

The Social and Culture Life in the City Centre of Nairobi

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ABSTRACT

We live in a world of advanced technology, stiff global competition, rapid transformation of all facets of life and architecture has not been spared. The transformations are witnessed in facets of life that affect the social relations, cultural consumption and political economy that have affected the manner in which people perform in and out of space in the city centres. Cities are marketing themselves ecstatically beyond the baroque with a more visible presence of the contending parties through trade marks, public relations invasively advertised in streets, monuments (signature buildings or projects), and language.

Baudrillard (2003; vi) contends that architecture is today represented in huge screens of atoms and particles, with the public stage set of the baroque usurped by gigantic circulations, ventilations and ephemeral connection spaces. How are these notions reflected in the city centre life of a city such as Nairobi? What is its hope in the competition to market itself as the city in the sun and the gateway to Africa yet has limited resources? What are the impacts on the quality of life of the city centre users? Is there a transformation on who the audience and actors of the new public sphere? These are some of the questions that this paper explores with reference to city centre of Nairobi.

Key Words: seduction, culture, transformation