

If sacred space is a human construct, does the notion of “home” in the contemporary world represent an *imago mundi*?

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This essay explores the concept of the contemporary home as sacred space, by comparing and contrasting traditional and historical notions of the home as sacred space with current considerations and theories of the sacred. It does so in order to explore whether the contemporary home represents an *imago mundi* - a representation of the cosmos and/or the heavens and hence a sacred space. It furthermore focuses on particular components of the home to discuss their possible sacred content and it also examines the ideas of various theorists to conclude whether or not the contemporary home is an *imago mundi*.

Previous work related to the topics of home environments and sacred space are: Mircea Eliade’s *The Sacred and the Profane*, David N. Benjamin’s, *The Home: Words, Interpretations, Meanings, and Environments*; Irwin Altman and Carol M. Werner’s *Home Environments*; Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi and Eugene Rochberg-Halton’s, *The Meaning of Things: Domestic Symbols and the Self*; and Christopher Alexander’s, *A Pattern Language*.

Methodology

The methodology employed is a combination of literary-based material, quantitative research in the form of a questionnaire and qualitative research through encouraging respondents to express their opinions by answering open-ended questions and by viewing these responses as a form of written interviews.¹ Respondents were given the choice to either remain anonymous or to provide their names and email addresses for the purpose of future research.

The questionnaire, aim of the research and target group

Twenty questions were posed to respondents in a questionnaire, of which some questions were open-ended, whilst others were selected from a previous

¹ Judith Bell, *Doing your research project*, (Maidenhead: Open University Press, 2005), p. 24.

research project, as conducted by Csikszentmihalyi and Rochberg-Halton.² The questionnaire and the results of the questionnaire can be found in Appendix A. The aim of the research was to gain a cultural perspective on how people experience the phenomenon of home, in order to gain insight into the relevance of home as a sacred space. The target group are subscribers to a weekly newsletter that is circulated by email, by the editor of a South African website for women.³ 205 questionnaires were completed and returned over 5 days. Most of the respondents (41.9%) were between 30-39 years of age. In a previous interview, the editor of the website said that the typical profile of a subscriber is a woman who lives in an urban area, falls in a high income group, is as likely as not to be married, is as likely as not to have children. The questionnaire was designed so that those respondents who had not previously built or renovated their own properties (43.9%) were not expected to answer questions 4 to 9, whereas the rest of the respondents had the option to answer all the questions. However, all respondents were given the choice to skip any questions.

The house as cosmos

Gaston Bachelard is of the opinion that our house is our corner of the world and he regards it as our first universe, a real cosmos in every sense of the word.⁴ David G. Saile says that the home satisfies a fundamental human need to live in an ordered and consecrated microcosm.⁵ Lord Raglan has the theory that houses were originally neither shelters nor dwellings, but temples; in other words, buildings erected for ritual purposes.⁶ For Mircea Eliade, all symbols and rituals concerning temples, cities and houses are finally derived from the primary experience of sacred space. He says that religious man's desire to live in the sacred is the reason for elaborate techniques of orientation, which are techniques for the construction of sacred space.⁷ Eliade distinguishes between two methods of ritually transforming the dwelling place into cosmos, which in his opinion,

² Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi and Eugene Rochberg-Halton, *The Meaning of Things: Domestic Symbols and the Self*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), p. 281. [hereafter, Csikszentmihalyi, *meaning of things*].

³ www.women24.com, accessed 30 October 2011.

⁴ Gaston Bachelard, *The poetics of space*, (Boston: Beacon Press, 1964), p. 4. [hereafter, Bachelard, *Poetics of Space*]

⁵ David G. Saile, *The Ritual Establishment of Home in Home Environments*, ed. by Irwin Altman and Carol M. Werner, (New York and London: Plenum Press, 1985), p. 90. [hereafter, Saile, *Ritual Establishment of Home*]

⁶ Lord Raglan, *The Temple and the House*, (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul Limited, 1964), p.1. [hereafter, Raglan, *Temple*]

⁷ Mircea Eliade, *The Sacred and the Profane*, (Orlando, Florida: Harcourt Inc., 1987), p. 29. [hereafter, *Eliade, Sacred and Profane*]

gives it the value of being an *imago mundi*: by the symbolic installation of an *axis mundi* and repeating, through a ritual of construction, the paradigmatic acts of the gods by which the world came to birth. ⁸ Graeme J. Hardie says that the South African Tswana's organisation of space in the layout of a settlement and individual houses is closely intertwined with their cosmology.⁹ Hardie cites other researchers who also emphasised the influence of a society's cosmological view on the way in which cities, towns and houses are designed. Rapoport, for example, has shown that the Dogon lay out their towns as a model of the universe. Similarly, Bordieu suggests that to the Berber, the house is a microcosm organised according to the same principles that govern the entire universe.¹⁰ Hardie quoted Clare Cooper:

It seems that consciously or unconsciously ... many men in many parts of the world have built their cities, temples, and houses as images of the universe ... Our house is seen, however unconsciously as the center of our universe and symbolic of the universe... Primitive man sees his dwelling as symbolic of the universe with himself, like God, at its center. Modern man apparently sees his dwelling as symbolic of the self but has lost touch with this archaic connection between house-self-universe.¹¹

House-self-universe

Contrary to what Cooper says, it can be argued that this "archaic connection" may not be that archaic and that it was a fundamental principle of the sixteenth century building tradition. Robert D. Sack says that with reference to the late Middle Ages and the Renaissance, "...we have evidence that rooms, houses, memory theatres, theatres, and churches were in part deliberately designed as giant talismans to be in sympathy to the heavens..."¹² According to Sack, parts of houses may have been designed and embellished on magical principles and used to facilitate memory, even by such noted philosophers as Francis Bacon. Sack says that Renaissance mystics in particular, favoured the work of the Roman architect Vitruvius, especially his design of the theatre, in which much attention was paid to the role of astrology. Mary Quinlan-McGrath writes that it was common practice in the Renaissance to produce a horoscope for the foundation ceremony of a great

⁸ Eliade, *Sacred and Profane*, p. 52.

⁹ Graeme J. Hardie, *Continuity and Change in the Tswana's House and Form in Home Environments*, ed. by Irwin Altman and Carol M. Werner, (New York: Plenum Press, 1985), p. 217. [hereafter, Hardie, *Tswana house*]

¹⁰ Hardie, *Tswana house*, p. 216.

¹¹ Hardie quoting Clare Cooper, in Hardie, *Tswana house*, p. 216.

¹² Robert D. Sack, *Magic and Space*, (Annals of the Association of American Geographers Vol. 66, No. 2, 1976), p. 317. [hereafter Sack, *Magic and Space*]

structure, such as the foundation horoscope for St Peter's Basilica in Rome, which was designed by the architect Donato Bramante and completed by Michelangelo.¹³

The psyche and soul of the contemporary home

Another system of orientating space according to the heavens or the cosmos is found in the Chinese geomancy principles of *feng-shui*¹⁴ and in the Hindu geomancy principles of *vaastu*.¹⁵ The principles of *vaastu* embody the house-self-universe connection as a symbol of the body that is overlaid onto the grid, the *Vaastu Purusha Mandala*, which determines direction and orientation.¹⁶ The popularity of these two practices in the Western world can only be speculated upon. The respondents were asked whether they followed any particular procedures (rituals) before, during or after the construction or renovation of their homes. Of the 71 respondents, 6 held a ground breaking ceremony, 4 had *feng-shui* consultations, none had a *vaastu* consultation, 1 considered design according to the Golden Section, 7 had roof topping ceremonies, 1 celebrated crossing the threshold, 1 had a pagan cleansing ritual and 40 had a housewarming party. As far as the orientation of their homes were concerned, more people were interested in maximising natural light (23), desired privacy (19), wanted views (18), than were concerned with orientation according to the cardinal points (9). Yet, the majority of respondents agreed (30.2% of respondents agreed strongly, 25.6% agreed moderately, 36% agreed, 1.2% disagreed moderately and 8.1% had no opinion) with the following statement by the contemporary Finnish architect Juhani Pallasmaa:

We architects are concerned with designing dwellings as architectural manifestations of space, structure, and order, but we seem unable to touch upon the more subtle, emotional, and diffuse aspects of home. Yet, it is the capacity of the dwelling to provide domicile in the world that matters to the individual dweller. The dwelling has its psyche and soul in addition to its formal and quantifiable qualities.¹⁷

The respondents attributed the home's psyche and soul to the people who inhabit the space, the relationship between the inhabitants, a sense of harmony

¹³ Mary Quinlan-McGrath, *The Foundation Horoscope(s) for St. Peter's Basilica, Rome, 1506: Choosing a Time, Changing the Storia*, (Isis, Vol. 92, No. 4, 1976) p. 716.

¹⁴ J. F. Meyer, *Feng-Shui of the Chinese City*, (*History of Religions* Vol. 18, No. 2, 1978).

¹⁵ Sashikala Ananth, *The Penguin Guide to Vaastu, the Classical Indian Science of Architecture and Design*, (New Delhi: Penguin Books, 1999). [hereafter, *Anath, Vaastu*]

¹⁶ Anath, *Vaastu*, p. 92.

¹⁷ Juhani Pallasmaa, *Identity, Intimacy and Domicile - Notes on the Phenomenology of Home in The Home: Words, Interpretations, Meanings and Environments*, ed. by David. N. Benjamin, (Aldershot: Avebury, 1995), p. 131. [hereafter, *Pallasmaa, Intimacy and Domicile*]

between inhabitants and the presence of family and pets in the home. Csikszentmihalyi says that the home is not only a material shelter, but also a shelter for those things that make life meaningful and that household objects become signs of a wider network of meanings that embrace the whole "world", i.e. the cosmos.¹⁸ When given a list of special items, similar to, but not the same as that used by Csikszentmihalyi, the respondents rated the items on a scale of least cherished 1, to most cherished, 5. Photographs (57.9%), followed by pets (51.4%) and then books (43.8%) were the most cherished items. In response to the question, what these items, taken as a whole, mean to them; some of the meanings described were: memories, identity, family, heritage and what makes a house a home, with memories being the most popular choice. This seems to confirm Bachelard's theory that the house is one of the greatest powers of integration for the thoughts, memories and dreams of mankind.¹⁹ Bachelard favours the term oneiric house to describe the dream house of the mind.²⁰ Pallasmaa says that the characteristics of the dream house of the mind might be culturally conditioned, but that the image reflects universal constants of the human mind. He criticises modern architecture for having contributed to modern man's arrogant rejection of history and the subsequent rejection of psychic memory attached to primal images.²¹

Ritual and the home as living thing:

Carol M. Werner says that the Pueblo Indians who live in tightly knit communities in the southwestern United States, view home as a "living" thing and that it is regarded as a sacred place.²² Raglan also comments that in the minds of the Hidatsa Indians, the centre posts of their houses are living beings and they hold them sacred.²³ Saile is of the opinion that through the ritual processes involved in the transformation of inert physical and spatial fabric into living, participating, and richly experienced home places, the physical environment is transformed, as well as the human participants and their relationship with the changed place.²⁴ This philosophy also underpins the work of architect and theorist, Christopher Alexander, whose fundamental premise is to create living

¹⁸ Csikszentmihalyi, *meaning of things*, p. 139.

¹⁹ Bachelard, *Poetics of space*, p. 6.

²⁰ Bachelard, *Poetics of space*, p. 17.

²¹ Pallasmaa, *Intimacy and Domicile*, p. 133.

²² Carol M. Werner, *Temporal Aspects of Home: A Transactional Perspective in Home Environments*, ed. by Irwin Altman and Carol M. Werner, (New York and London, Plenum Press, 1985), p. 20.

²³ Raglan, *Temple*, p.10.

²⁴ Saile, *Ritual Establishment of Home*, p. 87.

neighbourhoods. Brian Walker describes Alexander's, *A Pattern Language*, as: "... a compendium of patterns which Alexander and his colleagues believe to be the likely convergence points for a population deliberating on the construction of the built environment."²⁵ Alexander is furthermore of the opinion that people can, if given the necessary tools and patterns, design and build their own houses. The replies from the respondents seem to suggest that in building or renovating their own homes, the majority (78.6%) relied on their own design ideas, whilst only 22.6% took professional advice. Alexander sums up his approach: "It is shown that towns and buildings will not be able to become alive, unless they are made by all the people in society, and unless these people share a common pattern language, within which to make these buildings, and unless this common pattern language is alive itself."²⁶ Alexander cites an example of the effect of modernization in Peru: the traditional way of entering a Peruvian home was to enter through a porch, then into a room that hosted visitors (the *sala*), then into the family room (*comedor-estar*) before entering other private domains within the home. However, he found that the newly built apartment buildings did not cater for this cultural function and this disrupted long-established cultural patterns of visiting and sociability.²⁷ The pattern in the *Pattern Language* that describes this function is called "Intimacy Gradient", pattern 127, which should be read together with pattern 130, "The Entrance Room", which is recounted as: "At the main entrance to a building, make a light-filled room which marks the entrance and straddles the boundary between the indoors and the outdoors, covering some space outdoors and some space indoors."²⁸ What these two patterns elude to is the sanctity of the threshold.

The sanctity of the threshold

Bachelard cites Porphyry as writing in the third century that the threshold is a sacred thing.²⁹ Hardie's view of the importance of the threshold mirror's Eliade's view, which says that the house, like the temple or shrine, was sanctified by ritual, with special emphasis on the threshold. The entrance was, and still is regarded as the dividing line between the sacred and the profane and is suitably embellished to ward off evil spirits that might attempt to enter the inner sanctum. The threshold of the house is thus regarded as one of the most important dividing

²⁵ Brian Walker, *Another Kind of Science: Christopher Alexander on Democratic Theory and the Built Environment*, (Canadian Journal of Political Science, Vol. 36, No. 5, 2003), p. 1058.

²⁶ Christopher Alexander, *A Pattern Language*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1977), p. 87. [hereafter, Alexander, *Pattern Language*]

²⁷ Alexander, *Pattern Language*, p. 611.

²⁸ Alexander, *Pattern Language*, p. 622.

²⁹ Bachelard, *Poetics of space*, p. 223.

lines between the inner private space and the outer public world.³⁰ Eliade furthermore says that it also signifies the paradoxical space where the two worlds of the sacred and the profane communicate.³¹ Numerous rites accompany the passing of the domestic threshold, one such rite being the Jewish custom of placing or affixing a mezuzah to a doorpost. J. Trachtenberg explains that this originated as a protective device to exclude demons from the home.³² Similarly, the elephant-headed Hindu deity, Ganesha, is considered as the guardian of thresholds in Hindu homes. ³³ Eliade argues that within a sacred precinct, the profane world is transcended. He says that on the most archaic level of culture, the possibility of transcendence is expressed by various images of an opening. Therefore, places of passage between heaven and earth are referred to as the “doors of the gods.”³⁴ Douglas J. Porteous points out that “the rituals involved in entering the home of another, such as knocking on the door, ringing the bell, or using the more elaborate apartment-house intercom, have been compared to the recognition ceremonies of nesting birds.”³⁵ The door as a symbol of the transition between the sacred and the profane, the inside and the outside, the public world and the private world carries great significance, which Leach explains as being the possible origin of very elaborate doorways.³⁶

Home as centre of the universe

Eliade comments that religious man wants his own house to be at the centre of the world, to be an *imago mundi*.³⁷ Eliade explains that nothing can begin or be done without a previous orientation and that any orientation implies a fixed point, a centre. Says Eliade: “Revelation of a sacred space makes it possible to obtain a fixed point and hence to acquire orientation in the chaos of homogeneity, to ‘found the world’ and to live in a real sense.”³⁸ He is also of the opinion that the symbolism of the centre is as much involved in the building of towns as it is of houses and that any new human establishment of any kind, is a reconstruction of

³⁰ Hardie, *Tswana house*, p. 216.

³¹ Eliade, *Sacred and Profane*, p. 25.

³² J. Trachtenberg, J. *The Folk Element in Judaism*, (The Journal of Religion, Vol. 22, No. 2, 1942), p. 179.

³³ Edmund R. Leach, *The Gatekeepers of Heaven: Anthropological Aspects of Grandiose Architecture*, (Journal of Anthropological Research, Vol. 39, No. 3, University of New Mexico, 1983), p. 257. [hereafter, Leach, *Gatekeepers*]

³⁴ Eliade, *Sacred and Profane*, p. 27.

³⁵ Douglas J. Porteous, *Home: The Territorial Core*, Geographical Review, Vol. 66, No. 4, (1976), p. 384.

³⁶ Leach, *Gatekeepers*, p. 249.

³⁷ Eliade, *Sacred and Profane*, p. 173.

³⁸ Eliade, *Sacred and Profane*, p. 33.

the world.³⁹ For the new dwelling to last and to be real, it must be projected into the "centre of the universe" by means of a construction ritual. Belk, Wallendorf and Sherry observe that sacralisation through ritual is evident in their informants' descriptions of the process of moving into a new house and turning it into a home.⁴⁰ Home is viewed as sacred space that provides separation from the profane everyday world and they name ground breaking ceremonies, burials and house-warming parties as some of the rituals that may sacralise a place. House warming parties are evidently popular in contemporary society, since 56.3% of respondents report to have held such a celebration, compared with 8.5% of respondents who had a ground breaking ceremony, whilst 9.9% of respondents had a roof topping ceremony. Eliade furthermore says that every dwelling, by the paradox of the consecration of space and by the rite of its construction, is transformed into a "centre". Therefore, all houses stand in the self-same place, the centre of the universe. Yet, he says that it is a transcendent space that allows for the existence of a multiplicity and even an infinity of "centres."⁴¹ The creation of multiple and "strong" centres underpins the ideas of Alexander to create what he denotes as buildings with life.⁴² "In order to understand life as a phenomenon, it is necessary to define something which I call 'the wholeness' and also certain crucial entities which I call 'centres,' the building blocks of wholeness."⁴³ When asked which room/area symbolises the centre of their homes, 74 out of 141 respondents replied the lounge/living/family room and 32 out of 141 replied the kitchen. However, when asked where in their homes they feel most at home, 53 out of 147 said the bedroom and 45 out of 147 said the lounge/living/family room. In answer to the question what about this space/place/area/corner makes it special, the answers varied, but those who answered the bedroom listed relaxation, privacy, views, closeness to nature, amongst their answers. Those who answered lounge/living/family room cited family gathering, socialising and a connection to the outside, amongst their answers.

³⁹ Mircea Eliade, *Patterns in Comparative Religion*, (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1996), p. 373. [hereafter, Eliade, *Patterns*]

⁴⁰ Russell W. Belk, Melanie Wallendorf, John F. Sherry, Jr., *The Sacred and the Profane in Consumer Behavior: Theodicy on the Odyssey*, (The Journal of Consumer Research Vol. 16, No. 1, 1989) p. 10.

⁴¹ Eliade, *Patterns*, p. 379.

⁴² Christopher Alexander, *The Phenomenon of Life*, (Berkeley: The Center for Environmental Structure, 2002), p. 80. [hereafter *Alexander, Phenomenon of Life*]

⁴³ Alexander, *Phenomenon of Life*, p. 80.

Sacred Fire

Barbara A. Weightman says that when a traditional Hindu home has been completed, a fire altar is set up in a central room, which serves the purpose to centre and orient their devotees in the spatiotemporal landscape of the sacred and the profane, defining sacred place as home and home as sacred place.⁴⁴ She also says that apart from fire being a critical modality in evoking the sacred, by its orientation of facing eastwards to the rising sun, the fire altar signals a new beginning.⁴⁵ Eliade says that this altar is consecrated to Agni, the Vedic god of fire. He furthermore says that the erection of such an altar is on the microcosmic scale a reproduction of the Creation. The water in which the clay is mixed represents the primordial water, the clay represents the earth, the lateral walls represent the atmosphere (air) and naturally, the fire represents itself. ⁴⁶ Plato (c. 428 – 348 BCE) describes a similar cosmogony in the *Timaeus*:

Hence the god set water and air between fire and earth, and made them as proportionate to one another as was possible, so that what fire is to air, air is to water, and what air is to water, water is to earth. He then bound them together and thus he constructed the visible and tangible universe. This is the reason why these four particular constituents were used to beget the body of the world, making it a symphony of proportion. ⁴⁷

It can be said that fire has mesmerised mankind through the ages. Bachelard writes that amongst eighteenth-century thinkers the idea of the feeding of the stars by fire was still quite prevalent. He quotes Guibelet as saying: "...all the stars are created from one and the same celestial substance of subtle fire."⁴⁸ Pattern number 181 in Alexander's, *A Pattern Language*, is "The Fire" and his opening paragraph simply states: "There is no substitute for fire."⁴⁹ His pattern description reads: "Build the fire in a common space - perhaps in the kitchen - where it provides a natural focus for talk and dreams and thought. Adjust the location until it knits together the social spaces and rooms around it, giving them each a glimpse of the fire..."⁵⁰ In South Africa, the term used for cooking food outdoors over an open fire, is a *braai* (barbeque). Such is the South African fervour

⁴⁴ Barbara Weightman, *Sacred Landscapes and the Phenomenon of Light*, (Geographical Review, Vol. 86, No. 1, 1996), p. 66. [hereafter, *Weightman, Phenomenon of Light*]

⁴⁵ Weightman, *Phenomenon of Light*, p. 62.

⁴⁶ Eliade, *Sacred and Profane*, p. 30.

⁴⁷ Plato, *Timaeus* 32b, trans. John M. Cooper, (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, Inc., 1997) p. 1237.

⁴⁸ Bachelard quoting Guibelet in *The Psychoanalysis of Fire*, (Boston: Beacon Press, 1967), p. 67.

⁴⁹ Alexander, *Pattern Language*, p. 839.

⁵⁰ Alexander, *Pattern Language*, p. 842.

for "braaiing" (80.4% of respondents confirmed that they have an outdoor *braai* facility) that in 2005, Heritage Day, which is celebrated annually on 24 September, was proclaimed as National Braai Day; with the esteemed Archbishop Desmond Tutu as its patron. The etymology of the word "holiday" is given as "*hāligdæg*" or "holy day" in the Oxford English Dictionary.⁵¹ It is debatable whether or not the holy or sacred connotation of public holidays in contemporary South African society carries the same meaning as was originally intended, but that by inference, *braaiing* can be considered a sacred activity.

The sanctity of nature

Pallasmaa writes that authentic architecture is always about life and that mankind's existential experience is the focal subject matter of the art of building.⁵² David N. Benjamin, on the other hand, says that the way in which homes are marketed worldwide, does not reflect any kind of integration with local tradition or the ecological premises of the site.⁵³ Alexander addresses both these concerns. Of local tradition he says that: "...it must be a shared vision of a group of people, very specific to their culture, able to capture their hopes and dreams, containing many childhood memories, and special local ways of doing things."⁵⁴ Regarding the ecological impact, he is adamant that something should not be built in isolation and that the world around it should be repaired so that the larger world at that place, becomes more coherent and whole, so that what has been built, takes its place in the web of nature, as it is made or built.⁵⁵ Thomas Berry is of the opinion that the "historical realism of Western civilization and our later scientific empiricism have weakened the conscious presence to the natural world, that once guided and supported the psychic dimension of our lives."⁵⁶ Similarly, Belden C. Lane cites Max Weber as having argued that the freeing of nature from its intense religious associations by the insistent rejections of pagan animism has resulted in the "disenchantment" of the world. Lynn White Jr. says that by destroying pagan animism, "Christianity made it possible to exploit nature in a mood of indifference to the feelings of natural objects."⁵⁷ The result of this, says Lane, "has been a rampant secularization of nature and activism of spirit in western life,

⁵¹ *Oxford Dictionary of English*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005).

⁵² Pallasmaa, *Intimacy and Domicile*, p. 142.

⁵³ David N. Benjamin, *Afterword in The Home: Words, Interpretations, Meanings, and Environments*. (Hants, England: Avebury, 1996), p. 304.

⁵⁴ Christopher Alexander, (1979), *The Timeless Way of Building*. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1979) p. 336

⁵⁵ Alexander, *Pattern Language*, p. xiii.

⁵⁶ Thomas Berry, *The Great Work*, (New York: Three Rivers Press, 1999), p. 168.

⁵⁷ Lynn White, Jr., *The Historical Roots of Our Ecologic Crisis*, (Science, Vol 155, No. 3767, 1967), p. 1205.

leaving us exhausted in our mastery of a world stripped of magic and mystery.”⁵⁸ This paints a bleak picture in comparison with Frances Yates’ view of sixteenth century traditions in Europe:

Renaissance Hermetic man believes that he has divine powers; he can form a magic memory through which he grasps the world, reflecting the divine macrocosm in the microcosm of his divine *mens*. The magic of celestial proportion flows from his world memory into the magical words of his oratory and poetry, into the perfect proportions of his art and architecture.⁵⁹

Sack laments the fact that the twentieth century Western worldview is predominantly scientific. He expresses his dismay when he says: “Without the sixteenth century episteme to nourish them, thoughts about a grand magic controlling the environment in a lost age stand naked and vulnerable in the light of twentieth century science and technology.”⁶⁰ Eliade’s voice is more hopeful and he speaks of that which makes mankind invulnerable to what he terms “becoming beyond time”: the analogy of absolute existence and the irreducibility of the sacred.⁶¹ Sack does suggest, however, that over time, many of the magical principles of the hermetic tradition, like harmony, proportion and shape, became new standards for taste and proportion. As the distinction between magical and symbolic design blurred, Sack says that possibly, these ideas were simply absorbed into the aesthetic context of the age.⁶²

Conclusion

The evidence suggests that in traditional societies, and even in Europe up to the sixteenth century, the notion of home as sacred space is much more evident than in contemporary society. Some reasons for this have been ascribed to the predominantly scientific Western worldview, whilst others have blamed the role of modern architecture. However, it has been argued that even in the twenty first century, home components like the sanctity of the threshold, the home as centre of the universe and the sacred fire, are universally regarded as sacred symbols. It has also been argued that the contemporary home is a receptacle for memories and that sacralization through ritual, also affords the home to be a sacred space. The respondents predominantly agreed that their homes have a psyche and a soul and that the cherished objects of the home are revered as having special meaning. Leonard N. Primiano describes this reverence as a vernacular religion. “Vernacular religion is, by definition, religion as it is lived: as human beings

⁵⁸ Belden C. Lane, *Landscapes of the sacred*, (New York: Paulist Press, 1988), p. 19.

⁵⁹ Frances Yates (1992), *The Art of Memory*, (London: Pimlico, 1992), p. 173.

⁶⁰ Sack, *Magic and Space*, p.321.

⁶¹ Eliade, *Sacred and Profane*, p. 155.

⁶² Sack, *Magic and Space*, p. 317.

encounter, understand, interpret, and practice it.”⁶³ It can thus be argued that the evidence suggests that the contemporary home is an *imago mundi* - a representation of the cosmos and hence a sacred space. Saile comments that homemaking material is largely ignored in environment-behaviour studies and may allow insights into popular notions of home and the patterns of ritual required by domestic custom. ⁶⁴ He also says that in addition to research using largely literary sources, there is a need for more direct observation and recording of the making, use, and experience of home. Apart from accentuating the need for future research in this field, it also emphasises the importance of the ideas of architects like Dennis A. Mann and Christopher Alexander. Mann calls for an approach to vernacular architecture that straddles traditionalism and modernism,⁶⁵ whilst Alexander calls for a philosophy of building that goes beyond a mechanistic view of the world and allows for a union of human beings with what the world is made of. Alexander said: “What is ecologically appropriate, what is socially and psychologically valuable, what is beautiful to the eye, what is comforting to the soul - these are all wrapped together in the global judgement of wholeness.”⁶⁶ It can be argued that what Alexander refers to here, but does not say explicitly, is a recognition of the home as *imago mundi* and the sanctity of all life, so that one can see, in his words: “...the light of the universe shining there.”⁶⁷

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⁶³ Leonard N. Primiano, *Vernacular Religion and the Search for Method in Religious Folklore*, (Western Folklore, Vol. 54, No.1, 1995), p. 44.

⁶⁴ Saile, *Ritual Establishment of Home*, p. 106.

⁶⁵ Dennis Alan Mann, *Between Traditionalism and Modernism: Approaches to a Vernacular Architecture*, (Journal of Architectural Education, Vol. 39, No. 2, 1985), p. 10.

⁶⁶ Alexander, *Phenomenon of Life*, p. 364.

⁶⁷ Christopher Alexander and Howard Davis, *Beyond Humanism*, (JAE, Vol. 35, No. 1, 1981), p. 24.

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Appendix A - Home environment survey

Questionnaire results

1. What is your gender?

Female (202)	99.5%
Male	0.5%(1)

Answered question	203
Skipped question	2

2. Please indicate your age group.

Under 20	0.0% (0)
20-29	16.3%(33)
30-39	41.9% (85)
40-49	21.7% (44)
50-59	15.8% (32)
60-69	3.9% (8)
70 and over	0.5% (1)

Answered question	203
Skipped question	2

3. Have you ever had the opportunity to build or renovate your own home?

Yes, built	10.7% (22)
Yes, renovated	38.0% (78)
Yes, built and renovated	7.3% (15)
No, never built or renovated	43.9% (90)

Answered question	205
Skipped question	0

4. In planning the design and layout of your home or renovation, how many designs/layouts did you contemplate before settling on the final plan?

One	26.7% (23)
Two	37.2% (32)
Three	6.3% (14)
More than three	19.8% (17)

Answered question	86
Skipped question	119

5. Please indicate the inspiration behind the design of your home or renovation project.

Own ideas, gathered from books, magazines, etc. (66)	78.6%
Design based on an existing house I have seen	13.1% (11)
An architect's suggestion	4.3% (12)
In consultation with more than one architect	1.2% (1)
Collaboration between different parties, for example: yourself, an architect and an interior designer	8.3% (7)
Input from friends	11.9% (10)
Other (please specify)	

Answered question	84
Skipped question	121

6. How the orientation of your house was decided upon:

To maximise the views	21.7% (18)
To be parallel to the adjacent road	6.0% (5)
According to the four cardinal points of east, west, north, south	10.8% (9)
Limited or no choice, due to the constraints of the existing building	43.4% (36)
To maximise natural light	27.7% (23)
With privacy in mind	22.9% (19)
Other (please specify)	

Answered question	83
Skipped question	122

7. Did you consider any of the following procedures before, during or after the construction or renovation of your home?

Ground breaking ceremony	8.5% (6)
Feng Shui consultation	5.6% (4)
Vaastu consultation	0.0% (0)
Design elements incorporating the Golden Section (also known as the golden mean)	1.4% (1)
Roof topping ceremony	9.9% (7)
Crossing the threshold	1.4% (1)
Housewarming party	56.3% (40)
Spring cleaning	49.3%(35)
Other (please specify)	

Answered question	71
Skipped question	134

8. Please indicate to what extent you agree or disagree with the following statement by the Finnish architect Juhani Pallasmaa: 'We architects are concerned with designing dwellings as architectural manifestations of space, structure, and order, but we seem unable to touch upon the more subtle, emotional, and diffuse aspects of home. Yet it is the capacity of the dwelling to provide domicile in the world that matters to the individual dweller. The dwelling has its psyche and soul in addition to its formal and quantifiable qualities.'

Strongly agree	30.2% (26)
Moderately agree	25.6% (22)
Agree	36.0% (31)
Disagree	0.0% (0)
Moderately disagree	1.2% (1)
Strongly disagree	0.0% (0)
No opinion	8.1% (7)

Answered question	86
Skipped question	119

9. In your opinion, what contributes to the psyche and soul of your home?

Answered question	72
Skipped question	133

10. Which room/area symbolises the centre of your home?

Kitchen	22.7% (32)
Living room	40.4% (57)
Pool area	0.0% (0)
Patio	2.8% (4)
Television area	10.6% (15)
Fireplace	0.7% (1)
Study	0.7% (1)
Bedroom	9.2% (13)
Family room	12.1% (17)
Bathroom	0.0% (0)
Outdoors	0.7% (1)

The entrance hall 0.0% (0)
Other (please specify)

Answered question 141
Skipped question 64

11. Where in your home do you feel most at home?

Answered question 147
Skipped question 58

12. What about this space/place/area/corner makes it special?

Answered question 144
Skipped question 61

13. Which of these rites/celebrations are of importance to you?

Birthdays	89.6% (129)
Christmas	75.7% (109)
New Year	38.2% (55)
Easter	48.6% (70)
Anniversaries	44.4% (64)
Weddings	38.9% (56)
Funerals	22.2% (32)
Eid	6.3% (9)
Passover	3.5% (5)
Other (please specify)	

Answered question 144
Skipped question 61

14. Please indicate which of these items you regard as the most cherished in your home on a rating scale of 1 = least cherished and 5 = most cherished:

	1	2	3	4	5
Furniture (chairs, sofas, tables, etc.)					
5.5%	9.6%	37.0%	30.1%	21.2%	
Visual art					
11.7%	19.7%	24.1%	27.7%	19.7%	
Photographs					
3.4%	4.8%	13.1%	23.4%	57.9%	
Books					
4.1%	7.5%	21.2%	26.0%	43.8%	
Music					
3.4%	9.6%	28.1%	33.6%	28.1%	
Digital media					
1.4%	16.1%	35.7%	26.6%	21.7%	
Television					
9.9%	12.7%	32.4%	28.9%	16.9%	
Musical instruments					
38.1%	15.7%	17.9%	16.4%	12.7%	
Sculpture					
34.8%	21.0%	22.5%	13.8%	10.9%	
Plants					
16.8%	14.7%	22.4%	26.6%	23.1%	
Jewellery					
10.4%	18.1%	27.1%	29.2%	17.4%	
Heirloom					
9.5%	13.9%	18.2%	23.4%	35.8%	
Pets					
19.3%	3.6%	11.4%	16.4%	51.4%	
Motor Vehicle					
5.6%	6.3%	25.7%	36.1%	28.5%	

Answered question 147
Skipped question 58

15. What do all these special items, taken as a whole, mean to you?

Answered question 131
Skipped question 74

16. In addition to the stove/hob/cooker/oven/microwave that you use for daily cooking, which of these fire-related facilities do you have access to?

Indoor fireplace with chimney to burn wood/coal	27.3% (39)
Outdoor portable braai	54.5% (78)
Outdoor built-in braai	25.9% (37)
Home pizza oven	1.4% (2)
None of the above	21.0% (30)
Other (please specify)	

Answered question 143
Skipped question 62

17. Please indicate your affinity for lighting a fire, either for cooking purposes or for heat during winter:

The fire is lit by someone else in the family	35.1% (47)
I relish the opportunity to light a fire	28.4% (38)
I enjoy the experience of keeping a fire going in Winter	27.6% (37)
I am indifferent about making a fire	12.7% (17)
I have a fireplace in my home, but it is purely ornamental	6.0% (8)
Other (please specify)	

Answered question 134
Skipped question 71

18. Gathering around the fire, inside or outside, is a symbol of:

Family togetherness	60.3% (88)
Socialising with friends	61.0% (89)
Relaxation	54.1% (79)
Has no special meaning	4.1% (6)
Being at one with nature	14.4% (21)
Contemplative/Meditative	19.2% (28)
None of the above	0.7% (1)
Other (please specify)	

Answered question 146
Skipped question 59

19. Approximately how many times have you moved home since your turned 18?

1-3	36.3% (53)
4-6	31.5% (46)
7-9	18.5% (27)
10-12	4.8% (7)
13-15	3.4% (5)
more than 15	5.5% (8)

Answered question 146
Skipped question 59

20. Name and email address requested. Respondents were given the option to leave this blank.

Answered question: 95
Skipped question: 110

Individual responses to questions:

Question 5. Please indicate the inspiration behind the design of your home or renovation.

- 1 I'm a gifted person
- 2 in conjunction with the man of my dreams
- 3 Spoke to 2 contractors

Question 6. How the orientation of your house was decided upon:

- 1 BASIC IMPROVEMENTS
- 2 TO OPEN UP THE LIVING AREA
- 3 Suggestions of the architect
- 4 Budget
- 5 more social spacing requirements & privacy

Question 7. Did you consider any of the following procedures before, during or after the construction or renovation of your home?

- 1 Pagan cleansing Ritual
- 2 NONE
- 3 kitchen warming party
- 4 Nothing but a big sigh of relief!
- 5 None of these
- 6 I anointed my house and asked GOD to bless it and everyone that enters it.

Question 7. In your opinion, what contributes to the psyche and soul of your home?

- 1 The people that inhabit it as well as the animals. The use of natural colours and space also lends to tranquillity.
- 2 I believe the fabric of the home can be contributed to textures, colours, lighting, tangible things as well as the people who we open our home to.
- 3 The people and pets who live in the home makes the house a home.
- 4 Space, sunshine, serenity, the smell of the sea
- 5 It's the people living in the house that makes it a home.
- 6 it needs to fit the function of the family - we have small children - I really wanted them to have their own lounge. I wanted a study for myself and my husband for us to spend time on our own interests.
- 7 home is were you are
- 8 Colour, comfort, attractiveness, and of course those that dwell therein.
- 9 The family in it
- 10 The atmosphere creates by the persons living in it, the colours of your home and whatever living things e.g. Plants/animals/ human traffic in your home
- 11 the inhabitants, the content and it's placement, natural light, free space, the external environment
- 12 What you bring to it - your personal touches, artwork, colours, photos, objects from travel. It is your personality rather than design that really contributes to the soul of a home. Without that personal touch, even the best designed home can feel soulless and empty
- 13 The warmth and the 'looks-like-it-is-lived-in' look
- 14 our family and pets, garden, comfort.
- 15 Colour, harmony and aura
- 16 THE RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN THE INHABITANTS
- 17 The people in the home
- 18 I believe it is the people living in a home. If everyone lives in harmony & is content, the contentment shows when you have visitors, because they feel the love & harmony, & feel welcome and at home.
- 19 The sense of space on top of a koppie, lots of light and elements of "boer-maak-'n plan" in a farm house
- 20 The energies and laughter in it. Also there has to be a certain degree of imperfection in a home

- 21 great atmosphere good colours
- 22 The inhabitants - your furniture, ornaments and the small touches that make a home a home.
- 23 IT'S A HOME - NOT A HOUSE
- 24 The flow and space utilisation
- 25 The people and pets in it.
- 26 Personal items that reflect our tastes, loves, and travels. These things make our home more than a house. And, books, loads and loads of books.
- 27 The people in it
- 28 colour, space use and furniture
- 29 personalisation, e.g. painting and photos
- 30 the extra space and the free flow of energy
- 31 Ease within the home with regard to all aspects of living!
- 32 The memories that are being created there.
- 33 not sure
- 34 Whatever energy and objects and life experiences unfold in the house contributes to the psyche and soul of a home
- 35 your comfort & easiness in your environment
- 36 The interior design and the personalities within.
- 37 the psyche and soul of a home is created by the people who inhabit it. Their combined energies and interests contribute to the atmosphere one encounters when entering their space.
- 38 Being yourself rather than following a fashion or trend.
- 39 relationships
- 40 a family makes a home and the soul is in our love for each other
- 41 Colour, natural light, water, flow of air, natural materials, use of space, storage so as to minimise clutter
- 42 Love, Peace and tranquillity in the home
- 43 That I feel comfortable in it, and at ease.
- 44 Surrounded by furniture and finishing's that suit my taste and lifestyle. Peace and tranquillity of my family unit.
- 45 Modern rustic interior makes it soulful without being over the top. All the rooms has got big windows & doors leading into a Cottage style garden flowers, herbs, vegetables, shrubs and fruit trees. I make a point of going barefoot into the garden first thing in the morning to feed the wild birds & get charged by the earth's positive field. I named my house Tree Cottage.
- 46 The people living in the home - my family.
- 47 The bond and love between the people who live in it and the ability to do whatever makes you happy in it
- 48 the furniture
- 49 Me
- 50 your personality and the presence of God in your home
- 51 I feel that it depends on a number of aspects
 1. The creative character of the primary occupant
 2. Whether the primary occupant has a positive view to life
 3. Whether the primary occupant is always keen to improve and beautify their living space.
- 52 the nature surrounding the home which is visible from each room through large windows. the fact that we love coming home and being home and just living there gives it so much soul.
- 53 The people in it; the atmosphere created by furniture, lights and pictures.
- 54 The people who live in it
- 55 Strong, healthy relationships between the dwellers and the love of God.
- 56 My believe in God and my love for my partner I believe Love, Peace, Goodness, Kindness is being fruits of the Spirit, envelopes everything
- 57 The love that we show it
- 58 The people who live in it
- 59 the way the household is run and the people living in it.
- 60 Design and surroundings
- 61 it is a reflection of your character & soul requirements to live the life we hope to achieve & portray of ourselves to the world out there
- 62 how the people, animals, plants and personal elements (paintings, books etc) interact with the hard structures.

- 63 Friends, family, food & wine
- 64 The happiness of the people living in it.
- 65 The people who live in the house give the input that makes the house great.
- 66 The inhabitants... and not the "things"
- 67 The relationships between the people living there, and also the people coming in and out of the home.
- 68 Its light, view and easy on the eye flow.
- 69 The people living in the home
- 70 The colours have to be of the heart as each room has its own characteristics for the role they play in your life on how you feel when entering the room. This also stimulates your mind as to personal touches you have embedded for your comfort.
- These aspects define you as an individual.
- 71 the people living in it
- 72 The people who live in it

Question 10. Which room/area symbolises the centre of your home?

- Other (please specify)
- 1 kitchen
 - 2 The open-plan kitchen / living room / dining room area
 - 3 the kitchen and dining room are open plan as is the lounge
 - 4 Open plan living room and kitchen
 - 5 Dining Room
 - 6 open-plan kitchen - eating area - family -room
 - 7 open plan kitchen/dining/sittine/tv area with fireplace

Question 11. Where in your home do you feel most at home?

- 1 My living room
- 2 Lounge
- 3 Lounge
- 4 Living Room
- 5 My Bedroom
- 6 kitchen, bedroom
- 7 My Room
- 8 In the TV room
- 9 in my bedroom
- 10 Kitchen
- 11 My kitchen
- 12 bedroom
- 13 The living room
- 14 everywhere - I think I have almost slept in every room - just not the bathrooms
- 15 bath
- 16 Lounge
- 17 everywhere
- 18 living room
- 19 Lounge
- 20 bedroom
- 21 Lounge
- 22 My bedroom
- 23 My bedroom
- 24 My bedroom, just loooooove my kingsize bed and my corner bath bathroom
- 25 bedroom
- 26 In the living room - on the couch looking out over the mountains, with many colours from the pillows, the carpet, the painting on the wall
- 27 Garden
- 28 kitchen
- 29 Bedroom and kitchen
- 30 Kitchen
- 31 bedroom
- 32 living room
- 33 BEDROOM
- 34 Living Room
- 35 Living Room
- 36 my bedroom
- 37 lounge
- 38 My lounge

- 39 My room
- 40 Family Room
- 41 Kitchen and Lounge area
- 42 Bedroom & Patio
- 43 lounge
- 44 My bedroom
- 45 my bedroom
- 46 Open plan kitchen, dining-room, tv room area
- 47 Bedroom
- 48 in my bedroom
- 49 Bedroom and bathroom
- 50 kitchen & lounge
- 51 Bedroom
- 52 Bedroom
- 53 Bedroom
- 54 Bedroom
- 55 Bedroom
- 56 SUN ROOM
- 57 kitchen or family room
- 58 bedroom
- 59 Kitchen
- 60 bedroom
- 61 Bedroom
- 62 My bedroom
- 63 My bedroom
- 64 In my bedroom
- 65 Lounge
- 66 my bedroom
- 67 living room
- 68 Bedroom
- 69 Bedroom
- 70 bedroom
- 71 Family room
- 72 bedroom
- 73 Living room
- 74 everywhere
- 75 garden
- 76 Living room and bedroom
- 77 dining room
- 78 Lounge
- 79 Bedroom
- 80 All rooms embrace me, but in different ways.
- 81 bedroom
- 82 family room
- 83 My living room on my coach
- 84 Living room
- 85 Study and / or kitchen
- 86 bedroom
- 87 My bedroom
- 88 Living room
- 89 Living Room
- 90 living room
- 91 My study
- 92 Bedroom
- 93 Lounge
- 94 Living Room
- 95 living room
- 96 Lounge
- 97 My bedroom
- 98 my bedroom
- 99 In the bedroom.
- 100 no-where specific
- 101 Bedroom
- 102 Kitchen
- 103 Every where- I love my home. My favourite place is my veranda on hot summer evenings, overlooking my pool, sipping a glass a wine!
- 104 Lounge
- 105 Living Room
- 106 bedroom
- 107 everywhere, if I have to choose I would say my bedroom
- 108 My Bedroom
- 109 My kitchen
- 110 Television Area

111 Everywhere
 112 Bedroom
 113 Bedroom
 114 living room and kitchen
 115 living room
 116 Lounge-TV room
 117 Bedroom
 118 In my living room on the couch
 119 my bedroom
 120 TV Room
 121 Family Room
 122 television area
 123 bedroom
 124 TV /Social area
 125 in the garden and in the family areas
 126 Kitchen and bedroom (depends on my energy levels!)
 127 Kitchen
 128 bedroom
 129 In the lounge/living room
 130 The lounge
 131 sitting room
 132 KITCHEN
 133 Living room and the kitchen:-)
 134 bedroom
 135 Lounge
 136 Bedroom
 137 Lounge
 138 bedroom
 139 Bedroom
 140 Living Room
 141 In my living room.
 142 Living room
 143 bedroom
 144 the open plan area
 145 Kitchen
 146 Kitchen and living area, bedroom
 147 Outside

Question 12. What about this space/place/area/corner makes it special?

1 The lounge and TV
 2 Feels cosy
 3 Family area
 4 Just the sofas and TV makes it Home, as I relax by my Living Room
 5 It's all mine, I don't have to share this space with anyone!!
 6 comfort
 7 The colour on the walls and the easy going use of furniture and fittings. It is a comfortable room.
 8 its completely mine, I have the only say in how it should look or feel
 9 It's where the family gathers.
 10 This is the place that my husband and I cook together talk about the children and food, we my children help me in the kitchen preparing food and helping with the dishes
 11 it is my private space
 12 The living room is generously proportioned and ideal for relaxing and reading. It also has gorgeous golf course views and is dappled in sunlight
 13 the surrounding greenery, the vast spaces inside
 14 me time
 15 the comfortable chairs and TV. Nice to just chill
 16 I like my whole house, but I love cooking so the downstairs kitchen / living room / dining room is a great place to socialize while cooking
 17 warmth
 18 It is where I relax
 19 privacy
 20 The whole family will gather

21 Everyone is always there for some reason, don't really know what is the attraction.
 22 It is where I can relax and simply be myself

23 Quiet, uncluttered and open with lots of natural light
 24 my bed where I can relax
 25 It is a reflection of me - a comfortable space, with a structured couch, warm colours, a place to sit with friends, enjoy the view, enjoy the changing colours of the sky and a great window sill for a glass of wine to rest.
 26 Outdoors, privacy, nature
 27 the smells coming from the kitchen. Children come and sit & talk in the kitchen.
 Our coming together place
 28 Its where I bake and spend time with family and friends while cooking and baking.
 29 my bed
 30 comfortable, relaxing, spacious, breezy, natural light
 31 MY SPACE - PEACEFUL, COMFY
 32 just relaxed. Nothing fancy.
 33 The TV unit with special photographs holding special memories
 34 calm
 35 it connects to the kitchen, dining room and French doors leading to garden and pool area
 36 The view and the way it opens up to the outside
 37 I relax on my bed, reading, with the TV on
 38 Lots of space to kuier and entertain
 39 it is a gathering area...
 40 Its warm and comfortable
 41 things I like and love are here
 42 Large, airy, spacious, comfortable, good lighting, has my stereo set.
 43 there I can be quiet and at peace after a hectic day
 44 Big windows, lots of light, sunny corner spot in winter, pretty views, lots of energetic family traffic flow
 45 It's my own, to do whatever I feel like doing
 46 its the one place where I can unwind, relax, exhale and be me
 47 I can change it into whatever mood I'm in... With candles, cushions, music, etc
 48 it's communal and there's always a large gathering of friends and family in it
 49 It's peaceful and serene
 50 Privacy, isolation, comfort and peace
 51 Comfort
 52 The one whole wall is a bookcase and it really defines the space.
 53 private
 54 A COMBINATION OF INDOOR / OUTDOOR FEELING
 55 the size
 56 itsMINE
 57 I love cooking
 58 furnishings & paintings
 59 Comfortable
 60 Its large and spacious
 61 This is my hidey-hole from the world - a place where I can relax, read, chat to my Hubby, a place of warmth and love
 62 It's my sanctuary.
 63 Cosy and are able to have a nice time in that specific area.
 64 me time
 65 The ambience
 66 I have all the privacy
 67 It's very large and open with two glass doors going outside, just makes me feel closer to nature.
 68 warm
 69 Its huge and well lit
 70 it is contained and my books are there
 71 its comfortable
 72 its a part of my comfort zone
 73 area
 74 Couch and bed
 75 I can work at my dining room table and socialise with those in the lounge or watch TV / DVD's at the same time
 76 Everybody gathers there for most of the time

77 Calming colours
 78 Each room has its own energy and feel.
 79 my bed and the serene tranquillity and the chirping of the birds in the garden makes it special
 80 relaxing
 81 It is the view outside the window. I love looking out through my window at the view and it is cosy for me to sit and have my breakfast and tea in my living room area.
 82 It houses elements that personify US
 83 My books, our computers, and the fact that our cats and dogs gather there with us.
 84 It's comfortable and I can relax
 85 the colour scheme of linen and furnishings.
 86 It is where the family gets together.
 87 It's a place where the family gather and socialise.
 88 the whole family gathers in this room
 89 I am surrounded by inspirational books and magazines, mementos from my Travels and my laptop with Internet that allows me to connect with the world.
 90 Place for rest
 91 Comfortable, external lighting
 92 Cosy, Safe, and where everyone gathers to talk.
 93 the kudu leather suite
 94 Chair, door to garden
 95 The colour
 96 the peaceful view and the quietness
 97 It's where I am able to relax.
 98 the whole house is special to me
 99 Privacy and I have all my things with me. It's the one room in the house that I get to decorate the way I wish.
 100 It is my space to be creative and be in control.
 101 Quiet, peaceful, and my animals just loving me being outside.
 102 Comfortable, cosy
 103 Comfy couches and a play area for my little boy!
 104 living room
 105 I love relaxing and reading, or listening to music, cd's
 106 Great views of the garden
 107 This is where I prepare sustenance for my family, this is where I can gather my troops and bake up a storm. There is no better feeling than walking into a home where the aroma of freshly baked cookies or a home cooked meal greets you first.
 108 The decorations and French doors which open on the stoep.
 109 It is my home and I am happy in it.
 110 it's got a great view of the garden
 111 It is my private alone space
 112 it has a fireplace and cosy furnisher. You can put your feet up and relax
 113 get together with family, eat, chat, visit
 114 It is comfortable and sunny and has some of my favourite things, like our big TV, a comfy couch as well of photo's and memories. It is where we relax and entertain.
 115 Comfy bedding
 116 Place to relax
 117 the light streaming in & the fact that I relax when i'm there (well most of the time)
 118 I can throw myself on the couch
 119 Family and friends gatherings
 120 does not face where the sun comes in. the TV vision becomes clearer
 121 I can go there to be calm and think about everything
 122 the place where people can feel free to mingle and socialized with each other
 123 people, relaxed no tasks atmosphere
 124 There is lots of space for other people to join me and help with prep or merely to chat.
 125 The smells
 126 relaxing, sunny and bright
 127 My family + animals being there
 128 Sitting with my kids (and animals) and watching and discussing TV.

129 my house is small
 130 BIG SPACE, THE COUNTER IT LIKE OUR ENTERTAINMENT PLACE
 131 It's where I spend time with my loved ones
 132 it has my bed LOL
 133 Love watching TV and movies with my fiancée
 134 Relaxing
 135 its mine, and I can read and listen to tunes as and when I want
 136 The size, colours and decor
 137 Where we eat, watch TV, drink coffee and chat together
 138 The warm earthy colours and the texture of fabric.
 139 Comfy, warm and relaxing
 140 its quiet...
 141 its the centre of the house, warm in winter, cool in summer
 142 cosy and conveniently laid out
 143 Functional and our living space where the whole family spends time
 144 I spend most of my time here and I've set it up exactly as I want and enjoy it. It's my space.

Question 13. Which of these rites/celebrations are of importance to you?
 Other (please specify)

1 Valentines Day!
 2 First night's meals home from Boarding School
 3 Diwali
 4 Diwali
 5 Valentine's Day
 6 None of the above. Through the years, they have lost their significance. In my opinion, they are merely 'ordinary days'. It how one treats one's fellow man that is of significance.
 7 FAMILY COMETOGETHERS

Question 14. Please indicate which of these items you regard as the most cherished in your home on a rating scale of 1 = least cherished and 5 = most cherished.

Other (please specify)
 1 kist - 5, macro waves
 2 My son
 3 Kitchen appliances, esp the coffee machine
 4 OWN CRAFT - MOST CHERISHED
 5 we value everything in our home, even if it costs very little
 6 my scrapbooking stuff
 7 Craft work
 8 Paintings
 9 cosmetics/perfume

Question 15. What do all these special items, taken as a whole, mean to you?

1 Special and sentimental
 2 Familiarity
 3 Love and family
 4 Interior Deco
 5 Once it's gone, it can't be replaced.
 6 good times
 7 It has taken a long time to build up and my tastes have evolved over time. Quite Interesting to see the changes.
 8 collection of memories
 9 It's my memory bank.
 10 They are who I am because it is part of inheritance
 11 it has sentimental value. Pics of my late son & best friend are my most prized
 12 They are memories of something special
 13 they signify our interests, our family history (photos)
 14 our way of living and being able to entertain ourselves without having to spend money to go out.
 15 Home
 16 They are what portray my personality.

17 What we've built up during 14 years of marriage
 18 My Bible is important, which shows me the direction in which to go etc.
 19 Memories and the memories it can create
 20 It indicates who I am ... what I like. Makes me feel at home
 21 paid a lot for them
 22 They represent what I love, what makes me happy, what reminds me of my life and my experiences
 23 Heritage, memoirs, identity, independence
 24 history
 25 My life, comfort and security
 26 They help me to relax at the end of a stressful day
 27 it's all part of my home
 28 ownership - self accomplished, debt free, personal taste, satisfaction, complimentary to the interior finish
 29 CONTRIBUTE TO MAKING MY SPACE A PLACE TO RELAX UNWIND ETC
 30 This is my memories, my life
 31 They all contribute to and bring about fond memories. They also symbolise life, ethnicity, culture and lifestyle.
 32 lots, we worked our butts off to earn them
 33 Who I am.
 34 Most I can do without, some I can't
 35 Warmth, cosy, mine
 36 Love and entertainment
 37 what I have worked for and enjoy
 38 These are the things I love and that define me
 39 Security, comfort, sense of "coming home", history and growth
 40 Good memories Items bought with my own hard earned money
 41 some are part of my growing up, some have sentimental value
 42 Represents my journey and me so far...
 43 My life
 44 It symbolizes who I am and represents home
 45 Shows about who I am and what I value
 46 Identity
 47 They resemble the things that we enjoy, that give us comfort and make us happy. They make our home truly ours.
 48 IT SYMBOLISES MY HOME
 49 the creation of a relaxing space
 50 all together they define my family and me
 51 They make up my home and life.
 52 They are personal and irreplaceable.
 53 My life, my history my future
 54 These are the things that give me joy in life and should there be a fire - the dogs
 And the photos would the first to be grabbed! :-)
 55 Its all the things that bring happiness into my life just having them around me.
 56 I try to look after what I have got. They are all old or second hand but they are just materialistic
 57 accomplishments on my own
 58 My possessions
 59 All these items as a whole is what keeps me close with my family, we spend a lot
 Of quality time together via these items.
 60 sentimental value
 61 Celebration of life
 62 a happy existence
 63 these are items that are a part of who my family & I are.
 64 A feeling of belonging and happiness.
 65 I can amuse myself without spending a fortune, I am safe at home with my daughters and expressing my creativity
 66 they make up my life
 67 Only material Goods
 68 Part of my identity and they make me happy.
 69 my home, part of my life
 70 good memories, milestones
 71 good living, Sentimental

72 Things I enjoy, a reflection of what I've accomplished and a history of where I've come from
 73 Interaction, imagination, memories, flights of fancy, other worlds, love
 74 They reflect what I am and what I like.
 75 Makes a home special
 76 They mean the memories of many years
 77 Independence
 78 they are all part of our lives, they make us carry on
 79 A sense of achievement, reflects the path my life has followed & are instruments that gives me security to survive in future
 80 Our belongs. What I spent everyday at work for.
 81 They make up my home
 82 Love
 83 it give me pleasure to use and see
 84 Home
 85 All resemble what a home should be
 86 part of my past and a reminder of what I have achieved or what I have been privileged to be a part of
 87 Enjoying life.
 88 memories of my past. things I have brought with me to where I am today. Got Dec married for the first time when I was 42 so got rid of a lot of unnecessary things and only have what is really important left.
 89 These are the things that make a house, a home. Like photographs for example. It adds a personal touch.
 90 They are what make my house a home and what are special to me.
 91 My pictures and special furniture make the house my home.
 92 Design
 93 Heritage of my family, and things we really cherish and like to use. Our pets are our babies as well!
 94 Comfort and relaxation
 95 An environment when I come home that is me - it feels safe, warm, comfortable...
 96 They represent family.
 97 Many of the special items were presents and inherited, sentimental value!
 98 Happiness and family.
 99 They contribute to my emotional wellbeing
 100 Makes up my home
 101 Most of them have special memories around them
 102 It is little pieces of who I am and who my husband is. Most of our furniture are hand-me-downs, but we ad our own personal touch to things. It all adds up to make our little home special.
 103 Memories
 104 My life, my personal private space, who I am and what my world consists of
 105 memories
 106 Contentment and achievement
 107 Homeliness
 108 what our lives have been build towards
 109 everything
 110 they are an extension of me & my personality & my world
 111 the story of my life and the people who matter to me
 112 They make our house a home!
 113 I am very materialistic and am happy when surrounded by nice things
 114 For many years I did not have many possessions, and lost everything twice after bad relationships. Now building up a home for me & my son, and appreciate all we have collected. Makes me realize where I am now at this stage in my life is working for me at last.
 115 Family and family time
 116 Represents me.
 117 a lot cannot leave without
 118 MAKES ME FEEL COMFORTABLE TO LIVE MY LIFE AND FEEL AT HOME AND JUST MYSELF
 119 It fills my home and makes it the place I want to be, to relax, spend time with my boyfriend and our cats, laugh,

- chat - it's just the perfect getaway and I don't even have to go on holiday for that:-)
 120 my accomplishments
 121 The history of my life and what I love most
 122 Comfortable memories
 123 my life and memories and living in the moment
 124 Memories, creativity and great meaning.
 125 Security
 126 For the fact that I love a room with art and sculptures as they give the flair. Always love watching movies on big screen with surround sound.
 127 Life Love
 128 both my partner and I started out with nothing and we love and appreciate what we have accomplished thus far
 129 our whole life
 130 luxury
 131 It makes our home the way it is.

Question 16. In addition to the stove/hob/cooker/oven/microwave that you use for daily cooking, which of these fire-related facilities do you have access to?
 Other (please specify)

- 1 Indoor /Patio Braai built in braai (busy building)
- 2 Gas heater and gas braai / stove
- 3 none of the above
- 4 Indoor Braai Room
- 5 portable gas one plate cooker
- 6 Weber
- 7 Portable gas bottle and cooker attachment
- 8 Indoor built-in braai
- 9 Separate braai room

Question 17. Please indicate your affinity for lighting a fire, either for cooking purposes or for heat during winter.
 Other (please specify)

- 1 NONE OF THE ABOVE
- 2 I was a girl guide - fires are my speciality :O)
- 3 I don't have a fireplace, but would love to have one.
- 4 I light a fire purely for braais
- 5 28 of 32I almost never light a fire. I do burn candles though :-)
- 6 I don't mind lighting a fire when necessary, but I am wary of gas and flame
- 7 Would like to if I had a fireplace
- 8 Do not have a fire
- 9 I would love to have a fire place
- 10 Only make fire for Braaiing

Question 18. Gathering around the fire, inside or outside, is a symbol of:
 Other (please specify)

- 1 The perfect end to a social evening
- 2 warmth and comfort