5. Theoretical Investigation

5.1. Introduction

5.1.1. The African City

The African City is characterised by the notion of anonymity. It not only exists overshadowed by globalisation and Western thought processes, but it is also trying to free itself from its Colonial past. Colonialism is expressed as having framed and fixed Africa into a *tabula rasa* that needed to be filled with knowledge for the West to control. Within this historical context, African cities are struggling to find appropriate solutions that could assist in reclaiming their identities of a valid African urban expression (Ntuli, 2002:54).

Many African cities still strongly reflect colonial influences of power. In particular, some South African cities still embody the goals of Apartheid, where the ideologies of modernism were manipulated to display authority, oppression and control. These principles were then universally applied regardless of their appropriateness to local conditions. The result of this is described by architect and critic Rem Koolhaas as a "Generic City" in which its "sensations are weak and distended, emotions are few and far between and its inhabitants are mostly familiar with its superficial routine" (Koolhaas & Mau, 1995:1250). Its social and ethical standards are limited, so too are its choices and opportunities. This urban condition is one in which social richness barely exists, as it is dominated by notions of necessity. This city's identity is characterised predominantly by homogeneous spaces as stated by the architectural historian and urban commentator, Ian Borden in his book *The Unknown City*. These include the exchange of decisions and commodities over social relations and uses. This alienating environment is left without spontaneity and dynamism, in which the prospect of alternative spatialities is repressed, and the urban experience is reduced to what he refers to as organised walking (Borden, 2001:184).

These alienating urban environments are aggravated by the misconception that they could be enhanced by inserting isolated architectural measures that are grounded only in aesthetics; appealing to a society where vision has dominated all the other senses. However, it is not necessary to resort to over-symbolic, monumental forms to accommodate and celebrate a multi-cultural society. Rather create identity through activity-driven solutions as opposed to form-driven solutions. Activity-driven solutions involve exposing urban realities and reactivating the city, revealing the city's embedded potential. In view of these statements, the following questions arise: what role does architecture play in the South African City, and how does it validate the African urban condition? Is it the duty of architecture to give an identity to a South African city inhabited by a multi-cultural society? If so, how does one achieve this?

5.1.2. Spatial Dichotomies and a Divided Population

The city and its urban form is a result of spatialities continuously adapting themselves, due to their sensitivity, to society's changing needs and socio-cultural energies (van den Burg, 2004:41). At present the socio-cultural energy prevalent in the modernising African city, is one which it is trying to meet the high demands of globalisation and feels the need to be on

par with Western societies and their ideologies. This has divided the urban population into two segments; one being the urban elite that have firm linkages with valuable resources, leaving behind the poorer masses who have little to survive on (Namicao, 2000:13). In South Africa, urban forms and systems indicate a struggle to adjust and adapt themselves to meet the needs of a growing contemporary urban culture.

These patterns of adjustment are identified not only by spatial dichotomies; but also by social and economic dichotomies, where informal systems with their lower socio-economic classes, are desperately trying to survive in a system dominated by the formal and elite. Furthermore, these systems result in spatial relationships that are defined by inflexible boundaries, both physical and psychological. They draw up impermeable walls between the public and private realms and between the formal and informal spaces, allowing the elite the privilege to control obtainable space. Residual space, being the most apparent destructive product of this notion of territorial space, is characterised as abandoned or previously restricted spaces; here, the city's symptoms are played out. It is also here that the underprivileged are forced to survive by setting up their own informal infrastructural systems, resulting in a city that is perceived to be dominated by chance, crime and consumption (Koolhaas, Boeri, Kwinter, Tazi & Obrist, 2000:187).

5.1.3. The City We Anticipate

The urban condition within a dynamic city is one in which a rich social and architectural fabric exists that provides an abundance of building types, social relations, times and spaces. As a result its inhabitants are presented with a wide variety of opportunities and choices offering them the freedom to insert their own meanings into the city. If a city consists of a rich and multifaceted urban fabric its inhabitants will have a direct engagement with the city that is more significant. To achieve this, choice and opportunity must be accessible to all urban dwellers, not only to those who have available resources. For that reason, physical and perceived boundaries should not exist or they risk enclosing vital opportunities. It is essential that urban dwellers experience the city by way of engaging in various forms of social exchange and share in its collective public life. In this realm, socio-spatial relationships supersede physical and material ones (Berrizbeita, 1999:197). In order for this to occur, the social, spatial and temporal logic of capitalistic space must be confronted so as to redefine and reprogramme space to accept all socio-cultural energies so that it may become a city that can equate itself with a contemporary society (Borden, 2001:194).

5. Theoretical Investigation

5.2. Inflation of the Image

5.2.1 Seductive Objects

Many of the architectural projects of the recent past that have been celebrated by the architectural profession, have been described by Juhani Pallasmaa, a Finnish architect and architectural theorist, as expressing both "narcissism", an excessive self-indulgence, and "nihilism". By further rejecting moral principles, they consequently detach architecture from the body and turn it into something that is meaningless and solely for visual satisfaction (Pallasmaa, 2005:22). Architecture as an aesthetic object, fabricated to be complete in itself, ignores social relations and has been suggested as having its roots in the ideologies established by Postmodern architecture. The desire to avoid boredom and the search for the "interesting" is expressed in the American architect Robert Venturi's unforgettable quote "less is a bore". Reacting to one of the architects of the Modern Movement, Mies van der Rohe's "less is more" and to modernism's "moral failure", it seems to be more of an aesthetic reaction as opposed to an ethical one (Harries, 1998:6-9).

Pallasmaa states that society is developing an increasing fixation with the power of the image, and from this ocular bias, contemporary architecture has become "easy". It has turned into a series of objects of vulgar utility and of shrewd seduction. Architects have created architectural imagery for use as instant persuasion, with forms that are lifeless and lack tectonic logic (Pallasmaa, 2005:17). The Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao, Spain by Frank Gehry, is used to clarify this notion of architectural image, in that it exists not for itself, but for the media. This is supported by the fact that it has been communicated extensively; nearly everyone has seen a picture of it, or heard of it. Pallasmaa adds that it is an architecture which has a fixation with appearance and has no sustaining power over time; it is purely an exterior experience (Pallasmaa, 2005:30).

These architectural solutions are intended to seduce, and are often identified by new forms that supposedly propose different solutions to those of traditional orthogonal building practice. They are further encouraged by new technologies that make this type of architecture easy. Subsequently, the French philosopher and social theorist, Henry Lefebvre (1901-91) concludes that architecture suffers in the belief that reality can be achieved merely through graphical
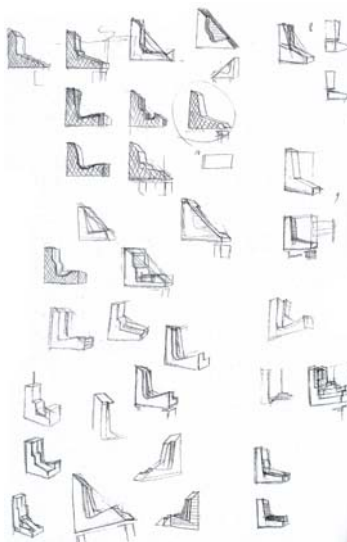
Fig. 54 A form-driven concept design for the Credit Lyonnais Tower, in Euralile by Christian de Portzamparc (Croise, 1996)

representation. Hence, architecture is evaluated and opinions are formed by what is seen on paper, based on the fallacy that if it makes a good picture, it will make good architecture (Lefebvre, 1997:144).

5.2.2. Aesthetic Objects Attempting to Save the City

This formalist and aesthetic approach to architecture has made its appearance in the urban context, with the attempt to restore the city; yet it is an inadequate attitude that degrades the urban space (Lefebvre,1997:138). These interventions are introduced only to create spectacle and attempt replacing reality by disregarding their contextual constraints, demands and opportunities (Forty, 2000:274). Besides that, they are also ignorant of their cultural context, their intended programs, historical roots, their ethical and social obligations, and the end user experience resulting in an urban setting that reduces opportunities to actively participate in the urban context. It has developed into the city of the eye.

5.2.3. Illegitimate African Architecture

Contemporary South African Architecture by Murray describes these buildings as "images of Africaness that have been carefully and wittily crafted into building forms" (Murray, 2006:7). Can one really suggest that these buildings, and others that employ similar tactics, are a valid architectural expression for South Africa? Architecture that employs over-symbolic and monumental solutions assumes that the entire society of South Africa shares in the same world-views, by wrongly imposing one's own perceptions, understandings and allusions. Do these projects genuinely question and challenge problems that are specific to South Africa? It is understood that it is necessary to initiate the process of finding alternative and valid African expressions in built environments, but it is debatable whether or not these projects have initiated the process in the correct manner.
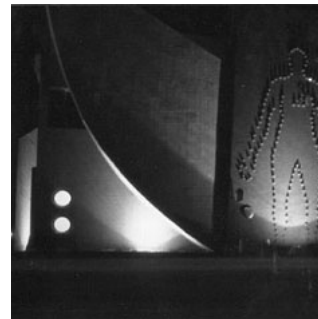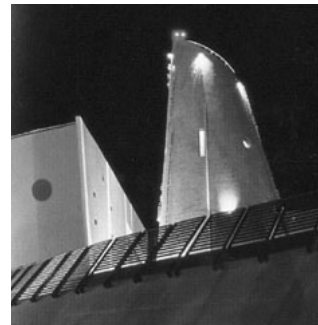

Fig. 55 & 56 Legislature for the Northern Cape provincial Governement, Kimberley (Meyer, 2006)

Fig. 57 & 58. Legislature and Office Complex for the Mpumalanga Provincial Government (Meyer, 2006)

5. Theoretical Investigation

5.3. The Cultural Condition

5.3.1. South Africa's Multi-Cultural Society

The concept of culture from an anthropological viewpoint, categorises the beliefs, practices, and systems of meaning of specific groups of people, and defines the core values, within a community, that make life possible and meaningful (van Staden,1998:15-17).

In South Africa, the cultural context is characterised by conflicting aspects. Firstly, that foreign population groups interact with diverse indigenous population groups. Secondly, that it has been run by the white society of South Africa, whose values were falsely presented as universal values (Biko, 1998:29). The South African multi-cultural context is best described as one that is based on different lines of race, class, values and ethnicity. It is also a society in which different cultures have adapted their world-views to be based upon a combination of their own and foreign world-views (Ntuli 2002:64).

A dependency exists between the social and political identity of a society, where a balanced and sound community is one in which its political identity is a direct result of its social identity (Coetzee, 1998:138). Yet this poses a problem for the culturally diverse South African society, which has consistently been dominated by a single political identity. How can a firm relationship then exist between the social and political identity of different communities who do not share the same world-views?

Culture influences perceptions, which in turn are formed by our expectations, beliefs, and emotions, but also by our histories and social circumstances. It follows that an objective and universal perception of reality cannot be expected from different cultures, as they will perceive reality differently (Teffo & Roux, 1998:134). This strongly suggests that those differences whether, inherent or social constructs, need to be acknowledged by means of secured choice where all cultures and communities are granted equal status (Coetzee, 1998:352).

5.3.2. Understanding the African Condition by Means of Contrasting African Philosophy with Western Philosophy

Western thought points to a world-view that is rooted in an individualistic and objective framework, which has led it to be understood by notions of division and control. The result is a value system that is governed by material gain, individual growth and power. In contrast, African knowledge systems are characterised by a world-view that encourages solidarity, communitarianism, traditionalism and participation (Teffo & Roux in Coetzee & Roux, 1998:148). This contrast is clarified by the following comparison drawn up by (Broodryk, 2000:20).

African Philosophy	Western Philosophy
a. Together	a. Alone
b. Mind	b. Material
c. Whole	c. Pieces
d. Past	d. Future
e. Harmony	e. Control
f. Shame	f. Guilt
g. Share	g. Accumulate

Embedded in African thought, is *Ubuntu,* whose essence is articulated in the Xhosa proverb: *Ubuntu ungamuntu ngabanye abantu,* suggesting that "people are people through other people" (Broodryk, 2000: 5:13). This humanist philosophy shows that a fundamental aspect of African society is the importance it attaches to human beings; it is a human-centred society. Furthermore, to recognise one's own humanity, one needs to recognise the humanity of others, by establishing humane relations with them (Ramose, 2002:231).

The importance placed on humanity branches out into additional non-individualistic aspects essential to African society, which suggest communal spirit, inclusiveness and participation. The values attached to humanism are associated with the view of a person as a social being; not a mere number, but someone who belongs to a democratic society (Broodryk, 2000:13). The idea of a democratic society is clarified as being one in which all actions are community orientated instead of individualistic, which is the hallmark of a capitalist society. Social values are of paramount importance to the African milieu (Biko in Coetzee & Roux, 1998:27).

It is understood that *Ubuntu* may only play an important role in portions of the South African population, which consists of groups that are not indigenous and have alternative value systems. But, given that social and human values are universally appropriate, and since they personified in *Ubuntu,* this seems an appropriate point of departure.

5.3.3. Imposing Western Philosophies

Despite the distinction between Western and African value systems, Africa continues to timidly prescribe to Western principles for one of two possible reasons. The first, Africa believes it is the only way to attain success and growth, based on European and North American criteria that are seen as absolute. The second being that this imposition of Western criteria has occurred over such a long period of time and has infiltrated into so many facets of African life, that African society blindly follow, as it has lost its sense of its fundamental purpose and destiny (Ntuli, 2002:57). This has lead to the notion that Europe and North America are advanced, and other parts of the world, particularly Africa, are some way behind. The view that Africa is just different and productive in itself, with a unique existence, struggling to acquire its own identity, is not taken.

5.3.4. Different Values therefore Different Solutions

Africa is neither Europe nor America, for that reason Africa's problems are not European or American, so then Africa's solutions to her problems have to develop in Africa (Ntuli, 2002: 53). If this is true, then Africa has to find its own indigenous framework to define, identify and address its challenges (Teffo & Roux, 1998:148). In order for Africa to become a self-sufficient, independent entity, it is necessary that it develop the confidence to embrace and employ its own values and a valid thought process without ignoring what already exists.

5.3.5. A Responsive Urban Expression

The revival of the African City is a symbiosis of existing conditions, philosophies, and thought processes with new inventive strategies, transforming it into a true African expression; one which supports the survival of its inhabitants. It is to free itself from unnecessary principles and to discard its desire for global competitiveness. The challenge lies in accepting that African resources are different and therefore require different solutions.

An appropriate South African urban expression begins with honouring the significance of its society's diverse perceptions and viewpoints. The need for a non-prescriptive space exists, where differences may be negotiated and where integration between multiple levels of identity, understandings and practices exist. This elastic entity should accommodate for the unpredictable.

Another point of departure includes resisting Western principles of consumerism and global capitalism. An independent and resilient African City cannot rely on resources that are readily available in Western cities. Rather, it identifies itself with the refusal of Western systems and spatialities, by not following universal regulations, but rather adopting its own regulatory system, consisting of 'guidelines' that are open to change and allow for daily variations. In view of this, care should be taken so as to prevent reducing it to idealistic notions of chaos characterised by total indeterminacy and flexibility (Shepard & Comaroff, 2002:138-9).

Western ideas are further opposed by testing the concept of boundaries. Blurring boundaries by externalising introverted spaces, erases the distinction between prohibited and permitted, and formal and informal. Spatial definition is expressed in other ways, where boundaries are replaced by flexible and elastic building edges. Koolhaas, explains that territoriality occurs temporarily, as the streets, and public and private spaces, are variable and adjustable, allowing public space to be continuously occupied in different ways. It abandons the premise of discontinuity or that space is meant to be divided up. In this scenario, an African City is a spatiality that is able to express genuine space that is barrier-less and open where the distinction between spaces is maintained through connections rather than disjunctions (Massey, 2005:66, 84). This self-organising system recognises the citizen's right to inhabit and work in a flexible and mutable city (Koolhaas, et al. 2001: 661, 674).

This new city should also take into account its existing urban patterns, and acknowledge that a new urbanity and a new urban citizen have emerged. As N'Da N'Guessan, an architect and town planner from Togo says, together they are to be understood as a condition and as a social landscape, which is dominated by the actions of its citizens. It is a city that survives on the human dimension (N'Da N'Guessan & Bachir, 2000:112).

5. Theoretical Investigation

5.4. An African City: Lagos

5.4.1. Introduction

The West African City of Lagos, and the capital city of Nigeria, is en-route to modernisation, and it is a clear example of a city that represents the flexibility of space discussed previously. It demonstrates a legitimate African urban expression, achieved by inverting every essential characteristic of the so-called modern city, while still allowing for the survival of its millions of inhabitants. It is a city that is characterised by energy, intensity, spontaneity, incongruities, juxtapositions and shortcomings (Koolhaas, et al. 2001:652).

5.4.2. Lagos and its Infrastructure

The contributing factor towards the indeterminacy of Lagos's urban condition is its flexible infrastructural system, which has been categorised into three main components. The first is known as parasitic infrastructure, due to its ability to modify and manipulate existing formal infrastructure in order to provide more services than the government is able to. The second is described as mobile infrastructure and relies on cars, trucks, buses, bicycles and mammy-wagons to take care of waste, power, transport, shopping, telephonic communication and factory production,. As a result, infrastructure in Lagos has become *unmappable*. The third and last category is nodal infrastructure, where services and goods are centralised and compacted into points, which then service a wide area (Shephard & Comaroff, 2002: 144, 145).

Fig. 59 Lagos's roads are not just lines between points but rather elastic and variable landscapes (www.radiobridge.net. 14 April 2007).

Fig. 60 Lagos's streets and highways are almost unidentifiable, as it contains bus stops, mosques, markets and factories (www.mit.edu. 14 April 2007).

5. Theoretical Investigation

5.5. Rethinking Architecture for the African Urban Condition

In order to legitimise the African urban condition, it is necessary to rethink architecture and the role it plays in the city. It has been suggested that one begins to view cities as extensive systems made up of interdependent and overlapping conditions; a product of human activity and interaction and not a product of architecture and planning. The urban context presents itself with opportunities for a multi-disciplinary approach to its design and management, allowing the city to become a multi-scalar landscape (Borden, et al. 2001:4).

Architecture needs to free itself from the static, aesthetic approach to design by shifting away from buildings as iconic objects, as a city's identity cannot be reduced to individual buildings, but rather is formed by the collective and the spaces around them. As proposed by James Corner, a professor of landscape architecture at the University of Pennsylvania, one needs to downplay the strictly formal and representational, opting for design that returns to the instrumental function, which is intimately bound into larger contexts and processes. Here, form and geometry are to be regarded only if they take into account and make sense of the issues that are meant to be addressed (Corner, 1999:4-16).

An architecture appropriate for the African condition has the ability to evolve and is capable of reproducing itself through use and everyday life; its obsession shifts from appearance and form to implementing social strategies that create conditions and surfaces for human activity (Lootsma, 1999:264). These strategies will ensure that the city is not reduced to a homogeneous state, alienating its users, paralysing the imagination and depriving sensory engagement. The contemporary African City should supplement the human body by encouraging heterogeneity, nearness and participation (Pallasmaa, 2005:40).

5. Theoretical Investigation

5.6. Rethinking Space

5.6.1. Introduction

Lefebvre, in his comprehensive critique of space draws attention to the fact that we often use the word space, without being fully aware of what it means. Up until now, space has always been understood as a phenomenon that is fixed; both easy to define and represent. Space has rarely been equated with having dynamic qualities. This is owing to the fact that we have inherited an understanding of space that is so *fixed*, no one has ever felt the need to challenge it (Massey, 2005: 13, 17). However, it is indeed a lively phenomenon, and many and persistent strategies for taming it, have resulted.

There are three alternative propositions to the formulation of space. To start with, one needs to recognise space as the product of interrelations; from global to intimate interactions. Secondly, space is understood as a sphere that allows for the existence of multiplicity, expressed by heterogeneity. Lastly, space is acknowledged as always in a state of incompleteness and always in the process of being made. Never finished nor closed; this is its goal. These concepts of space are clearly demonstrated by Massey (2005:107) as the:

> …sphere of a dynamic simultaneity, constantly disconnected by new arrivals,
> constantly waiting to be determined (and therefore always undetermined) by the
> construction of new relations.

In order for a more challenging and social landscape to emerge space needs to be liberated from the embedded and unquestioned notions of closure, stasis, science and representation. Instead they should transform space into an expression of openness, heterogeneity and liveliness (Massey, 2005: 9, 11, 13). When one favours a dynamic simultaneity and outward view over a static inwardness, the possibilities of a positive and truly social space begin to emerge. Once again this is demonstrated by Massey (2005:105) as:

> …seeing the world beyond one's own turf, whether that be one's self, one's city,
> or the particular parts of the planet in which one lives and works"

.

5.6.2. Space as a Temporal Condition

It is broadly assumed that space is of lesser importance than time, with less gravitas and magnificence. This is because the current thought pattern considers the material as being more significant and convincing than the abstract. Our existence is dominated by the notion that being is far more important than becoming. For that reason an additional condition for genuine spatiality emerges; to erase the assumption that space is simply the opposite of time. This does not suggest that space and time should be identical but rather interdependent equals. This is only possible when a multiplicity of things constantly associate and interact. If one does not allow for space to exist as a temporal condition, space is then reduced to a static state. Space as a temporal condition suggests that territory is not constituted through isolation and separation but rather through time. Space differs, because different things happen there during different times, while geographically it is still the same place (Massey, 2005: 29, 30, 188).

5.6.3. Social Space is Not Physical Space

In the Western tradition of architecture, its misapprehension of the body has manifested in transparent and utilitarian architecture with rational motives. Architectural space has merely become physical space, rather than lived space. Buildings can no longer be seen as enclosures and physical objects, but rather as an all encompassing space; a social space (Lefebvre, 1991:33, 205). Adrian Forty, the architectural theoretician, expands on the notion of social space, by saying that it is perceived through the social relations of everyday life, conceived by thought, and lived as a bodily experience integrating the social actions of individuals (Forty, 2000:272). Social space is therefore not to be understood as a mere frame or a neutral container, behaving purely as a receptor; an item complete on its own.

Social space diverges from the physical to the non-physical, and which can be identified by differential space versus abstract space. Abstract space reflects notions of commodity and capitalism that erase social constructs and distinctions. In addition it appeals to the visual and the optical and due to its quantifiable formal nature; it isolates itself from the past and what it

could become in the future. It does so by making a *tabula rasa* of whatever stands in its way, making it incapable of redefining itself, and compromising its longevity (Lefebvre, 1991:57).

An alternative to abstract space is the concept of differential space, characterised by diversity and heterogeneity and accentuating the differences while restoring the unity that has been destroyed by abstract space (Lefebvre, 1991:52). It is where socio-spatial differences are valued and emphasised in order to restore the human body and reaffirm the social condition. However, architects are still the servants of abstract space (Forty, 2000:275).

5. Theoretical Investigation
5.7. A City Beyond Architecture

5.7.1. Rethinking Urban Space

Urban and architectural practices are failing to adequately meet new sets of social and cultural needs, because they are based on a historical set of needs. Current urban interventions need to be critically reviewed since a new type of urbanisation has emerged necessitating new responses (Dewar, 2004:40). Architectural solutions that simply fill in gaps, increase densities, mix land uses and stitch the fragmented city, would only partly correct the problems. Often the problems are non-physical and cannot be solved by physical solutions (Cuff, 1989:343). Architects and planners need to consider that architecture and cities are far more than what they are currently perceived to be. Architecture is no longer the controlling factor within cities as it only contributes on a certain level towards the complexity of the city. It is not the job of the architect to create or impose values upon a city, but instead, to allow the city to evolve its own values. If the task of the architect were only to put identity, community and continuity back into city life, then a city would look like something it is not and it would undermine the conditions of contemporary urban culture (Forty, 1995:314).

Consequently, a new approach to resolving spatial problems needs to be identified. This could be achieved by thinking about the city beyond architecture, and to stop applying interventions that occur within boundaries (Attali, 2000:270). Urban architecture should not be an autonomous object or a volumetric envelope that displays an individual's aspirations or is merely a symbolic monument. It should rather encompass circumstances in which the life of the city is framed, expressed, structured, facilitated and given meaning (Koolhaas, et al. 2000:271). This alternative approach to architecture combines the perceived and the lived, within the micro and macro scales of the city's functions. From this, architecture will emerge as a spatial condition housing social activity and engagement (Borden, et al. 2001:20).

5.7.2. The Social Role of Architecture

Spatial issues do not only concern the architectural profession; all disciplines have an effect on space. In view of this, architecture has no more right to space than any other discipline (Lefebvre, 1991:107). Architects and urban planners do not have the ultimate authority in issues relating to space and hence have no right to manipulate it. A strong link between built environment professions and larger social orders exists. In order for architecture to carry out a social and ethical function, it needs to broaden its intentions by resisting the tendency

to be a self-determining practice. Architecture's ethical and social function reflects the values of a society and its existence, in the hope of achieving an optimum situation (Harries, 1998:291). It is important however to remember that architecture is just one social practice among many, and should not be loaded by too many expectations. Most often the root of the problem lies in social issues and architecture's contribution to solving them is limited (Melvin, 2005:8). The Italian self-taught architect and writer Giancarlo de Carlo (1919-2005), argues that the idea that architecture is able to change society is out of date, however, it can provoke situations or create an atmosphere where it is used to produce an expression of society (de Carlo, 2005:23).

Architecture's ethical function is unavoidably a public one too, where its role is to create a place for the community; unattainable by simply producing elaborate works of architecture (Harries, 1998:287). One needs to consider, what function this architectural object has in the establishment of an urban community? Does the building type assume any role or serve a common ethos? Does it insert any meaning or does it reflect and renew the social order (Cuff, 1989:340)? It is important to note that meaning cannot be predetermined by one person, such as an architect, but it is rather a result of the people that one designs for.

Architecture, within the urban realm, needs to be reduced from a traditional notion of a building to a condition as clarified by de Carlo:

> A building is not a building. A building, in the sense of walls, floors, empty spaces, rooms, materials, etc., it is only the outline of a potential: it is only made relevant by the group of people it is intended for." (de Carlo, 2005:22)

It is a social construction that allows for a variety of uses. It is an interface and an open system that connects with the city; the materialisation of a condition, program, concepts and strategies, and not the materialisation of form. The only role form plays is to reduce the abstract to its most modest and necessary architectonic forms, revealing the fundamental characteristics of the site irrespective of whether it is a natural landscape or the built-up fabric of a city (Frampton, 2002:305).