

**STUDY OF SOCIAL AND SPATIAL CHARACTERISTICS OF
URBAN PUBLIC SPACE:
CASE STUDY: ROME AND COLOMBO**

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**A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED FOR THE
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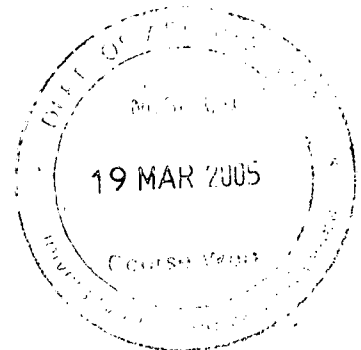
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DECLARATION

I declare that this dissertation represents my own work, except 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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ABSTRACT

Present day cities and their public spaces are not provided with the proper ways. It mainly causes to remain the urban spaces isolated without people and activities. Although the designers created visually pleasing beautiful places less consideration was given on its social and spatial characteristics in the proper way to create rich socio spatial urban environment full of people with different activities.

Most of the modern cities that designed recently paid little attention to their socio cultural values and their urban public spaces become lost as, and they have finally created unused dead spaces. The liveliness of the urban spaces is increasingly diminishing due to various negative effects. This has caused very badly for developing countries.

Rome had been a city of urbanized and developed but with magnificent urban spaces at history and so far. Studies of them will create to unearth the elements of the past, which are applicable in the present urban context.

In Rome the most live urban spaces are urban squares, which emphasizes and doubled the activities and movement comparing to other urban spaces. Therefore some urban squares in Rome have been examined. For Sri Lanka the Independent Square is a especially designed urban public square. Its characteristics have been studied as the squares in Rome.

Mainly the social and spatial attributes are studied which make strengthen the urban activities or how the social and spatial attributes intertwined our urban space, in response to its physical context too. And how the society of Rome has attached to the urban square, where it remains their quality as monumental or multipurpose or etc.

These places accommodate the urban man fulfilling various requirements and needs of the ancient Romans.

And how the urban square intertwined socially and spatially to suit the present situation for the population.

Hence study of how the urban square has to be created or make intertwined in urban space is essential to make public space.

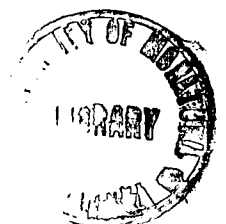


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INTRODUCTION

Topic Explanation

“Architecture is the art of space making”

Space making is to contain the activities of man and experience these spaces by man in a way that the human senses can feel it. Therefore we move and orientate ourselves by responding these spaces and experiences. These kinds of experiences make us to connect in with the space. These meaningful connections gained through experience, and it makes the man dwelling on earth. It creates a sense of belongingness towards these spaces in peoples' minds.

Sense of belongingness plays an important role in producing architecture especially in urban public spaces such as streets, squares, parks, playgrounds, tree canopies, flight of steps and shopping centres. They can create a space for people to pause but not to pass through. For the urban dweller the public space is a space that one experiences the quality of the urban living and help to create social interactions, and these spaces for the urban dweller to spend a better urban life rather than spending their whole the life in small tight spaces, condominiums or housing apartments or flats. Urban Public spaces are dynamic spaces it must bring the communal life, spaces that are accessible to all, and that help man to identify himself with in the urban environment to maintain a close relationship with the spaces. These Public Spaces should inherent some essential characteristics to create identity, security, comfort and sense of belongingness in users' minds. Then it happens to go to public spaces. These characteristics are basic characteristics that determine the qualities of such spaces mainly social and spatial characteristics are the basic characteristics determine the qualities of such space.

Although the science and technology develop very much man as a social animal can't survive on earth without social interactions with each other otherwise many social problems arise. Therefore with immergence of cities much consideration has to be given for the development of public spaces, especially plazas, squares and streets.

In the case of urban design the main actors in the play are the square, the street, and the buildings that make up the public face of our towns and cities”

Cliff Moughtin- URBAN DESIGN streets & Square, pg. 1

The square is identified as a very important entity as an urban public space in cities. And it has been the heart of the city and enlightens the life of the city, encourages lot of social interaction.

To generate this kind of sense it has to be act as a centre of human association and significant to the urban dweller, that to create a pause not to pass through, and to bring human intention to the city. Then it creates a space for public activities, where people meet each other, move freely communicates and do urban activities. Especially in Rome, there are a considerable amount of consciously created public spaces- urban public squares or piazzas such as St. Peters’ Square, Piazza Navona and etc. and they are very prominent in the western World.

This study is an attempt to study design Urban Public squares which socially and spatially vibrant.



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Need of the study

Most of our present day cities, especially third World countries including Sri Lanka are growing very rapidly, making twice and thrice their population growth rate. The growing trend is condominium apartments, the area occupy by single person is lacking day by day. This has been happening in a very haphazard unplanned manner. Therefore this has also encroached into the public spaces of the urban dweller. Therefore the space occupied by the individual building against a public space is greater, they are minimized spaces.

As a result of this it does not provides proper architectural settings for the urban spaces, therefore their functions are decreasing. Such as social interaction, social and cultural activities and the urban spaces become abandoned, dull and inactive places and it was replaced by crime, psychological disorder ill health and unhappiness. Lack of knowledge and the negligence of social and spatial attributes in the environmental design bring this kind of situation. Most of the urban spaces and buildings designed

recently in our cities did not cater to this. Therefore they become dead spaces.

Due to this rapid mega development towns, open spaces, public buildings and other areas around the world are rapidly becoming similar, due to standardization of production methods, improper use of materials and lack of concern in urban environmental design. Therefore the cultural, social, and environmental and historical significance had been in different cities are gradually degrading and all become similar. E.g. Anuradhapura new town is not very much different from other commercial towns whereas its historical and religious significance was not there. People are losing their sensitivity, identity towards it. Therefore the Architects and Urban Designers has to provide meaningful socially responsive urban spaces and buildings where fulfilling their various requirements and needs. These spaces should be capable of accommodating public activities.

To bring forward all of these events together the designers has to be essentially deals with and cater to social and spatial attributes. Otherwise there is no continuity of urban public spaces. Although public squares become very prominent character in cities especially in Europe, But not much in Sri Lanka and third World countries. Sri Lankan cities are now rapidly developing if the Architects and Urban Designers have not much concerned about the development of Urban Squares of proper Architectural settings with socio spatial attributes. These spaces too remain as minimized dead spaces. Therefore the architects should be responding to user inside the building. Sri Lankan Architects are more concern with the visual, physical, and spatial qualities of the built environment, rather than its social relevance.

Significance of the Study

In our urban spaces social and spatial attributes are intertwined. Therefore the designer should appreciate the important component of the built environment. The peoples' activity pattern has to be studied especially, when making an urban public squares in cities or towns. It has to be concerned on the variation in the no. of people in different settings and the time, types of

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activities varies and degree of activities one may find, among differs urban spaces(Squares)

E.g. Piazza Navona as a multifunctional urban square.

Piazza di Campidoglio as a Monumental Square

Therefore it is of greater importance for the Architects to identify the issues between peoples' activity pattern and the supportiveness of these characteristics in order to create a live urban environment.

Urban spaces designed by architects at present are according to their image and they expect other people to adjust them. Therefore these spaces alienate man and make feel the urban dweller rootless.

Aims and objectives of the study

The present day urban spaces become disorderly, mismanaged and lack of place, the identity and the sense of belongingness to the urban dweller.

Study the social and spatial characteristics to create meaningful urban public spaces esp. public squares and study the public activities and find out the ways social and spatial characteristics have to be included and find out how these urban spaces has to be formed regarding to social and spatial characteristics.

Study the social characteristics of the urban public spaces and such as social interaction of different social categories of the society in the same urban space how they react to each other.

Study how these urban public Squares become coherent element of the collective urban form.

Methodology

This has been mainly a qualitative and experiential study only a little weightage for quantitative analysis. First discussion is about the notion of space and the concepts of urban space. The space is discussing directly to the specific situation- 'urban space'

Identify specific urban spaces in Rome and discuss about their social and spatial characteristics. Identify their activity pattern of the urban people and

to be analyzed how these characteristics become supportive to change the mode of the people as they are in urban spaces.

Last Chapter study and analyze selected practical situation in which the relationships with these characteristics and the peoples. Activity pattern are to be carefully studied.

Limitations of the study

The study is limited to examine mainly a small no of situations in the local urban context

The research study itself will be revealed various issues related to the particular subject. But in this study it will be revealed various issues related to the particular subject. But in this study it is mainly focussed on social and spatial aspects of the issues especially when a study of analyzing of urban public spaces consideration has to be given to micro climatic issues, form, specific function usage, type of mass etc... to make the idealistic situation for urban public spaces. But this study mainly focuses only on the qualitative attributes. How the social and spatial characteristics have been supportive to make real urban spaces especially the piazzas, urban squares and to make a cohesive urban form.

CHAPTER ONE - URBAN PUBLIC SPACE

1.1 NOTION OF SPACE

Man lives in space, all beings lives in space, and all things exist in space. Space is always bound with our life. The 'space' has given different meanings by different people. Aristotle had described the space as "the container of all the objects".

Man experiences the space through the physical dimensions – length, breath and height. It is basically a quantitative experience. Then he captures the volume of the space and begins the qualitative experience.

Norberg Schulz (1971) explains that the man's actions comprise of spatial aspects. And he has deeply study about the man space relationship. He categorized the space and described about the different ways and degrees of spatial experience as;

Primitive / Pragmatic space

Perceptual space

Existential space

Architectural space



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1.1.1 PRIMITIVE / PRAGMATIC SPACE

The experience of Primitive / Pragmatic space is purely emotional form of feeling of space. There is no rationale or intellectuality on it and essentially individual, but it comes unconsciously. It is the man's most elementary level of spatial experience. It begins from the birth and develops with the life.

East Cassives has stated that "A child has to learn many skills that an animal is born with". It says that human beings learn after they are born through experiences.

People experience the space that they live and understand it. If this experience of space happens unselfconsciously, it becomes a pragmatic space thus it can be said that a pragmatic space is structured unselfconsciously through individual human experience.

1.1.2 PERCEPTUAL SPACE

Schulz N (1971:13) describes "Schulz N (1971:13) describes "perceptual space has a centre, which is perceiving man, and it therefore has an excellent systems of directions which change with the movements of the human body; it is limited and in no sense neutral; in other words it is finite heterogeneously and subjectively defined and perceived; distances and directions are fixed and relative to man"

It means that the perceptual space has a clearly developed structure. It is centered with immediate needs and practices. It is a self-conscious attempt, which has sense of awareness and sensitivity.

Perceptual spaces have special personal significance and it carries a sensual attachment with it.

Matore expresses that “we do not grasp space only by our senses ... we live in it, by emotional bonds; space is not just perceived ... it is lived” (1962:22:23)

Therefore these spaces bring out friendly organizations of perceptions and meanings.

1.1.3 EXISTENTIAL SPACE

Ralph (1976) expresses the existential space as, existential space or lived in space is the inner structure of space as it appears to us in our concrete experiences of the world as members of a cultural group. It is a space that becomes meaningful for a group of people according to an accepted set of norms, attitudes and values.

As an example, the Red Indians consider their land as a sacred thing while the Whiteman trying to buy the land. It provides a better example for the existential space.

They convey their gratefulness towards their country as,

“How can we buy and sell the sky, the warmth of the land? The idea is strange to us. If we do not own the freshness of the air and the sparkle of the water how can you buy them? Every part of this earth is sacred to my people. Every sandy shore, every mist in the dark woods, every clearing and humming insect is holy in the memory and experience of my people. The sap which courses through the trees carries the memories of the red man.”

While the Whiteman saw this land as an unused or waste land. But for the Red Indians it is their life, it brings great feelings and emotions.

And the public squares in Rome become existential spaces for ancient Romans.

These spaces bring the memories of and feelings of the people who live there. It is a shared experience made on common phenomena such as life and death, religious, social, or cultural functions, day today activities etc.

1.1.4 ARCHITECTURAL SPACE

Man creates architectural space to live, according to their needs, likes and wishes. The pragmatic, perceptual and existential spaces are psychological concepts that they have been used by the man to interact with the environment while this interaction sharpens his awareness of space. the awareness of space enables him to realize his own mental images. His own image is created by his aspirations, wishes and dreams. The architectural space certainly adopts itself to the needs of organic action as well as facilitating orientation through perception. It illustrates certain cognitive theories of space as when building a Cartesian co-ordinate system with concrete materials. But it is related to the space

schemata of man's individual and public world. Man's schemata are created through interaction with existing Architectural spaces. Sometimes these do not satisfy him because of the confusion and instability of image; therefore he has to change Architectural space.

Schulz (1971) describes this has been concretization of man's existential space. Architectural space can be identified as a man's inner most spatial experience. Architectural space can be identified as a man's inner most spatial experience. Therefore it is filled with emotions and feelings and also it has a strong bond in between man and his architectural space.



Falling waters - the Architectural space

Fig. 1.1



Hotel Kandalama

Fig. 1.2



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1.2 URBAN SPACE - AN INTRODUCTION

1.2.1 INTRODUCTION TO URBAN SPACE

The term 'Urban space' and the meaning it holds defined in different ways by various academics.

A simpler definition of urban space could be as follows,

"Urban space is an object of direct experience of the people who participate in numerous activities within a physical organization of a city".

Robert Coles (1970) cited in place and placelessness. (1977)

"Urban space is the result of a process carried out in space and time, moulded by topography, form, function, memory and history coagulated into a whole which is greater than some of its parts, and which is unequivocally characterized by a collective dimension."

- Andria Ponsi 1985, p: 223

“One can think of a town and its urban spaces as a system of behavior settings, stages as it were, for various acts and behavior, giving people the right props. The whole play is the result of all the parts, and in greater than their sum.”

- Rappoport 1990, P: 149

Urban spaces form activity spaces within a physical setting for a large number of people who can move freely and use these spaces for communication, social interaction and various other urban activities giving different meanings.

“All types of space between building in town and other localities. This space is geometrically bounded by a variety of elevations. It is only the clear legibility its geometrically characteristics and aesthetic qualities which allow us consciously to perceive external space as urban space”

-Krier, 1979: P-61

He further explains that internal space shielded from weather and environment is an effective symbol of privacy, external space is seen as open, unobstructed space for movement in the open air with public, semi-public and private zone.

“Space which permits public events and activities that keep happening in the city”

-Bebz(1978:P-112)

“Urban spaces are those spaces in the city which forms actively nodes, where the city dweller can move freely and use these spaces for communication, social interaction and other urban activities. Urban space could be probably divided into two, as urban open spaces and urban semi-open spaces or covered spaces”.

-Kokuleraj (1991: P-12) explains urban space in his final thesis.

Traditionally urban spaces become very important as their transportation network system of communication. And it becomes an added function of handing messages.

“Places, squares and streets were designed specially for this purpose. News travel from public space and building along city street to gates of developing and onwards from room to rook”

-Benz, 1978: P-78)

Urban spaces in western world are having vast differentiation when comparing to the 3rd world cities. The Urban spaces in third World cities awaken a stressful image in people's minds. It is full of traffic along the roads, people engaging with various activities for different purposes, buildings are disorderly arrange and their forms does not follow their

functions, very indistinct designed, full of poverty and tension, as well as luxury and affluence, industry, offices, shops, apartments, and people.

1.2.2 URBAN SPACE – THE SIGNIFICANCE

An urban space gives common experiences for large number of people. Large number of people can gather in these spaces they can engage in different activities or a particular activity at the same time. They are the places where the goals and the intentions of people, are manifested in physical form. Positive urban spaces are those in which people have memorable experiences and identifiable structures to organize them. Thus, it is evident that the quality of urban spaces within a city essentially represents the quality of life of its people. This is a significant aspect of urban spaces.

1.2.3 URBAN SPACES IN 3RD WORLD CITIES

“The great sea of people. An amorphous undifferentiated mass of humanity on cycle and on foot, clogging the road in all directions, people living on the pavements or in whatever crevice they can find”

-Correa, 1985 P-24

In third world cities, poverty has richly grown and urban spaces are exploited by the poverty. This urban poverty may be the worst pollution of all. This is mainly because the poor accept this as their fate not as their bad consequences of their life.

Therefore these spaces are inherent of much-uncelebrated characteristics mainly due to their unlimited growth of people and poverty. The future development of the third world cities greatly depends on this. Therefore cities create lack of emotional commitment. And their development rate is very low.

Though the cities are growing very rapidly and massively, the economic growth rate is not associative with development growth rate in the third world countries. Because this economic growth which in fact not enough to provide employment opportunities for the rapidly increasing population of these cities. This is clearly reflected by the use of urban spaces.

Most of the third world cities are came in to being as an interface between the colonial powers and hinter land as examples, Calcutta, Singapore, Hong Kong and etc. The colonials developed them for their purposes such as the economic and physical structure which suit for them.

Correa (1985: P-33) in his book, the new landscape explains the great city...but terrible place...

“We are paying too much attention to the physical and economical aspects of a city and not enough to its mythical, it metaphysical, attributes. For city can beautiful as physical

habit trees, uncrowded roads, open spaces and yet fail to provide the particular ineffable quality of urbanity which call city”

1.3 URBAN PUBLIC SPACE

1.3.1 INTRODUCTION URBAN PUBLIC SPACE

With the urbanization the functions and the population become increased in cities. Therefore the open spaces become very demanding element. Therefore these spaces have to be designed in more meaningful and bring the social aesthetical effectiveness to the maximum it can get.

Today city means crisis in many occasions, a crisis brought about by past neglect, present indecisiveness and future explosions of undetermined effects.

Therefore the urban public space has to be properly understood and defined before it was create.

DEFINITION OF URBAN PUBLIC SPACE

Urban cities have very dynamic and varying qualities where people live work and enjoy their social cultural relationships. This has been similar to thee urban spaces too. These spaces are diverse with people and full of various activities.

Architects, Urban Designers, Psychologists and other Academics have defined the urban Public spaces in many different ways by looking at in various view points.

“The character of urban public spaces is freedom of action and the right to stay in active”

-Spiro Kostof – THE CITY ASSEMBLED

Kostof further explained,

“The urban public space on the other hand is a purpose – built stage for ritual and interaction. Basically, the purpose is to create place we are free to use, as against the privately own realm of houses and shops.”

Public spaces are the stages where the social interaction, communication, recreation and gathering take place. And in public places we act in ways we do not, in the private realm.

These spaces make to meet friends and neighbors together and every one is entitled use these spaces, we’ll find people who do not know might be seating with us do quite contradictory things comparing to us and that will create a offensive or annoying to us.

Public places host structured or communal activities – festivals, riots, celebrations, public executions- and because of that, such places will bear the designed evidence of our shared record of accomplishment and our ritual behavior. They are where we would honour a ruler by setting up a monument to his name. And here one day we might converge to pull down the monument and damn his memory

So the public spaces can be defined as open, publicly accessible, dynamic spaces, which allow free movement and interaction among its users, and spaces where the experiences feel that they are a part of that and they belong to that.

These places are varying from simple spaces such as neighborhoods (e.g. Privatized public realms- Piazza st. Matteo) to complex regional parks and playgrounds.

1.3.2 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE URBAN PUBLIC SPACE AS SOCIAL SPACE

The streets, public squares, and parks as public spaces of an urban city give form to the drama of communal life and let the flow of human exchange and movement. These spaces are halts to the more settled places and communication channels for home life. They link different activities and spaces that functioning as linkage spaces.

Urban public spaces play a great role as a social space in the urban environment.

It gives opportunities for socializing with neighbors, acquaintances and friends.

It also offer visual contact needed by the urban dweller who is living in a competitive world for ensuring his existence.

An urban public space provides sense of belongingness to the urban dweller as an essential space to assist him dwell on earth. Spaces of conveying meanings and relations will bring the sense of homely and it creates the sense of belongingness.



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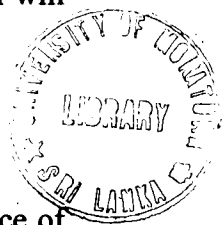
Process of urbanization has progressively eroded sense of community of man and his moral and responsible attitudes or faith towards his fellow men or he lost the faith to himself. Therefore he has lost his essential foot hold on earth. Make him feel that he is rootless, homeless, as a wanderer. He has lost the sense of belongingness and the sense of place.

Therefore the public spaces have to be evolving with positive characteristics, which will bring and protect the sense of community.

1.3.3 EVOLVING OF THE URBAN PUBLIC SPACE

Public spaces have evolved due to many different forces; some were the consequence of creep encroachment of a society bent on finishing and filling up spaces, especially in urban areas. Some were the products of a diverse society with many differing needs, interests and aesthetics. Other was product of a desire for careful planning, whatever the priorities guiding their forms and functions. Still others just happened without formal planning procedures.

These public spaces are evolved due to different processes. Some developed naturally, without deliberate planning, appropriateness, repeated use and for attractness of people.



Another way of evolving of public space is properly planned public spaces, they have different origins, and this will discuss about such public spaces.

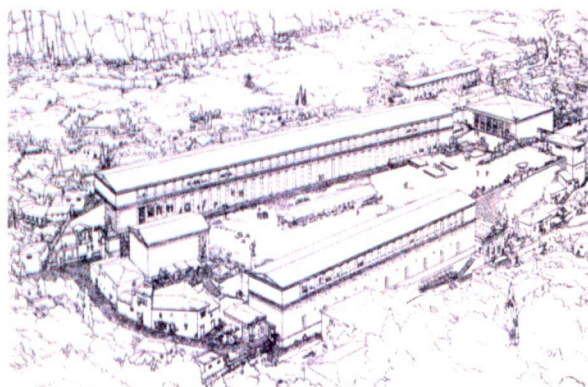


Fig 4: Greek Agora the ancestor of the urban public spaces History of the city

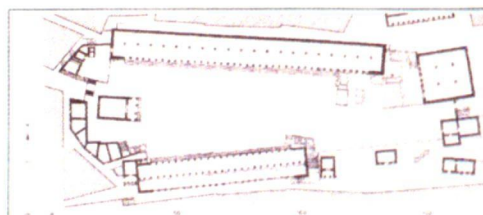


Fig 5: History of the city

PLANNED DEVELOPMENTS

When consider about the evolved cities, such as cities of Greek, Rome, Anuradhapura; these developments have different origins. For them Architects, Urban Designers, City Planners have engaged in.

These planned developments resulted in two ways.



1. Through deliberate planning.

In deliberate planning the urban public space are designed when laying out a city or town or for visual and image enhancement to a city or due to the need of such a space.

E.g. Greek cities

The city was a single, united entity and no restricted areas. There were certain public spaces designed, they are Agora, Theatron, in which the majority could meet and assert their right as a single community.

City was divided into three zones – private areas, sacred areas and public areas. In public spaces there were political meetings, sports, commerce and Theatre.

The artificial organism – city has inserted into the natural environment, as a tenuous link. It respected the natural way and little effort to change; it was gradually melted into the nature. It gives every Greek city a highly individual character to each other and the city becomes a living organism, its unity lack of rigidity, the maintenance and balance with nature, stability and growth and it was a construction of human scale has created this. Therefore these public spaces are very live and meaningful; it will bring the sense of community and the sense of belongingness. That creates to love to each other and the spaces.



Fig.6

St. Peters' Square too are those planned urban spaces.

2. Through accidental

Urban public spaces are also formed by results of unplanned placement of buildings by left over set backspaces due to planning ordinance.



Fig. 7 Spanish steps

Both these spaces have similar functions. Naturally developed public spaces although a long period of time and more familiar with the uses and they are harmonizing with the nature very much. Although they may look disorganized, they form treasured spaces for people.

Planned spaces too become treasured spaces through a period of time as the cities become a living organism in the Greek cities.

1.3.4 TYPICAL FUNCTIONS OF URBAN PUBLIC SPACES

Public space is a dynamic space that makes the city alive. Urban public spaces are accessible to all and free to move. Public spaces are belongs to all. It produces a perfect match between individual and collective. It lets to happen various types of activities which

a person performs outside the familiar territory of his own home and for which he utilizes public space, as for example traveling, shopping, selling goods, recreation, leisure activities, sporting events, deliveries and etc in a town. Streets are also a part of urban public space which serves the motorized traffic and the pedestrian to move. But today it has given arisen to big amount of motorized vehicles therefore the pavement public spaces becoming gradually degraded due to the polluted fumes comes from the public vehicles.

Fig:8 Galle Face Green
Recreational place



Fig. 9 Bo Tree Junction
selling goods



1.4 THE SQUARE AS A URBAN PUBLIC SPACE – INTRODUCTION

Further extension of the urban space within the urban structure of a city provides two elements. They are the streets and squares.

“In the category of ‘interior space’ we would be talking about the corridor (street) and the room (square). The geometrical characteristics of both spatial forms are the same. They are differentiated only by the dimensions of the walls which bound them and by the patterns of functions and calculation which characterize them.”

The urban square was the first way man discovered of using urban space this concept it was produced by the grouping of housing around an open space. It offers high degree of control of the inner space. This kind of arrangement developed and frequently came into



Fig 1.10 :The City Assembled

A Ceremonial square

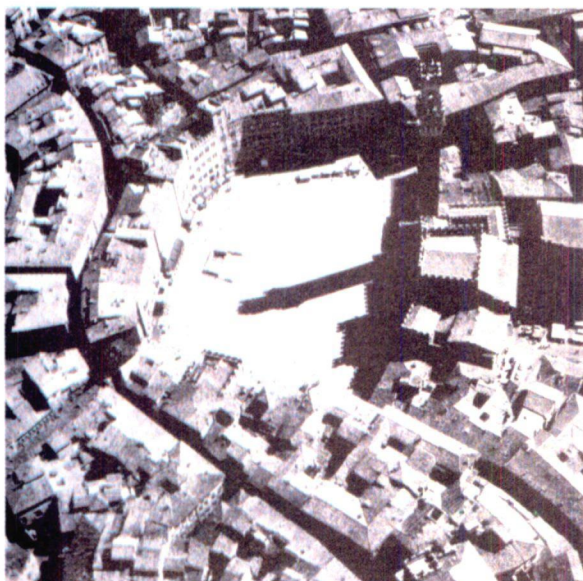


Fig 1.11: History of the city

Piazza Del Campo, Siena cities formed together with the public squares

bear a symbolic value and therefore this kind of spatial model chosen for construction of numerous holy places such as Agora, Forum, Cloister, Mosque courtyards. Houses built around the central open space or the atrium creates a spatial pattern for an urban square.

And later on the public squares have undergone more and make market places, parade grounds, ceremonial squares, squares in front of town halls, cathedrals and etc.

The most distinctive element in the city is the urban public square as well as the most important urban public space in a city too.

1.4.1 PRESENT SITUATION OF PUBLIC SQUARES

Public squares mainly contribute to strengthen the social life of a city and become spaces of majesty in its physical and spatial environment. But In present day, cities these are threatened in many ways by the new urban development trends. The unrecorded growth of modern cities has suppressed the importance of public squares in the urban environment. With the rapid urbanization, land values are risen up to the skies. Therefore these places are often being diversified into other uses; it makes disorganization of the physical elements loosen the identity in urban context. Then these lively places gradually transformed into deserted and dead places because the environment in and around them has failed to cast pleasant and lasting images to the visitors.

Many scholars have expressed that it will deteriorate the image and lessen the liveliness of the urban spaces and due to ignorance towards public squares.

Paul Zucker in his book towns & Squares has said that,

“ There exist today in towns and cities ‘squares, marked as such on maps which actually are no more than plain voids, empty areas of the town by the mere fact that they are bare of any structures.’”

Jaqualin Robertson has pointed out that,

“A park, square, street corner or boulevard in which people have tried to tell their history through monuments, memorials, markets, plaques, etc. The kind of place required by the communal psyche and largely ignored in modern times”.

During last decades city planners have been primarily concerned with such problems as the use of the land, the improvement of traffic and general communication, zoning, the relationship between residential and industrial areas etc. These considerations somewhat over showed the fundamental importance of the squares. Only now interest toward this central formative element, which makes the community, and not merely in an aggregate of individuals has arisen.

When consider about the great historical cities such as Athens Rome their urban morphology depicted the main activities and functions. The Architecture creates urban form and became a representative of social cultural and climatic setting. But most of the present day cities do not make this kind of representation by its urban architecture; Koichi Nagasima in his book “City in Conflict” has expressed that,

“At the first glance the city centers of Sydney and Tokyo are not that different. They look much the same as the other metropolitan centers of the World dominated by concrete and glass buildings which are indifferent and the irresponsible physical expression of techno industrial reality which prevails in Japan”



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The urban squares were given a great importance in historic cities such as Rome, Venice



Fig 1.11: Design of urban space

A city centre is not just a centre

In these cities the Architecture of the urban Squares are dominated, elevated and giving strong identity on the urban fabric. And these urban public spaces are designed as a rhythmic collection of spaces in the city. Among them there were large open public spaces as Urban Squares and they become major places in the cities. It provide spaces for full of

activities and leisure. The physical elements such as fountains, statues and structures and etc organized in rhythmic way within the square. And this organization of spaces helps to create pleasant physical environment.

The public squares were given a great importance in historic cities such as Rome, Venice and etc.



Fig – 12

Piazza Del Popolo



Fig -113

San Marco Venice

In the great historic cities the Architecture of the urban squares are dominant, elevated while giving identity on the urban fabric. Urban square become the major place in cities, it provide space for full of activities and leisure.



Fig. Fountains in Piazza Navona

Fig 114

There were physical elements such as fountains, physical structures and etc organized in a rhythmic way. It helps to create physical environment. This rhythmic organization has extended towards cities. Cities were also designed in accordance with these spaces.

But in the present situation these characters in urban spaces are ignored.

Peter F smith expresses similar view in his book *The Syntax of Cities*. He has said that,

“If urbanism is to live again as an art the skill of modulating city rhythms by means of accentuation needs to be recovered. It will only be recovered if one sober paymaster can be persuaded that such things have a real cost benefit. Until then the displaced persons inhabiting modern towns and cities will be compelled to travel to historic towns to recapture the primordial violations of intensified urban place.”

1.4.2 Historical importance of public squares on Rome.

The city of Rome has a great urban history which begins as early as 8th century. The population of the city was estimated as about 1200 000 in the 2nd Century AD. At that time Roman built many military camps they adopted a simple town planning system and built them as temporary. Many of those camps had become the bases for permanent towns. In those fortified towns too the importance was given to public squares. The Castrum plan was usually square or rectangular and main streets (Decumanus and cardo) crossed through the centre of the town. Secondary streets completed the grid system. Forum which was the market was placed in the centre where two main roads crossed. The forum normally consisted of a colonnaded court with a meeting hall built across one end. In addition some of them contained religious and recreational buildings. These examples of Castrum plans reveal the importance of public squares in ancient Rome city building. As early as 2700 years ago, Public Square was considered as a main element of cities.

The harbour city Ostia Antica of Romans could be taken as an example for a city which was based on a Castrum plan. This city which was established in 330 B C has had a complete urban organization with its five wards and regular street pattern at the time.

The placing of the main gathering plane forum in the centre with a multitude of public building around it, It was said that this forum was a place of commerce and a meeting place for merchants as well as fir artisans sailors and bankers. The remnants revealed in the archeological excavations have indicated that the buildings in and around the forum of Ostia Antica have had a complete homogeneity facade with bricks and marble plasters. Also architectural details and the forms had given a vivid variety and complexity.

Paul Zucker has described the forum of Ostia Antica as follow “The true public forum located at the intersection of Cardo and Decumanus was dominated by the Templum Vulcani. Opposite the capital lay the large Templum Romae and Augusti, on the other sides were a portico and a basilica – all elements in the strict axial organization around the square.

Thus Ostia Antica could be imagined through its ruins as a city proud of its public life.

1.4.1.2 Public Square in the City of Rome

The city of Rome, which is situated in the central part of Italy, has sunny and mild climate, which encourages the association with outdoor life intimately. This is one of the factors, which had influenced the Romans to become social. Thus makes great social space. There they had exchanged their ideas and views by communicating with the others in public places. Many festivals and events had taken place, which needed space for large gatherings. Therefore many public squares had been built in the city of Rome to cater these needs. Most of these places were open to sky and open to all.

Rome the city of Seven Hills was reputed for its public squares and civic activities. The well-defined urban spaces continuous urban fabric and the activities become the main themes of the roman city design.

Frank E Brown has expressed that the concept of city design in Rome, was based on a system enclosed spaces linked with streets and avenues.

The squares were arranged to fit with this system and they become part of the total urban space. As they were built according to the needs and functional purposes of the city population, they were neither too small nor too large in the city scope. The enclosures of these squares were architecturally treated to strengthen the liveliness of them. Therefore, the next section of this study describes the features of the different types of public squares in Rome.

1.4.3 CITY OF COLOMBO AND ITS PUBLIC SQUARES

From the 5th C. AD Colombo has been recorded as a commercial port. It has passed three colonist regimes. Portuguese (1505-1656 A.D), the Dutch (1656-1796 A.D) and the English (1796-1948 A.D) All of them have contribute to create the city and there are no of places and buildings both public and private which recalls the urban form of Colombo city.

The city of Colombo began to develop after the Independence with an increasing urbanization trend. The spaces are mostly utilizes for commercial and administrative purposes. It makes a remarkable difference in the city. But it finally makes problems such as traffic jams in the city centre and makes worse the situation. It shows the valuableness of having open land in and around the heart of the city, mainly for the provision of bus terminals and parking spaces, etc. Gradually it was felt that the city was gaining an unpleasant urban characteristics, the city planning authorities started their planning by improving parks, street junctions and roundabouts. And in the mean time the image of the city was changed due to various private developments in the city.

Colombo is the capital city of Sri Lanka, situated in the Western part of the country. The average temperature is around 27°C and rises up to about 30°C in July and August. South West Monsoon brings rain in April which is quite heavy but bright sunny days are common which make better out door life and parks and open spaces which can be well usable in Colombo.

In the space utilization of Colombo, the central business district is mainly Fort and Pettah. They are fully congested and they contains huge no of offices and commercial areas which now developing towards the South along the Galle road towards Colpetty, Bambalapitiya and Wellawatta. Pettah the most congested area in the city of Colombo has Institutions of wholesale and retail trade, private business and banking. There are many mercantile offices, financial Institutions, and government offices. The day time a large crowd gather around Colombo. Therefore public spaces for Colombo for relaxation of this population become an essential need.

In Rome, there are consciously created Public urban squares or Piazzas- as Public urban spaces. They are very prominent in the Western World. In Colombo there are no such designed urban spaces as Rome. But the Independent Square, The Galle Face Green and the Pettah market square some of the urban public spaces in Colombo.



CHAPTER TWO: SOCIAL AND SPATIAL CHARACTERISTICS OF URBAN PUBLIC SPACE

In the academic literature this has been identified as the Socio- Spatial dimensions in built environment. In the broader sense it has been identified that the social and spatial characteristics are inter related to create live urban spaces. For the existence of the live urban space, it has to be full of activities with social interaction.

The American planner Kelvin Lynch expresses his ideas about, “The image of the city” it emphasizes the idea of imageability of the city. Spatial qualities play a major role to enhance the imageability of a city. While the Spatial qualities rather than merely visual and aesthetic aspects great imageability to the urban public space, social characteristics brings liveliness too by their social components and activities and their relationships together, to make attractive social space.

2.1 SOCIAL CHARACTERISTICS OF AN URBAN PUBLIC SPACE

The social characteristics of a space are important to enhance the quality of life. It helps to enable social contacts among people, and to make a space that brings together the people and make feel that it is a space need to go rather than a space get away from.

It makes people to think and behave suitably to a particular situation as the culture, therefore it minimizes the conflicts within a space and helps to stabilize the activities and make better spaces. These spaces are social spaces.

Urban Public Squares becomes the main spaces in a city. According to its locality, cultural, religious and commercial settings of user the Squares stabilize particular behavioral setting- it is an element in enhancing the social characteristics of a space.

There is an increasing attention at present when creating social spaces or when the physical space becomes the social space. It will help to stabilize the activities of a space and enhance the social characteristics of a place. So far little has been known about the process has to be involved to make social spaces. Therefore the consideration can be given through architecture is that it can't directly control the behavior of a given place but through the physical media the social characteristics of a place could be manipulated with great consideration to the social aspects of particular situation. Thus the adaptation to a certain behavioral pattern becomes easier and comfortable rather than to just a physical space. It means that the ideal situation can be created through this.

There were more inter relation with the social form and behaviors due to the plasticity of the human being. Therefore the analysis of spaces according to social characteristics is

complicated. The social behavioral relationships that different people have towards different spaces can be considered as basic attempts of understanding peoples' dealings towards spaces or the social spaces.

Kelvin Lynch expresses this, "more to do with the generalities of the process than with the generalities of form alone. Careful programming is the heart of it - a formulation of the behaviors and the spatial characters that are desired, considered as an integrating whole".

It expresses a good fit between space and behavior regarding the above facts, some areas are discussed that can be understood as the social characteristics of a given space.

2.1.1. SOCIAL ELEMENTS

- People as main social elements
- Variation in density of people



Fig. 2.1



Fig. 2.2

People can be considered as the fundamental elements of a social space.

The social elements deal with spatial arrangements, and the interrelationship of the characteristics, use and value of a space. Because of this it makes variations of people, in different aspects, within different settings. Although, a designer cannot manipulate this aspect of sociability of space, it is the 'key' element in examining the sociability of a space. Thus it is worth giving recognition.

As Rapoport (1983:107) discussed, the following characteristics of people are important to be considered in relation to the above.

Behaviors

Language spoken

Dress

Physical type Occupation

Age, Sex & Etc.

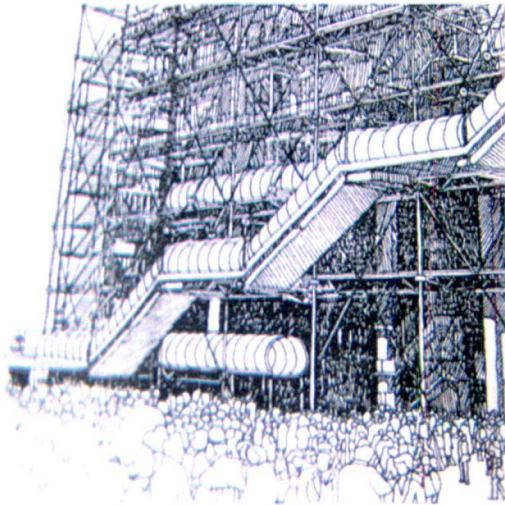


Fig: 2.3

Centre Pompidou, of France -Social spaces, People are the most important elements. Their behavior, dress, physical type creates a lively social space.

2.1.2. NEUCLEUS OF ACTIVITY

-Activity related concentration and diversification within a setting.

Due to Nucleus of activity it creates high concentrated and diversified setting in urban spaces. This is mainly because of the activities that are going on in the given space. When the number of activities is high the space brings high value. The variation of the activities is distinctly noticeable; and the perception of space becomes strong, and creates lively social spaces. The nucleus of activities could be seen in parks, shopping centers and etc.

But there are some negative aspects too. It creates congestion of people and traffic and competition among business which goes in and around the nucleus. It wastes the time for some extent. A town centre is a nucleus; it has more attention of people than any other place in a town, because all the main activities concentrated on the town center, such as services-transport facilities, commercial activities, recreational activities and etc. if the town centre is an urban square the negative aspects can be solved to a greater extent.

Francis Tibbalds (1992) says

“nucleated uses and activities are more important than buildings to the life of the town”.

Nucleus of activity arouses the dynamism which is the most important nature in the towns and cities.

2.1.3. TYPE OF ACTIVITY, VARIATION IN ACTIVITIES AND DEGREE OF ACTIVENESS

TYPE OF ACTIVITY & VARIATION IN ACTIVITIES

Some urban spaces are basically for particular activity- e.g. Religious squares, civic squares and etc - the activities are completely varied to each other. Some urban spaces there

activities are overlapped. E.g. Multipurpose squares. These spaces are differentiated from each other due to the type of activity, variation of the activity.

Francis Tibbalds states, "The most attractive places offer a variety of activities and experiences. Living, working, trading, shopping and playing, all gain from being linked. Mixed uses make for lively and safe environments"

A good mix of activities would bring live spaces, different patterns, creating a variation and rhythm between spaces. This is especially important in larger scale public places such as multi purpose public squares.

DEGREE OF ACTIVENESS

The degree of activeness could be changed with the time of the day. Some areas could be prominent as being active throughout the day and night, while others are active only during certain times of the day.

As an example,

An open square may be a food market (Sunday fair) in the morning, a cricket ground in the afternoon, and a place for adult gossip and children's play area in the evening.

In terms of the intensity of the activity the degree of activeness could be changed. For example, as in industries, clubs, restaurants, residential, recreation, pedestrians, cooking, eating, sleeping, playing, etc.



Fig 2.4

Concentration of commercial activities



Fig 2.5

Concentration of social activities

VARIATION IN ACTIVITIES



Fig. 2.6



Fig. 2.7

A Street which functions as a vehicular Street in week days has converted into a 'pedestrian heaven' in the weekends. The food outlets are in the center people move freely & the street is a great social space

2.1.4. ROUTINE ACTIVITY

- The event of routine daily life
- Fields of care

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SPACES RELATED TO ROUTINE OF DAILY LIFE

Routine of daily life

These are the day today activities which happen as a routine. These activities are generated and developed gradually with lot of association to spaces and people. It makes the daily life. And these places become the part of the daily life. These activities happen within a certain spatial location.

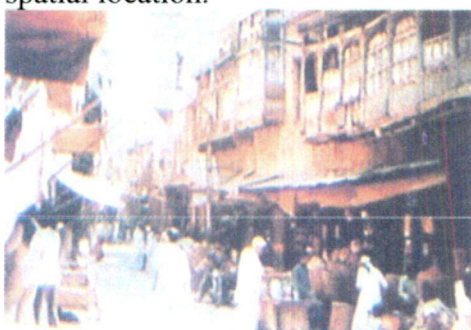


Fig.2.8

A way side activities

2.1.5. NON ROUTINE ACTIVITY

These are not every day activities. It happens non routinely. This is a distinct event for the people who use places routinely. As an example, the annual Asela Perahara at Kandy makes the city distinctively different in the perahara season.

The birthdays, Anniversaries and Arrivals, Departures make the home quite different space when it compare to the daily life.



Fig 2.9

New Year celebrations



Fig 2.10

Annual Esala Perahara

Non routine activities attract much people to a place.

There are significant events in our lives which happen accidentally or deliberately. These are powerful motivators of a sense of place. The memories are anchored to the particular location.

For example where they married etc.

For a larger community of people there are events could be common to all. Which are also very

rare events, such as, the Second World War.

2.1.6. DEGREE OF SOCIABILITY

This indicates the level of neighboring and thus signifies the degree of friendliness. These spaces own a proper territory and a socially supportive group; among them there can be many personal links. People get familiar with each other because of the proximity where scale, size, plus other features such as social homogeneities, identity and boundary may play a definite role in promoting control, present fit and sensibility.

The facilities and activities provided for socializing, also increases the sociability of a place

2.2 SPATIAL CHARACTERISTICS OF URBAN PUBLIC SPACE

When studying about the public spaces it is very important to study about the spatial characteristics. It enhances the quality of the spaces. It will deeply root in our minds as great experiences.

These experiences of urban spaces occur due to direct and immediate presence of space, as a response to its more tangible and physical attributes.

Physical structure of the space is bound and ordered by the experience of man mainly in terms of its spatial characteristics. This relationship acts as an ordering principal of spatial attributes. Mainly physical elements determine and condition its spatial characteristics.

“Comes into life when we have a similar experience which fits into those that are already formed” (Schulz 1987:p.42). It is about typical human reaction to a particular situation depends on our experience of similar situation in the past. Experiences are already known or the influences of previous memories and occurrences enhance the complexity and richness of the present.

Governing principles and the past experiences both generally applies and forms the basis for urban space and become the general and overall principal of urban space. They make fundamental attributes associated with the urban space. These attributes are the devices that allow the diverse forms and spaces of an urban public space to co exist within an ordered and unified city as a whole.

They are,

- | | |
|------------|--|
| Proximity | as ‘center’ |
| Enclosure | as ‘areas’ or ‘domains’ related to the principal of space organization |
| Continuity | establishes directions and paths to successive experience. |



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This is the basis that the way the urban space has to be created and experienced. They are the essential attributes of space organization as they direct and govern the concept of urban space. And it will develop a way of looking at actual three-dimensional space on urban spaces, as a place where people to experience the city. These basics of organization of urban space and its relationships help the man to orient him comfortably in the urban environment.

2.2.1 PROXIMITY

Moughtin C. (1992 p. 89) says, “The concept of the centre is probably the most important idea when considering about the spatial qualities in urban public spaces. Without an understanding of its importance to man’s perception of the environment only damage can be inflicted upon the city.”

Mans perception of space is subjective and centred upon himself. This idea of centre applied to the ‘known’ and ‘friendly’ world, as opposed to the undifferentiated outside and often

hostile world. It is where we feel the 'place'. Each group has its own centre or 'place'; the centre of the Muslim world is Mecca; that the Catholic World is the Vatican in Rome.

"It is a point where he acquires position as a thinking being in space, the point where he 'lingers' and lives in space". (O.F. Bollnow 1963, p58)

Schulz (1971, p 19) explains, "If the centre of the World thus designates an ideal, public goal, or 'lost paradise', the word 'home' also has a closer and more concrete meaning. It simply tells us that any man's personal world has its centre".

The centres held within two extremes, as 'home' and the 'world'. It is a hierarchy of overlapping centres serving different communities or groups.

These centres make places for each individual or a group. The 'places' become goals and foci of one's experience where meaningful events and experiences take place.

Centre in relation to concept of place is the centre of individual or collective experience or memory of people. In terms of urban space this could acquire meaning through enclosure, a street way, a land mark or a place of open activity can acquire the meaning of a place. It gains character and form through the particular nature of the activity that takes place, from our own identification with such places and individual experiences.

Norberg Schulz (1971, p. 19) refers to it in terms of activity as-

"All centres are places of action, places where particular activities are carried out, or places of social interaction. The place is always limited; it has been created by man and set up for his special purpose"

The establishment "centres" as places in urban spaces create a momentary pause in the experience of space and makes an individual's identity and meaning with it much richer and human.



Fig.2.11

Town centre acquiring the meaning of a place through activity and centrality.

“It is a point where he acquires position as a thinking being in space the points where he lingers and lives in the space.”

Schulz, 1971:p.19

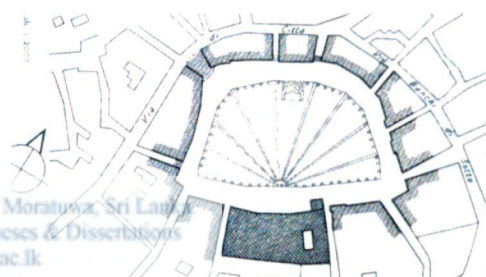
To understand the space, the concept of centre plays a major part, as the reference point of space. It is a point towards which a man’s interest is directed.

“Place” in this context as a “centre” of individual “connection” matters most in urban space. Spatial attributes that govern the quality of such place are those that relate most to the individual, those which acquire the form of an intricate scale, a deep enclosure, encounters with people and mix of activity will have the uniqueness of enabling places to evolve. Such places can be termed as friendly to the people. Meanings of place as a centre are enhanced when the sense of relationship to that place acquires a rich cohesion.

Piazza Del Campo: Siena,



2.12 Piazza del Campo Siena



2.13 Piazza del Campo Siena - Layout

a powerful central square enhances public life of the city a place for casual meeting ritual promenades and ceremonies creates significant place through deep enclosure of spatial formation.

2.2.1.1. COMPOSITION OF SPACE AS A CENTRE

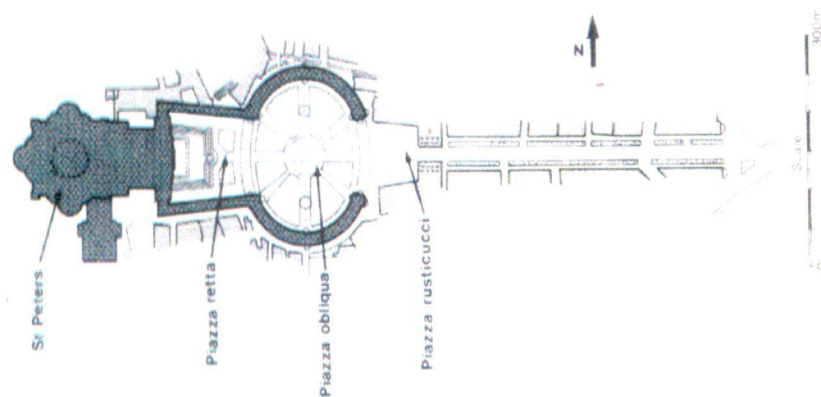


Fig.2.14 Layout of St, Peters Square Rome

In any composition there is a need to emphasize some parts and subordinate others. Composition of space as a centre (Piazza Oblique) plays an important role when composing urban spaces and of core space as centre (subordinate to the main centre Piazza rusricucci, Piazza retta) in towns and cities.

The cities 'centre' determined by form and enclosure acquire the nature of natural meeting places for people. They concentrated nodes in a city where people congregate due to various activities. They become so called "core places" that are formed by natural meeting point of several fingers of connecting places. A high concentration of commercial activity, a transportation center or a business area can form the central place of cities. Such places when positively created can permit public events and activities to take place, a common ground for people to carry to take in the life of the city where supportive activities such as theatres, restaurants, cafes, night clubs, shopping, can form their nucleus. The largest catch basin of people and varied services are created at these centres. The nature of how they are formed, arranged, sensed and experienced by people determines the quality of such places. The degree to which this is achieved establishes centres as the nucleus of urban life and its experiences. They are the memorable places where the pulse of the city beats.

Spaces within such centres are rich and vary. Here the magic of the city reaches out to every one, where the concentration of life and activity generates the nuances to human experience.

They are also places that are alive during night, when the heat of the Day fades away, people use the sidewalk, the street side boutiques cafes open out and urban life and experience takes a different tone to the day. Sense of enclosure becomes less important as lights, noises; people determine the experience of "a place".

Composition there by determines how enclosure or enclaves are defined and formed into open spaces, streets, walled up pockets of left over spaces, whether they remain individually isolated or connected to remaining fabric of urban spaces and sense and degree of enclosure determines the distinctive experience of being inside, of being in a place. (Cullen 1971, p2)

By doing so they not only draw attention to themselves but create places that in many ways stand out from surrounding area because of the nature of their centrality, clarity of form, remarkable size, exceptional architecture or because of associations with events and activities they have of urban life, of how they relate to the every day nature of its experiences.

The positive outdoor spaces that are formed are not merely generated by spaces that are merely placed in outdoors, but in terms of how they are composed and relate as a whole to people and activities that generate the life of those places. Urban space in this relation actually physically shape outdoor spaces, streets, pathways, nodes, open spaces that are formed, are of enormous importance and how they influence enclosing buildings and respective built forms.

These principles relate to the quality of enclosure, but the main attributes that determine its nature are the physical elements that create the definitions to it. Here boundaries that are defined by building edges. Arcades facades are key elements. They are the physical element

that governs its characteristics. They must be looked at in terms of how they, in an overall sense create and contribute to the “sense of place”.

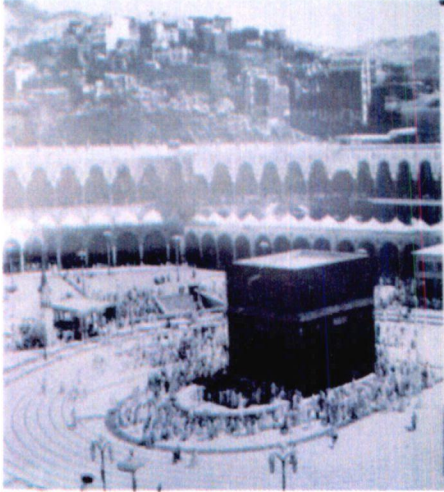


Fig. 2.15 Centre of the Muslim world – Mecca

2.2.1.2 SENSE OF PLACE IN URBAN CONTEXT

Place when it is positively experienced generates a sense of place, which acts as a center of human associations, and significance to the urban dwellers.

Ralph speaks of its connection as “Yet however we feel or know how to explain space when there is nearly always some associated sense or concept of place. Space provides context for places, derives its meaning from particular places”.

‘Place’ becomes distinctive attribute of space to acquire a tangible identity or make an memorable place. it invariably relates of refer to those attributes that generates a ‘ sense of place’ within a larger context.

‘Places’ thereby become essential foci of human intentions in the city. They retain fixed locations and possess identifiable characteristics that determine their physical entity inform of surrounding buildings that determine their enclosure, by substructure and projects or of more subtler definitions as a tree canopy, a flight of steps at elevated walkway, grouping of street furniture. These can acquire the meaning of a place.



Fig. 2.16

Spanish steps

The nature and form of activity too can generate a sense of place. Wherever there is a sense of re-occurring events, activity and action taking place, they by their nature can emphasize and contribute to the quality and sense of place. Thus market, an active pedestrian street, a pathway, a junction can acquire a meaning of a place.

The amazing variety of events and activities makes it interesting to observe. Human contact is offered at every instant, the experience can adopt the role of a particular for an observer. Peoples on the street are not just stationary but always doing something, going and moving from one place to another.

Thus the arrangement of activities, how it relates to man on the street can support the outdoor atmosphere of particular place, a street, a pathway. It will determine whether such places can become a magnetic place for the people.

In reference to Norberg Schulz (1971 p.19), "Spaces receive their being from place and not from the space". The city does not exist as an abstract idea but the reality of lived space.

Ralph (1980 p 42) says that, "Places are not abstractions or concepts, but are directly experienced phenomena of the lived world, and hence are full with meaning, with real objects and on going activities".

2.2.2 ENCLOSURE

The physical form of urban space is derived through sense of enclosure. Man's position in a place, in an urban context is defined physically by the "enclosure" that governs the formation and structure of the space within. In terms of spatial attributes, enclosure plays a key element in defining urban spaces.

In an urban space the enclosing built form act as walls; streets pathways form the ground, while the skyline creates the third dimension.

In viewing a square for instance, the surrounding buildings, their facades, changing pattern of skyline, define the shape of the enclosure. When they are significant and vary in form. Qualities of spatial enclosure can be observed.

"As we grow older, the mystery appears to deepen rather than diminish; marching towards the heart of the mystery, we feel surrounded not by unfriendly darkness. Rosen's city- of sky – is filled with nourishing light, but there are hints here and there throughout. High buildings cast shadows; that the life of a street in shadow is silver as well as grey and furnishes its own singular form of nourishment".(Brendan Gill 1982, p.9)

Urban spaces such as streets, squares appear to be carved out, from the original block of material the city. They are moulded and shaped by the degree and quality of the enclosure. Spaces were seen as "volumes or corridors of city". This emphasis's the depth and dimensional attributes of urban space.

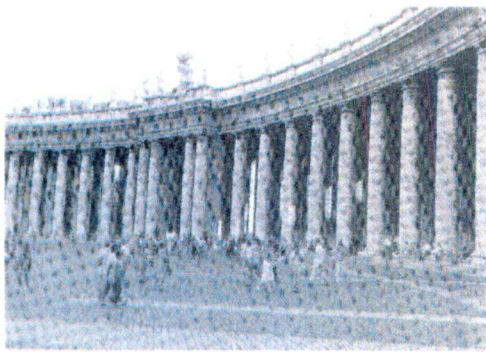


Fig 2.17
St. Peters Square the collanaded enclosure

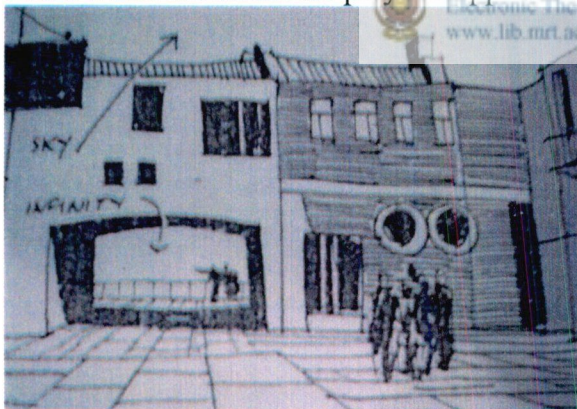


Fig 2.17
St. Peters Square achieving spatial unity

St. Peters Square the collanaded enclosure

“They are seen as volumes to be designed and the building were merely two dimensional enclosures- the walls of the spaces” (Moughtin 1992)

The space or the container acquires a three dimensional volume, to support the life of public realm while the enclosure plays a supportive enhancing role to its quality and character.



Sense of enclosure brings “insideness” in full the sense. In a wider context any enclosure emphasizes gathering function in relation to what is known. The outside existential space, relationship, which is a primary aspect of largely depends on varying degree of enclosure. It thereby relates to the concept of “place making” creating a definite sense of outside inside relationship. The degree of enclosure, how it is manipulated in an urban content determines such relationship.

Enclosure being the most powerful and obvious of all spatial attributes of experience installs one’s sense of position, of identity with the surroundings.

Sense of enclosure thus creates a point of anchoring, a concentration of activity and identity in the notion of place making.

In a visual sense “enclosure” implies a point of containment, a break in a gap or space in movement, in from of a closure, which rests or arrests the eye. It captures the position of man in urban space where one reacts to the fact of being surrounded “the reaction can be static, once the enclosure is entered, the sense remains the same an you walk across it and out of it’.

It spatially focuses our sense of direction to a particular place. Through demarcation of space a pause in orientation is enabled through positive enclosure.

2.2.2.1 PRINCIPLES OF ENCLOSURE

The physical form of urban space is originated through senses of enclosure. Enclosure creates the over riding quality of space experienced It is the purest expression of “sense of place.”

Enclosure relates to the scale of the surrounding built form. Structuring or form of enclosure relates to as any other organization of architectural space where principles of composition , units, contrast, proportion, and accentuation are applied to define the arrangement and grouping of built form, which gives meaning to the character of the place enclosed.



Fig 2.17

St. Peters Square achieving spatial unity

In the manner of how space is enclosed and ordered, composition must be considered. It is the art of achieving visual unity in which each element or component of space must relate to the overall sense of the idea. It articulates individual spaces to create a sense of a whole, Composition is the ordering principle of space design. Whether it applies to urban space or interior space, the same principles such as unity contrast proportion applies in composition.

Here the key elements of space as volume mass are ordered in accordance to these principles.

Scale is a governing factor of composition and architectural language. It not only relates to how space is perceived by the individual but also determines the relationship of man and space. A comfortable human scale in an urban content is one, which recognizes the scale of the individual, the man on the street, related to his pace of movement and sense of identity.

Urban areas are not just for fast moving traffic and vehicles but primarily for the existence of people. Even the high tower blocks of great cities at the street level must respond to this sense of scale. An appropriate and a suitable scale contribute to the variety and texture of urban from making and enabling places that are “human”. It also encourages fine grain of pedestrian movement an activity, element such as arcades, connecting pathways, passages, steps introduced at pedestrian level, can enhance this sense of scale.



Enclosure must respond to the achievement of human scale to create a general sense of protection and well being in urban space. Here the sense and the scale of the enclosed space and enclosure is important. The larger the public squares, the less they move away from this “sense of place “and intimacy. They can be left deserted and uninhabited due to their enormity of size and scale. Many of the modern day squares that are intended to become lovely spaces become lost and dead as the sense of enclosure and the relative human scale are ignored. Time and time again architects and designers fall into the habit of designing space that are far too large and end up as desolate.

But those that acquire a “sense of place” are those that are more comfortable and relate to people in terms of scale, they are the ones that are most active and alive. They places become favorite places of people where people mingle, communal relationship is fostered and a sense of identity is strong. They take the form of gathering places, where small crowds, festivities, carnivals, speeches, street drama take their place in the life of urban space. Alexander relates to the importance of establishing correct state of enclosure as-

“In small scale places thus the people feel half consciously tied together in places that have diameters of 70 feet or less- where they can make out the faces and half hear the talk of people around them, and feel their being at one with a loosely knit square, which is lot in the larger spaces”. (Alexander 1977, p.313)

They determine the quality of place and in terms of how places are used and experienced by the individual.

2.2.2.2 ELEMENTS OF ENCLOSURE

EDGE

Heidegger (1971, p154) says “Boundary is not that which something begins its presencing.” The boundary is determined by the building edge that defines the entity of outer space with the interior.

It has been referred in terms as “The zone between the in doors and the out doors. Often this zone is thought of as the edge, a line on paper without a thickness, a wall but this is altogether wrong.” Alexander 1977, p 52)

Edge is to increase the Connection between inside and out side and encourages formation of group of activities that cross the boundary and encourages movement that starts from one side and ends up on the other. This allows activity to be on the boundary or within the enclosure itself. Thus the nature and the quality of the enclosing edge, the degree of articulation it creates between the centre and enclosure.

E.g. Arcade enhances space as it opens out and receives the street.

Have continuous niches, galleries, Openings creating places for people to Stop, openings creating places for people To stop, loiter, shop around or rest. These Edges are much alive and being cooler. They help to reconnect to the world around and respond to the outdoor enclosed spaces. The edges themselves create boundaries, that something begins its presenting. They create positive places where people can enjoy themselves, become a part of the social fabric part of the urban space, part of the lives and experience of people who move in and through them.

E.g. Window place niches create a positive gesture to the street edge

This enclosure provides rich experience recognizing the above. The walls not been barriers, would merge in and out, the roof canopy extending over creating little places for benches and shading from the hot sun. Such places in experience can be making every day experience of city more memorable.

ACTIVITY POCKETS

These spaces are along the edges of enclosure where people gravitate and linger naturally. These activities can line more public pedestrian orientated areas. Small shops, stalls can

from partly enclosed areas along these edges sustaining a rich mix of uses. In effect they create places for people to naturally pause and get involved and by the distinct nature of these activities we determine the quality of space formed.

E.g. Street buzz generates a place of activity that lines the street edge. Christopher Alexander illustrates our natural tendency to such spaces as, (1977, p 601)

“Further, the process of lingering is a gradual one, it happens; people do not make up their minds to stay; they stay or go, according to a process of gradual involvement. This means that the various pockets of activity around the edge should be next to paths and entrances so that people pass right by them as they pass through “.

THRESHHOLD

Threshold can form relation between exterior and interior spaces by providing both separation as well as connection.

Enclosure can be the floor, the paving that creates a unifying element of space leading from one another; the continuous skyline or uninterrupted building edge can create demarcation to building edge.

Space does not exist in explicitly defined, limits for “threshold” of enclosure are many. They merge with other places enhancing the spatial quality.

Urban space is born out of these relationships, of buildings with other buildings, or space with other spaces. What is relevant in experience is the fluid relationship of space with the surrounding and connecting spaces.

Spaces are created through become defined as places themselves. Places in which the world reverses itself. Thus elements as colonnades, arcades and shops, level differences, steps in elevation, balconies, opening to spaces are all regulators of this inversion. They control permeability of spaces. Thus it is the threshold, which reveals the limit of enclosure, and plays a significant part in urban space.

E.g. Courtyard, colonnade, archways.

“A colonnade defines exploit space in this manner. The amount of void is greater than the solid by the alignment of columns we perceive a limit which separates whilst acting as a

2.2.2.3 Sense of Scale in Urban Context

Places are created when they are intimate and relate to the scale of people around, when they encourage activity to take root in a place. A place that provides rich experience is that recognized in the above.

Scale of the edge to dominate the sense of enclosure, when the width of the street does not exceed the height of the surrounding buildings, the nature of space in between is more comfortable and sense o enclosure is greater.

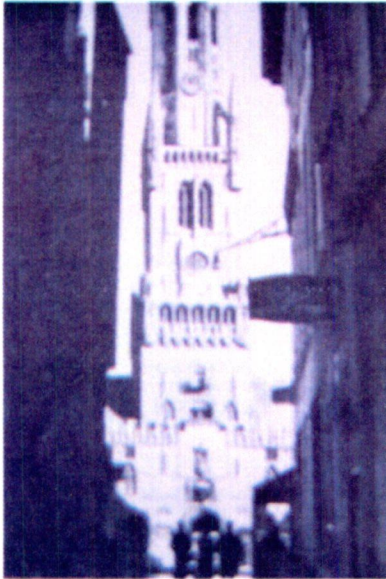


Fig 2.18

The Palazzo Vecchio, Florence

2.2.3 PRINCIPLE OF CONTINUITY

Schulz (1971. p.25) explains that,

“Any closed form, has to be entered, and a direction is thereby introduced. For a house not to become a prison it must have an opening into the world beyond that connects this inner world with the outer”

The continuity is the connection of the inner and outer world the connection between the enclosed and the open. Continuity bridges the gap and thus creates the connection shattered by enclosure.

In Timeless way of building, Alexander (p. 379) points out that, “In order, the parts are taken in a sequence is formed, this allows to build up an image of the whole”

Urban space is made out of a series of individual spaces and they are joined at larger level. This structure modulates relationship between parts and the whole. Therefore it becomes an essential quality of relationship within spaces.

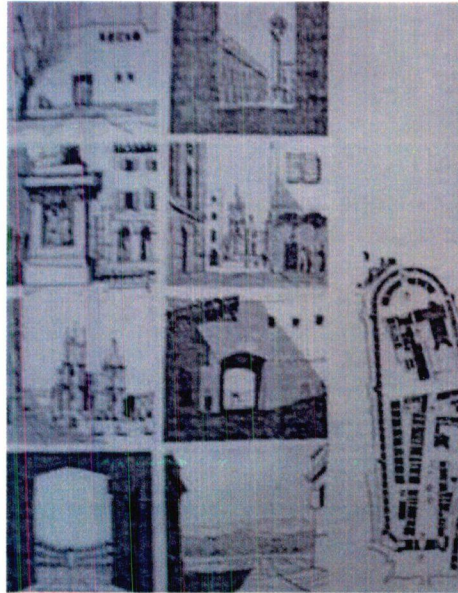
It can be seen in the orchestration of spaces and events, which makes a sequence and it generates series of movement, or a sense of progression through each space, moves and relates to the next. These spaces generate dynamic sense of order.

Alexander (1977:p.97) says that, “Movement in space is governed by predetermined program sequence. It guides events, spaces, movement into a single progression and the path, the route this progression takes, is more important than any individual place along it.”

Thus the physically immobile and static space; acquire a dynamic sense of order.

James Synder relates to it as, “All spaces, interior and exterior are experienced by people passing through them in define sequence. Spaces do not occur in isolation. They are linked

together, thus the effect of space depends on space before it and after it. Spatial sequence must be functional and legible” (Synder C. James p. 143).



The continuity articulates human movement and space. The physical structure of the built form also contributes to achieve the spatial continuity in urban space. In a street, the continuance of facades, sky line, set backs, repetition of elements, scale massing. Principles of similarity and harmony, all contribute to the sense of continuity and purpose of movement.



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To achieve the Continuity in urban environment; the space has to be structured and organized into coherent wholes. Elements are grouped into paths to create centres or goals of ones movement. They become important elements to achieve spatial continuity. These paths have to direct the movement, and orientates towards goals or points of focuses that act as reference points to each path. They become directional indications, which support movement. Urban space is perceived in this manner. Christopher Alexander (1976. p.97) speaks of the importance of path in generating this sense of continuity. Movement paths become important, because the channels along which any observer moves. They are places from which the city is observed.

Threshold in terms of spatial enclosure creates an interesting feature of “place” experience. Space cannot exist in terms of being explicitly defined or with in well sustained limits, but subtly merges and interpenetrate with other space. This enhances the sense of continuity and builds up relationship between individual places enabling separation as well as connection.

Thus each durable place “in experience is marked by “limits of enclosure” (thresholds). It applies to a market square a street an enclave or sometimes to a whole town. We refer to these limits in order to know that we are inside with-in a place. The limits thus create the

existence of an interior in relation to the exterior. When a man demarcates a boundary to a place, the limits of it implies of what is in his control. In Urban space the quality of experience is enhanced when such limits do not explicitly exist as walls or boundaries to places, but merge and form connections. When they exist as thresholds they enable relationship of spaces to merge. It both creates differentiation of spaces as well as transition, interruption as well as continuity, boundaries as well as crossings of enclosures. They play an important role in the composition of space and their articulation.

Movement paths become more important, because the channels along which any observer moves. They are the places from which the city is observed.

In the progression direction of a path is determined by intermediate goals; then they focuses new goals for the observer. If the relationship of the goals is more, or they connect goals to one another and form a path, these goals become interesting points and the journey through this points also become interesting.

Alexander goes to explain- the path may be straight, or gentle curve between goals. Their paving should swell around the goal. The goal should never be more than a few feet apart. (Alexander 1977 p.588).

E.g.Goals can be a vista, a visible landmark trees, fountains, states, gateways etc. a succession of movement along individual places of resting, interesting activities and events too can establish visual goals along the journey.

Channels or paths move through the city make small inevitable spaces to wait, loiter or meeting. They also enrich the journey of from one goal to the other thus contributing with the social life.

To establish the sense of direction, physical elements such as colonnades, arcades ground slopes, color texture; floor patterns. But the physical attributes are governed by the pace of one's own movement. There the rhythm plays the major role.

It acts as an important element in recognition. Norberg Schulz (1971.p.17) points out that rhythm is a quality inherent in every aspect of human living: "life itself can be understood as movement form one condition to another. The movement is incessant and continuous, but has rhythm and form".

Kevin Lynch (Lynch p.106) express that," A man who moves rhythmically starts the motion himself and feel that he controls it, but very shortly the rhythm controls him, he is possessed by it. It carries him along, Rhythmic motion gives a feeling of lightened energy": person as well as the surrounding is related to the rhythm.

Rhythmic motion can be generated through the space; it is an unconscious relationship that exists between man and the environment.

Rhythm generates unity; change of rhythm generates a sense of variety. While rhythm makes a continuous flow of movement change of rhythm makes the observer, pause, and

turn change pace of movement. It helps to break the sense of monotony; interruptions of opening, columns, and solids can help to alter one's pace while

2.4 URBAN LIFE

RURAL LIFE

When it considers about the life of a village is very out worldly, means every body was out, taking part in the nature. Every morning every man in the village houses rode out to work in the paddy fields, farms or they kept their eye on what there was that he could use. They are always involved in jobs like sharing land, the water, the grass, the sand the gravel and the forest.

A simple account of an image of rural life, its every day experiences, activities and encounters underlines a way of life governed by a sense of close kinship between man and his fellowman. The natural environment and the land he dwells on. The country is always full of peace, innocence and simple virtues of life become significant.

THE URBAN LIFE

The typical urban life is exuberance of everyday living and the nature of activity that fills the urban space. The idea of the city dweller is immediate and full of activity and associations with other people.

Life of a city is both inspiring and stressful, extreme experience of human activity and experiences, filled with noise, traffic and people. Urban environments provide variety of choices and life styles to its people. Cities are providing ever increasing communication among societies and space not only for social interaction but for economic and spatial powers too. The most important spaces in cities are streets and squares; they are living spaces and the heart of the city. They are full of people, foods, clothes, goods and etc. people encounters a complex mix or vibrant activities, views, sounds, smells and close contact with others gives reality to the geography of the city.

The city is a place of constant vibrancy and powerful and even hostile associations. Its public spaces such as streets and squares become the centre and realm of everyday life in the cities.

“A city ought to be like the human body and for this reason it should be full of all that gives life to man.”

“The city is an element of a people's spiritual and physical culture and, indeed, it is one of the highest expressions of that culture” Urban design: street and square

Urban design: street and square

Therefore Architecture is not merely providing the qualitative demands of people but to enhance the mainly the quality of life – ‘the qualitative realms’ of the people, their perceptual and experiential needs in the cities.

Urban life is mainly often limited to those of its open spaces which define its public realm: the city dwellers' space of the city is spread out and extensive. The landscape of the city is

full of people and rush of activities spread out beneath the tall buildings at present day cities. These are countless number of high risers; major part of it is connected with many activities much in ground levels in the realm of its open public spaces. What has taken into consideration here is that the quality and nature of such spaces, the socially and spatially alive in the closely defined urban environment and these lives are more direct immediate and confined to the boundaries of given spaces. They are often limited to places of human contact such as his home, place of work and the many open spaces that define the public realm of cities.

The relationship between the nature and the modern man is often reduces to fragmenting relationships and their relationship with the earth and land is fast loosening. Therefore their direct relationship with the earth is reduced. Man identifies himself with the man made settings and the defined boundaries of the urban space. The typical pavements, the street, open spaces especially the public squares become the breathing spaces as they are fundamentally important to their existence.

Human life in the urban environment mainly depends on the gathering of relationships within its immediate settings. The urban way of life its quality and nature have particular manifestations in the formation of the built environment.

“In their urban environment and a town as a whole, the direct relation to the natural environment is weakened, almost lost, and gathering becomes a bringing together of forms which have their roots in their localities. This is the essential property of the urban environment.”

Norberg Schulz (1884, pg.58) relates to one of its distinct qualities in this way.

There is a distinct variation between life of the country and urban setting. In a country the experiences with the nature/ environment is much more subtle, tranquil and often unrestricted by human boundaries and demarcation.

E.g. it spread from home to fields, to the village and river beyond, country dwellers. Everyday living is always related with the landscape across and it is much more fluid and collected with the nature.



Fig. 2.19

Rural beauty

When consider about two living methods each have different nature as urban and rural inhabitants. It was not only developed by their definite locations and spatial aspects, but they are quite contrary to each other.

The rural life is full of family life, traditions and sense of community. The cities are always towards progress, modernization and growth. The way of life in cities is related to the high density of people, living in close proximities for number of particular social reasons but for economic and material needs. It is distinct differentiate from the communal life of the village its social structure and the shared values.

The human relationships are more formerly defined in urban life. It is limited to a routine of activities and structured.

The sociologist Lois Wirth has expressed this, "The bonds of kinship and neighborliness and sentiments arising from living together are likely to be absent, relatively weak in comparison to the rural setting, under such circumstances, competition and format control mechanisms, furnish the substitute for bonds and solidarity that are related upon to hold folk societies together."

-On cities and social life; Lois Wirth, p.76

Urban life lacks the sense of security and unity as in rural communities, further more the natural water, fresh air and etc. To some extent the presence of people brings sense of security in a more living way in urban spaces. And its distinctive nature brings richness and vitality to its dwellers. Their impersonal encounters, rich mix of activities brings different taste and experience to the urban dweller.

Luxuries of the urban environment do not exist in the rural areas. The 'luxury' means the ability to have running water, electric light, transform to and from places in convenience and comfort, telecommunication, access to medical facilities and education etc. The quality of life has improved in the cities by the presence of amenities and infrastructure that makes the tasks of living easier and convenient but has deteriorated in some other ways.

In the present urban situation quality of life in one hand is far more superior, they are living in well-planned settlements with higher quality of enjoyment. In the other hand it has created artificial settings, which are dirty with drug abuse, crime, mental illness, vandalism, truancy and social disintegration.

The urban space can be defined as the product of the urban development process.

Most of the time in the field of architecture has been identified that the Socio Spatial approach to urban space is needed.

CHAPTER THREE: CASE STUDIES

3.0 BASIS FOR SELECTION OF CASE STUDIES

Public spaces especially Piazzas are important elements in urban environment which strengthen the social life. Thus gain great physical and visual appearance to the city. The historical city of Rome has the best examples for public urban spaces as discussed earlier.

Norberg Schulz in *Genius Loci* (p.142) says that about Rome, 'the street is an urban interior where life takes place, in the full sense of the word. In Piazza this character is emphasized.'

Streets and quays are primarily places of transit, capturing public life in momentary pause from a river or people in motion. The public square in the other hand is a destination: a purpose built stage for ritual and interaction. It refers spaces free to use, as against the privately owned realm of houses and shops. Piazzas are the planned or be a results of historical growth. Therefore it becomes very important to discuss about Piazzas as urban public spaces.



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Rome has been one of the civilized empires, which develops through no of ages. Rome, a great city, which carries monumentality and grandiosity, thus, its' spaces have an 'interiority' which gives us a strong sense of protection and belonging, and they are nature close: while humanizing with nature than any other European city does. Therefore it brings rootedness to a space, and sense of familiarity and belongingness, which make a great space to bring rich social life. Therefore Rome becomes an ideal place to study about urban public spaces which unearth the secrets of being so alive in history and so far.

Colombo as a city of a developing, urbanizing, which has larger percentage of poor, and Colombo is being neglecting many of the public urban spaces and squares mainly due to economic reasons. Therefore it is a quietly different setting comparative to Rome.

Therefore the selection of the case studies will be different settings, where different types of social activities happen and make sense of belongingness, and to achieve different types of spatial attributes within different community groups.

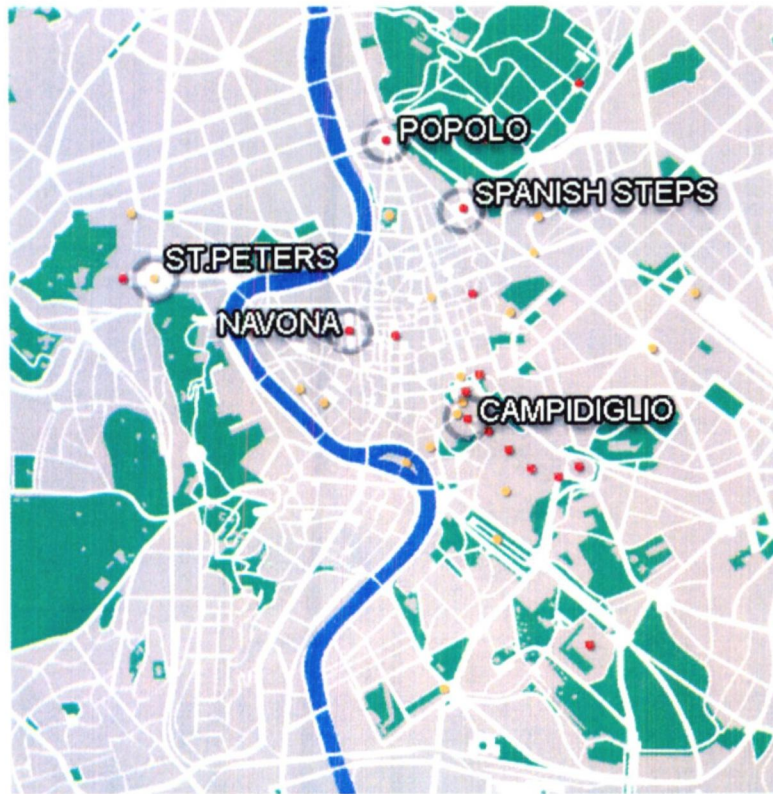


Fig 3.1

Map of Rome



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3.1 PIAZZA NAVONA IN ROME

Piazza Navona is a very important public square in Rome, which defies all the rules as a square. It is a multipurpose square in Rome.

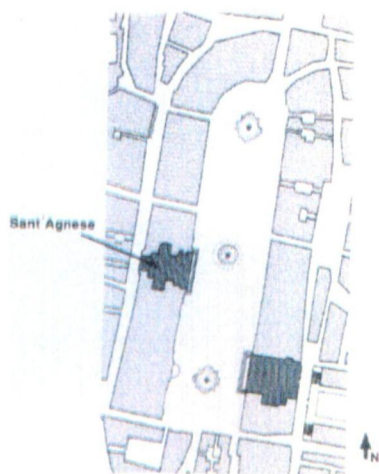


Fig 3.2 Map of Piazza Navona



Fontana del Moro



Fontana del Nettuno



Fontana dei Quattro Fiumi

Fig. 3.3 The Fountains

Historical importance

The Piazza Navona is situated in the historic center of Rome, west of the [Pantheon](#) and can be accessed through seven points from the surrounding. Piazza Navona is extremely large (65x240m) and its sides are in the ratio of 1:5. The shape of it recalls a stadium; it was laid out on the ruins of a stadium built by Domitian in 86 AD, ruin of which can still be seen at the north end of the piazza. The stadium had seating for around 30,000 spectators by Emperor Domitian (81-96 AD). The stadium was destroyed during the middle ages. This arena was used for water festivals and horse races when it was a stadium.

Later during the Baroque period Bernini and Borromini two rival architects built a magnificent series of palaces, churches and fountains that created the character of the present elongated square.

Components Social Characteristics



Fig 3.4
View of Navona with the fountain
On the longitudinal axis

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Fig 3.5
Church St. Agnese

Piazza Navona was an elongated square and one of the most famous and arguably the most beautiful of Rome's many squares. It is an extremely lively place with features no less than three magnificent fountains. It encounters the Romans and becomes an existential space for Romans at that time and now.

Although it is not a monumental square by purpose the characters in and around it depict the original Roman world and vernacular settlement and its general properties bring monumentality to the local landscape. The articulation of the boundaries comprises the classical characters with the dome of St. Agnese. The church saint Agnese is the main highlighting building of the square as a primary bodily manifestation.

At Piazza Navona, it gives sense of feeling that we are really inside, close to the Earth, close to the palpable things of everyday existence at the same time it make feel, part of a comprehensive cultural totality.

The main attraction of the Piazza Navona is the three fountains. Each has its own characters and creates exiting scenes to any kind of visitor. They are three focal points, which mainly concentrates people around them. Three of them were placed on the longitudinal axis.



Fig 3.6

Piazza Navona

The central and largest fountain is the Fontana dei Quattro Fiumi (fountain of the four rivers), one of the finest and imposing creations. Cascading waters in this piece of art attracts the people and provides a visual entertainment. It was constructed between 1647 and 1651. The fountain features four figures, each representing a river from a different continent—the Nile, Ganges, Danube and Rio della Plata. The statues are at the base of a rock supporting an obelisk, originally located at the Domitian stadium. The design of the fountain was by Bernini.

The two other fountains on the piazza are the Fontana di Nettuno (Neptune fountain) at the northern end and the Fontana del Moro (Moor fountain) at the southern end. The Fontana del Nettuno, also known as the Calderari, was built in 1576 and represents Neptune fighting with a Marine Monster. And the Fontana del Moro, the central statue of a Moor holding a dolphin, a design by Bernini, was added in the 17th century. The artistic sculptures and display of water at different levels create a beauty of its own.

People are concentrated in different fountains with different visual entertainments. And it always has a festive character. These places function as nucleus of activity, which brings social spaces.

There are architecturally important buildings such as palaces, churches, etc St. Agnese the prominent one too bring close to the earth by its broad flight of steps in front and increase the sense of belongingness without being the separation point of two existential realms.

There were open-air cafes around the square. During the summer there are numerous artists who draw or paint members of the public for a fee. The place is crowded each day and there are often buskers and sometimes mimes to entertain.

And restaurants, bars, nightclubs and curio shops with residential quarters in the upper floors. In addition to these artists sellers of souvenirs all add variety to this square. In front of these buildings in the square there are the facilities for the general activities.

Especially in the Eastern edge these activities extended to the square therefore it creates rich mix of activities.

During the Christmas season and at August festivals, the square adds variety to it. Square become fully active with sellers of different things and with the visitors and the activities are extended to the squares. The piazza is filled with stalls selling figurines of all sizes. It's a place of child's delight.



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And there were more activities as pivotal events in the festive season. The place was transformed into an exuberant and dynamic social space.

And there was a good mix of activities. Places become much more alive. These activities are harmonious to each other and encourage public use and interaction.

The multipurpose nature of the square as a religious, civic, recreational etc, the activities completely varied to each other. There was the variation of activity.

The synthesis of nature and culture is condensed and visualized in Bernini's great fountain, where natural elements such as water and rocks are combined with human figures and religious symbols as well as axis of the obelisk.

The surrounding buildings remind the visitor the glory of the period they were built. One who enters this square experiences a different period of time and each element carries him to that time.

With its decorated façade and the cupola it represents the Baroque style of Architecture. Next to this there are other architecturally important buildings such as palaces, churches, etc.

Spatial Characteristics

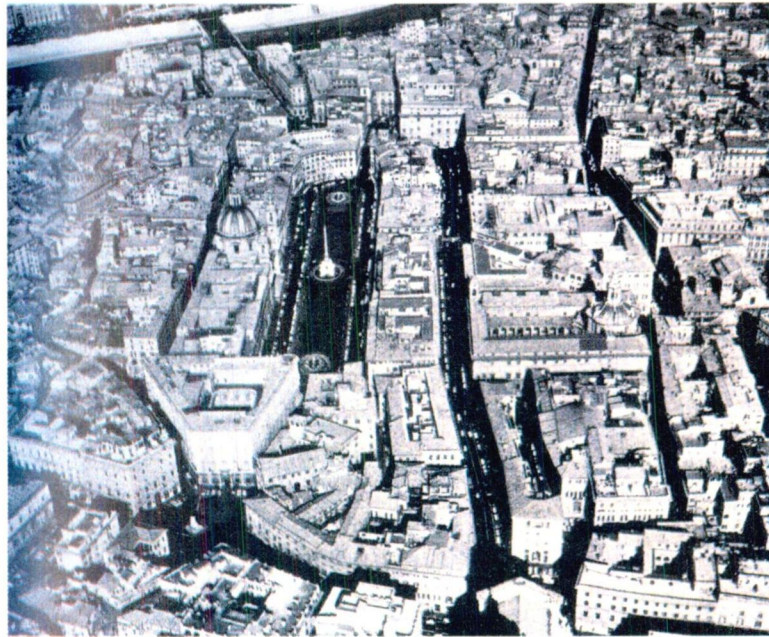


Fig 3.7

Piazza Navona within the Urban context

The square emphasizing on the longitudinal direction fully enclosed space on all four sides. And it was dominated by mainly Bernini's magnificent fountains which placed on a longitudinal axis and finally become an essential character in the square. It defines the form and rhythm of the square. And make movement within the elongated square and bring different spatial experience for the user.

The great Architect Bernini introduced them to concentrate the focal and spatial order and the confine subdivision places in this large elongated square.

The main focal point 'centre' of the square is the famous Fontana dei Fiumi (Fountain of the four rivers) (1647-51). This is considered as the masterpiece of Bernini. And the other fountains act as sub centres and enhance the totality of the square and attracted the visitors to different ends of it. Therefore the focal elements are used effectively within the elongated setting. The places have their individual identity and bonded with other fountains and the enclosure buildings unconsciously. The fountains have enhanced their quality as centres by being relating with the enclosure cohesively keeping the longitudinal form itself.

The church, "Saint Agnese" by being main building in the square with its Baroque style façade occupies the west side of the square Paul Zucker has described this façade as following,

"..... the church Saint Agnese (1652-77) whose façade became an essential element for the piazza. The expansion of the church façade in broad horizontals and specially the

location of the cupola, rising immediately behind the façade in contrast to all other Baroque churches prove that the architects were fully aware of the narrow width of the square”.

The façade with two towers on both sides of the entrance and the cupola in the middle characterize the master architects’ style. The same style could be seen in some other important building too.

The broad flight of steps in front of the Church of St. Agnese is not a space to show the difference between two realms but a representation of articulation of the ground itself which invites people; which bring the spatial continuity from square to the building.

The main focal point, Fountain of four rivers composed round the ancient obelisk of Domition placed directing away from the central axis, not directly fronting to the Church, quite off to enhance the curved façade of the church.

By being fully enclosed square rather than other squares in Rome which encloses three sides and directing towards vista has emphasized its centrifugal character only with the great pieces of sculptures and elements.

The focal elements and enclosure bears witness to the creative ability of the architects who designed and remind the visitor the glory of the period that they were built.

The different forms of elevations on all four sides add variety to the space. The skyline of the square keeps almost horizontality while for important features such as the cupola and the towers of the main church intercept this horizontality. This vertical and horizontal combination creates an attractive spatial character and adds charm to the cityscape. Even though the square is extremely large the scale of the buildings and the function in the middle proportionately combine it to form a totality.

The churches, palaces, civic buildings and restaurants, bars, curio shops, residential quarters have form the edge. The nature of the enclosing edge in Rome did not create different between two realms, inside and out side but they were harmoniously blend while keeping the characteristics as in front of the Church of St. Agnese. It has been encouraged movement inside and outside especially in Christmas season and August festivals. The Architectural frames of the enclosure with its balconies, galleries, viewing rooms which open out encourage it too. Public buildings are decorated to suit the moment.

The enclosure depicts its vernacularity through the use of colours, orange, orange brown and etc.

3.3 PIAZZA DI CAMPIDOGLIO

This is one of the great monumental squares in Rome designed by Michelangelo.

Location

This was strategically located on one of the seven hills Capitoline. Naturally this location made it a dominant place in the urban scene of Rome. The higher elevation of the location improved its monumental quality and also made it visible from distance.

Historical importance.

Piazza Di Campidoglio or the capitol square was the first most significant urban interior created in the 16th C. this was intended as a new manifestation of Rome as a capital city that is as a central place which symbolizes the role of Rome in the World. It was not made as a square open, radiating lay out as normally found in at that time. But it becomes a enclosed space delimited by converging facades. . This was built as a symbol as well as a guardian place of the religious and political powers of early Rome. The square was brought to its new form by master architect Michelangelo in 1538 AD.

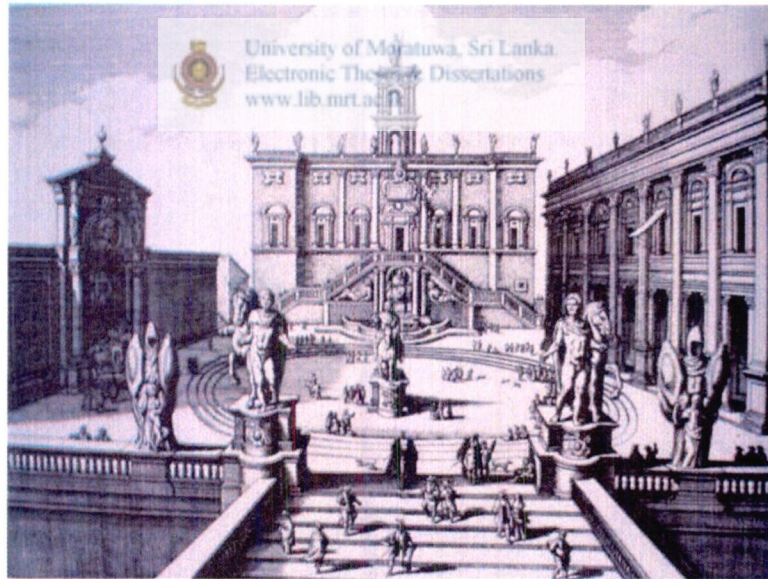
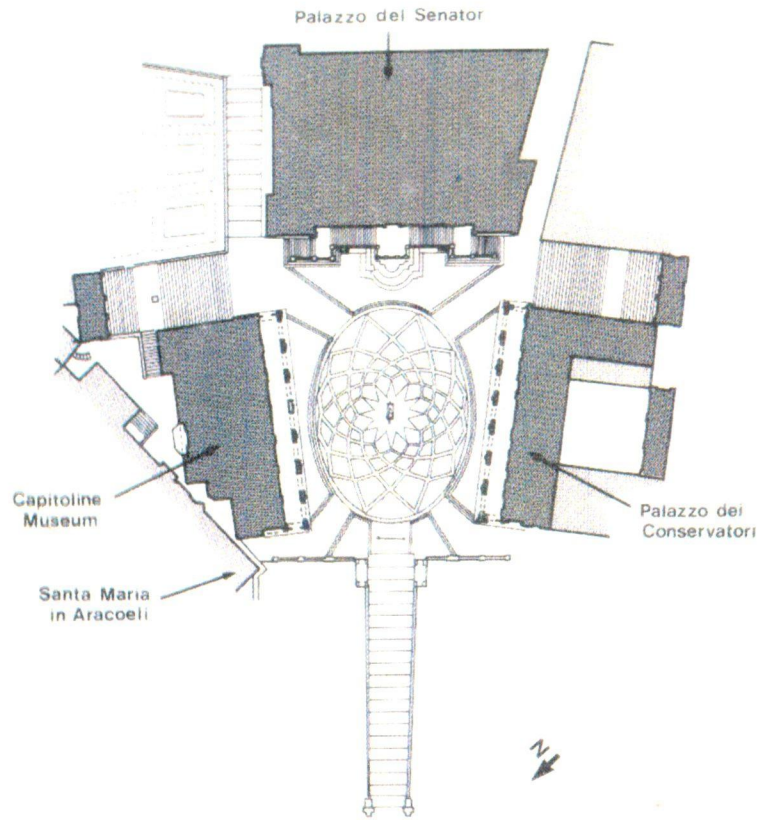


Fig. 3.8
Piazza di Campidoglio

The approach he adopted to improve this square produced one of the master pieces of all times. He saved the basic structure of the existing old palaces redesigned the facades of them and created a totally new effect making Campidoglio the heart of Rome. This is a good example how to make existing urban spaces attractive and identifiable by mingling past with new developments.



4.29



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Fig 3.9

The layout of the square



Fig. 3.10

The Main building – Pallazzo del Senator and the Museum



Fig. 3.10

The Piazza di Campidoglio the star shaped paving pattern the sculptural enclosure towards the vista



Fig.3.11

The Entering path that give the fullest impression



Fig. 3.12

The Capitoline Museum



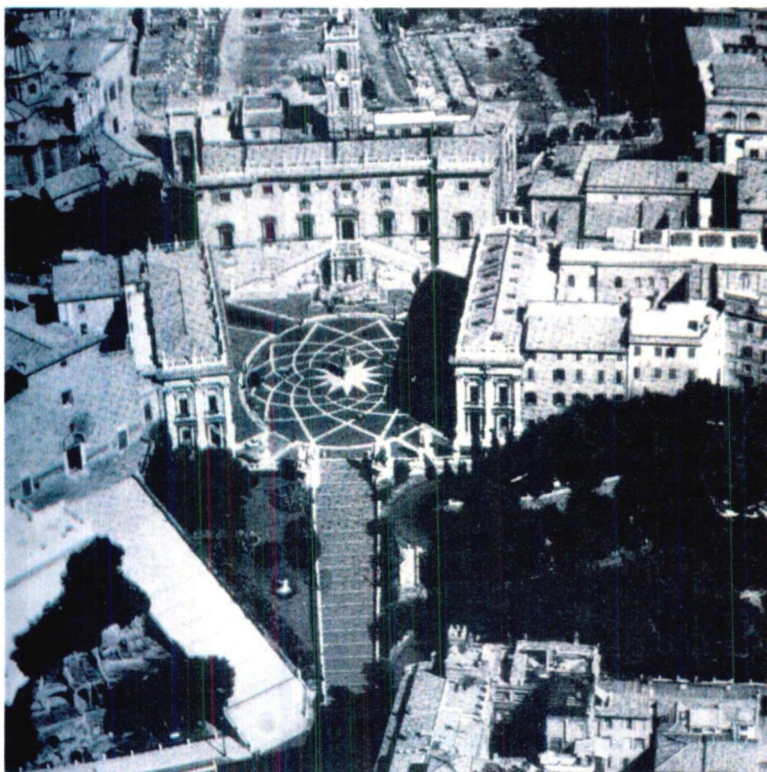


Fig. 3.13

The Capitoline Square



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Components and Social Characters

The square is a three-sided enclosure. This was function as a political and religious centre, and a town hall with no of activities, there was not much social activities as in Piazza Navona.

It was comprised of the Piazzo dei Senatori (presently official seat of Mayor of Rome) in the centre Palazzo dei Musei (Presently Museum of classical arts) and Palazzo dei conservatori (an art gallery now) to the left and right of it respectively because this was been a monumental square activities are organized to enrich the characteristics particular to that situation.

Basically the square could be divided into three activity areas, the main square the colonnades and the stairs. The square serves as a place of relaxation for the people who visits the museums and palazzo die Senatori. The colonnades act as a shady semi public area for small groups of people. The stairs mainly function as a movement area but rarely as a relaxation area.

Ordinary people as well as artists and philosophers admired this place.

The buildings of this square positioned in relation to the sun angles, they create different shadows and shapes on the square during different times of the day. These shadows adds

floor patterns and to form a pleasing play of light and shadow. This causes different degree of activeness of some spaces with the time of the day.

This square mainly built to monumentalize the Palazzo dei Senatori performs that purpose entirely.

Spatial Characteristics

Piazza Di Campidoglio was a masterpiece of civic art and a unique architectural composition and comprises Michel Angelo's work of art and architecture.

This piazza gives the fullest impression at the arrival and the departure. It is an uninterrupted view of the main building when approaching from the main stairway.

This unity was achieved by the trapezoidal square, oval shaped two-dimensional starry paving pattern and the three dimensional projections of buildings and elements.

The trapezoidal square was given the break to the regular geometric figures of the Renaissance. And it is comparatively a small space (55m x 40.5m). it is not a fully enclosed one.

In addition to the open side, the two main corners are open (Fig), contrary to the method of forming corners.

When standing in the Piazza though it is irregular, it has been skillfully counteracted by the geometric pattern of the floor to a rectangular. And it appears as an element in the composition. The geometry of the floor is a large sunken oval of a star radiating from the statue of Marcus Aurelius. It creates a strong centrifugal movement, which contrasts with the converging facades.

The longitudinal axis introduced is goes through the grand stairway the centre of the square and the main building. The enclosure buildings add three-dimensional effect and focuses vision to the centre of the square. And it was greatly reinforces the large space which is defined by the three buildings with its strong centre.

The statue of Marcus Aurelius In the centre of the square appears to be riding on a horse with a hand stretched. It is silhouetted against the square and provides a balance to the total environment.

The enclosure buildings are different in design they complete each other with their horizontal divisions. The verticality is emphasized by the columns of Corinthian order rising up in individual buildings which tie together all three structures. The correct proportion of the square makes it neither too small nor too large. Also the proportion of the buildings to the square emphasizes the impressiveness, which is necessary character for a monumental square. The angled position of Palazzo dei Musei and Palazzo dei Conservatori makes the square visually contracting when a person walks along the main axis towards Palazzo dei Senatori.

At the top of the stairs there are beautifully made statues, which symbolize the artistic talent of the great architect of the square. There could be seen statues around the edges of the roofs of three buildings too. These statues create a majestic impression and harmonize the environment and the skyline of the square.

N. Schulz (Genius Loci p.152) says, "...the Capitoline Square becomes one of the greatest interpretations of the concept of place ever conceived by man. It brings us to the centre, not only of the world, but psychologically also of those departures and returns which constitute our individual existence."

It brings unique monumental public space thus created through an effective task of synthesizing nature, culture and architecture.

3.2 PIAZZA DEL POPOLO

Location and Historical importance

Piazza Del Popolo was the main entrance to the great ancient city of Rome. Three streets branches out to connect the main city gate with different urban districts which was the main entrance (until the age of railway) to Rome. For all visitors coming from North, it was also the departure point for those traveling Northwards.



Fig. 3.14

The Piazza del Popolo in early Rome acts as an Entrance



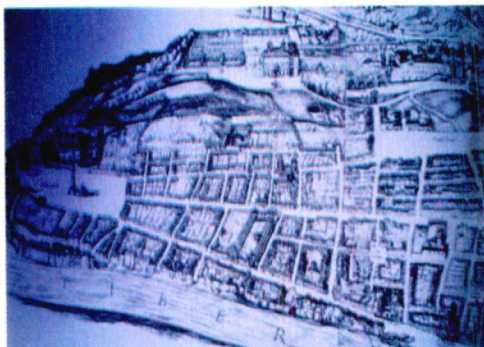


Fig 3.15.

The Piazza del Popolo appeared in early Rome acts as an great Entrance with the three roads branching towards the central city.



Fig 3.16.



Fig-3.17

Layout of the piazza in early Rome

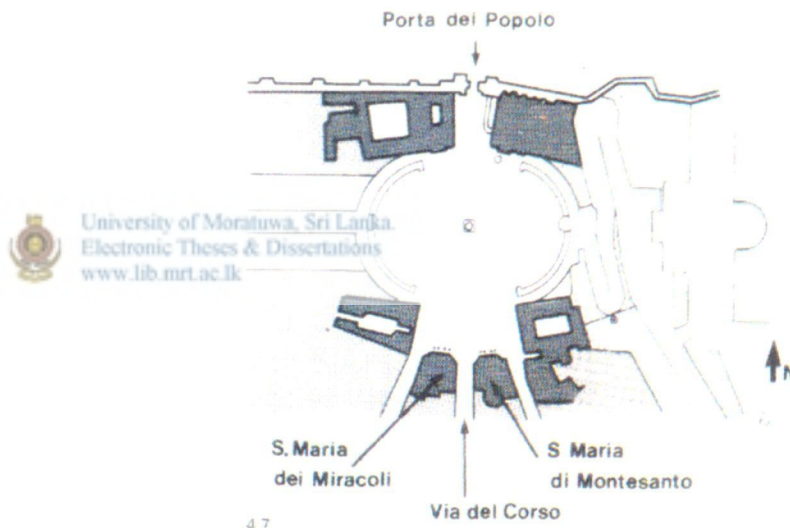


Fig.3.18

Layout plan of Piazza del Popolo after it was developed



Fig-3.19

Twin churches, Piazza del Popolo, Rome



Fig.3.20

The Piazza del Popolo

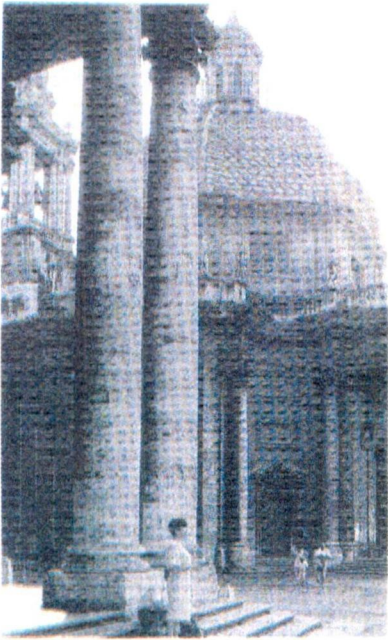


Fig.3.20

Colonnades make space to Harmonizes the church with the square and streets

The piazza Del Popolo is a large oval square near the Borghese Park and in a narrow area between the Tiber on the west and the steep slopes of Monte Pincio on East.

On the north side it is dominated by the Porta Del Popolo, which leads to the Via Flaminia. Since the Via Flaminia was built in 220 A.D. to connect Rome with the Adriatic coast, many travellers entered the Rome via the square. In 1562 construct a large gate, the Porta Flaminia, to impress the pilgrims who entered the city via the Via Flaminia.

In 1589, an Egyptian obelisk was placed in the center of the square. The 23,2m/73ft high obelisk was originally built in 1300 B.C.

In 1815 to 1816 Giuseppe Valadier redesigned the square by adding walls around the square and giving the square its current oval shape.

Components

Main structuring elements are twin churches obelisk in the centre of Piazza and the Gateway way.



Fig 3.21

At the center of the square the obelisk placed by Domenico Fontana in 1589

Valadier designed two hemicycles (semi-circles) (here the side towards the Pincio) around the obelisk to which he added fountains and Egyptian lions. The statues of the four seasons (below summer) are located at the beginning of the streets going up to the Tiber or the Pincio.

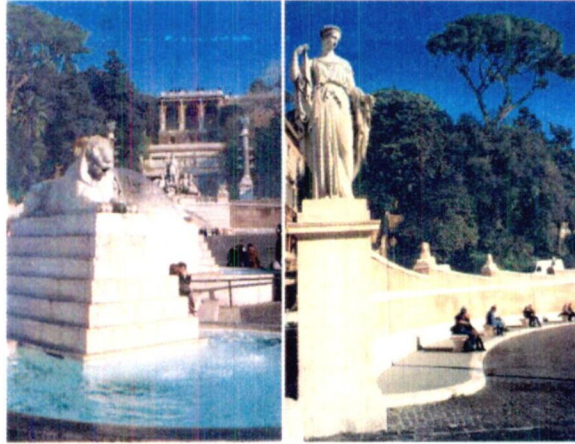


Fig 3.22
The Fountains of Egyptian lions

Porta del Popolo



Fig. 3.23
The obelisk & the Porta del Popolo



Fig. 3.24
Porta del Popolo The inner side of Porta del Popolo celebrates the entry into Rome.

At the southern end of the square are two symmetrical churches on either side of the Via del Corso, a street-leading straight through the heart of Rome to the Piazza Venezia. The churches, the Santa Maria dei Miracoli and the Santa Maria in Montesanto
He also added the central fountain and the four Egyptian lions around the obelisk



Fig. 3.25

The twin churches Maria dei Miracoli e S. Maria in Montesanto



Social Characteristics

Piazza Del Popolo had a role similar to a railway station since most of the travellers arrived here in ancient city of Rome. It was a place, which has a dual function. This Piazza become a centre because it is a goal, a place of pilgrimage more mundanely and somewhere get weekly shopping and it is an entrance or departure.

This place is for daily work at the same time grand scale work at festive seasons. There were distinct variations in the activities, being entrance where daily traveling can be happen and where there were lot of pavement hawkers and sellers were. This place had been a part of their daily life. the degree of activeness vary with the time of the day. but being a Entrance to a great city of large no of population it was functioned throughout the day and maximized in the festive seasons, or at the arrival of great people (Kings and Queens) this had been a great welcoming point with full of new decorations (permenant and temporary) and full of people.

But with the arrival of railway this place is some left over with its daily routines as a proud city entrance. Now it is almost a museum piece. Become a place of civic art.

The obelisk at the centre and twin churches mainly create many activity related concentration and diversification with the setting.

Spatial characteristics

As an Entrance to a great city it brings best impressions by its spatial characteristics. It deserves a splendid entrance while determining the one best, no exception. It gives a grandeur and spacious welcome being the most important historic gate in Rome.

Somollett said that, “such an august entrance cannot fail to impress a stranger with a sublime idea of this venerable city.”

Backford commented on the city entrance in this way: “Shall I ever forget the sensations I experienced. When I entered an avenue between terraces and ornamented gates of villas, which leads to a Porta Del Popolo and beheld the square, the domes, the obelisk, the long perspective of streets and palaces opening beyond, all glowing with the red sunset.”

In the central element, the Egyptian obelisk, which surrounds by Demilico Fontana and three roads are, branches out from there.

The great North road ‘ strada de Corsa ‘ continued undeviating from the gate to the foot of the Capitol, it was the main approach to the city centre, the main axis to the most important direction. It has created the continuity towards the city centre from the entrance. The other two roads Via Del Babuino, follows the natural line of the Pincio and connect the South East part of the city. The Piazza Di Spanga and the Spanish Steps. South West part was connected by the Via Di Ripetta, which follows the line of the Tiber. The Twin churches standing in between main axis will increase the impressiveness of the Piazza as an Entrance.

As Giedion so aptly says, twin churches stand “.... Like ecclesiastical sentries guarding the three main arteries of the city...”

Churches being part of the square and street by opening out towards the square with it huge columns link the square and streets with the Obelisk.

And they will provide good balancing and contrasting setting to the red granite Obelisk. When entering from the Porta Del Popolo with a rhythm thus a change in rhythm, a pause. Piazza, which helps to break the sense of monotony while reminding it is a Entrance for a Great city.

3.4 SPANISH STEPS

Location and historical importance.

The Spanish Steps in Rome were built to unite Via del Babuino, the easternmost of the three main arteries radiating into the city from the Piazza del Popolo. It was located in the junction is crossed at an approximately right angle by Via Condotti, focal point and a beginning of a shopping street, which defines the direction toward St. Peter's.

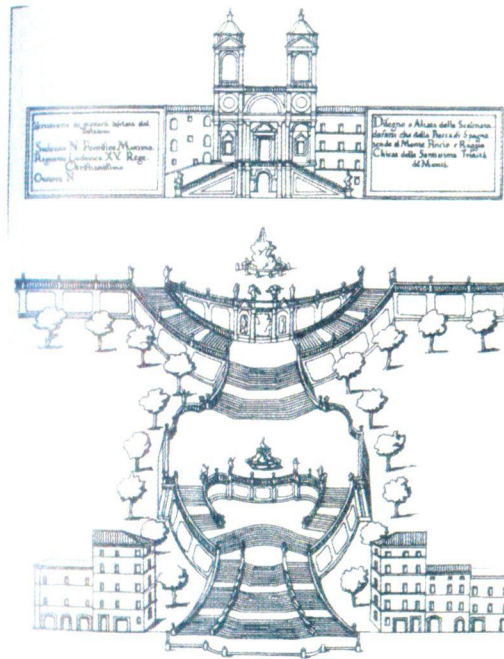


Fig. 3.26
Plan of Spanish Steps



Fig. 3.27
General view of the Spanish Steps



Fig. 3.28
General view of the Spanish Steps



Fig. 3.29
View towards the square from the
platforms of Spanish steps



Fig. 3.30
very lively space, rich mix of activities

Spanish steps are a part of the popularly known Piazza dei Spagna. In the history, the square at the bottom of the steps was called as Piazza die Francia.

It is a ramp, a steep slope between the Piazza di Spagna at the base and the church Trinità dei Monti built by the kings of France on the hill above. The monumental flight was built with French funds in 1721 - 1725, linking the Bourbon Spanish embassy to the Holy See, still located in the piazza below, with the Bourbon French church (actually founded in 1495) above. After the establishment of the Spanish Embassy in the square it was known as Piazza dei Spagaa. The Spanish Steps were designed by Alessandro Specchi after generations of heated discussion over how the steep slope to the church on a shoulder of the Pincio should be urbanized. The solution is a gigantic inflation of some conventions of terraced garden stairs.

Social Characteristics

Spanish steps are fascinating Unique gathering place with different levels makes platforms and terraces which has become most popular theatre place for singing and performances of different activities.

In modern times the Spanish Steps have included a small cut-flower market, a favorite place for eating lunch, now officially frowned upon and rewarded with fines. The apartment that was the (1961) is halfway up on the right. The Spanish Steps were restored in 1995.

In the Piazza at the base is the Early Baroque fountain called the Barcaccia, called the ugly boat'.

In the Piazza, at the corner on your right as you begin to climb the steps, is the house where English poet John Keats lived and died in 1821, now a museum dedicated to his memory, full of memorabilia of the English Romantic generation.

The stairway is so designed the mid platform areas has become a convenient place for viewing activities performed there form different angles. This place provides a suitable environment for strolling, sitting and for gathering during festive occasions. In addition people use this place for flower sales in summer and for various occasions.

At the top the *Pincio* which is the Pincian Hill, omitted, like the Janiculum, from the classic Seven hills of Rome

Spatial Characteristics

The total square is made of three forms of spaces – the fountain area at the bottom of the steps, the stairway and the church on top. From these three the fountain and the stairway are popular public spaces. The fountains another work of Bernini was built at a place where three streets meet.

The stairway, which is one of the world famous pieces of Architecture, comprises of 137 steps. It was designed by Alessandro Specchi and Francisco de Santis during 1721-25 AD. The design has been a very rich and varied solution ultimately employed. It is based on a simple doubling in depth of the central theme: a protruding volume flanked by convex stairs and a straight flight in front. The upper unit presents the theme in its basic form; the lower constitutes an articulate and lively variation."

The architects had taken the best advantage of the natural slope. The stairway at the beginning is enclosed from both sides by houses of average size. There are three major landings which act as stages. The unique spatial and the visual experience is brought forward by the integration of the stairway and the square. Here the architects had created the stairway as a link between two topographical levels but this link has been designed in such a way to become a public place of its own. Piazza de Spagna is a good example of introducing steps in squares to create interesting places for public use.

3.5 The Independence Square

Location and Historical Importance

Independence Square was designed by Wynn Jones as a remarkable Land Mark in 1957, to commemorate 10th anniversary of the country's Independence. The design of the main element, Independence Hall, a decorated colonnaded structure on an elevated podium covered by decorated Kandyan roof. It was influenced by the Royal Audience Hall (Magul Maduwa) Kandy.



Fig. 3.30
Independent hall as a monument, which represents the Kandyan audience Hall
And adds a cenral focal element to the square

Independence Square is a venue for start funerals and other state celebrations and commorative events.

Independence Square is situated in the heart of Colombo's green area, at Cinnamon Gardens, two kms away from the much active business district. Around this location there

were elegantly designed public buildings; residential units around this location demarcate the square.

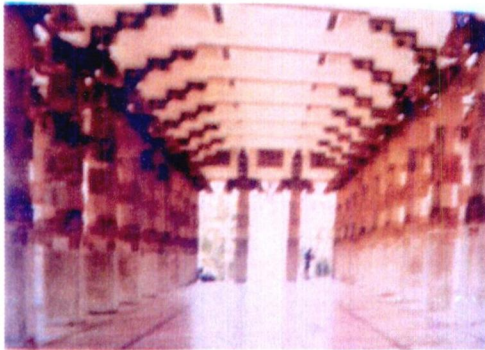


Fig. 3.31
The column structure of the Independent hall
It adds a sense of enclosure

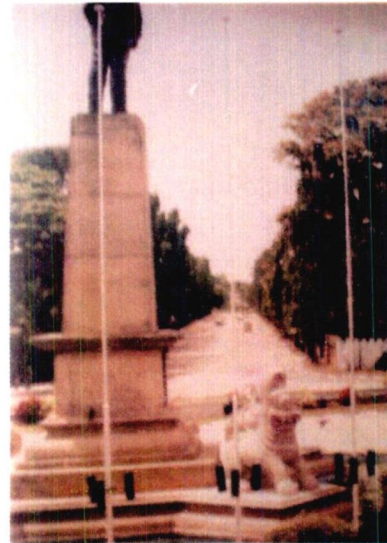
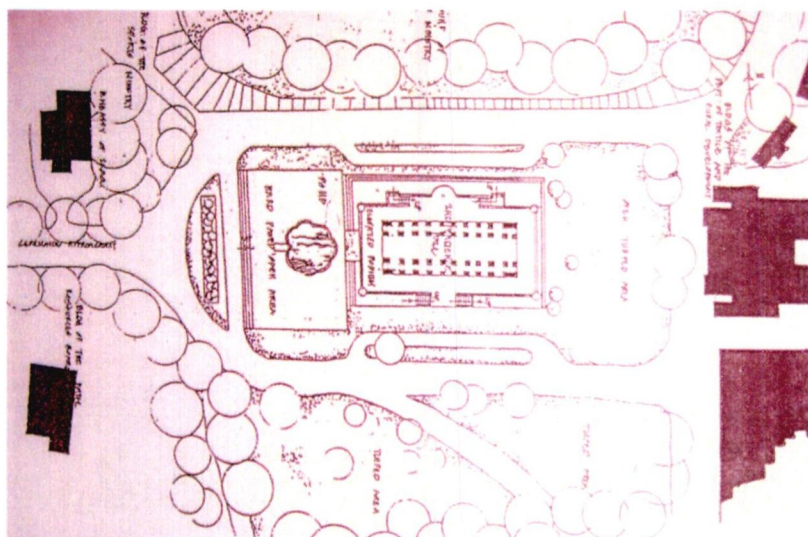


Fig. 3.32
Fountain depicts a traditional lotus pond
And the Independent avenue

The independence Hall is the nucleus and surrounds by many open spaces such as parks, play grounds etc.

Public buildings, the Department of textiles and Rural Development and a colonial period building define the southern periphery. And on the Eastern periphery by a play ground of the sports Ministry building which is an open area with clearly defined boundaries and from the north the space is bordered by trees and greenery, the main roadway leading to the space, greenery in front of the Iraqi Embassy building, and a building belongs to the sports ministry.



Independence Square and the surrounding buildings

Fig. 3.33

The around this public space has many open spaces. Therefore the location suits for a monumental building but it is not that suitable for a public square.

The population density around the area is less than 55 persons per hectare whereas in the central area the density is about 99 persons per hectare. The place is not a part of the every day life of the city. Therefore the place is used by very limited group of people mostly upper and middle class people who live around it and tourists.

The square is approached by a ceremonial tree lined Independence Avenue, which divided into two roads at the front of the Independence Hall, then runs round the square.



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Fig. 3.34

Statues and details adds variety and beauty to the square

Fig. 3.35

Front podium around the maun statue was more alive and active than the hall interior

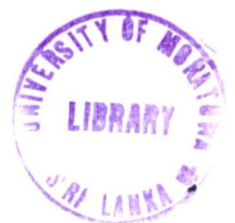


Fig. 3.36

More activities happen around here

Especially in the evenings

Fig. 3.37

in the mornings around the place is some what busy



Fig. 3.38

majestic buildings around the square
Social characteristics of the place

The independence Hall as a national monument surrounds a large open space. It becomes a typically different square to the Roman public squares discussed above.

There the Independent day celebrations are held once a year and mostly used for offering last respect for famous persons of the country. And some other special national occasions when a specific activity taking place in a grand manner by attracting thousands of people mainly as large gatherings.

Colonnaded main hall in an elevated podium acts as a stage and a place for guests during special occasions.

The square has used as a place of relaxation and a place for viewing sports activities, and musical shows in the adjacent playgrounds. In mornings and evenings it is a place where activities such as jogging and exercising takes place.

Due to the location it has been limited to certain group, upper category and the upper middle class category, which limits the Social interaction to certain extent. Therefore does not attract people when compared to the Roman squares.

Therefore the Social interaction does not happen properly. At the same time diversified of activities is lacking hence the spirit of the places is not to make a socially rich space. Routine activities such as pavement hawkers, wayside cobblers are no more there.

Spatial characteristics of the place

The Independence Hall is reminds the traditional Architecture of Sri Lanka by mainly the majestic pillars, the Kandyan style roof and elevated podium. It is a total representation of the traditional architecture, which tells the richness of the tradition. Therefore the building totally is a monument. Therefore it brings monumental character to the square. Therefore it has to be designed for proper social and spatial order.

This elevated podium prevents space being perceived as a whole. Hence the people are unable to observe each other freely. Therefore the whole open space volume cannot be identified with one large group involving activities. Perhaps this can be a reason why it

lacks the attraction that would draw people in large numbers though it has architectural beauty and its present green surroundings.

The nucleated space the Hall rests in an elevated platform to a greater extent, which makes two realms – inside and outside, the road level. Therefore it has limited the public access. To some extent it has limited the open space too.

The approaching path, the huge statue of first Prime minister and the Hall located in a single axis increases the monumental quality of the place, therefore it possesses a direction from the main approach; the final destination can be seen. Which automatically the people towards the focal point and creates high degree of continuity. Thus the vertical trees closely planted either side along the path creates the rhythm and movement without giving any sense of pause until it reaches to the fore court where the avenue gets divided.



Fig. 3.39

Independence Avenue brings the continuity

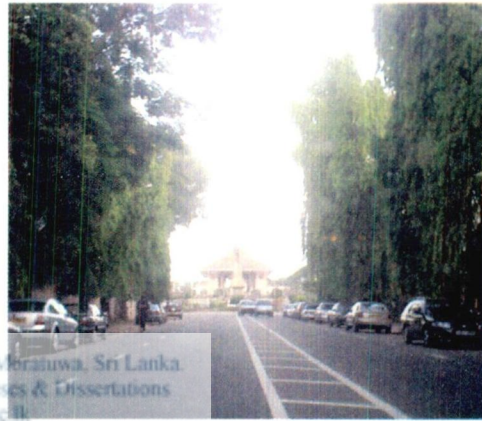


Fig. 3.40

axial location of the building creates a majestic Appearance

Independence Avenue gains a ceremonial approach which is ideal to a monumental square while creating a great movement, sense of continuity towards the main element from the far away.

When one reaches along the path to the front fore court where the straight road is divided into two he is entertained by the water display of the fountains, which stands the huge statue of first prime minister. It is an open elevated podium, which welcomes the people.

The independence square is a National center of the whole city or the locality, which should be a place of rich life, but it acts as only a centre of the neighborhood community due to insignificant orientation, location. It does not feel as a center for action and inspiration in a National level.

Any man made space, its character and spatial properties are determined by how it is enclosed. Its proportions, scale and the configuration enclose the independence square. The green lawns and the roads running and the elevated podium demarcate the periphery and gives enclosure to the square. They Kandyan roof and the decorated rigid columns also add the sense of with lawns surround it. But they did not become a good enclosure to the square, but it adjoins buildings. Hence the spatial character dilute in larger context.



CONCLUSION

Public squares are probably still the most important distinct in urban environments. Simply where there were sculptures, fountains as central elements and where people meet and socialize where it generates sense of place, and symbolic meaning where there was the enclosure around the space.

This study is about how the social and spatial characteristics play of the urban public spaces especially urban squares.

In cases in Rome, it depicts how the social and spatial qualities had been achieved properly to build the specific situation. For an e.g. Piazza del Popolo as an entrance to the city, Piazza Navona as a central space to the city, the Campidoglio Square as a monumental square and how their social and spatial characteristics support to enhance the spirit of the place.

To achieve the ideal characteristics there are main factors have to be considered.

It has to be identified that the ideal location, in the case of Independence square it was the ideal location for an urban square. The Campidoglio square located in an elevated space one of the seven hills.

Proper activities have to be created to make it a specific type of urban space. In Piazza di Campidoglio as a monumental square it has created museums, palaces around to make proper activities. But in the Independence Square as a monumental square remain as a dead square because the proper activities are not being created.

It has to be created the proper enclosure around the urban square. Although Piazza Navona was fully enclosed it has been the most beautiful places in Rome so far. Because one thing is the enclosure provides concentration towards the Fontanas, while in Campidoglio which the square was a three sided open and other side direct towards the vista, But the characters continues towards the open façade too(the sculptures on the buildings continued in the front wall too), which to a greater extent protects its spatial attributes.

It has to be achieved as a single architectural entity. Space as a centre, enclosure, continuity is a single object. Piazza Di Campidoglio, Piazza Navona

Design and management has to be motivated by shared vision and they the final Architectural entity has to be unfinished because it has to bring to the future to suit the social and spatial characteristics and the development in the future.

The great public squares are the harmonious bonds of all.

The Roman Piazzas which play the major role remain for decades prominently, dominantly while making many changes. They are creations of many people.

It has discussed how the architects have had consciously design the spaces with architectural features and bring about the character unique to each. Therefore the urban squares become the great piece of work which creates admirable spaces.

Colombo as a developing country which has to overcome great many economical problems has been deteriorating its urban public spaces. But there new trend has no of proposals for urban spaces. Therefore it is necessary to identify the proper location which could be developed as a square, and it has to be arguably proved as a viable project or otherwise they will remain as dead social spaces like Independence.



In the case of Rome they are attracted by Romans as well as tourists over long period of time within a limited context of material and technology.

But now within an advanced context present architects are given more opportunities. That they can design more magnificent squares than Rome. Therefore the city of Rome and its public squares provide unique examples which could utilized in contemporary urban design.



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