

LB/201/27/1998

**URBAN PUBLIC SPACE : AN EXAMINATION OF ITS QUALITATIVE  
ATTRIBUTES WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO  
SENSE OF BELONGING**

Dissertation submitted to the Dept. of Architecture  
for the Final Examination in Msc

and for the Part II of RIBA



University of Moratuwa, Sri Lanka  
Electronic Theses & Dissertations  
www.lib.mrt.ac.lk

මොරටුව විශ්ව විද්‍යාලය ශ්‍රී ලංකාවේ  
විද්‍යාඥාඥානායකයාගේ  
විද්‍යාඥාඥානායකයාගේ

Sudarshana Senadeera M.S.  
Dept. of Architecture  
University of Moratuwa  
Sri Lanka

72'98"  
711.4

July 1998

69348

69348  
um  
thesis  
coll.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

In a study of this nature one builds up enormous debts, to each and everyone who contributed in various ways.

Utmost gratitude to Archt. Vidura Sri Nammuni for his guidance, incisive comments, criticism, and advice.

I extend my thanks to Archt. Ranjith Alahakoon, Archt. Vijitha Basnayake, my year masters for their continuous guidance.

Further, I am grateful to Archt. Prasanna Kulatilake for his comments, inputs, direction and effort devoted on my behalf.

I also grateful to my friends, Namdana, Prasanna, Kamini, Sudarshana, and many others for the contineous support extended.

I am much obliged to the technical and library staff of the Dept. Of Architecture for their dedication.

Finally, my heartfelt gratitude to my mother and Chaya for their courage and effort devoted on my behalf.

I aware that a study of this nature may have short commings, due to its depth and broadness and for the faults that still exist I remain responsible.



## ABSTRACT

Urban life becomes memorable when people are active in public spaces. The city used to be the center for art, thought and consequent relationships and always had a promise of something more.

In early cities the urban built environment enhanced the man's freedom of thought, action and creativity. It generated strong characters unique to the users, where they felt that they are a part of the setting. The word 'city' once suggested 'civility' and those characters of culture and politeness which attend the term.

However, with the turn of this century an apparent crisis in public life began which resulted in the loss of public realm. Now, there is disorder and people have lost the enjoyment of public life. Today 'city' means crisis, a crisis brought by past neglect, present indecisiveness and future explosions of undetermined effects.

The population densities and the requirement of space for them and the growing activities increased after the industrial revolution, and the situation is worsening during the recent past, vanishing the public life that is so vital to a city's well being. The problem of the city has undoubtedly achieved a magnitude of attention in recent times. Concern with the problem of cities, is therefore more than simple idealism or passing academic fancy; it stems from fear and great apprehension. If urban problems are left to chance, or to indifference, the results will necessarily be tragic. We see in cities of the world, places where man can no longer live in safety, with convenience, with a sense of security or with a feeling of human dignity.

Therefore it is necessary to take action to lead our cities to their survival and renaissance and this action must be guided towards one goal; to create a better city for man.

## Contents

<b>Acknowledgement</b> .....	I
<b>Abstract</b> .....	II
<b>List of Illustrations</b> .....	V

## Introduction

Observation .....	1
Impact .....	1
Possible Causes .....	2
Intention of the Study .....	2
Methodology and the Scope .....	2



## Chapter One

### Urban Public Space : Quantitative and Qualitative Attributes.

1.1 Urban Public Space : A Wholistic view. ....	4
1.1.1 Definition of urban public space. ....	4
1.1.2 Significance of urban public space .....	6
as social and existential space.	
1.2 Quantitative Attributes. ....	8
1.3 Qualitative Attributes. ....	9
1.3.1 Imageability. ....	9
1.3.2 Territoriality. ....	11
1.3.3 Sense of community / Togetherness. ....	13
1.3.4 Sense of Belonging. ....	14

## **Chapter Two**

### **Sense of Belonging : The Subqualities and the Language.**

2.1 Achievement of Sense of Belonging. ....	17
2.1.1 Through a People Specific Approach. ....	17
2.1.2 Through a Place Specific Approach. ....	20
2.2 Constituent sub qualities. ....	21
2.2.1 Identity. ....	22
2.2.2 Orientation. ....	23
2.2.3 Legibility. ....	24
2.3 The mechanism of creating such spaces. ....	25
2.3.1 Center. ....	25
2.3.2 Enclosure. ....	26
2.3.3 Continuity. ....	28



University of Moratuwa, Sri Lanka  
Electronic Theses & Dissertations  
www.lib.mrt.ac.lk

## **Chapter Three**

### **The Examination : Case Studies**

3.1 Basis of selection of case studies. ....	31
3.2 Case studies. ....	32
3.2.1 Mahmaluwa - Kandy ....	32
3.2.2 Independence Square ....	43
3.2.3 Mohideen Masjid Road - Panchikawatte ....	52

<b>Conclusion.</b> ....	62
-------------------------	----

<b>Bibliography.</b> ....	65
---------------------------	----

## LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

1.	The Cannery Shopping Center, San Francisco.	6
2.	A Bourgeois Boulevard, Vienna. 1873.	7
3.	Wenceslas Square, Prague in 1835.	8
4.	Hamina, Finland.	10
5.	A Contemporary European City.	11
6.	A Project for the city of Chaux, France, 1775.	11
7.	Protecting one's own Territory.	12
8.	Play ground in Victoria Park, London.	13
9.	Grand Boulevard, Chicago, Illinois, 1892.	14
10.	People in Tokyo,	19
11.	The Spirit of the Place.	21
12.	Identity through intense familiarity.	22
13.	Brasilia, Brazil.	23
14.	Paris looking South west, Arc de Triomple.	24
15.	Sculptures, Chicago, Illinois.	24
16.	Karlsruhe, Germany.	26
17.	Aigues- Mortes, France.	27
18.	An enclosed Urban Public Space.	27
19.	An ally way, Turkey.	28
20.	Continuity through visual paths.	29
21.	Brussels, Belgium.	29
22.	Location map of Mahamaluwa	33
23.	Map of Mahamaluwa complex.	34
24.	Entrance terrace to the Temple of Tooth Relic.	35
25.	Temple of Tooth Relic.	36
26.	Mahamaluwa - View from the west.	37
27.	Orientation of Mahamaluwa in relation to the larger context.....	37
28.	Green lawns where people relax.	38
29.	Mahamaluwa - orientation, scale and form.	39
30.	Kandy city.	39

31.	Ancient Kandy city - painting	40
32.	Wahalkada - Main entrance.	40
33.	Walakul Bemma - A decorated parapet wall.	41
34.	Terraced path way towards the Temple of Tooth Relic.....	41
35.	Terraced path way towards the Temple of Tooth Relic.....	42
36.	Location map of Independence Square. ....	44
37.	Map of Independence Square. ....	44
38.	The square and the people. ....	45
39.	Independence Hall - Exterior. ....	46
40.	Independence Hall - Interior. ....	46
41.	View from the Independence Avenue. ....	47
42.	The landscape and people. ....	48
43.	Base of the statue in the front. ....	49
44.	Elevated Podium. ....	50
45.	Sense of Enclosure. ....	50
46.	Independence avenue. ....	51
47.	Independence avenue. ....	51
48.	Location map of Mohideen Masjid Road.....	53
49.	Sub culture of their own. ....	54
50.	Street as a public space. ....	55
51.	An ally way. ....	55
52.	Street as a communal space. ....	55
53.	An ally way. ....	56
54.	Links to the Panchikawatta Road. ....	57
55.	Mohideen Masjid Road. ....	57
56.	Legibility through familiarity. ....	58
57.	An ally way. ....	58
58.	Road as a center of activities. ....	59
59.	Entrance to an ally way. ....	60
60.	An ally way. ....	60
61.	Links to the Panchikawatta Road. ....	61
62.	Mohideen Masjid Road. ....	61