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Examination of the impact of colour On Spatial Progression:

With special reference to selected buildings in Sri Lanka.

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A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO
THE DEPARTMENT OF ARCHITECTURE OF THE
UNIVERSITY OF MORATUWA IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
MASTER OF SCIENCE IN
ARCHITECTURE

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DAMITH PERERA

2004

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DECLARATION

I declare that this dissertation represents my own work, excepts where due acknowledgement is made, and that it has not been previously included in a thesis, dissertation or report submitted to this University or to any other Institution for a degree, diploma or other qualification.

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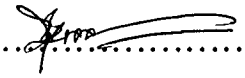
Signed: ..  .....

Name of the student: Damith Perera

Acknowledgements

I wish to thank the following for the assistance given to me in numerous ways to accomplish the task of preparing this thesis.

- I am very much thankful to Architect Vidura Sri Nammuni, Head of the Department of Architecture, University of Moratuwa for providing continuous assistance to fulfil the task of preparing this thesis.

- My sincere thanks go to Architect Channa Daswatta, the lecturer Department of Architecture, University of Moratuwa who was my supervisor for giving me valid advice and guidance with affection to complete the thesis.

- Also I am very much thankful to Architect Prasanna Kulathilake for providing valuable advice and guidance to structure the study.

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- I am grateful to my friends Ruwan, Arosha, Ruwini, Champika, Thusara, Jalath and all the students of M.Sc. final year 2003, Department of Architecture, University of Moratuwa for helping me to get necessary data and also for giving moral support.

- I thank Mr. S.S. Alahakoon, Technician, Department of Architecture, University of Moratuwa for helping me to get some necessary relevant data.

Damith Perera

EXAMINATION OF THE IMPACT OF COLOUR ON SPATIAL PROGRESSION: WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO SELECTED BUILDINGS IN SRI LANKA.

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Abstract

Colour is a very close phenomenon to human life. Colour plays an important and significant role in human activities. It is evident though colour is important in human activities some times it is been used without a meaning or rationale. In most instances it can be seen that colours are used without much thinking. When using colours to decorate buildings it is very essential to think about the building's functions, user's expectations and the context in which the building is constructed. But frequently it can be seen that constructors of buildings have drawn their attention much on outer appearance rather than on the above factors in selecting and using colours. Colours can be efficiently used to emphasize the feelings belonging to certain places of the building. But this aspect has not been taken into consideration in many instances. Because of this trend people do not draw much attention on using colours meaningfully. This tendency has caused negligence in using the colours meaningfully and on a rational basis. Therefore the present study focuses its attention on examining how different colours are being used in buildings and how colours are used by the designers and constructors in order to increase the spatial progression of buildings. This study specially examines the role of architecture in promoting the use of colour in improving the effect of spatial progression in buildings.

The first chapter discusses the nature of architecture and its role in the field of building construction. It also examines about the elements and details that are used for spatial progression The chapter discusses in details how colour can be used as a detail for improving spatial progression of a building.

The second chapter is used to examine how colour is used in different selected buildings as a detail to improve spatial progression. It gives an understanding about how different colours can be used to emphasize different effects in buildings. The chapter discusses about the psychological background of colours and how these psychological elements influence the feelings and moods of people. Also the chapter gives an understanding about the meanings and expressions of different colours.

The third chapter deals with force and episodes used for emphasizing spatial progression and how colour as a detail can be used to emphasize spatial progression. In this context application of colours in three different buildings in Sri Lanka has been critically examined. The buildings, which were examined, are the buildings of SOS Village in Piliyandala, buildings of Sri Lanka Institute of Information Technology in Malabe and the building of the Light House Hotel in Galle.

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Introduction

Introduction

Colour is a medium for expression of the ideas as well as textures, volumes, spaces, patterns of a building. It is a way of expressing the feelings of people about buildings. Colours help people to progress automatically from one place to another. It is a physical as well as mental reaction. Colours can be divided in to two groups as follows.

1. Cool Colours
2. Hot Colours (Warm Colours)

But unfortunately most of the architects fail to use colours to enhance the spatial quality and the spatial progression. Therefore people show a hesitation to apply colours proposed by architects in their buildings. Therefore the correct application of colours is gradually missing in the field of Architecture.

Observation

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In Architecture the spatial progression of a building is an important characteristic The Spatial Progression helps to increase the significance of the building. A building constructed keeping that aspect in mind attracts people more than a building constructed without giving much attention to this aspect. Such a building would definitely be a theme for discussion among people.

Architects employ different kinds of strategies to highlight the Spatial Progression of a building. They use different materials, textures, lighting, thickness, heights, volumes and colours as strategies to improve spatial progression in the buildings they design. They are in a position to increase the spatial progression in their buildings in this manner. Spatial progression improves the quality of buildings. Buildings differ from each other according to spatial quality. Also the spatial quality of buildings differs from each other. The spatial quality of a residential house may differ from that of an office building. The strategies and other things used to improve the qualities of calmness and quietness of the house environment is quite different from the strategies used to maintain the efficiency of an office.

Though the Architects use materials, textures, lighting, thickness, lighting, and volumes to improve spatial progression and spatial quality it can be seen that some are not paying much attention on colour they use in the buildings they plan. The colours they use are been used as a strategy to increase the outer beauty and appearance of the building rather than its spatial progression and spatial quality. Therefore many buildings where the colours are used without a reasonable basis have been a theme of criticism. Lot of architects do not apply colours meaningfully to enhance the spatial progression of the building.

Criticality of Observation

If the colours are not intelligently used to improve spatial progression and spatial quality in constructing buildings such buildings will not be accepted as buildings of quality. If the correct colours are not applied in correct places the building would definitely become uncomfortable to the users of the building. For example if in an office the colours which increase the efficiency are not applied it might cause a reduction of the efficiency of work of the employees in that office. The decrease of efficiency of workers would definitely cause losses to the owners or authorities.

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As a result, there is a tendency among people to resist to the use of colour that enhances the spatial progression in buildings. They show a hesitation to use colour. Therefore the colour usage is gradually declining in Architecture.

Causes

The following are the causes that have lead to this situation

1. People do not know about the difference between colour and other materials that are used to enhance the spatial progression.
2. Colour application is gradually vanishing from building design.
3. People are becoming unaware of the use of colour as the cheapest way to enhance the spatial progression.
4. Use of other materials that can be used to enhance the spatial progression, which are expensive than colour application.

Remedies

The following can considered as remedies to correct this situation.

1. Architects must educate people about the difference between colour and other materials used to enhance spatial progression. They should apply suitable colour in appropriate places to improve people's understanding.
2. Architects must safeguard the practice of colour application in architecture by using suitable colour to enhance the spatial progression.
3. Architects must educate people by showing that colour is the cheapest material. Also they should show that colour is easy to apply to enhance the spatial progression than other materials.

Intention of the study

In this exercise an attempt will be taken to study about the difference between colour and other materials in spatial progression and how the spatial progression be enhanced by using suitable colours.

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Scope of the Study

The relationship between the buildings and colour is a key feature in Architecture. Colour can change the whole feature of any building. Any body can apply any colour for any place of a building but the best solution should be the meaningful application of colour. It is a very hard exercise. For example applying colour in houses, in temples, in public buildings is different from each other. Architects must have an idea about colour and their uses. The use of the building and the kind of people who are living in that building and the behaviour patterns of people are the factors that an Architect should consider in selecting colour.

Limitation of the study

This study is limited to the study of colour as a detail which improves spatial progression of a building. This appears to be a limitation of the study as there are many other details such as volumes, spaces and lighting. The present study is confined only to colour as a detail that emphasize the spatial progression of the building.

Methods of study

The study area will be focused on selected public buildings of Sri Lanka, The concept of spatial progression and the meanings of colour will be studied with the available and existing data.

The following approaches would be employed to accomplish the study.

1. Firstly studying about the architecture.
2. Secondly studying about the determination of colour.
3. Thirdly studying about the language of architecture and spatial progression.
4. Finally studying about the impact of colour in spatial progression.

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Line of Reasoning

1. Architects do not use colour to enhance the spatial progression of a building.
2. There is an emerging tendency to use unnecessary and unsuitable colour
3. There is a growing dislike among people to use colour in their buildings and colour application is gradually vanishing from architecture.

Architects must keep the practice of colour application in architecture by using suitable colours to enhance the spatial progression.