FORMULATION OF DESIGN STRATEGIES OF URBAN NODES IN STRENGTHENING THE IMAGEABILITY OF A CITY WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO COLOMBO FORT

A history of architecture and social studies essay presented

To

The department of architecture
University of Moratuwa
For the examination in M.Sc. (Arch)

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December 2002-2008
Acknowledgment
Acknowledgment

Completion of this study would not have been possible if not for the help of many, who supported both physically and morally. Therefore I would like to express my thanks to the following persons who assisted me in numerous ways.

- Archt. Madura Prematilaka, Senior Lecturer and Archt. Kapila De Silve, Lecturer, Dept. of Architecture, University of Moratuwa for the necessary guidance given to start and carry on the study.
- Archt. Wasana Wijesinghe, Lecturer, Dept. of Architecture, University of Moratuwa for being behind and guide throughout the process.
- Dr. R. Emmanuel, Lecturer, Archt. Prasanna Kulathilake, Lecturer, Archt. Jagath Munasinghe, Lecturer and Mr. K.D. Fernando lecturer Dept. of Architecture, University of Moratuwa, for the voluble comments they provide.
- Archt. Prasanna Wijethunga and Archt. Anjana, Urban Development Authority, for voluble imformation and debatable ideas.
- Mr. D.S. Gunaratne, Presidential Assistant Scretary, O.I.C. Jayantha Seneviratne, O.I.C Suresh Warnasuriy, for their assistants given to me when taking photographs in Colombo Fort.
- My parents, Aparna, Manohari, Ganga and Malinda Ayya for providing me with all the support to carryout my entire task without any laps.
- For whose names are not listed, who helped me in so many ways.
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Introduction

Background of the study

A city can be identified as a place; being a ‘place’, a city must be accomplished the necessary quality of a ‘place’, ‘Imageability’. As a result each city posses a particular character unique to it.

A strong image is a prime requirement to achieve this quality in a city and symbolizing it as a ‘whole’.

Urban environments or cities can be considered as the most imageable amongst human habitations around the world. Therefore persons like Kevin Lynch had been selected them for their studies on the image.

Structure and the meaning are the two prime characteristics necessary to making this strong image and together with these two characteristics, an ‘identity’ is automatically derived for the particular context.

This strong image is a product of vivid and integrated physical setting, which can be referred to as physical objects and spaces within a city.

These physical objects and spaces are organized in the form of physical elements in order to strengthening the image in the events of designing and development of cities.

Proper integration between these elements will make a positive image of any context. Here nodes are identified as one of the important element in urban context, that forms a city and which gives a special character and identity to it.

Basically nodes are man made spaces, which comes mostly the form of junctions of paths. Apart from this,
a node can be concentrations having a special use or function and a physical character.

**Intention of the study**

City forms is normally subjected to continuous growth and change to meet daily increasing needs of current industrialization, commercialization and urbanization processes. On the other hand these changes in the physical environment are regained, acceptable and unavoidable.

Inequalities among such changes have to be avoided or minimized in order to maintain a visually pleasing and structurally meaningful cityscapes. Nodes, being one of the important constituents of a cityscape, in order to making image of the city stronger have been already neglected, due to individualistic approaches of urban design programs. Haphazard developments caused to destroy the existing characters of nodes and creating inhuman environments.

It is therefore the responsibility of architects and other designers who are engaged in shaping the urban environment, to understand the specific characters, meaning and structures of nodes and their role and importance as a key element of city image.

Therefore the nodes must be thoughtfully designed in order to create a good and meaningful city environment importance of the present study lies in this connection.

**Aims and objectives**

Colombo is one of the cities, which is currently subjected to various kinds of development programs. It can be noticed that such approaches in the design and development of the city are rapidly changing and destroying its original character. This eventually
results their users disorientation. In order to minimize those circumstances a better view to be developed is essential in a broader perspective.

- Firstly, it is expected to identify various types of nodes in urban context.
- Then it is expected to examine and identify the principals and other various disciplines, which have been followed in designing of urban nodes. Deferent local and foreign examples will be found out for this purpose.
- It is expected to examine and illustrate the selected potential instances in the city of Colombo, which can be successfully utilized as urban nodes. Following two basic aspects of nodes will be examined under this as;

  Their existing situation

  The potential of them in order to function it as a node in strengthening the 21st century image of the city.

- By analyzing the above conditions it is expected to formulate some strategies to utilize the urban nodes in city of Colombo that could be apply for further development.
- Finally additional potential methods will be found out in order to utilize urban nodes particular in local context that the methods extracted from foreign instances.
Scope and Limitation

The intention of the study itself is to formulate the design strategy to strengthen the revitalization of urban nodes in order to strengthen the city image.

The scope therefore, widened to capture all possible aspects of urban nodes in order to make them meaningful, structural that contribute to the identity and imageability of the cityscape.

Image subjected to examination for the purpose of the study is the ‘public’ or the ‘approximated’ image, which is overlap or the generalized ground of many individual images.

Further the study intends to examine the urban nodes in a selected city.

City of Colombo will be the selected city based on a prepared questionnaire on the image of Colombo, and from the sketches that indicates the image is selected for the basic. (image of people about Colombo) from the results of the questionnaire 'Fort' identify as the main contributor of making the city image. So the studies limited to the Fort area, and nodes are discusses as a major element that can be use for strengthening imageability of the city.
Methodology.

- The main purpose of the study is to find ways and means of revitalize the urban nodes in ‘Sri Lankan city’ in order to achieve a strong image.

- The first, the study establishes what a node is, and what are special characteristics and functions of them through studying the examples in world context.

- Secondly, various types of urban nodes will be identified through a main typology. The main typology is based on the most important aspect, the physical form of urban nodes.

- Thirdly, the study will be identified different nodes according to the interview

- Then the study will discuss how these different nodes are created or reshaped by using certain design principles or certain architectural language.

- Basically, the international examples will be utilized to establish the theoretical context.

- Finally it discusses the selected nodes and their strategies as a base for future development