



'Divisible Spaces': Land Biographies in Diepkloof, Thokoza and Doornfontein, Gauteng.

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For Urban LandMark

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Land Biographies

- Land Biographies project tried to
“*offer an historical perspective which narrates the passage of land through the urban land management system*” and

“*...how each precinct has travelled through the systems (official and unofficial) of land management over a period of time*”.

Value of the Approach

- How they *reveal and value a greater set of land use management processes and practices.*
- *Historical approach:* makes it possible to understand the interaction of processes that unfold at different rates of change – “catastrophic” or gradual
- *Land at the centre* as the object of study

Methodology

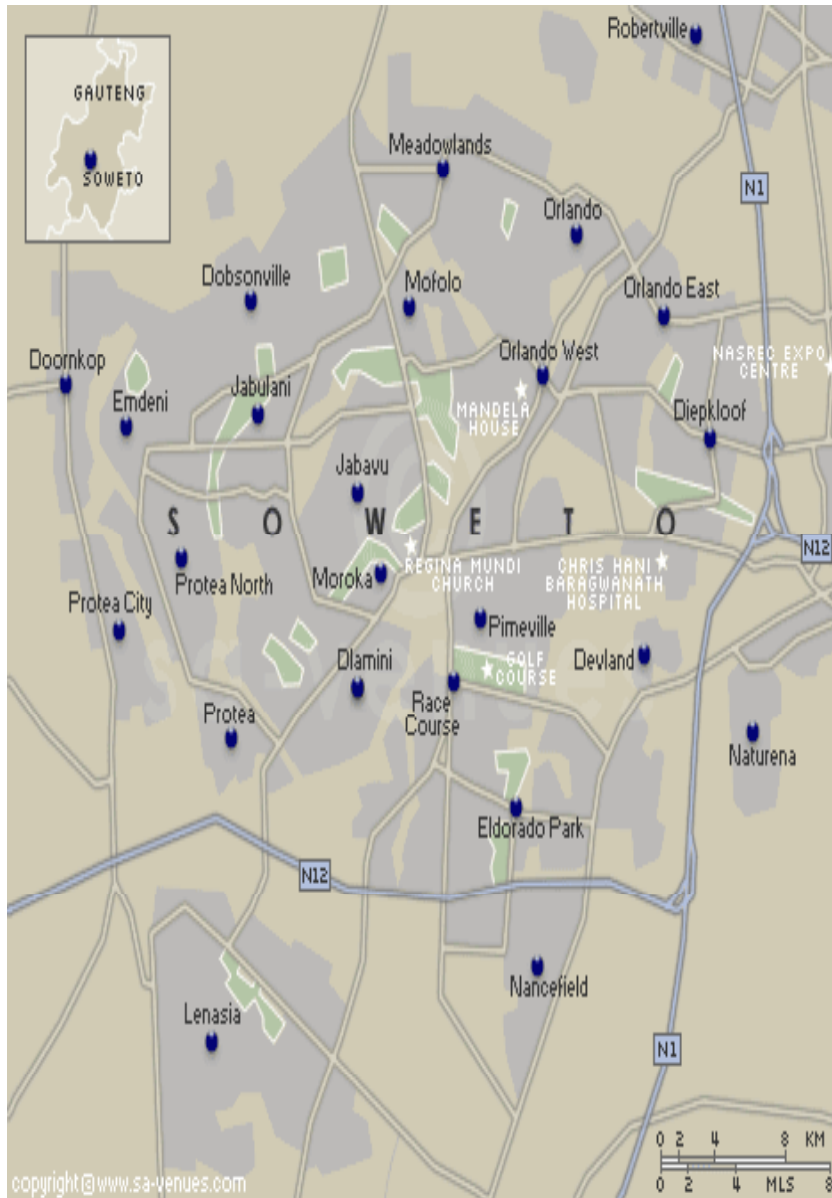
Site Selection:

- Within **Doornfontein** has some informal occupation of dwellings, sub-hostels, warehousing, commercial and converted warehouse space.
- **Thokoza** was identified because it is densely settled and provides a number of examples of different housing typologies, tenure forms and land uses.
- **Diepkloof** is an example of an area where the Apartheid regime manipulated the formal/informal status of development. The precinct was chosen as it demonstrates an area that was designed and planned formally but has in many ways become an informal environment

Thokoza



Diepkloof



Methodology ctn...

Purely a qualitative study, with a number of different elements:

- 45 land users were interviewed, 15 per precinct
- 12 Formal land managers: government officials, town planners, urban specialists
- 3 Councilors
- 3 Focus groups (1 per area)
- Archival research
- Desktop background study & literature survey

Deliverables

Three reports came out of the study:

- Methodology Report:

<http://www.urbanlandmark.org.za/docs/Land%20Biographies%20Full%20Report%20LowRes.PDF>

- Full historical report and all findings:

<http://www.urbanlandmark.org.za/docs/Land%20Biographies%20Full%20Report%20LowRes.PDF>

- Guideline document intended for a wider audience:

<http://www.urbanlandmark.org.za/docs/Land%20Biographies%20Full%20Report%20LowRes.PDF>

Findings

1. Land can be “shared” or used by a number of people for a variety of purposes at the same time
2. That there are a number of co-existing Land Managements systems – led to formulating a “device”.
3. Dominant land management systems change over time
4. Existing land management is resource rich but constrained by the myth of formality
5. Formal/informal does not adequately describe reality

Continuous sub-division and Sharing

- Needs to be understood at a range of levels and is both tangible and intangible
- Land is sub-divided physically for a multiplicity of uses

BUT what is interesting is that such divisibility requires the development of a series of relationships that define, rights, obligations, and claims.

A Framework for new ways of thinking about LUM

| Categories of land use and LUM | Examples of category | Control and authority | Value and meaning | Existing approach | Experiences of land users |
|--------------------------------|--|---|---|--|--|
| Anarchy | Conflict in Thokoza Hostels Diepkloof both from 1990s | No control Authority absent no accepted rules | Generally limited Highly individualised Hard to determine | Establish law and order | Disorder Degrees of conflict, Highly insecure |
| Mixed | Doornfontein shop 2000s | Little control Authority highly variable Local /official rules, /a mix but unpredictable | Dynamic/ in flux Unstable Highly variable | Different degrees of: Formalisation Eradication Erasure Incorporation Co-option | Adjust, adopt Unstable Unpredictable Unclear |
| Informal | “Hijacked” buildings in Doornfontein 2000s Informal settlements in Thokoza | Control is rigid Authority is local Rules are locally based & driven; Rules are evident & enforced | Locally defined Shared Consistent Social and financial | Regularisation | More predictable Clarity Limited external appeal More exclusion |
| Formally based informal | Indunas and blockmen in Thokoza hostels 1970s | Rules are derived from official system managed by local figures /structures of authority | Locally negotiated Socially legitimated Based on formal Social and financial | | More inclusive More predictable Clarity |
| Informally based formal | Informal enterprises in Diepkloof & Doornfontein Shebeen code of conduct on Thokoza | Rules derived from local practice and authority, they are managed officially or more formally | Based on local practices Officially legitimated to different degrees Social and financial | | More inclusive More predictable Clarity |
| Completely formal | Layout and regulations for all 3 settlements, when they were originally developed. | Control is rigid Authority is formal or official | Singularly defined according to financial logic | Enforce Regulate Protect | Exclusion Protection for insiders Predictable Control Inflexible |

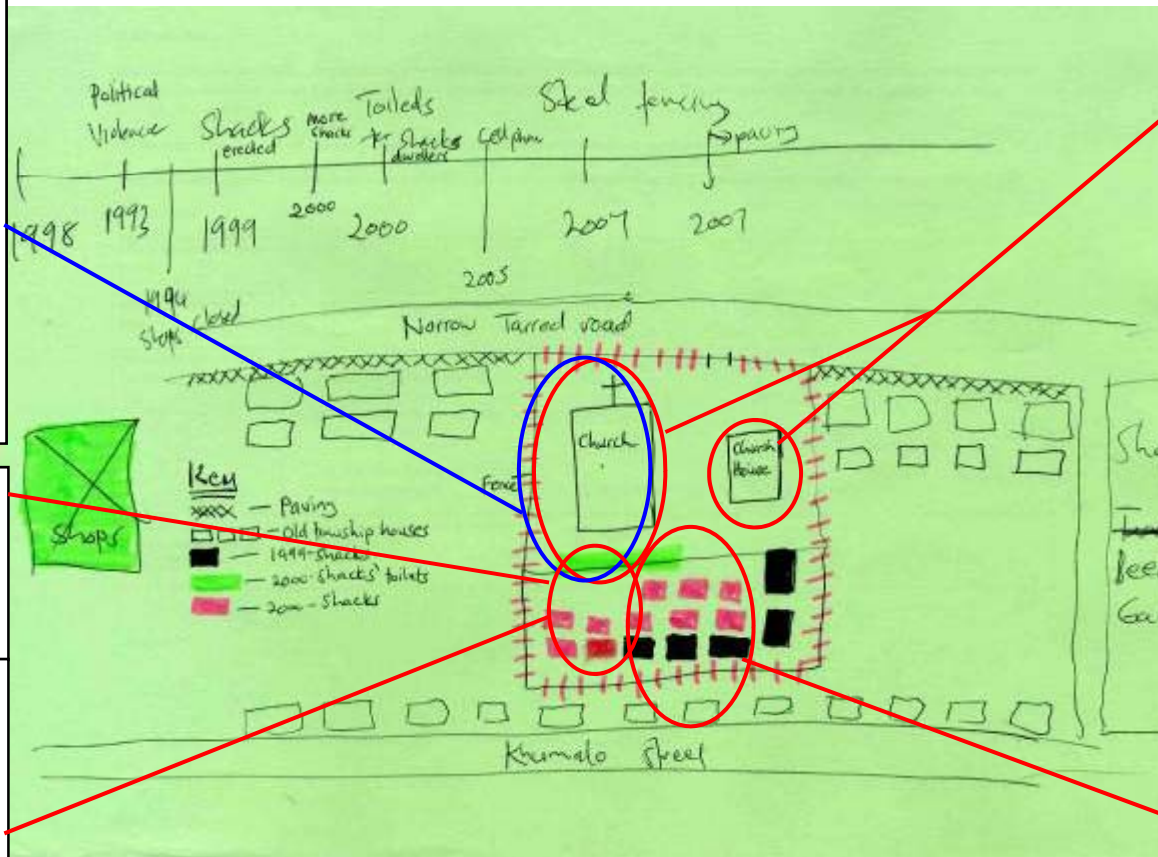
Co-existing Land Use management Systems

The Figure below was completed by a respondent living in Thokoza who had been on the stand since 1998.

Formally driven informal system: The Church also acts as a communal centre and the venue for the Passes Committee, which helps "... people that are poor who can not go to Home Affairs to process ID documents. Then when ID documents come back we deliver them".

In 2000 the Pastor provided toilets and there is a community food garden the retired women use and work in.

Completely Informal System: There are a number of activities that take place in these dwellings. "And here I have women that are selling mealies, I have a boy that makes atcaar here, I have women that buy & slaughter chickens to sell them. I have women who wake up every morning and sell to people to cover up the cost of living".

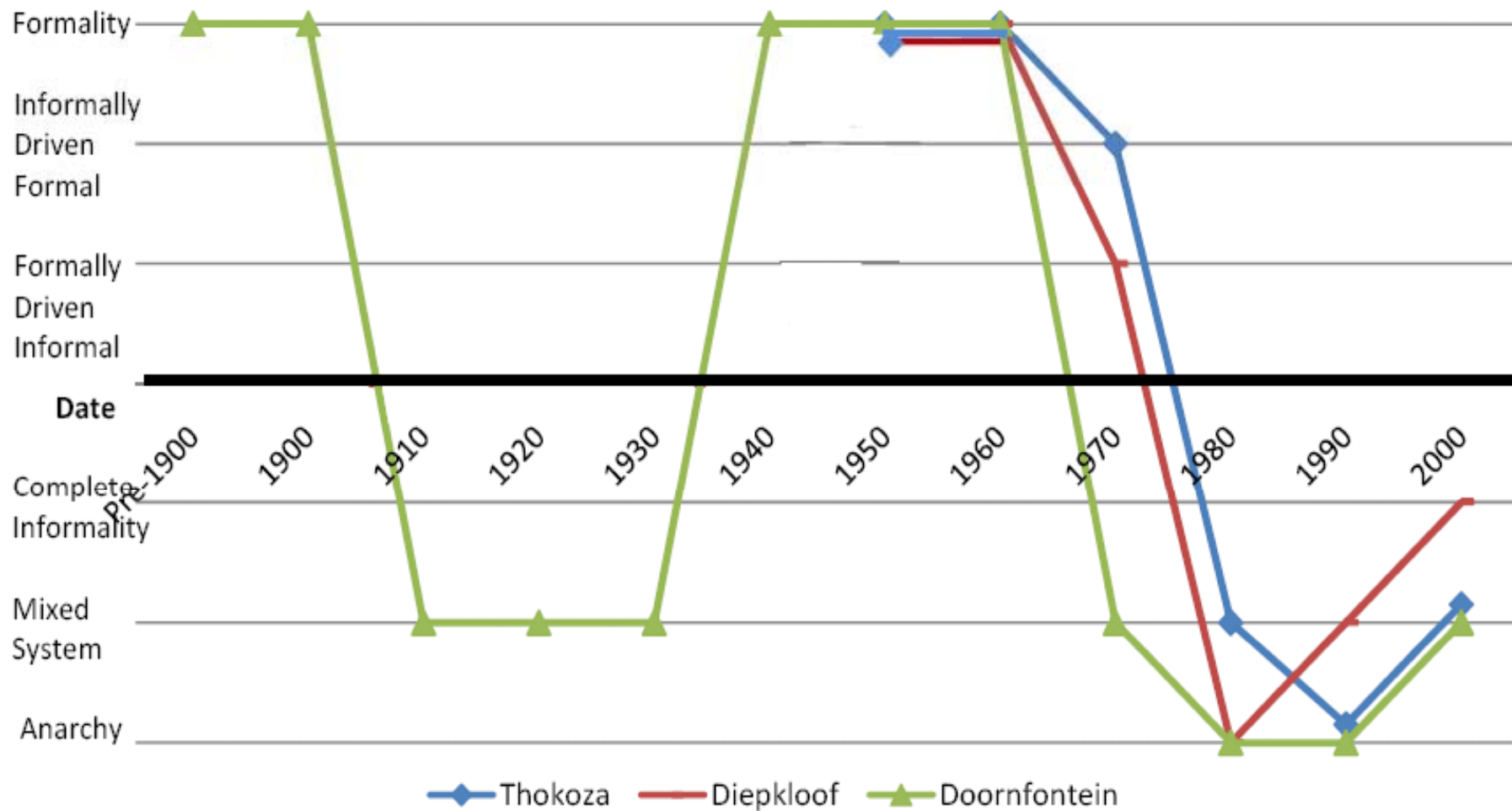


Formal System: The Church of Nazareth was established on a plot zoned for Institutional uses but by 1998 the Pastor was absent and the Faith Brethren Apostolic church applied to the Nazareth Church and was given permission to take over the property.

Completely Informal System: The Pastor also acts rents out shacks He explains how "Initially residents from around this township used to dump rubbish at the site where the shacks stand today. They also used to plant a lot of Marijuana. So when some of them approached me asking for permission to occupy the place I did not hesitate to allow them to. When I am bored I can go to one of them and if there is a case then we discuss it because we don't want other person to be harassed".

Mixed System: if the entire parcel is analysed than it has clear elements of a mixed system as parts of it are governed by informal and parts by formal but they seem to be randomly chosen and the rules of each are applied at will.

Dominant Land Use Management Practise over Time



EXISTING PRACTICE IS RESOURCE-RICH BUT IS RESTRICTED BY THE MYTH OF FORMALITY

- Existing practices involve more than just formal practices but formal land use planners are discouraged from acknowledging this.
- In fact most formal land use managers access a far wider range of resources regarding land use than is generally accepted.
- Without realising it, land use managers deal with all of the different land use management systems that the schema identifies and they constantly move between the various systems with both skill and dexterity.
- The current challenge is to make the process conscious and to capitalise on the skills and abilities that land use managers demonstrate by ensuring that within the formal system the full range of land use managements is valued and appropriately utilised and responded to.

FORMAL AND INFORMAL DOES NOT ADEQUATELY DESCRIBE REALITY

- The findings indicate that a formal/informal duality does not adequately represent the multiplicity of land management systems that are in place and which operate on a daily basis.
- Does not see the value or asset value of anything less than complete formality.

Land use management - towards a new end

- LUM has a tarnished image as a result of its explicit service to apartheid
- This research has begun to identify what principles a more pro-poor official approach to land use management would serve, were such a system to exist.
- Chief amongst these are social legitimacy, predictability, clarity and inclusion.

Thank You!

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