



Finding the fruits of Modern Architecture in urbanizing Dar es Salaam

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INTRODUCTION

These days, **Dar es Salaam** is a widespread and complex composite of micro-cities and an amalgam of architectures, of which some survive urban indigestion and others do not. This urbanizing space can be regarded as an ever transforming and expanding **collective archive**, a **hot playground** for a historian and an architect in search for meaningful and perhaps even valuable materials to build the story of what may be a Tanzanian pavilion in the pantheon of the International **Modern Movement**. Between February and March this year, we have spent six weeks in Tanzania conducting **research** on African modernist Architecture under the umbrella of the **ArchiAfrika**-project, looking for modernist qualities as well as contradictions in projects built between the nineteen fifties and seventies. The **University College of Lands and Architectural Studies (UCLAS)** in Dar, provided assistance in the field and a place to work. Fairly, the research was not a search for collector's items, but a search for **meaningful projects**, all more or less inspired by the principles of the Modern Movement, and built in the transition period between the colonial and the post-colonial era, when modernism slowly gained momentum in Tanzania. The results of 50 years of modern architecture in Dar es Salaam are manifold. The branches and breaches of **'multimodernity'** have given many faces to architecture in Dar, varying from improvised facades to smiley pokerfaces. Finding the **fruits** of modern architecture in urbanizing Dar es Salaam has proven to be not an easy task.

This paper aims to sharpen the **debate** and **raise awareness** on **modernist heritage** in the rapidly urbanizing city of Dar es Salaam. Conflicting notions of modernity, and varying views on what the 'goodlife' has to offer, blur the idea of *'modern architecture in Tanzania'*. It is clear that the existing qualities and historic values of modernist architecture nowadays have become victim to this **confusion**. We assume that modernist architecture in Dar es Salaam has both an historic value within the global Modern Movement, as a value for the local cultural heritage in Tanzania. We even believe that some



Kariakoo Neighbourhood - view from the Cooperative Building - March 2005.

of these modernist buildings may be references for 'quality architecture', and sources of inspiration for contemporary architecture in Dar.

Before independence only a few private **architects' offices** operated in British Tanganyika: apart from pioneers as Ernst May and Amyas Connell ¹, the offices of C.A. Bransgrove and French & Hastings were the first independent firms established in Tanganyika. In the same period Anthony Almeida established himself as the first chartered local architect, even though at that time – in his words – most of his architecture was *'rubbish work'* for friends and a *'fixed type of things'* ². After independence building activity in Dar es Salaam boosted, and the small number of private architects worked closely together with the Nyerere government in constructing the public facilities for the newborn nation. By the end of the 1960's a whole set of qualitative public buildings had enriched the city scene. However, the infusion of modern architecture after independence went together with processes of mass migration from rural to urban areas, which lead an explosion of informal housing.

The **collective memory** of the rapid urbanizing city is fluid. Dynamic, rapid and often contradictory urban development makes memories collapse, enjoin, include, fracture, visible or invisible. The so-called memory of the 'African ancestors' mingles with built memories of

¹ The article by Dennis Sharp on Connell and May provided the first literature on the Modern Movement in East-Africa (Sharp, 1983).

² Discussion with Almeida 10th of March 2005.

a near past. That it does not necessarily mean an attack to cultural virginity and authenticity, but rather leads to a creative reinterpretation of cultural life, is a statement that is not applicable for all cases. But it pricks the longstanding idea that the introduction of modernity is bound to have a thoroughly negative impact on an authentic built environment. The process of **identity-building** tries to reinterpret and localize universally accepted modern vocabularies. Passe-partout 'copy-paste' architecture arose in the sixties as a reaction to the growing amount of slum dwellers and informal settlements along the creeks in Dar. Slum clearance programmes tried to make people live in apartment proto-type blocks like the ones in Ilala and Ubungo, following the socialist ideals of collective freedom and hopes for better living conditions in the city. These scenarios did not always fit the scenery. The development of modern architecture is liable to processes of hybridization and localization.

In which sense is the validation of modernist architecture this day able to contribute to the **sustainable urban development** of Dar es Salaam? The discussion of identity and heritage should have a place in this debate, because the validated projects reflect appropriate solutions that go beyond short-term commercial interest and that have an **urban potential**. The conservation of qualitative modernist architecture can preserve **anchors** for a very complex urbanity. Today, some may say that the urban experience in Africa is barely based on buildings ³, due to the overall presence of urban poverty, though we see that some buildings in Dar es Salaam are not just there as floating objects in a sea of human activity, survival and improvisation, but define and create a **meaningful place** in the fragmented urbanizing space. Can 'modern architecture' in Dar es Salaam be regarded as 'valuable heritage'? Can it mean something for the urban identity? And can it play a role in the sustainable development of the city?

ESTIMATING THE VALUES OF MODERNIST ARCHITECTURE IN DAR

The **quest for the fruits** of modern architecture in Dar es Salaam started with the **inventory** of buildings and urban projects, focussing on the work of five architects, three planning offices, and a handful of urban housing projects. Apart from the offices of **C.A. Bransgrove**, **French & Hastings** and **Anthony B. Almeida**, already mentioned above, we investigated the activities of two more offices established after independence: **B.J. Amuli** and **H.L. Shah**. The colonial and post-colonial masterplans for Dar es Salaam of 1949 and 1968, by respectively the British **Sir Gibb Alexander** and the Canadian **Project Planning Associates**, were incorporated as

basis for comparison with the current layout of the city's neighbourhoods. A third planning office was that of **Norman & Dawbarn**, who made the urban plan for the University Campus; both architecturally and from urban point of view relevant for our research. On the part of urban housing projects, our research incorporated higher density neighbourhoods and social housing projects located in the suburbs of Tabata, Ilala, Mwenge, Ubungo, and Upanga. They were built by the National Housing Corporation and the National Insurance Corporation, and fitted in the slum clearance programmes of the sixties.

In all cases, we asked ourselves what could be the **'cultural value'** of these projects within the story of 'modernist architecture' in Dar es Salaam. Indeed, 'cultural value' is a broad notion, which might be considered as any significance that is exemplary for the aesthetic, historic, social, spiritual, etc. value of modernist architecture. In order not to get lost in this complex web of values, we concentrated on two issues that we considered as distinctive for the identity of 'modernist heritage' in Dar es Salaam.

A first issue addresses the characteristic features of 'modernist heritage' in Dar. In which way is this heritage representative for the events in Tanzania between the 1950's and 1970's? To which extent are these features 'living witness' of the era they were built? ⁴ And since we are dealing with a European-originated phenomenon in a period of Colonialism and independence: How 'African' is this modernist architecture?

Secondly, since every 'modernist architecture' in some way reacts against a 'norm-imposing tradition', we asked ourselves to which 'traditions' modernist architecture in Dar might revolt. Since every 'modernist architecture' also refers to an ideology about what modernity is, the question arose what these notions of modernity actually mean in the context of Dar es Salaam, and how this could relate to the European origins of the Modern Movement. In the part of this paper about 'Modern Times' we will give tentative answers.



St. Peter's Church - Arch. H.L. Shah - July 2005

Historical outline

The question to which 'traditions' the modernist architecture in Dar is tributary, first requires a short historical outline of the building practice in Dar es Salaam. The beginning of formal architectural practice is often said to have started with the failure of the **'Groundnut scheme'** in 1949. This large-scale project by the British Government of Atlee aimed at bringing the inland around Nachingwea and Kongwa in culture. The military planned project failed and some members of the project stayed in Dar. One of them was an architect named C.A. Bransgrove, who established the first full operating Architects office in TanCotHouse in the centre of Dar es Salaam.

Nevertheless, the statement that architectural practice started in 1949, might be a bit too bold, since it ignores the entire rural and urban development in Dar es Salaam since the early ages. First of all there are the remains of the succeeding colonial powers that reigned over Dar es Salaam. The Arab, German and British architecture are still important landmarks in the urban landscape of Dar and if there is one patrimony that is considered as the 'architectural heritage of Dar es Salaam', it is the Old Boma, the German hospital, State House or the White fathers House. But also with the 1920's and 1930's architecture of the Indian quarter, Dar has a valuable urban fabric that is unique for Tanzania. Unfortunately, so far the Indian quarter hasn't been studied or documented at all, and for the moment it is disintegrating and disappearing in fast tempo.

The first architect that settled in Dar es Salaam was **C.A. Bransgrove**, one month before Anthony Almeida opened his office. We could hardly get any information about the person of C.A. Bransgrove, apart from his involvement in the Groundnut Scheme. But in the archive of Covell Matthews, the Kenya based firm that incorporated Bransgrove in 1972, the plans of the office are still preserved, as well as the furniture and library of his office. The inventory to the archive reveals that Bransgrove was involved in the construction of many embassies in Dar es Salaam in the 1950's, as well as almost all Lutheran churches in the Dar es Salaam region. For the Christian Council of Tanganyika, he also built Lutheran house in which he established his office on the top floor.

Another 50's office was **French & Hastings**, an office we even know less about. Also this firm was established in the early 50's by two veterans of the Groundnut Scheme. Both remain rather enigmatic figures. 'Tigger' Hastings was an officer in the British army and known as a distinct gentleman. French had South-African origins and died already in 1960. Hastings died in 1983, but the company existed till 2002, when it died a slow death. The threatened archive is preserved in the NIC Invest House, but there is no solution for the future conservation of it. The projects of the firm are very diverse, but some of the main landmarks of Dar es Salaam were built by them: the Tanzania Cigarettes Company, the National Museum of Dar es Salaam and the New Africa Hotel. Within the scope of our research, we could hardly trace anything about the backgrounds of these architects.

A second generation of architects appeared in Dar in the early 1960's. They were the first who grew up in Dar. Some of them were trained by Norman & Dawbarn, a British firm that settled in Dar in the early 60's to lead the construction of the University Campus. Others were sent abroad to London or Bombay. We focussed on the work of two of these Dar es Salaam born architects that are both still active.

As a kid **H.L. Shah** [1934] worked in the office of C.A. Bransgrove, where his father worked as an accountant. Already in 1952, his father sent him to The Polytechnic in London. He graduated in 1958 and started his professional practice with Norman & Dawbarn in London. They invited him to run the new established office in Dar, but Shah decided to start on his own. In 1960, he returned to Dar and with his first project, the Saint Peters' church, his office made a successful start.

The career of **B.J. Amuli** [1938] followed a different track that will lead him to Israel Institute of Technology. In 1957 he starts his architectural studies at the Royal College in Nairobi, but after one year, a grant enables him to continue his studies in Tel Aviv. He graduates in 1964 and starts his professional practise for Zevet Architects, an Israeli office that in 1960 got its first major project in Dar es Salaam: The Kilimanjaro Hotel, the first modern hotel building in Dar es Salaam. He stays with Zevet until the break-up of the company in 1969 and for Zevet he realises his first design: the National Co-operative Building in Kariakoo. After the

³ In the book 'Kinshasa the invisible city', Filip De Boeck discusses the importance of the human body and the degradation of the architectural landscape in Kinshasa. He poses the arguable hypothesis that in the 'African City' urbanity exists beyond its architecture, and even so, that the physically built architecture has become irrelevant for urban life.

⁴ cfr The preamble of the Charter of Venice in which the initial motives for the conservation of cultural heritage is expressed as follows: 'Imbued with a message from the past, the historic monuments of generations of people remain to the present day as living witnesses of their age-old traditions. People are becoming more and more conscious of the unity of human values and regard ancient monuments as a common heritage. The common responsibility to safeguard them for future generations is recognized. It is our duty to hand them on in the full richness of their authenticity.'

split of Zevet, Amuli starts his own office at the top floor of the National Co operative Building. He built several co-operative buildings all over Tanzania, but his major project is obviously Kariakoo market; a project that turned the historical African suburb of Dar es Salaam into a vivid commercial center.

Based on this limited sample survey of the activities of four architects' offices, we can roughly outline the history of modernist architecture in Dar in three stages. There is still a whole patrimony with Indian origins that dates from the 1930's - 40's, which has seemingly modernist features, but hasn't been studied at all. A first generation of architects worked under the British colonial regime. They were mainly British architects that ended up in Dar after the failure of the Groundnut Scheme. **Anthony Almeida** may be considered as an exception, since he is the first Dar-born architect. A second generation appeared around the time of independence. Some of them were trained by the British firm Norman & Dawbarn. Others were sent to London, Nairobi of Bombay for their education. The track of B.J. Amuli is a case apart, since he ended up in Tel Aviv and worked for the Israeli company Zevet before he established his own office in Dar.



Tanganyika Standard – Arch. C.A. Bransgrove – 1950's



Tanganyika Standard – Extensions – 2005

Heritage values

After determining the Indian, British and even Israeli roots of modernist architecture in Dar, the question remains what makes these buildings 'authentic' expressions of the architectural practice in Dar. In order to estimate the value of 'modernist heritage' in Dar in an appropriate way, one needs to have insight in the 'cultural values' of these buildings. Of course, a brief stay in Dar didn't allow us to pose grounded **value judgements** on any building, since the sources and time were rather limited. But considering the whole of the modernist patrimony of Dar might reveal some preliminary building stones for appropriate judgement. In search of a standard to guarantee a balanced judgement, the notion of 'authenticity' guided us to the so-called *Nara Document on Authenticity*, a document drafted by the *Nara Conference on Authenticity* in November 1994. The origins of this document go back to the wish of UNESCO World Heritage Committee to ground the criteria for the World Heritage List along international lines. The common critic on the World Heritage List was that it was based too much on the European concept of heritage as buildings and objects with a distinct artistic and historical value. The aim of the Nara Conference on Authenticity was to find ways to open up this narrow concept to immaterial kinds of heritage, as well as social related values. Or as it is stated in article 13 of the document:

'Depending on the nature of the cultural heritage, its cultural context, and its evolution through time, authenticity judgements may be linked to the worth of a great variety of sources of information. Aspects of the sources may include form and design, materials and substance, use and function, traditions and techniques, location and setting, and spirit and feeling, and other internal and external factors. The use of these sources permits elaboration of the specific artistic, historic, social and scientific dimensions of the cultural heritage being examined.' (Nara Document on Authenticity, art. 13)

In other words, a balanced judgement on the heritage values of a building should consider the complex nature of the object and the variety of sources that might provide information about it, as well as the different dimensions under which it becomes valuable. The mentioned sources and dimensions are only indicative since the document warns for applying to rigid and mechanic schemes in the assessment of the heritage values. The challenge is to detect to appropriate sources and dimensions that meet the individual character of the heritage.

'It is thus not possible to base judgments of value and authenticity on fixed criteria. On the contrary, the respect

due to all cultures requires that heritage properties must be considered and judged within the cultural contexts to which they belong.' (Nara Document on Authenticity, art. 11)

Within the scope of this paper, we would like to briefly discuss some of the dimensions of the modernist heritage in Dar along the principles of the Nara Document. This may provide an indication for the existing and latent values, as well as the errors made.

The 'artistic' qualities of Modernist architecture in Dar es Salaam

What are the aesthetic and architectural values of modernist architecture in Dar? At first sight, the projects we researched appear as **isolated projects** in a chaotic and continuously changing urban fabric. However, some of them acquired a **landmark** function in the city by their setting and appearance. This applies in particular to Saint Peter's church, located at the main access road to Mwasani peninsula, and Magomeni church, which marks the centre of the Magomeni suburb. In the center of the city, most of the buildings we studied were located in the plots between Ohio street and Maktaba/Azikiwe street. This area, which is a kind of transition zone between the diplomatic area and the **Indian quarter**, has been developed from the 1950's on and is the ideal working field for any study on the different faces of modernist architecture in Dar. The area contains projects from all four architects we researched, but some plots are still under development, and the resulting fabric is far from coherent. Almeida's Goan club appears next to Bransgrove's Life House. Bransgrove's two-storey YMCA and Posta House are opposed to the latest skyscraper of Sumar Varma architects. The Art Deco Barclays Bank stands in front of Almeida's NIC headquarters. They all offer a concise overview on modernist architecture in the 1950's and 60's, but the area lacks the urban density of the Indian quarter. Nevertheless, some buildings like the Goan club represent the best of what modernist architecture has to offer in Dar. Unfortunately, other buildings with a definite architectural or aesthetical quality were spoiled. The formal purity of Bransgrove's Tanganyika Standard Offices has been brutally disturbed by the addition of two banal storeys on top. The same happened to Almeida's public library, which lost its spatial purity.

As far as the artistic qualities are concerned, assessing modernist architecture in Dar remains looking for the **'raisins in the porridge'**, which adds to the belief that modernist architecture has difficulties to claim that it has contributed to the embellishment of Dar's urban landscape. In some cases, the extreme opposite is true.

The 'historical' connotations of modernist architecture

Considering the historic value, modernist architecture has to struggle as well against the remains of the colonial era, which because of their age automatically accede to the status of cultural heritage. The **historical significance** of modernist heritage is still delicate, since the 'historical narratives' of the era to which they belong still didn't take a definite shape. The Arab and German **colonial heritage**, although they belong to a historical disputed era, clearly refer to a particular stage in the history of Dar. The reference of the 50's and 60's modernist architecture to the era of British colonialism and the Independence under Nyerere seems to be obvious, but is far from unambiguous. Modernist buildings with a clear reference to the **political aspirations** of British colonial power or the independent Tanganyika remain scarce.

Perhaps the **Campus of the University** of Dar es Salaam is the clearest example. It is said that Nyerere even before independence went to London to make an agreement with the British government for the establishing of a Tanganyika University in Dar es Salaam. The project was boarded out to the British office **Norman & Dawbarn**, since they already had experience in the field. In this sense, the campus of today's University of Dar es Salaam is exemplary for the ambition of Nyerere to create an intellectual subclass in the new Tanganyikan society. Another example of a building with clear historical connotation is the **New Africa Hotel**, today one of the major tourist spots in Dar, but built on the site of the former Kaisershof hotel. During the German and British colonial era, this place was known as the whites-only place of Dar and the most exemplary symbol of segregation in Dar. Being a main entrance gate of 'white' mass tourism into Tanzania, the current building still bears this historical connotation.

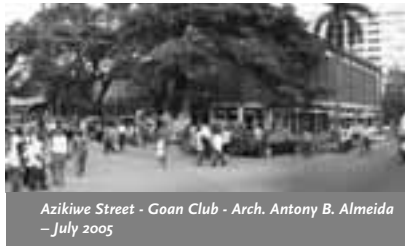
A last group of buildings that may represent an important part of the history of Tanzania is the **religious heritage**. The churches, schools, hostels and other service buildings may represent the importance of the Christian as well as the Muslim organisations in developing the spiritual and social networks in Tanzanian society. In Dar es Salaam, we might refer to the Catholic Saint Peter's and Magomeni church, Luther House, YMCA and YWCA, the Joint Christian Chapel and the Mosque on the university campus.

The 'social' aspects of modernist architecture in Dar

We already noticed that modernist buildings appear as **isolated entities** in the urban landscape of Dar, and when they appear near to each other, they behave as individual entities set next to each other. The Bank of Tanzania, Kilimanjaro hotel, NDC headquarters, Sukari House, NIC life house: they all stand indifferently next to

each other. Because of the differences in scale, they appear as a disturbance in the urban fabric. In the suburbs of Dar, several **NDC housing blocks** appear as fremdkörper among the slums, rather creating high-density ghettos instead of improving the housing quality or building a socialist dream.

But not every modernist architecture displays this conceited attitude. In particular along Maktaba/Azikiwe street, Bransgrove's **vWCA** and the new **post office** create a valuable urban element. The covered passage bulks of human activity and provides shelter along the main axis through the Dar city centre. The extension of the **National Museum** by French & Hastings is an extensive modernist complex that is well integrated in the park environment of the diplomatic quarter. Unfortunately, some of these urban elements become victim of their own success. The best example might be **Kariakoo market**. Amuli's covered marketplace had a considerable impact on the identity of the quarter, but was designed to serve 5000 people. Today a multiple amount of people is using the market, which puts a heavy charge on the building and even prevents it to be used at its full capacity. Also the passage along **vWCA** and the post office is completely overcrowded, since it is also the largest bus stop in the city centre, creating a major traffic bottleneck in the heart of the city.



Azikiwe Street - Goan Club - Arch. Antony B. Almeida
- July 2005

Modernity as the 5th Dimension

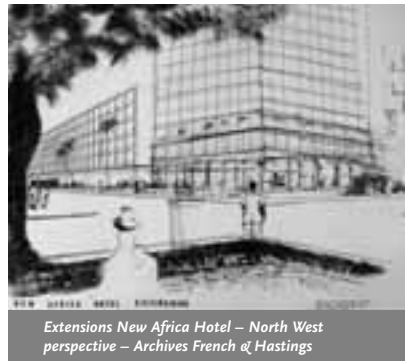
An essential dimension of 'modernist heritage' is obviously its affinity with the 'modern condition'. What does modernity mean in Dar es Salaam and how is it exemplified by modernist architecture? This relation, as will be discussed extensively in the next part of the paper, has different manifestations in Dar.

A first evident one, might be the relation towards **indigenous architecture**. We might think about the concrete huts Ernst May designed, where he combined indigenous housing typologies with the use of modern materials. Such a way of dealing with the own architectural tradition is at first sight absent in Dar. Of course this is partly due to the urban environment of Dar, but

also at a symbolical level there doesn't seem to be much reference to the indigenous architecture. Though, as the regional interpretations and expressions of 'modernity' actually represent 'indigenous modernities'⁵, there must also be something like indigenous modern architecture.

Secondly there is the relation to colonial architecture. The break with the **colonial architecture** is in the first place exemplified by the change in scale of the buildings. Early 50's buildings as Barclays bank, TanCot house and the Bank of Commerce created a shift in the dimensions towards multi-storey and plot-occupying buildings. But the influence of the European Modern Movement is harder to identify. Barclays Bank clearly refers to 1930's Art Deco architecture. TanCot House has a lot in common with the canopies of the Indian quarter, but applied on a building with a long monumental façade. A second shift in the scale of the buildings happens around 1960, exemplified by the Kilimanjaro Hotel and the First Permanent building. The typology of these buildings clearly represent the universal ambitions of the International Style, but in the detailing both give testimony of the input of tropical architecture using different kinds of canopies.

The modern attitude towards architecture as the consistent reinterpretation and overlap of the contemporary, as will be discussed soon, is clearly exemplified in the work of **Anthony Almeida** and he is still the main advocate of the universal principles of modernist architecture in Tanzania. But his notion of modernity is quite unique among the other expressions of modernity in Tanzania. In many cases, these expressions are quite superficial and mirror to an imaginary Western World of wealth and freedom, which has less to do with the social ambitions of the historical European Modern Movement.



Extensions New Africa Hotel - North West perspective - Archives French & Hastings

MODERN TIMES IN TANZANIA

Modernity has long been seen in the context of developing countries as an **outside force**. The multi-faced **Modern Movement** as such did not come from the inside, although the desire for freedom, emancipation and progress, when building the new Nation of Tanzania after independence, created a comparable drive. Though 'the inside' reinterpreted and transformed the varying **notions of modernity** into a local 'multimodernity'. Dar es Salaam today is a **melting pot** of modernities, which are all different outcomes of the negotiation between vast **capitalism** and **social progress**⁶. In general, it is often said that modernity's typical characteristic is its drift for **renewal** and the **resistance** against the **normalizing pressure** of tradition. The question is off course, in a city as Dar es Salaam marked by complex cultural differences, as noted above, what the meaning is of 'tradition'. It must be the **memory** of the common past, the common ground of **differing cultural traditions** and lifestyles coexisting in Dar es Salaam. One must keep hereby in mind that 'tradition' is not static. It is not a fixed **fossilized body** of habits and conventions, since it actually derives from a very **hybrid** and **dynamic** sense of past.

Bearing in mind that several villa's of Le Corbusier for instance were inspired by **vernacular** Ottoman architecture, and that the CIAM group based in Algiers⁷ studied squatter settlements to find organic and flexible principles applicable to modern urban planning, then we can assume that an **essentially modern architecture** never existed and never will⁸. (Celik; 2001). Though up to date there are **essential values** belonging to modernist architecture as an open plan, rationality, standardization, functionality, transparency, suggestive movement, new materials and techniques, and the architecture is generally marked by adjectives as sober, minimalist, clean and pure, somehow comparable to the Swahili words 'safi', 'fresh', and 'poa'. It is clear that modernist architecture could never be a style per se. It is rather a **way of thinking**. The fabulous diversity of the moderns proves this.

Nowadays the modernist promises and ideals for **freedom and emancipation** are not entirely fulfilled. Many people in Dar are still caught in the circle of poverty and class differences persist dramatically. Therefore people show lots of **criticism** when it comes to progress and modernity. The lyrics of **rap-music** in the public buses in Dar; the Bongo Flava, react to Nyerere's naïve ideals in the early post-colonial times, and the present loss of norms and the rough competition in the city to survive⁹. '*Sio mzee, this mistake we won't make again*', raps Professor Jay¹⁰. Since the eighties in the post-Nyerere period, politics in Tanzania are marked by **neoliberal** economics. This **transition** caused a plurality of new **clashes and shockwaves** in economic and socio-cultural domains.

Multimodernity

Its co-existence with the 'post-modern' condition reveals that modernity is not entirely the same as the **contemporary**, unlike Almeida's belief that this is the case. '*Modern architecture*' is thus not entirely the same as '*modernist architecture*'. Modern architecture is the consistent reinterpretation and overlap of the contemporary, expressed through differing forms and uses of architecture, whereas modernist architecture rather represents buildings that have or refer to a cultural-historic meaning. The 'moonshape' building of Interconsult along Bagamoyo Road in Dar es Salaam is a good example for this distinction. Its 'mickey-mouse' architecture depending on new fashion trends, as noted by Ivan Sutula, a Croatian architect working in Dar es Salaam, reflects clearly this breach with the modernism of Almeida and the others.

Under the umbrella of modernism, one can make also the distinction between the process of **societal development** marked by better technologies, industrialization, urbanization, democratization, capitalization, etc. and the way this process is experienced by individuals in their **personal environment**. Inevitably architecture has the potential to connect this distinction. The **branches and breaches** of 'multimodernity' have given many in-

⁵ 'Indigenous modernities' were described by Jyoti Hasagrahar as "paradoxical features of modernities rooted in their particular condition and located outside the dominant discourse of a universal paradigm centered on an imagined 'West'" (Hasagrahar, 2005, p. 7).

⁶ Jyoti Hasagrahar has used the notion of 'indigenous modernities' to describe this 'melting pot' or 'local multimodernity'.

⁷ "As context and place-specific interpretations of a global condition, indigenous modernities are everywhere." (Hasagrahar, 2005, p. 7)

⁸ The International Conference on Modern Architecture (CIAM) in 1953, was held in Algiers, Algeria.

⁹ This illustrates that modern architecture more has to do with a style of thinking than actual stylistic modernist forms and materials.

Though many stylistic features are copied into other so-called modern buildings in Dar today.

⁹ Inhabitants sometimes call Dar es Salaam 'Bongo', which is Swahili for 'Brains'. This refers to the survival in the city, the 'cunning to survive'. 'Use ur brains if u wanna survive in da city'. 'Chemshwa Bongo' means 'Boiled Brains' and boiling refers to the stimulation of the cunning. The Belgian anthropologist Koen Stroeken gave a lecture on Tanzanian rap-music in Leuven, 9-12-2003.

¹⁰ Professor J is a famous Tanzanian rapper living in Dar es Salaam, where this style of music was born. It's been said that by listening to Bongo Flavour one can grasp the living conditions of an entire subculture in Dar.

terpretations to modernity in Dar. In some cases modernity is equivalent to **wealth**, expressed through the excessive use of expensive materials, or formal behaviour or ordering beer. In other cases it means an enduring **engagement** to the upward development of society. The nature of modernist culture in Tanzania beholds breaches and branches, or using the thematic distinction by Hilde Heynen; *transitoric* and *programmatic* notions (Heynen, 1999) ¹¹. It can be the dialectic anathym of tradition and a critical break with the past, or an element of the development process as a rehabilitation of the traditional into the contemporary. The several representations of the modern make it impossible to point out clearly **what's in a name**. Also according to Anthony Almeida, modernism is **very broad**.

'It can look very old. It can turn out to look very classic. It's dependent on today's requirements, like climate, available materials, affordability, etc. One needs to uplift conservative people to modern architecture.' (Almeida, 2005)

In this view, simply the applied skills for architectural and spatial quality are distinctive for different senses of modern architecture in Dar es Salaam, instead of **conflicting views** on what modernity is about. Almeida uses the metaphor of a *'fruitsalad'* to describe his view on an architecture *'open to all ideas'*. Established habits and ideas are additional to today's new needs. The **fruitsalad** refers to the consistent rethinking of tradition instead of resisting it. *'Find out how it became tradition'* is for him an important *'leitmotiv'*.

Dar es Salaam as a mirror hall

A remarkable article of a leisure magazine, sent by Almeida and addressed to us in April, describes Dar as becoming a **glass jungle** ¹². Nowadays, the skyline of Dar es Salaam is indeed increasingly marked by glass towers. The 'twin-towers' of the Bank of Tanzania, which are now still under construction, are sticking out majestically. The author of the article notes that *'in its own sense glass has always been considered as an element of modernity'* (Michuzi, 2005). This glass is not applied as a means to evoke the modernist virtue of transparency, movement, and flexibility, but as a means to reflect **status and wealth**. *'At Ubungo, you have the Ubungo Plaza, blinking down at you, a stone's throw from the up-country bus terminal.'* These glittering mirrors in the vast sun represent new **ramparts** served by modern materials and production techniques. The more expensive the technique and the more glass is used the more **prestige** is achieved. This glass is merely a **facade**, a **membrane**, a **mirror**.

The facades reflect differences in material wealth and status, and implicitly also evoke **class difference**. This



Bank of Tanzania Extensions – Arch. H.L. Shah – March 2005

is radically against the spirit of modernism looking for progress, freedom and eventually the creation of a homogenous social class and metropolitan public. The glass is used for the creation of difference as a strategy to increase the standard, the market value, and express the prestige and importance of the Bank. With the rise of **concrete** it was a comparable scenario, as Michuzi describes the phenomenon as: *'Dar's impulsive metamorphosis from a concrete to a glass jungle'* (Michuzi, 2005). The wealth expressed by mechanical **air-conditioning** and **climate control** goes together with glass ¹³. Some architecture is only modern because it is fashionable. Cultural values struggle with the **commercial pressure**. The use of glass in this case is like the exhibitionism of inequalities. In his essay about the poverty of experience, Walter Benjamin describes glass as the enemy of the secret, and the enemy of the possession (Heynen, 1999), though it is clear that the glass buildings in Dar express exactly the opposite of this. *'The nssf Waterfront House, its loud red-and-yellow edifice, and glass, colouring the area like nobody's business.'* (Michuzi, 2005) **Transparency** has become a matter of secondary importance. It is an example of, as Seidler noted, *'exhibitionistic display of technological acrobatics for its own sake'*. These buildings, like any fashion, cloy the appetite. *'They are transient and self-extinguishing, grating and annoying the senses in the end. They are regressive, anti-intellectual modes – defying reason, art and technics. They are not a worthy product of our time whose creed should be one of restraint and disdain for willful waste or physical or visual extravagance.'* (Seidler, 2002, p. 61)

'Glass structures have their plusses and minuses (...) first it's their element of modernity, whereby owners proudly wallow in the fact that the more glass there is the more prestigious they become. It also allows an unobtrusive panoramic view of the outside, and those outside cannot see inside, it could be with various tinted colours and shapes and could be laminated to create sound proofing walls. Glass could also be coated to reflect light and heat to a desired volume, and could be carved to create exciting facades. Disadvantages associated with such structures vary, but top most include the fact that glass is easily breakable and its complexity of technological demands during construction is very high. (...) If not properly fixed and chosen glass can cause considerable hazards like excessive reflexion of light and heat into the street. Also if broken it is difficult to dispose of as it requires special cleaning methods to clean up the mess. Local architects and engineers have a daunting task in terms of perfecting construction of glass structures, whose technology is both complex and expensive. But still the end product gives the place an element of beauty and modernity; That's for sure.' (Michuzi, 2005)

'Njuu, who is also the Vice Chairman of the Engineers Registration Board (ERB), does not make it a secret that he himself has been fascinated by glass from tender age, particularly after his dad brought home a huge mirror way back in 1947. It is still the talk of Kyara village in Marangu, Moshi urban, he swears.' This man, said regularly in the interview that there's nothing to worry about, like many Tanzanians easily react on problems with typical sentences as *'pole pole'*, or *'hamna noma'*; **no worries**, take it easy. Hereby the **standard of the material** used is far more important than the quality of the architecture.

'There's nothing to worry about on the latest glass craze, because they are not very different from modern technologies and styles, ranging from underwear to posh cars. The only thing here to worry about, is the sustenance of standards. Don't be bothered by glass structures because like many other new designs such as underwear, motor vehicles, restaurants, supermarkets and what have, so is the glass culture which in the western world started way back in the middle ages. Don't worry about the number of glass buildings because like restaurants you only have to worry about the quality of the food not their numbers. (...) This comes now to the question whether our glass structures

are up to standard. The good thing is all the 'big boys' - who are less than 10- had imported foreign material and engineers from South Africa, UK, and China. Therefore theirs is high standard workmanship with everything considered. Luckily there are only few 'small boys' who have glass structures therefore it is a safe bet that other than having poor workmanship their buildings are okay too.' (Michuzi, 2005)

The melting pot

The above discussions point out that not all modernities fit into the broad realm of the Modern Movement. There is a **confusion** of what modernity is about ¹⁴. The values of historic modernist heritage, as we discussed before ¹⁵, can only fully be recognized if there is **consensus** on the values of the qualitative examples of 'modern architecture' in Tanzania. The Modern Movement is simply not rooted in Tanzania nor in Africa. It was part of a forced march to - western - modernity and capitalism. Its infusion is an expression of this inevitable **transition**. All these notions of modernity, are entangled and simultaneously present in Dar es Salaam, as a new complex **layer of meaning** of the contemporary. Dar today is a melting pot of modernities.

Modernity is **complex and versatile**, and cannot adequately be described. The **connection** of the differing notions and views is essential for its existence. Modern architecture can thus be regarded as the collection of all architectural expressions that are built from any viewpoint out of the wide range. It is important to place the modernist tradition of the fifties, sixties and seventies, in the development and ever more complex sense of **'contemporary modernity'**, as it manifests itself in a rapidly transforming and sprawling city as Dar es Salaam.

Voices of modernism

Comparable voices of Modernism in the Europe of the twenties, like **Adolf Loos**, an architect from Austria, described modernity as a continuation of tradition, instead of a radical new start. According to Loos, modernity most fully displays itself in the actuality of tradition. Also for **Ernst May**, traditional features were very important. He pleaded for an approach beyond imitati-

¹¹ To make this point clear, she refers to two philosophers of the twentieth century, Habermas (programmatic, the branch) and Baudelaire (transitoric; the breach).

¹² Dar turning into a glass jungle (article by Muhidin Issa Michuzi, Leisure Magazine, March 27, 2005).

¹³ The story goes that sometimes taxi-drivers in Dar es Salaam having a car without any special technical options, keep their windows

closed in the heat of the day, to give the impression that they do dispose of air-conditioning, even when temperatures in the car become unbearably high. This kind of competition between taxi-drivers is also expressed through the 'tuning' of their cars.

¹⁴ This confusion is most likely the essence of modernity.

¹⁵ The heritage values as discussed in the first part of the paper, in its artistic, historical, social, and 'modern' dimensions.

on of the past. In Frankfurt, Germany, he was responsible for the design of several urban projects or 'Siedlungen', to raise the living conditions of the masses and to solve the large housing needs after WWI. In 'das Neue Frankfurt', the magazine published in this period, he said:

'We refuse to pay homage to those traditions by imitating their achievements. On the contrary, we want to reveal these traditions in the manner they deserve, by giving a decisive form to the new, standing with boot feet in the contemporary world and basing our conclusions on the actual conditions of contemporary life.' (Heynen, 1999, p. 67)

Central in May's work are the dialectics between the modernist principles and the actual context. The work of Almeida in Dar es Salaam, using a modernist language that is strongly influenced by local and climatological features, also reflects this **ambivalence**. Almeida never subscribed himself to the so-called Avant-Garde rejecting all traditional forms and calling for tabula rasa. A similar attitude towards the local features is shown in the early work of H.L. Shah. Saint Peter's church is classic example of the principle of cross ventilation in tropical architecture. With the original Bank of Tanzania and NIC Invest House Shah has been experimenting with new kinds of sun shading. But in the last example, he also experimented with European typologies for high-rise office buildings. The work of Amuli more or less lacks the climatological issues and goes for an architecture that by its vast concrete volumes completely breaks with the past.

Modern architecture was initially, from the viewpoint of Ernst Bloch (Heynen, 1999, p. 118), intended to create openness and to provide room for light and sun, with the aim to create an interchange between interior and exterior. In Tanzania though, houses need shade for the harsh sun and shelter for the long-rains. In the detailing and conceptualization of his house near Coco Beach, Almeida knew well to solve these local parameters without making compromises¹⁶ to the modernist language. He brought his private space into relationship with the public realm, as he noted: 'a house isn't made only for the persons who intend to live in it, it is also a gift for the landscape and its people'¹⁷.

'Truly modern architecture is architecture that represents a mature art of building, where the language of form is not only symbolic but pictures the social concern of the architect in the choice of materials, scale, light, and relation to the context.' (Lund, 2002)

Capitalism and social progress

Manfredo Tafuri's thesis says that the course of modern architecture cannot be understood independently of the economic infrastructure of capitalism and that its entire development occurs within these parameters (Tafuri; 1973, Heynen; p. 129). In this way, **modern architecture** is liable to the **capitalist discourse** in Tanzania, and its development should be seen in this process of transition from a socialist one party state with a planned economy to a multi-party democracy in a capitalist system. In this sense a second wave of modern architecture flooded Dar since the 80's, after the resignation of President 'Mwalimu' Nyerere¹⁸. It is probably no coincidence that the introduction of the **monetary economy** went together with the infusion of modern architecture in Tanzania in the fifties. In this sense modernism has always been bound to **wealth and money**, while this is not where modernist architecture in Europe stood for in the first place. Did modern architecture in Tanzania have a potential legacy to offer a **future socialist society**? Modern architecture in Tanzania nowadays is most seldom connected with these ideal views on social progress. Though two examples that do reflect clearly these **social aspirations**, are the **building** of May in Moshi built in colonial times, and the **urban design** for Dodoma from the post-independence period.

In **Moshi**, Ernst May built in 1952 the KNCU building, one of the first buildings for multi-racial use in Tanzania (Mol, 2004). The Kilimanjaro Native Coffee Union was one of the most successful co-operations in Tanganyika, long before Nyerere started with the nationalization of the Tanzanian economy. The cultivation of Arabica coffee, which was introduced by the missionaries in the 19th century, created a flourishing coffee economy on the slopes of the Kilimanjaro and turned Moshi into a center of coffee trade. The coffee farmers associated themselves in the KNCU and decided in 1950 to build a **new community center** that would contain offices for the co-operation, trading space for the coffee farmers and a commerce school. A notorious member of the co-operation was the German protagonist of the Modern-Movement **Ernst May**. When May had to leave Europe in the 1930's, he found a refuge on the slopes of Mount Meru near Arusha, where he started a coffee-farm. By the end of the 1930's, he resumed his architectural activities and settled in Nairobi and Mombassa.

But the contact with the coffee farmers of the Kilimanjaro region remained, and of course he was the suitable person to realize the ambitious but complex programme of the new KNCU headquarters. May designed a U shaped building on a sloping terrain along the main road to Dar es Salaam. The co-operation was

liquidated in the 1980's, but re-founded in the 1990's. They still occupy the KNCU building, which has been preserved in unspoiled condition as it was built in 1952. The KNCU is probably the most **socially engaged** project that the Modern Movement has brought forth in Tanzania and still a **modernist landmark** in the urban landscape of Moshi.

The urban plan for the new Capital City of **Dodoma** of 1976 was one of the only plans, which truly reflected the utopian search for community and family traditions and for social mixture in urban villages, based on Nyerere's philosophy of Ujamaa¹⁹. This modernism promoted a symbol for the **progress of the State**, reflecting a national and **collective identity**.

'Dodoma, as a capital city, should be a symbol of Tanzania's social, economic and cultural values and aspirations, and shall avoid the mistakes of colonial planning which are evident in Tanzania's present towns.' (Dodoma Capital Masterplan, 1976, p. 1)

The masterplan²⁰ represents a form of opposition to capitalism, a form of criticism, longing to a new **socialist** society in a freshly established Nation. The design of a new Capital City, with its vibrant National Capital Centre that was never really implemented, wanted to mark the point of transition to the modern and independent State. The concept of urban villages was an expression that would resonate both with modernity and with specific cultural aspirations. This is comparable to the **expressionist architecture** in Europe trying to devise an alternative to tradition by concentrating on the power of the imagination, as discussed by Ernst Bloch (Heynen, 1999).

Unfortunately, many examples of modern architecture in Dar today, as shown, are bound up with a **capitalist lifestyle** mirroring the wealth of the West **at the cost of**

social progress. A tough competition exists between the desired modernist **freedom** of the individual in a classless society, and the **free market**. Modernist freedom has been competing with the freedom regulated by the market, where flats and houses are merely commodities. From an anti-pastoral viewpoint, in this fundamental contradiction between an economic and cultural modernity²¹, none of both can be realized without breaches or **conflicts** (Heynen, 1999). These conflicts though, did not lead to the fall of modern architecture.

'True modern architecture is not dead, as some will have us believe. We have hardly started to explore the potential of its methodology.' (Birksted, 2002)²²

Housing for the Homeless

Born under capitalism, the process of western modernization in countries as Tanzania means an accumulation of **contradictive changes**, and in this whirlpool it's not easy to **feel home**²³. In the society based on new market conditions, which create diffuse dichotomies between as well rurality and urbanity, as centre and periphery, as modernity and tradition, as mythos and logos, people may experience a lack of a **place to which one fully belongs**, indicating a deeply felt rupture with one's lived world. The well-known sentence *'all that is solid melts into air'* is a clear cry of this experience of **disruption** and it is most relevant in the Tanzanian context (Berman, 1982). For the people stuck into deprivation and poverty, the notion of modernity is often merely present in an invisible and imaginary world as part of **diffuse daily realities**²⁴.

The architecture of migration

Modern architecture is inevitably also the architecture of migration. Maybe this is how houses built by rural migrants in the urban areas of Dar es Salaam, although

¹⁶ Sometimes though, as Almeida said at his office, the 24th of March 2005, clients didn't accept local elements of the Tanzanian context. In the EACSO building for instance, he had to place against his own will, the type of toilets to sit, while he had chosen to place the 'French' type of toilet to stand, because they are more hygienous and fit into the natural and traditional uses. 'You want us to go back to the bushes?' the client refused. The consequences paved way for jokes, when stones were found in the basin and when a toilet broke because a Masaai wasn't familiar with such a toilet and decided to stand on top of it.

¹⁷ As said by Almeida when visiting his house on the 1st of March 2005, ¹⁸ Mwalimu is Swahili for 'teacher'.

¹⁹ Ujamaa is kiswahili for 'familyhood'. The plan proposed clusters of 'urban villages' as a model for urban growth, comparable to the traditional family-life of rural people in compounds.

²⁰ The masterplan was prepared by Project Planning Associates, a Canadian firm based in Toronto. Giving the job to a foreign firm was a bit paradoxically to the idea of 'a design of the region, instead of

for the region' and 'Self-Reliance'. This firm also designed the masterplan for Dar es salaam in 1968, using a rationalised city structure and design of social communities along the lines drawn by the Modern Movement.

²¹ 'Economic modernity' is easily connected with 'neocolonialism', because before independence, the relationship between the colonizer and the colonized was essentially economic.

²² Though, Charles Jencks symbolically declared the death of modernism in 1972 (LIM, William; The dynamics of East-Asian New Urbanism; Back from utopia, 010 Publishers, Rotterdam, 2002, p. 203).

²³ Housing and home are in conflict in the condition of modernity, as noted by Martin Heidegger in his lecture 'Building, Dwelling, Thinking' in 1951.

²⁴ The book of Filip De Boeck, and Marie-Françoise Plissart, as mentioned before; Kinshasa the imaginary city, discusses a modern city that is constituted by the imaginary world of its inhabitants.

these reflect a traditional housing habit and know-how, actually become modern through the use of small features like a billboard or bricks with the coca-cola logo, obtained in the city. The meaning of these buildings is **inversed** due to their **location**. They are now related to new contemporary life-styles linked to the universe of modernity and the city. Big cities were a completely new experience for the masses of migrants after independence, who came from the countryside looking for employment. The **migrant** is as well a **person**, as a **metaphor** for the experience of the individual in a modern, mobile, and changing society. The modern consciousness is that of the 'the **homeless** mind', the **stranger** addicted to a continuous **traveling**.

The ideas of modernism appeared as strange ideologies in a local context where housing had to do with family-hood and enclosure into the compound. In the context of the city modern architecture is like a **screen to the world**.

ANCHORS FOR DEVELOPMENT

Some markers of modernism like **pilotis** and **arcades**, do not have the same meaning in Brussels or Amsterdam as they have in Dar es Salaam, where they contribute to creating a cooler, shaded area, and a shelter during the rain season. The process of **interiorization**, as discussed by Jean-Louis Cohen (Cohen, 2002, p. 85), goes together with a growing internationalism. The '**authenticity**' of the place, or the '**genius loci**'²⁵, is now tempered by



Cooperative Building – Arch. B. Amuli – March 2005

the global, and the architect has to work within this sphere of **ambiguity**. This raises questions and problems of assimilation and standardization. Is modern architecture still able to reflect any cultural identity after all?

Collective identities

The central premise of Tanzania's Nationalist movement after independence was '**Self-Reliance**', based on a Tanzanian identity. For years in the colonial period, 'indigenous' memories and traditions were marginalized. The shift to independence promised a new era and a space for the **collective identity** of all Tanzanians. Renewal was meant to be achieved by creating chances for marginalized and repressed traditions. It was the start of a continuous process of **negotiation** between the demands of the modernization project and the revalidation of cultural heritage. Modernist discontinuity had to allow historical continuity. People started to look for preserving or **building their identity** while at the same time taking advantage of some selected aspects of modernization. Up to date, this has been a **continuous search** for and between culture-specific urban identities and modern conditions.

In the sixties the CCM government²⁶ saw the need for **standardized design**, as a means of establishing **order** before it got out of control. This led to the spread of standardized building blocks, or 'copy-paste' architecture²⁷. New **housing schemes** asked for the 'redevelopment' of the old, muddled environments with the undertone of concepts for moral and medical hygiene. These blocks seem to have rather been built for solving instant housing needs and problems in the slums, than they were part of the modernization project. It was crisis management that asked for higher densities, and these could only be achieved using **modern building techniques** and the use of **concrete**. Even though these blocks initially all looked the same, they started to become different. People added shacks, painted parts, and the blocks were given names of mental elsewhere like 'Karachi' or 'Oklahoma'. In a way, those people became the architects of (re)localization.

Almeida's buildings are considered of a high quality, because they represent a deep sense of local **craftsmanship**, a consideration of local realities concerning climate, lifestyle, materials, etc. and at the same time try to reflect this 'fruit-cocktail' or the **unification of differences** through the well considered interplay of ideas in a modern grammar. This doesn't necessarily mean a loss of identity, but it can be the creation of a new kind of identity which unifies the restrictions and clashes of apparently conflicting styles and ideas of the modern and the traditional. Comparably, modernist planning can try to unify differences without excluding them, to

give them a place in the urban structure. Today the continuing push of **globalisation** apparently has spurred architects like Almeida to set a – however small – counterpoint to the big **mainstream** of the commercial 'non-place' architecture, by reinterpreting and **localising** the universally accepted modern vocabulary.

Though, according to Cacciari, in the reality of **capitalism**, every form of **synthesis**, every attempt to reconcile the **contradictions**, is illusory and has been superseded. '*The only justifiable attitude, given this assumption, would seem to be that of a resistance originating in a completely disillusioned understanding of the reality of its own existence.*' (Cacciari, 1993, p19) The only way to show **resistance** is to create the suggestion of **difference** in the mainstream, by demonstrating the existence of a **plurality of languages**.



Posta House – Azikiwe Street – Arch. C.A. Bransgrove – March 2005

Beacons

After the exploration of the differing notions of modernity and ways to cope with it in Dar es Salaam, the next question rises: Which buildings can be regarded as the **anchors**, the '**beacons of built quality**'? This collection of high-quality buildings built in the 50's-70's can be seen as some kind of structure in the city, and as a layer, or narrative, of modernism. Urban spaces can be qualified via the presence of such buildings. These buildings could be **opportunities** for the development of its surrounding urban area. **Meaningful places** in the fragmented city can be generated or developed through the presence of preserved quality architecture and historic monuments. Are these old modernist recipes and fruitsalads, as mentioned in the previous parts of this paper, threatened to be swallowed by the uncontrolled urban hunger in Dar today?

Referring to the 'unification of differences', as noted in the previous paragraph, it is clear that without any sense of **unification**, the city is 'lost in translation'. Dar will lose itself as a **fragmented body** cut into **bits and bites**. Therefore, modern planning trying to create the contradictory unity of differences through strategic interventions and intelligent transport structures, is essential for the functioning of Dar today. A step in **creating this unity**, is to recognize the collective memory of the city in its built heritage, which not only refers to a pre-colonial and colonial past, but moreover to the richness of the post-colonial discourse. This collectivity links the development of the city today with its past. It is this collectivity that is able to **unify the city** not only in **space**, but also in **time**. Though, Dar es Salaam cannot be regarded as a conceptual whole, or a single body waiting for interventions. Instead perhaps **sustainable urbanism** is able to link up existing, future and past developments in a unifying and strategic 'time-space urbanity'. This **way of thinking** creates short-term strategies serving long-term objectives, and always regards buildings as a multiple intervention in the landscape. As Wessel de Jonge said: '*In respecting human dignity, local characteristics and cultural values, the ideals of the Modern Movement may prove to be of a great use to arrive at sustainable solutions.*' (De Jonge, 2002) Only 'sustainable pasts' can lead 'sustainable futures' for urban development.

'The diversity of cultures and heritage in our world is an irreplaceable source of spiritual and intellectual richness for all humankind. The protection and enhancement of cultural and heritage diversity in our world should be actively promoted as an essential aspect of human development.' (Nara Document on Authenticity, art. 5)

²⁵ According to Christian Norberg Schulz it is the task of architects to 'find and express this 'genius loci', or the 'geniunity of the place'.
²⁶ Chama Cha Mapinduzi; the ruling party of the revolution.

²⁷ According to Almeida the architects of these buildings even wanted to sell copyrights.

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ABSTRACT

The discourse of 'Native housing' in apartheid South Africa derived its architectural language and design principles from modern architecture, which became popular in Europe and America during the inter-war period. As a particular architectural discourse, 'native housing' and 'township' were not just simply an architectural drawing or a plan, which described the configuration of a building or a neighbourhood. Rather it was part of a web of practice embedded within the evolving apartheid spatial strategy to control the social and geographic mobility of African workers and their families.

INTRODUCTION

To control the overpopulated villages held in native ownership such as Sophiatown and Alexandra and the numerous squatter camps around the Witwatersrand and Pretoria efficiently, would be attempting the impossible

...The most pressing single need of the Native community is more adequate housing. *Only by the proper supervision of adequate shelter in properly planned Native townships can full control over urban Natives be regained because only then will it be possible to eliminate the surplus Natives who do not seek or find an honest living in the cities.* (emphasis mine) (UG 61, 1951)

Native housing ... not only affect[s] the well being of Natives but [also] the very stability of the prime economic factor, the labour of the Native, on which the material prosperity [of South Africa] depends (Lindberg, 1937, p. 1).

In the inter-war period when segregationist strategies to control the social and geographic mobility of African workers and their families were unravelling, a consensus emerged among a group of architects, town planners and municipal administrators about the need to build 'Native' housing townships with considerable government subsidy that would also meet rigorous standards of minimum housing design and urban planning for the rapidly expanding Africa urban population.

The new minimum housing scheme that began to be constructed in South Africa was inspired by a group of architects associated with the Modern Movement in Europe. These housing schemes which were specifically designed for African workers and their families were built with brick or cement blocks, asbestos roofs, and unimaginative textured surfaces; they were considered as a major innovation in architectural design. The designs were hailed as the way to bring material improvements and moral uplift to 'native' workers their families. Implicit in this view was the civilising and domesticating mission of architecture within the racialised space of South Africa the foundation for maintaining racial domination.

This paper examines several features of state intervention during the interwar period. In particular, the paper analyses the architectural and planning discourse in the construction of 'Native' housing as a specific solution to the African housing crisis in the major urban centres of the country. The second part discusses the planning of segregated African townships as a strategy for controlling the social and geographic mobility of African workers and their families in South Africa.

ARCHITECTURAL MODERNISM AND THE DISCOURSE OF 'NATIVE' HOUSING

In a letter written (July 1939) from Paris to Rex Martinseen, a white South African architect, Le Corbusier noted that

Johannesburg seemed to me just about at the end of the earth, in the middle of the lions and negroes, that is so say ... inaccessible. But the other day in Zurich, I lunched with a prominent businessman who praised Johannesburg and its inhabitants to the skies and declaring among other things, that you are extremely gentlemanly fellows and it is a most interesting place. He urged me to get on an Imperial Airways plane and go. And that is very nice and very tempting, but with my pockets empty, things are going very badly (cited in Herbert, 1975, p. 270).

Le Corbusier's cultural construction of Johannesburg in the 'middle of lions and negroes' was based on a