re-thinking Asian Cities:

discussing boundaries

by

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Submitted to the School of Architecture
on 18 September 1998 in Partial Fulfilment of the
Requirements for the Degree of
MASTER OF ARCHITECTURE

Abstract

The dissertation responds to a series of questions posed in relation to the perception of
cities and their boundaries. It is an investigation that prompts discussion, but not
necessarily drawing any conclusions; a summary may be more apt.

The following is excepted from “first words”:

Is Kevin Lynch’s looking glass an adequate instrument to perceive cities today? What
are its limitations and their implications on urban design (assuming that there is
worthwhile cause for such aesthetic concerns)? How had Lynch’s ‘general principle of
city design’ affected Singapore’s citiescape. Could Singapore, as a tabula rasa for
‘deliberate urbanisation’, offer any new readings for Asian cities? Is there any
significant difference between cities in the West and Asian cities? Rather, is Asian-ness
possibly unique and defined? What other/new boundaries are there, besides those
inscribed by Lynch’s five convenient city elements of paths, edges, districts, landmarks
and nodes (and what kind of boundaries are these?), or are there any more boundaries
in contemporary cities? These confrontations however may not yield coherent answers
or at all.

Total length of dissertation: 12216 words

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