have been different if we had been a white family and the thought that went through my father's mind as to why we had stopped you know and all of those kind of things and that was growing up. Is there any specifics you want to know about.

N. PILLAY:

I think that's fine

ANONYMOUS:

Okay

N. PILLAY:

Okay tell me about ceremonies like weddings, funerals, child births etc. How were they performed back then compared to now. Is it different?

ANONYMOUS:

Okay I grew up in a Christian home okay and the other side it is my mother's side of the family is Catholic.

N. PILLAY:

Okay

ANONYMOUS:

So she grew up and her mother was Catholic so there is a lot of things growing up that I didn't know even though it was cultural I didn't know it because my grandmother was Catholic and her mother was Catholic so we never like to them I think traditional practices where in Christian okay so my mother like in school my friends used to talk about certain things using the vernacular I didn't know what they were talking about. Not about the language but culture certain types of food you know using the vernacular. I didn't know what it was, I knew the English term for it so I can't think about anything on top of my head but there are some things and they all knew that they talking about except me. I know my grandfather my mother's father was a Hindu. So he had a Hindu funeral and there were priests coming and I questioned why they gave him a shirt and an umbrella and something I remember back then and all it stayed in me and I overheard adults talking about what they had to give him and it stayed with me for a long time until I eventually asked somebody about those kinds of practices and someone told me that in India even in the early days the Indians settling here in order for a priest to walk there were no cars so he had to walk from place to place and when he came to the place he needed to have sandals and the shirt and an umbrella for the walk back. Those kinds of traditions you will still see it sometimes it would be an exchange of cash and sometimes I feel we don't know why we do the things that are done and it is not legit anymore in the tradition you know. So in terms of that, that is the only thing that I grew up with. Well with the funerals my uncle past away we had a Christian funeral, we had a Catholic funeral and those things I think stayed the same except

for now we have whereas in weddings there used to be only one race of people but now there's different kinds of people will attend because it's your work colleagues although now. I know my dad worked in this company. He was the only Indian man that worked in this company with all white people. I remember that we used to go for and I wish but I can remember minute details but I don't but I remember we used to go for Christmas parties it was like bosses houses you know but I can't remember minute details because I wasn't meant to feel out of place you know and I think if I did then it would have stuck with me but looking back at those days I feel like in some ways you can't paint all white people or black people with the same kind of brush you know. In some cases I remember my father was treated very well so I don't know what happened to those people because but I know the company closed down. So everything stays the same but how we see that friendships are there more friendships across race barriers.

N. PILLAY:

Okay

ANONYMOUS:

So don't get me wrong. So majority of those people you know of the same decent I think in any race you hear that. In any wedding or function you go to in a particular race the majority of the people 99% of the people there will be and still the same is and that is the same about our country although twenty years into democracy it is much the same with the minute changes.

N. PILLAY:

Tell me about cultural activities that used to be performed and how did it have an impact on the people and how did they bring the community together. The Indian community especially.

ANONYMOUS:

This is not from personal experiences but it is from what I read from all of those things there used to be religious festivals. There used to be indentured workers and municipal workers who used to live directly together. So there used to be religious activities together like if people lived together and when you read the work by Goolam Vahed, you have. He has done work on the Moharam festival it was those kind of things even sport you know was also you know people

formed their identity around you know at the Curries Fountain. There was something written I can't remember the authors name, the publisher was the University of Technology.

N. PILLAY:

Len Rosenberg

ANONYMOUS:

Yes so there was sport identity formed around that and politics obviously and there is another thing you must have heard of the Indian in drum The Coffee Table book okay. I think it is Naidoo who refers to the person who did it but what that shows is the contrast different individuals of Indian so the Indian women that you see on the KwaZulu Natal when you see dressed in a Traditional gown. It shows that are still in pasture on the top of a car or things like that or different images you know. Show how Indians where trogenous opposed to modernist paints a picture was painted about in South Africa.

N. PILLAY:

Okay I want to move on to identity now and since we live in a multicultural, multicultural South Africa. I want to know about Indian identity in South Africa

ANONYMOUS:

Like I said now I don't think that you can say that there is one specific identity. I think people will organize specifically around religion okay. Some people and I think there's a difference between people who are aware like you were saying earlier about what race and identity is that people just unquestionably accept the category of what is called Indian. For me I don't want to use the word again but in society that is deemed to be non-racial society. You still have the existence of races which to me is a quanandrum okay. I can't understand how it will be possible to create a division based on race using the same apartheid category okay.

N. PILLAY:

Okay

ANONYMOUS:

So you will have Black, White and Indian. Indian is not a color. It is a nationality so when you say the word Indian it is implying that you come from somewhere else. That you have a homeland other than South Africa okay and you will see how with all the things around the election campaign with Visven Reddy allegedly telling all Indian

people to go back to India which he said that he didn't say. He said that he said go to India and see what it is like there. The fact he is saying that to people who don't know and don't even regard India as anything. If you look at the Gujarati merchants, the Muslim merchants they came from a place from a sub-continent that is now called India. It was not called India back then. They can't even call themselves Indian in fact many people came from the sub-continent south of India or something like that but it was India, Pakistan all those places. So you can say specifically the place is now called India but you are now calling people who look in a specific way Indians. So I think now people will continue to identify unquestionably with that category. It has been entrenched okay and our government continue to use those categories so you will blindly and unquestionably tick the box when you filling the forms. You can't not fill in a category because say it is an official for like a blank bank document or a bond document. You are going to fill it right. Even in university they say for statistical purposes you will just put in your race okay. So if you tick something there is nothing there which I would like to tick you know. I think we must be proud of our ancestry where we came from whether we come from Scotland or India. I am not denying that there is a rich ancestry that we should be proud of but should think critically about the category that we are being placed in we should challenge them if we want to have a non-racial society that if the democratic government says that we are.

N. PILLAY:

Okay do you think that the Indian identity is being lost.

ANONYMOUS:

Okay that is a very broad question. Like do you mean culturally that people are losing or in terms of their attachments to traditional.

N. PILLAY:

Sort of but also to show off what they are about. They losing throughout then became more westernized or seeing themselves as a South African born Indian.

ANONYMOUS:

So you see that is where I would disagree with this entire concept now of Indians because it goes back to becoming something. There is no other people should I say in South Africa are defined as



nationality so we have people of Italian decent and Portuguese decent and all of that who are proud of their heritage. They also of Greek decent right proud of heritage but nobody asks the question you are asking now. Are they losing their Greekness or are they losing their whatever, their Scottishness or Englishness or whatever because you can be proud of your ancestry. You can have these for your ancestry but you can also be South African which is the South African ancestry, okay so it would be a good thing if people focused on South Africa and being South African as opposed to reaching something or towards something that doesn't ever or even include the fourth or fifth generation or sixth generation. South Africans of Indian decent okay who don't even speak any of those languages to begin with, any South African no matter how well versed they are in being Indian or would well versed is not the right word to say. Like steeped in Indian culture they don't know their vernacular languages. They will be completely lost in India okay and also you cannot like for me I don't think that people can say I am an Indian from India. You understand, you are, we all South Africans who that have our ancestry somewhere else. So I'm a South African of Indian decent, I'm a South African of Italian decent that why I ask my students as well everyone in South Africa even the Black people as well came from Northern Africa. Nobody in South Africa is indigenous to the country. So when people talk about indigeneity and say people must go back to India there is something very wrong about that in that kind of inter-score right because not everyone is from here okay so we all came from somewhere else so even so called White people who seem to be natural South Africans that Indians came from somewhere else are also from somewhere but seems to be accepted because there is no way else for them to go. Even though they came from different parts of the world or whatever the case may be right but we could have a label because there is a lot of whites divided into British, Greek, German and Dutch. There is no division. There is only for

the Indian. You understand what I am saying so I don't think that it is losing the Indian identity. I think people who agree with that will be able to answer that question you know. Like some people like I questioned those categories but there are some people who go work in those areas that agree and say that these categories are all necessary and all that. I agree we don't necessary agree that these races and actually having racial categories and all of that.

N. PILLAY:

I am a bit scared to ask the next question

ANONYMOUS:

Yes

N. PILLAY:

From the previous question. What are your views in making the Indian identity more prominent in South Africa or do you think there is a need for it.

ANONYMOUS:

No like I said we and also it depends on what you said Indian identity, you talking about culture or you talking about. I don't think there is any need for that I think that we need to and also in terms of prominence you know what does that mean I think that it is going back to what I said earlier about appreciating your heritage okay and I think that it is regardless from where we came from but in terms of making it prominent all that does is putting people of Indian decent further into a box. Things like the Eastern Mosaic, the Sunday Tribune Herald things like the Sunday Times Extra all creates these faces and communities of a few from the outside look in okay and those what is reflected there is the few the people from the outside is that everyone who looks in a certain way is interested those days. So when I wake up in the morning and want to watch Eastern Mosaic and I am not a very big fan of whatever music and all of those things it is taken from the outside that everyone of Indian decent like this everybody loves curry and everybody you know. When I first got here to campus in 1995 you know after the general elections, the first democratic elections there was this white guy sitting next to me in the same class and one day and I had very long hair right I turned around and saw that he kept on looking at me so he asked me about my hair and how it must be to clean and all of

that right. And then he said so you eat curry everyday okay. So it's a simple naive question so that is how you construct Indians to be right. There is this comedian. I can't really remember his name and don't know if he still goes by this you know he has the stage name Micheal Naicker. Did you hear of him and he constructs this male, this Indian male and people find this funny. The thing about this is that it is accepted from the inside and people then the people regard themselves as Indian from the outside that this is what an Indian male is the accent firstly which is the meaning right but people within the community find it funny so they perpetuate it right. Then he has the accent, he has fast cars, he has the girls you know so you create an image of an Indian male so who is not necessarily educated, not necessarily an Architect, not necessarily speaks well and I mean not articulate okay not educated so he creates an impression so when everyone watches this okay we have our laughs. I know that I laugh at Trevor Noah. I laugh at his jokes but okay it's an extreme when you perpetuate something to a level where others believe what people are. That in itself for me is promoting anything if it is IsiZulu culture or identity. If you want to call it that or an Indian identity because I don't know what that is to be honest with you because you asked me that. To be perpetuating things which I feel further entrenched people in categories which they cannot escape from there afterwards you know. You will always be seen as an Indian male right as opposed to being an Architect etc okay. Never an Architect competing on the same levels which is what we want to achieve in this country. If we say we are a rainbow nation in a non-racial society we need to see each other as human beings first before we see each other okay the first thing okay. The students we had a tutor here who was from a mixed race right. Her mother was Indian and her father was white. She had a very whitish creamy complexion with long straight like lightish brown hair. She spoke English very well but the students could not place her because her accent was because whilst she spoke well

wasn't a native white KwaZulu white accent, neither was it a coloured accent because her colour was creamy white it wasn't like. So the questions I used to get is "What is she". I asked them what do you mean what is she. I told them she is your tutor, she is human, what else you want to know. Even the students wanted to know what she is because they wanted to place her in a box and especially in South Africa as soon as you can place a person in a racial box then you can identify with them in a certain way. Oh she is coloured , oh okay the I will talk to her in a certain way, if she is Indian ok I feel safe I can talk to her if she is white I see her in a different way, you understand.

N. PILLAY:

Yes

ANONYMOUS:

Because we are grown up with all these pre-conceived ideas about what race category is and that is where the problem lies. The problem is not in describing the person as my lecturer is or came to see my lecturer. Which one? Oh he is Indian, short, dark or whatever. So the moment you attach things to that label then it becomes problematic okay.

N. PILLAY:

Okay I want to speak about needs and wants in a physical building. The reason why I am talking about building is that this thesis leads to some sort of end result the design of the building, so can I ask a question. Is there a facility to promote Indian identity and culture needed in Durban

ANONYMOUS:

I will tell you what is needed. I think, I don't think to promote identity if you want to call it that but I think a building or there may be buildings or house all of these documents and all of that because I think we have rich history that we cannot lose of indenture which was given of indenture makes it little you know less terrible in the minds of people and I think we need things to honor that kind of legacy. Our children and our children's children in South Africa not necessarily on Indian decent but we need something yes to promote that, to promote an interesting memory okay whether it is like a museum of some sort you know or houses for documents

something that you are able for not promoting identity as and entrenching something but something for us to remember it must house all the pc's ever done, house all the research ever done, all articles people have collected you know.

N. PILLAY:

So something based on heritage and

ANONYMOUS:

Yes something on heritage. So I am not an Architect so I don't know also what buildings there are out there but you will know. But no one can re-invent the wheel but there should be something that could be different like calling it a museum or some sort whatever but you know we can have a documentation centre and all of that. Something of more, not upmarket but where one of the stops for tourists is that you have to go here to look at this and that promotes that kind of interest in memory and in children as well. Also adults like my age who seem to know here and there and I was telling people about my research they were interested. People who love apartheid like me. People who like me didn't know and want to know now sent me those letters you read and I told them what used to make me so angry okay so they used to send me those articles you read. They are not going to waive through books and what you call this files with newspaper articles. They needed a place where it is easy for those places academic, documentary, documentary centre all of that. Let's have a place where people anyone can go into you know.

N. PILLAY:

To find their heritage

ANONYMOUS:

Ya or Yes

N. PILLAY:

Okay I think you already answered my next question. How can I put this basically? Your needs and wants. What you want in the building to promote Indian culture, your heritage, your identity of this sort

ANONYMOUS:

Yes

N. PILLAY:

Thank you for your time. It is being appreciated and all your knowledge of the topic okay. Thank you

ANONYMOUS:

Okay

# ***Architectural Design***





re\_discovering indian identity in durban through built form.  
a memory market for durban.

## background research

The History of Indian Immigrants to South Africa began in the 17th and 18th centuries. During the 1600's the Dutch Colony of the Cape Imported slave labour from India. These slaves arrived on Dutch Ships at the Cape and were captured or sold in bondage. They originated from Bengal, Bihar and Malabar or Coromandel Coasts; however records of them are unseen because they merged with the Malay community of the Cape (a 150-year African Indian Odyssey, 2010). On 16 November 1860, the first set of indentured labourers arrived at the Port of Natal. This was a part of South African history that set it onto a new trajectory, with an introduction of a new group of people. With the influx of indentured labourers, the country saw a new type of slavery take place. The conditions were harsh but the community remained strong and affluent in their rights and culture (Vahed, 2010a). There has been a passing down of knowledge but it slowly loses its vigour and authenticity as time progresses. An African proverb says, "When an elder dies a library burns" (Steven, 2001). This statement reaffirms what is currently happening within cultures globally. Today religion, culture and tradition are celebrated in the same way amongst Indians as it was 150 years ago when they first arrived in South Africa. However this culture has grown and adapted to the context in which it takes place making it complex and leaving it with a host of different needs. The modern Indian now has a dual identity; one is of the South African individual who adapts to western culture and modern living and the second being very strong is the Indian culture that has been passed down by generations before them. This conflict in cultures has created a break in identity of the group as a whole. The strength of culture has been stripped and is slowly losing its identity in society. It is noted that a contributor to this loss in identity is lack of teaching and learning of cultural beliefs, traditions and a place in which this can occur (Vahed, 2010a). One could argue that through time Indian families have become westernized and extended families are on the decrease. Culture and identity is closely linked to memory, memory is on the decrease and has a direct effect on culture and passing of traditions. This suggests that the current memory in which cultures remember beliefs, values, traditions etc. should be preserved; if something is to be preserved a whole host of knowledge has to be gathered, the information has to then be stored or shared from a location that is accessible to interested parties. It is now evident that a suitable architecture be applied to house this information and commemorate these memories. However in South Africa, a multi-cultural society, one has to take into consideration the location for such a Building. Another consideration would be if it is suitable and responds well to the context. Over and above the above mentioned considerations, the architecture should represent its use and also conform to the new trends of building. Just as how identities change and adapt, so too must architecture.

## motivation

The re-discovery of the Indian South African Identity is the task at hand. South African Indians have created an identity in Durban and this is easily seen and observed. Today culture in South Africa is influenced by western ideals, shopping centres are the hotspot and people frequent these places because it is easily accessible and allows one to enjoy themselves without practically or learning in mind. The Indian identity is full of great value, tradition and culture and this needs further reinforcement to show the rigour of its existence in South Africa. A main contributor to this decline in identity is the decline in memory. Memory serves to place identity in a framework of society. With regaining identity, the group as a whole becomes more powerful and their ideals, values, traditions, languages etc. become more prevalent amongst the societies in which they exist. Another main contributor to this decline in identity is lack of character of a place or a sense of placelessness because of the trend of internationalism (Frankton, 2003). This is fast becoming the way in which the urban landscape is being formed. Communities are now being driven by shopping malls and convenience stores that work on profit generation rather than a place to help people live better. Architecture should be built with local traditions but follow international trends (Frankton, 1983). This architecture needs to address the needs of communities and societies in which they take place. A society where this is possible, can partake and contribute to the urban fabric. The way in which this problem can be tackled is through an intervention which can use collective memory as a tool to support the identity and culture of a group.

## definition of the problem

The History of Indian Immigrants to South Africa began in the 17th and 18th centuries. During the 1600's the Dutch Colony of the Cape Imported slave labour from India. These slaves arrived on Dutch Ships at the Cape and were captured or sold in bondage. They originated from Bengal, Bihar and Malabar or Coromandel Coasts; however records of them are unseen because they merged with the Malay community of the Cape (a 150-year African Indian Odyssey, 2010). On 16 November 1860, the first set of indentured labourers arrived at the Port of Natal. This was a part of South African history that set it onto a new trajectory, with an introduction of a new group of people. With the influx of indentured labourers, the country saw a new type of slavery take place. The conditions were harsh but the community remained strong and affluent in their rights and culture (Vahed, 2010a). There has been a passing down of knowledge but it slowly loses its vigour and authenticity as time progresses. An African proverb says, "When an elder dies a library burns" (Steven, 2001). This statement reaffirms what is currently happening within cultures globally. Today religion, culture and tradition are celebrated in the same way amongst Indians as it was 150 years ago when they first arrived in South Africa. However this culture has grown and adapted to the context in which it takes place making it complex and leaving it with a host of different needs. The modern Indian now has a dual identity; one is of the South African individual who adapts to western culture and modern living and the second being very strong is the Indian culture that has been passed down by generations before them. This conflict in cultures has created a break in identity of the group as a whole. The strength of culture has been stripped and is slowly losing its identity in society. It is noted that a contributor to this loss in identity is lack of teaching and learning of cultural beliefs, traditions and a place in which this can occur (Vahed, 2010a). One could argue that through time Indian families have become westernized and extended families are on the decrease. Culture and identity is closely linked to memory, memory is on the decrease and has a direct effect on culture and passing of traditions. This suggests that the current memory in which cultures remember beliefs, values, traditions etc. should be preserved; if something is to be preserved a whole host of knowledge has to be gathered, the information has to then be stored or shared from a location that is accessible to interested parties. It is now evident that a suitable architecture be applied to house this information and commemorate these memories. However in South Africa, a multi-cultural society, one has to take into consideration the location for such a Building. Another consideration would be if it is suitable and responds well to the context. Over and above the above mentioned considerations, the architecture should represent its use and also conform to the new trends of building. Just as how identities change and adapt, so too must architecture.

## hypothesis

It is of great importance that identity is acknowledged and understood in South Africa and the World. Learning the lesson from the forefathers of South Africa can teach us valuable lessons than can be applied to all walks of life. The utilization of these fundamentals can link traditional culture to contemporary culture. Meanings that are strong and vibrant have to be implemented into the urban fabric to counteract globalization. The richness of a rediscovered identity will stimulate a more socially interactive society which in turn will create a stronger, unified and more understanding society.

## theoretical framework

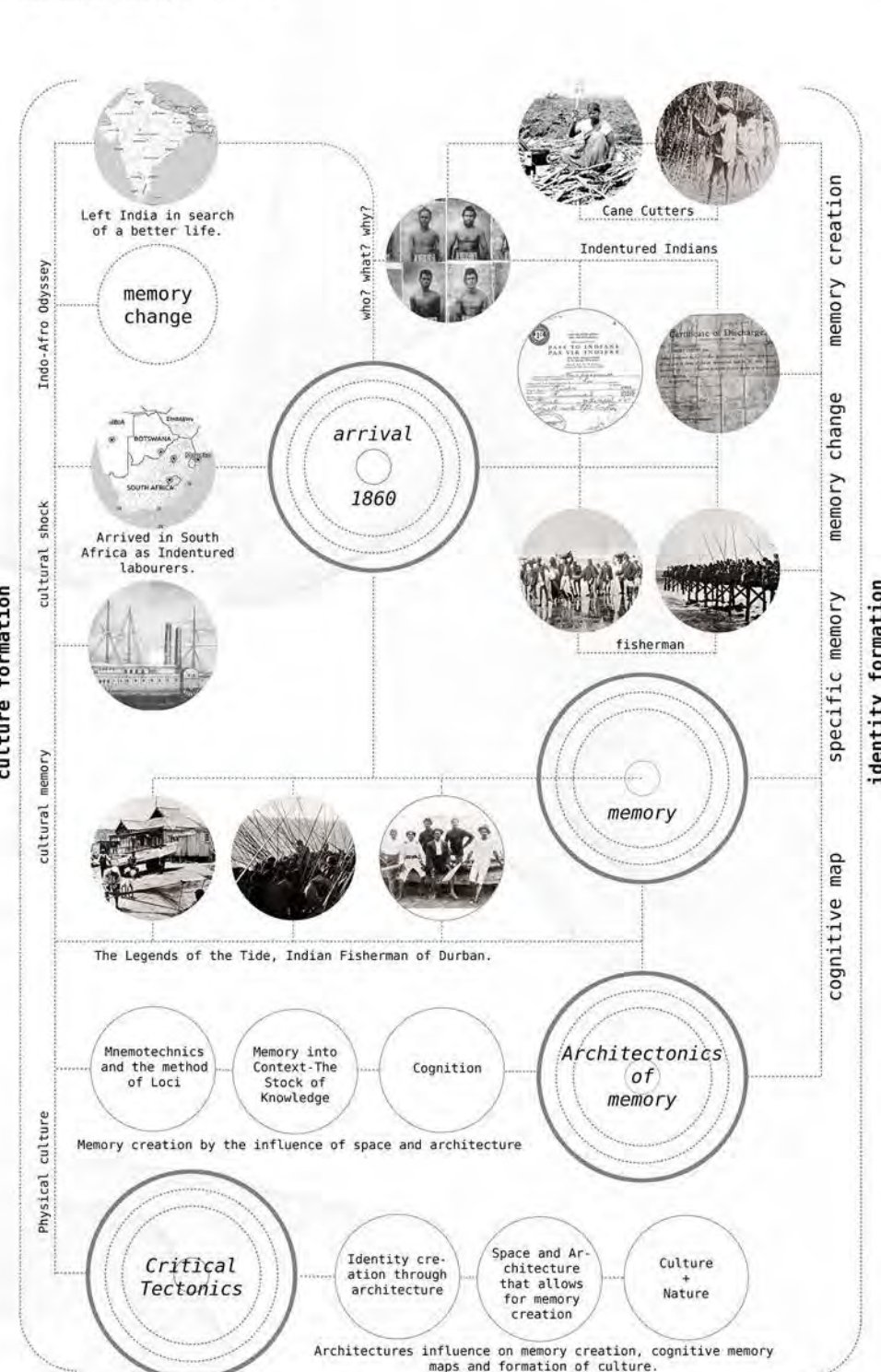
**The Indian Identity and Cultural Memory**  
Memory has a significant influence on culture and identity in any society today. The way we perceive space and experience events are a true testament of a memory that has occurred, telling one to do things in a certain way. Many authors have debated the topic and have come to conclusions on how collective memory influences identity of people in place at a certain time. The concept of collective memory was first academically discussed by Emile Durkheim and his understudy Maurice Halbwachs in the 19th century. It was ascertained that collective memory is a flexible connection between past and present. The academic Egyptologist Jan Assmann suggested that collective memory is based on a society's collective understanding in a particular context which relates them to the past (Assmann & Caplicka, 1995). This theory will be used as it is an important tool to recall memories in the Durban context. By this occurring it will further reinforce the identity of the Indian community as a whole due to memory being exercised in practice of cultural events. It is also argued that there are two types of memory, collected and collective. Collected being memory of an individual and collective being that of a group. Both types will be used in this research as individual experiences form part of the larger network of collective memory. Memory through built form will be used as a catalyst in rediscovering the Indian identity in Durban.

**The Architectonics of Memory**  
The methods in which one navigates through built form and the manner in which societies form is mainly based on a spatial cognitive map that individuals and collectives create in their minds (Parker, 1997). There are many methods in which one realizes and perceives the built form. The aim of this chapter is to investigate the methods of memory. Memory in the built form is a crucial tool in order to navigate, remember and continue. The built form is said to a manifestation of memory physically (Parker, 1997). The methods discussed under this chapter will include Mnemotechnics and the method of Loci, The Stock of Knowledge and Cognition. These methods are the most common and relate memory to the built environment. According to Parker, memory and architecture have similarities in that both are involved with the construction of large scale, stable environments which humans find personally relevant. This theory is termed Architectonics of memory as it is a poetic construct of methods that create a cognitive map of memory for the human mind (Parker, 1997).

**Critical Regionalism**  
Critical Regionalism was introduced about 30 years ago to shift the focus of the postmodern debate. The Critical Regionalism theory was used to signify an approach to design that was marked by the identity of a particular locale rather than a universal system. It was made in each local place according to local customs, with local materials and local knowledge but following international standards. By applying the local way of building using local materials and knowledge but by keeping an international standard in design that conforms to the modern day universal system. Critical regionalism can be linked to nature directly, it informs design to take heed of nature and this is what makes this theory particularly special. Critical regionalism also speaks about how one can be sensitive in design for example site excavations. Critical regionalism also emphasizes a tactile design that evokes the senses through other senses rather than just the visual. This approach is taken to engage the user in the building to experience the structure with all senses. Another approach critical regionalism takes is one that creates a poetic composition of structure. This is termed tectonics. According to Frankton, if the all the sense are not present, the tectonics or poetics of architecture is lost (Frankton, 1983).



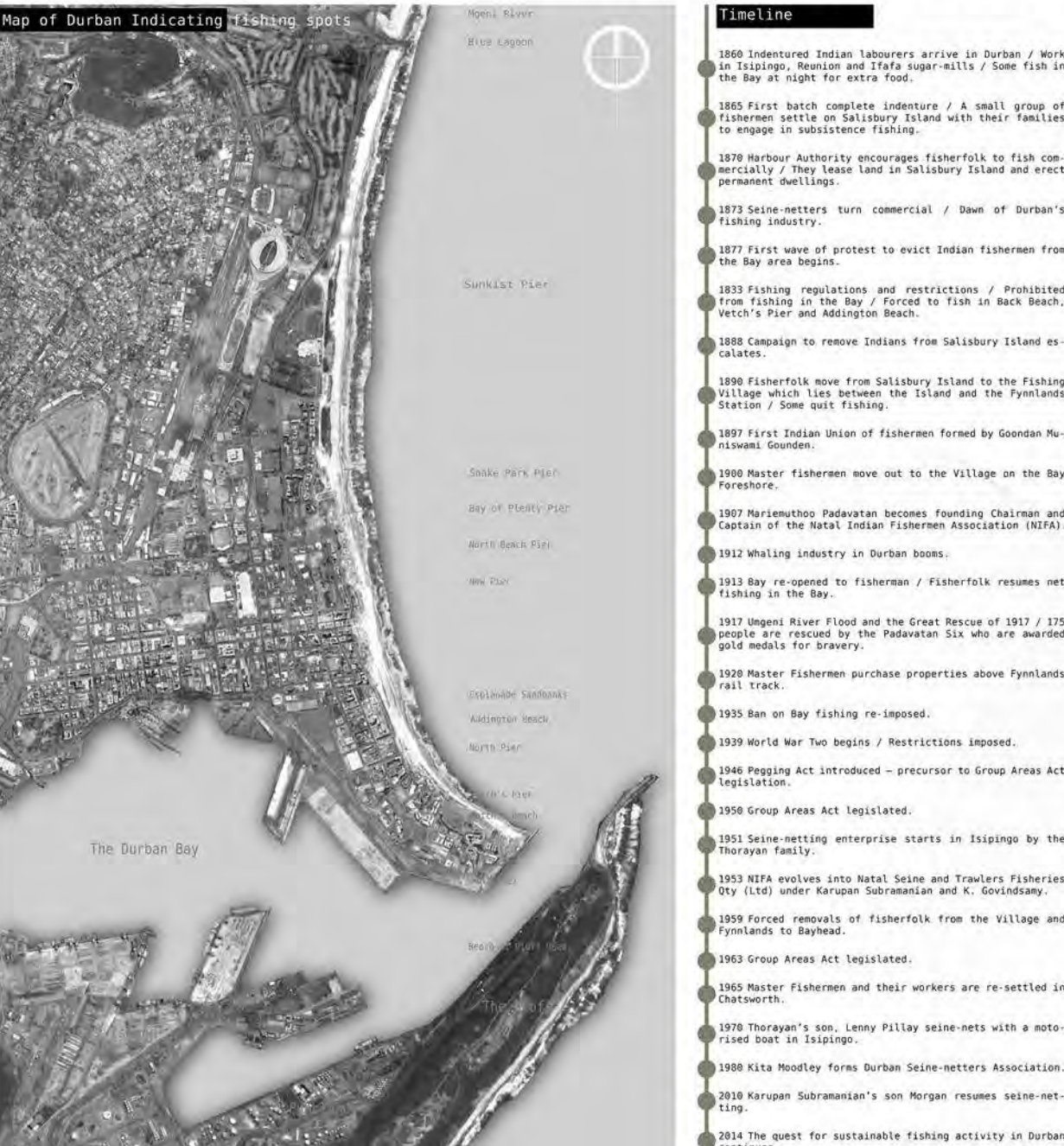
## Diagrammatic idea of research



## Introduction

The story of the Durban Seine-netters speaks of a people's mastery of the tides and their battle for economic independence, and the other unfortunate story of wanton plunder. From humble beginnings, the Seine-netter community of Durban educated their children, built their own infrastructure and created their own opportunities; thereby raising themselves by their own bootstraps, through dint of hard work and consummate skill. The Seine-netters started fishing in 1865 to provide food for their tables but were soon harvesting more than they needed. Fortuitously they found a ready demand for fish among settlers of Natal and thus began Durban's first fishing industry, long before the deep-sea trawlers and whalers came onto the scene. At the height of their enterprise this community collectively owned scores of boats, and a fishing crew made up of hundreds of men and women, including Dalus, Zanzibaris, Maritians and St. Helenans. Throughout their ventures, Seine-netters faced many hurdles and obstacles: forced removals from profitable fishing grounds, unfair legislation, and a lack of opportunities for growth and development. The final blow was dealt in 1963, which resulted in the enforced resettlement of these people to Chatsworth and other Indian Areas about 25 kilometres or so away from their regular fishing grounds. They were so widely dispersed from each other in this township that it became very difficult to mobilise their fishing crew on a regular basis. Within twenty years, the entire seine-netting enterprise was reduced to two boats and a crew of less than a dozen, split between Durban and Isipingo. In the end it was Apartheid, not the sea that eventually destroyed this enterprise. However, their tenacity and indomitable spirit helped them to succeed in their new circumstances. Out of this community emerged great entrepreneurs, professionals, musicians, sports people, cultural leaders, politicians and committed educationists. This community has an incredible story to tell which may yet be overshadowed by the immense contribution they still have the capacity to make in the new South Africa.

Today, large-scale fishing has made our oceans vulnerable. The advanced technological tools used by many fisheries have tipped the balance of marine life. Ultra-depth sonic fish finders, satellite technology and gill nets have virtually depleted fish stocks in many parts of our oceans globally. In fact, in 2012, Newsweek magazine stated that if we continue as we are, in 40 years all that will be left in our oceans will be algae and jelly fish. Defending our oceans and the life it produces for humanity is now a critical challenge for humanity. If the descendants of the Seine-netters were to take up this challenge, this generation's endeavours would be a fitting tribute to a glorious legacy of self-improvement against all odds.

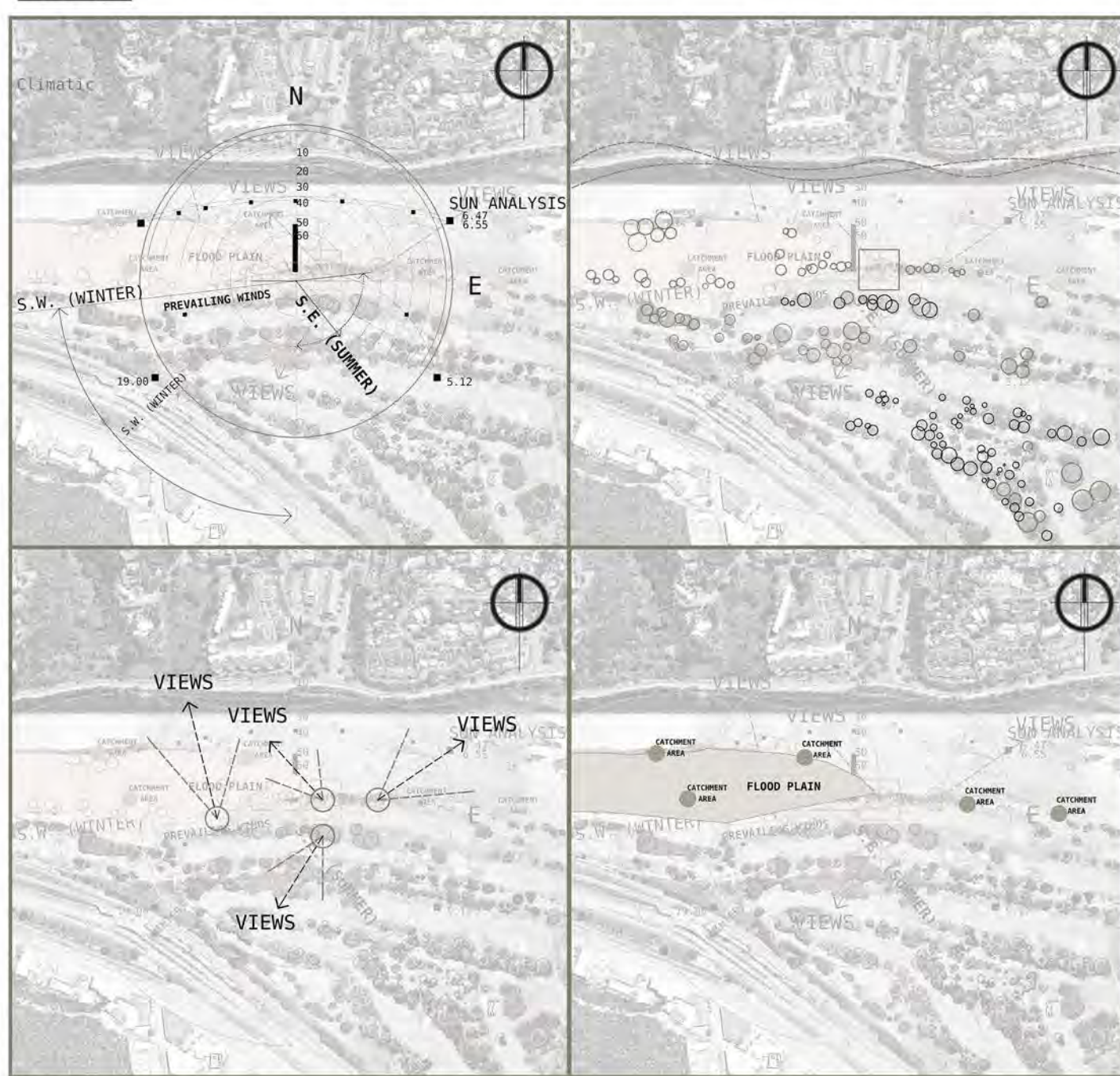








Site Analysis



Urban Plan nts



Site Plan nts





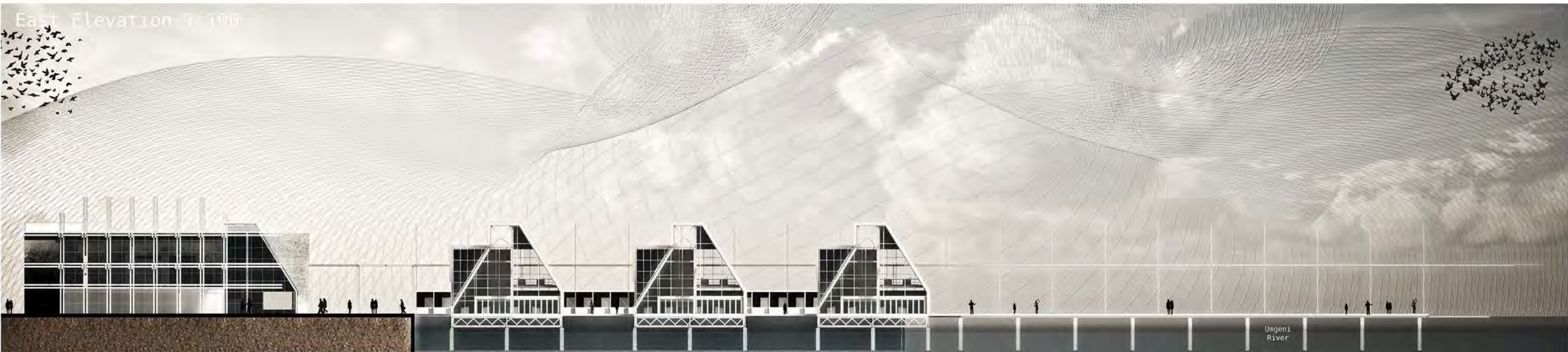
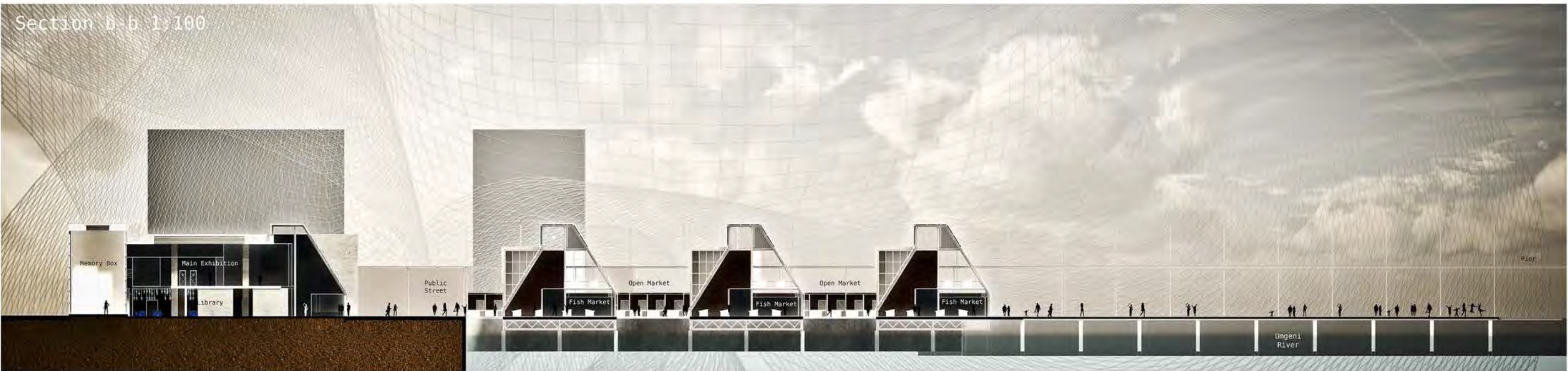
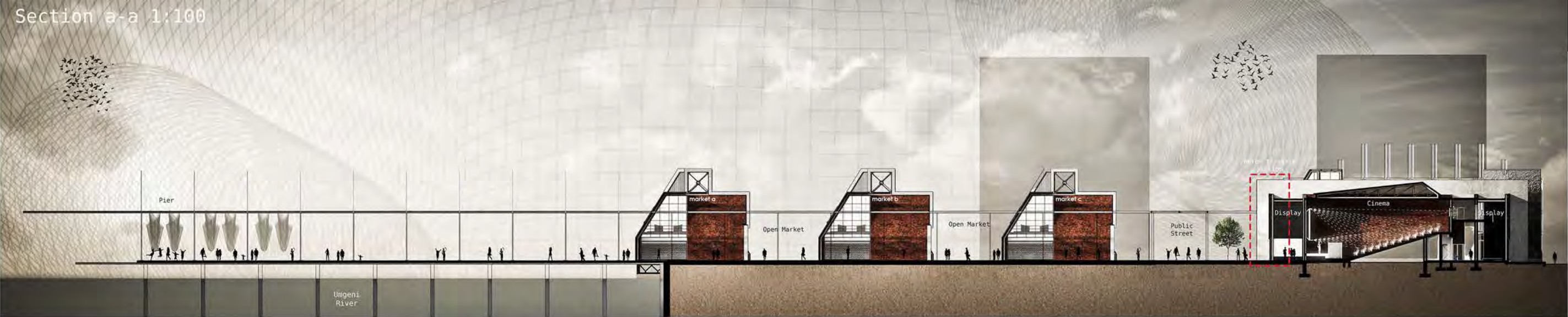
Ground Floor Plan 1:250



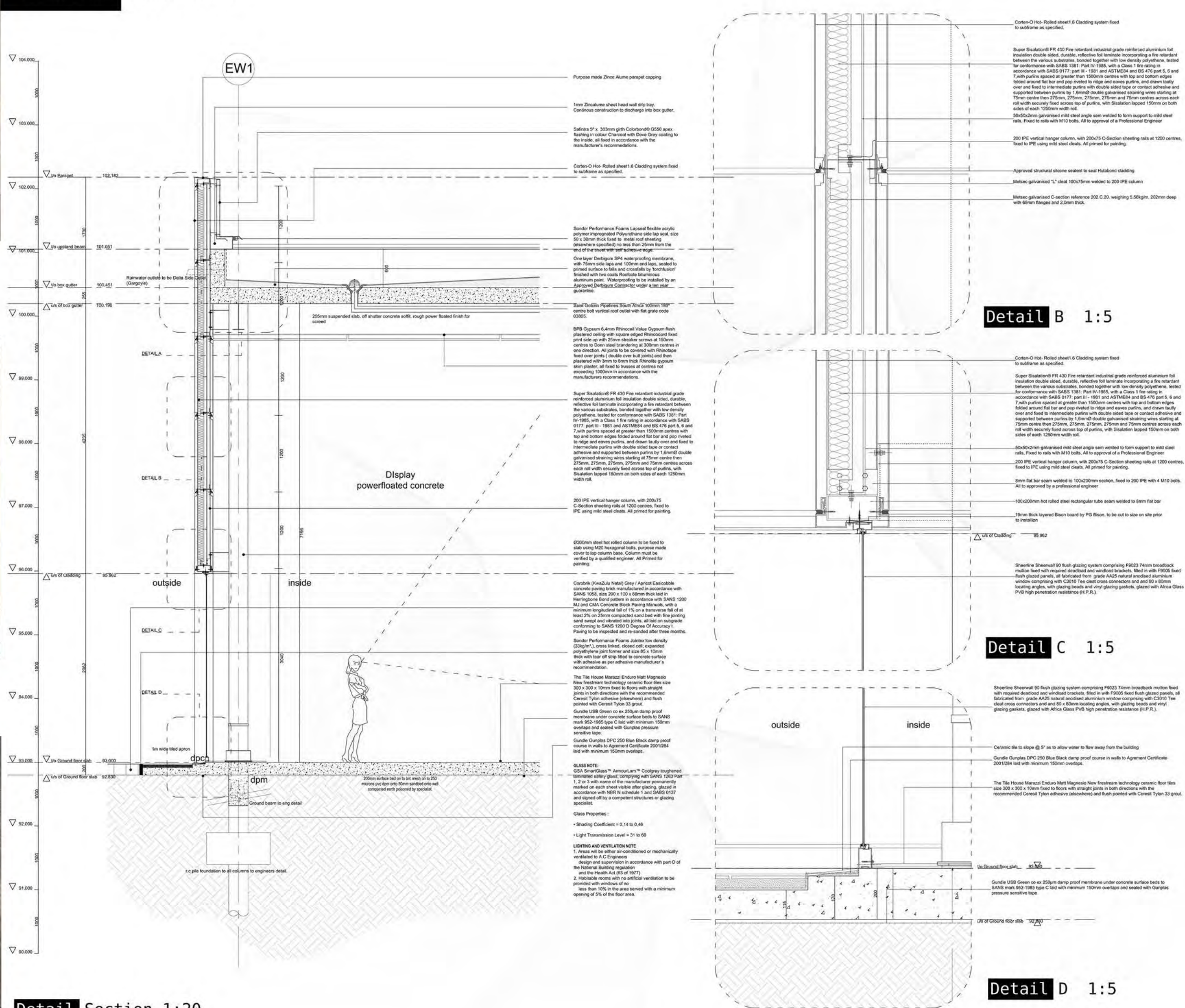
First Floor Plan 1:250







## Technical Resolution



Detail Section 1:20



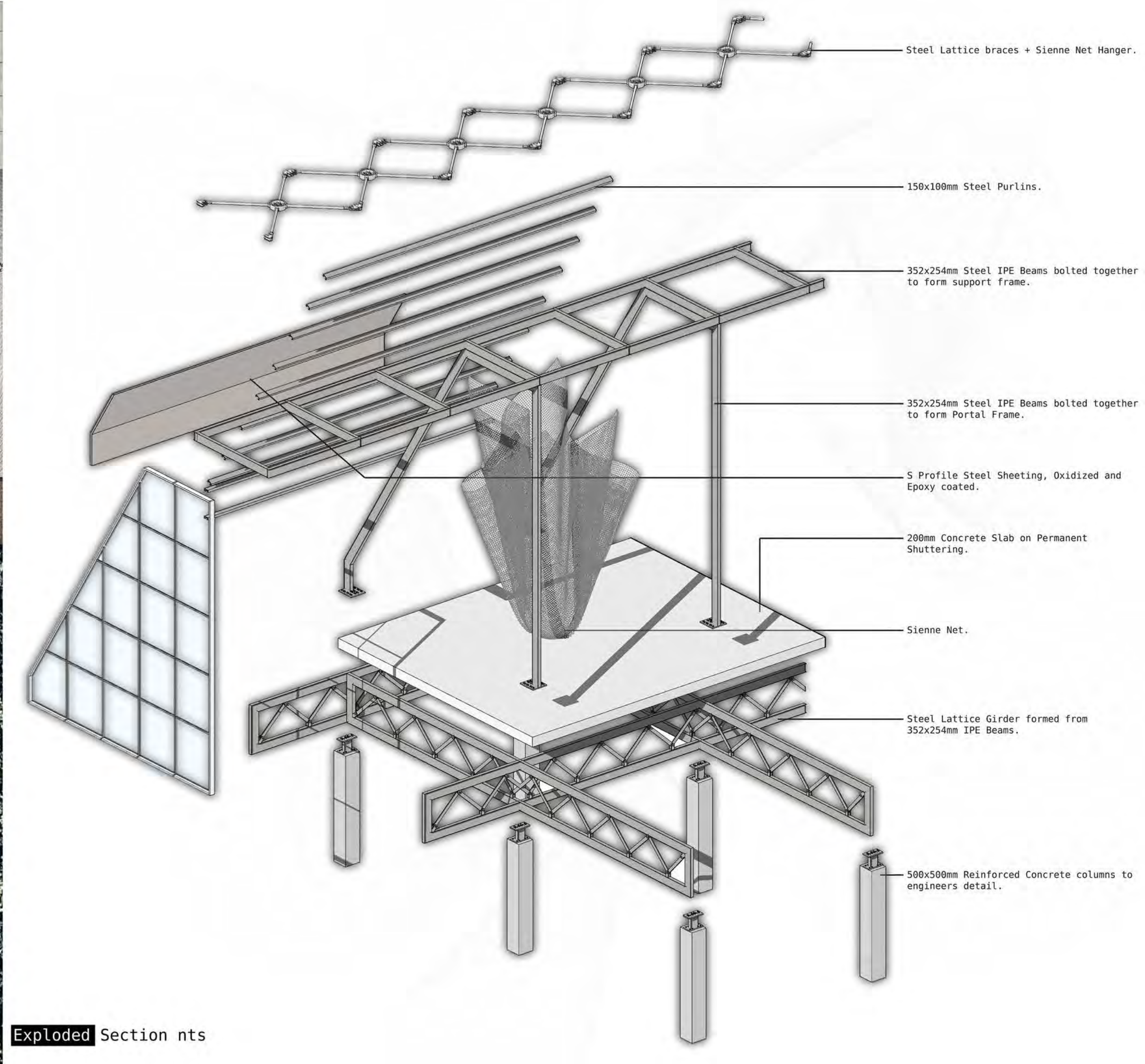
Materials Used

Red Brick      Powerfloated concrete      Corten Steel      Steel Sheet piling      Timber Decking      Off Shutter Concrete

Detail Elevation of Fish Market 1:100

This architectural drawing is a detail elevation of a fish market building, presented at a scale of 1:100. The building is a long, low structure with a facade made of vertical corrugated metal. It features a series of rectangular windows along its length. The building is situated on a pier or platform over water, supported by vertical posts. To the left of the building, there is a walkway with a railing and several small figures of people. In the background, a large, curved, textured structure, possibly a bridge or a large piece of machinery, is visible. The sky is filled with clouds, and there are small clusters of birds in the upper corners. The overall style is a detailed architectural rendering.

Detail Plan of Fish Market 1:100



## Exploded Section nts





Memory Box A: The Early Years.

The first memory box takes the viewer through the early years of the fisherman and their first grounds. This culture came with the indentured labourers from India and the tradition continued in Durban. The fisherman occupied the areas between the Bluff and the Umgeni river from 1860 to 1900. They lived on Salisbury island and claimed the shores as their own, fishing and creating a living for themselves as well as providing food for the community. During the 1900s fishing was banned on Salisbury island as the port became the busiest in Africa and the fisherman had to leave their grounds to find an alternative. They were moved to Back Beach and addington Beach. This became an even better fishing spot to their surprise. The fisherman are greatly known for their skill with the Sienne nets and using the banna boats to go into the sea. The fisherman always seemed to find means and methods to continue their fishing careers and make great financial progresses of which they built schools, religious buildings and homes. It was a start of many great opportunities for fisherman and Indians in Durban.

Memory Box B: The Seine Netters.

The Durban Seine netters weaved their own nets using locally sourced material. The tough cord used in the making of the seine net was first used in the river seine, France-Hence the name. The indentured labourers learnt the trade of seine net fishing from their home villages in Pondicherry and other French communities on the Indian coastline. The seine netters had a specific way of conducting their net fishing which from launching the bannana boat in three's, two going into the surf and one between the shore and surf. The nets are then set out by one boat. A purse is then created catching the fish. The shoal of fish is then dragged to shore. Sometimes the net allows fish to escape and the Pilot of one boat launches another to keep the shoal intact. The skill and mastery of the seine fisherman is an amazing story that still continues today. However a very profitable profession the low quantities of fish in recent times is making fisherman look to other means and methods to sustain a living. However is proper methods are used and cognisance of the environment is taken into consideration, it can be a successful profession again.

Memory Box C: The village on the Bay.

By 1900, all the fisherfolk of Salisbury island were resettled on the swamp lands south east of the bay, below Fynnlands station in an area they called the village. The Village extended almost to the edge of the railroad track which hugged the foot of the Bluff. The new villahers were close-knit fishing community formed around a core of a dozen or so master fisherman who owned the boats, equipment and licenses and who were regarded as the principal "tenants at will". In other words the were the landlords of the village. Their strong communal bond was forged through inter marriages, sports and the vagaries of life on the unpredictable sea. The tides, not the clock, dictated the life and the activities of the villagers. The incoming tide attracted a feast of fish such as mullets, grunters and a variety of bream, while the outgoing tide revealed a rich world of bottom feeders and shell fish. But, in the early years, the seine netters found it difficult to establish a comfortable habitation of the village because of the inhospitable physical condition which prevailed. The villagers had no choice but to build their homes on stilts to clear the high tide.

Memory Box D: The Springfield Flats

The 150 year story of the market gardeners, similar to the Seine netters, is one of tragedy, small triumphs and indiscriminate removals. The market gardeners of the the Springfield Flats were "free Indians" who tried to carve out a living for themselves and their families by growing and selling vegetables. along the Umgeni river. Clairwood, Bayside, Kings Rest, Wentworth and springfield flats to the west became popular residential areas for free Indians who were unable to afford the cost of living within the city. The Springfield Flats area lay in the flood plain on the left banks and only a few feet above the high level of the river. The people were largely poor and lived in shacks, huts and makeshift wood and iron buildings. They constructed cart-tracts, wells and latrines. They used a system of night soil removal for many decades before the municipal pail system was introduced. Use of the open field for this ablution purpose was not uncommon. They also built schools, temples and mosques. They were industrious and grew the economy of Durban using a variety of skills which included pottery and basket weaving. The market gardeners had created a profitable trade which still continues today.

Memory Box E: The Great flood

It had been hard for many days in the period leading up to the great flood of October 28, 1917. The accompanying storm wrecked the built up beach front and batter up ships, houses and vehicles, causing untold damage. Concrete and steel bridges spanning the river crumpled upon the impact of the hurtling water. During the days of heavy rain, debris jammed up the water courseway under the Umgeni railway bridge, the Connough bridge and the Clarkson bridge, effectively damming up the Umgeni river. The clogging of the debris at the bridges dammed up the furious on-rushing waters and set up a number of treacherous cross currents throughout the inundated area. The impact of the river finally broke the bridges, releasing a large volume of the water and debris flooding the Springfield Flats. Peryasamy Govender was at the sheds quite early that morning, because like most other fisherman, he too, was anxious about the safety of the equipment. He saw a fire truck coming towards him with the other members of the Padavatan 6, they had to load up all the equipment, so as to save it from the floods that were coming. The flood devastated many, but the community through collaboration rebuilt itself.

Memory Box F: The Education Generation.

The Seine-netter community built their own schools and actively promoted education. Their legacy inspires us to believe in self reliance. When state aid was not forthcoming, especially in the early years they raised money themselves; when facilities were unavailable they built and expanded education centres; when skills were unavailable they sought out teachers from outside of the community. The Natal Regional Survey records that the Seine-netters contributed financially and physically towards the erection of community schools were entirely funded and supported by the Seine-netters. The urge to establish a combined English and Tamil school was felt as early as 1880 with the advent of the first Indian settlement on Salisbury Island. A site on the island was granted in 1885 for the building of a school. An Anglo-Indian teacher (name unknown) was employed to teach children under 14 to read and write English - a skill which was necessary for living and working in Natal. The teacher, who was already infirm when he took up the post, died in 1886. The average daily attendance that year was 21 pupils.

South Elevation 1:100



Memory Box and Peoples Park Perspective





