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CONTEXTUAL DESIGN : AN EXAMINATION OF THE DIFFERENT ASPECTS OF THE PHYSICAL CONTEXT AND THEIR MANIFESTATION IN ARCHITECTURAL EXPRESSION

A Dissertation Submitted to the University of Moratuwa
As a Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree of
Master of Science in Architecture

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ABSTRACT

As a result of the influence of modern commercialisation, Architecture of new buildings reflect their immediate purpose without conserving the civic orders and social hierarchies of the existing built fabric. Architecture conveys the meaning of building in a form of expressions, and therefore the expression of correct meaning and its clarity is essential in order to coexist with the rest of the built environment. Such expressions could be generated by different forces or Generators namely; User, Activity Pattern, Purpose and the Physical Context. Among them, the Physical Context is considered to be one of the great generators of Architecture.

Thus Physical Context is a very complex entity, there is a tendency among practitioners and students to design without an in-depth response to it. As a result, the existing built environment lacks good Architecture which stimulates the minds of people. The reason underlying the above phenomenon is that the practitioners and students do not seem to have a thorough understanding and a sufficient knowledge about the Physical Context and its aspects. Though there are previous studies on this subject, some aspects have gone unmentioned. In this dissertation, the Physical Context has been examined on different stand points such as, in terms of Patterns of Locality, in terms of Character, in terms of Geometry of Site, in terms of Rhythm of Street and in terms of Architectural Idiom.

Perception of the Physical Context is essentially to be felt and understood and it is beyond the text and explanations. This study has derived the aspects of the Physical Context and has examined them in such a manner which shows how designer's sensible response to the Physical Context have evoked specific Architectural Expressions.

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