

# Acknowledging the land in architecture

— Dr Sechaba Maape —  
↗ Dr Kristen Kornienko



AFRICAPPECTURE

Is land central to architecture  
education and practice in South  
Africa?



“For me abstraction is important because of its links to certain patterns of western cultural thought. Renaissance architecture and gardens were constructed through the use of perspective, the process whereby an artist or architect creates the illusion of depth on a two-dimensional surface. Perspective was not new, but in the hands of Renaissance architects it allowed buildings to be planned with a precision that had not been widely seen before in Europe. It also provided a means by which landscape features like gardens or urban plazas could be planned. In either case, the process whereby abstract plan became material reality involved the translation of one spatial form into another. The two-dimensional plan itself, or what French social theorist Henri Lefebvre referred to as space as conceived or representations of space, could serve many purposes. It could, as the examples provided attest, function as a planning tool to allow builders and architects to conceptualize their aims ahead of time. On a broader scale, however, representations of space could also serve as the instruments of control, domination, and power (Lefebvre, 1993, p. 26; see also Harvey, 1989, p. 261-263). Maps, as noted above, served many purposes, but chief among them was providing a medium through which land became space. Once represented in this manner it could serve as the basis for a variety of actions whether it be subdividing land for taxation, sale or conquest, or for planning military strategy.”  
Stephen A. Mrozowski:1999



What are land  
acknowledgments?





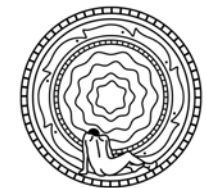
'Indigenous peoples are those who have creation stories, not colonization stories, about how we/they came to be in a particular place - indeed how we/they came to *be a place*'. - Tuck & Yang (2012)



Land



People







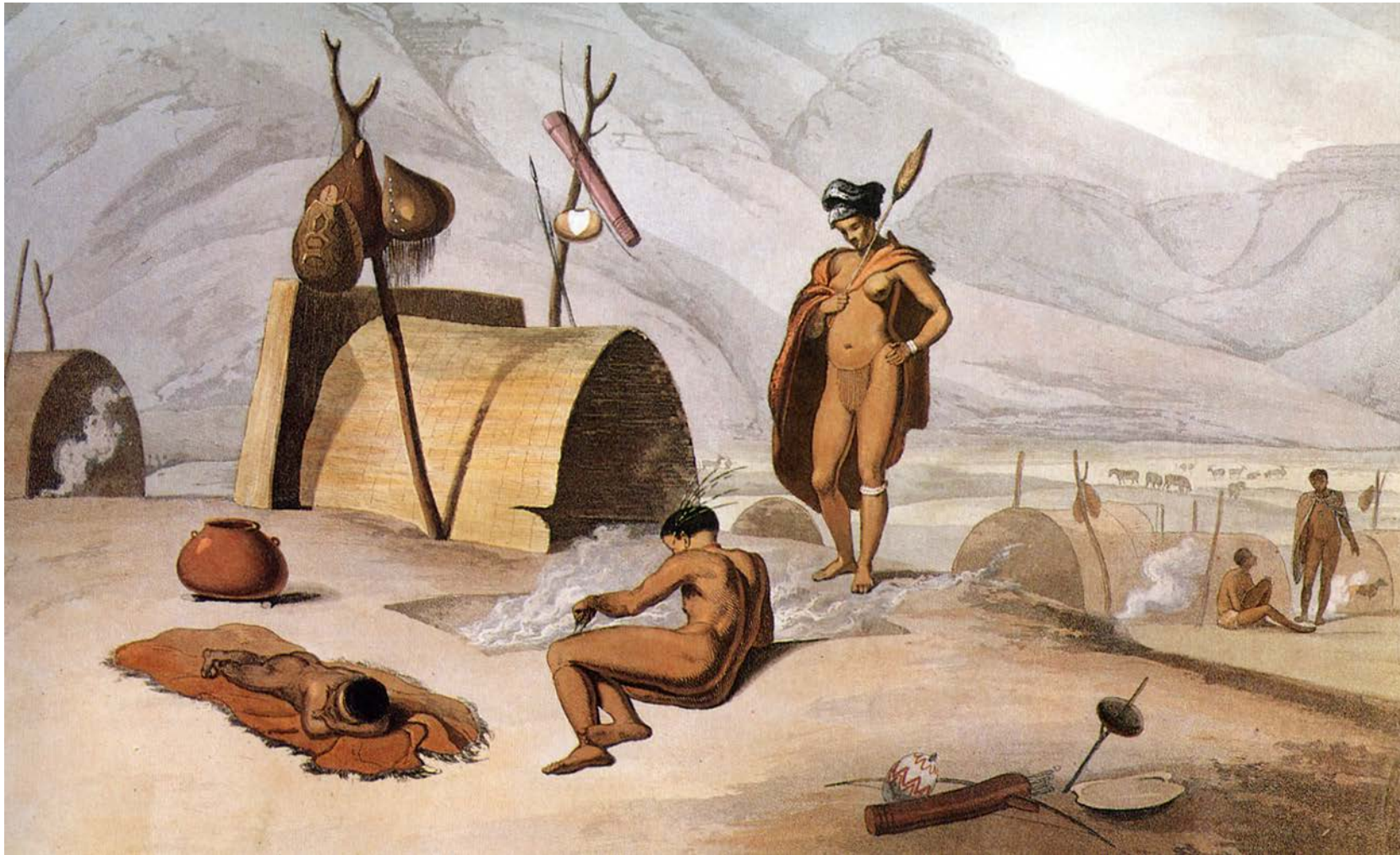
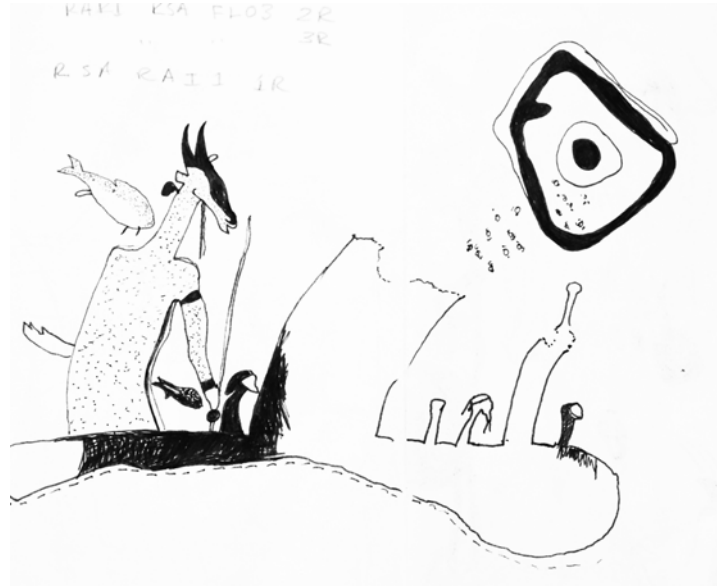
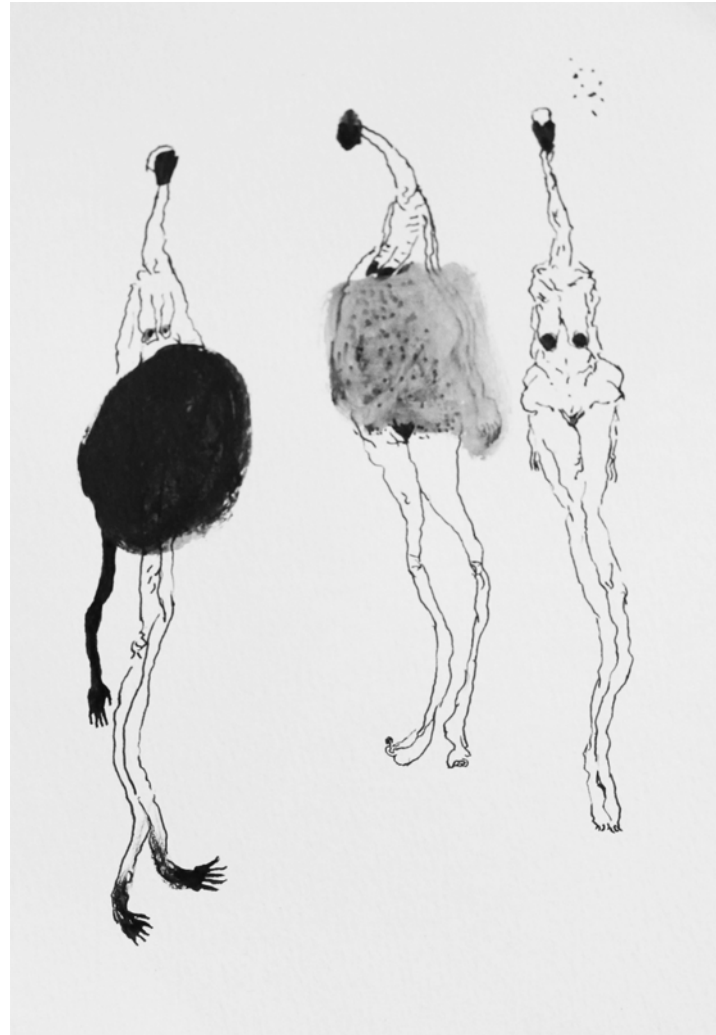
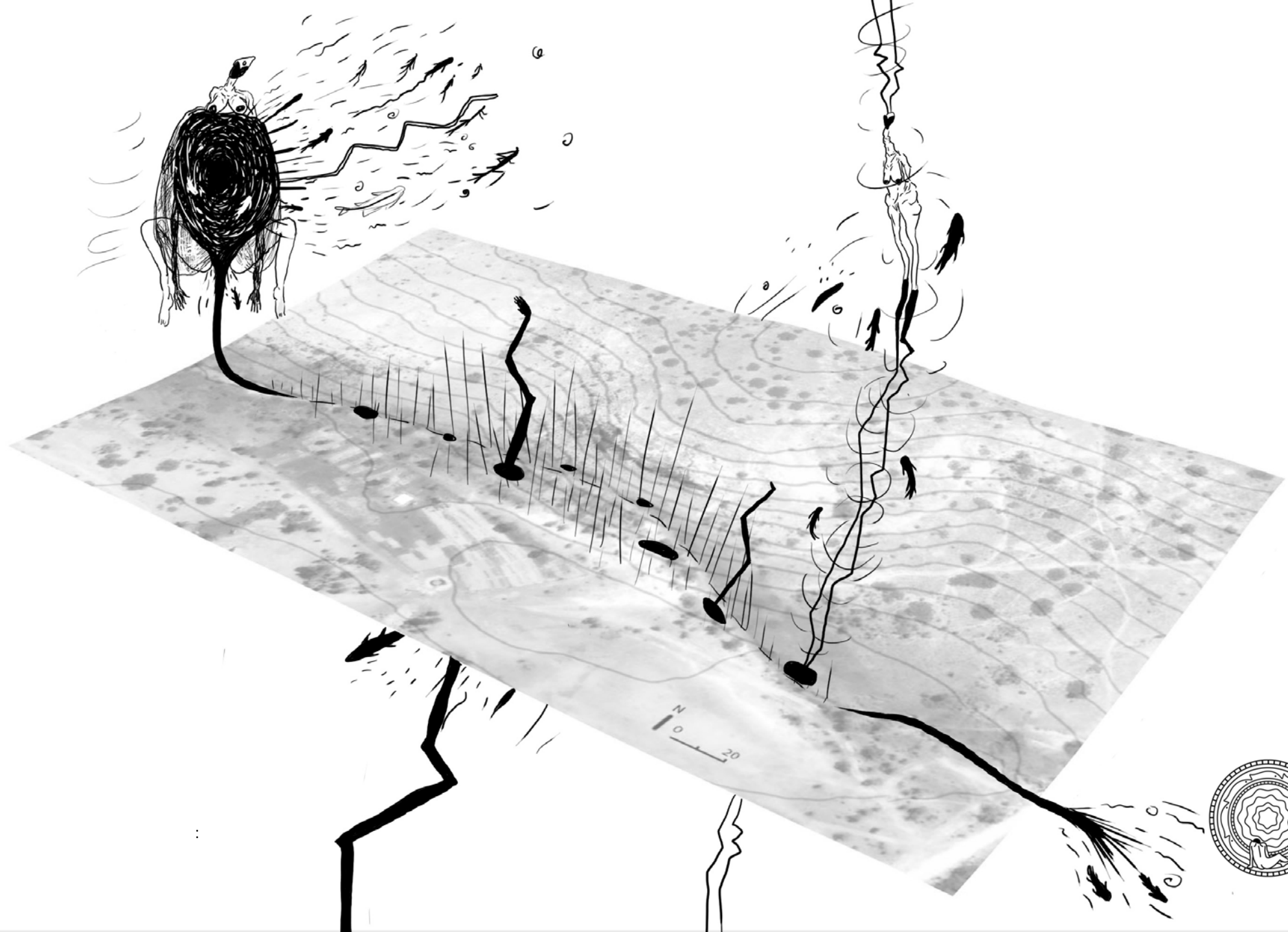


Image source: [https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/1/17/Sameul\\_Daniell\\_-\\_Khoisan\\_besig\\_om\\_sprinkane\\_te\\_braai\\_-\\_1804.jpg](https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/1/17/Sameul_Daniell_-_Khoisan_besig_om_sprinkane_te_braai_-_1804.jpg)









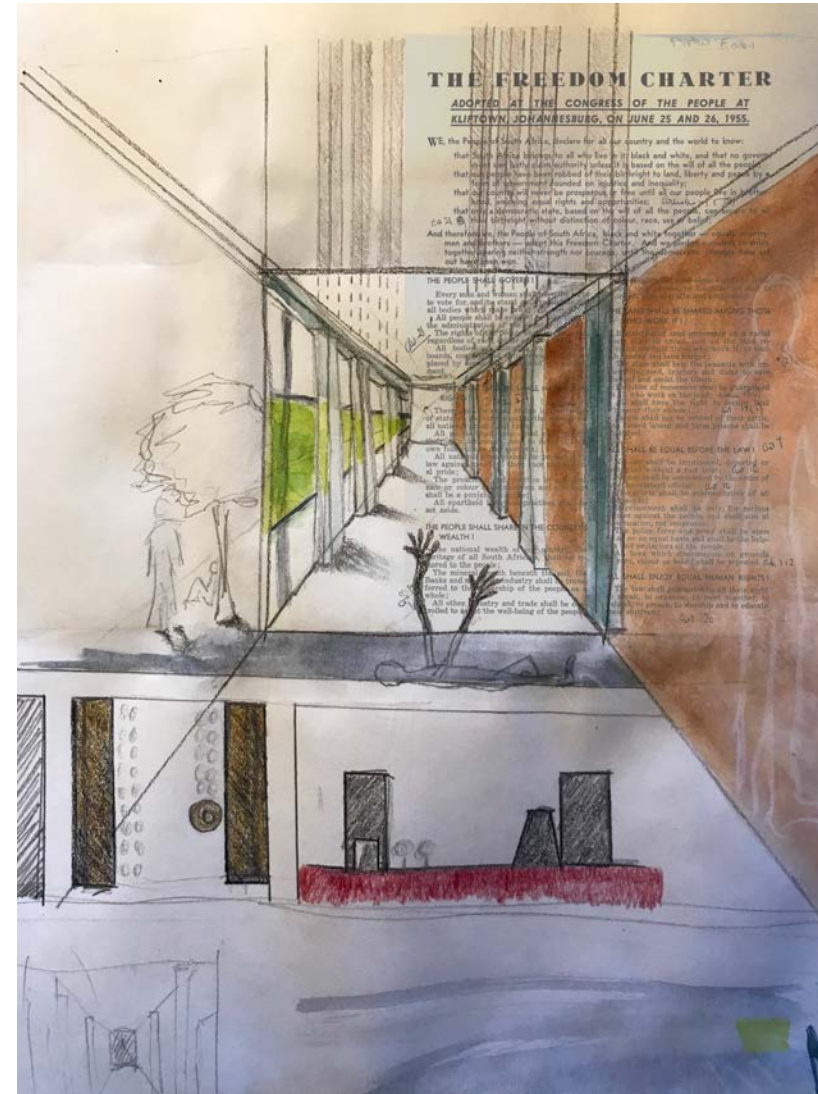








‘...the disruption of Indigenous relationships to land represents a profound epistemic, ontological, cosmological violence. This violence is not temporally contained in the arrival of the settler but is reasserted each day of occupation. This is why Patrick Wolfe (1999) emphasizes that settler colonialism is a structure and not an event’. - *Tuck & Yang (2012)*





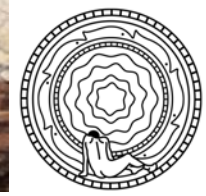


*...she stole a pair of socks*

on these streets,  
a white body  
can only be  
a violence,

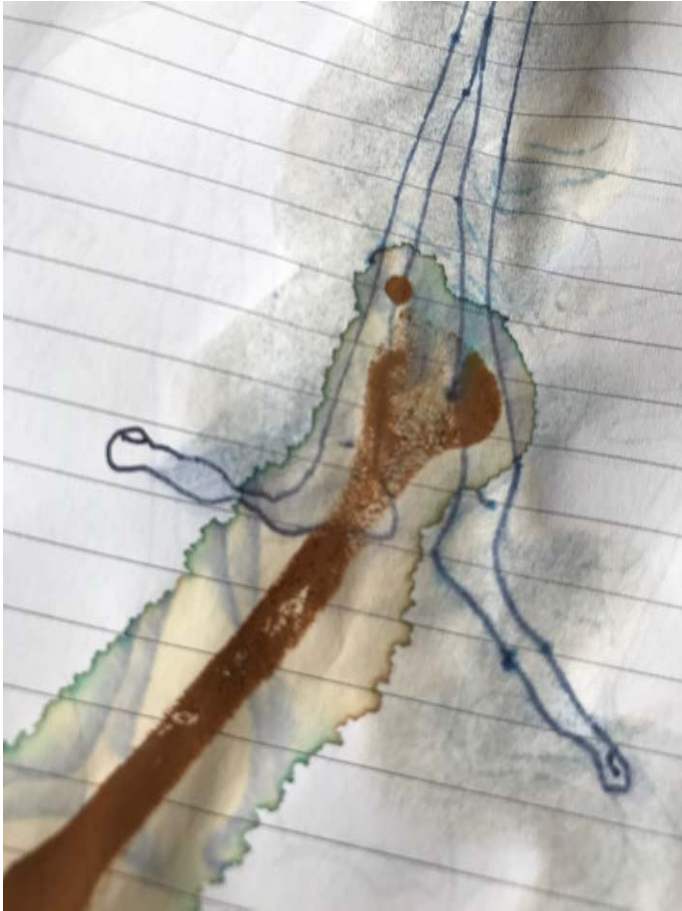
months later  
a washing machine  
still scrubs  
the red dust  
discolouring  
my favourite bra.

'A number of women were knocking bricks off the walls [of the Kiptown Metrorail station] using chunks of rock. Some said they used the bricks to build themselves houses because the government had failed to do so. Others said they used the bricks to support their shacks' (Daily Maveric, 7 April 2021).









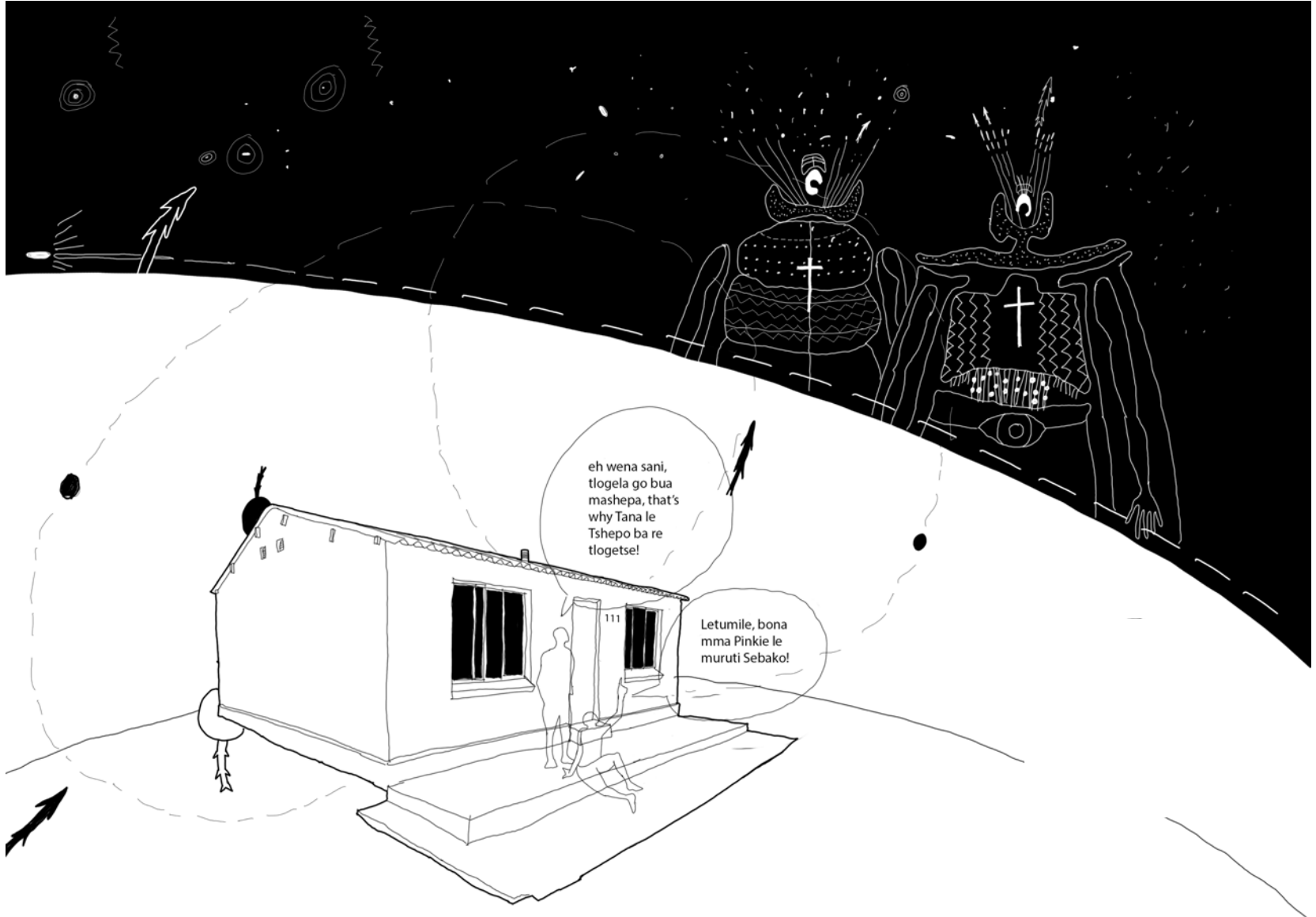
‘Indigenous peoples are those who have creation stories, not colonization stories, about how we/they came to be in a particular place - indeed how we/they came to *be a place*’. - Tuck & Yang (2012)











eh wena sani,  
tlogela go bua  
mashepa, that's  
why Tana le  
Tshepo ba re  
tlogetse!

Letumile, bona  
mma Pinkie le  
muruti Sebako!





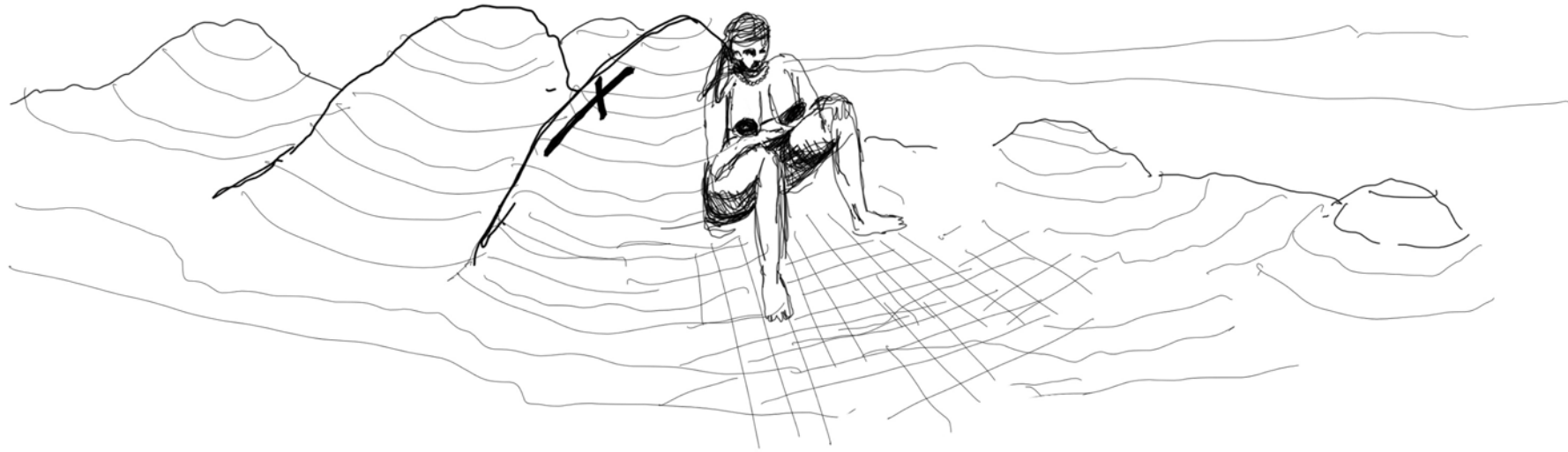


Sink hole near Mothibistad

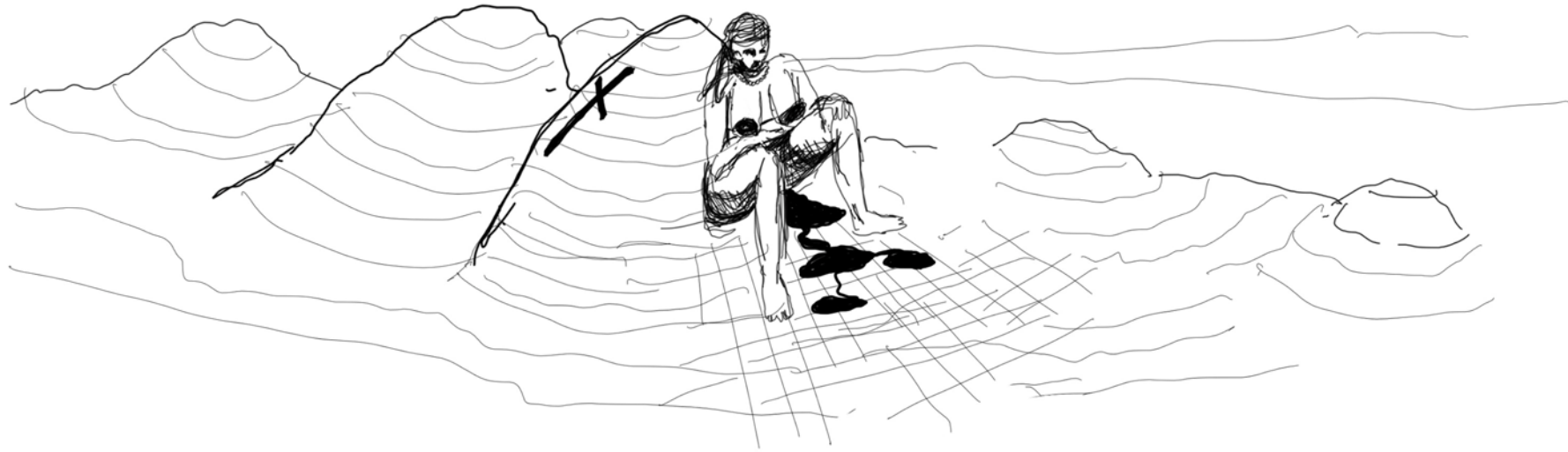
Image source: <https://www.geoengineer.org/news/giant-sinkhole-opens-up-in-northern-cape-south-africa>







1955  
creative  
collaboration  
High Town, Soweto South Africa

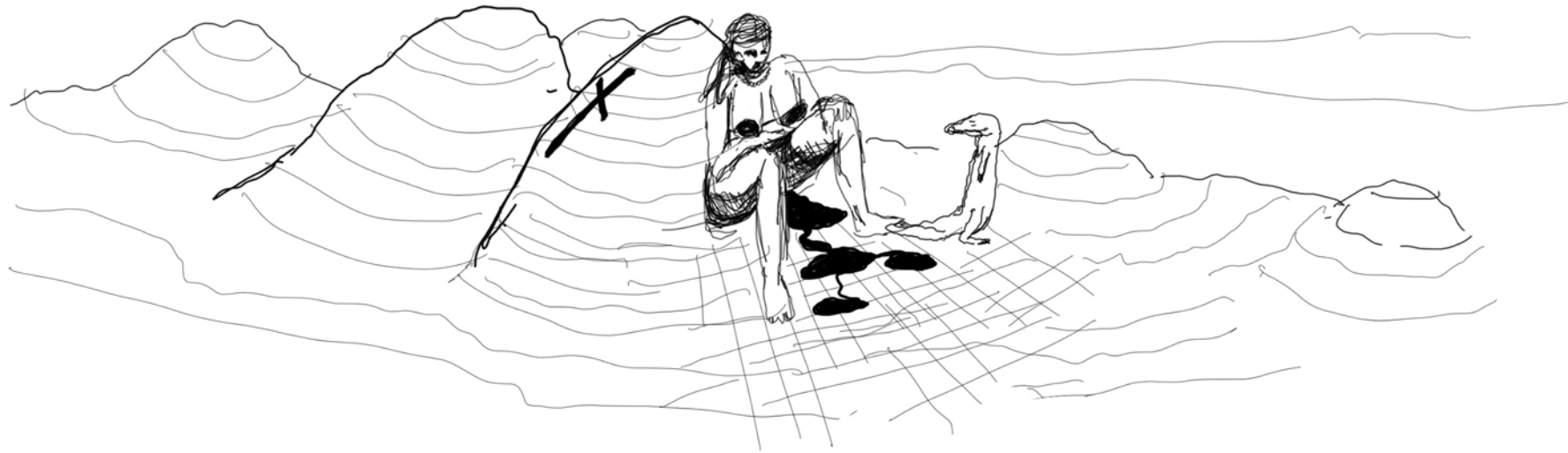




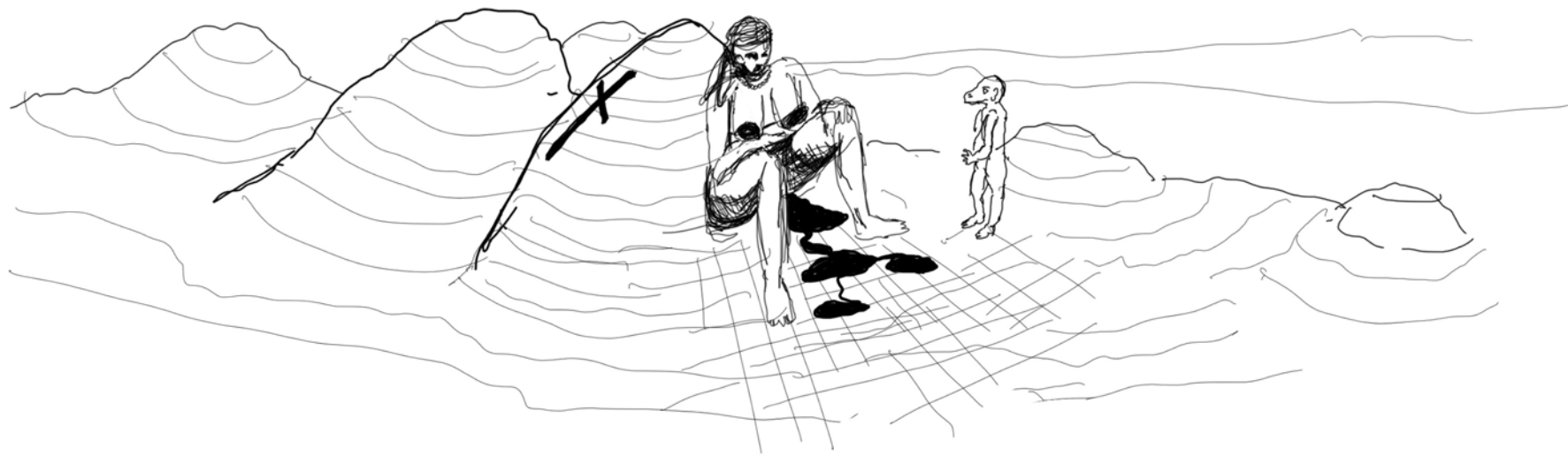
**1955**  
creative  
collaboration  
High Town, Soweto South Africa



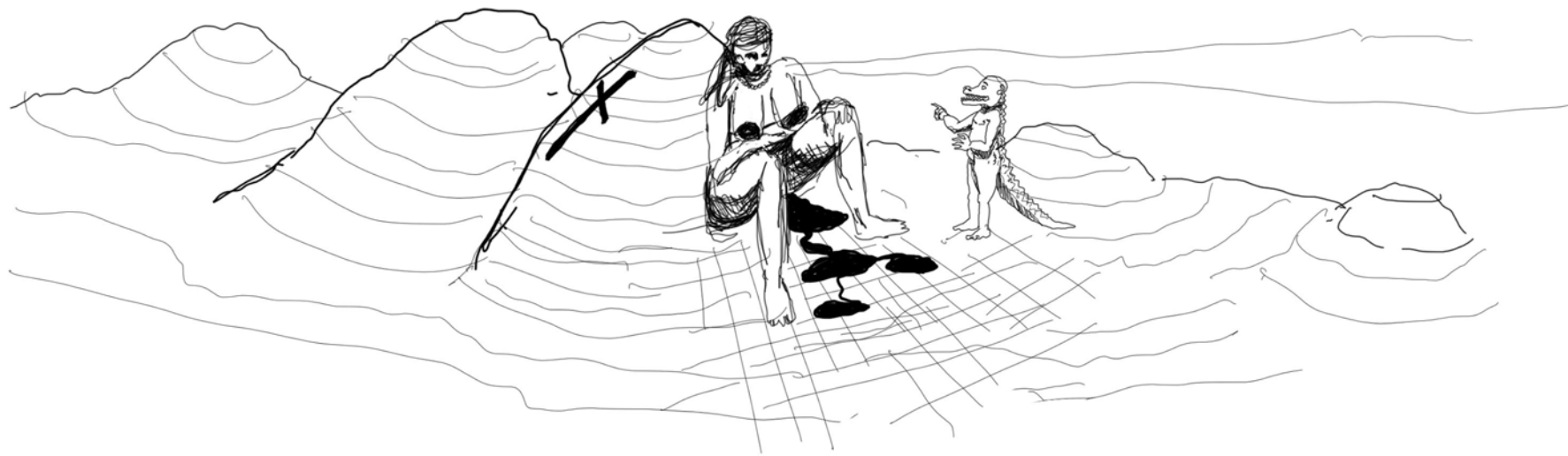
**1955**  
creative  
collaboration  
High Town, Soweto South Africa



  
**1955**  
creative  
collaboration  
High Town, Soweto South Africa



1955  
creative  
collaboration  
High Town, Soweto South Africa



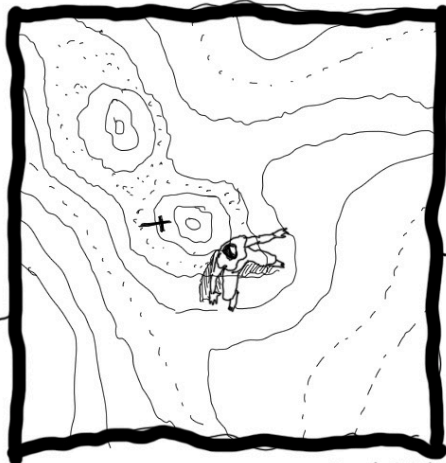
**1955**  
creative  
collaboration  
High Town, Soweto South Africa



KWENA TELLING  
HIS MOTHER THE  
TRAGIC STORY  
OF MOTHIBISTAD.



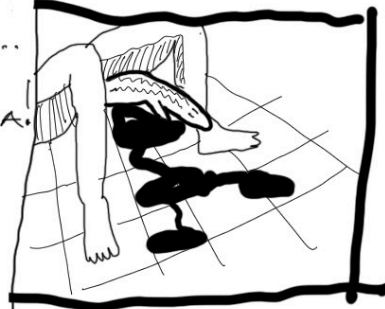




LE TSATSI LENGWE,  
MMA TLHAGO  
O NE A DUTSI  
KO DI THABENG  
TSA GA-MOHANA

**MODERNITY**  
YA KO **MOTHIBISTAD**

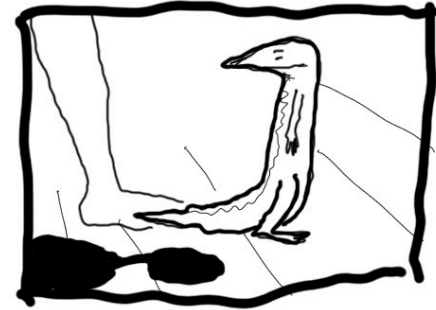
SUDDENLY, MMA TLHAGO FELT  
HERSELF BECOME PREGNANT...  
IJO, IJO, IJO... MMA TLHAGO  
O BONE NGWANA WA KWENA.  
KWENA A TSWILE KA  
BOTLALE, A HETUGA, MME  
A BA SA FELELETSE.



IJO!



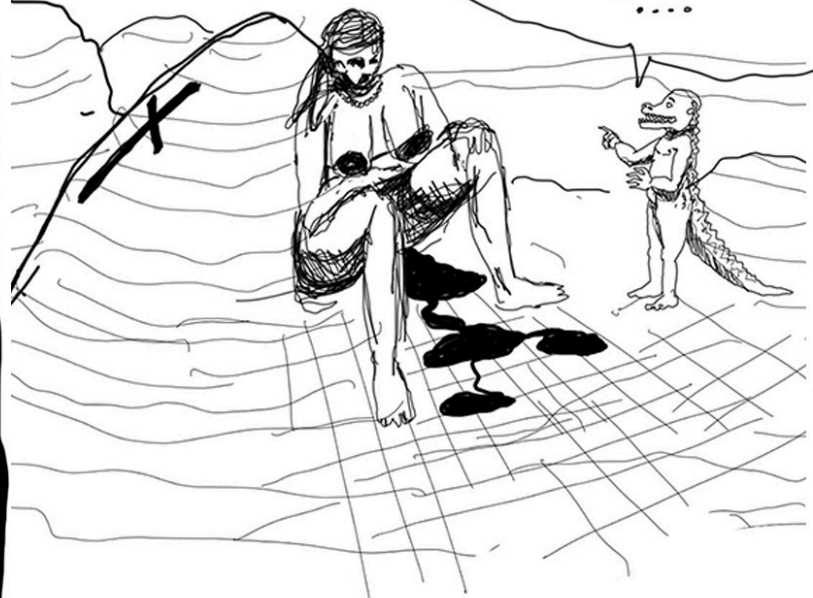
IJO!



IJO!

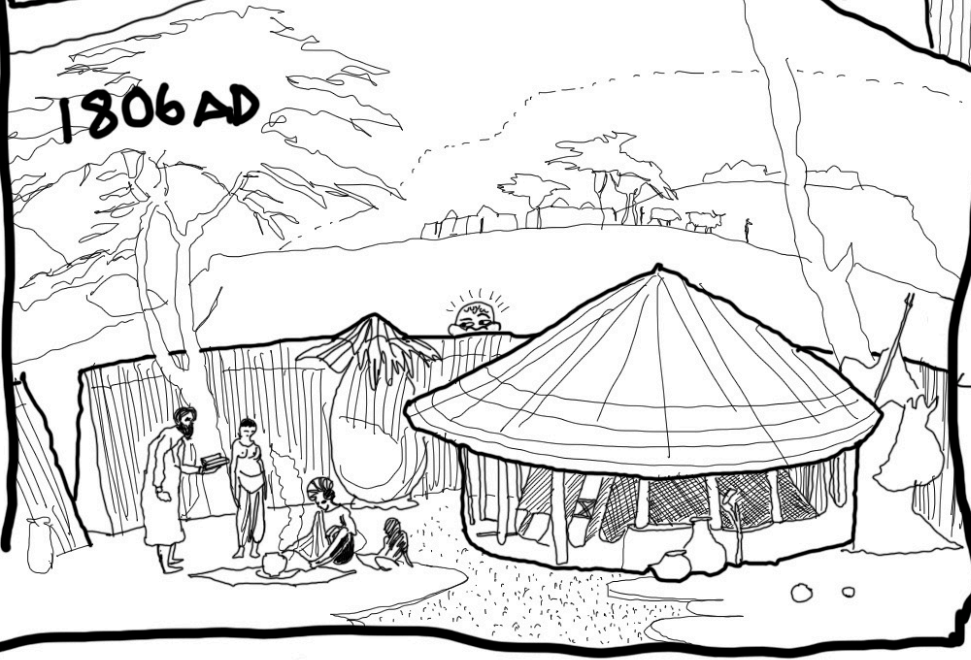


BATHO BA PELE PELE  
BA RATILE DILO TSA  
**MODERNISM**. MATHATA  
ENE ELE GORE, BA  
LEBETSE KITSO YA  
TLHAGO, **NATURE**  
....



BATHO BA  
PELE PELE BA NA  
BA ETELWA KE  
BATLHOKAMMALA,  
**COLOURELSSONES**  
BA TLILE KA  
**MODERNISM**

1806 AD





BATLHOKAMMHLA BA  
DIRISA BOLOYI MO  
BATHONG BA PELE  
PELE. KA NAKO EWA,  
BATHO BA PELE PELE  
BA FATLHIWA KE  
LESEDI LA MAKA!

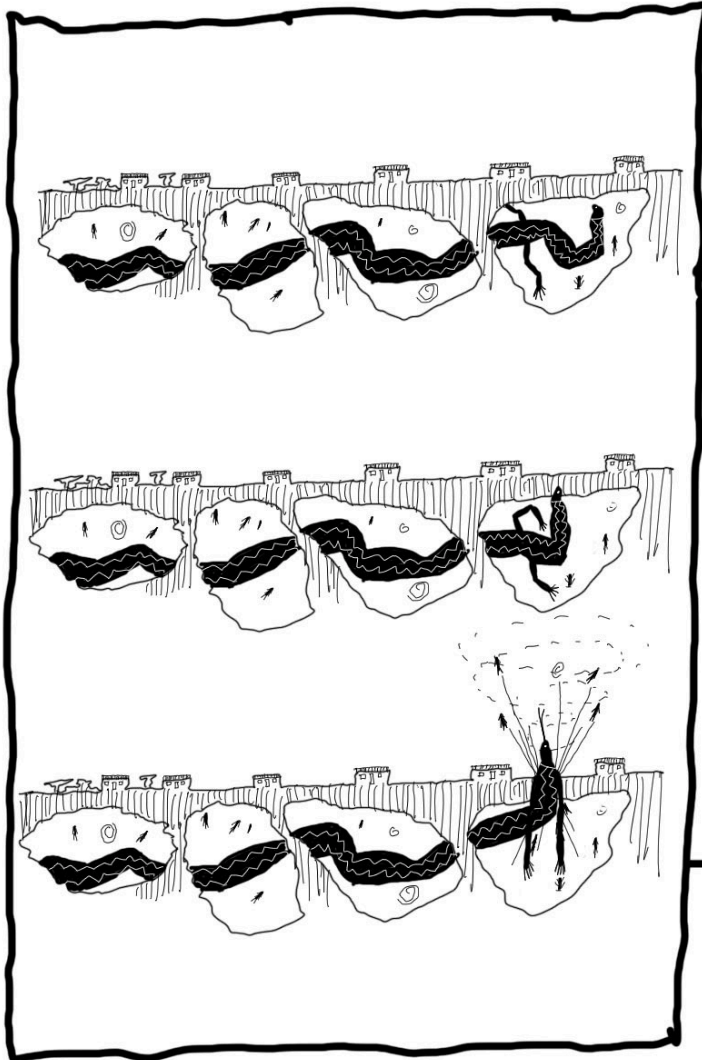


1970AD



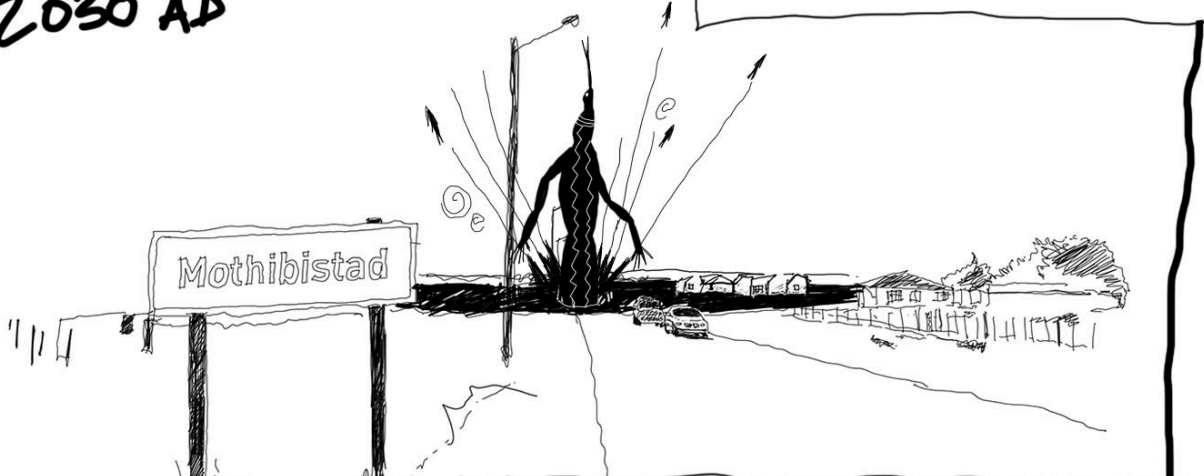
MO NOKONG, KE  
FA BANA BA  
BATHO BA PELE  
PELE BA TSHELA  
MO LIFIFING LA  
LESEDI LA MAKA,  
**MODERNISM**,  
BA FELELE TSA  
BA TSELWA TSOTLHE,  
TSE DI BOTLHOKWA,  
MME BA RATISINWA  
TSA MAKA.





2030 AD

MME SE BANA BA BATHO  
 BA PELE PELE BA SA SE  
 LEMOGANG, KE GO RE  
 MO BA BANA BANNA TENG,  
 KO MOTHIBISTAD, GO NO  
 GA TSELA NOGA YA  
 METSI.



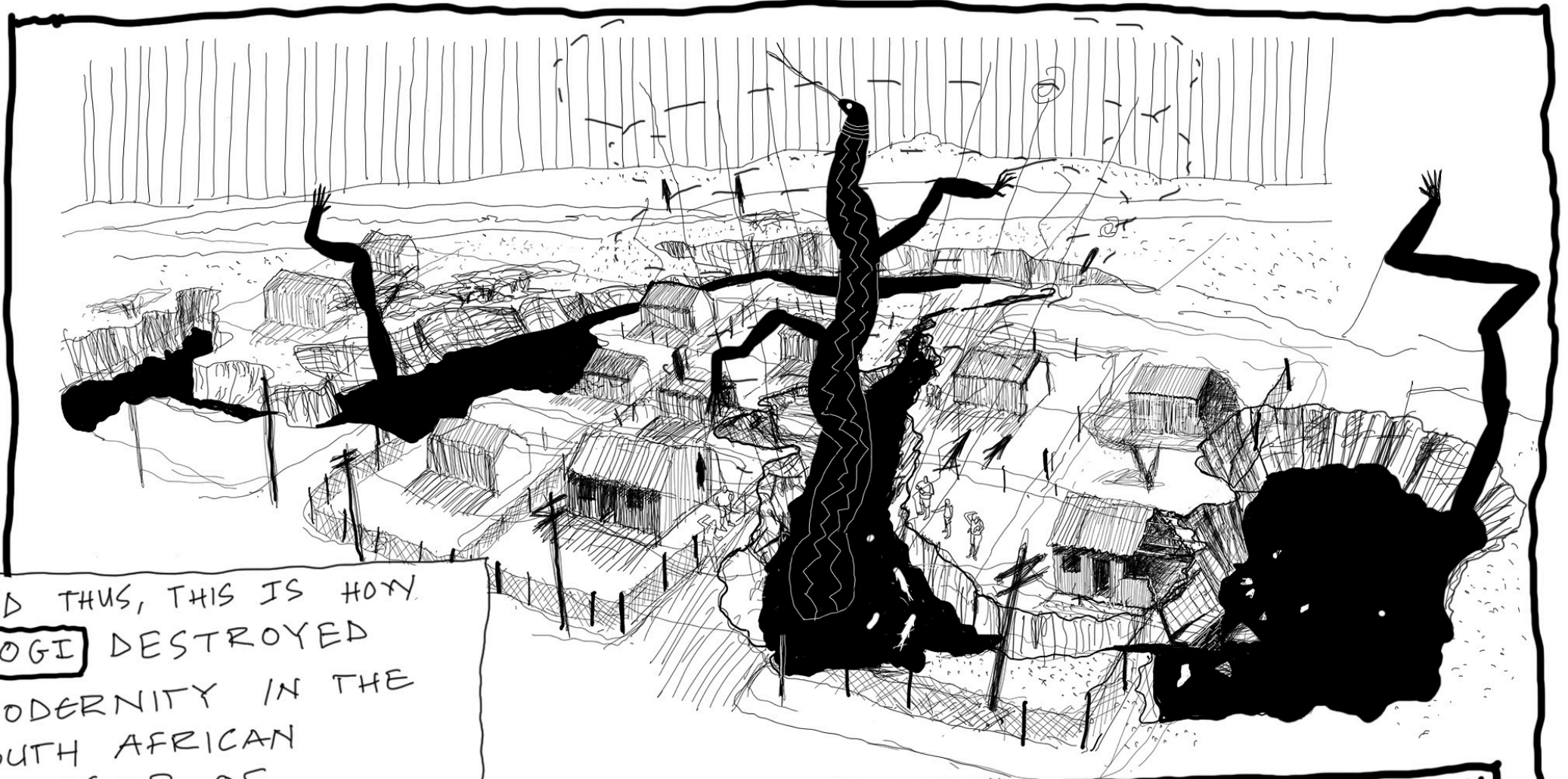
KA LETSATSI LENGWE, NOGA  
 E LEMOGILE GORE BATHO BA  
 AGILE MATLO A **MODERN** MO  
 LEFATSENG LA YONA. KA GO  
 TENEGA, NOGA EBE E THUBA  
 LEFATSE, MMOGO LE MOTLO  
 A BATHO BA MOTHIBISTAD





NOGA ENE E YA  
THUBA TSOTLHE  
TSA MODERNISM,  
MATLO, DI TSELA,  
DI KANTORO, DI  
KOLOI, TSOTLHE  
TSE DINI DILE  
TSA MAKA.





AND THUS, THIS IS HOY  
**NOGI** DESTROYED  
MODERNITY IN THE  
SOUTH AFRICAN  
TOWNSHIP OF  
MOTHI BISTAD. AMEN  
THE END

NOGA E THUBA MODERNITY  
**MOTHI BISTAD**

