

**The relation between spatial definition and place-making: architectural and urban interiors**

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**ABSTRACT**

Traditionally, interiors are associated with rooms as spaces inside buildings. Spaces for human habitation and interaction are found throughout the built environment and include urban space. Space is a product of social practices and Lefebvre (1991) argues that this process allows for 'space' to be transformed into 'place'. The appropriation of space adds personal meaning to place that Lefebvre refers to as differential space. The study is based on the premise of Augé's (1995) argument of place and non-place. Place allows for meaning and enrichment with the connotations of identity, history, urban relationships and social life within spatial dimensions and manifestations.

Place and space are central to this investigation, as the study aims to determine the relation between spatial definition and place-making. Anthropological, economic, cultural, sociological, geographical, economic, ecological and political aspects that are influences, are accepted and acknowledged, but fall outside the scope of this study.

This investigation focuses on the static, physical spatial dimension. A search into the criteria that can be applied to research, describe and define space and create place is conducted. The terminology that constitutes these criteria is identified

according to the elements and modulation variables for architectural interiors. The study explores the possibility of developing a general set of criteria that could be collectively applied to all places for human habitation, regardless of the location. Human need for shelter is universal. Can the criteria to achieve this therefore also be collective? Furthermore, if generalities in spatial dimensions and manifestations do exist, can the term 'interior' be used collectively for both architectural and urban places?

The existing situation of the Donkin Reserve in Central Hill, Port Elizabeth, is examined according to the criteria established in order to determine whether the space is adequately defined and meaningful to the community it serves. Recommendations are made according to the guidelines to improve the sense of place.

The research consists of a literature study to establish a theoretical basis and is supplemented with precedent analyses to interpret and demonstrate theoretical concepts. The descriptive survey method as qualitative research methodology is used to collect data.

### **Keywords**

Space, place, non-place, spatial definition, place-making, interior, quality, modulation, elements, variables