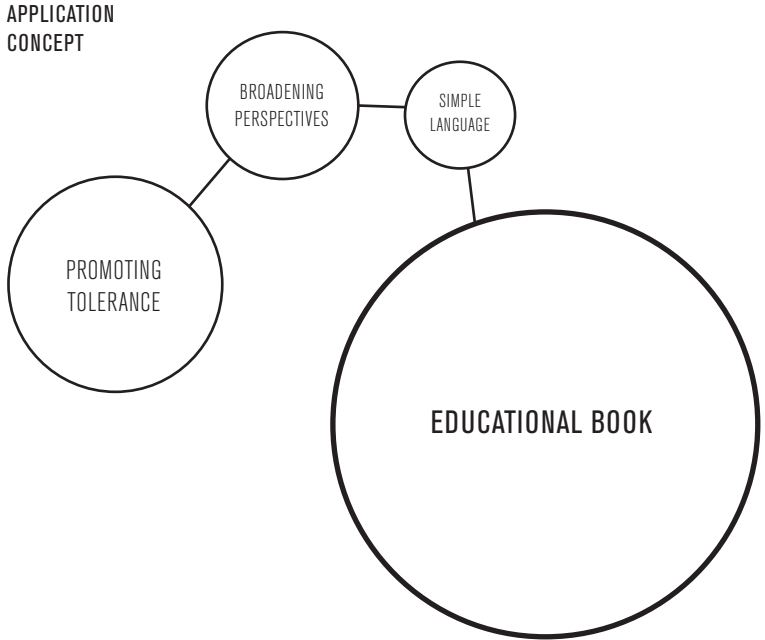
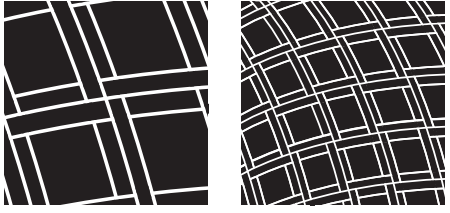


Concepts of Time Across Cultures



HOW TO READ

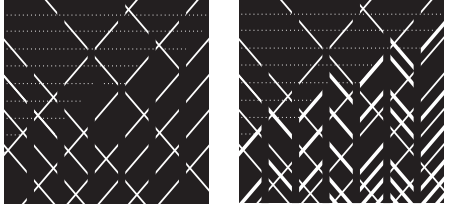
The concepts are categorized by row. The top row corresponds to African concept of time, the middle corresponds to Western, and the third row corresponds to Eastern. The flow of time within each concept is read from left to right.



African: SASA / PRESENT - ZAMANI / PAST

Sasa has a sense of immediacy, nearness, and “now-ness.” *Sasa* is created by recognizing opportunities in nature and community and acting upon them. Africans flow with life, rather than conforming to the clock. Relationships and community are valued over promptness.

Zamani gives a sense of foundation to the *sasa* period. It makes sense of and binds together all created things. *Zamani* is comprised of woven memories of birth, draught, journeys, etc. Africans live first in the *sasa*, and look after to *zamani* for wisdom.

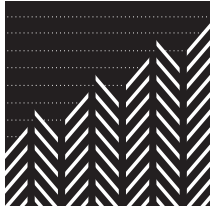


Western: PAST - PRESENT - FUTURE

Past is context. One’s past experiences combine to formulate the base of his/her being. Past is reflected upon to guide future choices.

Future is the heaviest of all Western time periods because it is where Western thought most often resides. A Westerner is willing to put in more sweat now in order to build a brighter, more enjoyable future for himself and his family. Outlined for the Westerner is a stairway to success that he may climb if he so chooses.

Present is guided by *clock time*. Humans conform to time. Past and future merge in the present.



Eastern: PAST - PRESENT - FUTURE - BEYOND TIME

Past, present, and future can be described as “ceased,” “not-lingering,” and “not yet coming.” The past has already perished, the future is yet to come, and the present does not stay.

One can find ultimate being by ceasing to seek it, for this state is ever-present within and can be experienced by emptying oneself of expectations and desires.

Ultimate being cannot be located in any of these three times. To search for being in any of these ordinary states would be futile because it does not exist there.

This state of being is called *beyond time*. It lives in the mind, but also extends to the entire realm of existence. This is the highest form of reality.

