Dissertation for
Master of Architecture

AN EXPRESSION OF AN AFRICAN RENAISSANCE THROUGH ARCHITECTURE

A Design of an African Renaissance Centre in Durban

Author

Sibusiso. S. Sithole

The School of Architecture, Planning and Housing
University of KwaZulu-Natal
Durban, South Africa
July, 2011

ABSTRACT

The concept of the African Renaissance has gained ground over the past couple of years since it was first introduce to the mass public in the mid 1990's. It aims to address a variety of challenges that affect the African continent and the people that reside within it. These challenges are mostly as a result of the centuries of oppression that the continent and its people had to endure as well as the latent effects that persist as a result of those oppressive regimes even though they no longer exist. The African Renaissance is meant to be a tool that will transform all aspects of society throughout the entire continent.

The African Renaissance has been associated with a number of different social, economic and cultural issues, but has yet to be adequately investigated in relation to the built environment and architecture in particular. The investigation is therefore a quest to determine whether there is a link or relationship between the concept and architecture, and if so, how can architecture be utilized to further the concept of the renaissance.

DECLARATION

I declare that this dissertation is my own, unaided work and carried out exclusively by me under the supervision of Dr M Zami, Dumisani Mhlaba. It is being submitted for the degree of Master in Architecture in the University of KwaZulu-Natal. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination in any other University.

………………………………………….

Sibusiso Sithole

……….day of………………………….year……………….

DEDICATION

Dedicated to my Gran, Gogo uMadukane Gasta Sithole. Who had so little yet gave me so much.

Thank You

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER 2 – THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

CHAPTER 3- LITERATURE REVIEW

CHAPTER 4 - RENEWAL AND TRANSFORMATION

CHAPTER 5 - CASE STUDIES

CHAPTER 1 - INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Africa has always been considered as the 'dark continent' and western history has depicted it as having contributed very little to the development of modern society in relation to the global environment. The western nations came into Africa and divided it with boarders and then helped themselves to the continent's natural resources and to its people (Zegeye, 23: 2003). In so doing, they also imposed their own western ideologies and customs while disregarding those which have always been in existence and functioning in Africa (Ibid). This has lead to a deep negative psychological embedment in the way in which Africans view themselves, always looking towards the West and looking down on solutions that Africa can provide. There have been a number of breakthrough discoveries and inventions in Africa which have however not been given appropriate recognition which is due.

For far too long western nations have imposed their own; customs, forms of construction and architecture on the African continent. These, in most cases, do not suit the climate and context of the various regions. The type of architecture practiced in many African countries, especially in South Africa, has simply been superimposed by western countries of the Colonial regime. Now is the time for Africa to take an introspective approach and search for new ideologies, concepts and theories to enhance the African way of life by Africans doing it for themselves. It is time for Africa to reinvent itself by returning to its origins, not in the physical sense but by taking the best elements of historic precedent so as to still be able to compete in today's global community.

In recent years there has been growing research, theory and literature behind the concept of the African Renaissance. However, there also needs to be an awakening in how Africans think and in the manner in which they deal with issues pertaining to Africa. The concept of the African Renaissance has been applied and investigated in various fields such as economics, politics, governance, arts, and education but it has yet to be looked at in relation to architecture and the built environment. It is vital to investigate the role that this concept can play in architecture, especially in South African context. Architecture ought to express the aspirations and values of its people, place and time, and be a social and cultural artefact. In the words of Kornegay and Landsberg, this whole concept of the African Renaissance can,

*"only really be possible if it is grounded in domestic renewal that reflects a broad public –
private partnership"* (Kornegay 1998: 30). It is therefore important to start looking at the
issues around the concept at a local level and, with South Africa being such an important role
player in the regional and continental spectrum, it can play a more central role in the African
Renaissance due to its powerful economic infrastructural nature.

1.3 Definition of the Problem

Over time a deep and negative perception of Africa's image, people, economic and financial
status in relation to the global community has developed. This came about from centuries of
oppression and ill treatment of Africa's people and resources after western European nations
divided Africa with their own boundaries and borders and helped themselves to the
continent's natural resources and to its people. Thus in doing so, imposing their western
ideologies and customs, and with disregard to those which have always been in existence and
functioning in Africa. This has lead to a deep negative psychological embedment in the way
in which Africans view themselves, always looking towards the west and looking down on
the solutions that Africa can provide. This is also in light of the recent xenophobic attacks
that have occurred in South Africa, where Africans feel divided and are not able to accept
immigrants who are our brothers and sisters from outside South African borders, instead of
welcoming and accepting them. There have been a number of breakthrough discoveries and
inventions in Africa which are not given the appropriate recognition which is due. This is a
plight for Africa to return to Africa, a rebirth of Africa in a sense. The time has come for
Africa to showcase its talent, its alternative way of doing things through music, drama,
literature, art, medicine and other cultural, political and economic avenues. Therefore the
concept of the African Renaissance is going to be carried through in this investigation as a
means of determining the correlation between the African Renaissance concept and the
architectural fields in the context of South Africa, and how the concept can be applied in the
above mentioned context.

1.4 Aims

The concept of the African Renaissance, like many other concepts and theories, can be applied to a wide range of fields and environments, but the aim of this study is to investigate the concept in relation to architecture as well as other secondary and varied sub topics that might have an effect or influence on the main topic of the African Renaissance in one form or another. It also aims, through the process of theoretical discourse, to ultimately develop an architectural design brief for an African Renaissance Centre that complements the region, context, environment and people of the country, as well as the place where it is to be located. It also aims to address some of the issues raised in the research and create a type of architecture that is inspired by the local region and shows development from the historical precedent of the region. Thus the concept of the African Renaissance will be used as an investigative tool in this search. The study in addition also aims to investigate the origins, developments and relevance of the African Renaissance concept, and how it can be applied to the current times and context. Even though the research pertains to the African context and its diaspora, the African Renaissance Centre is not aimed at being the headquarters for Africa where it is to be placed nor for the architectural design brief to accommodate and resolve all the issues raised by the investigation. The study is also not aimed at resolving all the issues and challenges that face the African continent, but it is aimed at being a start or a catalyst for future investigations pertaining to the relationship of architecture and the concept of the African Renaissance. This is due to the fact that Africa is too big a continent and that it has too many variables when it comes to culture, identity, language and history. Therefore the design concept is aimed at formulating a prototype or a set of guidelines for all other African cities to follow. It would take cognizance of the fact that each individual place would have different outcomes due to the different nature of the varying environments, cultures, contexts and people. The African Renaissance Centre would respond to the needs of the local community where the building is to be located, in this case the context of Durban, South Africa.

1.5 Objectives

This study will firstly take a brief and broad look at the image and perceptions of Africa being perpetuated in all forms of media, which has now been accepted as common knowledge and belief both within and outside the borders of the African continent, and how it has developed or evolved through the ages. It will also take a brief and general overview of the developments within the history of the continent which might have led to the current perceptions and status of Africa. The study then will look at the broader aspect of the investigation which is the continent, then zone in to a more national, then regional and ultimately a specific and particular place which is in the city of Durban where the end objective of the research would be to gather sufficient information for the design of an African Renaissance Centre. The concept of an African Renaissance and the theories associated with it are going to be extensively investigated. Since the African Renaissance is a concept, its theoretical and practical application can be applied to varying fields and disciplines. This paper will investigate the role of the concept pertaining to architecture in particular, as well as some underlying and supporting issues that might influence its architectural or physical aspect. The ultimate objective is for the theoretical investigation and discourse to influence the design of an African Renaissance Centre. As yet the study has not revealed a building has been classified as an African Renaissance Centre. The research does not intend to solve all the problems pertaining to Africa and that of the African Renaissance. It is however a start to the discussion and discourse relating to the concept and its link to the architectural field.

1.6 Delimitation of Research Problem

This research will focus mainly on social, economic and environmental issues pertaining to architecture and the built environment in relation to the African context through the application of the African Renaissance concept. Therefore the principals of the Africa Renaissance will be interpreted and applied in the context of the built environment and architecture. The research problem is to investigate how architecture can express the concept of an African Renaissance, and therefore the architectural part of the research will be targeted at the cultural aspect of society since culture is a response to or is in line with the social aspects of the community and needs of its people. First and foremost architecture is there to

serve the people. Culture is therefore a more tangible approach that architecture can grapple with. That is why some of the cultural analogies that the African Renaissance, as well as architecture, will investigate are in the fields of performing arts, music, theatre, dance, art and traditional medicine. These cultural aspects will aid to preserve, revive and portray the history from an Africans point of view. The study aims to investigate what would constitute an adequate platform for Africans to showcase their art and be given credit for their academic works. Where Africans can share and compare in terms of alternative medicines, cultures, rituals and way of living. The study would be a guide to show the level of effectiveness or architecture where Africans can teach and share with other Africans their way of life so their culture and heritage is not lost. It will also promote a new way of thinking, where Africans are encouraged to find African solutions for African problems and thus doing it for themselves and receiving acknowledgement and recognition for it.

These latter points shall hopefully aid Africa to play a more significant role in respect to the global community with new discoveries and new sources of inspiration. Architecture's roll is to adequately house such functions in a way which will promote them and enhance their intended use.

1.7 Definition of Terms

Izinyanga: Traditional healers namely of the Nguni tribes of southern Africa

Merbau timber: a type of timber found in Mauritius

Muthi: A Nguni word used to describe medicine

Nguni: A group of African peoples including Zulu, Xhosa, Swazi, and Ndebele, of similar language and culture

Ukugqula: A process where one grinds the bark or chips of a tree into fine pieces or fine dust by the process of crushing it into a bowl with a log

1.8 Key Questions

- What is the African Renaissance and from where did it originate?
- How can architecture express the philosophy and ethos of the African Renaissance?

1.9 Hypothesis

It is assumed that most of the developing countries in Africa still lag behind in terms of infrastructure, economics and general level of living when compared to first world countries and other developing countries in other continents. That is why there is a need of such concepts as that of the African Renaissance to attempt to change these negative perceptions and state that the continent is subjected to.

There is minimal social tolerance and integration between the different countries, cultures and peoples of the African continent due mostly to the fact that there are still very few institutions that facilitate for nation building and education for the people of the continent.

There have been years of suppression of the people of Africa throughout most of modern history, be it through slavery, colonization, apartheid or other resultant economic factors. There needs to begin a therapeutic healing process and a social and economic drive to unite the whole continent and formulate strategies, theories and concepts that aid and direct the continent's development and progression in all respects, so as to achieve a better state of being. Architecture is a powerful medium of societal expression and the African Renaissance would become even more tangible to all people through an appropriate architectural response. Even the functions that would occur within the architectural manifestation of the concept, would aid in developing and healing, educating and celebrating the people and culture of the specific regions of the continent. Architecture could be used as a physical attribute to the African Renaissance concept through the physical interpretation of the spirit, life, craft and culture of the environment in which it is located.

1.10 Research Methods

The research methods which will be implemented in this study will be of a qualitative and quantitive nature by the means of primary and secondary data gathering. The secondary research method will comprise a review and analysis of theories, concepts and movements that have been formulated or evolved in the identification of an African identity and those that attributed to the inception of the concept of the African Renaissance. The secondary data will comprise of a literature search in the form of: books, journals, conference notes, journals, thesis and electronic sources such as the internet and ejournals. The primary source of data collection will provide a base of what residents of Durban think is an appropriate architectural typology for the region and what type of accommodation is required for facilities such as traditional or alternative medicine consultation suites, performance studios and platforms, and the type of workshop space needed for subsistence manufacturing and display. Primary data collection will compromise: of; site visits and interviews; structured, semi- structured and open ended. Primary data will aid the research in what the people perceive to be the appropriate functions that would inform the design brief for an African Renaissance Centre,

1.11 Outline of the Document

The manner in which this investigation has been compiled is by first taking a look at a brief and general history of the African continent, since the study is sited in the African continent and since the renaissance is pertaining to the continent and its issues. The study than goes on to investigate the concept of the African Renaissance and its development over the years since its inception, as well as previous theories and concepts that lead and influenced the formation of the African Renaissance. The study also takes a comparative analysis at previous renaissance form and uses it as an investigative precedent for the current renaissance model. The study starts to further contextualise the concept of the African Renaissance to the context of South Africa and seeks to find out how the concept can be applied within the country and the effects which might arise henceforth. Globalisation is a major part of the discussion of the study and it had a direct impact on some of the issues by the concept of the African Renaissance in our present times since one cannot dispute that we are living in a globalised community. The investigation further progresses to take a look at various factors

that are related to some of the issues that are associated with the impact of globalisation and the various factors that may enhance or hinder the African Renaissance in Africa and more so in the context of South Africa.

The focus of the research is to identify whether there is a link between the concept of the African Renaissance and that of the built form, architecture in particular; therefore the study first takes a look at various architectural theories and concepts that form the framework of the research, which are aligned with some of the issues raised by the study of the African Renaissance. This aids to ground the concept of the African Renaissance into a physical form and context, since most of the previous discourse around the African Renaissance concept have been abstract and are in relation to various aspects of life such as economy, culture, lifestyle and perception. Architecture has a potential to affect and influence all of the latter mentioned issues in one form or another and that is why there is need for this research, to investigate whether there is any relevance of the African Renaissance concept within the field of architecture and if so how can it be articulated. This is also achieved through various precedent and case studies which would inform the final part of the research, which is the design of an African Renaissance Centre in Durban.

CHAPTER 2 – THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Introduction

As Okumu points out there can be no one solution to all of Africa's problems and each African country has its own particular history, politics, economic structure and place within the international community. The African Renaissance, when applied to the field of architecture, can play a critical role in the process of socio development and maintaining and developing cultural trends. Okumu (263: 2002) also goes on to say how the success of the African renaissance will be shown by the quality of life of the African people. This is in terms of greater opportunities for the community with improved access to health care, education and a greater flowering of the literary, visual and performing arts.

"Everyone has a role to play and each grouping must work out for itself how to contribute to an African renaissance, as expressed in the values of hard work and integrity, in the developments of the arts (painting, sculpture, design and music, poetry, and literature) and the development of science and technology, agriculture and technology" (Okumu, 259: 2002). These are some of the challenges that will be addressed when looking at the more physical aspect of the Renaissance and when it is grounded in context. Since most of the subjects mentioned above are a broad and generic sweep of the activities that might be prevalent in a particular city or community, this research will look in detail at other functions or activities that the communities engage in and try to find ways in which they could be uplifted, enhanced or rejuvenated through architecture so that they can function better in the respective contexts in which they are located. This though cannot be possible for all of the activities that exist in the community, but the study will target those that can be associated with the field of architecture. These functions may be an enquiry at facilities for alternative or traditional medicines, biodiversity, as well as agriculture and informal or subsistence forms of trade and manufacturing, depending on the pertinence of that particular context that is to be investigated. All of the subjects mentioned above may form part of a collective whole in the development of an African Renaissance Complex.

In order to translate the African Renaissance to architecture, one must investigate other relating theories in the field that are similarly aligned with the concept of the African Renaissance. These theories promote and transcend some of the core values and beliefs of the Renaissance and are to be used as a manifestation of the built form. The concept of the African Renaissance has been around for a number of years and there is a growing interest and discourse around the topic but there has been very little investigation carried out between architecture and that of the African Renaissance. The architectural theories that are to be investigated in this study are more inclined and appropriate to the physical state of the built environment, although they can however be applied to a number of other disciplines and in this case are going to be investigated in relation to the concept and attributes of the African Renaissance.

The architectural concepts and theories investigated in this study have a potentially strong link and in some cases are in parallel with that of the elements of the African Renaissance. These key architectural theories such as that of critical regionalism, which according to Kenneth Frampton (1983: 147) are about studying the surrounding context and environment, and the design of the spaces and the buildings should take the key from that. It is however noted that this concept is not only about the physical state, since he further elaborates that the phenomenon of universalisation, which can be noted in the current times as globalization, that constitutes to a gradual destruction of traditional cultures and this gradual destruction might be an irreparable wrong (Frampton 1983: 148).

Another such theory that is relatively similar to that of critical regionalism is contextualism. Contextualism also focuses more on the physical context of the site and that of the neighbourhood, of the building where it is to be located. Contextualism takes precedent from local existing building forms, building patterns and lifestyle into consideration when being used as an architectural concept. This closely resembles that of the principals of the African Renaissance which has been further elaborated in the following chapters of the study. The place theory is another architectural theory that stems from that of contextualism and it stipulates that in architecture and urbanism, one should not just respond to the context but also aim to enhance the identity of the environment as well as the cultural context (Trancik 1986: 114). The preservation of tradition and other social benefitting factors are also important in the upliftment of new appropriately fitting places.

This therefore creates or maintains the spirit of the place, which is the genius loci. The genius loci deal with the more spiritual aspect and character of the place. This is the more intangible

aspect which is evoked by architecture and the environment that exist. Christian Norburg Schulz who was well read into the concept of the genius loci ascertains that place is more than just an abstract entity, it comprises of physical concrete elements such as materials, colour and shapes which determines the particular character of the environment. It is this character that determines the spirit of the place (Schulz 1980: 11).

Another very relevant theory to the study is that of interpretation of signs and their meaning. This is the theory of semiotics. This is the deepening understanding of production of meaning of the architectural form (Nesbit 1996: 110). These signs can be inspired by anything, from nature, other physical entities or the abstract and interpreted into architecture in various forms. These theories aim to identify and begin to define a link between the built physical environment and that of the conceptual or cloud theory of the African Renaissance.

2.2 The Region as a design Instigator

The region as a design instigator is a simple translation of the theory of critical regionalism. Critical regionalism as a movement came about from a response to new problems posed by the direction and development in which the contemporary global society is advancing (Nesbitt, 1996: 485), as well as a form of response to the shortfalls that came about from some of the former epochs such as modernism which were no longer relevant due to the progression of time and a shift in society's needs, challenges and attributes. Kenneth Frampton who is a well-read intellectual in the field of the theory of critical regionalism, warned about *"the phenomenon of universalization, while being an advancement of mankind, at the same time constitutes a sort of subtle destruction, not only to traditional cultures, which might not be an irreparable wrong, but also of what shall be called for the time being the creative nucleus of great civilizations and cultures, that nucleus on the basis of which we interpret life"* (Frampton, 1983: 148). The latter statement provides a warning on the dangers of globalisation and how it has the potential to affect society in the future, he also goes on to provide a solution, or a counter balance, to the phenomenon of globalisation through the means of critical regionalism. Coming back to the topic of investigation at hand of the African Renaissance, one of the key aspects the design of an African Renaissance Centre aims to achieve is that it must respond to its immediate context, not only physically and environmentally, but culturally as well, and not just an imposition from one context to another. The centre must be able to showcase the lives of the people and respond to the

environmental and contextual issues surrounding it. In an essay about critical regionalism, Kenneth Frampton (Nesbitt 1996: 468) investigates just that. How and why there is a need to make buildings and environments contextual. *"Ideas about building the site are central to critical regionalism. The engagement with and accentuation of the topography, the constructed site model stands in sharp contrast with the international style of an ideal flat cleared site"* (Ibid)

Frampton insists on the need to work with the existing context and not just to take the modernist's approach of clearing and flattening the site after which the building is left standing alone or having no relationship to its surroundings as propagated by the architects and architectural theorists of the modern movement, resulting in absolute 'placelessness'. The engagement with the site is not the only element of critical regionalism, other factors such as the use of local materials, craftsmanship and responsiveness to the environmental elements of light and climate (Nesbitt 1996: 469) are also important. This will ensure that the building is fitting into that particular place. This promotes architecture that is experiential, rather than that which is image oriented and trying to find its way to an international architectural journal. Tzonis (Nesbitt, 1996: 484) poses the question though, whether if it possible to have a regionalist, be it in architecture, thought, theory, commodities or just about anything else, if we live in a world that is becoming ever more increasingly global economically and technologically interdependent. This is where in the field of architecture, universal mobility is taking architects and the users of architecture across borders and continents at unprecedented speeds (Ibid). One has got to be aware of the times that we live in, and that we live in a globalised community. The ease of transfer of information and goods occurs relatively effortlessly and quickly and in the advancement of building technology makes it possible for any building form to function and be habitable in any situation, context or climate.

A good example of globalisation is in the case of Dubai, where with enough capital, financial and political will, a first world city was formed and functions in the desert. With mechanically and artificially managed systems, that replicate the natural environment, the city is able to function and be habitable. One perhaps starts to question whether this type of development may perhaps be the city for the future. The major drawback to this type of development is that it consumes large amounts of energy which primarily comes from the earth's natural resources, which are unreplenishable and are fast being depleted, thus making this approach and form of building typology unsustainable due to its upkeep and

unresourcefulness. However the main aim of critical regionalism is that it is the resistance to the homogenisation of the built environment that resulted from modernization of product manufacturing, construction techniques and from colonialism which were from previous movements of the Modern and Pre Modern era. Frampton reacted strongly against the unthoughtful and irresponsible use of air conditioning and heating which has made it possible to export and popularise universal architecture (Ibid).

An example of a regionalist building can be found in Sydney, Australia, this is the Leaf House by Undercurrent Architects. The setting of this house is located in the suburbia of Sydney, surrounded by tall and densely populated trees, overlooking the sea. This particular residence is not meant to imitate but takes cognisance of its surroundings. Through the use of roofing forms that closely resemble those of fallen leaves, and with the roof supports organically shaped twisted steel tubular beams and columns to resemble the organic formation of the trunks and branches of the trees that surround the site. The house is clad with transparent moulded glass, so as to expose the structure. The lower more private rooms are semi dug out from the ground and clad in stone. This is to represent the heaviness of the ground and earth where the structure springs from.

Image 2.1 View from above building. (URL 012) Accessed 20/05/2011

13

Image 2.2 View from above side. (<u>URL</u> 013) Accessed 20/05/2011

Here the architects have created a dwelling unit that is critically inspired by its surrounding context, not as a replication or imitation, but it uses the immediate environment as precedent in the way it is designed and constructed.

However Frampton denotes that Critical Regionalism is not an "*unrealistic impulse to return architecture to the architectonic of the preindustrial past*" (Ibid), no, as Jenks (1997: 97) puts it, it is an urge for vernacular architecture that is opposed to modern architecture, but it should be an alternative theoretical position which continues the critical practice of architecture. (Nesbitt, 1996: 469) It also seeks architecture with the capacity to condense the artistic potential of the region while reinterpreting the cultural influences coming from outside (Ibid). Critical Regionalism is also not to say that it promotes a singular form of architecture in a region, the form of architecture being produced in a region that can be inspired or take precedent from external forms, but it must be adequately sited to suite the local context and at the same time enhancing it. Frampton further points out that it takes imagination and intelligence for a region to develop its ideas. It is difficult though, as Frampton further reiterates, to maintain a stringent level of regionalism in this day of

globalization and freedom of expression, with the constant exchange of ideas and the ability for individuals to express themselves as they please and they may choose to disregards any established forms of the region. Tzonis (Nesbitt, 1996: 490) denotes how the poetics of critical regionalism should not set design rules of partitioning, motifs and genera as did past architectural and art movements' definition of classicism, picturesque or de stiji, but the poetic should become specific and defined, drawing from the regional and circumscribed constraints which have produced the places that exist as a collective set of representations in a given bound area. Critical Regionalism essentially depends on searching for and maintaining a high level of critical self-consciousness in any given field where it may apply. It also aims to bring back culture in places such as the universal Megapolises of this world, where one finds that such areas of habitation have reduced the environment to nothing but a commodity and in the absence of culture, as according to Frampton, leads to placelessness (Frampton. 1983: 162).

This is in line with one of the vital values of the African Renaissance that are going to be further elaborated on as the study progresses, but in respect to the more physical aspects in relation to architecture, whereby the architecture relates and responds to the site, and serves the site thereby serving the people of that area. It is time to revert back to the roots of architecture, especially in the context of Africa and South Africa in particular, creating a type of architecture that is governed by the context and environment in which it is sited. This may be physical or social in nature, but it must nonetheless respond to the context and will enhance the identity and uniqueness of that particular place. It is this lost or missing identity that many of the African countries are in search of and are trying to retrieve through such concepts as the African Renaissance, and the theory of critical regionalism could be used as a driving architectural theory that will contextualise the aims of the African Renaissance in the context of the built environment, since both concept and theory of the African Renaissance and critical regionalism are trying to achieve a similar goal in relation to the built environment, people, context, society and to architecture, in order to positively celebrate the local or indigenous context and achieve social reform through the field and practice of architecture.

2.3 The Spirit of the Place

The spirit of the place is a simple articulation of the concept of the Genius Loci that was derived from an ancient Roman belief that every independent being which existed had its own genius (Schulz 18: 1980). This genius was a guardian spirit that gives life to people and places, and determines their character and being, and accompanies them from birth till death (Ibid). The current context of architecture is the field in which the concept will be investigated. The genius loci has been interpreted as a space where life happens, and therefore a place is a space with a distinct character (Schulz, 1980: 5). This in turn suggests that the genius loci in its purest form can be regarded as the spirit of place (Trancik 1986: 114). Schulz (1980: 6) stipulates that a place is more than just an abstract element, but it consists of more concrete things such as materials, substance, shape, colour and texture, and all of these things together determine the environmental character which becomes the essence of a place. Schulz (1980: 11) also goes on to mention that space comprises of a three dimensional organization of the elements which in turn make up a place, and the character denotes the general atmosphere and ambiance which is the most important contributing factor of any place. *"When a man dwells, he is simultaneously located in a space and exposed to a certain environmental character"* (Schulz, 1980: 19), so it is this character that the concept of the genius loci is concerned with.

Schulz further elaborates on this statement by stating that there are two psychological functions involved in relation to man and the environmental character, these are orientation and identification. Both of these are equally important in this case in attempting to synthesise the practice of architecture and the concept of the African Renaissance to that of the genius loci. It is therefore vital that the architect or the designer creates places that the people can relate to, identify with and own. In order to create a distinct character of a place, Kevin Lynch (Ibid) calls for imageability, by creating vividly identified powerfully structured and highly useful images of the environment, and these elements constitute to the spatial structure as concrete things that give character and meaning. As indicated by Susan Langer (Schulz, 1980: 23) architecture can achieve this when the total environment is made visible and it may be from buildings which gather the properties of the place and bring them close to man. This may also be from the surroundings, environment, context or from existing buildings of that area. The notion of identification is just as important as that of imageability. Both factors are formed by the same or similar influencing entities but yield different results depending on the

individual. To elaborate, identification is derived from the identity, and the identity of a place is formed from an acclamation of different characters such as the context, environment, physical, social and human features pertaining to a particular place. Therefore one could take the notion of the concept further by saying that genius loci is the imageabilty of the identity, since the image of a place can influence the identity and vice versa, as they both deal with and are influence by similar constraints and attributes in order to create a meaningful place.

The designers and architects must also implement such strategies when creating physical place, space and buildings in the African context, which begin to more appropriately define and create places with distinct characters. A place that will encapsulate the feel, character and ambiance of its surroundings in the context situated within a particular part of the continent, and must be distinctive from any other place in the world. Therefore one can use these secondary supporting concepts as a generative tool for the formation of places that are in accord with the African Renaissance and relate it to the physical form of architecture. It is the role of the architect to create meaningful places that will enhance the living conditions of the inhabitants both socially and physically.

A successful example of such spiritual spaces is found on Phoenix Island in Korea, created by the Japanese architect Tadao Ando. This is created in the form of a meditation hall, ironically named Genius Loci. It is situated in the rocky but serene landscape of Seopjikoji.

Image 2.3 View from front entrance. (<u>URL</u> 016) Accessed 20/05/2011

The building is moulded to the landscape by utilizing the topography in its construction and also through the use and incorporation of local materials found on site, such as stacked stones, which link the users to the natural environment both horizontally to the landscape through punctuations in the wall, and vertically with some parts of the building being open to the sky. This aids one's approach to the building to become familiarised with the landscape until the landscape forms part of the building and due to the nature of the building, one is brought closer to nature through the use of natural materials.

Image 2.4 View into garden. (URL 016) Accessed 20/05/2011

Image 2.5 View from interior. (URL 016) Accessed 20/05/2011

This is even carried through into the exterior spaces of the building, where the landscape has been articulated and shaped to continue the ambiance of the main building in the creation of serene meditative spaces. This strong link to the environment both inside and outside of the building captures and retains the spirit of the immediate context with its surroundings, thus propagating the essence of the genius loci.

Another good example where the concept of genius loci has been well executed in a physical building environment is in the Sayantsalo Town Hall in Finland, by Finnish architect Alvar Aalto. Sayantsalo is a municipality that comprises of three islands in the Lake Paijane, and it comprises of mainly an industrialised community that works in the saw mill, plywood mill and factory that manufactures furniture and complete wooden houses (URL: 009). The building was commissioned through a competition which Aalto won under the pseudonym 'Curia' (Ibid). In this example the architect used the existing surrounding context and cultural elements to influence the typology of the building. The building comprises of the following main elements that capture the spirit of the context and place:

- The building consists of a courtyard, a common Mediterranean type of construction with prevalent typology of construction. The area and the courtyard have been artificially raised. This is achieved by using the soil from the excavation of the foundations and implies the continuation of the steep hilly terrain.
- It utilizes a mono pitched roof which is synonymous with the Mediterranean rural vernacular architecture of the area.
- There is a strong visual link to the exterior surroundings from within the building.
- Extensive use of brick is used to symbolise time and the presence of history as a representative element with reference the medieval tradition.
- It is perched on top of a hill, in a castle-like manner, similar to the Nordic fortress building and medieval castle of Hameenlinna with a use of a similar brick material and building mass.
- The use of a pergola as an extension of the porch and veranda creates an abstract space which is inspired by the way of living in Mediterranean countries.
- The extensive use of timber cladding in the interior of the building, sourced from the immediate surrounding forest and from the site clearance upon construction.
- The building incorporates vegetation and greenery into the building since it is sited within a forest, therefore the greenery is an extension of the external environment.

- Articulates and manipulates the natural light from the environment to achieve a different ambiance within the building depending on the time and season of the year.
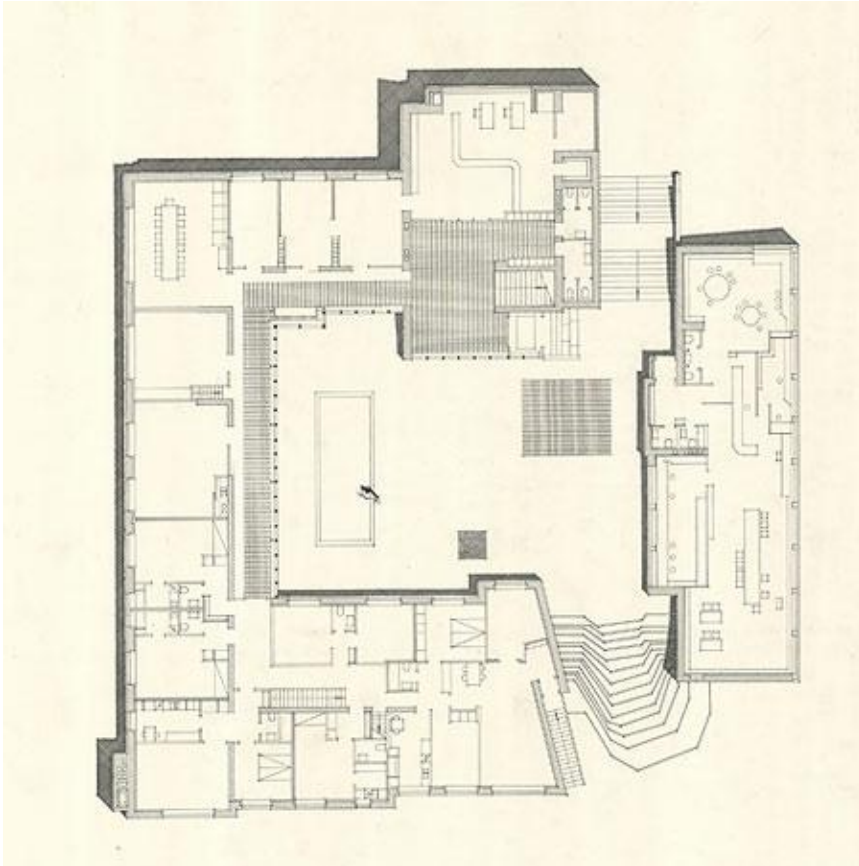- The use of furniture made at the local factory and artwork produced by local artists.

Image 2.6 Floor Plan. (URL 009) Accessed 15/04/2011

Image 2.7 View into building and courtyard (URL 009) Accessed 15/04/2011

All of the above examples simply affirm the building's appropriateness in relation to the site and to its context and creates a unique place with its own spirit which responds to its particular context. It would not work on any other site but the one it is designed for. This creates a form of architecture that is site specific and responds to the landscape, context and environment. The very same example can also be used to represent the functions and principals of the concept of contextualism and all that it stands for.

One should be wary though, when using this example, not to extract the uses of material and symbols from the above precedent as it is simple just to superimpose it onto an African context, since this building exists in a completely different environment to that of any other in Africa. It should just be used as a lesson on ways to execute the concept by taking certain elements of the immediate and greater context, environment, historical and social elements and incorporate them into the building design. Although the above examples are outside the continent of Africa, the aim of this part of the study is to extrapolate the method and principals of execution of the concept and apply them to the local region and context of Africa and Durban in particular.

2.4 The Importance of the Context in creating meaningful spaces

Contextualism is essentially the importance of the context in creating meaningful spaces and it is another theory that lies parallel to the principals, theory and framework of appropriate building design that can be implemented when creating environments in the African context. The theory of contextualism however is more inclined to the physical and tangible aspects of the environment unlike the African Renaissance concept which deals with the more social and economic aspects of society. *"Contextualism offers a middle ground position between an unrealistically frozen past with no future development permitted, and urban renewal with the total loss of the urban fabric"* (Nesbitt, 1996: 295). In this statement taken from a paper written by Thomas L Schumacher titled the Urban Ideals and Deformations, one can see how the theory of contextualism, much like that of the African Renaissance, is concerned with the aspect of renewal, but in this case renewal of the urban form and the dialogue between the past and the future. Thomas Schumacher also goes on to discusses how *"land values and the economic necessities of grouping of people in high concentrations have greatly limited the*

flexibility of the capitalist city. Economic pressure and design preferences ... based on profit rather than need. The results are urban configurations which neither relates to the human being nor the neighbourhood which they interrupt" (Nesbitt, 1996: 297). Schumacher (Ibid) further reiterates that in these cases a form of middle ground is needed, that to go back to the hopelessly artificial past is irresponsible and, at the same time to allow the abovementioned brutal system and globalization to completely take over, is irresponsible as well.

This situation can be metaphorically associated with situations in some African countries as well as in South Africa which the African Renaissance aims to address and rectify. This is where the identity of the city and places have been imposed on to a great extent, not only by previous suppressive regimes such as colonialism and others, but also by the ever changing global times of trends and styles of the international community, based on what is regarded as being 'hot' at the time, or to maximise profit development. This greatly imposes in a negative manner on the indigenous and contemporary forms of architecture and the city. Robert Ventury (Ibid) offers a solution to this problem through contextualism, through a system of geometric organizations that can be abstracted from any given context, and seeks to define contextualism as a design tool by calling for elements that are hybrid instead of pure, distorted instead of straight forward and ambiguous instead of articulated. Thus, seeking a new form of doing things, not just looking, and going back into the past with disregard to what is happening currently, or not just seeking to pursue current trends and ideologies and disregarding the past. This will aid the development of the context and architecture in progressing forward through a system of critically selective processes that do not look in one direction of the past, present or the future, but by critically selecting the relevant elements of each, in order for the context to progressively evolve, and the existing context to greatly influence the culture and lifestyle of the people that inhabit it. This concept can also be applied to the physical context of architecture, whereby building or developing on the context which is already in existence, through design and materials used, and not just by simply superimposing one context or form onto another through influences of globalization or profit maximization. This concept has a number of similarities to that of genius loci, since the fundamental principals are the same and can be applied in a similar context or field.

In the Jean-Marie Cultural Centre in Noumea, New Caledonia, by architect Renzo Piano, is an example of how the theory of contextualism has been reinterpreted into a building environment.

Image 2.8 Side view from river (URL 014) Accessed 28/05/2011

The cultural centre is dedicated to a local leader, Jean-Marie Tjibaou, who died while leading the fight for his country's independence from the French government. The concept of the cultural centre is derived from the form of construction and interpretation of the local villages in which the Kanak tribes of New Caledonia live. The centre consists of three 'villages' made up of ten pavilions or 'Great Houses' of various sizes and heights, which are arranged asymmetrically along a main gentle curving path, similar to that of a ceremonial alley of the traditional Kana Village. The role of the cultural centre is to search for and preserve the identity of the Kanak people. Some of the functions present in the centre include a library, exhibition and research areas, auditorium, an amphitheatre, conference and lecture rooms. Some of the activities include exhibitions of local history, traditional activities such as dance, music, painting and sculpture, as well as research, archiving and educational activities. The building form has incorporated building elements that are found abundantly on site, such as timber, and with the use of contemporary forms of technology to bind them together.
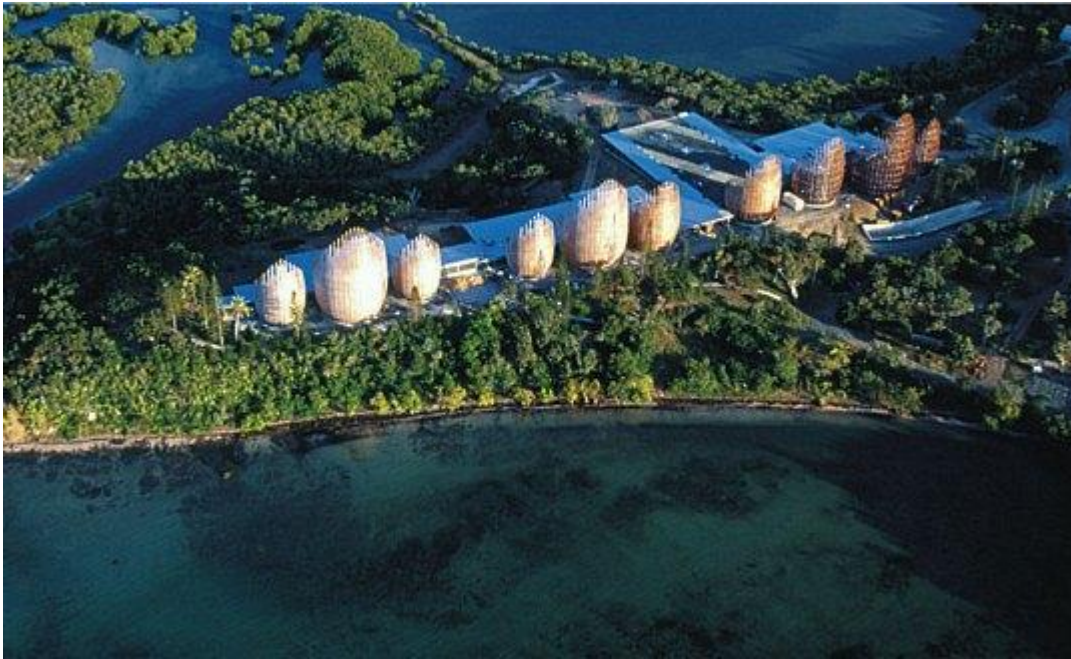
Image 2.9 Aerial view. (URL 015) Accessed 28/05/2011

This cultural centre can be used as a precedent of how, through the use of architecture, culture, history and context can be reinterpreted in a contemporary manner into the built form. The building has managed to capture the essence of the local environment through carefully selecting the elements that best represent the local context; through the selection of building materials, structural form and as well as the functions that occur within the building. Therefore the building is adequately placed within its context, and is contextual.

The theory of contextualism could also be applied to the very same challenges which the African Renaissance aims to overcome, on how to approach the issue of regaining identity of both social aspects and in relation to that of architecture. The concept of contextualism could be applied as an executionary and supporting concept to see through the aims of the African Renaissance concept in the built form of architecture. In theory, certain parts pertaining to both the African Renaissance and that of contextualism have similar aims and objectives. From the above chapters, the African Renaissance aims to revive.

2.5 Place as a fundamental design principal

Place as a fundamental design principal is an elaboration of what is known as the place theory, and it is a theory that applies to urban design as well as architecture, but it is more commonly used in the urban design sphere. The place theory seems relevant to be discussed in line with the concept of the African Renaissance since both talk about similar aspects of intellectual discourse, the difference is that the place theory refers to the more physical and tangible aspects of the environment and the African Renaissance to the more social and political aspects of society. But both these theoretical discourses somewhat have a point of convergence where they cross paths as their fundamental principals are similar.

Trancik (1986: 114) states how architecture must respond and where possible enhance the environmental identity and sense of place, as well as the best fit between the human, physical and cultural context with the needs and aspirations of the contemporary user. This statement can be affiliated to that of the African Renaissance, since some of the core values of the renaissance involve the creation of a holistic environment for the people of the Africa continent to prosper. Trancik (1986: 112) also goes on to argue that, in order to create a meaningful place from a space, when it is given contextual meaning derived from cultural or regional content. This means that the people, culture and activities that exist in a particular space will give that place its identity and character. The people therefore must inform the type of design which is meant for a particular place. This relates to the African Renaissance since it is all about reviving the context of a particular place and the upliftment of the people that reside therein. The place theory can be used as a secondary theory which will be a physical grounding tool for the Renaissance. Architecture is meant to respond and enhance the sense of place, *"for designers to create truly unique contextual places, they must more than superficially explore the local history, the feelings and needs of the populace, traditions of craftsmanship and the indigenous materials, and the political and economic realities of the communities"* (Trancik 1986: 112). This is also on par with the Mission Statement of the African Renaissance, how we must not just import other values, traditions and practices without a critical analysis of what is being introduced (Mbeki, 1998: 3). There must firstly be an introspective approach to look at what is in existence and then enhance, rectify or rejuvenate it.

The place theory not only deals with the social aspect of the environment but its physical aspect as well, it applies contextuality in architecture in respect of the design. It also acknowledges that successful spatial design should be achieved by creating buildings in context and not in isolation. Trancik (1986: 116) further notes that one must take into consideration how the old and new spaces and buildings fit together with the established urban context. A good design should be a response to the environment, context, and its people, as it is well understood in the practice of architecture that the modernist concept must no longer be applied. The notion of celebrating the building by clearing the site and placing it in isolation is no longer applicable in today's society. That instead of creating islands of buildings in a context, the aim should rather be the creation of communities of buildings in a context, so as to create meaningful environments. By creating these environments, allowance must also be made for its people to incorporate their identity into it by allowing them to alter and change it to their needs and requirements. Trancik (1986: 116) assimilate that designers must not just look at the historical context but also respond to the self-perceived desires of the community, and to allow the present and future community the flexibility to alter its own environment. He counts this as one of the most fundamental aspects of a successful approach to a good design. Herman Hertzberger is sited in Tranciks (1986: 123) book of Lost Space as; in order to

2.6 Interpretation of signs and their meanings in Architecture

The theory of semiotics can be simply defined as the interpretation of signs and their meaning, and just like most modern day theories it can be applied to a wide range of disciplines but in this context it is going to be applied in to the field of architecture. Diana Agrest and Mario Gandelson elaborate on the notion of semiotics as being *"involved with signification, or the production of meaning, which is accomplished via the relationship between the two components of the sign: the signifier and the signified"* (Nesbit 1996:110). When applied to architecture, semiotics is a deepening understanding of the production of meaning of the architectural form (Ibid).

Ferdinand de Saussure defines semiology as the science of the different systems of signs (Nesbitt 1996: 116), and Geoffrey Broadbent, a prominent architect and educator in the field of semiology states that, in relation to architecture, all buildings carry meaning and that the

study of semiotics is one way of approaching the question of meaning (Nesbit 1996: 122). Charles Jenks give his analogy of good architecture that carries a rich variety of meaning in relation to its context (Nesbit 1996: 127). He singles out Antonio Gaudi's work in Barcelona called Casa Battlo.

Image 2.10 View from roof (By Author) Accessed 17/11/2008

Image 2.11 View from street entrance. (By Author) Accessed 17/11/2008

He gives the following detailed analogy of the building; *"The first two floors have a curious colonnade formed by visual forms in brown, green and blue. The main facade, with its undulating forms in brown, green and blue ceramics, obviously is an icon for the sea, while the boldly tiled roof actually looks like a dragon. It is dominated by a pinnacle bearing a Christian cross. The bones, sea and the dragon are all icons at the level of simple visual analogy, but the whole thing is an expression of Catalan nationalism in which the dragon of Castille has been slain by St George the patron of Saint Barcelona. The bones represent those of the martyrs who have died in the cause"* (Nesbit 1996: 127). This simple analogy by Jenks shows the different levels that one can take symbolism and meaning in architecture through; the various signs in a building that represent different factions in a society. Broadbent goes on to assert in a similar analogy of the concept and theory of semiology that buildings should not just be read visually, since architecture affects a wide range of senses (Nesbit 1996: 127). Architecture has the potential to affect the sense of smell, hearing, sight, heat and cold through the skin, movement and other senses which are esoteric in nature and are concerned with balance and height (Ibid).

This form of thinking and analogy should be applied when creating a new form of architecture in the African Renaissance era, a form of architecture that celebrates and takes precedent of the local culture, history and heritage through the semiotic interpretation of different social, contextual and environmental forms in the built form. This should not be achieved just by simple or direct imposition of the contextual elements, but could also be achieved through the reinterpretation of abstract societal and traditional forms, as well as in the tectonic manipulation of the architecture to represent these translated forms.

It is therefore important that in order to create meaningful architecture, a form of architecture that represents something relevant to its context is also used and not just arbitrary assimilation of form and aesthetic. To somehow extract a deeper meaning from the context so that people can familiarise themselves with it and be a part of the architecture being developed. It should be noted though that due to the individuality of people, it is possible for different people to have different interpretations of the same object. This however should not stop the designers and architects from searching for an appropriate architecture that bears meaning and is appropriately sited in its context.

2.7 Conclusion

Issues pertaining to Africa cannot be looked at in isolation. In the aim of trying to ground the concept of the African Renaissance into a physical form it is important to also consider other social elements that might be relevant or impact upon the execution of the concept. This is where architecture must reflect and respond to the local environment, history and needs of the people. People must be able to relate and identify with, and own the architecture being created. This can be achieved by the use of materials, architectural forms, technology and types of spaces articulated, taking cognisance of the local environment but at the same time ensuring it is of the same standard as other forms of architecture being produced in other parts of the world. The manner in which this portion of the study looked at similar and tangible architectural theories and concepts that could be used to justify and to use as implementing agents and have similar qualities and goals as of that of the African Renaissance, thus grounding the African Renaissance in physical form. This is because the African Renaissance as a concept and theory, even though it can be applied to a wide range of fields in society, has been investigated with issues that are more aligned to a social, economic and cultural nature than that of architecture and that of the built environment - since architecture has a major role to play in shaping the social and cultural aspects and aspirations of society. This is because there has been relatively little study into the concept of the African Renaissance and only recently has the notion of the concept of the renaissance really started to gain ground with scholars and intellectuals around the continent and the world. The only form of information that was revealed by the study in relation to architecture and the African Renaissance was a thesis by Lwazi Khumalo (Khumalo 1999: 1), it could not however be used in the investigation since its credibility was compromised due to irregular and lack of references in it.

All of the above investigated architectural theories, dealt with the context, people and local environment as a means of uplifting the general lives of the people. The functions to be accommodated in these buildings will be those that will facilitate growth and development of the community which are similar to the principals in theory of that of the African Renaissance.

CHAPTER 3 - LITERATURE REVIEW

3.1 Introduction

This chapter of the study investigates the inception and development of the African renaissance concept, as well as other influential factors that affect the concept in one way or the other. The concept of the African Renaissance is one which can be considered as the brain child of the former president of South Africa, Mr Thabo Mbeki, as noted by Francis Kornegay (Kornegay 1998: 30). Thabo Mbeki is considered as the architect of the concept which he first mentioned publicly in a statement on behalf of the ANC in his address as the Deputy President of South Africa in 1996 in the adoption of South African Constitution in what has become as his 'I Am An African' speech (Ibid). The concept of the African Renaissance however was first mentioned as early as 1994 after the county's first democratic election (Moloka 1: 1998). Eddy Moloka notes how the ANC, along with Thabo Mbeki, the then Deputy President of the Party and South Africa, stated what the key elements of the African Renaissance should entail: the recovery of the African continent as a whole, the establishment of political democracy on the continent, the need to break the neo-colonial relations between Africa and the world's economic powers, the mobilization of people of Africa to take their destiny into their own hands and thus prevent the continent from being seen as a place for the attainment of the geo-political and strategic interest of the world's most powerful countries, as well as the need for a fast development of people-driven and people-centred economic growth and development aimed at meeting the basic needs of the people (Moloka 3: 1998).

Paul Ahluwalia then notes that the African Renaissance can be seen as a call for modernisation aimed at waking Africa competitiveness globally and as part of the process of globalization. (Zegeye 36: 2003) *"It is in this context that South Africa, with its capital resources and infrastructure is well placed to serve a leading role"* (Zegeye 36: 2003), as an exemplary figure for the rest of the continent, and as a catalyst for other African countries to benefit and take precedent from the role that South Africa could play.

3.2 Africa, its history and development

The documented history of Africa has mostly been of a negative nature with such epochs such as colonization, the slave trade and civil unrest of tribal factions. Ahluwalia notes in the book by Abebe Zegeye (Zegeye, 2003: 29) how about ten million or more black African slaves, between the years 1492 till about 1870, were carried away from Africa to one or another part of America to work on various plantations, mines or as servants. Even after the abolition of slavery and colonisation some countries such as South Africa, continued with various forms of internal oppression. This is what may be referred to as the colonial power, in the form of 'the whites', even though they were not affiliated with any other country than that which they resided in, had kept the colonised 'blacks' in largely poor and poorly educated condition and living in squalor (Barrel, 2000: 6). There are four predominant epochs which shaped the history of the African continent, these are: pre-colonial where there were great civilizations and empires such as the Ashanti, Zulu empire or the merchant cities along the trans Sahara route (Quest, 2001: 46), then there was the era of colonisation, whereby certain European countries divided Africa with borders and into countries within Africa in order to establish their own colonies on the continent. Then there was the era of slavery and oppression, "*which robbed the continent of millions of her healthiest and most productive inhabitants and reinforced the racist and criminal notion that as Africans, we are sub human, imperialism and colonialism, which resulted in the rape of raw materials, the destruction of traditions; agriculture and domestic food security, and the integration of Africa into the world economy as a subservient participant, and neo-colonialism, which perpetuated this economic system, while creating the possibility for the emergence of new national elites in independent states, themselves destined to join the dominant global forces in oppressing and exploiting the masses of people*" (Mbeki, speech: 1999). After all African countries had been liberated from the clutches of colonisation and became independent states, then finally came the era of post colonialism. This is whereby countries within the continent established their own governments and form of rule. This is currently the era that the continent is in at the moment, where all the African countries are 'free' from the rule, dictatorship of foreign European countries.

3.3 The Developments in the formulation of the African Renaissance

In the search for Africa's identity there have been a number of movements, theories and writers that have attempted to investigate and grapple with the notion of where Africa is as a nation and as a continent in its current state, and where it should be. These include Negritude, Black Consciousness, Pan Africanism and the concept of post colonization which, directly or indirectly, impacted on trying to change the perception and social standing of Africa in relation to the rest of the world as well as within the continent. These concepts were also aimed at emancipating and improving the lives of the people living on the continent. All these movements have, in one way or another influenced and contributed to the formulation and concept of the African Renaissance. It must be noted however, that many other theories were also formulated in regard to the identity and needs of Africa and development of the theory and concept of the African Renaissance, but those mentioned here are the ones that played a more significant role in what is to be discussed further into the investigation.

The conceptualization of Negritude was in the days when colonization was still a grim reality in every African's life. It was a response or an aim at Africans reaching the same standards and social standing as their European colonizers, but the reality was that only a selected few were ever able to achieve this. This resulted in the concept being geared too much towards essentialism or particularism (Zegeye, 2003: 30). It also received much criticism due to the fact that Africans could never truly be seen as Europeans due to the many underlying verifying factors to be considered. This included the various cultures, beliefs, historical backgrounds and social and economic standings of the diverse people of continent. It would therefore be unjust to disregard all those elements which had moulded and shaped Africans throughout the centuries and to simply adopt the norms and traditions of western or European nations. In essence this would not only mean the eradication of Africa as we know it, but the creation of a new form of European in the African context.

Pan Africanism as developed by the esteemed African intellect, Kwame Nkrumah (Barrel, 2000: 1) on the other hand, played a substantial role in the fight for liberation in many African countries. Ali Mazrui noted that: *"the very idea of Pan Africanism is one that out of the connection between the Africans in Africa and those in the Diaspora"* (Zegeye 2003: 34). The notion of Pan Africanism was born from the concept of Pan Negroism which is similar to Negritude, which was a commitment to the Negro race. Pan Africanism was the

acknowledgement that Africans can do it for themselves and they have the right to be independent in order to do it for themselves, *and it played an important role in the liberation struggle of Africans everywhere* (Zegeye 2003: 35). After all African countries had achieved their independence, the need and role for Pan Africanism seemed to dwindle away (Ibid). As was also so with the Black Consciousness movement, which had been based on similar grounds to that of Pan Africanism, although Black Consciousness was more predominant and popular in South Africa during the apartheid era where it had much relevance. This was a movement that highlighted the injustice and the marginalization of the 'black' races and was aimed at making them conscious of themselves, evoking a spirit of pride, faith and confidence that they have the ability to be on par with their white oppressors in terms of social standing, education and other pressing social issues. This was the realisation that even though they were marginalized, they needed to stand up and take cognisance of what and who they were, and what they were capable of becoming (Ibid). The concept played a major role in South Africa in mobilising its 'black' population, making them aware of these injustices and the need to progress and move forward from the post colonial and apartheid era, since the effects and strategies implemented in the colonial regime still have a latent effect and impact on the society of this day.

There are many other theories that were investigated and developed around Africa that pertain to and impacted on the development of the investigated topic, but they cannot all be mentioned, as they do not fall into the main scope of the investigation. However there is one other theory which might have also contributed to the eventual development of the African Renaissance. This is the theory of Post Colonialism, formulated in the 1960's when the process of decolonisation had begun and some African countries had already gained their independence (Barrel: 2000: 1). This theory is formulated on the grounds and examination and continuing legacy of colonisation of the European conquest and the domination of non-European lands, people and cultures (Deyner, 1998: 5).

Franz Fanon, a major contributor to the theory states how *"colonialism with its explicit conceptual underpinnings of white racial superiority over non white people has created a sense of division and alienation in the self identity of the non white colonised people, the history, culture, language, customs and beliefs of the white colonisers, under colonialism, are to be considered as universal normative and superior to the local and indigenous culture of the colonised"* (Ibid). The universal normative mentioned here is in relation to all aspects of

society, even including architecture, where this resulted in Africa's indigenous form of architecture being suppressed and resulting in its development stagnating. That is one of the reasons that most African countries are struggling to identify a contemporary vernacular architecture. The colonisers come along and superimposed their form of architecture onto the regions within the African continent with little or no regard to the culture, context and environment that was currently in existence. This resulted in this crisis of identity that is still being experienced today. It is these forms of suppression which created a strong feeling of inferiority and lead to the adaptation of forms of language, culture and customs of the colonisers as a way of compensating for these feelings of inferiority (Deyner, 1998: 6). This is the same inferiority that still exists today in many of Africa's people. It is this latent deep psychological embedment that even today, still finds African society adhering to the ideologies and products of western cultures with a total disregard for the products and solutions that are offered by the African society. There needs to be a shift in mindset of those institutions and individuals who have the capacity to teach and educate African nations of these dangers so that their indigenous culture is not completely lost among the global community (Ibid). Post-colonisation is an identification of such short comings in all respects of society and aims to address it, in order to stop perpetuating the same problems but aims at finding a solution. This statement can also be defined by a concept of Pax Africana, which in simple terms means an African solution for African problems (Landsberg 1998: 1).

As Franz Fanon articulated: the Post-colonisation Theory involves claiming back the history of those who were colonised, from the negative and misconceived versions of the colonisers, and highlighting the importance of the culture and representations of the past as being a central part in the creation of both new and positive forms of the subject information and in the formation of new social organizations, which are necessary in the newly formed and independent post colonial era (Deyner, 1998: 6). The post colonial theory also aims at addressing other issues that have emanated from colonialisation such as colonial space which Fanon articulates as *"space which was formed during the colonial era"* (Ibid). This is whereby the colonial institutions used town planning and urbanism to construct places of business, administration as well as government institutions in places that would suite the aims and functions of the privileged and that of the colonisers, and to largely exclude the indigenous people of the area (Deyner, 1998: 6). Fanon considers these actions as being a form of racism and that it is important for post colonial nations to *"develop new forms of social democracy rather than utilise existing colonial institutions and simply to fill existing*

administrative positions with indigenous people" (Ibid). The solution for these types of spaces is to rebuild them and all other various urban forms to reflect more democratic post colonial forms of social organisations, to build and plan for the masses, so as to benefit all and reject and breakdown the ideologies which underpin those of colonial rule.

All these theories, concepts and movements laid a foundation for what has become the concept of an African Renaissance. *This is the rebirth of Africa after being freed from the crude clutches of colonialism* (Speech 001: 2), and apartheid, where foreign ideologies were forcefully imposed onto the continent. The time has now come for Africa to showcase to the world what it has to offer, in the form of various developments in the physical, economic and social realms and at the same time, reawakening the spirit of the continent that exists in all Africans who inhabit it. All these concepts are closely interlinked and, as Van Kessel notes, that at first when the advocator of the African Renaissance concept initially introduced the idea of the rebirth of the African continent, it was initially labelled as the Pan African vision (Quest, 2001: 45), However, with further study it later evolved into a concept which including many other aspects of development that needed to be addressed and also identified the shortfalls that came about from all the other previous concepts.

In his speech at the time Thabo Mbeki, then the deputy president of South Africa spoke of an African Renaissance that projects both into the past and the future (Mbeki, 1998: 1). Then he went on to highlight some of Africa's contributions to the arts, culture, history, architecture and of the learning institutions of the continent. He speaks of *"...African works of art in South Africa that are thousands of years old. The continuum in the fine arts that encompasses the varied artistic creations of the Nubians and the Egyptians, Benin bronzes of Nigeria and the intricate sculptures of the Makonde of Tanzania and Mozambique* (Mbeki, 1998: 1). He also spoke of *"the architectural monuments represented by the giant sculptured stone of Aksum in Ethiopia, the Egyptian Sphinxes and the pyramids, the Tunisian city of cartage, and the Zimbabwean ruins, as well as the legacy of the ancient universities of Alexandra of Egypt, Fex of Morocco and Timbuktu of Mali* (Ibid). All these examples, in different parts of Africa, are all representative of some of the physical aspects that the African Renaissance aims to preserve and celebrate.

All of the above examples exist in different parts of Africa, but they could be used to showcase and emulate the different aspects of the African Renaissance. This is where the

concept focuses more on the cultural, historic, and educational and people aspect of the African Renaissance. The African Renaissance as a theory does not only focus on the above mentioned topics but deals with the total evolution and rebirth of the continent, in all fields and industries, provoking a total transformation of the continent and its people.

Even though the concept is referred to as the African Renaissance, and the ultimate goal is to uplift the whole continent, Koregay (1998: 4) suggest that it is better suited to deal with its issues if it is broken down into smaller manageable parts of regional or local context instead of looking at Africa as a whole, since Africa is too big and complex in terms of the varying issues pertaining to culture, traditions and the different social issues affecting each region, place or country. That is why in this paper, the concept is going to be explored and grounded in the context of South Africa, and more specifically Durban in particular, since that is where the end part of the process, which is the design of a building will be sited.

As further stated by Mr Thabo Mbeki, who can be considered as the architect of the concept, some of the key principals that the Renaissance is meant to achieve are: a sustainable economic development that results in the continuous improvements of the standards of living and the quality of life of the masses of people living on the African continent and the rediscovery of Africa's creative past, recovering cultures, encouraging artistic endeavours from within the continent as well as accessing and the advancement of science and technology (Barrel, 2000: 5). Most concepts and theories can be applied to a wide variation of fields, so too can the concept of the African Renaissance and as well as the fields mentioned above that form the backbone of what the renaissance is meant to address. This investigation is meant to investigate the concept of the African Renaissance

So far, one of the tangible developments of the African Renaissance has been the creation of the African Renaissance Institute (ARI), established in October 1999, after the African Renaissance Conference of 1998, and organised by the President's Office of South Africa (Maloka 2000:1). The African Renaissance Institute aims to coordinate national chapters of the African Renaissance in various parts of African and was meant to spearhead the movement throughout the continent (Nabudere. 2005: 6). In Dakar, Senegal, President Abdoulaye Wade commissioned and recently unveiled a statue for $27 million, named the 'African Renaissance' (The Guardian, April 2011). This is in commemoration of Senegal's 50th anniversary after it had gained its independence (Ibid).

Image 3.1 African Renaissance Statue, Senegal. (URL 017). Accessed 10/05/2011

The statue was designed and built by a North Korean engineering firm, but the idea behind the form and concept was President Wade's idea. Its height is a staggering 49 metres, making it taller than the Statue of Liberty and thus the tallest statue in the world. It is sited on top of a hill in downtown Dakar, overlooking the rest of the city of Dakar and facing towards the west in the direction of the sea (URL: 001). The statue is a composition of a muscular man in a heroic position, holding a woman (his wife) in one arm and a pointing child in the other, all facing in the same direction and seemingly rising out of a volcano (URL 008). The statue symbolises the potential of Africa's rebirth and liberation from centuries of ignorance, intolerance and racism (Ibid). It represents Africa emerging from the bowels of the earth and leaving behind obscurantism and travelling towards the light. It is also a symbol of the entire continent opening up to the 'western' world (URL: 009). The statue is to house cultural exhibitions, multimedia and conference rooms as well shops with a theatre nearby. It is being marketed as a future tourist destination for the country, attracting people from all over the

world. President Wade has however come under criticism for the statue. Critics feel the funds used for the statue could have been spent to better develop the country which has a current unemployment rate of 48% (URL 001). His critics also ask why the entire design process and manufacture take place in Korea? Why it was not manufactured in Africa in order to retain the principles of the African Renaissance of by Africans for Africans, and in order for there to be skills transfer and create employment for the people of the continent. The design of the statue has also been questioned with some critics saying that is resembles a fascist form of artistry which closely resembles a 25 metre high statue called The Worker and the Collective Farmer, currently located in front of the All-Russian Exhibition Centre in Moscow (URL: 010).

Image 3.2 Statue of: The Worker and the Collective Farmer. (URL 018)
Accessed 10/05/2011

3.5 A European Renaissance Model

Washington Okumu (Okumu 2002: 2), says the word 'renaissance' is derived from the Latin word 'renascor' meaning to be born again. When translated from the Oxford English Dictionary, the word renaissance is said to be a period in European history between the fourteenth and sixteenth centuries when there was a great revival in literature, paintings, science, commerce, architecture and the arts. Okumu (2002: 4) also goes on to say that the European Renaissance era was a turning point in European culture and civilization, a time of almost unprecedented creativity and optimism. It was a period of great developments of a new style of art and architecture that represented a new birth or renewal of nations and their people. The name of the renaissance has been considered (Walter. 1873: 2) as multi faceted and many sided, which represents a united movement for the love of things intellectual and the re-imagination of all aspects of social and cultural society. It was also a desire for a more liberal and comely way of conceiving life (Ibid). The renaissance may be commonly associated with rebirth, but can also be considered a revival or restoration of some sort (Okumu. 2002: 4). This was reawakening from a fragmented and church dominated feudal society and Europe became a continent increasingly dominated by central political institutions and changed from a relatively rural society into a more urban one where commerce predominated (Barrel 200: 4). Moving away from practices where *"culture has been mediated by superstition and by what the church found acceptable and Europe became increasingly exited by an exploration of its classical past and by the secular ideas in the arts"* (Ibid).

The pre renaissance period can be considered as a 'dark age', where Europe had descended into a depression of a wide range of cultural, social and economic decline and stagnation in the state of society. Therefore the renaissance lead to every aspect of society being revolutionised, and however old and archaic it was, it was renovated and revised (Okumu, 2002: 4), bringing about the end of the Middle Ages and embodying for the first time the values of the modern world (Pioch. 2006: 1). It was a distinct historical period as described by Pioch, heralding the modern age and characterized by the rise in individual scientific inquiry with geographic exploration, as well as growth in secular values. The Renaissance also saw a growth of bureaucracy and the increase of state authority in areas of justice and taxation, as well as the creation of larger regional states (Ibid). As indicated by Guisepi, the surge and increase in paper making, printing, gunpowder, astrology and other, or then new

forms of technology, further perpetuated the concept of the renaissance. The renaissance started in Italy, where the scholars of the time began to investigate and learn from ancient Roman manuscripts and also began to challenge the current living conditions they were subjected to. This then, as Pioch notes, was the philosophy of Nicolo Machiavelli that the era in the beginning was the construction of a realistic science of human nature aiming at the reform of Italian society and the creation of a secure civil life (Pioch 2006: 3). The renaissance then spread through to other parts of Europe including France, Spain, Netherlands, Germany and England, with the values of the renaissance being transformed slightly as they moved north. The spread of the renaissance was achieved by scholars and intellectuals from other countries who came to Italy to study classics, philosophy and the remnants of antiquity. This resulted in the imitation of Italian literature and art, as well as Italian clothing and furniture designs (Pioch. 2006: 2). Other scholars' such as Peter Burke, a professor at the University of Cambridge points out that the European Renaissance was not just an event or a period, but it was a European cultural movement whose response in different countries was shaped by local and socio political structures. This made its output, process or focus slightly different and unique, depending on the particular region of Europe, even though it was still considered to be the same movement. The word Renaissance was first used in 1855, by a French historian named Jules Michelet (Barrel, 2000: 2) as a means of describing this form of renewal. This was more than a century after it had taken place. The European Renaissance occurred naturally and independently of any program to deliver it, unlike the African Renaissance that has come about as a political program. Mbeki, the architect of the African Renaissance, states how governments and political organizations from all African countries need to be mobilized to act in furthering and enhancing the objectives of the African Renaissance (Ibid).

The African Renaissance however is quite different from its European counterpart. The African Renaissance discussed here and as stated by Moloka, is one which is in contrast to the European model, it is not a celebration of an accomplished past but an aspiration, and somehow even an apocalyptic goal, to reach a certain level of being equal to other countries and continents which are considered to be First World or developed countries (Moloka 1998: 8). It is also different in the sense that the European renaissance took its inspiration from the Greco-Roman civilisation (Quest, 2001: 46) and throughout Europe the outcomes of the era were similar in style and end product, and could be easily identified from works from other periods, be it in art, architecture, literature or poetry. In Africa it is different since the causes

of the problem were the same throughout the continent: the effects of colonisation and oppression of the African people and the latent effects and legacy thereof. The results however could be completely different from place to place and country to country. This is because in Africa people, culture, economy, religion, history and the built environment are all different from place to place, region and country. For example someone in South Africa may believe in and live a completely different lifestyle from someone in Egypt, but they both live in Africa and are Africans, sharing only a common history of colonisation and oppression. Even their experiences of colonisation may be different due to the fact that South Africa was colonised by a different European country to Egypt. Thus perhaps the level of oppression and foreign culture they were subjected to could have been completely different because of different colonisers from country to country, who imposed their own respective culture, values, traditions and architecture further adding to a completely different dynamic to other African states. The African renaissance is not aimed at imitating the European renaissance, even though both came about as a result of their respective desires for a need for change. Mbeki also warns us about the comparison between the European and African renaissance, that even though they are both renaissances, they are both different in nature. The European Renaissance took place over a number of decades, therefore we must not assume that the African renaissance will miraculously happen overnight (Mbeki, speech: 1999).

In summing up, the European renaissance was not just a reflection of one particular aspect of society in relation to the arts, science, literature or politics. Nor was it attained by a particular country or region, but it was the history of attainment of self-conscious freedom by the human spirit manifested in the European races as noted by Guisepi. The Renaissance was *"a new birth to liberty - the spirit of mankind recovering consciousness and the power of self determination, recognising the beauty of the outer world and the body through art, liberating the reason in science and the conscience in religion, restoring culture to the intelligence, and establishing the principal political freedom"* (Guisepi _: 3)

3.6 African Renaissance in South Africa

This part of the investigation focuses on the relationship that has the potential of being formulated in relation to the African Renaissance and South Africa in the built environment sector and in architecture in particular. It is widely accepted in South Africa that even though its 'black' population was formally free after 1994, many people are still chained to poverty and ignorance due to centuries of historical injustice and oppression (Barrel, 2000: 8). Therefore a new form of transformation and reform is needed to correct the injustices of the past. That is why the African Renaissance comes at an ideal time in the history of the country, where South Africa as a nation needs to awaken and free itself from the crude clutches of the past and take cognisance of where it has come from as a nation in order to formulate new strategies and find its path to being on a par with the rest of the developed countries. Kornegay argues that the African Renaissance would only be possible if it were grounded in a domestic renewal that reflects a broad public-private partnership. This would mean that instead of trying to change all of Africa at one time it would be better to target regional or domestic renewal. Rather each part of Africa changes their small and manageable part of the continent with the same grounding principals of the Renaissance. This will in turn contribute to the greater whole when the developments are collaborated with the rest of the continent's development. This is also due to the fact that within the African continent there is a wide variation of cultures, beliefs, languages, ethnic groups and religions, history and political denominations. It would therefore be almost impossible to administer them all at the same time, to form one common ideology and goal since the issues being tackled might be too varied from one country to the next. There are just too many variables to consider when dealing with Africa as one complete unit at one specific time.

The concept of the African Renaissance is grounded in the past but looks towards the future, as the former minister in South Africa, Aziz Pahad, in his speech at an African renaissance summit in Durban, likened the concept of the African Renaissance to Janus, a mythological Roman god, who looks both forward and backwards and is usually used to represent the change in transition between the past and the future (Speech 003). This is similar to one of the principles of the theory of contextualism. As stated by Schumacher, a middle ground is to be achieved and not just to revert back to the unrealistically frozen past, or to totally disregard it and just look toward the future developments which end up with the total loss of the urban fabric (Nesbitt, 1996: 295). South Africa having the biggest economy in Africa and

with great infrastructural developments is therefore well positioned to play a leading and exemplary role on how to articulate the concept better in terms of its physical aspect particularly in the architectural and built environment sector. South Africa still has the power, potential and structure to grow its built environment and, if executed properly, would have a positive spin off on other social and cultural factors in the country.

As a result of the built form, architecture can also be a powerful tool which impacts on the social aspects of society, to shape and mould the society inhabiting it. South Africa has the capital means to experiment and grapple with this relatively new developmental concept which have arisen from the African Renaissance concept and has yet to be truly and adequately applied to the built environment and architectural fields in particular. As the analysts Peter Vale and Sipho Maseko, pointed out, it would be absurd to believe that South Africa alone should assume the position and responsibility for the next wave of democratisation and economic liberalisation for the rest of the continent (Vale, 1998: 14). South Africa is well positioned to be a key player in these areas since it appears as a natural leader in political and economic affairs, *"a condition overwhelmingly confirmed by its military power"* (Ibid). Another critical fact about South Africa and the African Renaissance is that, not only is there a strong movement within the country but also in the government of South Africa, since in 2001 an Act was passed for the establishment of the African Renaissance and International Co-operation fund (URL 018). *This fund aims to enable the South African Government to identify and fund in a productive way; co-operation between South African and other countries, particularly African countries, the promotion of democracy and good governance, the prevention and resolution of conflict, socio economic development and integration, human assistance and human resource development* (URL 018). This shows South Africa's eagerness and position to be a major role player in the development of Africa and the African Renaissance. It is in this mind frame that the South African government states that, in order for this enormous challenge to be realised, the African Renaissance requires both political will and commitment from all sectors of society such as; *"women, the youth, people with disabilities, the African intelligentsia, workers and peasants, business and nongovernmental organisations"* (Pahad, speech: 2007), and therefore their continual commitment to the cause.

Initially Thabo Mbeki, when he was still the President of South Africa, stated that the South African government had come under criticism that their articulation of the Renaissance

concept was a secular modernizing programme, that it focused on political and economics and had paid little attention to cultural dimensions (Quest 45: 2001), but at that time, the concept was still at its infancy and its initial inception and formulation stage. Since then the concept has evolved to encompass a more holistic approach to the notion of African renewal so as to include other aspects and sectors of life, community and the environment. Professor Pitika Ntuli, a distinguished African scholar, poet and sculptor, who was a former president of the African Renaissance Institute in South Africa (URL 006), views the need of the African Renaissance to stress the need to acknowledge where one comes from in order to know where one is going. It is this dualism that Aziz Pahad (Pahad, speech: 2007) refers to is his speech at the African Renaissance Summit in Durban, that unless the Renaissance is people centred, as a historic project, it will not succeed. The Renaissance must also encompass a revival of Africa's languages, literature, religions, philosophies and theatre. *That after all the renaissance takes place in the era of globalization and diversity of hybridity* (URL 006).

South Africa has begun to address issues of transformation and rehabilitation of the nation through architecture in the built environment. These are achieved with projects such as the Constitutional Court, Apartheid Museum and the Johannesburg Metro Mall. These projects depict a form of urban regeneration and they address issues of the past such as transformation and transparency in the Constitution Court as well as urban renewal and community upliftment focused design for the Johannesburg Metro Mall. All these projects, even though not classified as Renaissance buildings, portray major characteristics prevalent in the concept of the African Renaissance.

The Constitutional Court project was the result of an international design competition launched by the Johannesburg Development Agency together with the Department of Works (Journal 003: 28). The competition was won by collaboration between two architectural design practices: OMM Design Workshop and Urban Solutions of Johannesburg (Ibid). The building is one of South Africa's first public buildings of this scale and prominence, built in the democratic post-apartheid era. The design and competition brief was to develop the entire precinct as the "Constitutional Hill", *"to become a public space for the city and a symbolic space for the nation where the constitutional court and Human Rights Commission would be accommodated alongside museums in the historic prison buildings"* (Journal 005: 2). The competition, although focused on the Constitutional Court, called for appropriate settings for

the new elements within the entire site (Ibid). It aimed at creating a new form of architecture rooted in the South African landscape, while consciously applying the principles of contextualism in responding to its context and the existing buildings on site. These would be retained to preserve the country's history while finding a way of integrating them with the new (Journal 003: 66). The building is built on a 12.5 hector site which lies on the north face of Braamfontein ridge in Johannesburg in the apex of the Witwatersrand region (Journal 005: 2). The site was originally occupied by the Department of Correctional Services and consisted of: the native jail, the women's jail, the awaiting trial block, sections 4 and 5, the fort and various prison outbuildings (Journal 004: 31).

Image 3.3 Constitutional Court Building (URL 011). Accessed 10/05/2011

The concept behind the building is that of a tree. This is a reference to the fact that traditionally, especially amongst the Nguni tribes of South Africa, important decisions pertaining to the community and conflict resolution were considered under a tree (Journal 003: 68). The concept can be seen carried through; in the roof of the atrium, which has slits for solar control while the shadows cast on the floor resemble light filtering through the trees. Through the use of large slanting columns depict the way branches of the tree grow, in the emblem of the Court and in the pattern for the mats resemble a pattern that might be seen on the forest floor in the relationship of shadow and light (Journal 003: 68). The architects' decisions and concepts were informed by the local culture, heritage and history of the site and customs of the people that reside in South Africa. Architects have applied the principles of

semiotics in the design of the building, by extracting certain elements of the history and customs, and reinterpreting them into a physical and tangible form on parts of the building.

Image 3.4 Foyer of Constitutional Court Building (Journal 003). Page 67

The scheme was designed with the aim of creating an *"amenity whose accessibility and transparency are enshrined in the values of the new democracy, whilst preserving the memory of the past"* (Journal 004: 32), that is why, in the choice of materials, extensive glazing has been utilized to keep the feeling of openness and transparency (Journal 004: 33). Other materials used on the scheme are: off shutter concrete which is exposed and untreated, plastered brickwork. Some brickwork recovered on the site was left unplastered and exposed, this was an aim to retain the history of the site, and curtain walling (Journal 004: 31). The building consists of finishes such as honed slate, galvanised steel and Merbau timber (Ibid). These create a rich pallet of interesting combinations of colour grounded in its immediate context while being apart while drawing from its surrounding and environment.

Figure 3.4 Lower Floor Plan of Constitutional Court Building (Journal 003). Page 66
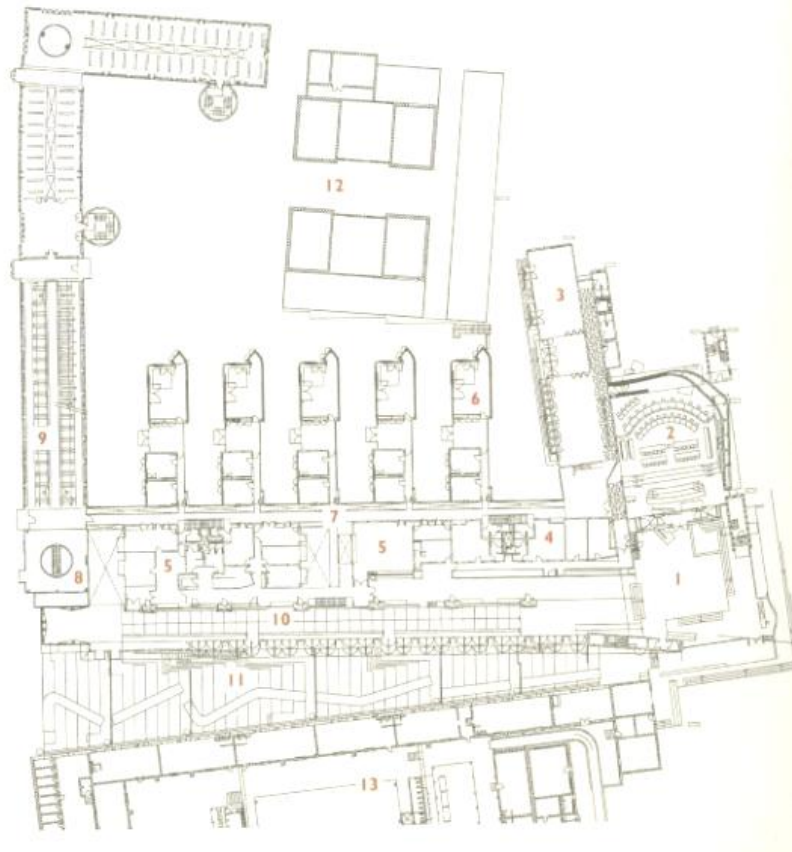
Figure 3.5 View from above building (Journal 003). Page 66

Due to the public nature of the building and its importance to society and the country, the architects involved with the design aimed at creating a building that sought the power of a pre-eminent building without monumentality (Journal 005: 2). To create an *"appropriate architectural expression, to reflect a new democratic institution and to have profound changes in society and culture"* (Journal 005: 3). The building was not meant to become a backdrop to be admired from afar, but to be a place that has the potential to express a new architecture rooted in the South African landscape, both physically and culturally (Ibid). The Constitutional Court building has achieved this, and much more.

Another building or development that is a relevant example that portrays the qualities of the African Renaissance, although not as actually considered a renaissance building, is the Johannesburg Metro Mall public transport interchange and market. The Metro Mall is located in the North West part of the CBD in the city of the Johannesburg, South Africa. It comprises of the *"largest taxi rank in the city, together with a bus terminal and formal retail and trading facilities"* (Journal 006: 11). The Metro Mall is sited on a 2.6 hectare site, which runs between Bree Street on the south, extended Pim Street on the north, from West to Sauer Streets and from Sauer to Simmonds Streets (Ibid).

Image 3.6 View from above building (Journal 006). Page 66

The site stretches over two portions of land, with the land-use prior to construction of the Metro Mall consisting of: five story parking garage which was owned by the municipality, neglected ablution facilities and a large portion of the site served inadequately as a bus and taxi terminal which were inadequate to meet the transport and commuters needs (Journal 006: 12). The Metro Mall consists of a multi story complex that accommodates: a traders market, traders storage, stores opening up both internally and onto the streets, parking garage, taxi holding facility offices for taxi associations, offices for the building management as well as the transport administration (Journal 006: 13).

Image 3.7 View from above building (Journal 007). Page 44

The Metro Mall was designed to engage and interact with the surrounding environment and adjacent streets, rather than close itself off from them (Journal 006: 14). The architects have chosen to utilize robust materials and finishes, for function and durability, in order to withstand the rigours of the urban city of Johannesburg. The building consists of a concrete frame with red brick infill and cladding, aluminium framed and glazed shop-fronts with roller shutter doors for security purposes (Ibid). This is in continuity with the existing facades along Bree Street and West Street, taking its cue from the existing context and enhancing it in a new and contemporary form.

Image 3.8 View from above building. (Journal 006) Page 43

Image 3.9 View from above building. (Journal 006) Page 42

The choice of materials used can be seen as reminiscent of, or taking precedent from Johannesburg's mining and industrial history, thus continuing with the familiar palette of colours and tones and re-asserting the urban context (Journal 006: 17) as well as retaining its spirit of place. The complex was designed by Urban Solutions Architects and Urban Designers who were also involved with the urban design framework for the entire

Johannesburg upper city redevelopment. The aim, through this development, was to promote mixed-use urban opportunities, support public mobility via various transport nodes, enhance connections with the surrounding city fabric, to observe street boundaries in the construction of perimeter buildings with active street edges and to acknowledge the street as a public space (Journal 006: 14). To further enhance public ownership of the building, local community artists were sourced and commissioned for the artworks, murals and part of the cladding (Journal 007: 4). Although these are all important design principals to follow when designing a form of architecture grounded in its context and which is for the people, these apply even more to the above mentioned building. These lessons can also be taken to inform future buildings sited within the city fabric.

The building, as analysed in the Digest of South African Architecture of the year 2004/2005, concludes that *"The building complex indicates a significant shift in the approach to dealing with public buildings and the provision for a sector of society marginalised in the past* and *it presents itself with a sense of pride and a sense of arrival, avoiding the stereotype taxi ranks we see dotted around the urban city centres"* (Journal 007: 4).

3.7 Globalization

It is a common phenomenon that the world is in a new era, the era of globalization. Where there is a fast and seamless transfer of data, ideas and the economy of different nations in different parts of the world. This has had a significant effect on the character of traditional modes of expression. This new era has formed a universal culture whereby the economy and technology have expanded as the regions have fused and combined into capitals, and capitals into metropolis and metropolis into megapolis (Nesbitt, 1996: 485). There has also been an ongoing debate as to whether the African Renaissance should, in relation to architecture and other associated fields, should be a return in form and building construction typology to the indigenous forms of the African tradition, especially in relation to South Africa being the country of focus. Or should it be a shift into a more globalized state, where it aims to be more like a mega polis of the first world countries. Where the skyline is populated by*; tall office towers housing multinational corporations, transnational banks, world trade centre's or five star hotels* (Oncu 1997 :1), all with glass facades and modern smart materials, built in an international style of construction and, if so, what are the social implications arising there

from. The essence of this part of the debate is whether the African Renaissance should be geared towards a more globalized or a more localized state.

In his paper Ayse Oncu (1997 :3) describes globalization as a movement of ideas, information and culture from one region or culture to another, creating a borderless world, and not a movement or a shift from one period to another but a contemporary metropolitan experience. Globalization, which can also be referred to as decolonization, as Ronald Niezen (2005: 3) puts it, is the world becoming one community where there is a fast transfer of information and data. Where there is a seamless sharing of ideas and ideologies and in most cases, it is the bombarding or imposing of western ideologies onto the rest of the world. This creates one universal culture and identity killing the local culture and traditions. Therefore one should be careful of globalization, especially in the field of architecture. One should take elements of what is good from other cultures and nations but not completely discard one's own that was derived from one's own context. This is one of the fundamental issues that South Africa and the rest of the African nations are grappling with regarding the built environment. How do these nations evolve and grow in order to compete with the world's leading nations in terms of infrastructure, special planning and architecture but still retain their ethnicity, culture and some part of their history. Frampton, on his view of modernisation, states how every culture cannot absorb and sustain the impact and shock of modern civilization, and there is a paradox on how to become, but at the same time return to and revive the sources of old and dormant civilizations, while participating in the universal civilization. This applies in particular to the context of South Africa, whereby the country and the nation are struggling with issues of identity in the fields of architecture and its associated disciplines.

Globalization leads to urbanization, from rural to urban or improved urbanization, which is, in a form of an existing urban context, being improved in its structure and functions. The predicament that arises with urbanization is that it disregards the existing historical and cultural structures present and requires a complete shift in lifestyle and thought. For example, a common scenario observed at a local level in South Africa is when a person currently residing in a rural area moves to an urban city area, and is forced to leave his traditional ways of the rural area. If he was a subsistence farmer he cannot farm and is compelled to reside in a conventional brick and mortar house, or flat, since this is the most common and efficient form of building typology available in the city. This is a more expensive and a more labour

intensive form of construction than that which existed in the rural area. He has been forced to leave behind his rural lifestyle which influenced the type of building in which he lived and the work in which he did, and vice versa. This is another factor that the concept of the African Renaissance is aiming at addressing and rectifying, that one should not just simply disregard ones existence and heritage in the search of a westernised ideology of what can be considered progress or success (Mlhaba 2: 2007), of the so called urban developed living. This form of living tends to dissolve all forms of cultures and identity in its quest for universality in accommodating everyone. It is however imperative that as a society creates a forward progression and development by sampling from other cultures what would be beneficial and an improvement of one's own culture, but still retain the essence and fundamental principles of the existing culture and creating opportunities in the places where people are located, while rectifying the mindset that one needs to reside in a city be successful. The African continent did not have the opportunity of evolving with time, as Mhlaba notes how even with such practices as African architecture and all other aspects, the colonial interventions were used as a tool of suppression and the continent became a victim drowned by the Eurocentric standards of definitions and interpretations (Mhlaba, 3: 2007). Therefore all progress which might have taken place was halted by this regime and those that followed.

The other argument that prevails in relation to globalization is the fact that history has shown us that in order for anything to survive, be it culture, tribes, animals, civilization, identity or even architecture, it must evolve and change with the times, along with its formulating theories and strategies. This as in the example of architecture, will ensure that the practice of as well as the identity of a particular place will continue to survive, thrive and move forward in history. This however has not been the case in the indigenous aspect of South Africa and most other African cities, and this was due to the role played by apartheid and colonization. Oppressors in the form of colonisers suppressed the development of existing structures of their host country and enforced their rule, culture, architecture and other forms of living. This hindered or put a stop to what might have been the development of the indigenous architecture of that country. Mhlaba states that the many centuries of colonial invasion in Africa passed with the extinction of generations of indigenous knowledge and customs, with reliable understanding of what would be regarded as African (Mhlaba 2: 2007). This is true in all fields and sectors of society, be it art, culture, identity or architecture and has led to the current problem facing many developing countries in Africa, including South Africa, that

they do not have their own contemporary form of architectural identity indigenous to the country, "*since most of the African architecture thus far have displayed from various angles, influences of colonial ideologies: consciously, subconsciously or unconsciously so*" (Mhlaba 2: 2007). Therefore there needs to be a revisit and reinvention, or one can say a rebirth, in the way in which the practice of architecture and construction of the built environment is executed in the context of South Africa and Africa as a whole. Thus also advocating a desperate need for a renaissance and a relook into such fields and practices of architecture and associated disciplines.

Globalization does not need to be a negative entity when viewed in light of the African Renaissance, in fact one of the core challenges of the concept is to ensure that globalisation has great opportunities, because at present its benefits are unevenly shared (Pahad, speech: 2007). It is evident that we live in a globalised society and it would be short sighted to say that the African continent or any country in the world should not participate in global affairs. It is after all through this global communication that we share ideas, theories, philosophies and trade to ensure that our economy, culture and lifestyle actually progresses and does not remain stagnant. It is through this inter-communication that we learn from each other, but we must just ensure that everyone gets a fair crack at the deal, not to use globalisation to benefit only a selected few.

The investigation undertaken here is going to focus primarily on the need for the African Renaissance to transform and uplift the area and community of the city of Durban by means of architecture. As mentioned above, the concept of the African Renaissance can be applied to wide and varied fields of society, with each branching off and formulating a network where one aids or influences the other in some sort of way. The case of the African Renaissance in South Africa can be seen as a search for a contemporary indigenous South African form of architecture but, at the same time it, must ensure that it uplifts and gives back to the local community as well as being influenced by other social forms, such as the socio economic context in which it is based. This research will focus on the latter part of the statement. Aziz Pahad stated at the African Renaissance summit in Durban in 2007 that the core essence of the African Renaissance is an economic and social development agenda for Africa and "*it is a comprehensive far-reaching global plan to tackle poverty and the developmental needs of African in the age of globalisation...*

We believe that the challenge we face today is to ensure that globalization becomes a positive force for all the worlds' people" (Pahad, speech: 2007)

3.8 Conclusion

The African Renaissance encompasses all aspects of society and it cannot be viewed or investigated through fragmentation. The concept touches on various social components such as religion, culture, economy, identity and education (Cossa 2000: 1) as well as history, tradition, lifestyles, the built environment and the economy. Cossa goes on to add that Africa is a continent that consist of interrelationships in which aspects of life are interrelated and to separate all of the above mentioned elements would be to do injustice to the continent. That's why in order to diverge the concept of the African Renaissance in relation to architecture, one must also investigate all the other factors that might have an influence, directly or indirectly on the architectural field. The study of the concept and theory of the African Renaissance is a very diverse and complex one. This is due to the fact that the concept involves so many different components and variants which influence or affect it in one way or another. As briefly discussed earlier in this chapter, the concept was formulated as a result of decades of oppression of the people of the African continent, and the after effects of the oppressive system that continued afterwards as a result of the measures and structures that were implemented and put into place in order to perpetuate the ideals of the oppressors. The African Renaissance is a tool aimed at addressing the injustice caused by these forms of oppression. It is a tool to revive and redefine the social, economic, cultural and physical landscape across the African continent in order to favour the African people.

The African Renaissance concept can be implemented across most fields and studies in the African context since it advocates a general renewal and revitalization across all sectors of society. The concept is not aimed at a certain racial group or a specific country or cultural entity but is aimed at all people of Africa who may be affected by the issues pertaining to the continent across all borders of the world, since the concept is not just a reform of the physical and tangible aspects, but also a reform of the mindset in the manner in which people view and perceive the African continent and its people. As in the European Renaissance, the African Renaissance is all about the rebirth and renewal of the continent, but it is somewhat different though in execution. Both forms of renaissance came about as a need for change of the dire

conditions that existed, but the major difference between the two renaissances was that the European Renaissance was more inclined to the artistic, cultural and architectural fields and the African Renaissance is in relation to all aspects of African society. When comparing the two renaissances, one must also take cognisance of the different eras and times in which they existed.

Including also factors such as globalisation, the African Renaissance has many additional challenges which it needs to address, including the fact that countries within the African continent in general lag far behind in all aspects from the first world and developed countries. One must also be wary that such huge structures of reform do not and should not be expected to miraculously occur over night. Just as the European Renaissance took place over a number of centuries, so too must the African Renaissance be given enough time for the concept to mature and filter through to all the different strata's of the communities on the continent in order for the desired changes to take effect. When it comes to African Renaissance in relation to South Africa, the policy makers of South Africa have implemented the concept into the national policy and this shows a strong commitment and political will from the government into progress and making the concept work.

CHAPTER 4 - RENEWAL AND TRANSFORMATION

The Meiji Restoration

The Meiji Restoration which occurred in Japan is most likely the closest form of era or movement that has achieved through a form of conscious change aimed at achieving transformation. What Japan achieved is almost parallel to what the African Renaissance is hoping to achieve but to a much lesser extent. As the restoration of Japan only took place there with only one ethnic group of people all having a similar history and culture, the African Renaissance differs greatly in that respect, although the end goal is similar. The objective of the Meiji Restoration was to achieve restoration and renovation through economic and security transformation. However, in the case of Africa, it is aimed at achieving total transformation and rebirth of all countries and ethnic groups in all fields of society throughout the continent.

"The start of the Meiji era and the beginning of Japan's road to modernization started when the 16 year old emperor Mutsuhito selected the era name Meiji for his reign. Japan emerged from the Meiji period with a parliamentary form of government and as a world power through military expansion abroad" (Shumikwa 1999: 2), and achieved economic reform through drastic economic transformation within the country. As noted by Beasly (1973: 1) the Meiji restoration and renovation was brought about in the nineteenth century by an increase in pressure from expanding western counties. This posed a political and military danger to Japan, as well as danger to their independence as well as their culture (Ibid). Before Meiji rule, Japan was governed by a number of different Lords within the country under a medieval structure where they owned land and governed over the countrymen especially in the rural areas of Japan where the majority of the population resided (Beasly. 1973: 3). The country finally came under the Meiji Government after some civil unrest within the country in 1868 (Shimikawa, 1999: 2). Immediately, after coming into power the new government wanted to ensure that a new world order was in place, one of justice and opportunity, so they issued the Charter Oath which promised that there would be an establishment of assembles to deal with all matters through public discussion, and that the old feudal customs would be abolished (Ibid). There were *"attempts to implement the assemblies and public discussions of the oath, but before long, the regime reverted back to a more authoritarian structure. However the boundary between the social classes were broken down and there were reforms that lead to*

the establishment of human rights and religious freedom" (Ibid). In the year 1889, as stated by Sumikawa (1999: 3), Japan introduced its first Constitution. Based on the European style and composition, a parliament was set up where the Emperor was placed as a sovereign figure head. There was also a transformation in the form of education, where a western form of education was adopted and fostered in state schools. With the economic transformation, factories were established and trade was encouraged (Beasley. 1973: 2). This resulted in, Japan being able take its placed and claim its position as one of the most powerful and enlightened countries in the world all within a generation (Ibid). To inform the people of the aim of the restoration, its history was documented in books, used in plays and taught in Japanese schools to further continue the reform of the nation (Beasley. 1973: 3). Beasley further notes how the restoration was an official outlet of the day to reflect the Taguchi as a means of condemning the past and glorifying the then present, as a shift and progression of man from barbarism to civilization and the rise of Japan to the next higher rung on the social evolutionary ladder (Ibid). This was a monumental era in the history of Japan, where is transformed from a feudal system into a modern and industrialised state with a parliamentary form of government and its military adventures abroad (Wylie, 1999: 4). This formed the backbone of the revolution in Japan. The end of the Meiji Rule came about with the death of the Emperor in July 1912. This era in Japanese history saw unprecedented change and transformation which targeted and changed key and fundamental factors influencing operational systems of the country and people's lifestyles in the political, economic and social sectors (Ibid). The restoration was able to achieve its desired results, and in the process achieve greatness.

It may seem a bit unjust to compare the two forms of upliftment programs since one might think they were too different in nature and that they occurred in different epochs and therefore dealt with different issues at the time. The Meiji Restoration came about as a prevention measure from the advances of the colonialist movement by western and neighbouring countries as well as from internal threats within the country. The African Renaissance is a responsive measure to the effects of colonialism and the following knock-on effect brought about by the regime in the time of globalization. In terms of the scope of work too, the Meiji Restoration in Japan took place in one country while the African Renaissance is aimed at achieving a continental transformation which encompasses many diverse cultures, history, religions, beliefs and population dynamics. In terms of size, Africa is the second largest continent in the world and Japan is only a small country: an island off the continent of

Asia. Therefore the magnitude of work to be done in Africa is far greater than that what was undertaken in Japan. The main point about the two movements or concepts is that Africa wants, in the years to come, to achieve a similar end goal, or to be in a similar position as Japan is in today, so that the Continent can shake off the stigma and negative perceptions of the social, political and built environment conditions within the country. This is to enable Africa to ultimately be considered as a united global powerhouse among the world's nations in all respects, disciplines and sectors of society.

From the study one can see the nature and mammoth task that lies ahead in bringing about the desired reforms. Just as the European Renaissance and the Japanese Meiji restoration took place over a number of decades - even centuries in the case of the European Renaissance - and, for the movements to really bear fruit and to accomplish what it is intended, so in the case of the African Renaissance, one must not be naive and expect results to materialise overnight. Due to the complexities of the concept, the many different components that factor into the equation, and just the sheer size of the task, one must not expect miracles and for immediate changes. But only with constant application of the principals of the concept and hard work by all members of society, together with the will of the people, politicians, those in positions of power and those who can contribute or have the influence to shape society in some way, can a true African Renaissance be achieved. As to when that will be, nobody can tell, but one can only hope that it will be within our lifetime.

CHAPTER 5 - CASE STUDIES

5.1 Introduction

A number of case studies have been looked at in this investigation, since the study could not identify a particular building that has all the properties of an African Renaissance Centre. In the investigation, it was found that the proposed African Renaissance Centre would comprise of a number of different activities and would be a celebration of different activities that exist within a specific city, and all cities will comprise of a different formulation of activities, depending on their culture, history and social environment. These different studies will be tested against the different principals and theories of the African Renaissance, so as to investigate how well the studies respond to them. The case studies that are to be investigated in this research are to be focused within the city of Durban and surrounding areas. The investigation will look at activities that celebrate or enhance the life of the people in the city in one way or another, be it socially, culturally or economically, and in relation to the theories and concepts that have been discussed in the previous chapters. The study therefore investigates a number of case studies that analyse different components of functions that are relevant primarily to the concept of the African Renaissance and therefore will contribute to the design of the proposed African Renaissance Centre. The case studies that have been investigated are as listed in Table 1 below.

FUNCTION	CASE STUDY	ARCHITECT/ DESIGNER
RETAIL	City traders' Stalls	The City Architects
TRADITIONAL/ ALTERNATIVE MEDICINE	Market traders' Stalls	Design Workshop SA
ART GALLERY	The African Art Centre	The African Art Centre in association with Design Workshop Architects
MUSEUM	The Durban Local History Museum	Mr P Patterson and Charles Freeman
PERFORMANCE	The Durban Playhouse	Small, Petit and Robson
CULTURAL CENTRE	The BAT Centre	Architects Collaborative

Table 1

5.2 Durban City Traders: Street Traders

Architects: City Architects

Image 5.1 Pedestrian mall between City Traders Market. (By Author) 22/03/2011

5.2.1 Introduction

The retail component of the research involved a study into the previously informal markets of the Durban CBD. The significance of this study area is the fact that it promotes economic development and sustainability of the local community of Durban, and promotes a sustainable living through informal trade. This part of the city has achieved its own unique identity that that can be easily differentiated from any other in the city with its market-like feel and function. This case study was investigated due to its nature of being people driven. It responds to the needs of the people, by providing retail opportunities and promoting micro economic development for the community.

It is however noted that this is not the only informal economic hub in the city, but this one is more organised and more aesthetically correlated within the city district. Over time this market has become part of the context, and it functions symbiotically with its surroundings. It provides a service for the community to purchase their goods at reasonable prices due to productive competition among the traders. It also provides activity in what would otherwise be a dead and desolate linkage space. Some of the principals of the African Renaissance stipulate that African cities must be all inclusive and must respond to the needs of the people by creating meaningful places that aim to uplift the social and economic standings of the community, and this case study fulfils that role to a small degree.

5.2.2 Geographical Location

The area of study is located from Dr A B Xuma Street, along the pedestrian underpass adjacent to Church Street; past the Workshop Shopping Centre and ending all the way up in Soldiers Way, adjacent to the Virgin Active Gym building. The entire area consists of traders' stalls along a pedestrian thoroughfare with a public performance and viewing arena within it. The area is all open space with different forms of paving and changes in levels, all universally accessible, as the path ramps down under Monty Naicker Road (Pine Street) and Dr Pixley KaSeme Street (Commercial Street). There are also a number of trees around the site, more concentrated on the northern portion of the investigation area, opposite the Workshop. This provides much needed shade on site and softens up the hard concrete surface, making the site more pleasant to experience.

Image 5.2 Areal View of study area (Google Maps) 28/03/2011

5.2.3 Historical and Social Background

From interviews conducted with a number of randomly selected traders from the site, the common issues and information gathered are listed below:

- Before the 2010 FIFA Soccer World Cup, the area used to be overcrowded, more organically arranged, and the traders brought their own tents and stalls for trading. The City has since formalised the area to a large degree by rearranging the hawkers so to ensure that people with similar products are not too close to each other, minimising conflicts between the hawkers. They also provided the hawkers with gazebos to create some sort of uniformity and order, then charged them a levy for a trading stand and subsequently provided security for the area. The general consensus is that the changes have been for the better and seem to have made the site function more effectively both for the hawkers and their customers as well as for the general public passing by.

- The area comprises mainly hawkers from all walks of life and different ethnic groups, selling varying goods from clothes, underwear, shoes, cell phone accessories, to food and entertainment products, etc.

- The area is found to be very secure, with security personnel employed by the city and others who are solely dedicated to the area, who patrol frequently.

- The traders have to pay a rental fee of R450 for the stalls and the stand which they occupy which goes to the upkeep, maintenance and security of the area.

- Most hawkers commute from outside the CBD and therefore have to pay for storage of their goods after working hours. They also have to pay for the 'trolley boy' to take the goods to the place of storage - storage is a big concern for most hawkers.

5.2.4 Empirical Data

The stalls differ in size but the common one is a 2.5m² gazebo, with a pitched roof and it is covered by marquee material on the roof and on the sides. The side walls of the stalls can be opened or closed depending on the preference of the individual.

Image 5.3 Picture of part of character of trading stalls (By Author) 28/03/2011
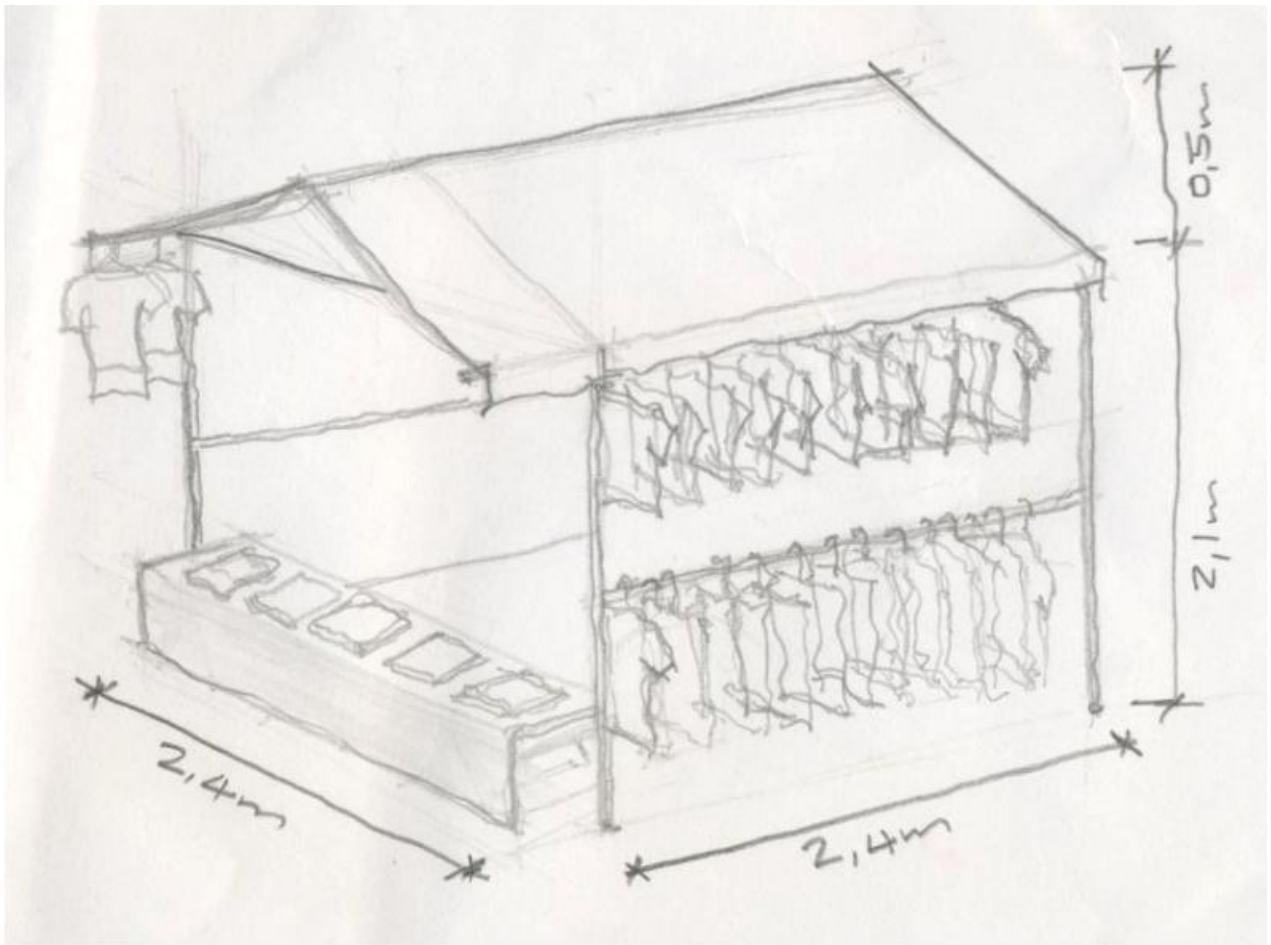
Figure 5.4 Sketch of a typical selling gazebo (By Author) 28/03/2011

The stalls are situated around the study area, and they are organised in a manner which defines circulation paths. A public amphitheatre is also located in the study area. The amphitheatre hosts a variety of functions; from musicals, comedy, talks and a wide range of shows. This adds to the quality of the space.

5.2.5 Conclusion

This specific area of study is significant in that it also represents elements of the African Renaissance concept in that it promotes integration of individuals from different backgrounds and ethnic groups. It also promotes sustainable economic development for the local community. The space where the market is located is ideal since it is on a prominent pedestrian route and the openness of the whole route allows for flexibility and growth of the entire market system. The study area could be compared with some of the African Markets and bazaars that are common on the African continent, where trade, transfer of information, teaching and socialising occurs on the streets. There is also an outdoor amphitheatre on the site where anyone can hold talks, shows or performances. This aids in creating an authentic African experience where mixtures of social and economic interactions take place and promotes the transfer of information.

Image 5.5 Outdoor Amphitheatre (By Author) 28/03/2011

5.3 Traditional and Alternative Medicine: Market Herbal 'Muthi' Traders Market traders'

Stalls

By Design Workshop

Image 5.6 General view of the Muthi Market (By Author) 30/03/2011

5.3.1 Introduction

The Traditional Medicine (*Muthi*) Market in Warwick Junction is reserved solely for the sale and promotion of traditional herbal medicines. This area of study is located along a pedestrian bridge off the Brook Street Traders' Market and spans the Berea Train Station and Market Street towards the Early Morning Fresh Food Market.

The aim of this market was to provide a platform where traditional herbalists and *izinyanga* were able to sell their goods and medicines as well as consult with those who required their services.

This is the only area of its kind in the city and it has a very distinct character and function. The city of Durban has taken a big step towards recognising that traditional herbal medicine

does exist and taking appropriate measures to build reserve and facilitate for such structures for the exclusive use of traditional medicine and practices. These are huge steps in creating an inclusive African city for all who reside within the city district. A large part of the populous of the Durban Metropolitan utilises traditional forms of medicine as their choice of healing. Most parts of Africa, especially South Africa still recognise traditional forms of medicine as a legitimate manner of treating ailments. Therefore, some of the aspects of the African Renaissance state that one should not shun away from traditional customs, but it should be celebrated and given its appropriate recognised platform.

5.3.2 Geographical Location

The site under investigation forms part of a pedestrian walkway that extends from the Badisha Peer memorial, over the Berea Train Station platforms and Market Street. This particular market consists of two types of stalls, the first being a partly covered structure on the sides of the walkway, with IBR sheeting with gum pole construction and a concrete barrier behind. The second type of stall is located in the middle of the site and it is informal in a sense that the hawkers built them themselves with whatever materials and form of construction they deemed adequate. The site forms a vital link from the central city district to the public transport nodes of rail, taxis and buses, and experiences high volumes of pedestrian traffic in both directions throughout the day, peaking at the start and end of the working business day, and the site is closed off in the evening.
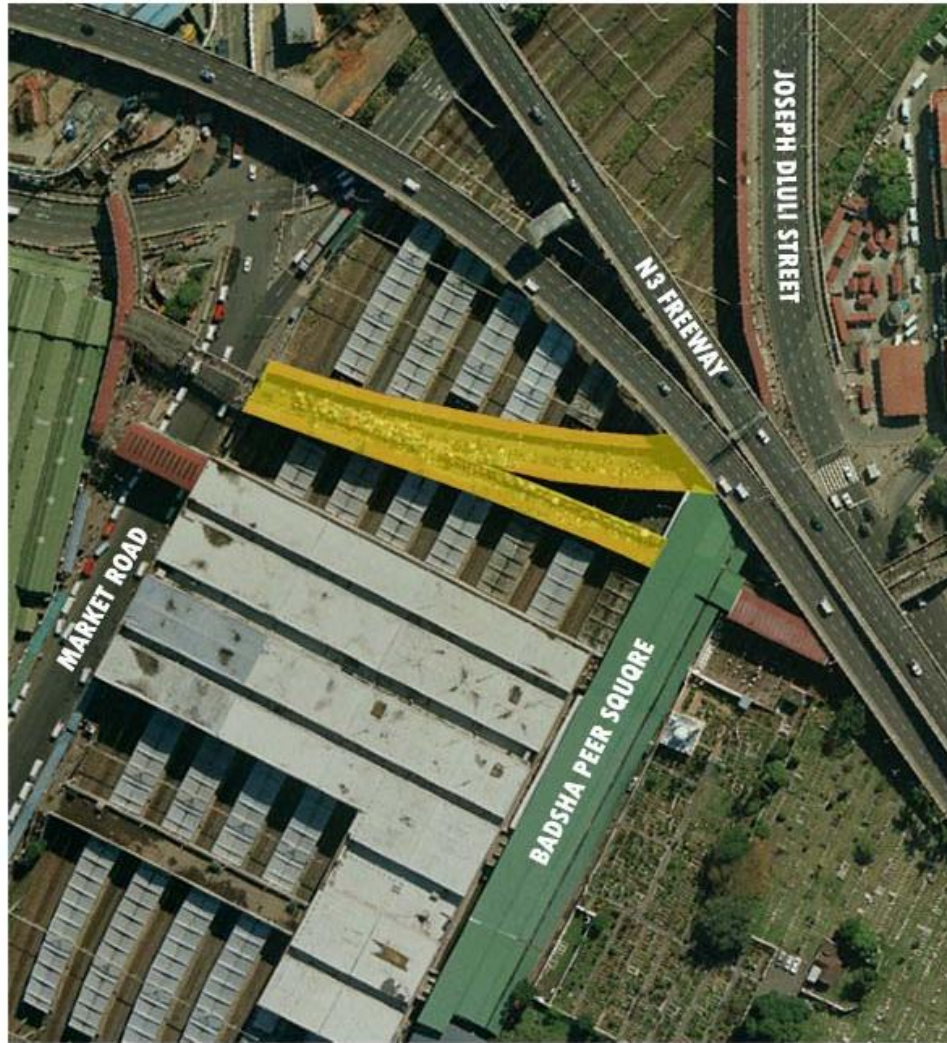
STUDY AREA

Image 5.7 Areal View Depicting the Investigation area. (By author) 15/04/2011

5.3.3 Historical and Social Background

Before its current function, the site included vacant and derelict on and off ramps onto Queen Street, which were never completed (Journal KZNIA 3/2001). The existing additions and modifications to the site were carried out in the year of 1999. The site is managed by a management forum responsible for the market in association with the relevant body of the city council. The forum has offices within the Warwick triangle, near the site and its role is conflict and dispute resolution as well as the collection of rental revenue from the hawkers. It also manages locking up of the precinct as well as security issues within and around the site. There are two types of rental tariffs charged for the occupants of the investigation site.

5.3.4 Empirical Data

The traders, who occupy the plots that are on the edge of the bridge and which are partly covered by a mono pitched roof, pay R75 per month. Traders who occupy the plots in the centre of the bridge, without any cover, pay R50 as rent to occupy the plot. The plots on the edge of the bridge that are partly covered are sub-divided into plots that average 3 meters by 2 meters. This, according to the traders, is sufficient space for them to sell their goods, although there is criticism of the stalls on the basis that they do not provide adequate cover in cases of extreme weather conditions such as rain. The muthi/herbs that they sell deteriorate if they are exposed to water before preparation. Thus in extreme adverse weather conditions, the traders have to cover up their stands with plastic sheets and inhibits their potential for trade. The overall development is a good initiative by the city but it lacks design integrity, since it does not adequately accommodate the functions that are occurring on it.
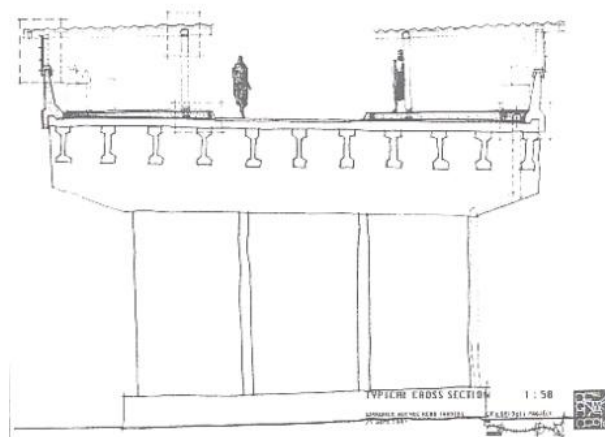

Image 5.8 Section through Bridge. (KZNIA Vol3/2001)

5.3.5 Conclusion

Alternative and traditional medicines form a large part of the lives of the people of Durban. Although not recognised as an official form of medicine and treatment, a large number of people use traditional medicines. This practice and culture has been in existence for centuries in South Africa and particularly KwaZulu-Natal. The practice is more predominant among the Nguni people, who in Durban comprise mainly Zulus and Xhosas.

The Traditional Muthi Market poses a new dimension in the composition of the city, where it forms a new cultural identity and makes it very distinctive from any other place both in structure and in ambiance. This is a self sustaining economic hub, within the city confines, catering for the lower income range of society. The traders have developed a close network of relationships where they help each other and look out for each other's stalls if they are away. There are many other secondary beneficiaries who benefit from this market such as the suppliers of some of the different ingredients for the production of the various types of medicines, the trolley boys who can be seen carrying heavy loads in and around the site, and the independent individuals who go around and carry out the process of *ukugqula*. This process is when the bark or pieces of a tree are ground into fine particles for the preparation of the muthi. This aids in the creation of secondary jobs and more efficient working methods. The significance of this area is that the city is aware of its potential and recognises the practice. That is also why there are dedicated municipal land and resources to fund and co-manage the whole precinct. This can be seen as a positive step towards the development of a truly African city, whereby local cultures and traditions are recognised and supported and not frowned upon. This is in line with the African Renaissance, where the people of the African continent not only look towards the west as their only source for medicines, but also use their own traditional remedies which have worked for them for centuries. In so doing they are also creating a sustainable environment for economic independence.

5.4 The Arts: The African Art Centre

Architects: OMM Design Workshop

Image 5.8 Areal View of study area (Google Maps) 20/04/2011

5.4.1 Introduction

The African Art Centre functions as a non profit organization which acts as a catalyst for skills identification, development and skills training for groups of young and targeted male and female arts and crafts people, primarily in the region of KwaZulu-Natal. The African Art Centre undertakes a number of functions which go further than that of a typical art gallery. Its main focus is on indigenous and cultural forms of art and crafts as well as fine art and jewellery design. All information gathered for this case study was achieved through an interview with Ms Nozipho Zulu who is the Centre's Development Officer, and also from informational brochures about the African Art Centre, as well as through empirical data gathered on site.

The aims and objectives of the African Art Centre are very similar to those of the African Renaissance Concept and are:

- providing creative and skills development of talented youths especially individuals in the region of KwaZulu-Natal;

- actively discovering, encouraging and nurturing works of creativity, originality and the highest quality;

- providing an outlet for the exhibition, sale and dispatch of artists' and craft persons' work, based on principals of fair trade;

- assisting young and established artists and craftspeople to become self-supporting by accessing funding for training, development and for exhibitions, displays and publicity;

- communicating and documenting traditional and contemporary trends in the art and crafts field;

- preserving the local cultural heritage of the province .
- rural skills development through learning workshops

All of the above points have some significance in the rebuilding of the African continent and for its people. The African Art Centre celebrates the culture and art of the people and seeks to unravel and nurture their talent so that local people can benefit and sustain themselves with it. This is one of the key principals of the African Renaissance concept, to uplift and empower people, especially those who were previously disadvantaged by colonial and apartheid regimes.

5.4.2 Geographical Location

The African Art Centre occupies the ground floor of a building at 94 Florida Road, Durban. The building is a six story mixed use building with offices and residential components on the upper floors. Florida Road is one of Durban's most bustling and active nodes and according to Ms Zulu, the centre is ideally located since the building has plenty of on street parking and the centre is also visited by many overseas tourists as well as those who frequent the number of restaurants and Bed & Breakfasts' in the vicinity. This makes the Florida Road precinct mixed-use in nature and not just dominated by one particular function. The shop opens out onto the relatively busy Florida Road, with a paved court in front of the entrance which becomes a transition space between the building and the pavement edge and is occasionally covered by a marquee and used as additional space when a function being held in the gallery. The African Art Centre leases these premises. Prior to moving to Florida Road the centre

was located in the Tourism Junction Building (old Durban Station building) in the Durban CBD. The reason for the relocation was that there was: no suitable parking in the CBD, crime and a general feeling of insecurity by visiting tourists.

Management of the building, in association with Design Workshop Architects located in the same building in the offices above, have attempted a number of interventions to try and give the building a sense of unique and distinguishable identity. Interventions such as wrapping the tree in front of the building with bright patterned fabric, and using large graphic script for the name of the African Art Centre on the front facade have made the centre more easily identifiable. These interventions are also part of the marketing strategy of the African Art Centre, to inform and to evoke curiosity and interest, as well as to promote it. All of these interventions give the Centre its unique identity in relation to its immediate context within the city landscape.

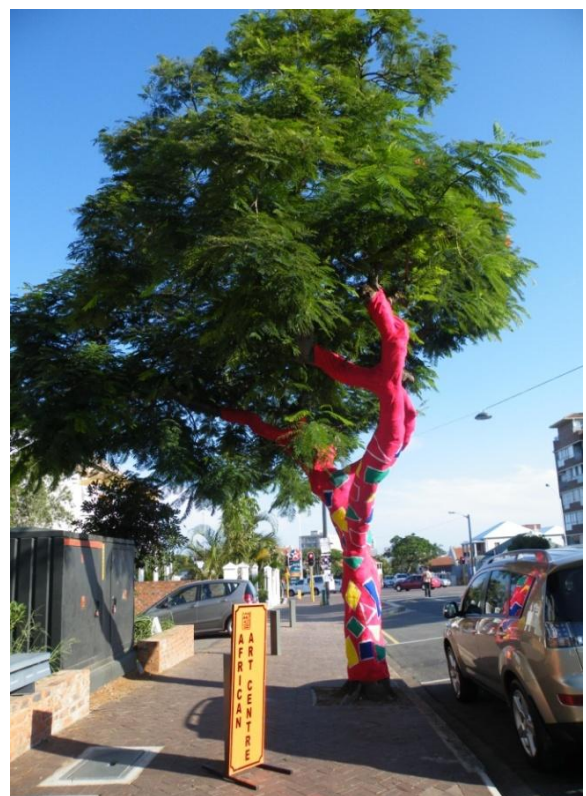Image 5.9 Facade showing graphics of the centre. (By author) 20/04/2011

Image 5.10 Street Decoration. (By author) 20/04/2011

5.4.3 Historical and Social Background

The African Art Centre was established in 1959 by Jo Thorpe who was with the Institute for Race Relations. At that time it operated in Guild Hall Arcade in the city centre. From there it moved to The Tourism Junction Building also in the city centre and then finally it moved to its current location. All these locations were not really adequate, since they had not been designed for the space that the Centre required. Over the years the centre has done well to accommodate its functions in the restricted space available. Historically the African Art Centre has achieved much in terms of developing itself as a brand and company and, most importantly, serving is crafters and artists. The centre has over 2200 active crafters and artists on its books as well as six developmental projects in an ongoing process. The African Art Centre's main function and objective is for community and skills development and it has certainly achieved much in the years it has been in existence, both economically and socially for the community in which it serves.

5.4.4 Empirical Data

The empirical data gathered on site shows that the African Art Centre needs additional space throughout all of its sectors. The front part of the centre, adjacent to the entrance, is used as a gallery for exhibitions. The area is however, too small and the artworks are exposed to excessive direct sunlight in the afternoon which has the potential to damage them. The centre also requires additional space for the display and retail component of the shop, it is currently overcrowded and restricts the circulation space which makes the place seem even smaller than it is. The back section of the centre has partly partitioned work stations with a kitchen area, toilet and small enclosed office. In the interview with Ms Zulu, she noted that the centre has very limited storage facilities which are an important component in an institution such as, especially secure storage for the more valuables items. The African Art Centre portion of the building has not made any allowance for universal accessibility. There is a change in level of two steps from the gallery section to the rest of the shop and offices. A ramp has not been provided for the change in level, making it extremely difficult for an individual in a wheel chair to experience the rest of the shop. The centre does however have very good natural daylight, by taking advantage of the fenestration that is south facing and is not exposed to the direct sunlight. The temperature within the shop and gallery has to be controlled and

monitored by the use of air conditioning not only for the comfort of shoppers but also to ensure preservation of the artworks .If the internal temperature is too warm and humid, it will form mould on the artworks and, if it is too cold clay pieces can begin to crack due to their constant expansion and contraction resulting from the temperature change when the air conditioners are switched off when the shop closes.

5.4.5 Conclusion

In conclusion, as an organisation, the African Art Centre functions very well and plays a vital role in the social development aspect of communities around the province, as well as in the preservation and celebration of the culture and heritage of the people of KwaZulu-Natal. It is located not far from the Durban CBD in a trendy social and cultural zone. This is a relatively ideal location for an art centre as it is not too far out for tourists to find easily. The site is also ideal being on a busy road, and it is relatively accessible by public transport in the form of a bus or minibus taxi, making it easy for artists to bring their work to the centre. Overall the African Art Centre is very successful even though it has some shortfalls mainly due to spatial constraints but it makes best of the resources it has.

5.5 Performance: Durban Playhouse
Architects: Small, Petit and Robson

5.5.1 Introduction

The Durban Playhouse, as it is generally known, was a Tudor style cinema built in 1934 with another cinema, the Princess, next to it. The two buildings were joined, restored and renovated by architects Small, Petit and Robson with a 1200 seater main theatre downstairs catering for large scale productions, such as musicals, opera, ballet and drama. A smaller theatre was made on the first floor with a studio theatre known as The Loft on the third floor. The complex is undoubtedly Durban's finest performance theatre with world class stage setting potential, sound, lighting and recording facilities.

The Durban Playhouse is one of Durban's finest performance venues. With cutting edge stage, sound and lighting design along with an array of other functions that relate to the art of performance. This form of building is an example of a performance venue of music and

dance that is to world standards and is located in the heart of the city. Although this venue is mainly targeted and marketed for contemporary and westernised forms of performances, the study looks at the attributes that encompass a good performance venue.

5.5.2 Geographical Location

The Playhouse complex is located in the centre of the CBD, on Anton Lembede Street (formerly Smith Street) between Acutt Street, and Albany Grove. It comprises two adjacent buildings that were joined to form one complex. The main entrance to the Playhouse is on the busy Anton Lembede Street with a secondary entrance in Albany Grove. The complex is sited in what can be considered a 'cultural district', since this is where many of the city's civic, religious and other cultural buildings are located including the City Hall, with its municipal offices, Library, Art Gallery and Museum. Durban's Local History Museum is not far from it and the main Post Office and a number of churches are also within close proximity of the investigated site.
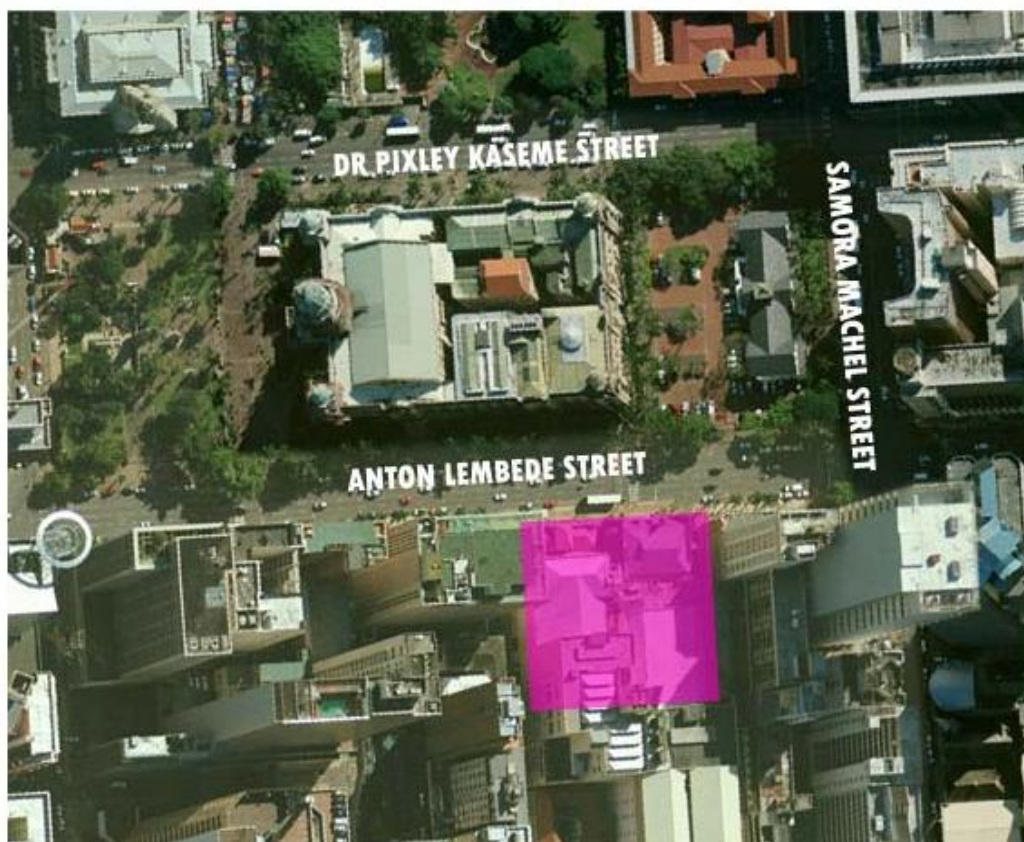
STUDY AREA

Image 5.11 Areal View of trading store (By author) 25/04/2011

Image 5.12 Facade of the Playhouse (By author) 20/24/2011

5.5.3 Historical and Social Background

The Playhouse building was built and opened in 1934, constructed in a Tudor style while its neighbour is Neo Spanish as can be seen from its façade. This theme carries through the foyer of the main entrance. The complex comprises of two distinct buildings which were joined together to form one. The complex underwent refurbishments and renovations in 2003 which were only of an interior and decorative nature.

5.5.4 Empirical Data

The main entrance of the building, as noted previously, is located on Anton Lembede Street and is in the Neo Spanish portion of the complex, entering a general reception lobby and restaurant immediately after it. The Tudor portion of the complex consists of a grand foyer which can open up to Albany Street. The main opera theatre has a multipurpose space which also opens up to Anton Lembede Street, and has a link to the general reception lobby and

restaurant areas. The Opera theatre seats 1224 people and the large stage and backstage facilities, storage and workshops, are all accommodated on the ground floor.
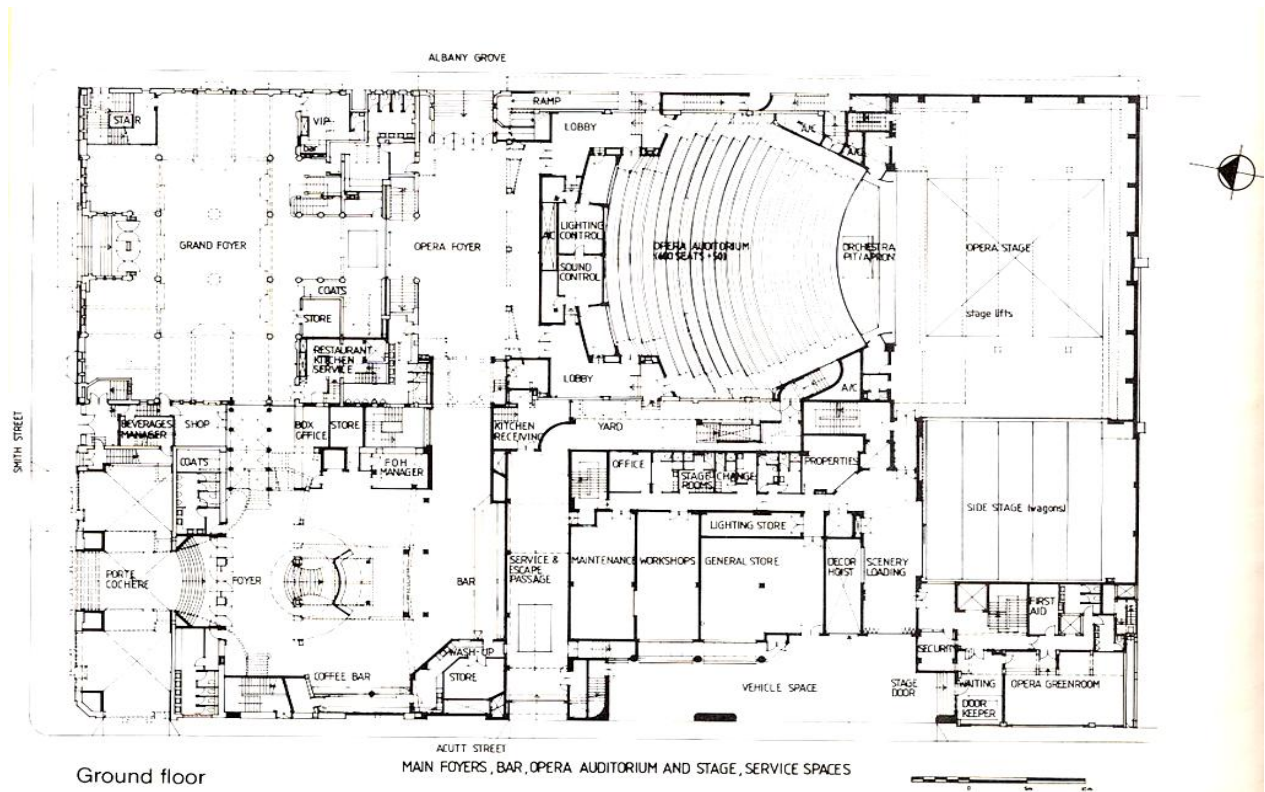

Image 5.13 Ground Floor Plan of the Durban Playhouse. (SA Architect Journal, May/June 2004)

The first floor comprises of a performance theatre auditorium which seats 660 people along with its stage and backstage facilities, offices, multipurpose Albana Room and the second levels of the grand foyer and the opera theatre with its seating. Even on this level there is a clear and fluid form of circulation which runs throughout the entire complex both horizontally and vertically allowing for seamless access from one portion of the building to the next. The second floor consists of the Opera's upper circle seating, the upper level of the performance theatre, the Loft theatre and performance space and offices, as well as the Opera's change and dressing rooms. Above is an eight storey fly tower extending from this floor. There is also a basement in this complex, which has a water plant room. Depending on the level of the Bay's water table, water seeps into the basement and is pumped out again, This system works in conjunction with the air cooling system of the building. The basement also houses some of the rehearsal and storage spaces of the complex.

5.5.5 Conclusion

This form of case study is an example of the requirements and of a well and efficiently run performance and music theatre should be. Taking and learning from the precedent of some of the key factors that constitute a building of this nature, such as the importance of acoustics and insulation, circulation, and the many different functions that happen behind the scenes of a performance and with its additional requirements such as for access and security. As well as the importance of climate control, and maintenance, which are also vital components when running of such a complex.

5.6 Museum: The Durban Local History Museum

Designed: Mr P Patterson and Charles Freeman

Image 5.14 View from the corner of Samora Machel and Anton Lembede Streets. (By Author) 20/04/2011

5.6.1 Introduction

The Durban Local History Museum is responsible for the recording, receiving, archiving and exhibiting many of Durban's historical artefacts from major or prominent epochs in the development of Durban as a city. The building itself has a significant history. The building is now 145 years old, and was declared a National Monument in 1975. From its inception to the present it has played a major part in the history of the city.

One of the key statements of the African Renaissance is a call for the preservation and showcasing of the history and culture of its people and their traditions, so as to learn and celebrate these, and subsequently pass them on to future generations. This building is an ideal case study, to investigate whether it fits the criteria of this aspect of the African Renaissance. Also to see what lessons can be learnt from it as it tries to fulfil its role in the preservation of some of the history of the city of Durban.

5.6.2 Geographical Location

The building is located in Durban's CBD at the rear end of the City Hall. It is bounded by Dr Pixley Kaseme, Samora Machel and Anton Lembede Streets, all three of which have a strong vehicular and traffic pedestrian flow and which generate considerable noise. There are various building typologies in the vicinity of the Local History Museum, generating a mixed-use environment, predominantly cultural. The neighbouring buildings consist of flats, offices, a church, as well as other municipal buildings', all within the immediate vicinity of the Local History Museum.

Image 5.15 Areal View of study area. (By Author) 25/04/2011

5.6.3 Historical and Social Background

The information on the history of the building was obtained from various sources mostly press articles reporting on the building. The building was constructed in 1866 as Durban's Courthouse, and is now Durban's oldest public office building. It fulfilled its role until 1910, when the Courthouse was moved to a building on the Victoria Embankment. The original building plans were drawn up by Mr P Patterson and Charles Freeman, colonial engineers from Pietermaritzburg. The north wing was added in 1891 and then the south wing was added in 1897. On 28th November 1975, it was declared a National Monument by Johannes Pratrus van de Spuy, the then Minister of National Education.

The old Court House Museum, which housed many artefacts of Durban's history, became overcrowded and needed to be relocated. In 1964 there was a huge and rather acrimonious public debate on whether the building should be demolished or renovated as by that time it

82

had become extremely dilapidated. It was suggested that the building be demolished as it was derelict. Some critics maintained it was a bad example of early Victorian architecture. However, the then City Council renovated the building at a cost of R 144 000.

5.6.4 Empirical Data

The building is a charming and well maintained structure within the central CBD and stands out amongst the more modern city buildings. As with most colonial buildings it has a timber floor and high ceilings. The combination of the extra high floor to ceiling, coupled with the materials used and the spatial configuration of large open rooms, provides many possibilities for multiple display configurations within its room. The use of light colours on the walls gives the rooms a feeling of airiness and openness, although all the windows of the exhibition areas are sealed off for the protection of displays against direct sunlight, as well as for security reasons.

The Museum seems to have a well organised artefact filling system; the only major criticism being that it should be more secure. The archive system is located on the upper floor which also has office work stations in the same room. The windows do not have any form of burglar bars. As the artefacts are rare and valuable, more attention should be focused on security. Apart from its archives and documenting facilities, there are a number of permanent visual displays. In one section there is a reconstruction and representation of some of the lives people used to live, as well as the types of structures that were present in those times. Another section is dedicated to Soccer and its history - one of the country's major sports as was confirmed when South Africa hosted the 2010 FIFA Soccer World Cup. Other prominent displays are about the history of the local Zulu radio station, vintage car replica models, the colonial sailing ship set of models and a room dedicated to the life of prominent historical Durban activist, Mahatma Ghandi located on the second floor. The museum is easily accessible and circulation within it is simple and clear, making orientation of oneself within the building easy. This can be due to the size of the building, its relatively small nature makes everything easy to manage, arrange and organise.
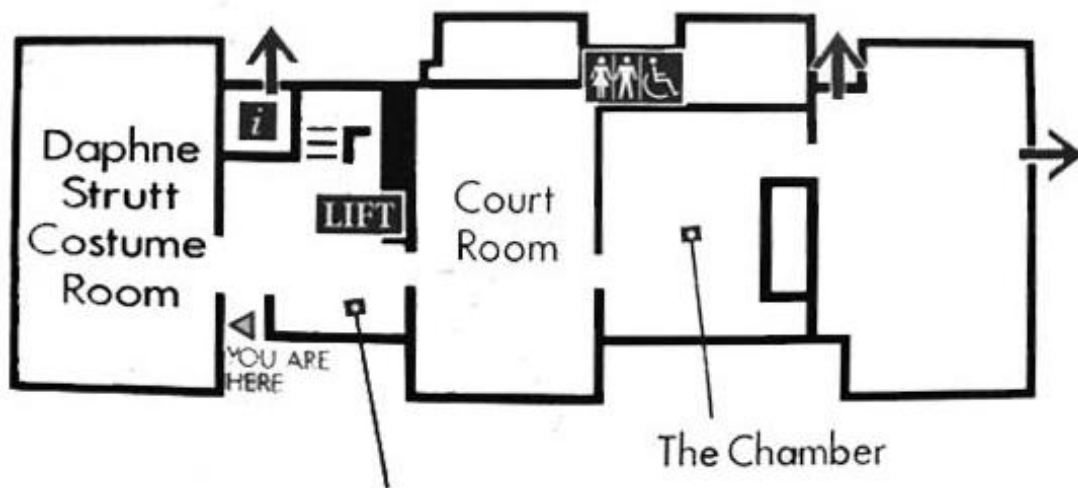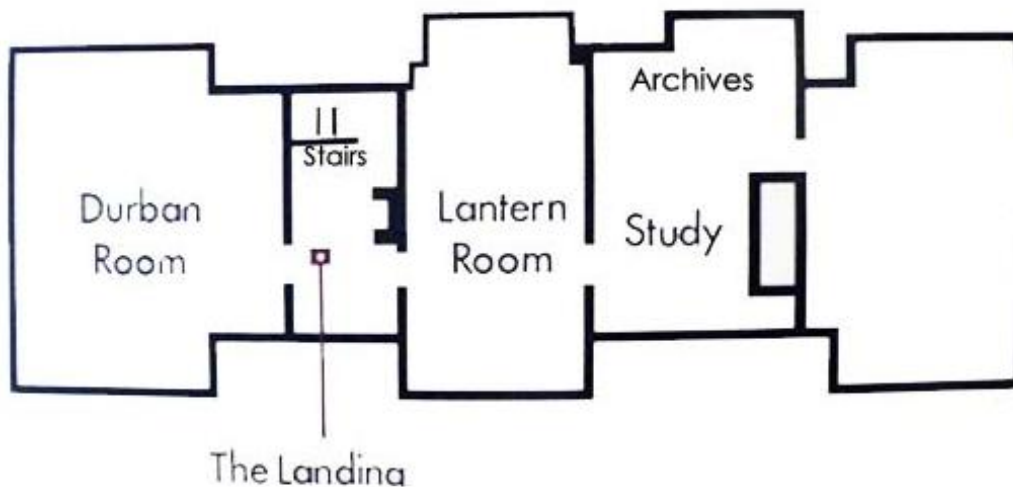
Image 5.16 Ground Floor Plan. (By Author) 20/04/2011

5.17 Ground Floor Plan. (By Author) 20/04/2011

Image 5.18 Facade showing graphics of the centre. (By author) 27/04/2011

Image 5.19 Original interior of a pharmacy. (By Author) 27/04/2011

5.6.5 Conclusion

The building is ideally sited in the middle of the city for its function. It is easily accessible by visitors and people from all walks of life and serves a variety of functions, such as to educate, preserve, exhibit, inform and to record. The building itself is also a historical artefact, since it was built nearly 145 years ago, so it serves as its own precedent for its function. Therefore it does well to preserve the history and heritage of the city for present generations and those to come. It is also easily accessible by the general public and it is used as an educational facility for the visitors and residents of Durban about the history of the city.

The concept of the African Renaissance shares similar values to those the Local History Museum is trying to achieve. The Renaissance highlights the need for a city to be proud of its heritage, conserve, promote and to learn from both the good and bad aspects of its history, so people can learn and appreciate it and not repeat the mistakes of the past. It is also a source of reference which the inhabitants of the city can be proud of.

5.7 The Bat Centre

5.7.1 Introduction

The Bat Centre is a hub for local artists in the city of Durban to develop and showcase their skills in the arts and associated disciplines. This case study is pertinent to the investigation since it is the first building that addresses some of the issues raised by the concept of African Renaissance. The building aims to uplift the cultural aspect of the local community through developments that are people based and specifically respond to the needs of the people across the wide spectrum of the social and cultural divide. The Bat Centre aims to integrate the formally established artists with the developing and informal artists that exist within the context of the city. The centre was designed in 1997 by Architects Collaborative for the Barthel Arts Trust and Paul Mikula was the lead designer on the project.

The building celebrates, educates and aims to uplift the local Durban community in the field of the art which ties in with some of the principles of the African Renaissance. Some of the architectural theories discussed in previous chapters were that the building developments and strategies should be people based and should respond to the needs of the people. The

development was also an aim to uplift and define the character of the waters' edge with regards to the harbour. The building ends up giving back to the surrounding environment, by bringing in functions that activate the precinct throughout most parts of the day. The centre plays an integral part in the preservation and upliftment of Durban's cultural heritage.

5.7.2 Geographical Location

STUDY AREA

Image 5.20 Areal View of Durban Waterfront. (Google) 28/08/2011

The development is located on the north edge the Durban harbour, on Maritime Plane. The site is bound by other harbour developments on the east and on the west, with a railway line passing through the sight on the north edge with a park and a busy Margret Mncidi Avenue (Victoria Embankment) beyond it. The road and the rail line are an inhibiter to the site, since they act as a barrier to the development and make it difficult to access the site. This is a huge drawback to the development since it was initially ease of access that made it beneficial to the people that it was intended to serve. Perhaps the latter issue is the reason why the centre is not performing to its full envisioned capacity.

5.6.3 Historical and Social Background

The Bat Centre came about from a commission from the Barthel Arts Trust in 1994. The trust had appointed Paul Mikula, a Durban architect and Dick Breytenbach, a senior partner at a law firm of Shepstone and Wylie, as trustees to research and to establish the best use for the funds of the trust in catering for the needs of artist in the greater region of Durban. From their research and that of the trust, they found that there is a need for such a centre. The centre was an alteration of the *SAS Inkonkoni building,* which was an existing former navy building in the small craft harbour.

5.7.4 Empirical Data

The centre has a wide variety of activities which create rich cultural integration that celebrates the cultural heritage of the city. The complex comprises of; a theatre, dance, fine art and recording studios, a music venue, art galleries, shops, restaurants, a photographic and resource centre and a terrace overlooking the harbour. Orientation around the building is simple, with all the functions easily accessible through clear and defined entry points. The building has a north facing internal courtyard, this aids in solar control and it helps to define the spaces and the functions that exist within the complex.
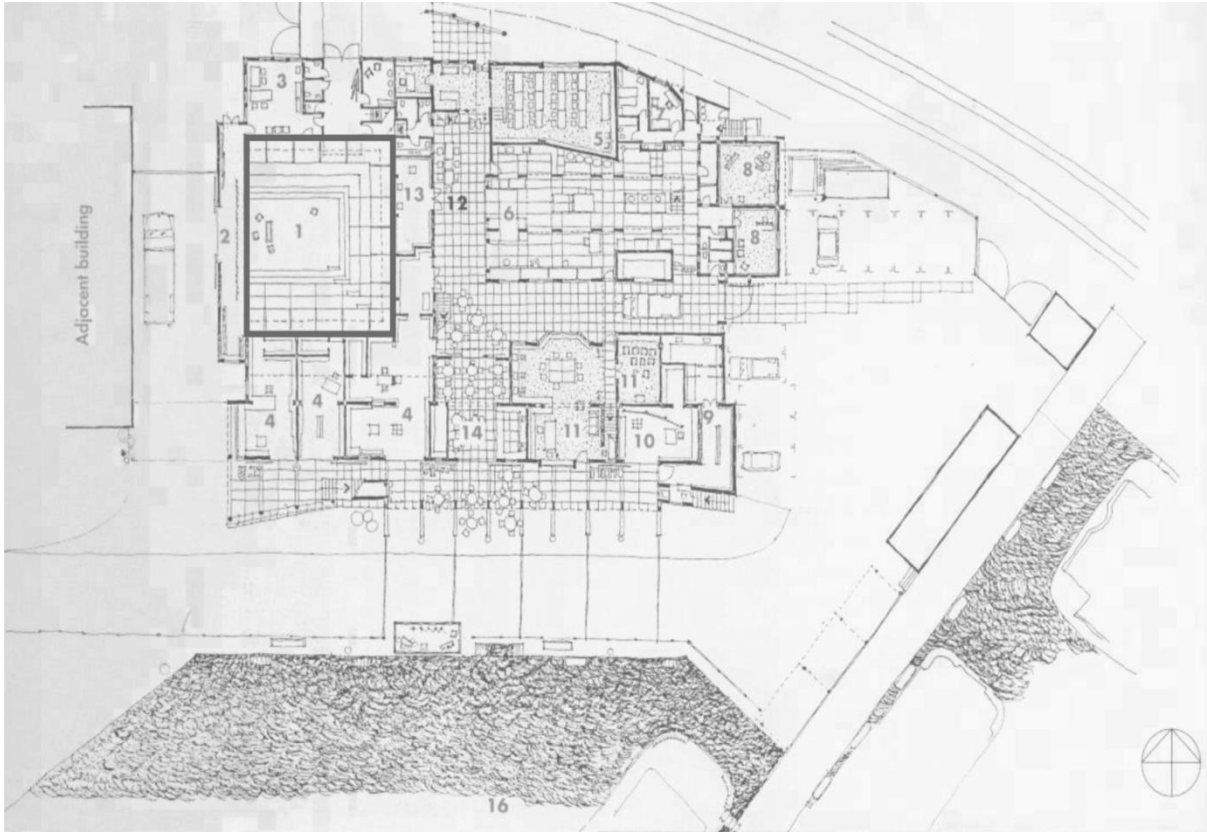
Fig. 5.21 Ground Floor Plan of the BAT Centre (Peters, 1996, p. 2)

Image 5.22 Approach to the Bat Centre. (By Author) 28/03/2011

Another major drawback to the centre is that it becomes a destination that caters to the immediate context and community without extending to the greater context of the city. As a result, the building fails to attract people who might not be aware of the centre. It also makes it difficult for the public to access it due to the busy road and fenced off railway that becomes a barrier that separate it from the city. In an effort to try and counter act this barrier effect, there are pedestrian underpasses under the railway line that aim to link the city to the harbour. The change in level raises safety issues for pedestrians that make use of these underpasses and as a result they are not used frequently.

5.7.5 Conclusion

The centre was a good intervention by the developers since there is still a need for more centres and institutions that provide these forms of services that educate, celebrate, integrate and develop the various art forms. The building is cited in a beautiful part of the city at the harbour; however, the location is not adequate for the role and functions which the building is meant to fulfil. The building becomes segregated from the city and from the people in which it is supposed to serve.

CHAPTER 6 – DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

6.1 Introduction

This chapter draws on the findings from the interpretation of the various theories, literature as well as case studies that formulated the body of the investigation. It makes a critical analysis between the various angles of discourse and whether or not there is a link between the concept of the African Renaissance and the field of architecture. There are a number interesting points which were raised by the investigation, but this study is still at its infancy and further more research needs to be invested into the topic.

The African Renaissance was initially conceived as a good governance and economic reform programme for the continent by its architect, a former president of South Africa, Mr Thabo Mbeki. It has however evolved and manifested into a more holistic approach to include all sectors and forms of society in all respects of the continent. When compared to other forms of nation reforms of similar magnitude, such as the European Renaissance, the African Renaissance aims to achieve a similar form of transformation but to a larger and more in-depth degree. The end goals are similar, which are to achieve regeneration and transformation, but the process will be different, and thus the outcome will be different as well. This is due to the different time, context and issues which call for the regeneration and will also depend on each particular country or nation on the Continent. The European Renaissance, even though it also dealt with issues relating to educational, political and economic transformation, its predominant emphasis was through the arts, which even to this day is sometimes revived (Peter 1873: 18).

The concept of the African Renaissance is multi faceted, aiming at total revitalization of the entire continent, but as pointed out in the former chapters, this it is too mammoth a task to be looked at and approached in totality. It would also be naive to expect that the African Renaissance would happen all at once. Therefore for the Renaissance to be tangible, it is better investigate it in smaller manageable parts. That is why the research focuses on the cultural aspect of the Renaissance. It is much easier for it to be grounded and interpreted in the physical and experiential, and in so doing, trying to facilitate dialogue between the African Renaissance in relation to the physical aspects of the architectural field.

6.2 Challenges between the African Renaissance and Architecture

The major challenge that arose pertaining to this research is that the African Renaissance has been inclined to more abstract challenges, such as economics and governmental issues, and consequently not much previous investigation has been done on how the African Renaissance would impact on the physical landscape, and what opportunities or disadvantages would arise there from. As discussed in the previous chapters, the African Renaissance emerged as a response and need for transformation, revitalization and a reawakening to all aspects of the continent. The concept of the African Renaissance came about as the development of a number of different concepts throughout the history of Africa that challenged the extreme injustice and inhumane conditions that existed. It is the latest of the liberating theoretical thoughts and frameworks, aiming to correct the legacy of years of suppression and oppression and the injustice which was carried out throughout the continent. Architecture can be used to influence the above mentioned issues in one way or the other, but it is neither the only form nor the form of priority. Therefore careful consideration must be applied when choosing means by which architecture can be applied in order to address such issues.

6.3 Establishing the Link between architecture and the African Renaissance

The study was carried out by investigating some of the principles that underpin the concept of the Renaissance and then looking at related architectural concepts and theories advocating e a similar sort of reform. These could be used as executary tools to ground the principals and concepts of the African Renaissance so it manifests itself into the physical built environment of the architectural field. Some aspects of the African Renaissance are in line with education of the African people, celebration of their history and heritage and are also about re evoking the pride and spirit of the African. Architecture too can achieve this, through careful articulation of the form of building and context, coupled with the functions taking place within those buildings or institutions. This can even be achieved through the choice of materials as well as technology incorporated into the buildings, relating to the local context. This should help people to recognise, associate and be proud of the form of architecture being produced. All the architectural theories discussed in the previous chapters have similar grounding principals in that they all aim to create architecture that is grounded in its context and responds to the needs of the people, culture and the environment. A type of architecture must also be achieved which does not alienate the people that inhabit it, but positively builds

and enhances their lives and their surroundings as well as the immediate context where they exist. Just as in the African Renaissance, these architectural theories are all about preserving, expressing and enhancing contexts which in this instance are contexts within the continent of Africa. It is therefore plausible to utilize such architectural theories to carry through some of the same ideologies as those of the African Renaissance into the physical state.

Some of the challenges that are synonymous with both architectural and African Renaissance theories are the issues relating to globalisation. There has been constant debate on whether one should reform to traditional ways of doing things, as a form of reviving the heritage and history of the place or should it focus on a more contemporary and globalised approach. The key to the dilemma brought forth is firstly that one should not disregard history and heritage, because this is what defines a person or a place, but one should allow for progressive change. Secondly, that to ensure its survival culture and the way of doing things should not stagnate but evolve. If something resists change, it eventually becomes irrelevant and obsolete to current and therefore future times. One must also take cognisance of the fact that we are currently in an era of globalisation and one cannot remain in isolation, continuing with the same old way of doing things as they have been done for many years. This may it be through the type and form of architecture or any form of the human aspect and this is to ensure its relevance in the current times. Just as seen in such projects as the Jean-Marie Cultural Centre and the Constitutional Court. Also with the use of theories such as semiology so the use the cultural and environmental symbols and be interpreted into the built form, maybe not as a direct translation or interpretation, but use elements of it so that the people of the local context can recognise and relate to. Creating and enforcing the link between the building and the local culture, therefore making it possible to positively link the built environment, in terms of architecture, to other social and cultural aspects of the community in order to improve it. These are some of the aspects that the African renaissance is trying to address: designing cities and buildings for the entire community, not favouring any cultural or racial group, but being all inclusive.

6.4 Interpreting the African Renaissance into the Physical

Some of the case studies under investigation explored the various factors that might constitute to a place or buildings that possess the properties of the African Renaissance. The study only looks at certain elements of the different case studies since at the time that the investigation was carried through; it did not reveal any building that completely fulfils the role envisioned by the African Renaissance concept. In the case studies investigated, the Bat Centre was the one which showed the most potential in relation to the principles of the African Renaissance even though it is not an African Renaissance Centre. The aim of the Bat Centre is to; showcase, celebrate, and uplift Durban's art scene through various activities that occur within the building. It is also aimed at integrating and uniting all of the cultural and ethnic groups of the city, through the medium of art. This is in tangent with the principles of the African Renaissance concept, the notion of unity of Africa and its people as well as the celebration of culture and heritage. The major to the bat centre is its location. It is segregated from the community by various physical barriers such as the busy road and the fenced off railway line. This hinders the ability of the centre to function to its full capacity. Other case studies that were investigated such as the Warwick Market Muthi Traders' Stalls and the City Market, outside the Workshop Shopping Centre, create a unique feel and character to the city. They developed from the need of the people and the spaces they formed began to define themselves as they grew incrementally. This began to create a specific ambiance and character to the place. Although both of the latter cases needed to be later regularised and ordered since they were becoming too overcrowded, but the character remained the same. This form of spatial development is purely contextual, since it evolves from the needs of the context to create something original, which can start to define the notion of the urban African city. Not all the case studies that were investigated had only minor elements of the African renaissance, but were more pertinent to the spatial configuration and the accommodation schedule, which aids as precedent for the design of the African Renaissance Centre.

Through the African Renaissance, the African Renaissance Centre will ensure that the building can showcase the multiple layers of the context through architecture and in doing so, represent the community where it is located. The concept is not only geared towards reform and regeneration, but it is also aimed at celebrating and showcasing the talents and achievements that the people of the continent have acquired. Architecture can provide appropriately designed facilities that will accommodate and cater for all forms of various

talents and achievements. The African Renaissance synthesises the traditional with the modern, thereby revealing a compact tectonic relevant to its people, time and place. This form of tectonic can be achieved through local materials such as using compacted earth blocks, harvesting materials from the site and retaining the genius loci or spirit of the place. One can also, through means of critical regionalism, incorporate some of the technology used in traditional vernacular dwellings of the place but in a more contemporary fashion, as has been done in the Jean Marie Tjibaou Cultural Centre. This will evoke a spirit of pride and ownership of the development or structure, in a building that the local people can identify with.

CHAPTER 7

7.1 CONCLUSION

Architecture responds to the social issues of society, particularly the needs of the people. Thus the link between the African Renaissance is the aspect of the renaissance that responds to and challenges some of the social issues relating to Africa – such issues as the identity of the continent. This is the African identity which was suppressed and, in some cases lost many centuries ago by the different oppressive regimes inflicted on the African continent. Another aspect that the Renaissance deals with is the economic and political reform within the continent. Architecture can impact on the latter issues of the renaissance, but not to a greater degree as to those pertaining to the social aspect of the environment.

While in search of its identity, the African continent is also trying to revive and resuscitate itself from the depths of all the social, economic, contextual and environmental ills that exist within in it. The driving approach of the African Renaissance concept is, as stated by its conceiver, Mr Thabo Mbeki, a call for an awakening of all aspects of the continent, in every nook and cranny. It has been pointed out that one cannot expect the African Renaissance to happen overnight, nor can one expect this revolution and transformation to take place at the same time for everybody. As the African continent is so large, complex and diverse the Renaissance cannot be orchestrated at one time or by any one person. Therefore everyone who resides in Africa must do their part, from different government institutions, to individuals who possess the authority to influence decisions in any field, and to the everyday person on the street to ensure that the envisioned concept of a progressive and leading Africa eventually becomes a reality.

The African Renaissance concept provides an interesting and hopeful prospect for the continent of Africa and one hopes' that its fulfilment will see all the countries within Africa being better positioned to take their place amongst global leaders in international communities across the various disciplines.

The investigation has revealed that even though it is not an in-depth investigation into the relationship or link between the African Renaissance and architecture, that architecture does indeed have the ability to be part of the African Renaissance. It is envisioned that this study will be a point of departure for others to continue further investigation into the relationship and to discover additional avenues and opportunities for the integration of architecture with the ideals of the African Renaissance in order to further enhance the progress of the concept and just take it a little step closer into becoming a reality.

7.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that one employs critical thinking when aiming at creating architecture that is to be beneficial to the people who will be using it. This is especially so in the context of Africa, as Africa and its people try to grapple with issues of identity and issues of trying to find themselves as countries and nations, to be on a par with the rest of countries considered to be developed. This is in terms of infrastructure, economics and general social standard of living. As previously mentioned, the African Renaissance Centre envisioned in this study is not meant to be the headquarters for Africa, but a prototype for other African cities to follow. As the investigation shows, in order for the concept of the African Renaissance to work in the built environment, the building must respond to the local environment and context, as well as to the social issues that exist within that particular place. Essentially the building is for the people and the people must be able to identify with it. This may be through the building form, type of materials use or the setting where the building is going to be placed. Everyone must feel welcome at the building and not intimidated by its form of architecture. As the building is for everyone within that environment, so it should not discriminate against any culture, race, gender or creed. The entire community must benefit and the building and its functions must aim to uplift and integrate everyone in one way or another. Functions and activities relating to music, arts, drama, literature, medicine and education have all have been identified by this study of the African Renaissance as cultural elements of society that need to be further investigated, especially in the context of South Africa, where the study is grounded. All of these cultural elements must be made to educate, pay homage and be told from the African perspective and not from a biased colonial point of view.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

References

1. Beasley W. 1973. *The Meiji Restoration*. London. Oxford University Press
2. Cheru F. 2002. *African Renaissance- Roadmaps to the challenge of Globalization.* Cape Town. ZED
3. Jameson F and Miyoshi M. 1999. *The Culture of Globalization.* USA. Duke University Press
4. Jenks C and Kropf K. 1997. *Theories and Manifestoes of a Contemporary Architecture*. London. Academy Editions
5. Jodidio P. 2007. *Piano: Renzo Piano Building Workshop, 1966 to Today.* Taschen
6. Johnson P. 1994. *The Theory of Architecture: Concept, Theories and Practices.* Van Nostrand Reinhold. New York
7. Kenneth Frampton. 1983. *Prospects for a Critical Regionalism.* USA. Yale School of Architecture
8. Kenneth Frampton. 1992. *Modern Architecture, A Critical History.* London. Thames and Hudson
9. Kriger R and Zegeye A. 2001. *Culture In The New South Africa: After Apartheid- Volume Two.* Cape Town. Kwela Books
10. Nesbit K. 1996. *Theorising A New Agenda for Architecture*. New York. Prinston Architectural Press
11. Niezen R. 2005. *A World Beyond Difference: Cultural Identity In The Age of Globalization.* Malden USA. Blackwell
12. Okumu W. 2002. *The African Renaissance- History, Significance and Strategy.* Trenton USA. African World Press
13. Onco A and Wayland P. 1997. *New Identities in Globalizing cities*. South Africa. ZED Books
14. Oncu A and Weyland P. 1997. *Space Culture and Power- New Identities In Globelising Cities.* South Africa. ZED Books
15. Koregay F. 1999. *Can South African Lead an African Renaissance.* South Africa
16. Schulz C. 1980. *Genius Loci: Towards a phenomenology of Architecture.* London. Academy Editions.
17. Trancik R. 1986. *Finding Lost Space*. New York. Van Nostand Reinhold Company

18. Zegeye A and Harris R. 2003. *Media. Identity and The public Sphere in The Post Apartheid South Africa.* Boston. Brill

Papers:

1. Chris Landsberg & Francis Kornegay. 1998. *The African Renaissance: A Quest for Pax Africana and Pan Africanism.* Institute for Global Dialogue, FGD Occasional Paper No 17

2. Guisepi R A. *The Renaissance: Beginning and Progression of the Renaissance.* USA. University of California.   http//www.history-world.org/renaissance.htm

3. Howard Barrel, 2000. *Back To The Future: Renaissance and South African domestic policy.* The African Security Review, vol 9 No 2. 2000 www.iss.co.za/pubs/ASR/9No2/Barrel.html

4. Jose Augustus Cossa, 2000. *The African Renaissance and Religion: The Birth of an African Renaissance Theology.* www.papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=282194

5. Kenneth Frampton. 1983. *Prospects of a Critical Regionalism.* USA. Yale School of Architecture

6. Khumalo L. 1999. *African Renaissance.* University of Natal. Durban

7. Konrad Adenauer Stiftung. 1997. *Occasional Papers: The African Renaissance*. Johannesburg.

8. Kornegay F. 1998. *Can South Africa Lead the African Renaissance?* Occasional Papers. South Africa

9. Landsberg C. 1998. *The African Renaissance: A Quest for Pax Africana and Pan Africanism.* Reflections on Africa Renaissance. South Africa

10. Nabudere DW. 2005. *Towards an Africonology of Knowledge Production and African Regeneration.* The Marcus-Garvey Pan-Afrikan Institute. Mbale, Uganda

11. Makgoba MW. 1999. *African Renaissance.* Mafube Publishing. Sandton South Africa

12. Maloka E. 1998. *The African Renaissance*. Occasional Papers. South Africa

13. Martin Deyner.1998. *What and Where is the Post Colonialist Theory?* PhotoInsight John Nassari. www.photinsight.org/theory/theory.pdf

14. Mhlaba D. 2007. *African Architecture Today: Approaches and Application of African Architecture*. www.mudonline.org.aat

15. Peter Vale and Sipho Maseko. 1998. *South Africa and African Reflections of the African Renaissance*. Foundation of Global Dialogue. Braamfontien, South Africa

16. Pioch Nicolas. 2006. *The European Renaissance*. Paris. The Web Museum www.ibiblio.org/wm/paint/glo/renaissance

17. Report on the workshop on the Cultural Diversity in conflict and peacemaking in Africa and Identity and Democratization in Africa. 2006. *Identity and cultural diversity in conflict resolution and democratization for the African Renaissance*. Johannesburg South Africa.

18. Shumikawa Shunsuke. 1999. *The Meiji Restoration: Roots of Modern Japan*. Professor Wylie

19. Walter H Peter. 1873. *Studies In the History of the Renaissance.* London. Macmillan.

Journals

1. (001) Quest electronic Journal- www.quest-jounal.net/Quest_2001_PDF/kessel.pdf
2. (002) SA Architect Journal May/June 2003
3. (003) Architectural Review No. 1293, November 2004
4. (004) Architect and Builder July/August 2004
5. (005) KZNIA 1/2004
6. (006) Architecture South Africa November/December 2002
7. (007) Digest of South African Architecture, year 2004/2005
8. (008) KZNIA 3/2001
9. (009) KZNI 2/1992

Speeches

1. (001) Mbeki Thabo, 1999. At the Launch of the African Renaissance Institute. Pretoria

2. (002) Mbeki Thabo, 1998. *The African Renaissance and the World*. United Nations University

3. (003) Pahad Aziz, 2007. *Towards an African Identity Characterised by Peace, Democracy and Development Through Partnership.* KwaZulu Natal African Renaissance Summit. 23/05/2007

Newspapers

1. The Guardian, April 2011 United kingdom

Websites

1. URL 001: http://www2.canada.com/topics/travel/guides/story.html?id=4562398

2. URL 002 http://inhabitat.com/jean-marie-tjibaou-cultural-center-inspired-by-native-architecture/tjibaou-cultural-center-3/?extend=1

3. URL 003 http://www.dfa.gov.za/docs/speeches/1999/mbek1011.htm

4. URL 004 http://www.polity.org.za/article/pahad-kwazulunatal-african-renaissance-summit-23052007-2007-05-23

5. URL 005 http://www.dfa.gov.za/foreign/Multilateral/profiles/arfund.htm

6. URL 006 http://www.ualberta.ca/~afso/documents/prelimprogram.pdf (Prospects for an African Renaissance: Culture, Development, Reconciliation)

7. URL 007 http://www.greatbuildings.com/cgi-bin/__gbc-drawing.cgi/Saynatsalo_Town_Hall.html/Saynatsalo_Section_A.jpg

8. URL:008http://www.travelblog.org/Africa/Senegal/Cape-Verde-Peninsula/Dakar/blog-459197.html

9. URL 009 http://www3.jkl.fi/ssalo/townhall/en-1.htm

http://www.cdslamar.com/WH/ch10/10-1Notes-MeijiRestoration.pdf

10. URL 010 http://www.emergingmarketsoutlook.com/?p=1017

11. URL 011 Html: www.parktonian.co.za/live/attractions

12. URL 012 www.designtopnews.com

13. URL 013 www.architecture-view.com

14. URL 014 www.phaidon.com

15. URL 015 www.aedesign.wordpress.com

16. URL 016 www.flicker.com

17. URL 017 http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/African_Renaissance_Monument

18. URL 018 http://www.dfa.gov.za/foreign/Multilateral/profiles/arfund.htm

LIST OF FIGURES

Image 5.15 by Author

Image 5.16 by Author

Image 5.17 by Author

Image 5.18 by Author

Image 5.19 by Author

Image 5.20 by http://maps.google.co.za/maps?hl=en&tab=wl

Image 5.21 (Journal 009)

Image 5.22 by Author

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Case Study Questionnaire
Questionnaire

Name:

1) What do you sell:

2) Did you provide your own shelter:

3) Is the shelter adequate and does it fulfil your requirements for your business:

4) Do you own this business or are you selling for somebody else:

5) Where do you keep your belongings after working hours:

6) How is the business/ stall doing in terms of sales and are you happy with your location:

7) How is your relationship with your neighbours:

8) How is the security or level of crime in the area around your stall:

9) How would you like your working conditions to improve:

ABBREVIATIONS

ANC: African National Congress

ARI: African Renaissance Institute

CBD: Central Business District

FIFA: Fédération Internationale de Football Association

PART TWO

DESIGN REPORT

DESIGN REPORT

CHAPTER 1

1.1 INTRODUCTION

This portion of the document is a continuation of the first part and deals with the incorporating the theoretical data and findings from part in order for it to inform the design process of the project which is elaborated on in pat two of the document. The end product of the design process is the proposed design of the African Renaissance Centre and its envisioned location has responded to the problems and the issues stated in the beginning of the document, and has tried to tackle the challenges as best as possible. A step by step break down of how the design developed into fruition is to follow in the later chapters.

1.2 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The African Renaissance Centre is to comprise of mainly cultural functions within it, as it was found through the research that one of the best ways in which to articulate and address issues pertaining to the African Renaissance concept in the built environment for any community is through culture. It is a tool which is most easily identified by individuals and can easily relate to it too. The functions that are going to occur within the centre are going to represent the drives and aspirations of the entire local community, and not just a certain or the most dominant cultural denomination. The project has to be cited in a central location where it can be easily accessible by the general public and must intercalate with the existing structures of society, not to act against it, but to improve on their roles and functions. There are however going to be other functions other than those associated to culture that are going to occur within the centre, which will aid in improving the immediate context where the centre is to be located.

1.3 THE NOTIONAL CLIENT

1.3.1 Introducing the Client

The envisioned main client that will be backing the project will be the department of Arts and Culture in KwaZulu Natal, but there will however be other associated partners of the project who's role is envisaged as being part of the supportive structure to the facility and facilitate a link to the various other structures with similar or same functions that already exist within the greater region of the city. As mentioned in the previous chapters, the centre is aimed at not being in competition with the other existing structures that exist within the greater context of the city, but to form a collaborative relationship with all of them and forge new relationships that do not currently exist. The African Renaissance Centre that is envisioned here is also not aimed at being the headquarters in Africa, it is merely aimed at being a prototype for other African cities to follow in terms of the theoretical and design process carried through with this one.

1.3.2 The Brief

Due to the complexity of the complex, with the structure having to accommodate a wide vary of functions from different disciplines, the complex would aim to integrate all of the envisaged functions in order for them to exist and function coherently with each other, so to enhance their individual function and not be in friction with one another. The primary users of these facilities are going to the general public with a tourist component being incorporated into the complex. With tourists from all over South Africa and the world that happen to visit the city, will get an opportunity to experience the culture, displays, history and products being stored, exhibited and sold in the centre. Therefore the centre must be an all inclusive complex, where no one would find a need to use it, may it be for; educational, reference, retail, cultural, historical, upliftment, entertainment or even for social purposes in terms of interaction and socialising of different constituencies of the public body from different cultural and economic backgrounds. The complex must cater for everyone's needs and must contribute to the upliftment and development of the city, especially its immediate context in its urban design framework. The building and site must be able to engage with the street edge and must be easy and universally accessible. The complex must be able to incorporate the following functions; performance theatre, reference archive and documentation   library, auditorium, multipurpose spaces, gallery and exhibition spaces, learning and teaching spaces,

workshops, a traditional and biomedicine collaborative facility, retail and restaurant component, and the complex must also accommodate for hard and soft landscaping with adequate parking and drop off zones allocated. The complex must also incorporate a sustainable aspect to it, both environmentally and economically, it must be able to sustain itself to a large degree in order to ensure its longevity.

The primary clients would be the Provincial Department of Arts and Culture in association with the eThekwini Municipality. The Department of Arts and Culture is an ideal client since it deals with most of the cultural, social and art forms within the provincial and national spheres. It aids and assist with the promotion and preservation of such latter issues.

The eThekwini Municipality would be used as the implementing agent and would form a partnership with the Department of Arts and Culture, whereby the municipality would be responsible for the running and maintenance of the centre. A number of organizations would form a joint partnership with the municipality in order to operate and run from the centre, just as long as they prescribe to a certain aspect of the African Renaissance and social or cultural upliftment in one way or the other.

Some of the key tasks that the building would have to fulfil are:

- Being a public building

- Used by the entire public, therefore should not discriminate against anybody

- Give back to the city and uplift its physical and social surroundings

- Fit in with its immediate surroundings

- Mixed and varied use of functions

- Encourage transparency

- Ease and clear articulation of circulation

- Also introduce defensible spaces without the use of physical barriers

- Must be universally accessible

- Aesthetically pleasing building that is to be easily identifiable and an icon of the city

1.3.3 Schedule of Accommodation

Ground floor				
Accommodation		**Quantity**	**Specification**	**Area**
Public Ablutions				
	Male		Toilets	
	Female		Toilets	
Main Structure				
Shop 1		1	Subsistence retailer	126.5m²
Shop 2		1	General retail	237.5m²
Shop 3		1	Crafts shop	270m²
	Fitting rooms	5	Fitting rooms	2.3m²
	Receiving area	1	Goods reception	53.5 m²
	Store room	1	General store	42m²
Skills centre				
	Security	1	Security booth, kitchenette & wc	26.5m²
	Foyer	1	Entrance	57m²
Main building				
	Security	1	Security	11.2m²
	Entrance	1	Entrance	216.5m²
	Reception	1	Reception	27m²
Library				
	Entrance			
	Ablutions			
Restaurant				
	Entrance	1	Entrance	48m²
	Bar	1	Mini bar	27m²
	Eating area	1	Eating area	153m²
	Ablutions	1	Male, female and disabled	80m²

	Kitchen	1	Food preparation	95m²
	Store room	1	Dry store	50m²
	Cold room	1	Storage of perishable goods	15m²
	Goods reception	1	Delivery	55m²
Medical centre				
	Entrance	1	Entrance and waiting	105m²
	Reception	1	Reception and admin	47m²
	Doctor's suite	1	Medical doctor's room	80m²
	Dispensary	1	Medication store and dispense	35m²
Retail shop				
	Display area	1	Exhibition of goods	270m²
	Sales counter	1	General sales	22m²
	Fitting rooms	4	Fitting room	1.5m²
Travel agent				
	Reception	1	Reception and admin	60.8m²
	Waiting area	1	Waiting area	64m²
	Board room	1	Board room and meeting room	21.5m²
	Office space	1	Open plan office space	150m²
	Ablution	2	Male, female toilets	8m²
	Store room	1	General store	7m²
	Kitchenette	1	Small kitchen	9m²
Performance studio				
	Reception	1	Reception	12m²
	Offices	1	Admin open plan office	45m²
	Ablution	2	Male, female	5.5m²
	Change rooms	2	Male, female	40.5m²
	Rehearsal space	2	Rehearsal space	120m²
	Outdoor	1	Performance space	522.5m²

	performance space			
	Outdoor gallery space	1	Exhibition, display and transition	207m²

1st Floor- Mezzanine				
Accommodation		**Quantity**	**Specification**	**Area**
Main structure				
Shop 1				
	Office/store	2	Office or storage use	81m²
	Display area	1	Retail display area	65m²
Shop 2				
	Display area	1	General retail display	115m²
	Ablutions	2	Toilets	5m²
Shop 3				
	Display and workshop area	1	General retail display	162m²
	Ablutions	1	Toilets	5m²
	Accommodation unit	1	Live/work unit	88m²
Skills centre				
	Students lounge	1	Students recreation area	100m²
	Ablutions	2	Toilet	7.5m²
Main building				
	Office	1	General office	32m²
	Staff lounge	1	Staff room	70m²
	Kitchenette	1	Kitchenette	7.5m²
	Ablution	1	Toilet	4m²
Restaurant				
	Eating area	1	Eating area	165m²
	Offices	2	Managers offices	72m²
	Storage	1	General storage	25m²

	Staff change rooms and ablutions	1	Staff room	38m²
Medical suite				
	Optometrist	1	Suite	80m²
	Dentist	1	Suite	68m²
	Physiotherapist	1	Suite	110m²
Retail shop				
	Display area	1	Retail display area	350m²
	Manager's office	1	Office space	15m²
	Storage	1	Goods store	35m²
	Fitting rooms	6	Public fitting rooms	31m²
	Staff kitchenette and ablutions		Staff room	35m²
Performance studio	Practice studio	1	Multipurpose practice studio	197 m²

2nd Floor				
Main building				
	Office	2	General office	35m²
	Storage	2	General storage	120m²
Skills centre				
	Seminar rooms	2	Seminar rooms	160m²
	Classrooms	2	Learning spaces	310m²
	Workshop	1	Machinery and crafts	500m²
	Ablution	2	Toilet	67m²
	Offices	2	Staff office	70m²

	Reception and admin	1	Reception, information, storage and admin	131m²
	Staff room	1	Staff room, toilets and kitchenette	130m²
	Outdoor terrace	1	Green outdoor space	190m²
Library				
	Security	1	Security check point	25m²
	Lockers	1	Parcel storage	7m²
	Issue desk	1	Issue desk and counter	37m²
	Office	1	Admin offices	31m²
	Shelves		Book shelves and display	790m²
	Reading lounge	1	Reading area	150m²
	Discussion rooms	3	Group discussions	225m²
	Restoration and archiving	1	Restoration, repairs and archiving	190m²
	Media terminal	1	Internet terminal stations	150m²
Sky bridge				
	Walk way		Excess way	720m²
	Retail		Subsistence retail stalls	350m²

3rd Floor				
Accommodation		**Quantity**	**Specification**	**Area**
Reception				
	Information desk	1	General information service point	200m²
	Foyer	1	Entrance foyer	250m²
	Storage	1	General storage	115m²
Ablutions		2	Toilets	70m²
Art gallery				
	Lobby	1	Entrance and display	320m²
	Multimedia	1	Multimedia exhibition	195m²

	display			
	General display	1	Main exhibition area	1550m²
Museum				
	Exhibition area 1	2	Exhibition	840m²
	Exhibition area 2	1	Exhibition	155m²
	Exhibition area 3	1	Exhibition	280m²
	Exhibition area 4	3	Exhibition	1120m²
	Balcony	1	Smoking area	50m²
	Outdoor exhibition 1	1	Terraced outdoor exhibition	172m²
	Storage	1	General storage	35m²
	Outdoor exhibition 2	1	Green outdoor area	510m²

4th Floor				
Accommodation		**Quantity**	**Specification**	**Area**
Conference centre				
	Information desk	1	Reception, information and storage	90m²
	Foyer	1	Reception foyer	250m²
	Auditorium	1	Lecture auditorium	620m²
	Lobby	1	Entrance lobby and exhibition	390m²
	Multipurpose space	1	Multipurpose area	285m²
	Ablution block 1	2	toilets	40m²
	Green outdoor	1	Outdoor area	280m²

	area 1			
	Offices	3	Curators offices	160m²
	Seminar room 1	2	Seminar room	450m²
	Seminar room 2	2	Seminar room	350m²
	Seminar room 3	1	Seminar room	185m²
	Balcony	1	Outdoor smoking balcony	35m²
	Ablution block 2	2	Toilets	69m²
	Kitchen	1	Food prep	183m²
	Dining room	1	Eating area	241m²
	Green outdoor space 2	1	Outdoor terrace space	415m²

4th Floor				
Accommodation		Quantity	Specification	Area
Auditorium		1	Upper part lecture theatre	161m²
Service room		1	General building services	722m²

CHAPTER 2

SITE SELECTION, SURVEY AND ANALYSIS

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The location of choice for the African Renaissance Centre should be located in the periphery of the Durban metro and should therefore be located within the Durban CBD. This is due to the fact that the city of Durban is the most central and most easily accessible location in the province of KwaZulu Natal and it has got the highest population density in the province, so the centre has the potential to be of service to a greater number of people. One can observe that the city of Durban is composed of a variety of people of different backgrounds and ethnicities, with various forms of activities occurring within the confines of the city and the greater metropolitan area. It would be too great a challenge in the time designated for the investigation to look at the greater region of the Durban metropolis, as the investigation will only focus on a portion of the city which might have a direct or indirect impact on the greater part of the community of Durban. As discussed in the previous chapters, the aim of the investigation and for the African Renaissance Centre is not to be a headquarters for Africa, but it is to formulate a prototype and formulae for other cities to follow. This is taking into consideration that different cities all across Africa and South Africa will have different issues of investigation which are pertinent to the environment and context in which they are located. Perhaps; culturally, historically, physically or environmentally, and therefore will have different responses depending on their challenges and Africa is too big of a place to try and accommodate all the need of everyone into a particular location or structure.

2.2 SITE SELECTION AND DISCUSSIONS

There are four sites which have been identified that have the potential to fulfil the requirements of the African Renaissance Centre, and they are all located within the Durban city centre. One of the most important factors in the site selection is access, since all members of the community must have equal and easy access to the centre, from all different backgrounds as well as tourist who might be visiting the centre.

As in the illustrated map below, there are six major population nodes in the Durban metropolitan. These are; Durban city centre which is the CBD of the metro which is

surrounded by upmarket suburbs of Glenwood, Musgrave and Morningside, Ispingo area which has big industrial corporations and a varied mix of population groups, Umlazi which is the biggest township in KwaZulu Natal and the second in South Africa and is one of the most densest areas of the metro, then there is the area of Pinetown which is a town and consists of many medium sized industries and factories and is surrounded by many residential areas that of many different racial groups, then there is Umhlanga Rocks and La Lucia which comprises mostly of upmarket residential, retail and offices and then there are the Ntuzuma, KwaMashu, Pheonix and Chatsworth settlements which are a cluster of smaller townships with mostly the 'Black', Coloured, and Indian populous residing in them.

🟡 PINETOWN   🔴 DURBAN CBD   🟠 UMHLANGA
🔵 UMLAZI   🔴 NTUZUMA PHOENIX   🟢 ISIPHINGO

This first part of the study focuses on the major population nodes since the African Renaissance Centre is about the people and in many different aspects there to serve the needs of the people. Out of all the major population nodes, the sitting of the renaissance should be

in the Durban CBD, since it is more or less in the middle of all the other nodes and is the most easily accessible, since all public transport and road links lead to the CBD, as well as entry to the province and metropolitan through the harbour entrance.

🔴 **DURBAN CBD**		▬ ▬ ▬ **N3 FREEWAY**		▬▬ **N2 FREEWAY**
▬ ·· **M4 HIGHWAY**		▬ · **M12 HIGHWAY**		

The above illustrated image is a depiction of all the major road arterioles leading towards the city, this just re-enforces the appropriateness of the sitting of the centre being in the city centre of Durban. The N3 Highway is the route from the KZN midlands and continues all the way to Johannesburg. The N2 Highway is the route which circles South Africa and passes from the south coast of the province to the North Coast of the province enroute to other provinces. The M12 is the arteriole that branches off the N2 and leads into the city centre from the south and the M4 is the arteriole that branches off the N2 and leads into the city centre from the north.
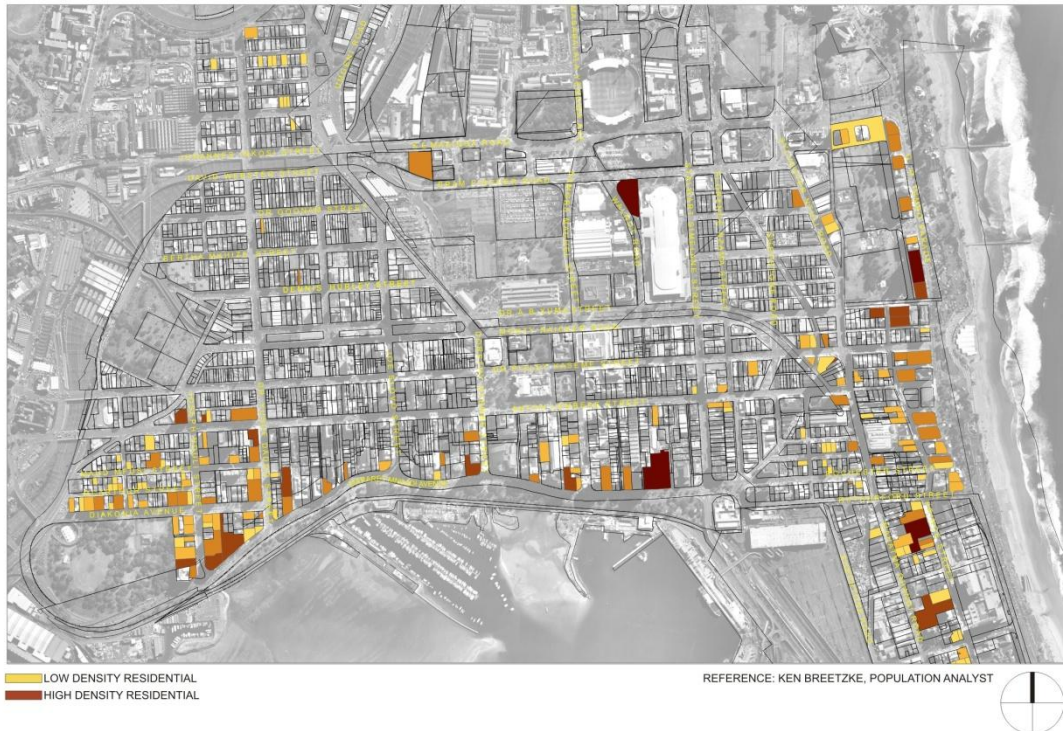
The above illustrated image illustrates a closer view of the Durban city centre with the major routes into the city by; car, rail or sea. In the illustration are also the three potential sites to accommodate the centre. **Site A** is situate above an active railway line, between the Brea Road station and Albert Street bridge crossing. **Site B** is situated on the south west portion of the Centrum Site. Currently the site is used as a parking lot and also accommodates a few traders that have spilled over form the City Traders Market in the vicinity of the Workshop Shopping Centre. **Site C** is located on the old Durban Drive in, and is currently a green field site which is overgrown with grass and lots of mature pine trees on the periphery of the site. **Site D** is located adjacent to the Workshop shopping centre, and is currently used as the Myna Bus terminus.

The two proceeding maps are an indication of the zoning and density of areas in and around the CBD. These analysis are important in respect to the fact that it's important to be aware what the intended use of the investigated sites are and the density which will reflect the activity that might occur after the end of the business day. These surveys will assist in avoiding single use areas, but to encourage a more mix use precinct and zones around the city.

REFERENCE: DURBAN CITY COUNCIL

PUBLIC OPEN SPACE	GENERAL BUSINESS 4	GENERAL INDUSTRIAL
RESIDENTIAL	EDUCATIONAL	GOVERNMENT/MUNICIPAL
GENERAL BUSINESS	SPECIAL	TRANSPORT
GENERAL BUSINESS 3	NOXIOUS INDUSTRIAL	BEACH

Site A is situated on a site zoned for transport since it is positioned above part of an existing and active railway lines running from Brea Road Station to Durban Station. The residential density around the immediate context of the site none but it starts to develop as you move further away from the site. Site B, in the Centrum Site is zoned for government or municipal buildings. Even though it is positioned in a very active and vibrant part of the central city during the day, the residential density around the site is zero, which makes it dead at night and after working hours. Site C is located on a site zoned for educational activities. It's on a quieter part of the city but next to a very active vehicular route into during the day. It is situated on a part of the city which is relatively near to the beach front with hotels and apartments lining the beach front. The area near the beach front is a tourist attraction and destination. Site D is situated on the south side of the Workshop Shopping Centre, flanked by two inner city roads in an east west direction. The site was originally zoned for public transport and is currently used by the inner city bus services. With the recent and gradual introduction of a new inner city form of bus service –BRT- the site is going to be left unused and without a function.

| ■ PUBLIC TRANSPORT- TAXI | ■ PUBLIC TRANSPORT - RAIL | ■ PUBLIC TRANSPORT - BUS |

The above survey is a study of the major public transport interchanges, terminals and ranks around the city. This is an important study since the centre's objective is that it must be easily accessible to all members of the public, since it will cater for the needs of the broad spectrum of the public as well as tourist into that might be visiting the city, therefore it is pertinent for the centre to be allocated near good public transportation routes or services. Site B and D due to its location being within the centre of the CBD are positioned relatively near public transport facilities such as bus and taxi modes and routes of public transport. Site A however is even in a more suitable position since it is also near a train station. Site C is situated within the city confines but is just outside the CBD zone and there are no public transport facilities within the immediate context. Although it is along public transport routes out and into the city, but there are no places or facilities to embark or depart from them.

TAXI ROUTE
BRT BUS ROUTE

PEDESTRIAN DENSITY

Image

Figure Ground Map, depicting transport routes

Around the city

By Author

Image

Figure Ground Map, depicting activation

nodes around the city

By Author

The above illustrated image is a depiction of the public inner city public transport network system which continuously circulates within the specified routes of the city. As noted there are two main routes that are prevalent within the city confines, and they run in predominantly linier east west direction in the middle of the city and north south direction along the beach front. There seems to be no form of cross circulation of the transport system respectively in the middle of the city, making it very difficult to get across town if it's not along the specified transport route, one would have to walk or go to a particular taxi or bus rank on the other side of the city to get on to a taxi or bus that is destined for a destination outside of the city that would pass by the edge of the city, and even if you drop off at any time before you reach your destination, you have to pay the full fare regardless of the distance. Perhaps the solution would be to create a draw factor nearer to the edge of the city, to promote that cross access.

The second above illustrate image shows the more predominant active zones around the city during the day time. It has got to be mention though that this illustration does not mean that other parts of the city that are not highlighted aren't active, it's just an indication of the more

densely populated by pedestrians throughout the day. To ensure that the whole city is active though out the day, more densification needs to occur within the city fabric, with a mix use of activities to ensure that the city is not dormant or sleeps during certain times of the day, but has a 24h life cycle throughout the whole year.
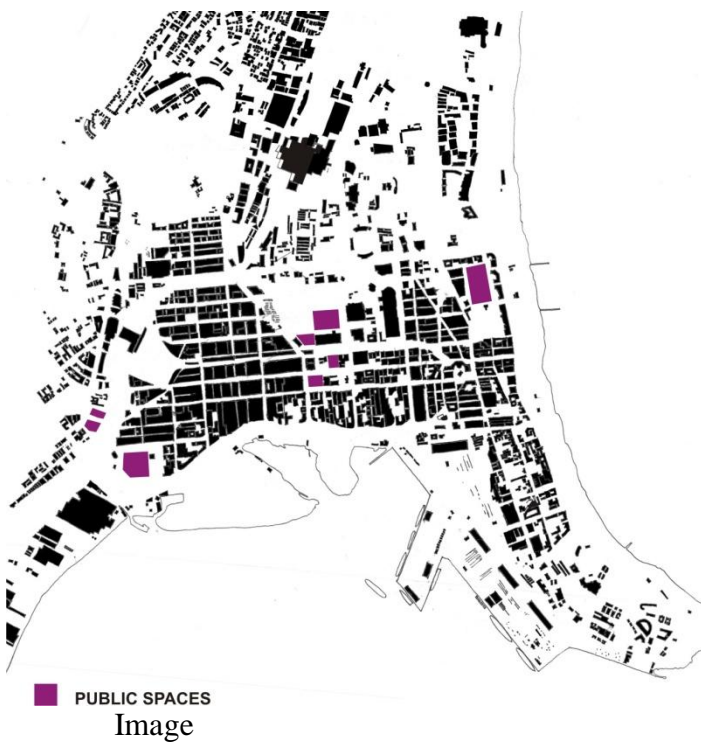

PUBLIC SPACES

Image

Figure Ground Map, showing public areas

Around the city

By Author

MUSEUMS
ART GALLERIES
PERFORMANCE CENTRES

Image

Figure Ground Map, showing cultural

buildings around the city

By Author

The study has also revealed that for a CBD as big as Durban, there are far too little public outdoor places around the city. Public outdoor places are important to a city because they give the public an opportunity to pause, catch a breather, relax and socialise among each other. They also aid to into improving social cohesion and interaction, by providing a platform for people to meet, exchange their ideas and goods, interact and just socialise. There are three main parts of the city that have these outdoor public areas, and they are; in the south west portion of the city in the area of Albert park, in the central part of the city in the form of Gugu Dlamini Park, Church Street thoroughfare and the city hall plaza, all situated in the area

of the Workshop shopping Centre and near the City Hall precinct and then a green field site near the beachfront, just behind the tall hotel buildings facing the shoreline. Areas of the city around the investigated area of Site A, Site C and around the Point require such spaces.

Other areas of interest around the city were some cultural buildings and spaces, since the Renaissance centre is going to perform some functions that may be deemed as cultural in nature such as performances, exhibitions and archiving, displays and showcasing. There are a number of institutions of this nature in and around the city and the African Renaissance Centre is not aimed at being in competition with them, but in being a mother body for all of them and work in collaboration with them. Since the Renaissance Centre will not only be a structure or destination, but it will also facilitate for the growth and development of the artist, because what is prevalent in the creative society of Durban is that there aren't many avenues for up and coming artist to develop and showcase their skills. The existing institutions that provide for such facilities all work independently and there is no network inexistence between the facilities that provide the same or similar functions.

GREEN SPACES

Image

Figure Ground Map, depicting the green areas around the city

By Author

This particular analysis is a study of all the green areas within the city. The city being situated in a subtropical environment and being a coastal city, greening the city is an important factor in our current times since it aids in cooling the temperature of the city with less heat being reflected on the concrete surfaces and it's absorbed by the fauna, and it is more pleasant to walk under shaded sidewalks and pavements that are naturally covered and it is more pleasant to be able to look outside your window at your residence or place of work and look into greenery, this has a positive psychological impact on the human psyche to be able to set ones eyes on natural elements after one has been indoors for long periods of time. The green areas and trees also aid in purifying the pollution in the air, by cleaning the carbon dioxide emissions being emitted by the large amounts of motor vehicles in the city. Therefore green areas should be encouraged and promoted in the city centre, especially in a climate such as that of Durban, where there is a concentration of trees and greenery in other parts of the city and in other parts there is none.

Site Selection

SITE A

PEDESTRIAN MOVEMENT   VEHICULAR MOVEMENT

Plate

Areal showing vehicular and pedestrian movement in the periphery of Site A

By Author

Site A is located above an existing and active railway track below, and bound by; Johannes Nkosi, Albert, David Webster, and Joseph Ndluli Streets. The site is situated amongst predominantly small factory, warehouses and shop type buildings which are in a dilapidated, old and in a not well maintained part of town.

Plate

View from Dr Yusuf Dadoo Street

By Author

Plate

View from corner of Albert and David Webster Street

By Author

Pros

- Close to public transport amenities and interchanges
- Links the two parts of the cities that have been divided by the rail link across the city
- Rejuvenate and revive portion of the city
- Provide an opportunity for a mixed use of land use in a vertical direction
- Site receives direct sunlight throughout the duration of the day
- Between prominent higher learning facilities in the city, DUT and UNISA
- Adjacent to the Stables Theatre
- On a major artillery into the city

Cons

- Site restricted due to size
- Land owned by Spornet railway company
- Site situated above an active railway line
- Noise and vibration caused by the passing trains
- Site is zoned for transport

SITE B - The Centrum Site

---- PEDESTRIAN MOVEMENT   ◄ - - ■ - VEHICULAR MOVEMENT

Plate

Showing Vehicular and pedestrian movement around Site B

By Author

The site is located in a portion of the Centrum Site, in the middle of the CBD. It is bound by the Gugu Dlamini Park to the east, the Virgin Active and Inner City trading Stalls to the south, Soldiers Way and bus rank to the west and another portion of the Centrum Site to the north. The site is currently used as a parking for the public of Durban.
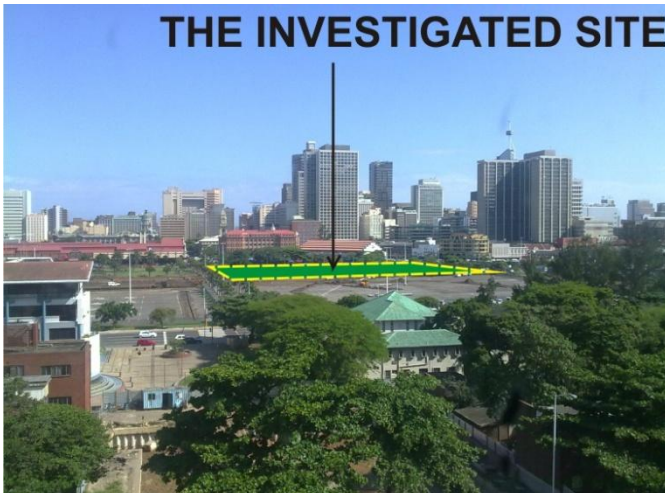
Plate

View from City Engineers building on

K E Masinga Road

By Author

Pros

- Is in the proximity of the cultural precinct
- Centrally located in the CBD
- Close to public transport
- Site receives direct sunlight throughout the duration of the day
- Active part of the city, strong pedestrian activity

Cons

- Congestion vehicular and pedestrian
- Vehicular access difficult
- No clear zoning and development plan from the city
- Currently a portion of the site is being occupied by central city market traders
- Site zoned for government or municipal buildings

SITE C - The Old Drive in Site

---- PEDESTRIAN MOVEMENT   ◀── VEHICULAR MOVEMENT

Plate

Showing Vehicular and pedestrian movement around Site C

By Author

The site is located in what was Durban's old drive in, which became Mishi Jones Baseball Park, but now stands empty and derelict with overgrown fauna in and around the site. the site is bound by the busy Florence Nzama Street to the west, Holy Park to the south, Sylvester Ntuli Street to the east and Somteu Road to the North.

Plate

View from Florence Nzama Road

By Author

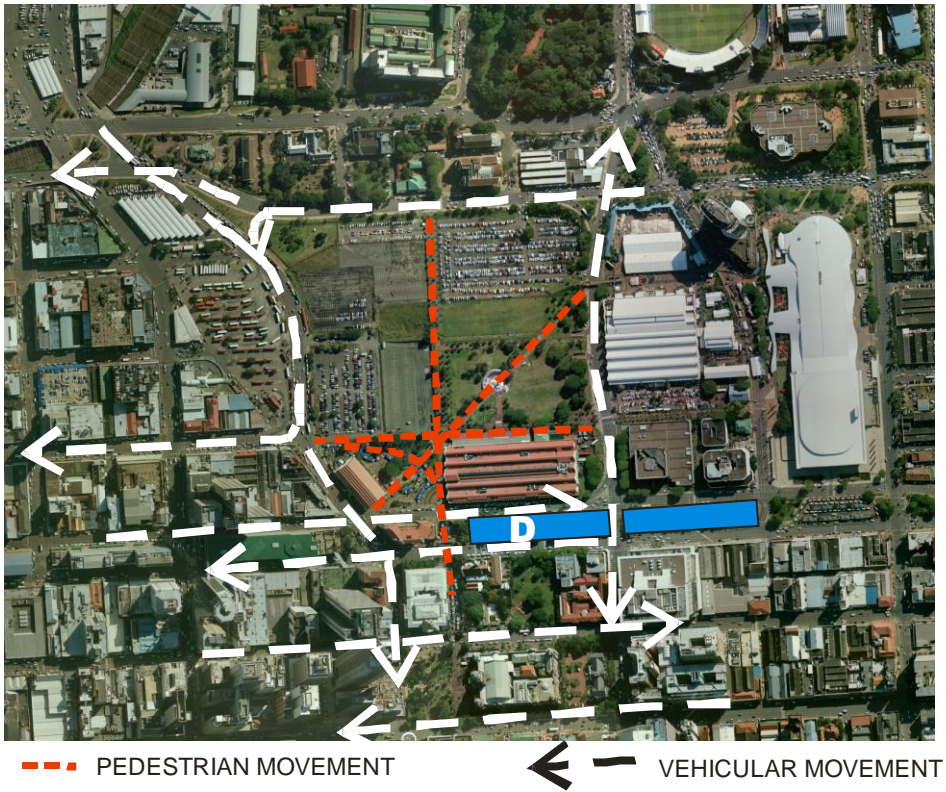Plate

View from Florence Nzama Road

By Author

Pros

- Close to a major learning institution , UNISA
- Greenfield site
- Poses an opportunity to activate area
- Poses an opportunity to link the CBD to the beach

Cons

- Not easily accessible by public transport
- Adjacent to a very busy road
- Area very quiet, not much pedestrian activity
- Site zoned for educational activity and functions

SITE D - The Inner city Myner Bus terminus

PEDESTRIAN MOVEMENT   VEHICULAR MOVEMENT

Plate

Showing Vehicular and pedestrian movement around Site D

By Author

Pros

- Is in the proximity of the cultural precinct
- Centrally located in the CBD
- Close to public transport
- Site receives direct sunlight throughout the duration of the day
- Active part of the city, strong pedestrian activity
- Good linkages
- Easily accessible
- Close to public parking facilities
- Potential to activate site that is dead through out most part of the site

Cons

- Ristricted site
- An active bus terminus
- Bound by relitivly busy streets
- Zoned for transport use

Choice of site

After critical analysis and investigation, the site of choice is Site D. Due to its ideal location, being in the inner part of the city, a building on Site D has a potential to give a lot more back into the city context. As in the concept of the African Renaissance is all about giving back to the people of Africa and its context, culture and heritage. Being in the heart of the city and along a prominent cultural route, the site has the ability to interact with different components of the city. Due to its location, it is easily accessible to people of all walks of life, therefore would attract people from all walks of life. Promoting cultural and social integration among different cultural and racial groups of the city, this affirms the concept of the African city. The site is also near public transport amenities such as bus and taxi's, making it accessible to all members of the public, especially those without their own means of transport. There is also a strong pedestrian link that passes adjacent and through the site and links to certain cultural nodes within the city in a north south direction. A major downside about the site is the fact that it is bound by very busy roads with relatively fast moving vehicles, which may pose a challenge of acquiring access into the site and the noise factor is associated with such volumes and speed of traffic.

2.3 SELECTED DISCRIPTION AND ANALYSIS

The site is situated on an existing bus terminus. Over the years the city bus services that was using the site has decreased in numbers and now does not adequately fulfil its intended function. Mow the site is used by scholars after school as a meeting place and a hang out spot. The site is currently owned and managed by the city of Durban and is bound by AB Xuma, Monty Naicker and Church Street underpass, and is divided into two segments by Samora Michel Street. Due to its central location being situated within the CBD, there is activity all around the site and the streets bounding the sites are relatively busy with passing and stationary traffic. There is also a prominent thoroughfare through the site from Francis Farewell Square and Church Street underpass in a north south direction. There are also a number of public transport pick up and drop off points adjacent the site. The neighbouring buildings around the site are relatively low rise, there for the site receives direct sunlight throughout most of the day, with very little overshadowing occurring. The site is populated with indigenous trees in and around it, creating a pleasant environment for the people who are using it at the moment, there for it would be a good idea to retain most of the trees in the new design proposal.

The site poses interesting and a unique opportunity to give back and revive the part of the city where the site is located. Just as in the concept of the African Renaissance, the aim of the building is to create an awareness, revival and rebirth of that entire precinct. This will be achieved by taking precedent of the existing context and working from it, to enhance it so to serve the people and the environment better, as such theories of contextualisim, critical regionalism and the genus loci stipulate these ideas that have been discussed in the previous chapters. By also placing multi functional buildings or adopting a multifunctional site usage approach aids the proposed precinct to run more efficiently and safely, due to the fact that this eliminates dead space within the city at certain times and reclaims lost space within the city districts. The concept of multifunctionality also can be used as a social and cultural integrator, by placing or incorporating different functions within a building typology or site which would not have naturally been incorporated together will encourage people of different backgrounds to socialise and interact with each other. Promoting social interaction at all levels.

2.4 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF SELECTED SITE
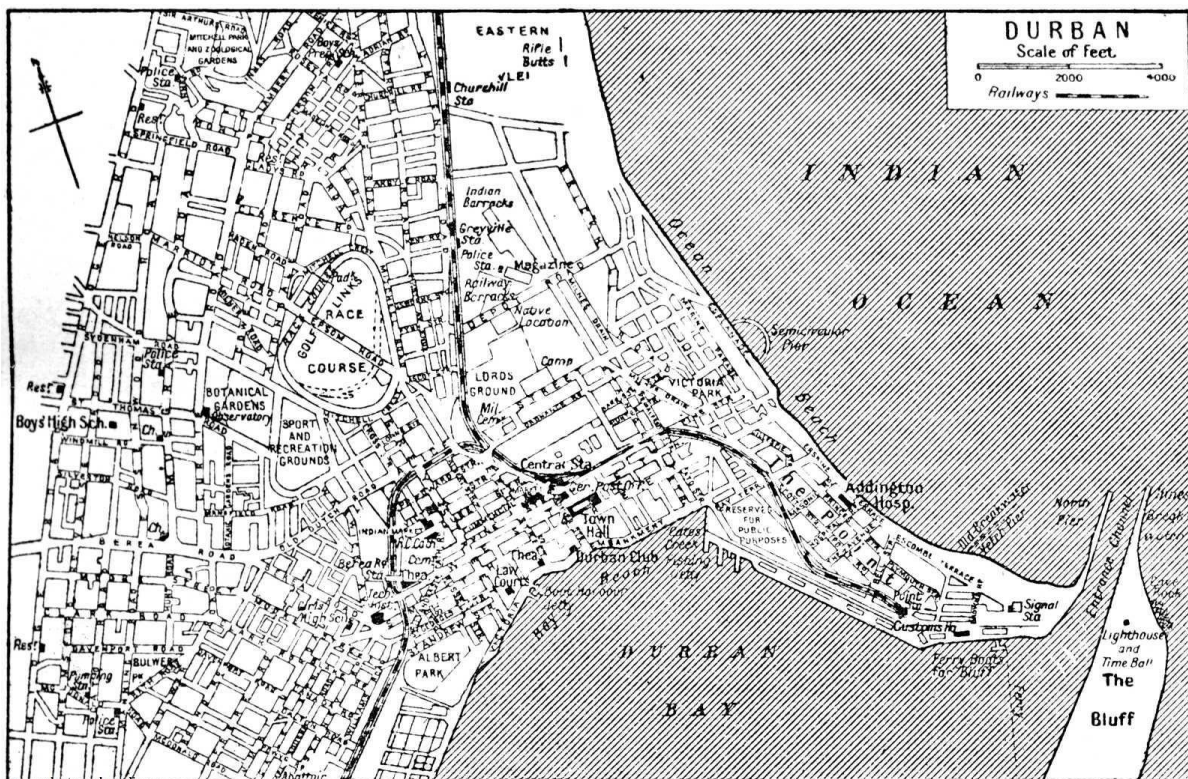
In 1860 the first railway in Africa was constructed in Durban to connect the Point with the CBD. This was soon extended to the hinterland. The line through the CBD was diverted as a new line was laid up the North Coast. During the Great Depression a connection was built to the harbour via the Esplanade and in 1968 the Holford Plan proposed the relocation of the Durban Station to Greyville and the subsequent growth of the Berea station to handle the major rail commuter traffic to the CBD.

As with the change of rail being the dominant means of public transport the city has adapted its infrastructure to meet the challenges of the mode of public transport. It is the nature of cities to meet and provide for the needs of the future and in this respect the nature of rail is no different.

2.4 DESCRIPTION OF EXISTING SITE CONDITIONS

BRIEF DESCRIPTION: The site is considerably flat, with a gradient of 1 is to 60. It is populated with indigenous fauna found all around Durban. The site is currently used as a municipal bus terminus, as a timing point and a departure point for some of the buses that service the inner city district and surrounding suburbs.

PHYSICAL FEATURES: There is a structure on the site which was used as a ticketing centre and ablutions, but it has been how locked up for a while now. There are also steel framed and clad bus shelters, with stainless steel tubular seating. Most of the site is paved with interlocking pavers with some areas incorporating grass berms, especially on the east front of the site. The west side of the site has steps leading down to Church Street underpass, which links West Street to the Workshop Shopping centre. The site is bound by The Tourism Junction Building, which used to be the old Station, The Workshop Shopping Centre, The South African Reserve Bank, the J Exchange building to the north, another bus terminus to the east, and a church, municipal buildings and various forms of retain to the south,

CHAPTER 3

DESIGN DEVELOPMENT AND RESOLUTION

3.1 Drawings and Presentation

3.2 Model