

**Landscapes of Memory: A Study of Memorialization in
Northern Uganda**

by

Philippa Keri Ovonji-odida

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To my parents, who always believed in me, constantly made sacrifices to make sure that I was able to pursue my goals in life, and taught me two very valuable lessons in life: always trust in God and never give up. This is for you, mum and dad.

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ABSTRACT

In the Western world today, memorialization typically occurs at 'sites of memory', such as monuments and museums, where people go to remember or learn about the events being commemorated. This approach to memorialization is increasingly being spread to non-western societies around the world. The design of these memorials often fails to accommodate the society's own cultural approach to commemoration, leading to deserted memorial sites that are seldom used by the people they are intended to serve.

This thesis explores the design of memorials within a non-western cultural context, using the remote town of Atiak, Northern Uganda, as a testing ground. It explores how the built environment can be informed by the memorial practices of the Acholi people, and proposes the creation of spaces where different commemorative rituals can take place. Within this proposal, issues of temporality and permanence, celebration of local material culture as well as the parameters surrounding the design of structures in a remote context are addressed. In doing so, this study presents an reinterpretation of memorialization in Northern Uganda which encourages the two current ways of memorialization to supplement each other for the benefit of the community.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Mapping identities, therefore, involves tracing journeys, which may be geographical, but may also be philosophical, political, emotional. They may be journeys in space, but also in time.¹



A monument by Caritas international in Northern Uganda

Having grown up in Kampala, the capital city of Uganda, I vaguely remember the occasional references to the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) war that was on-going during the bulk of my childhood: stories about "the North," "rebels in "the bush," a movie about the Aboke girls that came on the television one day. Despite the fact that there was a civil war that plagued the region of Uganda that my father's ethnic group hails from, the peace and comfort of the city managed to shield me and the majority of the country from the horrors of the war. Outside the region of conflict, many misconstrued narratives about the war existed, and continue to do so till today.²



Atiak Memorial in Northern Uganda, 2009; photograph by Jon and Lauren, from Treading Softly blog

The war ended in 2006. However, the formerly affected districts still suffer the effects to date; illiteracy, poverty, mental illness and land wrangles are some of the highest in the country.³ The war also led to severe cultural erosion within the affected societies, an effect that worries many of the elders and the cultural leaders in the region.⁴ As the people

1. Peter Wagstaff, "Introduction: Mapping Identities," in *Border Crossings: Mapping Identities in Modern Europe*, ed. Peter Wagstaff (Bern: European Academic Publishers, 2004), 8.
2. Ronald R. Atkinson, *The Roots of Ethnicity: Origins of the Acholi of Uganda* (Kampala: Fountain Publishers, 2010), 275.
3. Jennifer Rubanga (counsellor), interview by author, StraightTalk Foundation Gulu, July 13, 2015.
4. Ambrose Olaa (Prime Minister, Ker Kwaro Acholi),



Memorial at Lukodi, Northern Uganda, 2013; photograph by Mark and Mary, from Mark and Mary in Uganda (and back) blog



Lukodi Memorial, deserted and overgrown, 2015; from Youtube, "Visit to the Lukodi Massacre Memorial in Northern Uganda"



Dancers during the Atiak massacre memorial ceremony that was held at a local primary school, 2007; from the Justice and Reconciliation Project: Field Notes

of Northern Uganda struggle to heal the scars of the war, many non-government organizations (NGOs) and communities have turned to memorialization as a means of "symbolic reparations" for the survivors.⁵ While these communities mostly engage in spiritual and temporal forms of memorialization that are an inherent part of their tradition, such as prayers, performance of last funeral rites and dance, the NGOs mostly provide the communities with physical monuments. These communities are appreciative of these gestures.⁶ However, these memorials are not designed to accommodate the different commemoration rituals of the Acholi communities and thus these rituals have to occur at other communal sites, such as nearby school grounds. This separation of ritual from memorial decreases the ability of the memorials to contribute to the healing process for the survivors. The survivors have not developed sense of ownership of these memorials, which has led to deterioration of the sites.⁷ The sites are not programmed and are therefore often left abandoned in exception to the anniversary dates, when some members of the community lath wreaths in remembrance of the victims. I believe this disconnection between the physical memorials and the traditional temporal

interview by author, Ker Kwaro Acholi Cultural Center, July 13, 2015.

5. Julian Hopwood, *We Can't Be Sure Who Killed Us, Memory and Memorialization in Post-conflict Northern Uganda* (New York: International Center for Transitional Justice, 2011), 6.
6. The Justice and Reconciliation Project, "Remembering the Atiak Massacre," (Field notes: No. 4, April 2007), 14.
7. Olaa.

form of Acholi memorialization presents an opportunity for architectural interventions that draw from the very culture of the communities they will eventually serve.

As I reflect on the memories of my country's past, I discover aspects of my cultural identity that were previously unknown to me. I am driven to act on the curiosity and compassion that I possess as an Acholi who never lived in the Acholi society or through the war. This thesis presents an opportunity to learn and understand the history of my people, and explore a new way that architecture can contribute to the memorialization process and preservation of culture for the Acholi people of Northern Uganda.



Life in Kampala City was sheltered from the harsh realities of the war in the North.

THESIS QUESTION

How can architecture mitigate the current disconnection between the existing physical memorials and the traditional Acholi form of memorialization, in order to allow the former to better contribute to the healing process in Northern Uganda?

Keywords:

Memorialize (mɪ'mɔːrɪəlɪz)

to preserve the memory of; commemorate

Memory (noun): the time within which past events can be or are remembered // commemorative remembrance // the power or process of reproducing or recalling what has been learned and retained especially through associative mechanisms.

Rehabilitate, heal (verb): to bring (someone or something) back to a good condition.

Ritual (noun): done in accordance with social custom.

Temporal: of or relating to time as opposed to eternity.

Trace: a sign or evidence of some past thing // a mark or line left by something that has passed.



This thesis suggests that incorporation of program and traditional ways of memorialization will help reactivate current memorial sites in Northern Uganda



Memorial to the murdered Jews of Europe, 2015; original photograph from Google

CHAPTER 2: MEMORIALIZATION



Srebrenica-Potočari Cemetery in Bosnia, 2008; from Srebrenica Genocide Blog

“Monuments are important, because people want to see them.”⁸

As Richard Crownshaw writes in his chapter on history and memorialization, “memorialization is an act of remembrance: the commemoration of historical losses as opposed to the celebration of historical events.”⁹ The process of remembering is embedded in our human ethos. From the era of the great Egyptian Pharaohs, to the present day world, human civilization has often been compelled to find ways to immortalize the memory of tragic events that have taken place, or loved ones who have since passed on. Be it ritualistic or physically manifested, such as in the case of the Egyptians, where the grand pyramids were built to house their mummified rulers, societies have often found means to ensure that people, places and/or events would never leave individual and collective memories.



Memorial to the people killed during the JAL 123 Flight crash in Tokyo, 2015; from The Straits times “Prayers for 20 to mark the 30th year of JAL crash”

The Culture of ‘Monumentality’

In the western world, especially following the enlightenment period, memorialization has often



Vietnam Veterans War memorial in Washington DC; from Pinterest

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8. Margaret Olin, and Robert S. Nelson, introduction to *Monuments and Memory, Made and Unmade*, ed. Margaret Olin, and Robert S. Nelson (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2003), 5.
9. Richard Crownshaw, “History and Memorialization,” in *Writing the History of Memory*, ed. Stefan Berger and Bill Niven (London, New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2014) 219.

carried out through the creation of monuments.¹⁰

In their introduction to *Monuments and Memory, Made and Unmade*, Nelson and Olin explain that art history “lessens the threat” of its definition of monuments by limiting monuments to “aesthetically significant objects of enduring value.”¹¹ Crownshaw defines monuments as objects around which individual or collective memories convene, “and where past events represented by those objects can be remembered by those who witnessed the events directly or who have no direct experience of them.”¹² In both definitions of monuments, the underlying theme of tangibility is evident: monuments are a means to translate the act of remembering into the physical, built realm.

Although the words ‘memory’ and ‘monument’ are etymologically related, both being derived from the notion of remembrance, they conjure juxtaposing qualities when thought of. The former suggests ideas of temporality, intangibility, traces and the past, while the latter suggests ideas of permanence, visibility, grandeur and the present. Through the creation of monuments, memorialization leads the user to engage with the temporal realm, through their memories, and the physical, through their interaction with the objects. This can easily result in emphasis being placed on the object rather than on the event/the memory being honored for as

10. Olin and Nelson, introduction, 4.

11. Ibid., 2.

12. Crownshaw, *Writing the History or Memory*, 219-220.

Nelson and Olin state, “monuments are important because people want to see them.”¹³

Memory Versus History

In his essay, *Between Memory and History: Les Lieux de Mémoire*, French Historian Piere Nora discusses France’s transition from “memory” to “history”, defining memory as a “perpetually actual phenomenon” that ties us to the present, and history as a constructed representation of the past.¹⁴ He is critical of France’s 20th century perception of memory. His major critique is centered on his theory that ‘lieux de mémoire’ i.e places of memory exist because society has lost “real environments of memory”¹⁵, become de-ritualized and resorted to the preservation of history over memory.¹⁶ In a society that has abandoned its rituals, he argues that the manifestation of ‘memory’ through commemorative efforts such as monuments, are simply “illusions of eternity” that “mark the rituals of a society without ritual.”¹⁷ Communal activities that used to preserve memory no longer occur spontaneously, necessitating the designation of special days, places and objects that allow us to commemorate at appropriate times.

One can argue that a similar transition has occurred or is currently occurring in the non-western societies

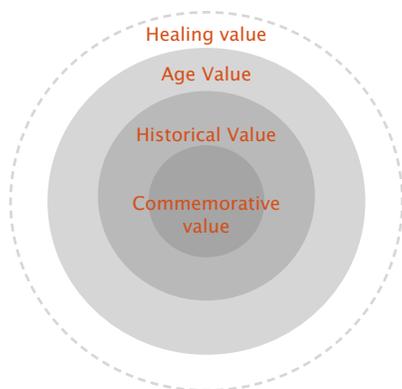
13. Olin and Nelson, introduction, 5

14. Pierre Nora, “Between Memory and History: Les Lieux de Memoire,” *Representations* 26 (1989): 8.

15. Nora, “Between Memory and History”, 7.

16. *Ibid.*,12.

17. *Ibid.*



Interpretation of Riegl's evolution of the value of monuments with the addition of present day 'healing value'.

around the world. Although peoples such as the First Nations in Canada try to hold onto some form of their previously inherent rituals or “collectively remembered values”¹⁸ in their day-to-day lives, the vast majority are losing this aspect of their culture, resorting to the act of archiving in order to preserve their history. In doing so, their societies are shifting from functioning as “environments of memory” to “places of memory”. Following the LRA war, Northern Uganda is in such a state of transition, with the increasing use of monuments, anniversaries and other lieux de memoire in the place of the traditional, cultural ritualistic forms of memorialization.

Discourse on the Role and Approach to Memorialization

The discussion surrounding the role, goals and practice of memorialization is one that is constantly in flux among various involved disciplines such as architecture, historians, art-historians, anthropologists and the international development sector. As Nelson and Olin state, the question of what the monument (and indeed most manifestations of memorialization) ultimately satisfies is yet to be solved. Is it “the desire to commemorate, to mark a place, to represent the past to the present and future, to emphasize one narrative of the past at the expense of the others, or simply to make the past past?”¹⁹ However

18. Nora, “Between Memory and History”, 7.

19. Olin and Nelson, introduction, 2.

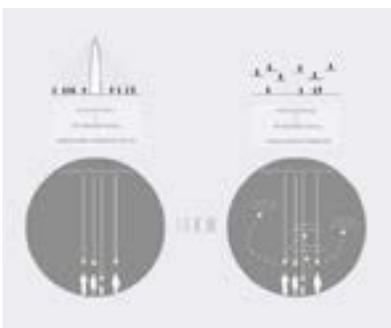


Deo Komakech, Northern Uganda's 'Massacre Scoper', 2014; photograph by Will Storr, from the guardian "Tragedy in Uganda, Joseph Kony massacre survivors in pictures"

in today's world, there seems to be underlying agreement that if 'done correctly' it can offer some form of healing to the victims.²⁰

Within the international development sector, there has been an increase in this use of memorialization. A special report conducted by the United Nations Human Rights Council in 2014 found that in the past 20 years, more memorials and museums dedicated to memory/history have been built than in the previous two centuries combined.²¹ Thus interest in assessing the practices and effectiveness of memorialization, as well as the evolution of new practices is valid today.

Deo Komakech, a research and documentation officer with the Refugee Law project in Uganda, has initiated a "massacre scoping" program where he interviews LRA war victims whose stories have yet to be heard. As he collects these stories, and maps the sites of the atrocities, he provides the victims with a means to be acknowledged. Although his approach involves the process of archiving people's memories and experiences, his main aim is not just to obtain a record of the war. Rather, he hopes that in allowing the victims to tell their story, they will eventually achieve healing through the acknowledgement that their experiences have



Lee Beomki's critique of the prevailing paradigm of memorialization, 2014; diagram by Lee Beomki, from Beomki Lee website

20. Sebastian Brett et al., Proceedings of the Memorialization and Democracy: State Policy and Civic Action conference, June 20-22, 2007, Santiago, Chile, 1-3.

21. United Nations Human Rights Council, Report of the Special Rapporteur in the field of cultural rights: Memorialization processes, Farida Shaheed, 25th session, 6.



Plan of Vietnam Memorial, 2015; data from Google maps



Visitors interacting with Maya Lin's Vietnam Memorial; from Maya Lin website



Procession path through the Vietnam Memorial, 2015 original photograph by Lee Foster, from Lee Foster/Foster Travel Publishing

not been ignored.²²

In his thesis, [ME]morial, Lee Beomki challenges the current relationships between 'collective memory' and western traditional memorials. He argues that the "primacy of a single image or rendering" has resulted in missed opportunity for further explorations and personalized experiences.²³ Throughout his thesis, he seeks to reinterpret Freud and Bergson's ideas on memory in order to fuel a dialogue on new approaches to memorialization that allow for a multitude of individual personalized experiences to occur.

Since the Vietnam War Memorial controversy that begun in 1981, Maya Lin is often included in the discourse of design of contemporary memorials. Her winning entry challenged the prevailing ideas surrounding war memorials at the time. Originally intended as an entry for one of her class assignments, Maya Lin often reiterates that she designed the memorial as an apolitical tribute to all who had died during the war.²⁴ Her design intention was avoid the usual politicization that is associated with war memorials, focusing on the honest reality of war, and the associated loss of life.²⁵ Her memorial challenged the American

22. Deo Komakech (Research and Documentation Officer), interview by author, skype online call, October 11, 2015.

23. Lee Beomki, "[Me]morial" (Thesis, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 2014).

24. Maya Lin, "Making the memorial," *The New York Review of Book* 47 (2000), accessed February 22, 2016, <http://www.nybooks.com/issues/2000/11/02/>

25. Ibid.

approach to commemoration at the time. One does not experience her memorial by simply viewing at it. Navigation to and through the monument is all intended as part of the visitor's contemplative experience: the descent to the apex of the monument, the search for a loved one's name, the locating of the name and the final ascent out of the site. In the design of her monument, Maya Lin managed to spark a conversation about the manner in which commemoration took place and the role of the built environment in the process.

In his essay, *the Keeping Place*, Jonathan Bordo reflects upon his attendance of the Pangnirtung whale hunt of 1998 that was held by the Inuit people in Nunavut. In his analysis of the nature of the event, its significance to the Inuit people and its role within the context of commemoration, Bordo presents an argument for a different approach to memorialization. He discusses the idea of "Site as an event", a locale that takes part in the act of remembering.²⁶ He seeks to distinguish this site of memory from contemporary 'depositories of memory' such as museums, archives and galleries, where preservation of memory takes place. Denoting the former as 'keeping places', he goes on to define them as "episodic, ephemeral, and unstable; they are subject to relapses and rebirths just as they might not appear to be

26. Jonathan Bordo, "The keeping Place," in *Monuments and Memory, Made and Unmade*, ed. Margaret Olin, and Robert S. Nelson (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2003), 171-179.

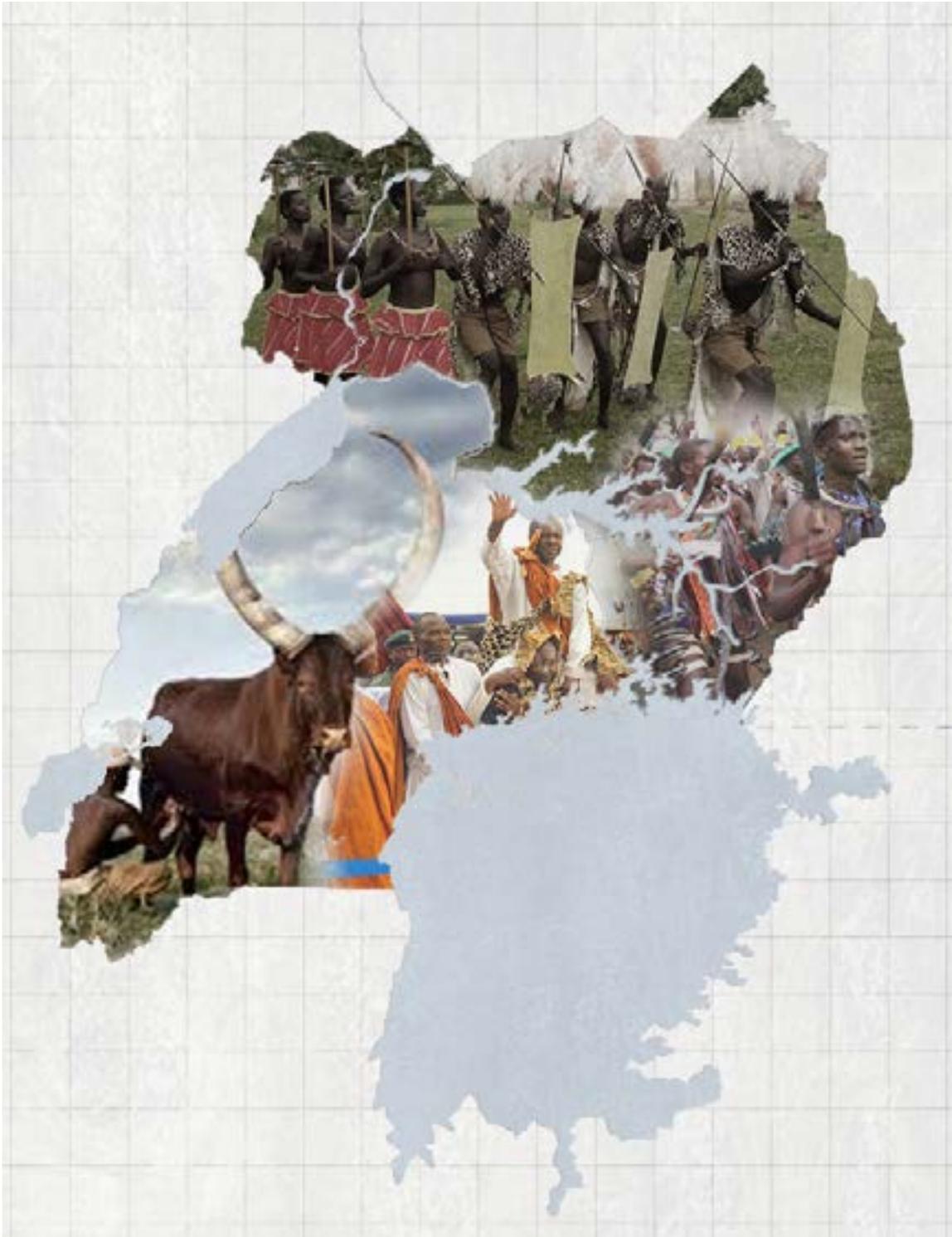
specially marked or institutionally framed.”²⁷ He acknowledges that this type of memorial is at odds with the contemporary notion of memorials, where “exhibition is a necessary condition for securing the artifactual deposition”²⁸ but presents a compelling argument for why it is appropriate within the culture and history of the Inuit people.

The above views challenge the current prevailing approach to memorialization, which is centered around the creation of grandiose objects, and results in the visitor primarily interacting with the memorial through observation. This thesis intends to place itself within this framework of thought. Nelson and Olin believe a monument must “exist within an actual present-oriented network of relationships” in order to be important.²⁹ This thesis argues that the monument, or any memorial, must also be rooted within the cultural practices of its users in order to be most beneficial to them. Northern Uganda is under going a much needed period of rehabilitation, with a number of players looking for ways to help the communities heal from their traumatic experiences of the war. This study aims to use the culture of the Acholi people to steer the design exploration and proposal. In doing so, I hope to present a new way that architecture can partake in the act of memorialization within the region, and add to current discourse surrounding memorial architecture.

27. Ibid., 176.

28. Ibid.

29. Olin and Nelson, introduction, 6.



Ethnic Make-up of Uganda today:

Uganda is made up of four distinct regions: Northern Uganda, Western Uganda, Central Uganda and Eastern Uganda. Each region comprises of a distinct linguistic group with exception of Central Uganda, that is home to the Baganda tribe but also contains the capital city of Uganda, Kampala. Kampala is one of the few cities in Uganda where the confluence of ethnic groups occurs at a large scale.

CHAPTER 3: CONTEXT

Uganda



Map of Africa indicating the location of Uganda.

This thesis is situated in Uganda, East Africa. The landlocked country is bordered by South Sudan to the north, Kenya to the east, Tanzania to the south, Rwanda to the south-west, and Democratic Republic of Congo to the West. As with many countries in Africa, Uganda is made up of several ethnic groups. These ethnicities can generally be traced to three distinct linguistic groups: the Bantu, Nilotic and Central Sudanic peoples.

Colonialization played a significant role in setting up the interaction/relationship between the different ethnic groups in Uganda.³⁰ The colonial policy implemented by the British greatly favoured economic development in the Southern part of the country, looking to the North to provide military and police services for their regime. This economic inequality led to a long-standing North-vs-South relationship in the country. Prior to the arrival of the British in modern-day Uganda, the different ethnicities existed as their own entities. Tribes such as the Acholi had their own identities, languages, rituals, and governing structure. Post-colonial era, these formerly autonomous societies found themselves thrust under one umbrella of rule. This resulted in a violent political history of coups, based along ethnic lines, that culminated in the two-decade Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) war in the Northern region of the country.

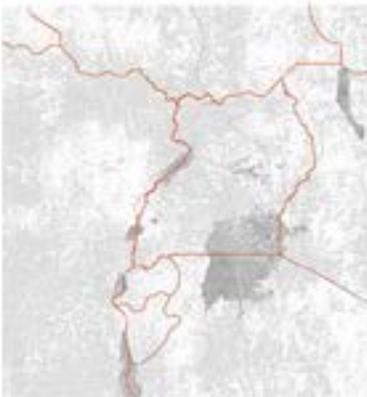
30. Atkinson, *The Roots of Ethnicity*, 1.



Thread 1: Pre-migration of linguistic groups from Western and Northern Africa. The natural rivers act as threads, creating boundaries in pre-colonial Africa.



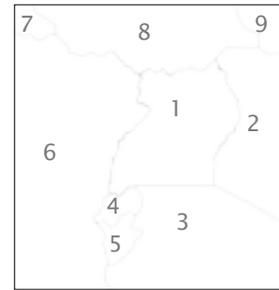
Trace 1: Post-migration of linguistic groups from Western and Northern Africa into East and Southern Africa. The areas occupied by the different groups respect the river-boundaries in some instances, leaving a trace of those boundaries.



Thread 2: Colonialism and the scramble for Africa. Political borders are imposed on Africa, ignoring the organization and soft borders of the inhabitant groups.



Trace 2: Post-independence. In spite of the imposed borders, people still identify with cultural similarities and differences associated with their respective ethnicities and linguistic groupings.

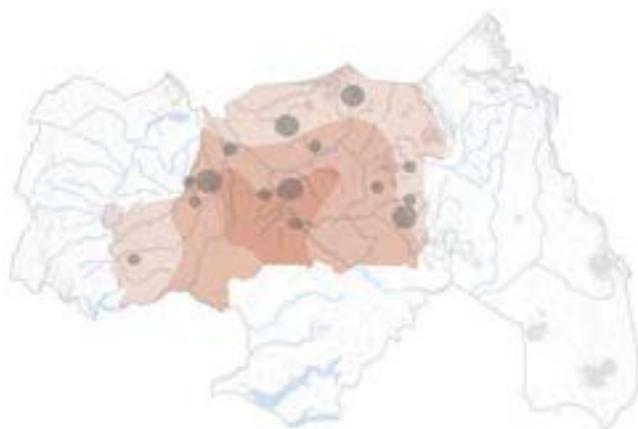


- 1: Uganda
- 2: Kenya
- 3: Tanzania
- 4: Rwanda
- 5: Burundi
- 6: Democratic Republic of Congo
- 7: Central African Republic (CAR)
- 8: South Sudan
- 9: Ethiopia

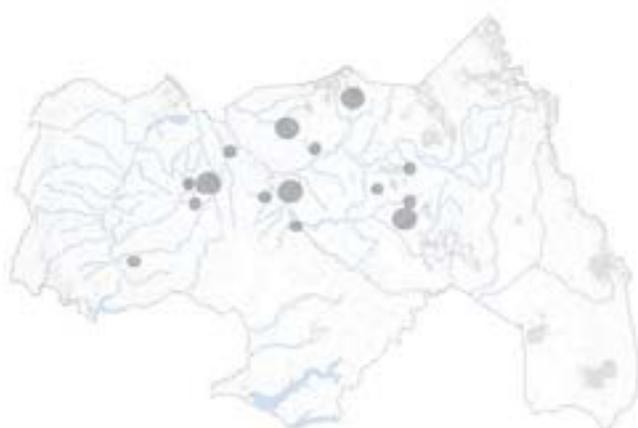
'Traces and threads': the formation of Uganda's political borders.



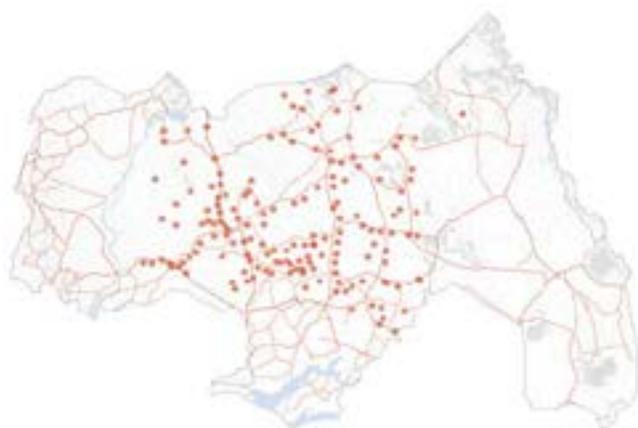
Bird's eye view of an Internally Displaced Peoples (IDP) camp in Northern Uganda, 2015; original image from Justice in Conflict "A genocide in Northern Uganda? - The 'Protected Camps' Policy of 1999 to 2006"



Rainfall Regions



Chiefdoms and Rivers



IDP Camps and Roads

-  Roads
-  Former Internal People's Displaced (IDP) camps
-  Acholi Chiefdoms
-  Rivers and tributaries (Above and below ground)
-  River Nile
-  Major Lakes
-  Rainfall Zone 1 (Most rain, most reliable of agriculture)
-  Rainfall Zone 2
-  Rainfall Zone 3 (Receives least rain, least reliable for agriculture)
-  Global North

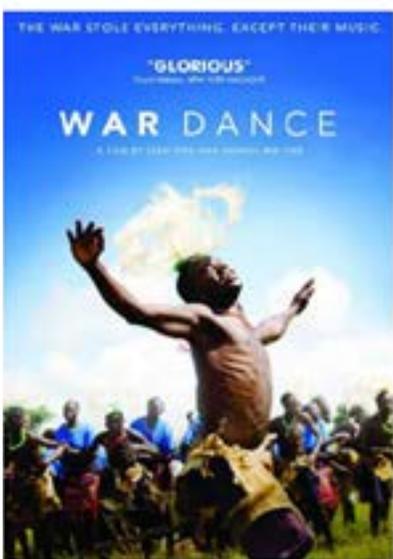
Maps of Northern Uganda highlighting IDP camps, former chiefdoms and rainfall regions



Modern adaptation of Wang'oo, 2007; from The inside story on emergencies (IRIN), "Traditions eroded by years of war"



Dancers performing a traditional Acholi dance; from Education Support and Health Organization (ESHO), "What we do"



War Dance artwork, 2007; from amazon

Memorialization in Northern Uganda

During the LRA War

The LRA war plagued Northern Uganda for twenty years until 2006 when a ceasefire agreement was signed between the government and the LRA. This war had a number of significant and long standing impacts on the Acholi people and their culture, some of which are still felt today.³¹

Insecurity

The LRA rebels were Acholi who turned on their own people. This led to distrust within the Acholi society as they did not know who among them supported the rebels or the government. Due to this constant state of uncertainty, social interaction dwindled to a minimum and only occurring out of necessity. As social gatherings were the settings for most rituals such as wang'oo (fireside story-telling where history was passed on from generation to generation), this lack of trust eventually resulted in the abandonment of many rituals.

Displacement

In 1996, the government implemented Internally Displaced Peoples Camps (IDPs) as a strategy to defeat the rebels. Under this strategy, people in the war-torn regions were forced to relocate to the IDPs that were overcrowded and unhygienic. This displacement was intended to be temporary,

31. Oloo.



A tree in a homestead in Gulu, Northern Uganda



Markings on a grave in Mucwini, 2011; photograph by Julian Hopwood, from *We Can't Be Sure Who Killed Us: Memory and Memorialization in Post-conflict Northern Uganda*



"This is where your father is buried," 2007; image capture from *War Dance*

but the population remained in these camps for 10 years until the 2006 ceasefire. These IDPs were detrimental to the Acholi way of life. Families no longer lived on their ancestral lands and were forbidden to leave the camps. Thus they were unable to properly bury their dead or perform the traditional last funeral rites rituals.³² People resorted to the use of simple markings such as small wooden crosses in place of the traditional ways which included the planting of special trees or the placement of special stones. Often times people just memorized where the dead were buried but did not have the means to mark the graves.³³

People turned to the use of dance to cope with the harsh life in the camps. It used to accompany most rituals that occurred within the homestead or in the center of the village, which was the location for most communal gatherings. During the war, it was used as a way to remember the peaceful life before the war, often occurring in outdoor spaces such as underneath tree canopies. Although dance had always been seen as part and parcel of being an Acholi, the war increased its importance within the Acholi Society as it was the only ritual that could easily take place in the IDPs.³⁴

32. Philip Odida (Minister Counselor, Foreign Affairs ministry), interview by author, Ker Kwaro Acholi Cultural center, July 13, 2015.

33. *War Dance*, online, directed by Sean Fine and Andrea Nix (2007; New York, NY; Think Film, 2016).

34. *Ibid.*

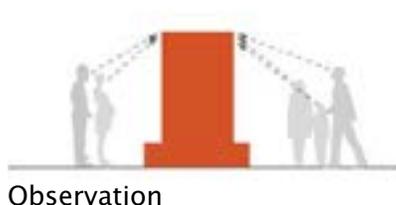


Post-LRA War, Participation to Observation

After the war, the Acholi population was encouraged to move back to their villages in order to resume their lives. As is the case with most societies that have faced mass violence, the entire population is severely traumatized. Some communities have conducted mass funeral rituals in honor of their dead³⁵, or prayer services in community churches. Unfortunately, majority of the younger generation do not partake in these rituals, as they were not exposed to them during their time growing up in the camps.³⁶ As surviving elders die over the years, the traditional ways of memorialization are dying with them. In response to this situation Ker Kwaro Acholi, the Acholi traditional cultural institution, is constantly looking for ways to preserve the Acholi culture and introduce the younger generation to the abandoned aspects of their cultural.³⁷

International Involvement:

In response to the dire conditions in the region during the war, a number of international Non-Government Organizations (NGOs) such as Red Cross and Caritas International and many others, became involved in Northern Uganda. A number of these organizations are still present today, and are trying to contribute to the rehabilitation



35. Refugee Law Project-Video Advocacy Unit. "Let's Save the Future: Acholi Traditional Reburial Ritual," Youtube video, October 6, 2014, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2IDBpDPZj7A>

36. OIaa.

37. Ibid.



Atiak Memorial, Atiak Sub county (Uganda)



Current spaces in which dance performances take place, 2013; from Cultural Safaris in Uganda



Acholi traditional dancers about to perform, 2012; from Outreach Uganda "Acholi Dancers Combine Culture and Income-Generation"

process through provision of transitional justice. Transitional justice refers to a "set of judicial and non-judicial measures that have been implemented by different countries in order to redress the legacies of massive human rights abuses."³⁸ Some of these measures include criminal prosecutions, truth commissions, reparation programs, and various kinds of institutional reforms.³⁹

One of the more common measures implemented by the NGOs involves the creation of physical memorials as a form of symbolic reparations for the affected communities. As mentioned earlier, these monuments are unfortunately often left deserted, with traditional memorialization rituals occurring elsewhere.

Main Problems Identified and Translation into Design Goals

...a memorial on its own was insufficient and instead recommended providing something that could benefit affected communities, such as a health centre or a school.⁴⁰

Lack of Adequate Spaces for Rituals to Take Place

Dance, and other rituals are still an integral part of commemoration practices in the Acholi society.

38. "What is Transitional Justice?" Last accessed February 22, 2016, <http://www.ictj.org/about/transitional-justice>.

39. Ibid.

40. Wairagala Wakabi, "Uganda Coverage Sparks War Memorials Debate," Global Voices, October 20, 2011, <https://iwpr.net/global-voices/uganda-coverage-sparks-war-memorials-debate>

However, these memorial sites are not designed to properly accommodate these dances. The rituals therefore occur elsewhere⁴¹, or the community is forced to make due with whatever their surroundings are to perform the rituals. Thus one of the design goals is to address the incorporation of performance spaces at the current memorial site.

Loss of Culture During the War

As mentioned, family and societal structures were broken down during the war. As these were the means for cultural practices like mato oput (cultural reconciliation ritual) and wang'oo to occur, many of these practices were lost. In present times, preservation of culture is an important concern for Ker Kwaro Acholi and the elders of the Acholi society. This project proposes the establishment of a community/cultural center where people of all ages can interact and (re)learn the lost traditions and rituals of this society. The proposal also includes the design of a memorial at the actual site of atrocity that allows for different rituals to easily occur, and that picks up on the traditional practice of planting a special tree to signify the loss of the victims' lives.

Lack of Adequate Portrayal of the Magnitude of Lives Lost

Due to the insecurity during the war, the victims of the Atiak massacre were hastily buried; predominantly in mass graves and without the

41. The Justice and Reconciliation Project, 9.

occurrence of the usual burial rituals. The existing memorial plaque refers to the loss of lives, but does not indicate the magnitude of lives lost, which has left many of the victims bitter. The final preposition of this thesis involves the creation of a “mark” in the landscape that is symbolic of the large number of lives lost during this massacre.

Translation of Thesis Goals to Program

Ritual



The new memorial will contain a space where the different communal Acholi rituals relating to commemoration and death, such as mato oput can take place. It will also be a space that people can use on a day to day basis for activities such as weekend markets.

Marking



The site of the atrocity will be the location of the new memorial where 300 trees will be planted over time, to represent the number of lives lost during the massacre, and reintroduce the tree-planting tradition that once existed in the Acholi society. As the trees grow, the site will constantly change as a reflection of the passage of time.

Culture



The proposed cultural center will serve as a means to preserve the Acholi culture through provision of a space where people can interact and (re)learn different aspects of the culture such as dance, the wan’goo fireside stories and traditional agricultural practices.

Thesis program goals

CHAPTER 4: DESIGN METHODOLOGY



Due to the remoteness of Northern Uganda, and the instability caused during the war, there is minimal data such as maps available. There are also a scarcity of archived documentation on the culture and rituals of the Acholi, and the quality of life that people are returning to. This thesis therefore relies on primary data collected during site visits, interviews with members of the Ker Kwaro Acholi and Ker Kwaro Atiak cultural institutions (the official cultural institutions of the Acholi people), and a number of non-traditional approaches so as to achieve its goals.

Phenomena Map



Since 1986, most programmatic, cultural and dwelling decisions made in Northern Uganda have been as a direct or indirect response to the war. This thesis interprets the war as the primary ordering 'system' of the region. Although there is scarce official documentation on most parts of Northern Uganda especially on the time period during the war, there is an abundant source of photos, documentaries, biographies and short films available. These sources were analyzed on the basis of program, material culture, spatial qualities and craft. This cinematic analysis resulted in a materials palette and general preliminary ideas about program.



Due to the subjective nature of the approach, all findings were cross referenced with interviews

previously conducted with the cultural institutions in the region, NGO reports and Deo Komakech, the ‘massacre scoper’.

Visits to the test site provided an opportunity to observe current conditions such as the current material culture. It also allowed for interviews with members of the Ker Kwaro Acholi. These interviews are instrumental in providing an understanding of the present-day rituals that still take place in the Acholi society.

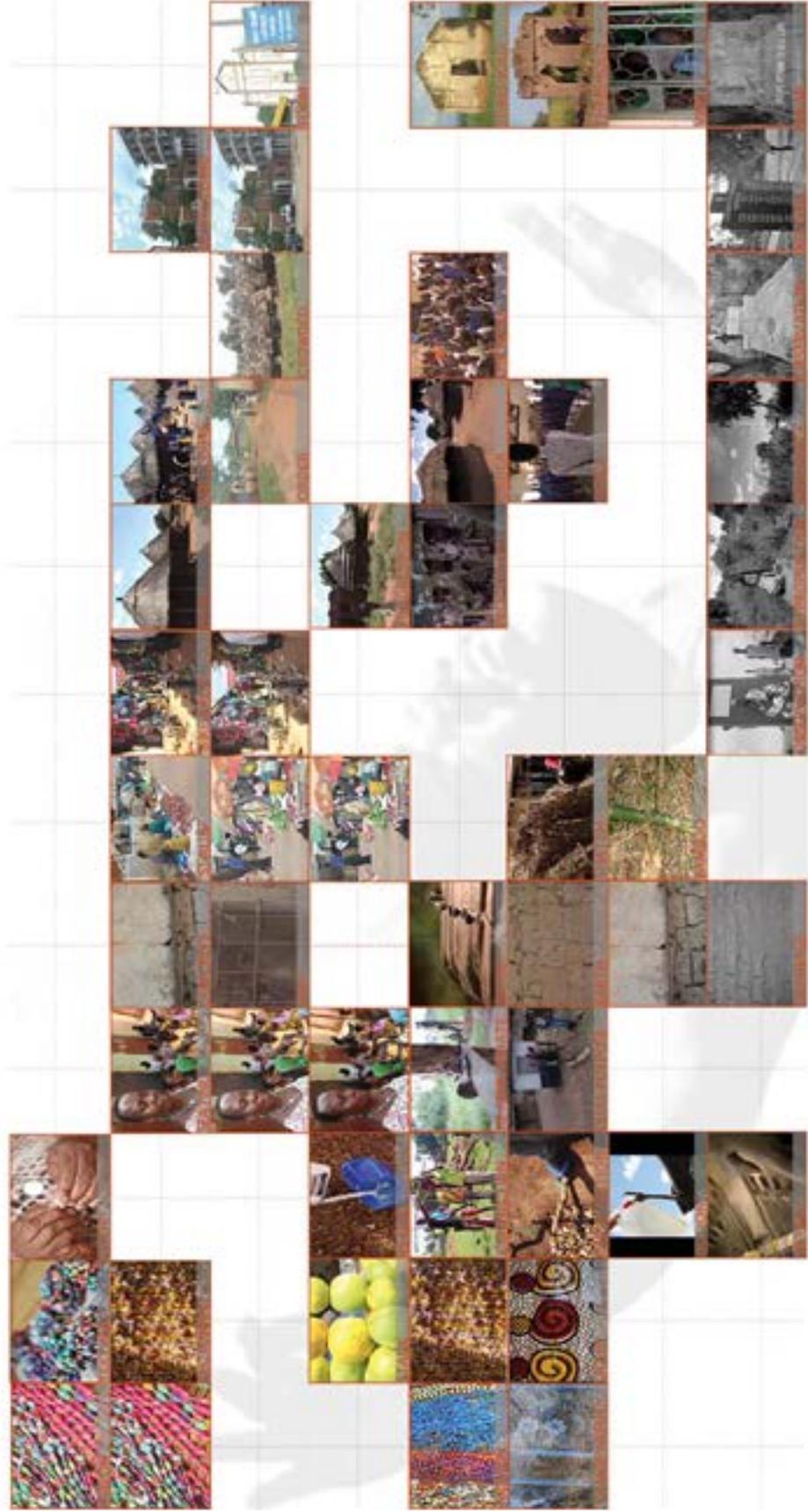
Translation of Dance to Architecture

In creating the phenomena map, dance emerged as one of the core activities that accompanies all Acholi rituals.⁴² The Bwola royal dance was then

42. Te Kal Acholi. “Acholi History and Traditional Dance (Ker Kal Kwaro)”. Youtube video, 32:30.



Montage depicting different rituals in the Acholi society. Color represents rituals that still commonly take place to date while black and white represents the rituals that have either died out completely or do not happen as often.



Phenomena Map of Northern Uganda

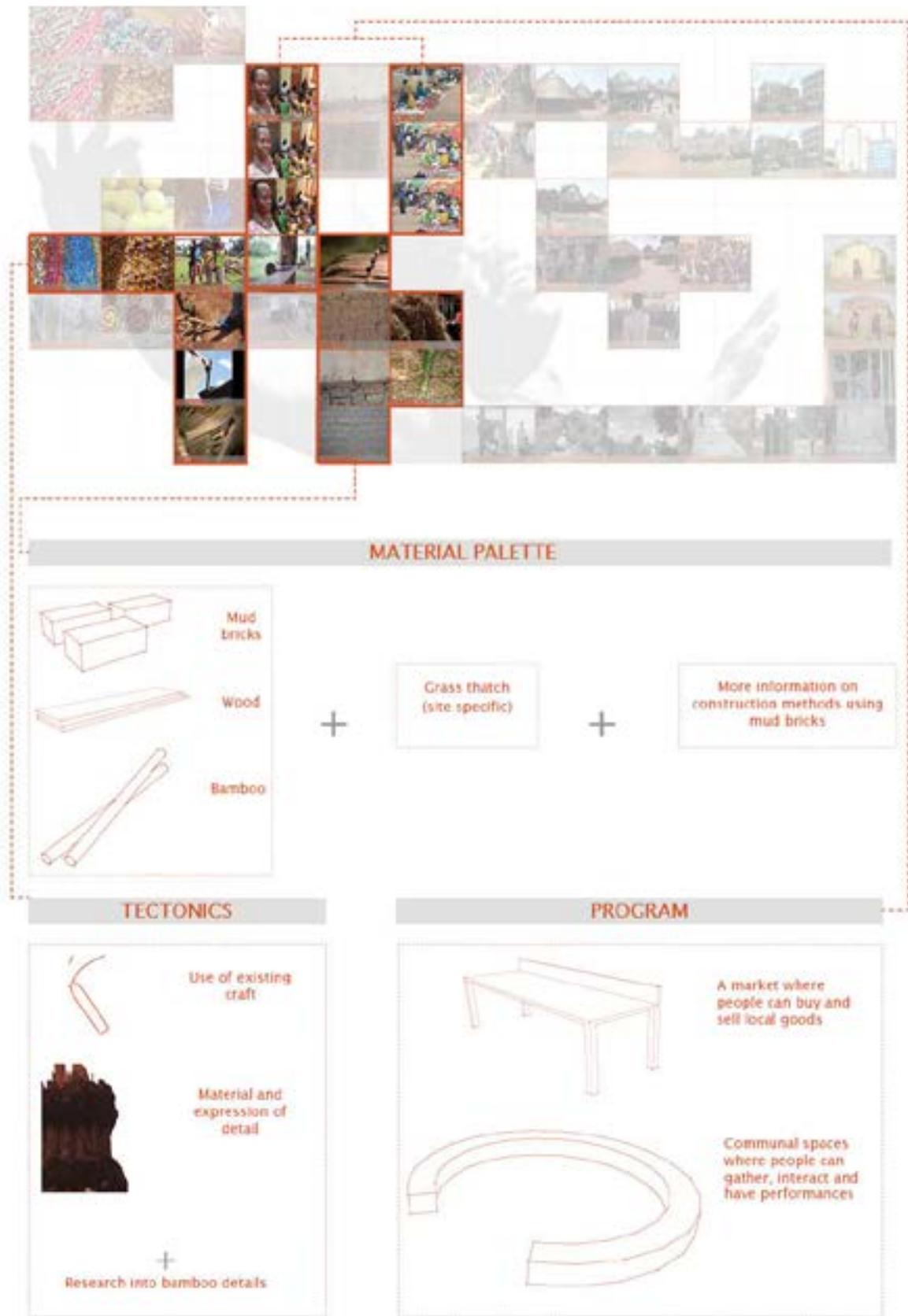
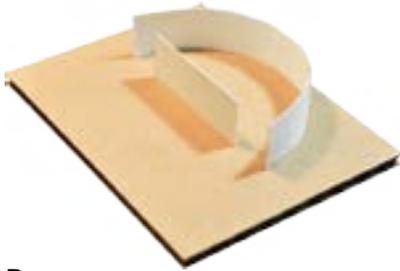


Diagram illustrating the translation of phenomena map to a design palette



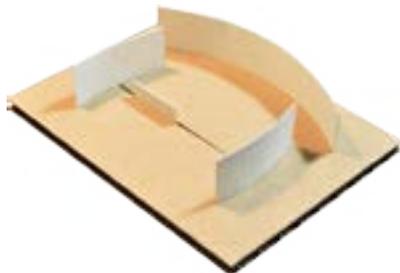
A collage highlight the three main attributes of the Acholi Bwola Dance



Dance



Dingi Dingi



Dance

Spatial interpretation of the main dance formation of four major Acholi dances.

analyzed in terms of dance formation, structure and the different levels assumed during the dance. These studies served as a means to transition into the architectural realm.

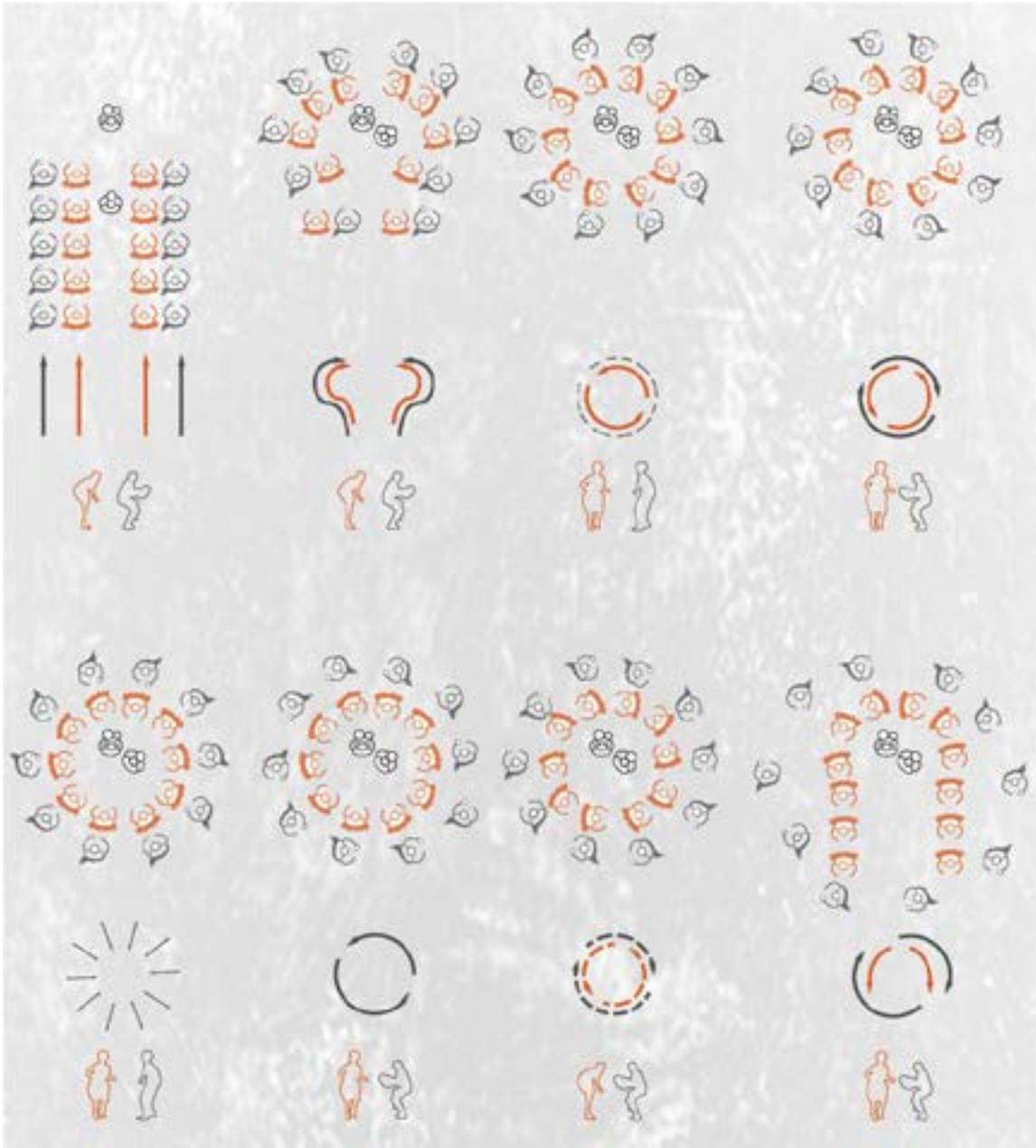
Dance Formation: the Circle

Traditionally, the circle was an important organizational tool in Acholi culture. It was used at many scales, ranging from the design of houses (huts), to the organization of the homesteads within a village. The center of the village was often the most important space, where communal gatherings occurred and rituals such as mato oput took place.⁴³ The circle was also used as the primary dance formation in most dances, including the Bwola dance. The Bwola dance formations were modelled to represent the spaces created by the dancers as they assume their various positions in both plan and elevation. This in was an informative exercise to help determine the space needed for the dance to occur.

Design Question: What are the different ways to create a circular space?

Posted January 2011. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R838J_KafwE

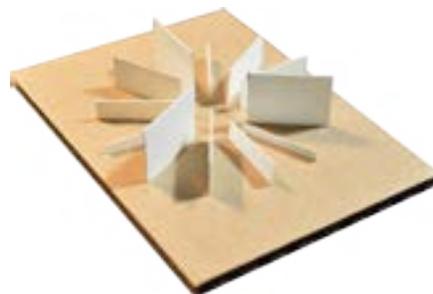
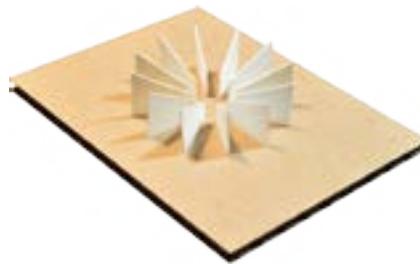
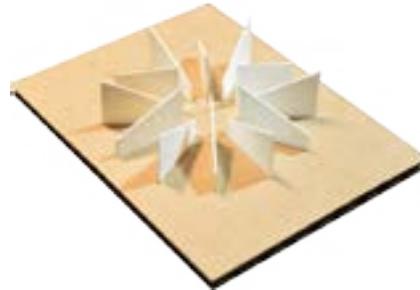
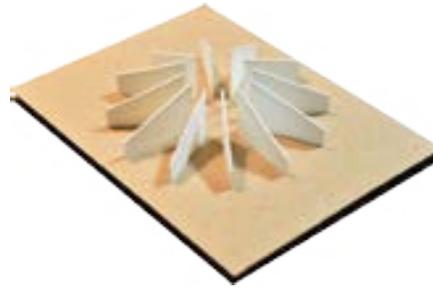
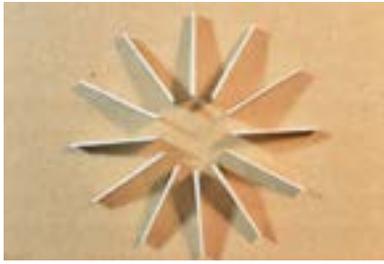
43. Odida.



Analysis of the dance formation, direction of movement and dance positions of the Bwola dance. The analysis highlighted the importance of the circular format in the dance.



Early models used to spatially represent Bwola dance formations



Further explorations of circular spaces created by the arrangement of linear elements

Dance Structure: Layers

Layering is an important structuring element of the dance. It is exhibited through the way the music, sounds created by the dancers' adornments, and the singers' voices are intricately intermingled, as well as in the sequential arrangement of the dance moves that make up the dance. Different architectural interpretations of layering, such as stacking of bricks, sequential spaces and differing levels of visibility through layers of screens, were studied so as to explore the different ways that the process of layering could be applied to the design of the pilgrimage sequence and the memorial spaces.

Design Question: How can the process of layering (materials, spaces, program) be used to create a flexible space for different programs to occur.

Early explorations of a brick wall as a screen through its means of construction i.e. stacking of the individual bricks (below)

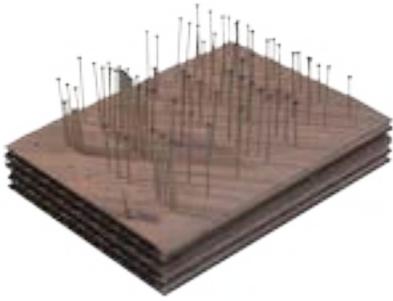




Sketch models exploring different brick stacking arrangements so as to allow for good ventilation (left) and exploring the nature of voids created within brick walls for different reasons such as stairs (top right) and ventilation (bottom right)

Dance Structure: Rhythm and the Body

As mentioned above, rhythm is an important part of the dance as it provides the ordering structure for the dancers. Rhythm is created through drumming and ankle bells worn by the male dancers. Each of the dancers responds to the music, assuming different choreographed positions based on the different sounds played at a particular time. The primary drum and bell patterns, and the corresponding vertical levels of the body's position were translated into a model so as to understand the vertical level transitions that occur.

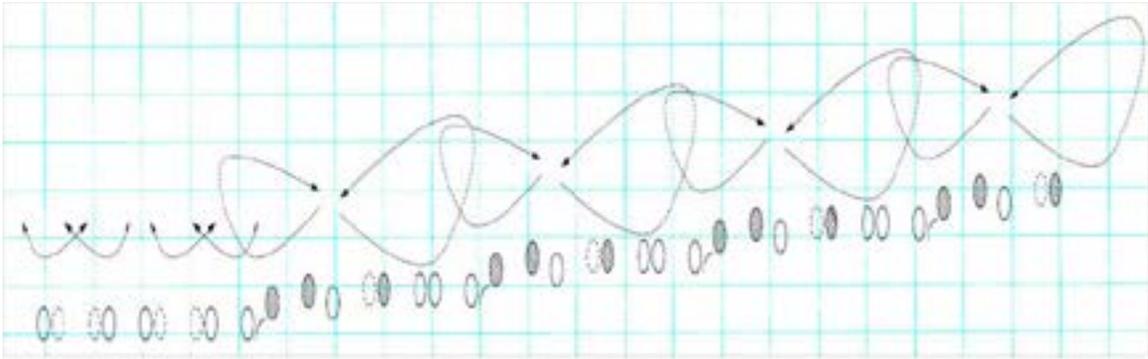


Model interpretation of the various body transitions in the Bwola dance

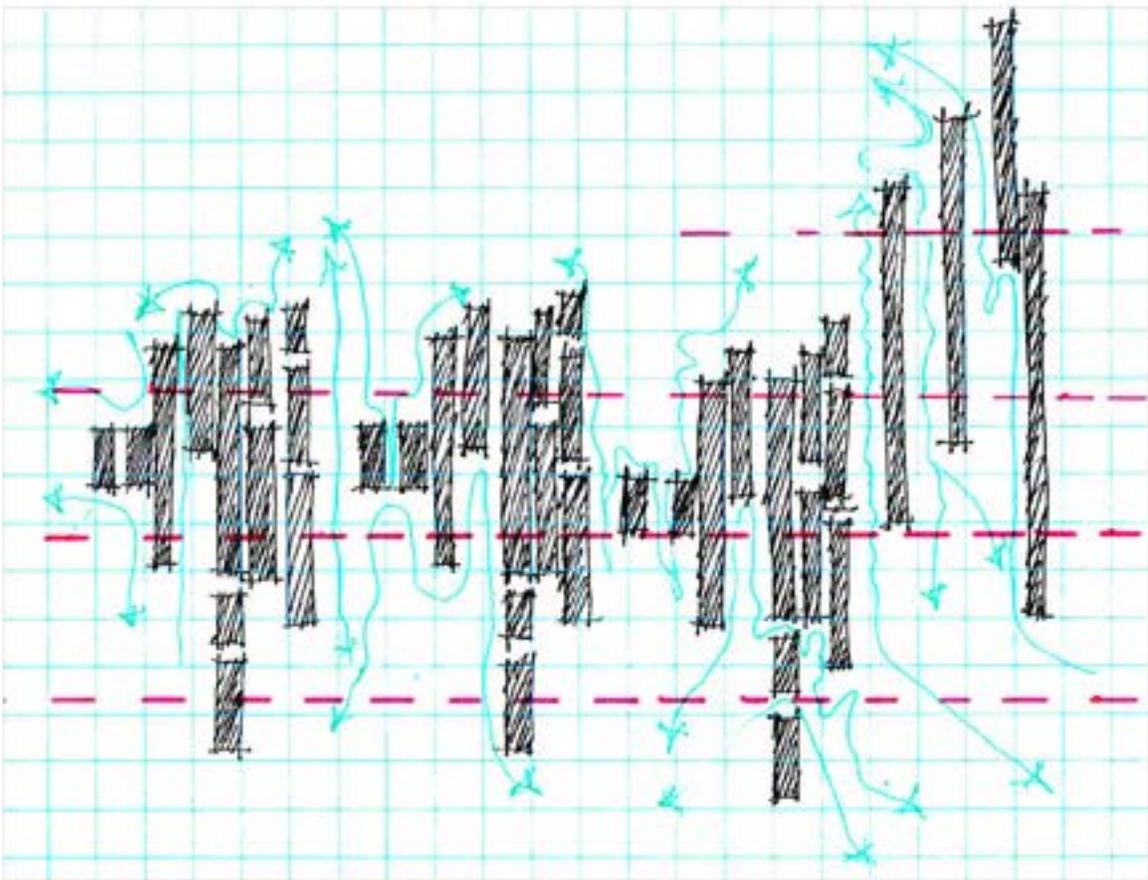
Design Question: How can the music patterns of the Bwola dance be translated into architectural elements that help one move through a space?



Early representations of vertical way finders and distance markers along the paths leading from one intervention to the next. The height ratios of the markers are derived from the vertical positions of the bwola dancers



Interpretation of the primary dance step of the Bwola Royal dance



Early exploration of the different vertical levels of the Bwola dance

- Foot movements:
-  Raised in same horizontal position (vertical transition)
-  In same position (no transition)
-  In new position (vertical and horizontal transitions)
-  Hand movements (combined vertical and horizontal transitions)



Sequence of foot-motion, hand-motion, neck-motion and voice occurrence during a segment of the Bwola dance. The four lengths represent the four categories: the lengths correspond to the body part's distance from the ground, with the shortest length representing foot-motion.



Woman transports wooden posts and bamboo, 2015; from sumadiario “Uganda stops the obligation of the wife to return of bride price upon divorce”

Materiality

In the context of this thesis project, which seeks to address issues about culture and the healing of the society, materiality of the architectural interventions plays a key role.

Use of Traditional Materials and Techniques

The main material palette for this project consists of bamboo, earth, thatch and wood, materials that were traditionally used by the Acholi people for construction. In urban Africa cities today, there is often a negative stigma associated with these materials despite their inherent advantages in respect to the hot climate. People often believe that these materials can only be used in a poverty-context, where one would not be able to afford the more prestigious materials such as concrete and iron sheets. By using these traditional materials, in a large scale community project, the project aims to help counter this stigma while simultaneously respecting and paying homage to the material culture of this rural community.



Stack of bricks ready for firing



Grass thatched roof on an outdoor open air structure

Brick making is an integral aspect of the Acholi construction culture today. Originally, most structures would be built out of adobe bricks that were simply left to air dry before use. Once the structure was complete, all the walls would be coated with a dung-mud plaster to preserve the bricks. This plaster mixture would then be reapplied to the walls every year to maintain the integrity of the wall. Today, the bricks are often burnt in

a temporary kiln after they have been dried. This process increases the strength of the bricks, which negates the need for the plaster coating over the top. However, it uses a lot of firewood and is thus less environmentally friendly than the original way of finishing the bricks.

Both techniques will be used in this project, depending on the location of the architectural intervention in relation to resources such as firewood, and human labor.

Step 1:

The earth close to a reliable source of water is dug up and ferried to the mixture site (often the same as the building site).

**Step 2:**

The earth is mixed with dried grass and water, and then poured into wooden formwork to create mud bricks. These bricks are then left to air dry in the sun.

**Step 3:**

The bricks are then collected and stored in an open air structure to allow more drying.

Traditionally, this would be the final step in the brick-making process.

**Step 4:**

When the bricks are completely dry, they are then stacked into a kiln form. Their arrangement allows for air and heat circulation through the stack, which burns the bricks and turns them red.

**Step 5:**

Once the bricks have been stacked, they are coated with a mud mixture to minimise heat loss during the burning of bricks. The kilns are then set on fire using firewood.

**Step 6:**

After the above process, the bricks are often stored under the roof of existing huts, until they are used for construction.



Acholi Traditional brick-making process

Temporality Versus Permanence

The process of place formation is a process of carving out 'permanences' from the flow of processes creating spatio-temporality. But the 'permanences' no matter how solid they seem are not eternal but always subject to as 'perpetual perishing'. They are contingent on processes of creation, sustenance, and dissolution.⁴⁴

The word memory infers both temporal and permanent aspects of the human experience; the event being remembered is temporary, with a beginning and an end, but certain aspects of the event then become etched into one's memory forever, in the form of a *memory trace*⁴⁵. This trace exists in our brains in a passive state, until we encounter something that triggers its activation, transforming the trace from the subconscious to the real and conscious realm.⁴⁶ Memorialization taps into this process, utilizing phenomenal triggers such as the rustic nature of a wooden post, the tranquility of water or a cut into the earth to trigger emotions within the visitor that activate their individual memory traces. After engaging with the memorial, the experience becomes another layer of the memory trace, creating a cycle of temporality and permanence for the visitor.

This cycle of permanence, temporality, and the

44 David Harvey, "The process of place formation," in *From Place to Space and Back Again*, (Malden, Mass: Blackwell, 1996), quoted in Ömür Harmanşah, *Place, Memory, and Healing: An Archaeology of Anatolian Rock Monuments* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2015), 116.

45. Gianfranco Dalla Barba, *Memory, Consciousness and Temporality* (Boston: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 2002), 6.

46. Tim Ingold, *Lines: A brief History* (London and New York: Routledge, 2007), 41-43.

effects of time are exhibited in a number of ways in this project, especially through the lens of materiality. The adobe bricks that will be used in the construction can either be dried in a man-made firing kiln, or air-dried and used for construction, with the exterior walls then covered with a coat of mud plaster. The structures are more susceptible to the erosion due to the weather which results in a yearly process of replastering the walls. This process often becomes a communal event where different generations work together and pass on maintenance skills from one generation to the next.

Wooden posts are used as way finders along the proposed path. They have a similar temporary quality to them due to the effect of weathering. They will be replaced whenever they decay due to exposure to the elements.



Early explorations of bamboo markers whose location and frequency is informed by the structure and rhythm of the Bwola dance



Detail of granary at a homestead



Granary at a homestead



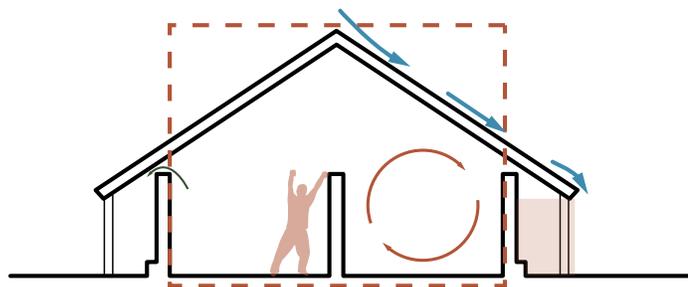
View of the roof of a hut in Atiak

How Do the Parts = the Whole?

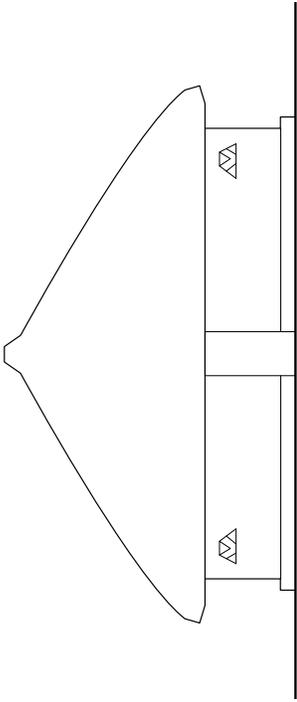
In the Acholi traditional culture of building, things reveal how they are put together, from the scale of a basket to that of a hut, every connection, fusion of materials and transition of space is clearly articulated. This material expression will be extended into this thesis, with any interventions clearly exhibiting how it the parts create the whole. The proposed structures will use traditional building methods and details, as well as the local methods of manufacturing certain materials, such as the earth bricks used in all the interventions.

The traditional hut is the an avenue for spacial and formal exploration as the current form has a number of advantages to it such as provision of shaded areas in a hot climate, and allowance for adequate ventilation.

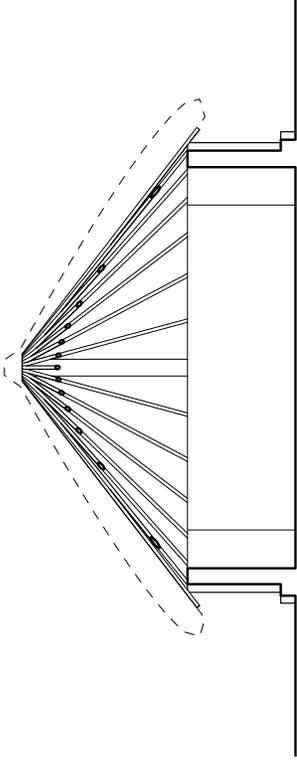
The traditional hut has a number of advantages. The partition wall does not completely divide the room, thus allowing the space to be separate and joined simultaneously. The design of the roof and the grass thatch allows for water to drain down the roof, and the overhang creates an outdoor space that provides shade in the hot climate.



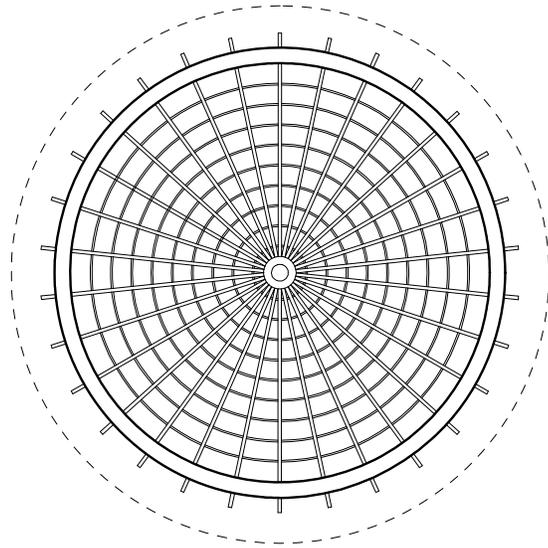
Diagrammatic cross section of a hut illustrating its spatial advantages



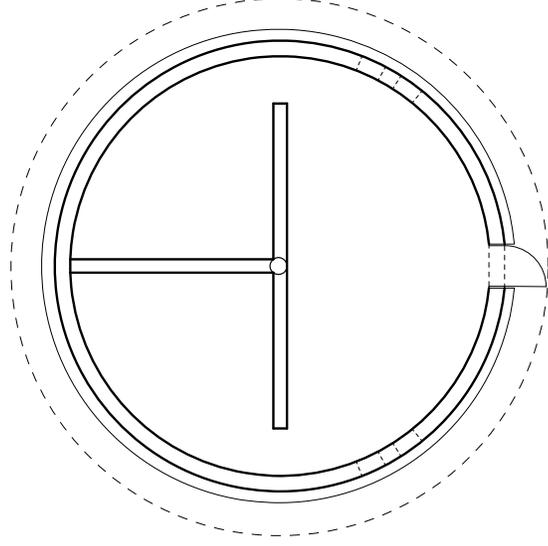
Elevation of a Typical hut



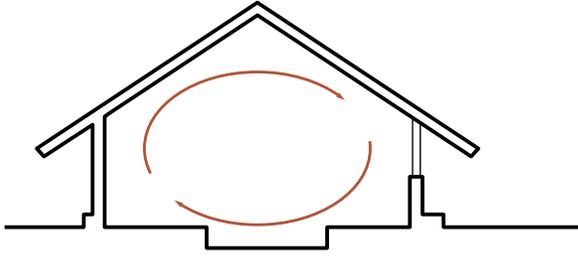
Section showing the primary structure



Reflected Ceiling Plan

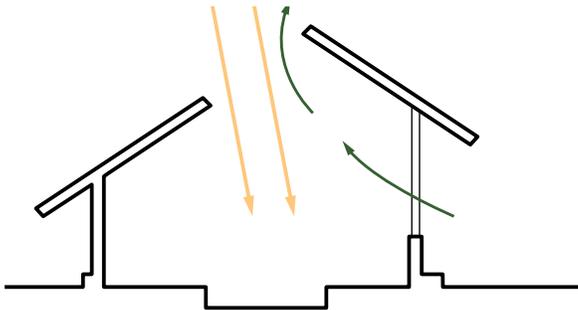


Typical Plan



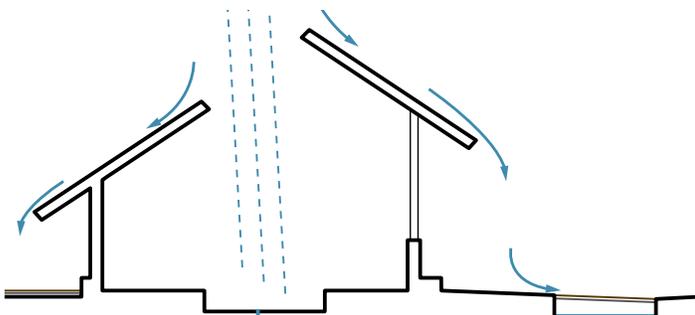
Step 1: Fire and Earth

By removing the central wall, the overall space becomes one unified room. The sunken center can accommodate a number of programs including the tradition fire-side storytelling ceremonies (*wang'oo*). The exterior walls are explored to allow the outdoors to flow into the indoor space at certain points.



Step 2: Air

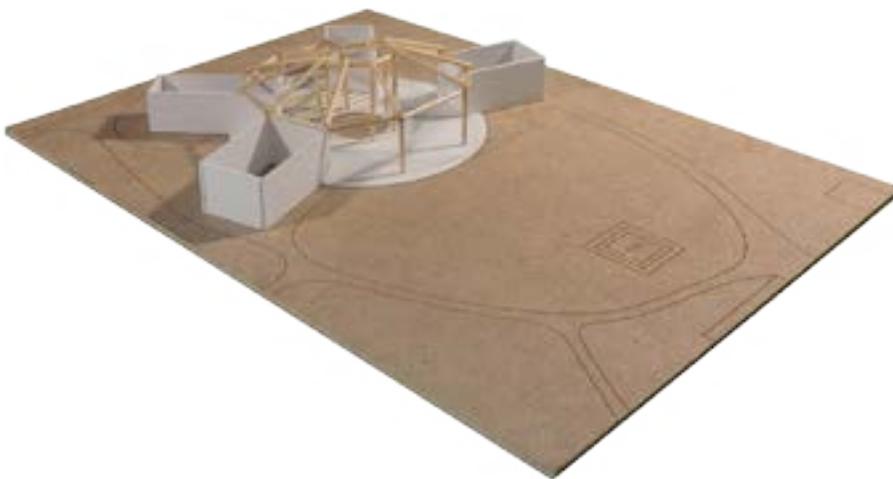
Parting the roof allows for more sunlight to enter the space and improves on the ventilation of the building.



Step 3: Water

The slope of the roof and the addition of underground water catchment basins allows for rainwater harvestation in an area where access to water is still problematic today.

Diagrams illustrating how the form of the traditional Acholi hut was transformed in order to achieve three design goals while still maintaining a likeliness to the original hut



Early explorations of the roof structure and form



Atiak Memorial, Atiak Sub county (Uganda)

Thesis Site

The test site for this thesis is Atiak town, situated in Amuru district of Northern Uganda. In 1995, it was the location of the largest massacre of the LRA war. On the morning of April 20th, 1995, a group of rebels marched into Atiak trading center. After exchanging gunfire with the army, the rebels took over the town, leaving most of the soldiers dead. They looted shops, set homes on fire, and then ordered the captured civilians to march into the bush towards a stream known as River Ayugi. Approximately 300 civilians were executed at the river, with the remaining survivors instructed to return to the town center to tell the world of the rebels wrath and strength. Following the tragedy, the survivors were not able to properly bury their dead, or find out the total number of the deceased due to the insecurity of the war at the time.⁴⁷



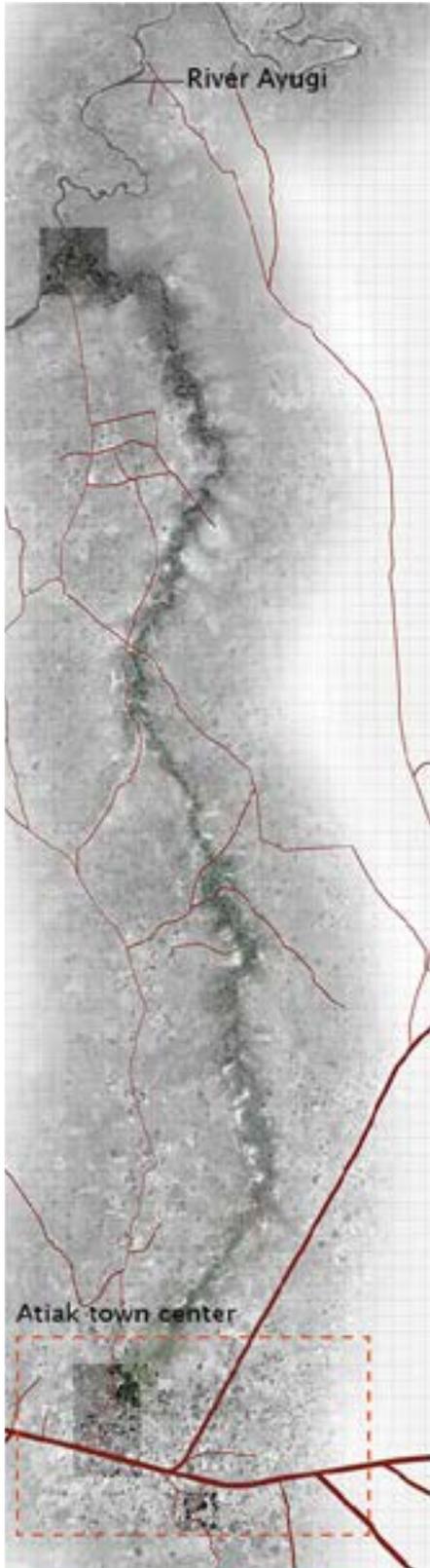
“In Loving Memory of our
Sons
And Daughters Massacred In
Atiak On 20-4-1995
May Their Soul Rest
In Eternal Peace”

Inscription on the memorial stone at Atiak, Northern Uganda, 2007; from The Justice and Reconciliation Project: Field Notes

On April 20th 2007, a memorial ceremony was held at a newly erected monument in memory of the tragedy. At the time when the monument was erected, River Ayugi was still inaccessible. Therefore rather than constructing the monument at the site of atrocity, the monument was erected at the Atiak trading center,⁴⁸ at the Atiak sub county office. Today, the members of the town hope to make the river accessible from the trading center, and to eventually construct a memorial at the river.

47. Field notes on Atiak

48. Speaker, Ker Kwaro Atiak, interview by author, Atiak Sub county Offices, December 28, 2015.



Map highlighting the path from Atiak town center to River Ayugi; base map from Google maps

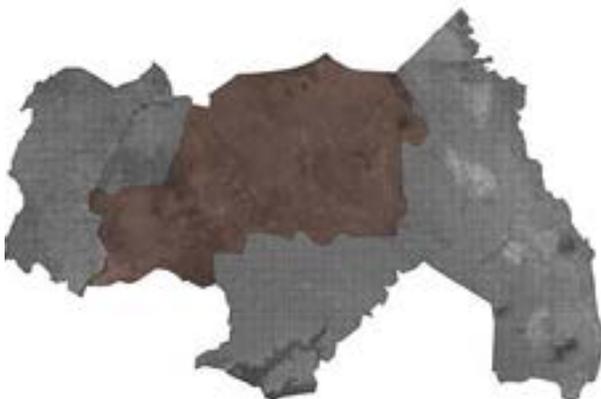


1. Pre-Colonial Era
Boundaries established on the basis of
clanship.

■ Acholi Region
● Major Chiefdom locations

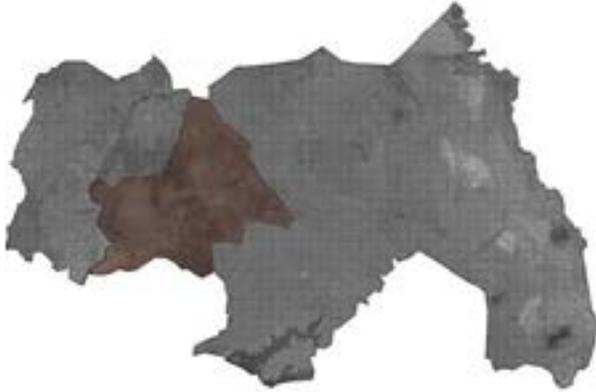


2. Colonial Era
Uganda is divided into four regions:
North, South, East, and Central. Tribal
boundaries are the premise for these
boundaries.

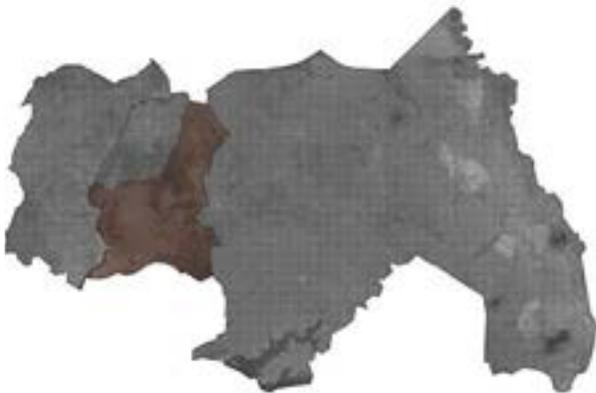


3. 1959
Post independence, Uganda is divided
into districts, with Gulu district as
the region's political, economic and
financial center.

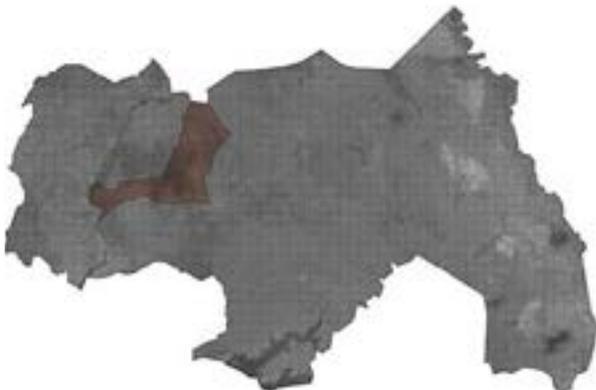
Evolution of the administrative boundaries of Amuru district from the colonial era; base information from google maps



4. 1971
Idi Amin takes over power from Milton Obote. Gulu is divided into 2 separate districts.



5. 2007: Post LRA war



6. 2010 to Present.
Amuru district is formed. There is relative peace and stability in the region.

Atiak town | Amuru district
Population: 38, 300

Gulu Town | Gulu
Pop.: 152,276

Lira Town | Lira
Pop.: 99,059

Mbale Town | Mbale
Pop.: 96,189

Jinja Town | Jinja
Pop.: 72,931

Mukono Town | Mukono
Pop.: 240,957

Kampala Capital City |
Kampala
Pop.: 1,516,210

Entebbe Town | Wakiso
Pop.: 69,958

Masaka Town | Masaka
Pop.: 103,829

Mbarara Town | Mbarara
Pop.: 195,013

Kasese Town | Kasese
Pop.: 101,679





Due to the war in Atiak, settlement was restricted to an IDP camp situated along the main road. Today, development is still predominantly situated close to the main road. Development is very low in comparison to Kampala (Uganda's Capital city) which did not experience any of the war, and Gulu Town (Capital of the Northern Region) which experienced the war but was able to defend itself due to the level of infrastructure present at the time.



View from shops across the road towards the memorial site

Atiak town sits at an altitude of 843m above sea-level, and has a hilly terrain. The current memorial sits at the center of its site, with a chain-link fence and iron bar gate preventing direct physical access to the memorial while maintaining visual access. There is also a small roof structure sitting over the memorial, but not the rest of the site. Thus the only accessible shade from a man-made structure is not accessible to public that it is intended to serve. Other structures at the site are constructed from adobe brick, manufactured brick, bamboo, iron sheets and grass thatch. This site, along with the river atrocity site and an intermediary site are the three primary locations selected for the implementation of the design proposal.



Current memorial site, showing current Atiak memorial Atiak Town

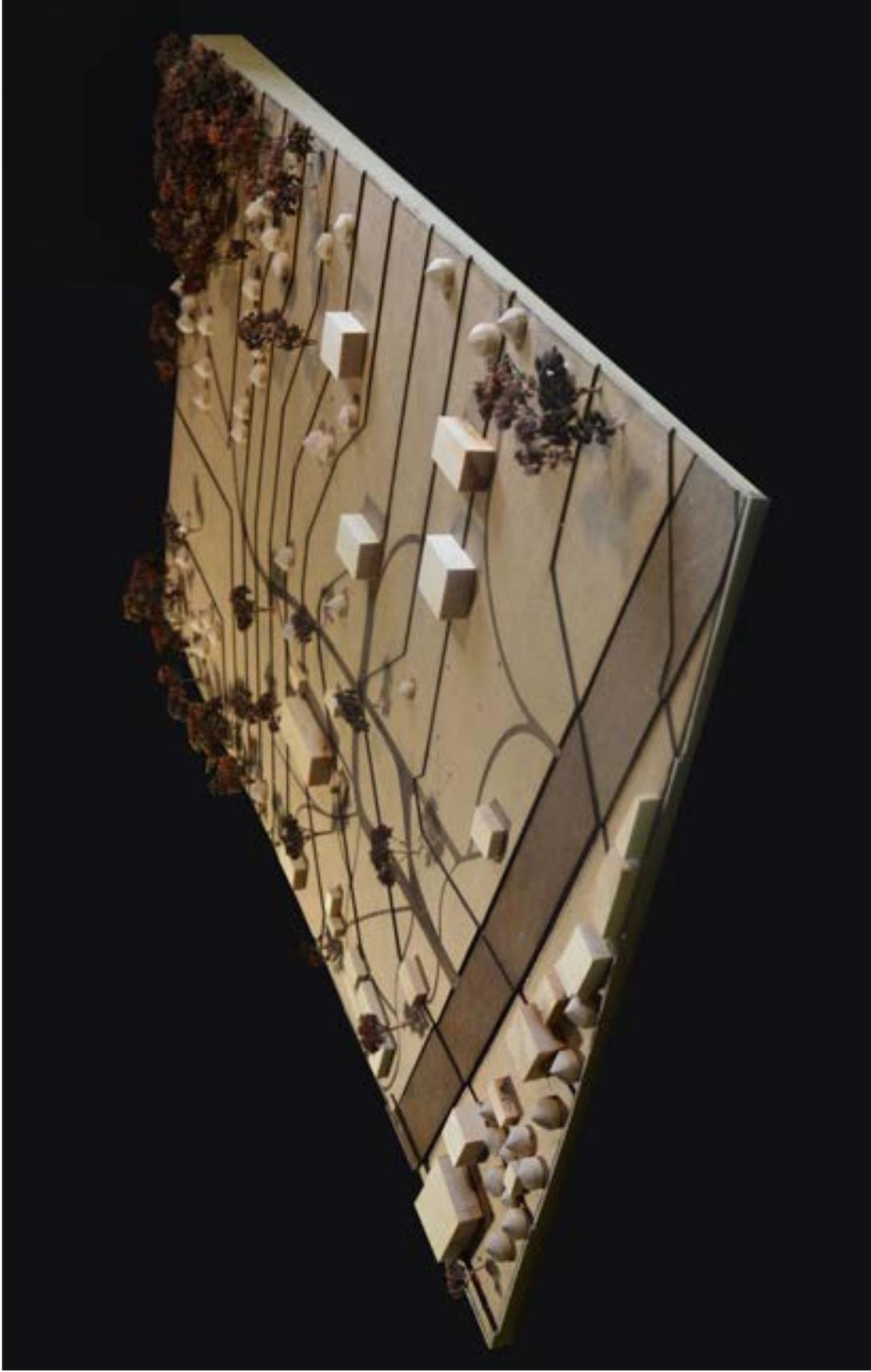


Image of 1 :500 site model showing original site conditions at the memorial and location tower sites

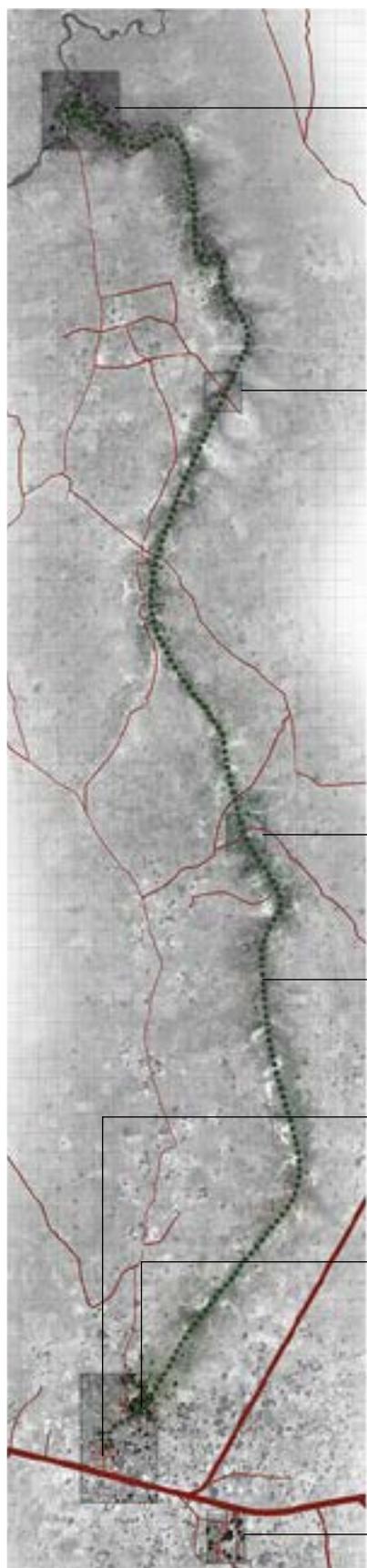
CHAPTER 5: DESIGN PROPOSAL

Earth, Fire, Wind and Water

As shown in the comparative diagram on page 55, urban development in Atiak town was greatly impeded due to the occurrence of the LRA war. Presently, the town center lacks any public gathering space for any communal events, including the annual memorial service. This forces residents to make use of the shade of the large tree canopies in the area during most occasions. In conjunction with the problems highlighted in chapter 3: lack of adequate spaces for rituals to take place, loss of culture amongst the Acholi youth, and lack of an adequate portrayal of the magnitude of lives lost, this observation provides the driving force for the programmatic considerations of this thesis.

The design proposal involves a three-component strategy so as to reintroduce the concept of memorialization through participation and activity, and provide shaded public gathering spaces throughout the area. The components of this strategy are:

1. Provision of infrastructure at the current memorial that allows for memorial rituals to easily take place. This will increase the usefulness of the current monument as the memorial services will now be held at the monument grounds.
2. A new memorial located at the river site. This intervention is intended as a flexible, multi-use



Site 4: River Memorial

Site 3: Rest Point

Site 3: Rest Point

Site 3: Pilgrimage Walk

Site 2: Cultural Center

Site 1: Location Towers/Brick Kiln

Former Location of Atiak Technical School. The school moved to a new location following the Atiak Massacre. Today, this is the location of a local primary school that is used for the Atiak memorial prayers due to shade provided by numerous trees.

- ● ● Proposed Pilgrimage path
- Roads and main foot paths
- Buildings affiliated with the memorialization process in Atiak
- ~ River Ayugi

0 100 500 1000 Meters

space that honors the lives lost during the massacre.

3. A pilgrimage path that connects the two sites and leads any visitors or residents along a path similar to one the victims would have tread 21 years ago.

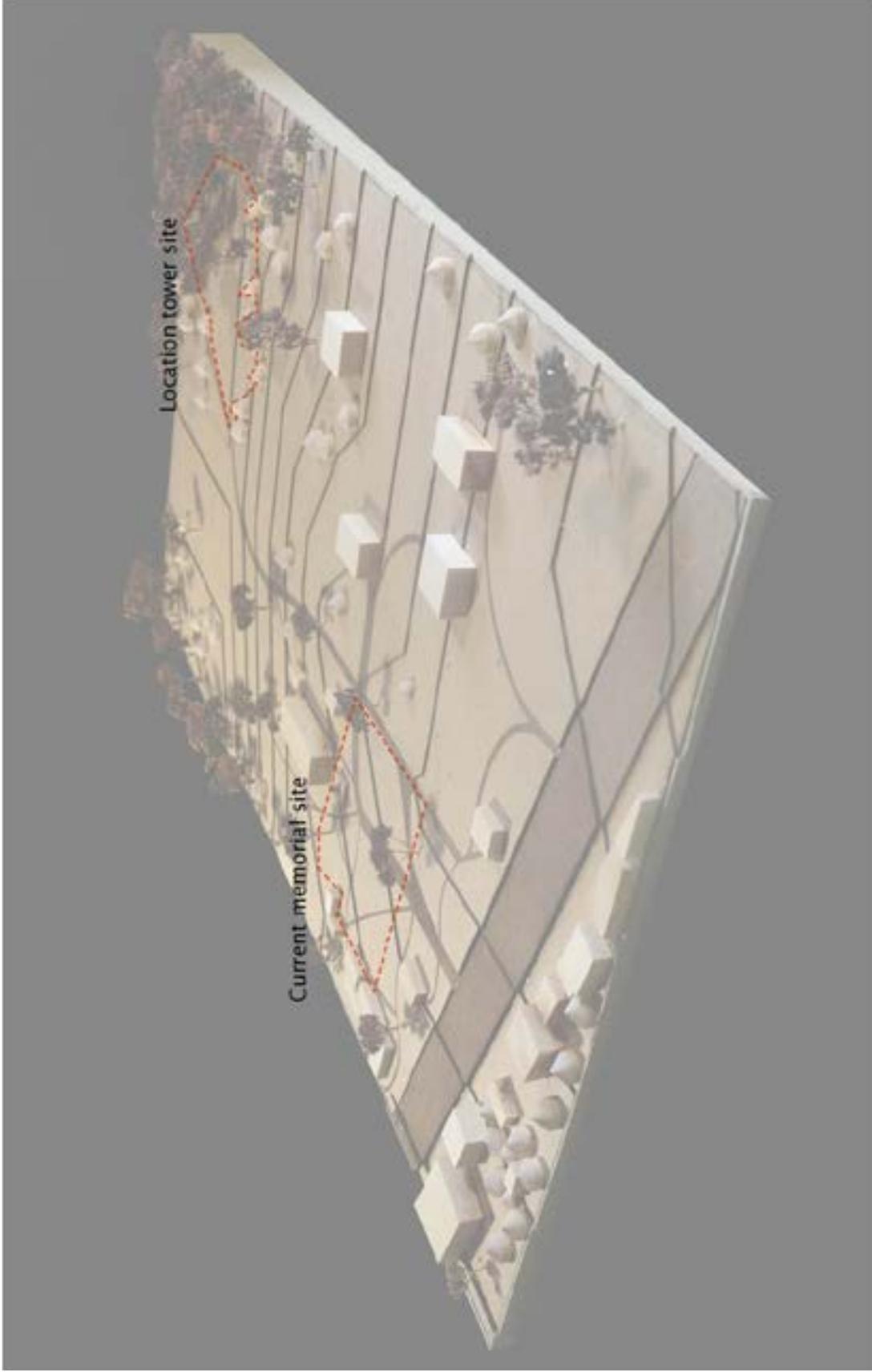
The resultant design proposal is a multi-phased project that involves different scales of architectural interventions that correspond to their site's specific conditions and program needs within the context of Acholi memorialization. Each site addresses the production or use of adobe bricks (earth), the provision of cooking facilities (fire), the creation of a gathering space that is conducive for the Acholi rituals to take place (wind), and water collection (water). The project would be implemented over a four phase process, each phase corresponding to a site on the overall site strategy map.

Location Towers/Brick Kilns

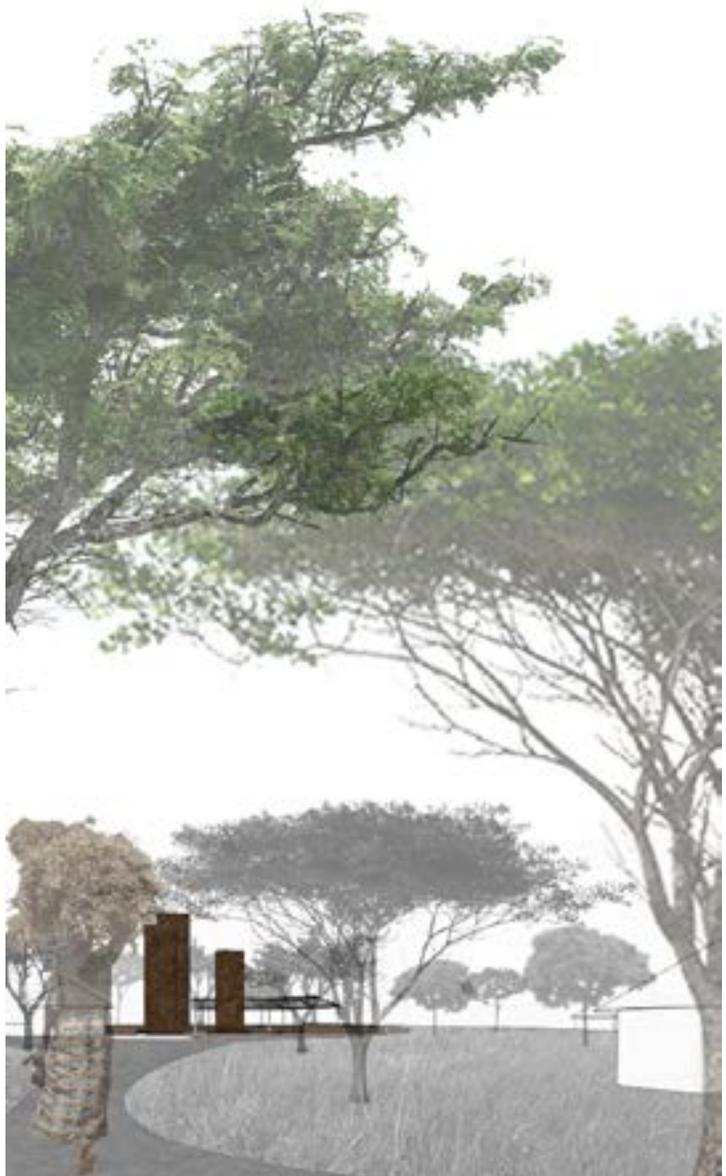
A large number of adobe bricks is necessary in order to build the proposed infrastructure at the current memorial site. The brick making process, which is carried out by the locals, requires sufficient water, earth and a well-ventilated area for the bricks to be burnt in the man-made kilns. Site one was selected because it provides all these needs, and is also at the ideal location where the residents path and the pilgrimage path diverge. Thus the architectural intervention at this site serves as a way-finding instrument for any visitors who are making the trek to and from the river site.

Although it is close enough to the town center that the locals can gather to make the bricks and transport these bricks to the memorial site, it is located far away from the majority of the houses so as to prevent the smoke from causing a major disturbance. The three towers proposed at this site would be constructed with unfired bricks, after which the rest of the dried bricks would then be organized around them to form the kiln. Once the bricks have been fired, the kiln will be dismantled, leaving the towers intact. These towers would then serve as two cooking stations and one water tower. The pilgrimage path departs from this site, as the designed path deviates from the current local path, as previously mentioned.

This site predominantly services the pilgrimage walk, with the proposed program including seating, food stalls and a water source. The residents in the area can also use the space for informal meetings, and children can use the different kinds of spaces as an unprescribed play area. The seating area is situated under the tree canopies to provide shading without the need of a roof covering. The lattice structure can also be transformed into a temporary shelter, in the advent of rain.



1:500 site model highlighting the proximity of the tower site to the town center/current memorial location



View of location tower site from the pilgrimage walk



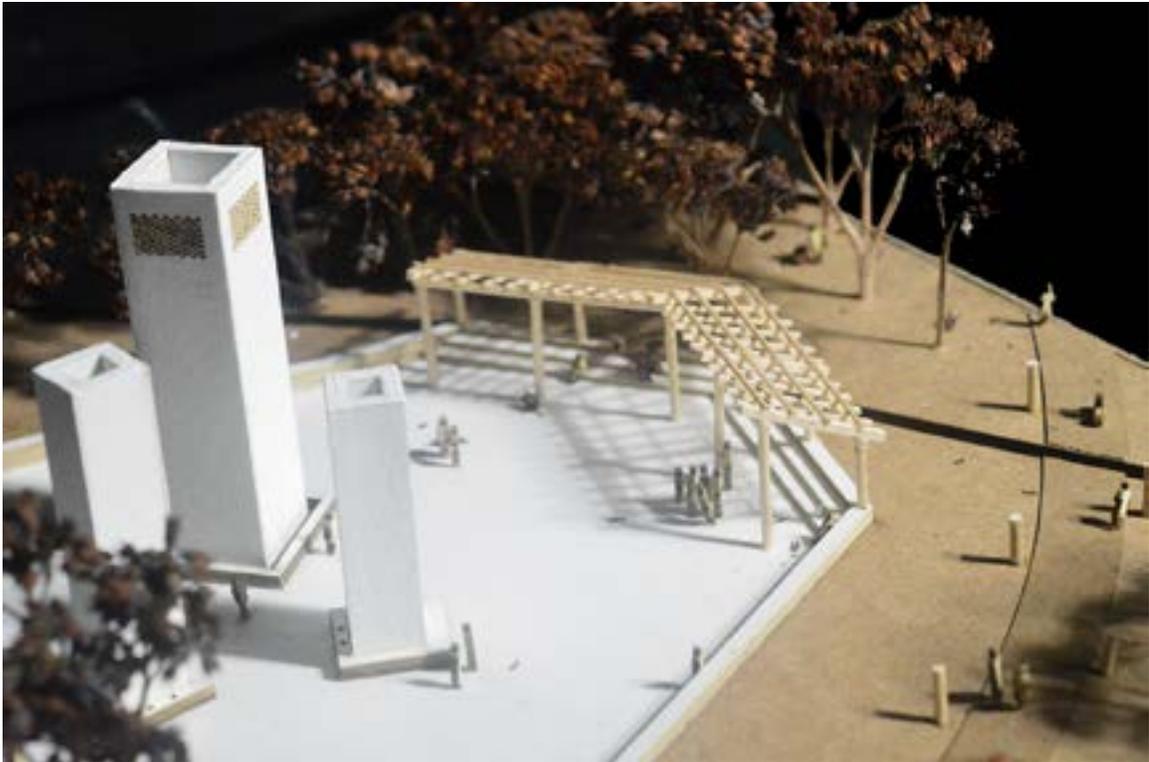
Plan of Tower site



Section A-A through site



Site model. Scale 1:200



Model showing the detail of the lattice structure



Site model

Cultural Center

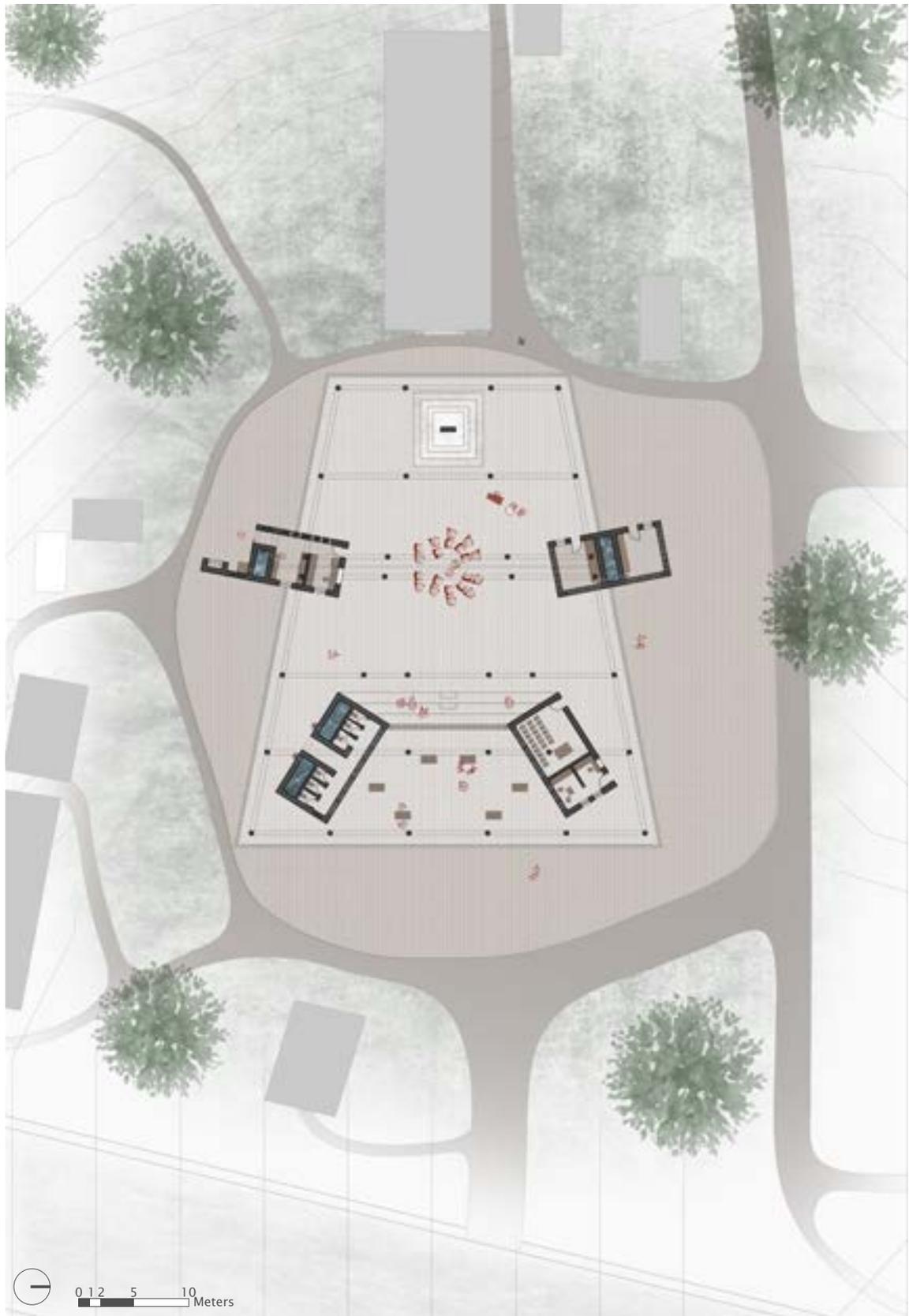


Current makeshift vending stalls used in Atiak town. The vendors often illegally set up in any available shaded areas that are close to the road, are constantly looking out for government officials.

Dance As a “Monument”

The second phase of this proposal involves the construction of a cultural center at the current memorial. This open-air building is designed as a series of pavilions that are united under one roof and that collectively create a circular “room” where Acholi rituals can take place. The structure is intended to be subservient to the existing monument and the above mentioned rituals, acting as the “display case” for the dances to be exhibited.

Through introducing program to the site, the building draws people to it thus activating the site and increasing its potential to benefit the residents of Atiak. The cultural center provides the necessary infrastructure such as shade, seating, washrooms, change rooms and performance space, so that the annual memorial service can now take place at the monument. It also contains a kitchen, storage and an out-door display area that can be used by the residents as vending stalls. The center is intended as a new community hub, where formal community meetings can be held, the youth can re-learn aspects of their culture through engaging with the elders, and the traditional wang’oo sessions can also be held. The building will serve as an information point for visitors who wish to embark on the pilgrimage to the river site. All guides would pick up their party from the center, and visit the monument before starting their journey to the new memorial.



Plan of Cultural Center highlighting the water storage areas



0 1 2 5 Meters

Detail Section of roof structure at the Cultural Center



Site model. Scale 1:200



Site model showing view from the main road

Pilgrimage Walk

The third phase of this project consists of the implementation of a 7-kilometer path that leads from the current monument to the new proposed memorial site at River Ayugi. There are 2 proposed intermediary rest points located along this path. These areas function as opportunities for pause along one's journey to and from the river. They contain amenities such as eating areas and washrooms. Located at points that are easily accessible from the current foot paths, they are intended as income generators for the local residents who will cater to these sites and provide food services.



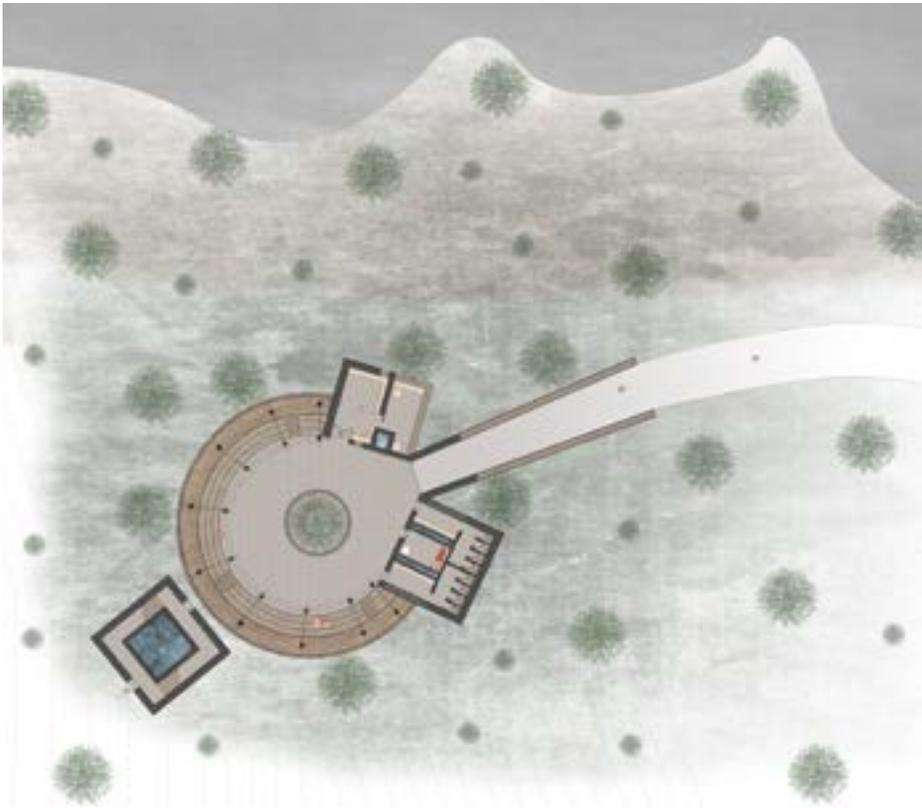
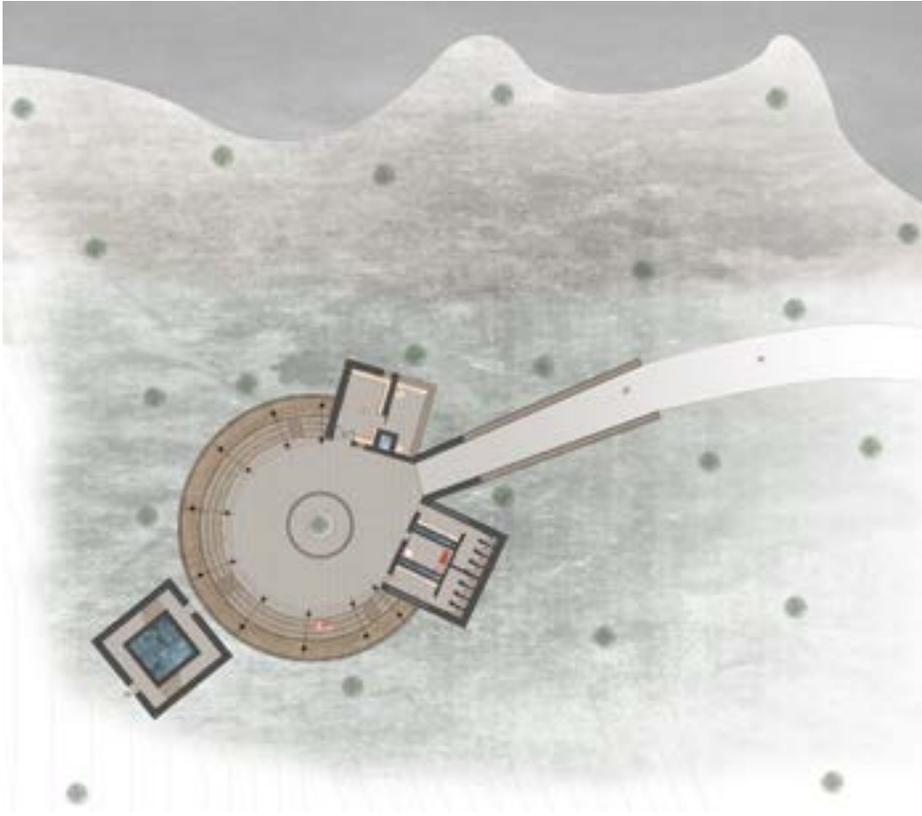
Wooden markers along the pilgrimage path that direct one in the correct direction, and act as distance measurement tools due to their 5m wide spacing

River Memorial

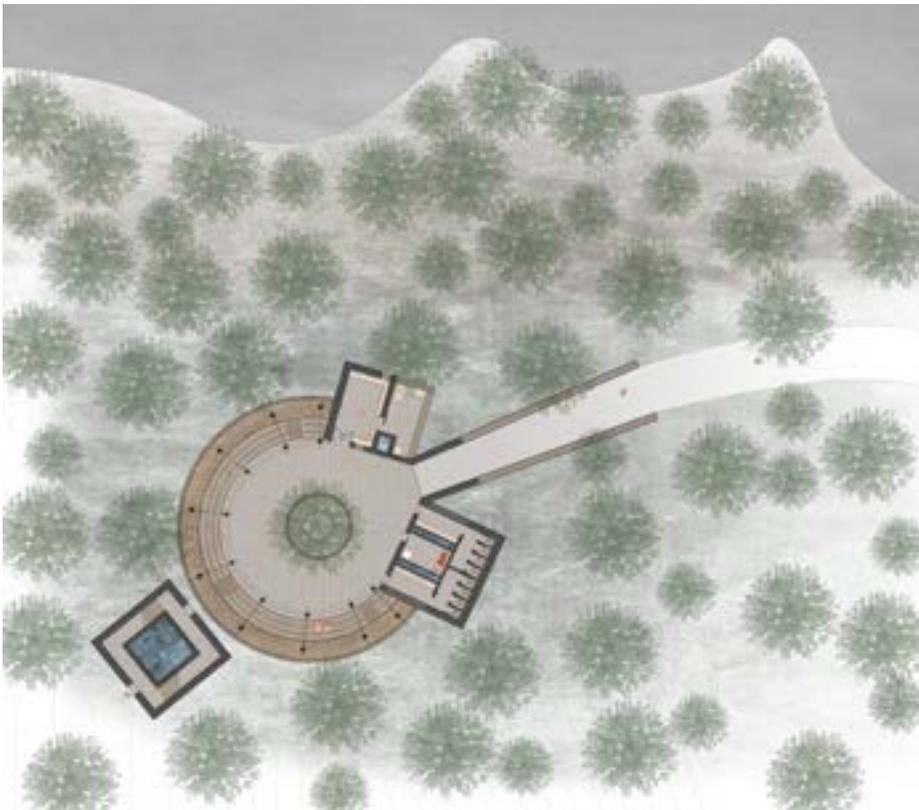
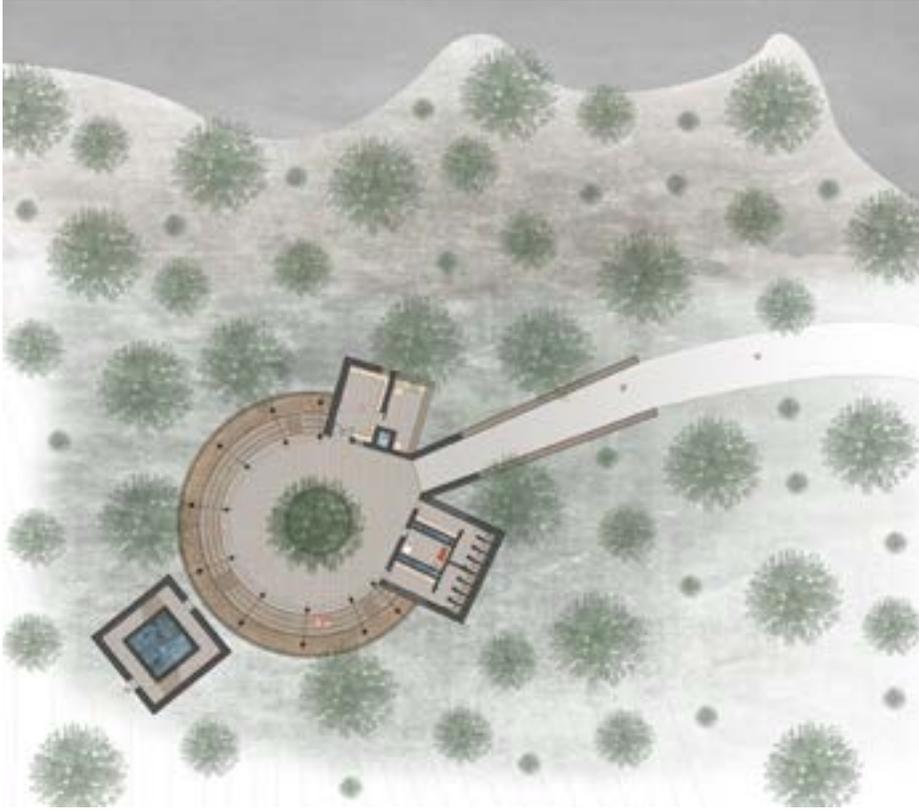
The final phase involves the construction of a new memorial at River Ayugi. The space is designed to accommodate rituals such as mato oput (a traditional Acholi reconciliation ritual) but is primarily intended for less formal forms of memorialization at the individual scale. The architectural intervention includes a kitchen, a viewing tower and seating. It's circular plan is intended to focus all views to the center of the space where any rituals would take place.

300 Slain

As mentioned in the previous chapters, the aspect of creating 300 markers is important to this design proposal. In reference to the old Acholi tree planting tradition, 300 trees will be planted at this site to symbolize the lives lost during the atrocity. These trees will be planted at different phases so as to allow the site to constantly change with the passage of time. These trees will eventually be harvested for wood to replace the small scale location markers that line the pilgrimage path, creating a cycle of planting-harvesting-planting at this site.



Change in the site as the trees are planted and grow over time



The Viewing Tower

The tower is an inhabitable structure that contrasts the typical horizontal typology of the Atiak landscape. The center of the tower is a water reservoir. The reservoir is enveloped by two sets of stairs that allow visitors to access the top of the tower where they are presented with a view of the path along which they have come, as well as a view back to the location towers and the memorial site at the town center. This introduces a new vantage point to the site that was never available before.



View from the pilgrimage path towards the viewing tower



Site model. Scale 1:200

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION

This thesis began as a critique on the two current forms of memorialization in Northern Uganda, and the missed opportunity for them to work in tandem for the healing of the surviving Acholi communities. Rather than elevate one form of memorialization over the other, the goal of this study was to use architecture as a means to bridge the gap between the two. I believe this approach was appropriate due to the fact that like in many other societies in the world, the Acholi traditions are changing due to external influences. This presents opportunities for new ideas and ways of doing things that are still rooted in the culture of the place and the people. This thesis was an example of such an opportunity: a new way for memorialization to occur in Northern Uganda, using architecture as a means to draw a set of inhabitable and habitable markers in the landscape. These structures serve to strengthen the traditional rituals, providing a space and shade for them to occur. They become a temporal memorial, intangible, impermanent and ever changing. The proposed architectural interventions take on a back seat, with the main purpose of showcasing the ritual memorials.

The Atiak massacre of 1995 was only one of numerous tragedies that the Acholi were subjected to during the twenty years of civil strife. Today, many communities are looking for new ways to facilitate communal and individual healing. I believe that this design approach can be extended to the multiple

communities within the region, each project having the flexibility of being tailored to the specific needs of the site and of the community that it will serve. This thesis does not presume that this is the singular correct response to the current situation in Northern Uganda. However, it is a way to open up the conversation surrounding memorilization and architecture in Northern Uganda, and how the latter can compliment the former while still being true to the Acholi culture. Only by doing this, can any response be most effective in helping the communities in Northern Uganda properly heal the scars of the LRA war.

APPENDIX A: WORLD DISPLACEMENT

In the world today, a large number of people are still finding themselves internally displaced in their own countries due to a number of reasons ranging from natural disasters, to conflict. During the LRA war, up to 1.8 million people living in Northern Uganda were displaced from their homes, and forced to live in Internally Displaced People's Camps (IDPs). A few of these still exist today, although the government is working to eventually resettle all people who once lived in these camps.



Map showing countries with internally displaced people due to conflict in 2014, base map from Google.



Map showing countries with internally displaced people due to conflict in 2015; base map from Google.

APPENDIX B: PHENOMENON MAP

This assignment involved the selection of an ordering system that is over importance to our overall thesis. The goal was then to analyze this system, and develop a palette that could be used to further some aspect of the project. War was chosen as the system to study.



Cause

The LRA war in Northern Uganda created a 20-year period of civil unrest in the region. The numerous killings by both the government's army and the rebels led to the creation of camps where 1.8 million people were forced to leave their ancestral lands and live in crowded Internally Displaced People's (IDP) camps.



Effect

In attempts to provide compensation to the survivors of the conflict, the Ugandan Government, and NGOs begun commissioning the establishment of memorials throughout Northern Uganda. These memorials take on many forms including Memorial days, monuments, annual prayers and schools.



Need

The Acholi people traditionally used songs, dance and story-telling as a means to remember the past. Many of the current memorials do not provide spaces for these types of rituals to occur.

Assignment Question: How can architecture play a role in the use of memorialization as a rehabilitation and healing tool in present day Northern Uganda?

Objectives:

-To understand the necessary vocabulary for the overall project

-To identify an appropriate methodology for my thesis

-To understand war as a structuring system within Northern Uganda

-To deconstruct the Acholi methods of memorialisation in order to uncover the intangible aspects of commemoration and translate them into the built environment

Data: In conducting preliminary data collection in Uganda this summer, I quickly realized that there is minimal official documentation of the nature of life in the IDP camps of Northern Uganda. However, a number of Non-Government Organizations (NGOs) and charities operating within the region created numerous documentaries and photo records in the area. Several websites contain documentation on the life in the IDP camps and of the Acholi villages following the survivors return in response to the 2006 ceasefire. These videos, blog entries and photos help provide a view into the side of the war that was kept hidden from sight. A view that would have otherwise been non-existent due to the

political environment surrounding the existence of the war and the creation of the IDP camps. Coupled with Acholi songs and poems, recordings of cultural performances, memorial services, and life in Northern Uganda as the region attempts to rebuild itself, this data provides a means to understanding the effect that the war had on the Acholi people, and their formal, programmatic, cultural and geographical responses to it.

Design Charette:

Alex Morier | Julia Million | Megan Florizone | Moses Hernandez | Philippa Keri Ovonji-odida

A group of four students participated in a design charette where they engaged in two tasks. The first involved observing four documentaries and taking screen captures of anything that they felt to be architecturally informative in terms of: program/use of space, form/spatial qualities, craft and materiality. The second task involved viewing of a specific set of photos to which they individually had to assign a word, and then diagram the word in the absence of the image. The photos and videos were selected in order to provide a wide and encompassing range of information on my subject area of inquiry. In addition to the four videos observed, I watched others to further expand on the exercise. The approach is highly subjective, and thus some of the assumptions were cross referenced with NGO reports, and other references.

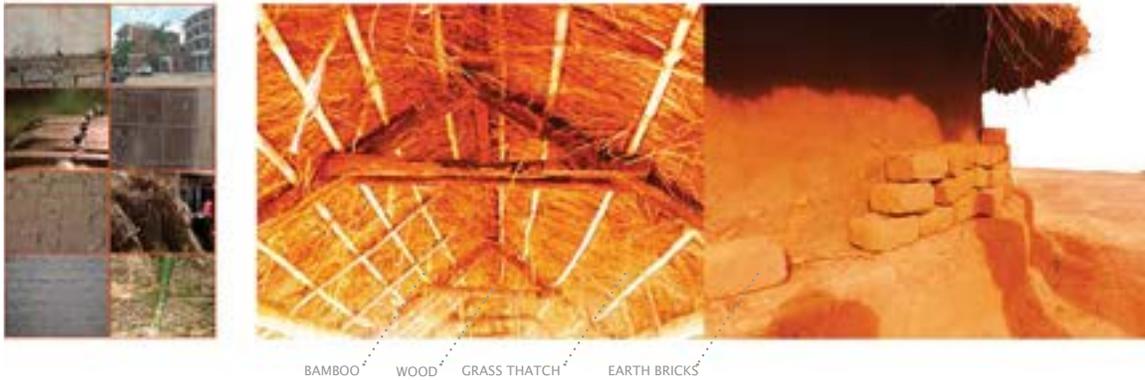


Resultant Phenomena Map

PHENOMENA MAP

INFORMATION PALETTE

MATERIALS



Wood, earth, grass thatch and bamboo are the traditional and readily available materials used by the Acholi people. There are two types of grass mainly used for thatching: *abii* (cane grass) and *obia* (spear grass). The particular type of grass used is indicative of where the structure is located as the two grasses grow in different parts of Northern Uganda. (Olaa, 2015)

TECTONICS



Most of the local objects are constructed so that they reveal so information about how they are assembled/constructed. (Olaa, 2015)

ACTION



DISPLAY

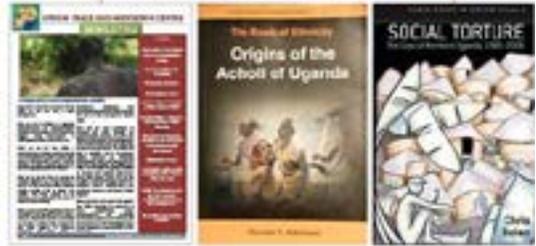


Trade is a common aspect of life for the people in Atiak Town. People appropriate the different spaces that they live or sell in, and find effective ways to best display their products.

DATA



CROSS-REFERENCES



All data sources have been cited in the bibliography

APPENDIX C: ATMOSPHERE ASSIGNMENT



The following assignment was two-fold. The first part involved the investigation of a material in terms of its qualities, nature or use. The second part, involved the translation of any material from the classes overall experiments, into an architectural feature (“atmospheric condition”) to be further explored in the course of the thesis project. I was interested in working with materials that are local to the region and inexpensive. Using my material palette from the phenomena map, I settled on two materials to explore: earth and bamboo. The former was used for the first part of the exercise, and the latter for the second part of the exercise.

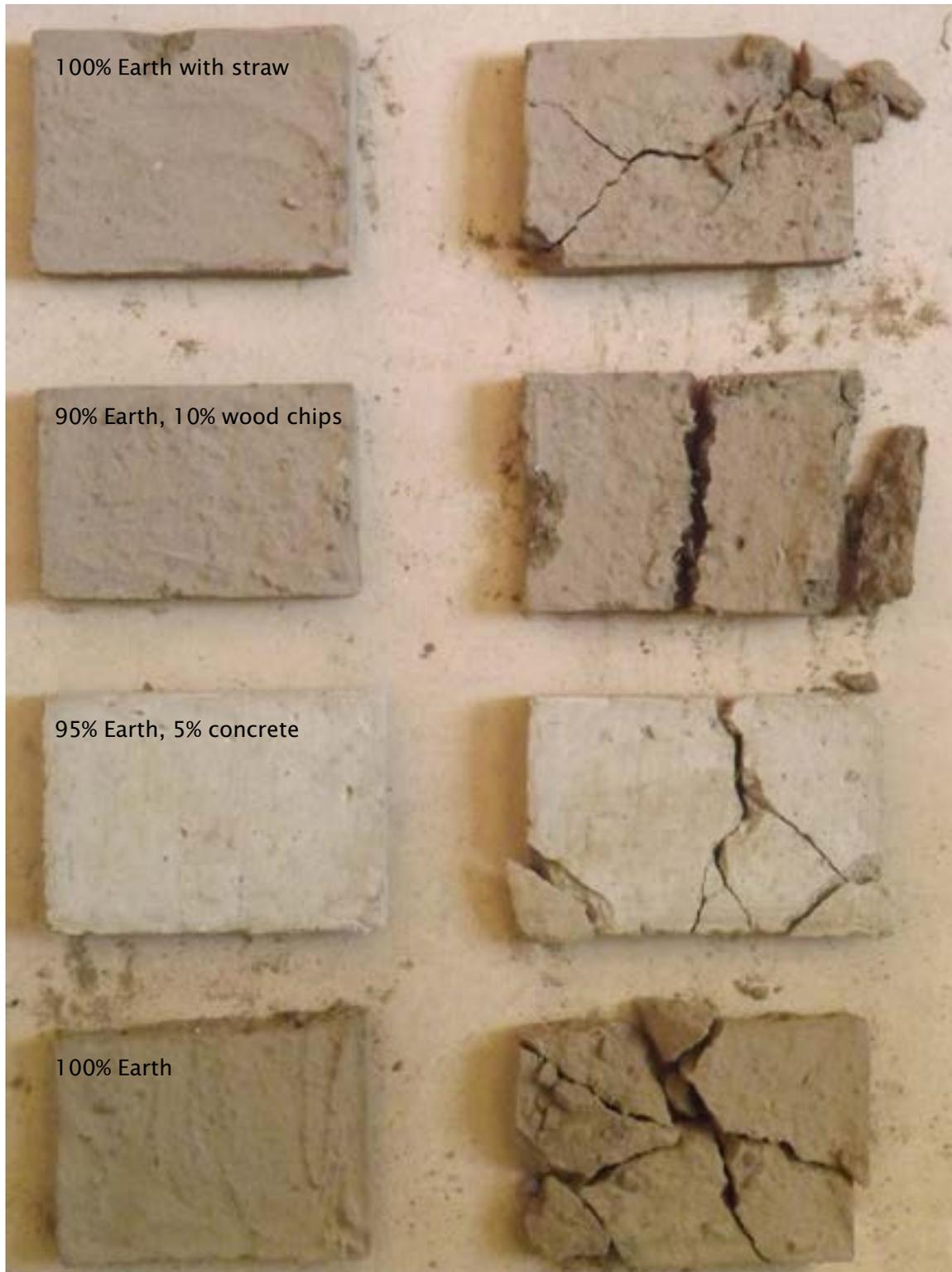


Early studies exploring the carving out of mud bricks to reveal the layers of other materials inside the brick

I was interested in creating an atmosphere that utilized the idea of layering of materials and spaces as well as the idea of porosity. The emergent design intention was to create an architectural intervention that uses a local material (bamboo), can easily be assembled/disassembled, and improves the ability for a dance ritual to take place anywhere. The resulting design was an attempt at creating two variations on a screen. The first serves as portable changing rooms for the female and male dancers. The second porous screen is the threshold between the “back of stage” and the “front of stage”. My goal was for both structures to be easy to assemble/disassemble and light to be transported from place to place.



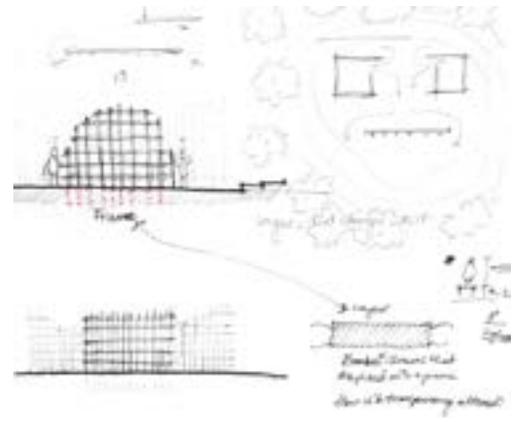
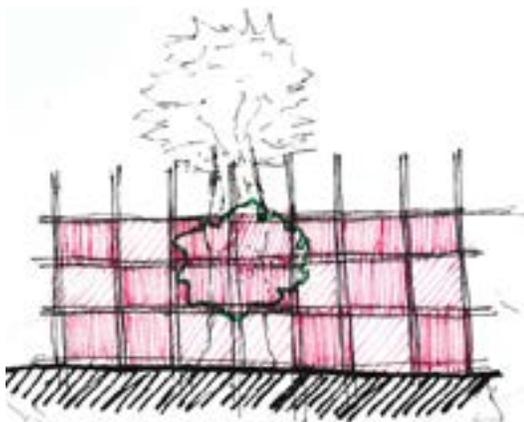
Final state of brick after drying



Strength tests carried out with mud bricks containing different binding materials in mud the mixture



Exploration of material as a screen. The screen creates layers of visibility and lack of visibility. Images taken of materials chosen during the “materials banquet”, a thesis class exercise in which students experimented with different materials and then had an opportunity to select other students’ materials to explore.



Early sketches translating ideas of visibility into an architectural feature. The bamboo screens are intended to create different spaces needed for the ritual of dance to occur, such as change rooms, and a backdrop for the performance.



View from behind the portable changing rooms



View from behind the audience

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