3 / HOW HULLS OF PUBLIC SPACE COME NATURALLY FROM STRUCTURE-PRESERVING TRANSFORMATIONS

Let us now pass to the general case, a part of a town in our time, and the kinds of process through which positive hulls of public space may be formed.

Assume that we have an open attitude to a town, or neighborhood. By that I mean that we are able to consider the wholeness of a given place, as it is, without prejudice about what is or is not possible. We are mentally open to the wholeness, can therefore afford (mentally) to allow unfolding to occur.

There will usually be some rather natural places for social space to be created. These latent centers may arise as a result of a certain density, where there is a natural need for places of congregation: thus, in a fairly natural way, at the center of gravity of a population, there may be a push towards a void to occur, a center, which gathers together the activities of that population into itself.

And there are sometimes naturally occurring spots of natural beauty, which call a hull of space into being, just because they point to the importance of such a particular spot in the land (or in the town) as a natural center which has importance in people's hearts.

Or, if the community has formed a collective vision which has — in addition — identified naturally required generic centers of some particular type, then these generic centers, too, might induce, from within the culture, a natural pressure towards the creation of such space.

Best of all, for the unfolding, is when these processes, all three of them, coincide to identify particular and obvious places, which the people in the community recognize as "Of course, we always felt there should be something there . . ."

The answer comes, again and again, from the fundamental process. Whatever living process is at work, it is made up of repeated application of the fundamental process. The fundamental process strengthens centers. Strong centers, as they form, form positive space.

4 / SHAPED PUBLIC SPACE FORMING LIVING CENTERS

Imagine, then, that we are to embark on a program of construction which makes a part of a town into a system of public places entirely made of POSITIVE SPACE, or think of it as "solid space." That means, really, that each part of the downtown, and each part of each neighborhood, is to be a strong center. In our ideal city, when we are finished, there are to be no places that are not living centers. This will be true of each part — each center — in the downtown area; there is to be nothing left over.

Some of these solid spaces may be parts of a sidewalk — I do not say sidewalks — because I mean only a single piece of a sidewalk, which is a graspable, felt, solid object of space, where I want to be. When I leave that place, I go to another one.

Obviously there may be avenues, a focal point, a small square, long pieces of sidewalk flanked by shops, a short wide segment of sidewalk or paving where there are pigeons. There are also — perhaps, lawns; there can be a sidewalk cafe — an area of tables and chairs, bounded; there could be an area of umbrellas. And, certainly, there will be less intense parts, but always positive space and THE VOID and BOUNDARIES, forming the background against which the many more intense small volumes of
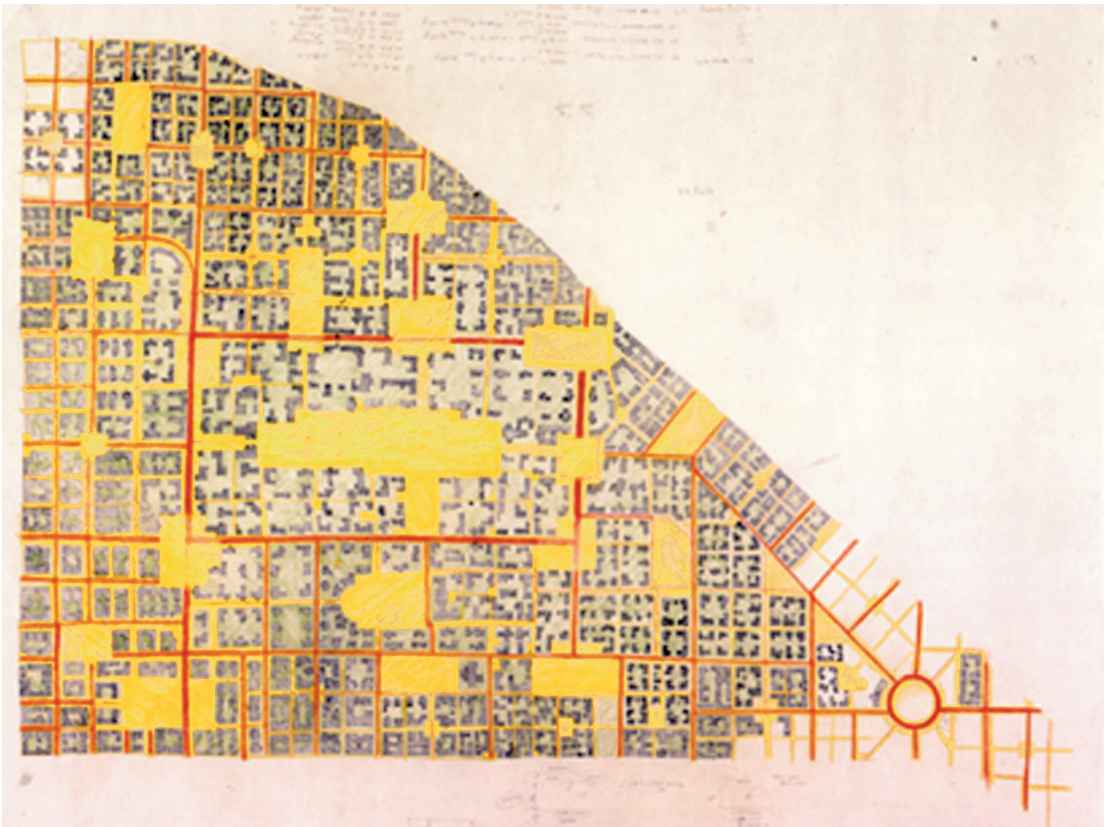
The solid space which forms a town, in a highly visible and coherent form. Streets, squares, even the interior of public buildings, are shown as parts of one continuous swath, in which every part is strongly shaped, and adapted to its immediate use and users. We see here, in rudimentary form, the system of public squares, gardens, and pedestrian streets which might form the hull of the Progresso district. Fort Lauderdale, Progresso, Christopher Alexander, Saul Pichardo, Chris Andrews, Shawn Bradbury, 1996
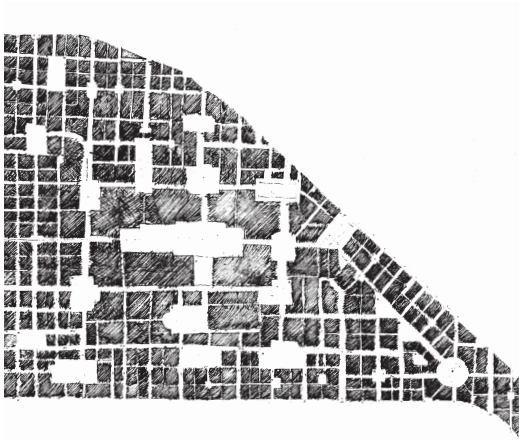
Reverse black–white drawing showing all hulls as positive. Fort Lauderdale, Progresso, Christopher Alexander, 1996

space are a counterpoint. But even the void is it-self a place — solid, continuous, empty, bounded, visible, and felt *as* the void.

Against all this in our process of forming space in the city, we must most carefully make the right kind of space for cars, parking lots, parked cars, moving in and out of parking. Our modern destroyed space has come about largely because with the onset of cars, 2000 years of tradition about forming pedestrian, horse and carriage space, suddenly dissolved — became irrelevant — and we have hardly yet found a new tradition in which the rules of the game — the patterns, the generic types of centers for parking, cars, movement of cars, deliveries, is clear and worked out in relation to the hulls of public pedestrian space.

The temptation to say — keep the cars out, make it all pedestrian — is far too harsh. In many places, it is just the cars which create the life in a place; the freedom of access that they permit which brings vivacity, energy, imagination. But undoubtedly, the pure pedestrian space in which there are no cars is also vital, allowing us to walk, dream, play, unhurried and uninterrupted.

So, in support of the emergent unfolding of the hulls of public space, we need a specific group of patterns, or generic centers, that tell us how the cars are going to work. How are the hulls of space to be managed, so that they are primarily pedestrian in feeling, yet able to contain the speed, and energy and bustle of small cars and trucks? How much parking is there? How visible or invisible is the parking? How is it to be paid for? What density is to be allowed. Possible rules for working through these questions are given, for Fort Lauderdale's Progresso district, on pages 290–305.

<center>❖</center>

5 / THE SPINE STRUCTURE OF THE EISHIN CAMPUS

The Eishin campus, built in 1985, is a pedestrian world which really works. It has an atmosphere of calm, one feels oneself there; it is calm and nourishing to the spirit. After it was built, though it is a school and college, the head of the school, instead of head or chairman, started to be called "the mayor." This was a tribute, I think, to the calm and living atmosphere of the place.
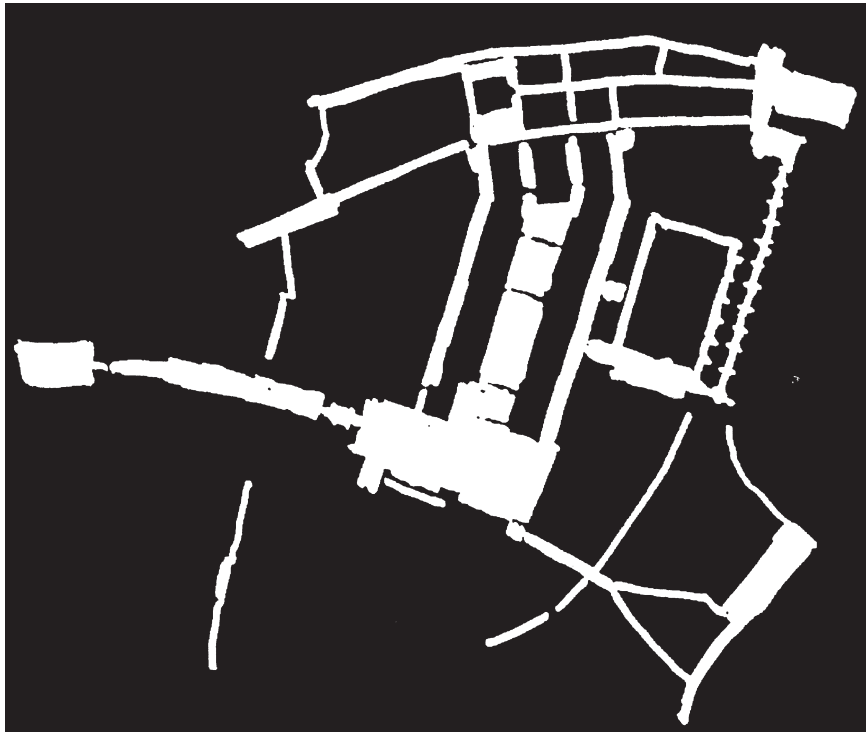
The space on the Eishin campus. In this drawing where white is used to stand for space, we see the hull of pedestrian space which makes the campus come to life. This structure, created by unfolding, is complex and orderly, yet far from the over-geometric norms of simplicity we have come to view as order. Christopher Alexander.