11.941 Learning by Comparison: First World/Third World Cities
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HUMANIZING THE CITY:

A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF
FESTIVAL AND THE ADAPTATION OF PUBLIC SPACE

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1.0   ABSTRACT

Humanizing the city is a worthwhile endeavor because it is a process by which places can be developed in such a way to give priority to humans. Prioritizing the human in this study focuses on the city as a setting for social interaction, therefore humanizing the city endeavors to improve the sociability of public space. Festivals provide a unique opportunity to study the social nature of city space as they are temporal moments when the culture and socialization of humans is exaggerated, potentially offering lessons for improving the social nature of space.

In this comparative analysis of the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade in Manhattan and the Ganesh Chaturthi festival in Mumbai, the two festivals were examined for elements to improve the sociability of the city, thus humanizing it. The analysis examined the elements of these festivals that were permissive of different and more social behavior in public space including enhancing connections, improving freedom of movement and accessibility, tolerating a varied use of space and the increasing vitality and grain of activity. Both festivals analyzed improve socialization of their respective cities across these metrics. However, due to the varied nature of each event and their respective contexts and cultures, each festival emphasizes some of the above elements more than others.

The analysis discovers that festivals are a humanizing force in the city and do offer lessons as to how a city could be humanized by enhancing the social nature of space. The analysis also uncovers the nuanced nature of the festival as a dynamic humanizing event that adjusts to its surroundings to socialize space as needed. The comparison also highlights weaknesses of each festival's sociability, a passive audience and rigid event structure in Manhattan and a potentially anti-social religious exclusivity in Mumbai. However, the strengths of each provide generalizable and arguably universal insights as to humanizing the city: focusing the grain of activity and movement on the human scale, providing civic moments in which common experiences can be shared by strangers, and creating the environment necessary to support a truly diverse and micro-scaled mix of activity and function in public spaces.

2.0   ARGUMENT FRAMING THE ANALYSIS

2.1   HUMAN

To be human is to be many things. However, beyond the genetic, physiological and philosophical definitions, humanity is primarily reflected in our nature as social creatures. In Maslow's Hierarchy of human needs, the social needs of humans are third after basic shelter and health, and then security and safety. The dominant construct for humans to engage as social creatures and to operate in and define vast hierarchies of social structures is the city. The city allows social exchange between individuals and groups, allows social norms to be formed, common interests and identities to be forged and human values to be formulated and tested.

2.2   A HUMAN CITY

What makes a city human? Or, what makes one city more or less human than another? Those elements of a city that may contribute to its greatness or efficient operation do not ensure that it is fit for human inhabitation and sociability. A discussion of the design and development of any city may be necessarily simplistic since many forces are at work in a city. Even identifying or understanding a dominant or explicit force is a difficult task. However, attempting to understand why so many of the cities created by humans are often difficult places for humans to inhabit is a valid cause for some simplification.

Many forces act upon the design and development of cities; these forces include value systems in the city including efficiency, profit, aesthetics and sociability (humanity). For instance, the city moves goods and people efficiently and quickly through its systems

of mobility. The city provides an economic and trading center capitalizing on its centrality and focus within a region. The city is able to capture the imagination of its inhabitants with great buildings and boulevards. However, to be human is not to be mobile, profitable, or aesthetic. To be human is to be social, so the city must align its priorities to provide for humans as social beings. A human value system in the city is one that prioritizes design and development that enhances socialization and human connection in the city. A human city does not limit human contact and connectedness -- many modern cities do not pass this simple test.

2.3   HUMANIZING FESTIVAL

There are moments in a city that create a setting for more social interaction between humans. The temporal event of a festival is one of these moments when the force of humanity in the form of human social interaction and cultural expression overwhelm all other value systems in the city. This festive moment provides a unique opportunity to study a human value system prioritizing sociability and human connectivity acting in and upon the city.

Examining the effect of festivals on public space and understanding how the city adapts to accommodate an event that is focused on the human can lead us to a better understanding of how to design and develop cities for the explicit use of humans. Interestingly, festivals as human events themselves can enhance sociability in the city; however the interest in this study is not the actual event or spectacle of celebration. In this analysis, the festival is seen as an experimental moment in the city, one that may inform our perceptions of the city to better understand what could possibly contribute to making a place more human.

3.0 COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

3.1 CASE STUDY SELECTION

In the selection of cities for this analysis, it would have been obvious to choose a city that could be considered very human and compare that to a city that is considered less human and then make the normative judgment of one over the other. However, this type of comparison would not result in a robust set of conclusions or indications as to what entails making a city more human. As such, the two case study cities selected, Manhattan and Mumbai, could both be considered very human places, both are a thriving metropolis with an active and vital populace. Both cities are social, cultural and festival centers of their respective regions, if not national foci for cultural events. However, the two cities contribute most to the comparative analysis not in these similarities, but in their differences.

One city is an established global center of finance, culture

and politics with a formal urban organization and regimented deployment of the festivals over the cultural year. The other city is an ambitious regional center of finance, culture and politics still struggling with the provision of certain urban infrastructure and public amenity elements, it has a strong informal organization to fill in the gaps of formal provisions and has a rich and varied annual survey of festivals. In this analysis, these cities were chosen for their differences in the hope that they lend a credible and universal nature to the common conclusions drawn from their comparison. These two cities are Manhattan and Mumbai, respectively and the festivals selected in each city are Manhattan's Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade and Mumbai's Ganesh Chaturthi.

3.2   RESEARCH QUESTION

How do festivals humanize the city or highlight strategies by which to humanize the city?

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FIGURE 2:
An illustration of the intended unit of analysis:
A typical space in the city with its adaptation from normal use to festival use.

3.3   UNIT OF ANALYSIS

The comparative analysis will examine elements of the festival that can uncover methods to humanize the city. The unit of analysis for this study will be an individual festival event that occurs in the city. For the purpose of this study, a festival is considered to be any cultural event that is temporary, that attracts a large crowd, has an impact on the city, has a national or international reputation, is primarily a human-based event and occurs annually and has an extended history since its origin. More specifically, the festival will be studied in one typical space in the city and will be examined for changes in use of space between the normal condition and festival condition. Examining the two case studies at this level allows the adaptation of space in the festival condition to be compared and analyzed across contexts and for generalizations to be drawn.

Accordingly the unit of analysis for the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade is a typical block along the route in Midtown Manhattan examining how the festival condition differs from the typical conditions on that block.

Similarly, the analysis for Ganesh Chaturthi is a typical block along the processions near Chowpatty Beach in South Mumbai examining how the festival condition differs from the typical conditions on that block.

3.4   HYPOTHESIS | INITIAL FINDINGS

Festivals humanize the city by adapting public spaces to enable more sociability and human connectivity through a combination of a greater freedom of movement and accessibility, enhancement of the connections between humans, and allowing a more tolerant and

unpredictable use of space. This ultimately leads to a more vital and social city, a more human city. In this analytical study, the festival should in fact prove a humanizing force in both case studies.

In Manhattan, the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade allows for greater connectivity between parade goers, improved human accessibility and freedom of movement and increased tolerance of unique public uses of space. However, the context of the parade (meaning the origin and design of the parade itself) and its location in Manhattan constrain the event's impact as truly humanizing force in the city. Manhattan has such a rigid urban structure and formal organization that a more humanizing event could have a more defined break from these patterns. However, many of the more dominant value systems in the city, efficiency and security among them, continue to dominate humanity even during the festival event.

In Mumbai, the Ganesh Chaturthi celebration improves connectivity between celebrants, increases freedom of human movement and accessibility and tolerable use of space in the city and provides a truly liberating, if only temporarily, event in the humanization of the city. The adaptation of space and the dominance of humanity in Mumbai during this festival is perhaps a more striking difference from the normal condition and operation of the city than the Macy's Parade exhibits. In that sense, the Ganesh festival is a more successful humanizing event, however as will be elaborated, there are other aspects of the event and its origins that may confound its ability to be a truly universal social connector.

The festival case studies provide interesting lessons to

humanize space in the city and the comparative analysis highlights the fact that all cities have a different level of baseline humanity and that an event designed to humanize and adapt space for human connection and sociability would take a different form in each context, this will be discussed in greater detail in the conclusions of the analysis.

3.5   METHODOLOGY

An observational collection of data and facts was assembled regarding each festival case study to provide a basis for comparison. A mapping of the location of the festival in their respective city contexts examined the amount of the city affected by the festival and its general effect on the city (road closures, crowd gatherings, the procession route, adaptation of the city and streets, etc.).

The analysis of the adaptation of space is built upon an examination of photographs, videos and other accounts of the festival event focusing on the behavior and interactions of festival participants, the use of city space and the change of use or pattern from baseline normal use in the typical block as defined in the unit of analysis above in each festival case study. The baseline of normal use of space was also established using photographs, videos and written accounts of the city and its operation under normal circumstances.

This information was then analyzed based upon the analytical framework of this comparative analysis as described below. The strength of the conclusions that come out of this analysis and framework are due to its comparative nature. It is hoped that even within two varied contexts, some universal elements of humanization will be apparent.

3.6   ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK

The analytical framework of this comparison establishes a method to compare and analyze the two festivals in question. If the primary goal of the study of festival is to discover methods to humanize the city by enhancing the social nature of spaces, then the analytical framework should examine how the use of space differs from normal conditions to festival conditions. These primary adaptations of space are thought to lead to a more social and ultimately more human city.

The primary humanizing adaptations of space for this analysis are the following:

1. **Enhancing Social Connectivity**
2. **Improving Freedom of Movement and Accessibility of Space by Humans**
3. **Tolerance of Varied Use of Space**
4. **Vitality and Grain of Activity**

Resulting in a determination of:

5. **Overall Sociability and Humanity**

Enhancing social connectivity is an adaptation resulting in greater opportunity for social interaction and connections between strangers in the city. Freedom of movement and degree of accessibility of space by humans is measured by focusing on the movement patterns of people in the city. Tolerance and varied use of space refers to the permissive nature of occupying space in a different manner and what is considered socially or legally acceptable behavior in public space. Vitality and grain of activity refers to how finely a mix of uses is in the city and public spaces and to what scale is the mix occuring; preferably this mix is occuring at the human scale. Finally, the overall

sociability and humanity is measured by looking at the net effect of all of the above measures and determining whether or not the festival event is leading to a net gain of sociability and humanity. Through this comparative analysis, each element's strength in creating a more social place can be examined and more universal principles of humanizing the city can be derived.

FESTIVALS AS HUMANIZING EVENT

Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade
Manhattan, New York, U.S.A.

Ganesh Chaturthi
Mumbai, Maharashtra, India

ADAPTATION OF CITY

CONNECTIVITY

*How does the condition of **connection and density** of people change b/w ordinary & festival?*

MOVEMENT/ ACCESS

*How does **freedom of movement** change b/w ordinary & festival?*

TOLERANCE

*How do people **occupy & use** the city differently b/w ordinary & festival?*

VITALITY/ ACTIVITY

*Does the **grain and mix of activity** change b/w ordinary & festival?*

HUMANIZATION OF CITY

SOCIABILITY/ HUMANITY

*How do the above adaptations benefit or negate city **sociability, human connection and interaction?***

FIGURE 3: Analytical Framework Matrix

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4.0   INTRODUCTION TO FESTIVAL CASE STUDIES

4.1   MACY'S THANKSGIVING DAY PARADE

4.1.1 EVENT DESCRIPTION

The Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade is a spectacle that has become a pop culture tradition associated with Thanksgiving and the beginning of the Christmas holiday in the United States, or more notably with the beginning of the shopping season for the Christmas holiday. The event is sponsored by the Macy's department store and has evolved from a European-styled parade that originated in 1924. The parade event is a linear procession that primarily features large helium-filled balloons of pop culture characters and icons. The parade also includes elaborate floats, marching bands, celebrity singers and performances. The parade route is secured by hundreds of police officers along the parade route and street closings. The parade attracts attendees to the Manhattan route and many onlookers camp out in one location along the route, while others come and go and move along the parade route and throughout the surrounding area of the city.

FIGURE 4: Use of space and general atmosphere at the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade in Manhattan.

Image courtesy of Josh Fiala.

4.2 GANESH CHATURTHI

4.2.1 EVENT DESCRIPTION

The Ganesh Chaturthi spectacle is a Hindu festival that has become one of Mumbai's most famous and well-known cultural events. The event is a celebration of the Hindu Lord Ganesh's birthday and the actual procession of large Ganesh idol's through the streets of Mumbai to the city's waterfront is the culminating event of a 10-day celebration of the Hindu god. The idols themselves are either small personal idols celebrated by families or large idols that are publicly worshipped. These larger idols number about 11,000 throughout the city, most located in the Mill Lands, and result in a procession to the nearby Chowpatty Beach and public promenade of Marine Drive. The main event is a procession of the idols to the sea where they are then immersed. The most popular procession routes are either fully closed to traffic or partially controlled by Mumbai Police to ensure the smooth flow toward the Western coast and to minimize disruption of traffic flow in the city. However, the movement and flow of people and of the idols throughout the city is quite free and unrestricted.

FIGURE 5: Use of space and general atmosphere at Ganesh Chaturthi in Mumbai.


Image courtesy of Josh Fiala.

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Aerial photo removed due to copyright restrictions

FIGURE 6: Locus map for Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade in Manhattan and aerial photo of the route.

4.1   MACY'S THANKSGIVING DAY PARADE

4.1.2 EVENT LOCATION

The parade takes place in Manhattan, New York on a defined parade route from Central Park West at about 87th Street Southward to Broadway at Columbus Circle, continuing South on Broadway until the Macy's store at Herald Square turning onto 34th Street and ending the procession on 7th Avenue at about 40th Street. The parade affects a surprisingly limited amount of the city, but does greatly reduce cross-town connections in Midtown. All cross streets are closed at the avenue adjacent to the parade route, converting at least a 3-block area, the length of the parade route, to pedestrian-only activity and adaptation of space.
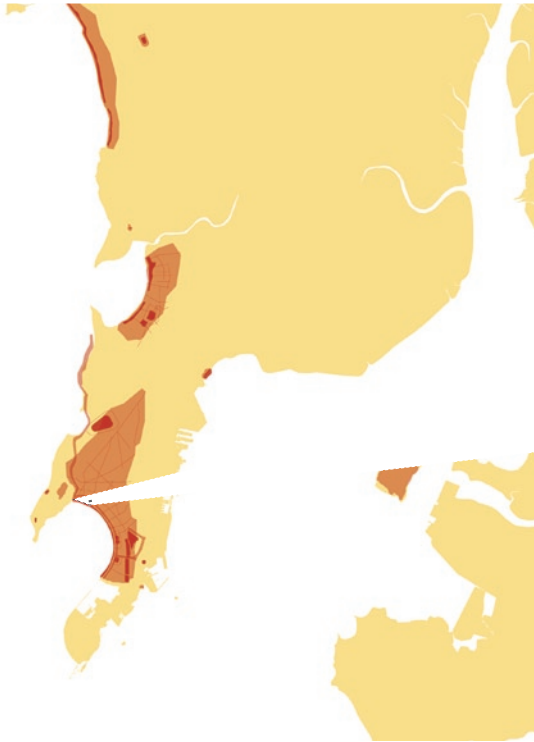
Aerial photo removed due to copyright restrictions.

FIGURE 7: Locus map for Ganesh Chaturthi in Mumbai and aerial photo of the focus area affected.

4.2   GANESH CHATURTHI

4.2.3 EVENT LOCATION

The festival takes place in Mumbai, Maharashtra, primarily in the Mill Lands of South Mumbai; however there is no defined route of the processions and the activity of the festival could take place in any part of the city and quite often affects much of the Western coast with activity. The main streets with the most activity and police attention to traffic control are those surrounding Chowpatty Beach. Juhu beach, further North along the Western coast is another popular immersion location and receives a fair amount of attention. The event in its peak will affect much of the city as many of the streets will become overburdened with revelers and the procession of idols.

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4.1 MACY'S THANKSGIVING DAY PARADE

4.1.3 BRIEF EVENT LOGISTICS

The parade takes place on morning of the Thursday of Thanksgiving every year, since it first began in 1924. The event lasts some four to five hours with preparation time before and after affecting the city as well. The parade procession officially begins at 9am and finishes at approximately 2pm, the city begins to fill with parade onlookers around the route by about 7am and the crowds will not clear the area of the parade until about 3 or 4pm.

The parade is allowed to take place in Manhattan for several reasons. One, it is a large draw of tourists and an economic generator for the weekend in Manhattan. Two, the event has successfully established itself as a cultural tradition and is anticipated each year as a tradition marking the beginning of the holiday season.

The event itself is a highly controlled and choreographed event that has deliberately and painstakingly eliminated any potential unexpected occurrences. The parade route is prepared by the city for a week in advance, removing obstructions, preparing sidewalks, marking streets and building seating along Central Park West, at Columbus Circle and at Herald Square. The pedestrians are only controlled immediately at the parade route and freedom of pedestrian movement is enhanced just off of the actual route, where automobile traffic is restricted. Other than some restricted movement at the parade route, the police officers are very tolerant and permissive of most behavior along the parade route.

4.2   GANESH CHATURTHI

4.2.3 BRIEF EVENT LOGISTICS

The festival takes place in late August or early September for 10 days. It first began in 1893. The actual immersion procession takes place at the end of the 10-day worship period and the procession lasts all day from morning until night, with crowds celebrating in the street and at the waterfront well into the night.

The procession festival is not so much allowed to take place in the city, as the city has little choice in resisting the shear number of participants in this event. The large number of Ganesh worshippers overwhelms the city and controls all normal function of Mumbai for that day. The event is not necessarily highly controlled, but is a well choreographed citywide maneuver of flows of crowds and normal flows of traffic and adjustment and accommodation of each dynamically in time. The city prepares for the event along the primary procession routes, and in general has an awareness of the event and its date. The city restrains its normal activity during that day, as normal city operation is in many ways impossible for that period. Pedestrian movement is not controlled in any way during the event and freedom of pedestrian movement is enhanced wherever there is a crowd in the city. Generally, the crowds allow many types of behavior that wouldn't otherwise be permitted to occur mostly due to the anonymity of crowd behavior.

5.0   ANALYSIS OF FESTIVAL CASE STUDIES

5.1   MACY'S THANKSGIVING DAY PARADE

5.1.1 ENHANCING SOCIAL CONNECTIVITY

The festival event enhances social connectivity in a number of ways. The primary method of enhancing connectivity is by providing a center of focus and occurrence to observe for all event attendees. The Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade provides the actual spectacle of the parade, large helium balloons, floats, marching bands and celebrities in a moving procession that can be the focus of the crowds of people in close proximity and provide a focus for people's attention and a frame by which to have a shared public experience. It is this shared public experience that is providing a means for social connectivity and enhancing the sociability of public space in the city. The event itself is simplifying the activity in the city to the extent that nearly everyone observing the parade will have a shared reaction and can bond complete strangers in the common experience of perception. This is very different than the normal operation of the city, in which many different activities are in action and any number of the events that occur in public space could be interpreted differently. The parade removes the nuance of everyday city life and replaces it with an event that everyone can easily observe and understand together.

FIGURE 8: Manhattan diagrams of normal (left) and festival (right) conditions of *Density of People.*
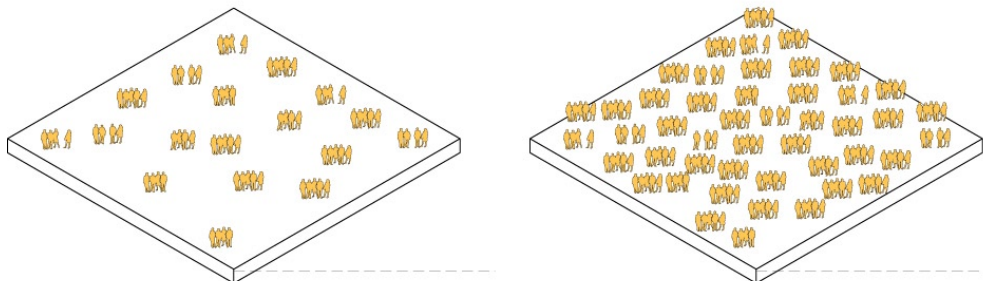
5.2   GANESH CHATURTHI

5.2.1 ENHANCING SOCIAL CONNECTIVITY

The event again provides a center of focus and occurrence for all event attendees to focus. However, in this case the event is not as objective and universal as pop culture characters or the commercial marketing of a shopping holiday. This is a religious event, which includes all of the religious imagery and devout worship that is associated with a religious holiday. This is especially significant in a city where religious tensions can be high at these times of public display of devotion. Nonetheless, the crowds that draw to the street to carry and escort the Ganesh idols to the sea provide a center of focus for everyone in that public space. The large Ganesh idols with large crowds of worshippers chanting, praying and playing musical instruments create a spectacle due to the shear size of their numbers. In spite of all of the intricacies of religion and culture, the event seems to draw large crowds together in the act of occupying space differently than under normal conditions as they move Westward toward the sea. As compared to the Macy's Thanksgiving Parade, much of the complexity and nuance of city life is maintained and celebrated during the Ganesh event.

FIGURE 9: Mumbai diagrams of normal (left) and festival (right) conditions of *Density of People*.
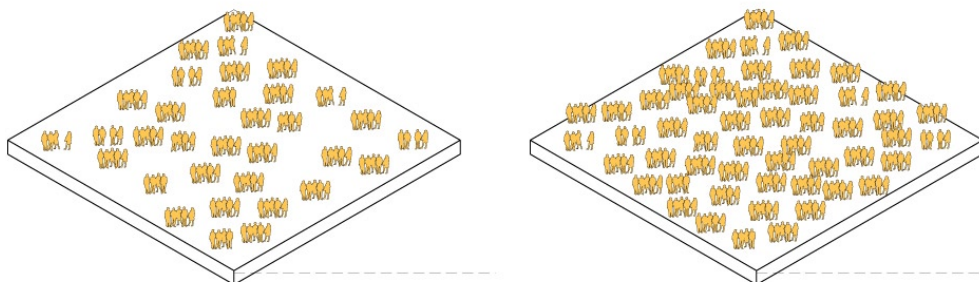
5.1   MACY'S THANKSGIVING DAY PARADE

5.1.2 FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT AND ACCESSIBILITY

The Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade does not completely improve freedom of movement and degree of accessibility of city spaces, but probably does marginally improve human movement and access. At the parade route itself, freedom of movement and access is the most limited. The street, which is the center of the route, is controlled with barricades and police barriers to allow only the movement of parade participants, severely limiting the free movement and accessibility of parade observers. In fact, the parade limits movement from East to West across a large portion of Midtown Manhattan since you cannot actually cross the parade route, but for at one point along its 33 block length at a cross traffic break at 42nd Street. However, due to these east-west street closings a block in either direction of the parade route, pedestrian access and freedom of movement just adjacent to the parade route itself is greatly enhanced from everyday use. For the entire parade route for at least a 1 block offset of the route itself, vehicular traffic is not allowed and people get to flow freely, use the street as a public space, and generally inhabit those blocks in a manner much more free and unpredictably than during normal city operation.

FIGURE 10: Manhattan diagrams of normal (left) and festival (right) conditions of *Movement of People.*
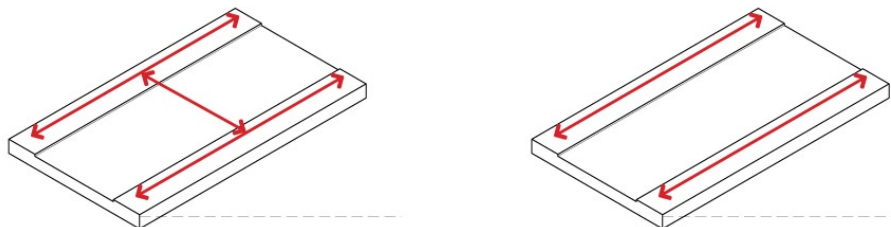
5.2   GANESH CHATURTHI

5.2.2 FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT AND ACCESSIBILITY

Ganesh Chaturthi does greatly enhance the human freedom of movement and level of accessibility of the city during the processions. The streets of Mumbai are regularly frenetic, highly trafficked and dangerous places for pedestrian movement, but for the time of the Ganesh idols procession through the streets it is as though the crowds of humanity overwhelm the traffic flow and the vehicles finally succumb to the shear will of the revelers and Ganesh devotees. Certain primary route roads are controlled by the police and given over to the Ganesh crowds. The mass of humanity controls the city spaces and streets in such a way that they would not normally have the power. In this way, the movement of the crowds during the Ganesh festival is greatly enhanced as compared to the Macy's Festival, any observer could become a part of the event itself, intentionally or accidentally, depending upon their location and positioning within the crowd. No barrier is placed between event participant and observer in the course of this spectacle. The crowd itself may become an occasional barrier to free movement. Moving in the opposite direction of the crowd of humanity can be a difficult or impossible endeavor at times.

FIGURE 11: Mumbai diagrams of normal (left) and festival (right) conditions of Movement of People.
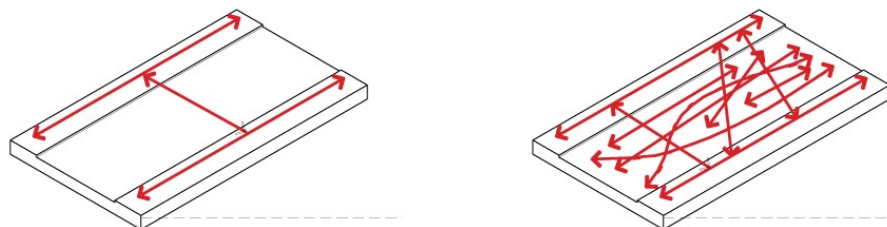
5.1 MACY'S THANKSGIVING DAY PARADE

5.1.3 TOLERANCE AND VARIED USE OF SPACE

As mentioned briefly already, the tolerance and varied use of space is increased during the parade event. Although the police force does enforce the boundary at the parade route, for the most part the vigilance ends there and the police are very permissive to other forms of occupation of space. Interestingly, private property owners and operators have reacted to this permissive environment of the use of space by enforcing their own restrictions on use: boarding up around trees, taping off stairs, boarding sides of buildings, taping railings, etc. However, wherever the specific building owner has not tried to limit the occupation of space, the crowds will optimize the surroundings, opportunistically occupying space to afford better views of the spectacle. People will stand in the streets on ladders, balance on concrete barricades, stand on elevated plazas, climb up lampposts, etc. In this way, the city becomes more tolerant of certain uses of city space and varies the use of those spaces at the same time. However, it should be stated that most of this behavior does still show a certain amount of restraint and civic behavior. The environment becomes less tolerant and permissive if anyone attending the event began to behave in a manner that is unacceptable or threatening to all of the children in attendance.

FIGURE 12: Manhattan diagrams of normal (left) and festival (right) conditions of *Space Occupied by People.*
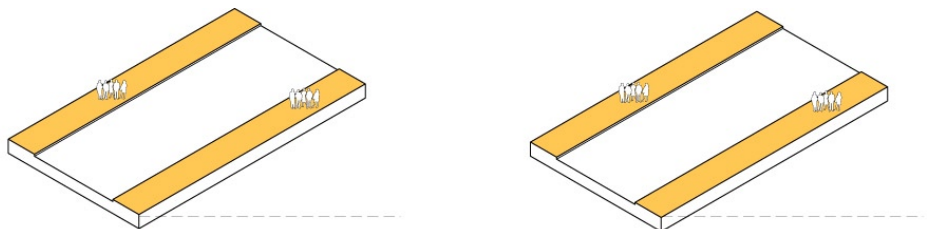
5.2   GANESH CHATURTHI

5.2.3 TOLERANCE AND VARIED USE OF SPACE

The tolerance and varied use of space during Ganesh Chaturthi is enhanced. During the event in the city spaces in which it occurs, the crowds allow a varied use of space and tolerate behaviors that do not normally occur in the streets. The crowds are walking through the streets, playing musical instruments in the streets, dancing, chanting, praying and otherwise creating a vibrant and active use of spaces that are normally the domain of vehicular traffic only and are not cultural sites of adulation. However, this use of space by the crowds may have a limit to its tolerance. It is difficult to imagine that the crowd would be permissive of any behaviors too different than their own. For instance, as mentioned above, if one desires to move in a direction opposing the crowd or if a Muslim crowd had different intentions for the use of the street in front of their Mosque, the tolerance of use of varied use of space would dramatically diminish and the crowd of the event itself could act as a limiting force on the variety of use of space in the city. In this way, the Ganesh festival is quite a delicate balance between humanizing space (by biasing the city toward use and activity of people) and ensuring that different cultural viewpoints are not put in to conflict by this adaptation of space.

FIGURE 13: Mumbai diagrams of normal (left) and festival (right) conditions of *Space Occupied by People*.
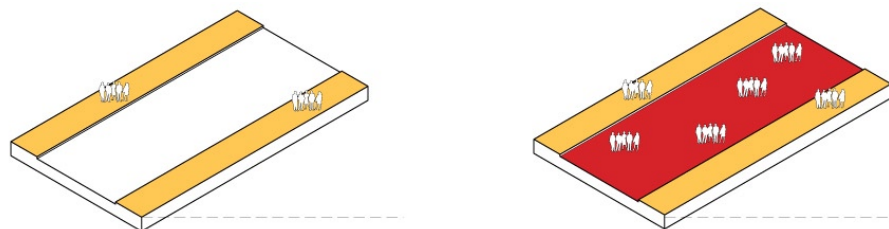
5.1   MACY'S THANKSGIVING DAY PARADE

5.1.4 VITALITY AND GRAIN OF ACTIVITY

The Macy's Thanksgiving Parade also creates a vitality and grain of activity that is not at first obvious. The spectacle of the event itself could certainly be seen to be vital in itself, but that is really not a lesson for urbanism. Although a major activity of the street is removed by barring vehicular traffic and the sidewalk venders normally seen on Manhattan sidewalks, the grain of activity does seem to still exist and perhaps be enhanced by the event. The parade route involves a few levels of observers and participants, the static observer that camps out in one spot from early in the morning through the duration of the event, usually directly on the parade route, the dynamic observer that is interested in the event, but prefers to move from place to place along the route affording different vantage points and the event attendee that is as much interested in strolling and using the spaces created by the event and the general atmosphere of the city at that moment as they are in the event itself.   Another form of parade activity is the vendor selling helium balloons of the large characters seen in the parade. Each of these elements of the event create a vitality along the length of the route that is probably not more fine grained and active than a normal Manhattan street scene, but does bias that activity to the human and pedestrian oriented scale.

FIGURE 14: Manhattan diagrams of normal (left) and festival (right) conditions of *Grain of Activity.*


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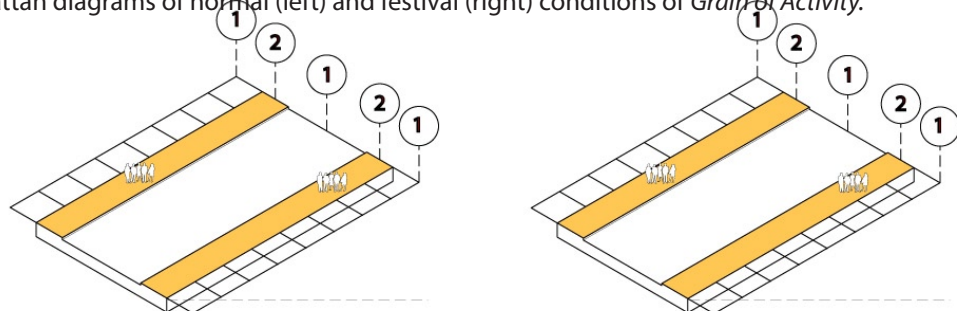
5.2   GANESH CHATURTHI

5.2.4 VITALITY AND GRAIN OF ACTIVITY

The vitality of the street is certainly enhanced by the large crowds of people, the cultural spectacle, the exuberance and the colorful Ganesh idols. However, the spectacle itself does not translate directly to better or desirable vitality in urbanism. The vitality of the street and public spaces of the city are improved over the norm of these spaces being occupied completely by vehicular traffic. The public space of the city, which is in high demand is certainly expanded as humanity expands the public realm. The grain of activity of the city is again biased toward the human in the instance of the event.   However, the overall grain of the city and mix of activity may be diminished again by the overwhelming force of the crowds. Just as the crowds overwhelm all forms of the other more dominant systems of the city, the crowd may also hinder other varied and micro-scaled activities that are normally occurring on the sidewalks and at the edges of streets. The dominant force of the crowd either eliminates the ability of these functions through lack of space or in some cases a lack of safety. Thus, the overall vitality and grain of activity while adjusted toward the benefiting the human, actually is somewhat diminished by the overwhelming force of the crowd and crowd behavior of the event.

FIGURE 15: Mumbai diagrams of normal (left) and festival (right) conditions of *Grain of Activity*.
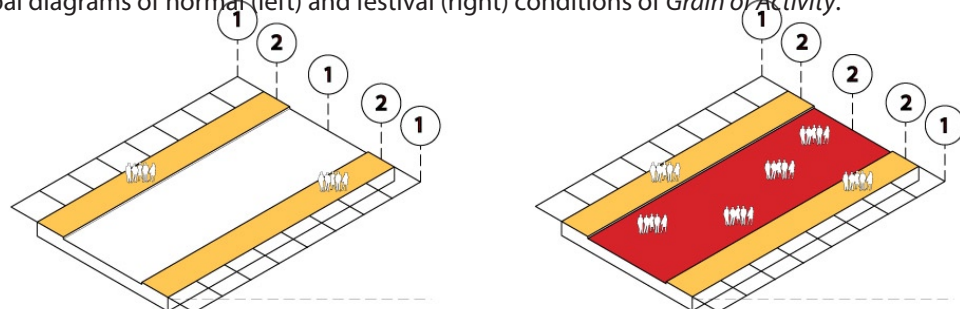
5.1 MACY'S THANKSGIVING DAY PARADE

5.1.5 OVERALL SOCIABILITY AND HUMANITY

Along all of the measures mentioned and illustrated above the overall effect of the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade is to improve sociability, thus humanizing Manhattan. The event allows for a connectivity to occur between large crowds of strangers bonding over a common shared experience. It marginally enhances the ability of large amounts of people to move freely and have access to space in the city (the street) that is otherwise considered dangerous or not tolerated. However, due to the restricted access and formal barriers along the parade route, overall movement and freedom in the city is restricted. The tolerance for different uses of space is enhanced, but the formality and overt police presence does limit the perceived tolerance of behavior for the event. The grain of activity and vitality in the city is maintained at about the same level as normally seen, but for an adaptation and biasing of that activity to the scale and scope of the human, thus increasing the vitality of the city in regard to people.

The Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade adapts space in Midtown Manhattan allowing people to inhabit the city differently along the parade route. The effect of the automobile on the city is minimized in this area and the ability to accommodate large crowds, the ability to tolerate less personal space and to interact favorably with strangers are all improved by the event. Overall, the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade has a humanizing effect on Manhattan.

5.2   GANESH CHATURTHI

5.2.5 OVERALL SOCIABILITY AND HUMANITY

Along all of the measures mentioned and illustrated above and in comparison to the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade the overall effect of Ganesh Chaturthi is to greatly enhance sociability in Mumbai. The event increases social connectivity of strangers joined in a common shared experience. The shear mass of humanity enhances the ability of large amounts of people to move freely and have access to space in the city that is otherwise not possible. The grain of activity and vitality in the city is somewhat diminished from that normally seen, but the intense activity of people in the city during the event balances this detriment. The Ganesh Chaturthi adapts space in Mumbai allowing people to inhabit the city differently along the procession routes, the effect of the automobile on the city is minimized in this area and the ability to accommodate large crowds and to have people enjoy themselves in large crowds and to interact with strangers are all enhanced by the event. Additionally, although the event may at times heighten tensions between different cultural and religious groups in the city, it is hoped that this public display and use of space could provide figurative space for disparate groups to come together and if not to share in some common experiences, than at least to become more tolerable and understanding of the traditions and cultures of other groups in the city.

As seen in the following summary figure of the analytical framework, the net effect of Ganesh Chaturthi as a humanizing event in the city must be greater than that of the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade. All of the factors discussed contribute to this conclusion.

FESTIVALS AS HUMANIZING EVENT

	Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade Manhattan, New York, U.S.A.	**Ganesh Chaturthi** Mumbai, Maharashtra, India
	ADAPTATION OF CITY	
CONNECTIVITY	**INCREASED (+)**	**INCREASED (+)**
MOVEMENT/ ACCESS	RESTRICTED (-)	**INCREASED (+)**
TOLERANCE	MARGINALLY INCREASED (+)	**INCREASED (+)**
VITALITY/ ACTIVITY	MARGINALLY INCREASED (+)	**INCREASED (+)**
	HUMANIZATION OF CITY	
SOCIABILITY/ HUMANITY	**IMPROVED /** **HUMANIZING EFFECT**	**GREATLY IMPROVED /** **HUMANIZING EFFECT**

FIGURE 16: Analytical Framework Summary and Conclusions

6.0   CONCLUSIONS

6.1   DISCOVERIES OF CITY CONTEXT

A truly human city is found unpredictably in the everyday drama of human encounter. In many ways, our cities today severely limit these chance encounters and opportunities for social connection. In this comparative analysis, festivals have been examined to discover

elements of these social events that could lead to the development of more social cities. Interestingly, it would seem that in terms of being a human and social place, each city has different a unique context and different issues to address when humanizing the city. This comparative analysis allows these differences to be discerned more easily. For instance, the order and discipline of Manhattan seems to also infultrate the organization of festival, diminshing the event's potential to humanize the city. The more fluid organization, dynamic participation and real-time, human-scaled decision making of Mumbai's Ganesh festival becomes a more effective event for empowering humans to interact with the city in a different way. In many ways it is the subversion of norms and order that provides the most dramatic adjustments of the festival events.

6.2   HUMAN CITIES: MANHATTAN AND MUMBAI

In general, Manhattan and Mumbai are both doing reasonably well when considered as human cities, but in different ways. This is surprising, in a certain respect, given all their differences, but predictable given the extreme differences in city context. It would seem that both cities exhibit varying degrees of the humanizing elements of festivals studied. Manhattan connects people on the street with its vibrant mixing of uses, tolerant social climate and enhanced movement of people with a pedestrian orientation. Mumbai connects people with its micro-scaled mix of activity, density of use, vitality on the street, tolerance of one's proximity and personal space, and a similar orientation toward walkability. Regardless of festival, both cities already do exhibit those elements of a humanized place.

6.3   TRANSFERABLE CONCLUSIONS

The true value of this study lies in discovering in comparison of one city to the other, how those human elements already present in the city could be enhanced by others that are overshadowed or nonexistent. Manhattan could learn from Mumbai the abiliity to temporarily subvert its systems of order and static observation and create human-centered events and spaces that are fluid, dynamic and actively involve the observer in the creation of the spectacle. Mumbai could learn from Manhattan the lesson in urbanism that temporal events could perhaps bring the city together in shared experience when they are not focused on only one group's traditions or celebrations.

6.4   UNIVERSAL CONCLUSIONS

The variety and difference in occupation and adaptation of space and varied forms of spectacle between the two settings uncovers a few universal and transcendent traits that could lead to a more human city. First and foremost, those elements of the city that currently exist as humanizing forces operating in the city should be identified, the temporal event or design of space can then address those elements that are deficient and call attention to them. Making connections in unpredictable ways and currently synergies between people, parts of the city and different functions requires overlapping and varied types of use, accessibility and freedom of movement between those uses, and a fine human-scaled grain of activity and use.

More specifically, all city spaces and arrangements of buildings and functions should be designed and developed in such a way to:

1. Improve social connections and shared common experience between residents of the city.

2. Break down large single uses providing muliple and varied uses instead.

3. Enhance movement and accessibilty of people and allow other modes of transportation to adapt to this priority.

4. Assemble uses, spaces, buildings, and all other elements of a city to ensure vital and active spaces at all times of the day and year and create moments that highlight the spectacle of daily life.

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7.2   FIGURES

FIGURE 1: *The mass of humanity that forms during the Ganesh Chaturthi festival in Mumbai, India, here at Chowpatty Beach.* SOURCE: www.gusrubens.com

FIGURE 2: *An illustration of the intended unit of analysis: A typical space in the city with its adaptation from normal use to festival use.* SOURCE: AUTHOR

7.2   FIGURES (CONTINUED)

FIGURE 3: *Analytical Framework Matrix.* SOURCE: AUTHOR

FIGURE 4: *Use of space and general atmosphere at the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade in Manhattan.* SOURCE: www.commercialappeal.com (left image), www.wirednewyork.com (center image), www.abcnews.com (right image)

FIGURE 5: *Use of space and general atmosphere at Ganesh Chaturthi in Mumbai.* SOURCE: www.abcnews.com (left image), www.danharlow.com (center image), www.danharlow.com (right image)

FIGURE 6: *Locus map for Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade in Manhattan and aerial photo of the route.* SOURCE: AUTHOR, Google Earth Aerial

FIGURE 7: *Locus map for Ganesh Chaturthi in Mumbai and aerial photo of the focus area affected.* SOURCE: AUTHOR, Google Earth Aerial

FIGURE 8: *Manhattan diagrams of normal (left) and festival (right) conditions of Density of People.* SOURCE: AUTHOR

FIGURE 9: *Mumbai diagrams of normal (left) and festival (right) conditions of Density of People.* SOURCE: AUTHOR

FIGURE 10: *Manhattan diagrams of normal (left) and festival (right) conditions of Movement of People.* SOURCE: AUTHOR

FIGURE 11: *Mumbai diagrams of normal (left) and festival (right) conditions of Movement of People.* SOURCE: AUTHOR

FIGURE 12: *Manhattan diagrams of normal (left) and festival (right) conditions of Space Occupied by People.* SOURCE: AUTHOR

FIGURE 13: *Mumbai diagrams of normal (left) and festival (right) conditions of Space Occupied by People.* SOURCE: AUTHOR

FIGURE 14: *Manhattan diagrams of normal (left) and festival (right) conditions of Grain of Activity.* SOURCE: AUTHOR

FIGURE 15: *Mumbai diagrams of normal (left) and festival (right) conditions of Grain of Activity.* SOURCE: AUTHOR

FIGURE 16: Analytical Framework Summary and Conclusions.
SOURCE: AUTHOR