



**Figure 1.2** Orchard Road, Singapore in 2003.

the former it consists of the square, the trees, the façades of buildings, the ground floor uses, and the entrances onto the open spaces. On a more typical street (Figure 1.2) the elements are essentially the same but take on a different form. If, however, urban design is concerned with the whole nature of human experience it has to address the nature of the activities and the people who engage in them as well. It is the set of behaviour settings and how the milieu affords activities and simultaneously acts as an aesthetic display that is important.

In 1748 Giambattista Nolli drew a figure-ground plan of Rome (see Figure 1.3). It shows the public space of the city at the ground level during the time of Pope Benedict XIV. Much interior space (principally of churches) and courtyards was accessible to the public. It also illustrates the amount of open space that existed in cities of that time. Much of it is not discernible from the streets.

As important as the figure-ground relationship is the nature of the façades that form these spaces. What are they made of and how are they fenestrated? What are the uses that face onto the open space? How frequent are entrances along the streets and squares? What is the nature of the pavement, or sidewalk? How tall are the buildings that enclose the spaces? How are the spaces illuminated? What are they like at night? What are the activity patterns that take place in the spaces? Who are the people engaged in them? These are the variables that distinguish one place from another – one city from another, and one precinct, or neighbourhood, in a city from another. The bird's eye perspective of the Banking District of Mumbai and the cut away ground floor plan tell much about the nature of the public realm (see Figure 1.4). They tell little about the life of the place, although