

CONCLUSION.

In this study it is aimed to explore the ways by which unity is maintained in transition in a given urban situation. A city is a collection of an enormous number of place specific and unique characters. A unique character is an entity that is capable of providing a unitary expression. Such a place with a unique character is termed a district. It is comfortable to unify a district when it is taken into consideration as a separate entity. Yet, the unification of a city as a whole is far more complex and hard. Therefore in this study efforts are made to explore the principles by which A city is unified as a whole.

The medium by which the above mentioned unique characters are harmonized is identified to be a transition, a filling medium in the city. It therefore is the most critical point in city design. It is similar to a river that divides the land into two shores. Though divides it also maintains a certain relationship between the two shores.

During the course of this study few urban design principles are identified to be unity generators in transition. In addition few design strategies are identified to be supportive to the above said urban design principles. The first is the theory of *pragnanz*, which describes the way by which a composition is arrived, that is perceived by man in the most simplified manner. The second that is the theory of figure and ground explains the manner by which most appropriate and livable responsive open spaces are created among a building composition. The theory of *pragnanz* is facilitated by the next, which is named as the theory of similarity and proximity. In achieving the above-explained theories few design strategies are exploited. Namely they are the maintenance of a regular building line and skyline, punctuation, inflection, composition of masses, facade treatment etc.

The applicability of these theories are understood in the examples studied in the course of study. In the first case, Fort to pettah there was two identifiable characters at the two extremes of the transition. In the said example, The perfectly maintained grand character is interrupted at the close proximity of the harbor. In the example of Kollupitya to town hall, natural elements such as trees and open spaces plays a major role of transition. The negative effect of the presence of a lesser number of built masses is rectified by the nature in this example. In the case of town hall to slave island, the institutional character and the residential character make the extremes. In this example a very good physical transition is present. Yet the building function, namely the ware houses function has de humanized the area making the transition dull and the environment a non-responsive. In the final example discussed that is at the Java Street a fine contribution to the transition is made by the physical. The organization of masses is according to the blueprint of urban architecture.

According to the analysis it becomes clear that organization of masses becomes the primary crucial pattern of the urban transition as most of the man made spaces are contained in physical masses even a smallest reference point. The best examples would be the Java street and the York street. In the York street case, the masses form a solid out of which well-defined open spaces are carved out.

This leads to a sudden break of the rhythm and hence a sudden transition too. In the Java Street, organization of masses is well exploited creating a very good transition.

With the analysis it becomes conspicuous that the presence of clear extremes is essential for a transition. It is favorable if the extremes do differ from each other drastically. The identification of such extremes facilitates the proper creation of an urban transition. Within such an identified extreme there will be a whole lot of patterns. Some of the patterns will be less prominent, while one will be the most prominent which provides the place with a unique character. This item will generate a unitary character in the place. This pattern that generates the unitary character should be the overriding in a smooth transition.

These patterns will be clearly shown by the architecture of the area in concern. For an example, in the York Street a high commercial, dynamic activity pattern is experienced. On the other hand in the town hall node the spirit of place is seen as the prominent pattern. In most of the residential settings a calm and quiet "serenity" is experienced. This concludes that in any type of a transition a common theme is available in generating a unitary character. Similarly these examples show that this common theme also varies with the place.

Basically unity principles are used in each transition to an extent. For an example in the York Street almost all of these principles are exploited. It provides the street with an almost perfect unitary character. Yet in the Vauxhall Street, the theory of *pragnanz* only is used. In this context it is evident whether to use one or more principle and the selection of the most appropriate unity principle or principles is up to the designer according to the nature of the transition.

In designing in accordance with the unity principles the following set of design strategies could be used. This would be a far more contextual approach in urban designing where the organization of masses should be given due consideration.

BUILDING LINE AND THE SKY LINE.

The building line and the skyline is clearly sensed in any kind of an urban transition. To the architectural character of any place these contribute drastically. Therefore the building line and the skyline must be maintained in the most suitable manner to arrive at a good transition. For an example in a commercial setting the building line is very hard and clearly maintained. But in a residential setting the building line and the skyline becomes a soft and non-continuo. In the transition the height of the skyline should be maintained properly.

CENTER, ENCLOSURE AND CONTINUITY.

In the discussed examples, the unification is clearly felt whenever there is center, enclosure and continuity. Without these, the transition becomes much loose and almost non-existent. For an example in the Java street example the finest transition sensed terminated as soon as the centrality,

sense of enclosure and the continuity is loosened in front of the slave island railway station. Therefore it is emphasized that these should be maintained in any kind of a transition at least with the help of natural elements such as trees.

EDGES AND FACADE TREATMENT.

With a hard edge man will behave accordingly with the built environment but with a soft edge he will not. The designer must be sensitive enough to select the most suitable edge for the appropriate transition. The roof seen to the facade becomes a dominant element, which unifies the area. The solid to void ratio in the facade should be determined by the two extremes selected.


The expression of the façade also contributes in determining the human behavior.

ACTIVITY PATTERN.

The importance of activity pattern for a transition is emphasized in the Vauxhall street example. Without the proper merging of activity patterns the transition has become dull and inhumane. Therefore it can be stated that without the human participation a transition zone will become a non-responsive environment.

In an urban design people and the physical environment moves together. Therefore it is stated that urban spaces have a responsibility to interact positively with human existence. Accordingly, the need of unity among man made environment arises and this has close relationship with existing physical qualities, patterns, inherent to the context. In this context, the formulated set of guidelines eventually facilitates the maintenance of unity in transition thus creating a responsive environment. With these guidelines even a chaotic transition could be unified to a considerable level.

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