Synopsis

The thesis deals with issues of living in the urban environment which has been one that offers a diversity of different activities as well as communities. In the past, overlapping of these activities creates relationships that are important in enhancing the city as a stage for human activities and interaction. It is this overlap that unfolds the complexities of the city life. Current process of urban development creates a city of isolated urban objects and human activities, each in its own realm. Urban communities are now housed based on socio-economic reasons where each community exists on its own. The thesis attempts to re-establish the intricate relationship among different urban community through investigation of thresholds as intermediary spaces for interaction and exchange. The attempt is to allow different groups to interact at appropriate situations and spaces without intruding on the privacy of each group. Therefore, thresholds are one of the key strategies which the thesis explores in allowing appropriate integration and separation in a more complex yet coherent urban environment where different communities can come together.

The vehicle chosen is a mixed-use residential development which caters for communities of different income and social structure, with emphasis on spaces and programmes that are related to the fostering of human interaction and community building. The proposed site is in the historic district of Rochor district within the Central Area of Singapore. This is an area that offers vast linkage potential to the city's well-established facilities as well as its range of different communities, ranging from the students to the nuclear structured families.

The proposed development consists of residential units from transient to the permanent occupancy for the different communities. The communal spaces are hierarchically arranged to integrate living environment of different groups into one coherent whole yet segregate when required to cater to the community needs of the inhabitants. Thresholds are established through the different scales and hierarchy of spaces so as to increase group identity and definition of spaces where each community can be established. This also allows the different groups a chance for interaction within the different scales of public spaces, yet ensuring privacy and security within their private domain. The aim is to achieve a positive mix and interaction among different communities, creating a more diverse and vibrant urban environment.