

Reality of Paradigm Shifts - a New Approach Towards City Centre Development

Abstract

Cities are a crude interpretation of the spatial narratives of individual needs and societal aspirations. A City Centre is actually a microcosm of the greater city, being constituted of all the various facets of a city and reflecting contemporary developments. Although many statistical methods have been developed to deliver Master Plans for evolving City Centres, the vision is often lost in the process of detailed exploration, especially with regards to the quality of the public realm. As we progressively grow into a more inter-dependant world, cities have become a place of globalised architectural clutter; a mixed palette of so called cognitive urban ethos/ aspirations, which are gradually turning into physical mummies. This situation is bound to grow in the absence of a clearly defined strategy towards urbanisation that integrates essential components of urban quality along with the fulfilment of quantitative aspects.

As a part of an ongoing research, focused towards finding alternative methods for an eventual development of a conceptual model of a city centre and growth of these urban cores this paper is an attempt towards highlighting these paradigm shifts in an evolving city centre. It takes a case study of Mumbai, India (formerly known as Bombay) as a city and its history to remain focussed contextually as the first step towards a generic understanding of the subject. It is anticipated as a catalyst to generate a discussion based on two specific goals:

Firstly, to initiate a discussion based on the historical account of the city and evident paradigm shifts.

Secondly, to discuss an intermittent findings of an ongoing research towards a conceptual generic model of an evolving city centre through a four tool method of the *spatial, the cultural, the inherent* and *fundamentals* highlighting the importance of both quantitative and qualitative attitudes.

Introduction

Globally, several concepts dealing with urban spaces have their roots in some abstract notions. These urban spaces oscillate between 'nothingness' and something universal. It is observed that mythological beliefs have a share in influencing such thinking. This research is not to be seen as an exploration of those notions or question such perceptions; rather its main aim is to examine the manifestation of these as urban spaces that have a strong base with a wide spatial and temporal spread. It can be attributed as a thematic continuity generated by the similarity of skills and commonality of beliefs. It can be well defined as an explanation of ideas of an urban space as seen in various essential, functional and structural expressions in the traditions of Indian urban development. For example, our understanding of urban development starts with describing a "City as a Metaphor". Literally, a metaphor means a "thing regarded as symbolic of something else". It is a pragmatic way of labelling a complex utilitarian understanding of the City, the way it represents the inhabitants and their aspirations. When we think about cities we describe or analyse. There is already an existing aura or sense of place and sometimes by mere accident; we find commonalities as a generic phenomenon.

The current paradigm of regeneration as a kit of parts for urban assemblage can only be assessed in terms of a qualitative definition with a low variance. The exponents of visionary urbanism from Sitte to Le Corbusier promulgated radical transformations of society. In the contemporary era, New Urbanism and Neo Modernism are examples of isolating ideologies, and at this juncture this research looks into the various sets of principles or paradigms, their meanings, variances, processes and generators.

By definition, a paradigm may be created from a blank slate and brought into existence by its expression. If there is an agreement within a culture, then over a period of time it becomes a custom, part of what we might call a tradition. These orders and the shifts therein are changing relatively rapidly forming a matrix of changing paradigms and hence a city centre is actually an overlay of these shifts or Paradigms.

Any attempt to project into the future of a city centre, even though for a short duration of ten to twenty years, we must attempt to define the variables that could, in the intervening

years, affect the course of its development. The real crux in predicting the future lies in whether we have the choice in determining that future, and who the "we" are who will make the choice? In the process of defining the changing paradigms, it might be possible to simulate and imagine alternative scenarios for variable size, shape and form of future city centre. The symbiotic relationships between the various urban parameters in any context are a superimposition of this value system, of which each of these has developed over a period of time. The conventional factors of determining the growth pattern and eventual development of the urban fabric like Population/ Density, Land uses, Movement Systems have to take in cognisance the ever-changing aspirations and their requirements. The search is an understanding of the landmarks (notional or otherwise), activity generators, economic and administrative policy formulation and other related factors... We might be able to realise its importance which would eventually lead to the qualitative interpretation of the quantitative (tangible) and intuitive (intangible) parameters.

First interpretation of a city centre could be laid as an urban model as Burgess Model (1925), based on the distance in concentric centres of CBD, Place of work. Its first criticisms came from the work of Homer Hoyt (1939) in *Sector Model* which added a component, direction along with distance. Then the famous *Multiple Nuclei Theory* of Harris Cud Ullman (1945) where he defined it as a patchwork of different discreet areas rather than sectors or zones. Then there are notable contributions from Murphy and Vance (1954), *Central Business Height Index* and Harwood and Boyce (1959) about the structure regarding the Internal (CORE) and External (FRAME). But as a definition quotient, these are basic structural interpretation vis-à-vis the city structure, but do not describe the changes in terms of a wholesome approach including the factors of planning and design.

Jane Jacobs's *Death and Life of Great American Cities* contained a condemnation of the zoned and formulaic approach to city planning pursued in the North End of Boston (1962). It celebrated urban vitality through the extended metaphor of the ballet in her observations of Hudson Street. Kevin Lynch *The Image of City*, Gordon Cullen *The Concise Townscape* and Christopher Alexander *Pattern Language* and A new theory of *Urban Design* could be a source of the theme match between the key words of 'Vitality and Viability' (Pratt, 1997) that

seems to be the simplistic form of understanding these paradigms and their shifts.

Recent urban theories: city centre

In early 1960s, Carol recognised its traditional role as "...offering the 'full range' of retail outlets, serving the entire city and its wider region." Carol (1962). Similarly in the early 1980's, Carter (1981:198) saw the City Centre as "...organising centre around which the rest of city is structured". In the mid 1990's city centre were envisaged by Montgomery (1995:101) as having traditional role as "...centre of trade and commerce, creativity and culture", for that the "...key to successful city places is therefore diversity, supplemented by relatively high nos. of people with different tastes and proclivities". DoE (now a part of ODPM) has described city centre as "...economic entity satisfying a number of human needs", having "...special qualities which give them additional public values and places for human interaction" (DoE 1997:10).

Short (1996:61) states that,

"current work on shopping and retailing has moved beyond the geometric focus of early central place theory towards a more explicit consideration of the economic importance and cultural significance of retail places".

The Central Place theory is "based on certain assumptions of human behaviour" Healy and libery (1992:21). For example Christaller devised a theory of hexagonal market areas in 1933, whereby a hierarchy of service sectors is apparent with "...a large no. of small (low order) centres providing basic services and increasingly smaller nos. of high order centres providing more special goods in addition to basic services". Issue 83, *Urban Design Group News letter*, from a lecture by Edwin Knighton (2002:6) talks about various facets of changes in the eventual development process as:

- Cultural – engendering and embodying civic pride
- Economic – exchanging goods; increasing value of real estate
- Psychological – linking quality of life and nature
- Physiological – promoting healthy lifestyles
- Environmental – ameliorating pollutants of the city
- Social – 'interacting is the attraction'

Architectural Pluralism in Urban India

India and particularly urban India is emerging as a unique

landscape of eclectic architectural pluralism. The urban Indian landscape is characterized by intense duality where modernity, tradition, prosperity and acute poverty, communality and communalism, medieval society and cutting edge information technology coalesce to create incomprehensible cities. These complexes defeat conventional notions of the city and are represented more accurately through 'motion' and mutation of urban space rather than conventional notions of the city as a largely 'static' and stable entity.

Today in our urban areas there exist two cities – static and kinetic – two completely different worlds that co-habit the same urban space. The static city is represented through its architecture and monuments built in permanent materials. The kinetic city that occupies interstitial space is the city of motion – the kuttcha city, built of temporary material. In the kinetic city architecture is no longer the spectacle of the city; rather processions and festivals form its spectacle and memory and the very expression of the city is temporal in nature, in constant flux. In this dynamic and near schizophrenic situation how does one approach urban or architectural conservation? How do we reconcile the static and kinetic? Rahul Mehrotra (2002)

It is here that the notion of 'cultural significance' gains importance – an idea where culture, place and perhaps aspirations intersect in interesting ways, opening up several questions about conservation approaches, where the act or thrust of conservation movements must necessarily go beyond the static to also encompass the kinetic city. What is the validity of such a notion in a highly pluralist society where cultural memory is often an enacted process? What is our cultural reading for the kinetic city which now forms a greater part of our urban reality?

How do we then embrace this 'change' as integral to the development, especially where the creator of that environment and the present custodians represent completely different cultural constructs? How do contemporary aspirations 'inspire' the process of conservation where we look forward and backward in a simultaneous gesture? How does one read cultural significance and the validity or necessity to sometimes invent 'cultural significance' to drive this process?

History of Mumbai

The fishermen were here first ... when Bombay was a dumbbell-shaped

island tapering, at the centre, to a narrow shining strand beyond which could be seen the finest and largest natural harbour in Asia.
"Midnight's Children", Salman Rushdie

Although the archipelago which developed into the modern city of Mumbai was inhabited whenever history chanced on it, we are forced to imagine the lives of these early Mumbaikars, because the islands lay outside of the sweep of history and beyond the marches of armies for millennia. Stone age implements have been found at several sites in these islands. Later, around the third century BC, the coastal regions, and presumably the islands, were part of the Magadhan empire ruled by the emperor Ashok. The empire ebbed, leaving behind some Buddhist monks and the deep-sea fishermen called Kolis, whose stone goddess, Mumbadevi, gave her name to the modern metropolis. Between the 9th and 13th centuries, the Indian Ocean, and especially the Arabian Sea, was the world's centre of commerce. Deep sea crafts made of wood tied together with ropes transported merchandise between Aden, Calicut, Cambay and cities on the West coast of Africa. Marco Polo, Ibn Batuta and other travellers passed by without ever making a landfall in these islands. Sourendu Gupta (TIFR, 2002)

Bombay changed hands many times. The islands belonged to the Silhara dynasty till the middle of the 13th century. The oldest structures in the archipelago--- the caves at Elephanta, and part of the Walkeshwar temple complex probably date from this time. Modern sources identify a 13th century Raja Bhimdev who had his capital in Mahikawati-- present-day Mahim, and Prabhadevi. Presumably the first merchants and agriculturists settled in Mumbai at this time. In 1343 the island of Salsette, and eventually the whole archipelago, passed to the Sultan of Gujarat. The mosque in Mahim dates from this period.

The western influence and freedom

In 1508 Francis Almeida sailed into the deep natural harbour of the island his countrymen came to call Bom Bahia (the Good Bay). Bahadur Shah of Gujarat was forced to cede the main islands to the Portuguese in 1534, before he was murdered by the proselytizing invaders. The Portuguese built a fort in Bassein. They were not interested in the islands, although some fortifications and a few chapels were built for

the converted fishermen. The St. Andrew's church in Bandra dates from this period. Eventually, in 1661, Catherine of Braganza brought these islands to Charles II of England as part of her marriage dowry. The British East India Company received it from the crown in 1668, founded the modern city, and shortly thereafter moved their main holdings from Surat to Bombay.

The web of commerce which had supported the civilisation of the Indian Ocean littoral had died with the coming of the Europeans. The Mughal empire in Delhi was not interested in navies-- despising the Portuguese and the British as "merchant princes". The second governor of Bombay, Gerald Aungier, saw the opportunity to develop the islands into a centre of commerce to rival other ports still in the hands of local kingdoms. He offered various inducement to skilled workers and traders to move to this British holding. The opportunities for business attracted many Gujarati communities--- the Parsis, the Bohras, Jews and Banias from Surat and Diu. The population of Bombay was estimated to have risen from 10,000 in 1661 to 60,000 in 1675.

Through the 18th century British power and influence grew slowly but at the expense of the local kingdoms. The migration of skilled workers and traders to the safe-haven of Bombay continued. The shipbuilding industry moved to Bombay from Surat with the coming of the Wadias. Artisans from Gujarat, such as goldsmiths, ironsmiths and weavers moved to the islands and coexisted with the slave trade from Madagascar. During this period the first land-use laws were set up in Bombay, segregating the British part of the islands from the black town. With increasing prosperity and growing political power following the 1817 victory over the Marathas, the British embarked upon reclamations and large scale engineering works in Bombay. The sixty years between the completion of the vellard at Breach Candy (1784) and the construction of the Mahim Causeway (1845) are the heroic period in which the seven islands were merged into one landmass. These immense works, in turn, attracted construction workers, like the Kamathis from Andhra, who began to come to Bombay from 1757 on. A regular civil administration was put in place during this period. In 1853 a 35-km long railway line between Thana and Bombay was inaugurated - the first in India.

Four years later, in 1854, the first cotton mill was founded in Bombay. With the cotton mills came large scale migrations of

Marathi workers, and the chawls which accommodated them. The city had found its shape. Following the first war of Independence in 1857, the Company was accused of mismanagement, and Bombay reverted to the British crown. With the outbreak of the American Civil War in 1861, and the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869, exports, especially cotton, from Bombay became a major part of the colonial economy. The Great Indian Peninsular Railway facilitated travel within India. This network of commerce and communication led to an accumulation of wealth. This was channelled into building an Imperial Bombay by a succession of Governors. Many of Bombay's famous landmarks, the Flora Fountain and the Victoria Terminus, date from this time. The water works, including the Hanging Gardens and the lakes were also built at this time. The Bombay Municipal Corporation was founded in 1872. However, this facade of a progressive and well-governed city was belied by the plague epidemics of the 1890s. This dichotomy between the city's symbols of power and prosperity and the living conditions of the people who make it so continues even today.

The construction of Imperial Bombay continued well into the 20th century. Landmarks from this period are the Gateway of India, the General Post Office, the Town Hall (now the Asiatic Library) and the Prince of Wales Museum. Bombay expanded northwards into the first suburbs, before spreading its nightmare tentacles into the northern suburbs. The nearly 2000 acres reclaimed by the Port Trust depressed the property market for a while, but the Backbay reclamation scandal of the '20s was a testament to the greed for land.

Bombay is energetic, exuberant, sparkling, and has building stones of many kinds and colours ... on your dyspeptic days you are apt to find ... Bombay's [architecture] bumptious, even riotous. In your more genial moments you might apply the adjective ... 'vital'.
John Begg, Consulting Architect to the City of Bombay, circa 1920.

The freedom movement reached a high pitch of activity against this background of developing Indian wealth. Gandhi returned from South Africa and reached Bombay on January 12, 1915. Following many campaigns in the succeeding years, the end of the British imperial rule in India was clearly pre-figured by the Quit India declaration by the Indian National Congress on August 8, 1942, in Gowalia Tank Maidan, near Kemp's Corner. India became a free country on August 15, 1947. In the meanwhile, Greater Bombay had come into existence

through an Act of the British parliament in 1945.

Bombay played a formative role in the struggle for Independence, hosting the first Indian National Congress in 1885 and the launch of the 'Quit India' campaign in 1942. After Independence the city became capital of the Bombay Presidency but this was divided on linguistic grounds into Maharashtra and Gujarat in 1960. Since then, the huge number of rural (especially Maharashtrian) migrants attracted by Bombay's commercial success has strained the city's infrastructure and altered its demographics. It gave rise to a pro-Marathi right-wing regionalist movement, spearheaded by the Shiv Sena municipal government which shook the city's multicultural foundations by discriminating against non-Maharashtrians and Muslims. This increased communalist tensions, which erupted in murderous post-Ayodhya riots in 1992 and was followed by 13 bomb blasts that ripped through the city on a single day in March 1993. Shiv Sainiks were implicated in the former while the city's mafia got blamed for the latter - though the dividing line between the political establishment and organised crime has been hard to pinpoint.

The Millenium City

Already India's main port and commercial centre, the City of Gold lured the poverty stricken rural population and the expanding middle class equally. The population boom of the '50s and '60s was fuelled by the absence of opportunities in the rest of the country. The language riots, the reorganisation of Indian states and the see-saw politics of the country did not seem to affect the city. The glamour industry's flattering portrayal of Bombay seemed to be the reality. However, by the late '80s the other big Indian cities had choked in their own refuse and Bombay's road ahead seemed to be blighted. How this city, renamed Mumbai in the mid 90's copes with the challenge of controlling its political fragmentation, disastrous health problems and load of pollution by utilising its wealth of talent and manpower is a story to be told by future historians. Sourendu Gupta (TIFR, 2002)

Bombay or Mumbai has a special spatial characteristic, it's a linear stretch of a city structure which polarises at the end as a bulb of activity that forms the core, but the periphery beyond this point actually forms another layer of distinctive

character zones based on the human perception of distances. It starts with basic functions to ancillary functions and trickles down as mere residential pockets with intermittent leisure and industrial corridors. Our imagination of the city to be fragmented in zones of importance based on the need and priority and position vis-à-vis the city as a whole is once again an oversimplified version of the complex metabolism of the city itself. Bombay (now called as Mumbai) is a metropolitan area boundary that's reaching a population of 10 million with having one of the highest densities in the world. It is the southernmost tip as a centre that has having one of the highest indices of rental values and cost per sqm in the whole world. At the same time a person staying within this region rarely feels like going to the core except for business and administrative functions. Does it mean that the cores have fallen apart as a basic hub of all activities? Certainly not, it means that the same functions are not decentralised and a reason for the person to toil his way to a crowded centre had diminished. But has it really succeeded in its approach to decentralised corridors? But recent developments of new decentralised zones as Bandra Kurla Complex and New Bombay enclave have helped in shifting the functions once this old core was catering to and these peripheral developments have encouraged towards a more viable proposition.

A city like Mumbai has grown and developed into a metropolis, for which it cannot be classified and fragmented into city centre and other surrounding peripheries. Its development pace has overridden the concept of singular city centre to another platform of centres overlapping with specific natures as commercial, trade or residential hub.

In order to understand the nature and construct of paradigm shifts it is important to correlate two examples simultaneously, we take the case of Mumbai fort precinct as a starting of understanding of the whole concept of this evening paradigms that evolve the city centre, its boundaries, extents, influence and image.

Some of the work carried out by citizens' groups in Mumbai's historic Fort area addresses this issue of using '*contemporary engines*' to drive this process of conservation and, more importantly, animating interstitial spaces in the city and creating thresholds between the many different worlds that exist in the city. In short, engaging with the idea of also simultaneously creating new urban typologies and inventing '*significance*' in response to specific problems and emerging aspirations.

In 1996 the Shiv Sena officially renamed the city Mumbai. The change of name led to linguistic confusion, and signalled the intention of the Maharashtra state government to assert the city's Marathi identity, despite the strength and success of its multicultural foundations. The Shiv Sena and their leader, Bal Thackeray (noted for his stated admiration of Adolf Hitler), ruled the state of Maharashtra behind the scenes until October 1999, when the administration which had protected them lost to the Congress Party in assembly elections. Attempts by the state's new political leaders to prosecute Thackeray in July 2000 for his alleged involvement in the 1992 anti-Muslim riots led to his supporters effectively shutting Mumbai down for several days through violent protests - the charges against this still influential person were then soon withdrawn. Mumbai leapt into the new millennium determined to become the most populous city in the world by 2020, when it might hold as many as 28.5 million people. This upcoming stature is, however, of little comfort to the 50% of the city's inhabitants who presently still live without water or electricity. It's hoped that the satellite city of New Bombay, which is taking shape on the mainland, will relieve some of the pressures on the urban environment.

Similarly, to deal with this highly complex entity of urban areas, especially in Mumbai, notions of '*cultural significance*', which limit efforts to '*object-centric*' projects, should be broadened to respond to our highly pluralistic society where cultural memory is often an enacted process. This is especially relevant given the fact that the '*kinetic city*' now forms a greater part of our urban reality! In this dynamic context, it will be necessary to include the notion of '*constructing significance*' in the conservation debates. In fact, an understanding that significance '*evolves*' will truly clarify the role of the urban planner, designer and architects all alike as an '*advocate*' of change, not only as one who opposes change - a facilitator who is an agent giving expression to contemporary aspirations.

Urban Models

Three classes of models have been distinguished as *descriptive* models, *predictive* models and *planning* models. Ira Lowry has enumerated the features of the descriptive model in urban studies as follows:

'the builder of a descriptive model has a limited objective of persuading the computer to replicate the relevant features of an existing

urban environment or of an already observed process of change. Roughly speaking, the measures of his accomplishment are: one, the ratio of the input data required by the model to output data generated by the model; two, the accuracy and cost of the latter as compared to direct observation of the variables in question; and three the applicability of his model to other times and places than that for which it was originally constructed'. (1965)

The descriptive model provides the planner with an insight of the working of city structure but it does not allow him to predict future trends or to determine the effects of particular planning policies. Nicholas Bullock, Peter Dickens and Philip Steadman (1968)

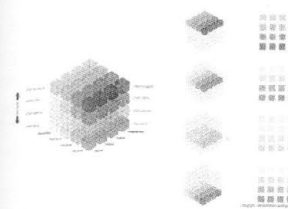
This is done by a prescriptive model, for which it is necessary to specify mechanisms of cause and effect governing the variables whose values are simply observed in the descriptive model. In some cases the predictions may take a conditional form; that is to say the model is designed to operate so that 'if X occurs, then Y will follow', but takes no account of the actual likelihood of the occurrence of X. in this way the frame of reference of the model can be somewhat limited. It is nevertheless impossible to treat all external (exogenous) variables conditionally, since not all will operate independently of each other. We cannot assume both that 'if A occurs then B will follow, and if X occurs then Y will follow' since the occurrence of A may preclude or effect the occurrence of X.

Planning models, the third type, form a class whose technology is far not developed. In planning models a measure of optimisation is introduced in terms of the chosen criteria, in order to determine means of stated planning goals.

"The essential steps are as follows : one, specification of alternative programs or actions that might be chosen by the planner; two, prediction of these consequences of choosing each alternative; three, scoring these consequences according to a metric goal-achievement; and four, choosing the alternative which yields the highest score' (Lowry, 1965).

Since a wide choice of planning alternatives exists at each stage in the 'decision-tree' the number of overall possibilities rapidly becomes astronomic, but the use of computer programs to carry our steps three and four allows the examination of a fairly large number of alternative decision sequences.

The model described here forms a fourth classification,



namely 'Associated - Narrative', its simple understanding is based on one; the four derivatives that encompass nearly all possible predictive models in physical manifestation; two, choosing the level of intervention, with an historical precedent which determines the nature descriptive of response; third, describes and predicts the likelihood and possibility of change in paradigm from the existing within an optimum SWOT analysis; fourthly, refers to the other planning models described above for future directions.

The generic abstract model

To understand these processes and their intermittent resultants lets take a direct approach towards four basic derivatives (provisional working terms) of the *spatial, the cultural, the implicit and fundamentals*. (As shown in abstract model - Image 1 and a simulated one as in Image 2) [Fig. 1]

The processes are not necessarily to find an end product, but in order to limit our scope of this vagueness; we try to focus on an evolving city centre as a changing paradigm based on these parameters.

The Spatial

The first form of study that remains essential and forms the backbone of physical planning starts with an understanding "of or relating to space". In terminology it encompasses all physical aspects towards a comprehensive study of the urban morphology including regular and irregular patterns of physical manifestations, its structuring and eventual growth.

One of the first coherent analyzers of the urban scene in empirical terms is "The Image of the City" (1960). The project resulted in the evolution of the concept of legibility depending on the people's 'mental maps'. Before Lynch the concept of legibility has proved invaluable as an analytic and design tool. *The Image of the City* helped give rise to a new science of human perception and behaviour in the city. For urban designers, however, it is Lynch's innovative use of graphic notation to link quite abstract ideas of urban structure with the human perceptual experience liberating them from the previous strictness of the physical master plan.

In his classic text, *The city is not a tree*, Christopher Alexander

develops a convincing argument for why separate functions have come to dominate the world of urban planning, and why this is an unhealthy way of building our cities. Alexander explains that city-building has become dominated by narrowly focused professions, mainly because human beings do not seem to possess the mental capacity to holistically perceive the complex social, environmental and economic processes that collectively shape urban life. Referring to a variety of experiments, Alexander demonstrates how the human mind tends to separate elements and arrange them in categories and visually separate spaces. When people are faced with complex organization, they reorganize natural overlap into non-overlapping units. Alexander characterizes this non-overlapping structure as a "tree", and he argues that the complex organization of cities is in fact more suited to a "semi lattice". While planned cities resemble trees, naturally grown cities and those that break free from the "tree" are semi lattices. Alexander argues that semi lattices are healthy places, while extreme compartmentalization and dissociation of internal elements can lead to destruction. He explains that in a person, dissociation marks schizophrenia, and in a society it marks anarchy. For a city to remain receptive for life, social interaction and human prosperity, it must unite the different strands of life within it. Planners and designers must therefore allow for a mix of functions and be open-minded to organic change.

It builds up an argument based on the next derivative...

The Cultural

For all its false promises, the metropolis is as seductive as ever. Ramesh Kumar Biswas, *Metropolitan Love*, 2001

All our references are an interpretation from the past, historic references and knowledge of the present. It could be "a spoken or written account of connected events, a story" that gives us directions to the character and composition of the urbanity we live and cherish along with cultural and socio-economic parameters. According to Norberg-Schulz:

to be meaningful ... the inventions of man must have formal properties which are structurally similar to other aspects of reality, and ultimately to natural structures ... Natural and man-made space is structurally similar as regards directions and boundaries. In both, the distinction

between up and down is valid, as well as the concepts of extension and closure.

The boundaries of both kinds of space are moreover to be defined in terms of "floor", "wall", and "ceiling". On the one hand, he testifies to the importance of reality and nature (whatever they may mean) in architectural expression. On the other hand, his characterizations of the directions and boundaries of natural and man-made space must be re-evaluated: if not refuted: in extraterrestrial environments.

It forms a representation of the beliefs and convictions we associate with the practices and look forward for the "spirit or sense of place". Cities and metropoli are perfect example of these expositions. The metropolis, more than any other human artefact, encapsulates the Utopian promises of modernity: salvation and equality through science and progress; the victory of culture over nature; the shattering of pre modern icons and hatreds and the establishment of a cosmopolitan melting pot of tolerant multiculturalism; consumerism as the path to the good life.

In these days of global corporate hegemony and nihilistic postmodernism, those modern dreams seem hollow: deceitful or, at best, misguided. Despite (and because of) a relentless push for development at any cost, cities are in crisis: uncontrolled sprawl is endangering life-support systems; the chasm between rich and poor is growing ever wider; increasing municipal taxes (levied on the poor who stay inside city limits and not on the wealthy who escape to the suburbs while still exploiting and enjoying urban resources) can't keep up with infrastructure costs.

It leads to another derivative of character zoning within and around the context...

The Implicit

Over the period of the growth of our towns and cities certain fundamental notions of "existing something as permanent or essential attribute" define the context, different from one to the other.

In his search for norms, Aldo Rossi confronts the typological schemes of modern architecture with their ancient and vernacular counterparts; in his formulation of an architecture for present conditions, he plumbs the first truly normative

concepts that under grid neoclassicism. He has no use for period ornament, no interest in cut-rate imitation; what he intimates, instead, is the possibility of an order of things that allows us to experience the present as a suspended moment in the passage from the past into the future.

Implicit understanding marks the beginning of the contextual development, related to the history of the place along with its associated landmarks and activity generators, which in many ways determine the direction of growth. It also exemplifies the need for an overall grasp of the nature and boundaries of the area as we study with a base of further...

The Fundamentals

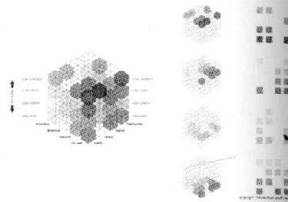
Design is always a subjective appeal in a sense that we tend to "accept as true without proof" certain quarters of physical manifestations of the previous derivatives. Sometimes it is obvious through the intermittent intervention, but it always swings to and fro within these aforesaid confines as a balancing act of justifying our projected visions.

Statistics, policies and associated guidelines regulated through administrative and economic mechanisms form the last of the derivatives which influence the eventual physical manifestation.

In crude sense it seems as though these are very separate arenas and an individual set of actors on the stage performing a play... but if we look closely, it is basically a matrix of intervening interests within these four set of principles that in any given point of time define a set paradigm built up over a certain period of time. If we try to analyse any part of an urban fabric, it has these components with varied degrees of influence on the eventual strategies and policies that guide us towards further developments. [Fig. 2]

The Way from Here

Although this is a starting point towards a composite analysis, testing and refinement, it certainly looks forward for a third dimension of defining the urban fabric, patterns, orders and eventual understanding of the paradigm. The time chart of development and growth could be from an ascending or descending order of influence. This would give us a cognitive



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and pragmatic understanding of the evolving city centre. A City's history cannot be determined and analysed overnight and thus although there is a positive component of a comprehensive understanding of the urban development. *City Centre* succeeds when the qualitative understanding is reflected in the physical manifestation and plays a major role in creating optimal experiences for its people. In order to get the same shape of the future of the same, it is necessary to utilise the integration of various areas of expertise and a solid understanding of the people and their desired experiences. The number of people and resources that must be brought together to provide a successful city centre is enormous. Complexity of this task explains why so many cities and their centres fail. One can only interpret three major factors that must be essential for success of city centres:

Firstly, the vision to identify technologies and their impact on people's lives. As technology and culture are deeply related phenomenon, rapid change of technology can alter our way of thinking and perceiving many things of the world including urban centres. This model to some extent triggers a need of redefining the urban complexities in order of a real time situation.

Secondly, heightened understanding of people's need, translated into actionable insights that define attributes. These attributes will help in developing a City Centre's overall nature, form and feature in order to be successful; they must have formal/ informal notions that people recognise as useful, usable and desirable.

Last but not the least; it is the integration of design, marketing, land users, movement systems, density and all other urban design factors. Merely putting up these together in a multidisciplinary context will not be sufficient, because most of the land use patterns are created for political benefits. These extremely chaotic systems must be supported and managed effectively, wherein all attributes respect and appreciate the constraints of others.

Similarly most of the urban parameters are highly dynamic. It seems that these parameters need refinement and up-gradation. As it is essential to learn that life on earth is not built upon few interpretations, but allows multiple and infinite readings. Many of the contradictory systems do not necessarily cancel out each other, so there will not be few parameters, defining

systems that can be chaotic. The real crux will be seeing patterns in that chaos and find an inherent order as a phenomenon for development of future of the *City Centre*...

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