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Original Scientific Paper • Izvorni znanstveni članak
UDC • UDK 711.001

Manuscript Received • Rukopis primljen: 01.04.1997.
Article Accepted • Članak prihvaćen: 03.12.1997.

Space and Place**Prostor i mjesto****Key words • Ključne riječi**

Awareness of Place	svjesnost o mjestu
Essence of Place	bit mjesta
Experience of Place	iskustvo o mjestu
Space	prostor
Place	mjesto

Abstract • Sažetak

What is a *Place*? What does it consist of? What is the *Awareness of Place*? How do we experience a *Place*? Through this paper the author has tried to reach some of the answers to these and other relating questions by revealing the meaning of *Space and Place* through the *Essence of Place*, making a distinction between *Space* and *Place*, and all the way to exploring the *Experience of Place*. All that was done in order to reveal the elements of identity that make some place *The Place*.

Što je *mjesto*? Od čega se ono sastoji? Što je to svjesnost o *mjestu*? Kako možemo iskusiti *mjesto*? U članku autor pokušava dosegnuti neke odgovore na ta i slična pitanja otkrivanjem značenja pojma *mjesta* i *prostora* analizom *biti mjesta*, utvrđujući razliku između *prostora* i *mjesta* te istražujući *iskustvo o mjestu*. Sve to provodi radi otkrivanja elemenata identiteta koji od nekog mjesta čine *mjesto*.

Introduction*

Through my professional practice in regional and urban planning I could witness that not many of the planners take the importance of the *place* into account when designing some plan in order to establish a proper planning process that would save the character of the entire place. Unfortunately, so much town planning and redoing of the environment proceed apparently in total ignorance of the *place* importance. This kind of planning process, that has been mostly forced by the demand of economic growth, undoubtedly leads to a new phenomenon in planning practice: *placelessness* - making of standardized landscapes and built environment what unavoidable results in bringing insensitivity to the significance of some particular place. The demand of economical growth reflects in most of today's regional and urban planning as homogenization in culture, economic, and the whole entire way of living.

Most of the plans, or their parts, that are today used as a process device are considering the preservation of the natural and cultural heritage of the entire *place* only in a very declarative way. This, unfortunately, leads to the fact that the space has been used, or better to be said wasted, not taking into account what are the real needs of the place or region as itself, speaking of the growth and development. The growth can make some place very static, but cities, towns, villages are a very living and changeable form. The form that needs a good planning process to guide it through the time. Very few of the planners would consider place a unique *place in space* through planning. Probably one of the reasons lies in not having a clear understanding of meaning what is the *place*, what is its *awareness*, and what makes the identity of *place*, and *with place*.

The questions "*what is a place*", "*how to define a place*", "*how to create and maintain the identity of place and identity with place*" have been in human mind for centuries. Different groups of people throughout whole human history tried to provide understandable, and all-definition meaning of that simple word: *place*. Another problem rises up when someone tries to distinguish two words that have so similar, but still very different meanings: *space* and *place*. To be able to give the definition of these two simple words, a very important process has to be understood and maintained: the process of experiencing *place* or *space*.

Through centuries philosophers, sociologists and geographers¹ have tried to reach all functioning-and-meaning description of this entire simple word but still have not reached the satisfactory one. A search for the *identity of place* and *identity with place* has become more intensive in the second half of this century. One of the pioneers among the architects and planners, is for sure Kevin Lynch who pointed out the importance of the *image of place*, *image of city*, *image of region*, *image of time*. For last two decades his books on this topic² have stood as essential for reading, not only for urban planners, but for architects, too. The *Identity with Place* is developed by Prof. Violich, my American mentor in this research, and draws upon his systematic research and experience of Dalmatian towns and villages on the coast and islands. Places that he had visited in the past, and the places of his forbears who emigrated to California at the end of the 19th century.

* This paper has arisen as one of results of author's six month research upon *Planning in Function of Preserving the Identity of Place* as a visiting scholar at the Institute of Regional Development (IURD) at the University of California at Berkeley in the first half of 1996.

1 I want to mention just couple of names from present days from United States of America and England, the names of sociologists, geographers, planners who tried to define a place, its appearance and awareness but always from the point of view of their field research. They are followed by the titles of their well known books: Edward C. Relph (*Place and Placelessness*), Fritz Steele (*The Sense of Place*), John, J. Brinckerhoff (*A Sense of Place, a Sense of Time*), David Canter (*The Psychology of Place*), Anthony Hiss (*The Experience of Place*), Dolores Hayden (*The Power of Place*), Michael Hough (*Out of Place*), Yi-fu Tuan (*Space and Place*), Christopher Alexander, Fred E. Lukerman, Simon Weil.

2 In chronological order they are as follows: *The image of the City* (1972), *What Time is This Place?* (1972), *Managing the Sense of a Region* (1976), *A Theory of Good City Form* (1981), *City Sense and City Design* (1990).

Let us return to the beginning: the *Place*. The meaning of *place* is so tightly connected with all settings and situations we live in; it brings all possible imaginable diversity and intensity of human (does only human?) experience of space. The variety of somebody's experiencing of the *place* according to Edward C. Relph can be focused in four essential ways:

- a) The relationship between space and place can be examined in order to demonstrate the range of place experiences and concepts;
- b) The different components and intensities of place experience can be explored as very deep linkage between people and the places they live in and experience;
- c) Analyzing the nature of identity of places and the identity of people with places;
- d) Illustrating the ways in which the sense of place and attachment to place are manifest in the making of places and landscapes.³

Unfortunately much of that mentioned above ended only in theory. Not much of it has been used in planning process, and only few planners tried to make that kind of research that will be followed by appropriate planning.

A very good discussion of the place concept in geography can be found in an article by Fred Lukerman⁴ where he is revealing six major components of the concept of place:

- a) The idea of location, location as it relates to other things and places, is absolutely fundamental,
- b) Place involves an integration of elements of nature and culture; this undoubtedly implies that every place is a unique entity,
- c) Although the places are unique, they are interconnected by a system of spatial interactions and transfers, part of a frame of circulation,
- d) Places are part of larger areas and are focuses in a system of localization,
- e) Places are emerging and becoming: with historical and cultural change new elements are added, while some old disappear,
- f) Places have meaning: they are characterized by the beliefs of individuals.⁵

Another geographer, Yi-fu Tuan⁶ discusses and examines space and place in geography from a phenomenological perspective view. Speaking in geographic manner, let me mention the four different meanings that can be applied to the *Place*:

- a) It can mean the entire surface of the Earth,
- b) It can refer to a unit of space like country, province, city, village, settlement,
- c) It can refer particularly to a specific part of some space (residential or office building, a yard or a park, a street or a square),
- d) It also means an exact location, position of someone or something.

In geographical way of speaking, space is not uniform and homogeneous; it has its own name, sense and experience. The place

3 Relph, 1976.

4 Lukerman, 1964: 167-172.

5 Lukerman, 1964: 169.

6 Tuan, 1975: chap. 2 & 3.

has to be recognized and considered as a *phenomenon of direct experience*⁷. It has to be concerned with the entire range of experiences that help us to know and make places. Man lives, moves, and works in the world that is so rich and differentiated with places, but still we have a very poor understanding of the constitution of the places and their experiencing. Places are sources of identity for every single living being, and thus the importance of adequate experiencing, creating and maintaining of every single place is obvious. Unfortunately this importance has not been recognized by everyone. Simply, not many people are aware of the importance of some place, and what is even worse, the same conclusion can be applied to the architects and town planners. The results are all these numerous *placeless* places⁸ that represent the weakness of distinctive and diverse experiences and identities of places and *with* places. All these mentioned above, undoubtedly leads to rootlessness.

1. The Essence of Place

For human mind, place is everywhere, anywhere where he/she was, is, or even dreaming of being at. A place is a center of any physical or mind action, or even intention. It is everywhere where we have experienced the meanings and events of our existence. Because of our moving ability and imagination, the place is everywhere where our mind can reach. Place can occur at all levels of identity: subjective (*mine* or *yours*, *ours* or *theirs*) or objective (here, there, in the house, on the street, in the town, or even any solar or star system). The aspects of the lived-in-world that someone can distinguish as places are differentiated because they all involve a great deal of concentration of our intentions.

In our living-in-world, the place cannot be experienced independently, clearly, as a defined entity: the entity that could be easily and simply described by means of location and appearance. The place has to be concerned and understood in the context of other places, other features and appearances, other settings, occupied by other living beings. They are all overlapping and interpenetrating each other, forming different identities at the same time at different places and giving a chance to provide a handful of varieties of interpretations.

According to E. C. Relph, *the essence of place lies in the largely unselfconscious intention that defines places as profound centers of human existence. There is a deep association with place and consciousness of the places where we were born and grew up, where we live now, or where we have had particularly moving experience*.⁹ This is a source-point from which we orient ourselves in the world. If we wish to consider place to be a multifaceted phenomenon of experience and try to examine the various properties of place then we have to face the following: *location, landscape, time* and, of course, some *personal involvement*. They all happen to be of a crucial essence of the place.

1.1. Location

The first step for someone trying to define a place will be to describe the location of the entire *place*. Most of the places are indeed located, but the location is far from enough in defining the entire place, its meaning and experiencing. The location of

7 Relph, 1976: 5.

8 Speaking from the planning aspect, typical example of placelessness are the towns and neighborhoods in US with a street grid system, where the blocks are of the same size, and even the type of the houses are the same. Another example of placeless places are the big shops and the shopping malls around the US, especially if they belong to a chain of the same company. Most of them look the same, the interior is the same, the same inside order of the retail place. During my stay in the US I faced with these placeless places when visiting some of the shops or department stores as *Safeway, Circuit City, Radio Shack, Target, Macy's* etc. The inside organization was the same for each of the shops, regardless whether it was in San Francisco, Los Angeles, New York, or any other town. The outside look did not differ too much either: a big squared "pancake" building surrounded by hundreds of parking lots, without trees. Sometimes the entrance is differentiated but never too much - not to confuse the customers that are so used to the inside organization of the similar shop from another town!

9 Relph, 1976: 43.

some place can be changeable and still not have the influence on the sense or experience of the place. Let us focus upon a nomad tribe that moves its *place* from time to time in search for food, or just for more appropriate site in terms of security. They are changing the location of their *place* in geographical manner. Tribe is moving through the space, but when it arrives to another livable place, the members of the tribe will put up their "homes" in the very similar manner as it used to be some hundred kilometers behind. They will try to re-establish their old *place* on a new location. Another example can be found in today's so called 'contemporary nomads', the people that are moving around the world, because of business, or simply because they just feel like moving on. We cannot say that they do not have sense for identity of place and *with* place. Most of them, upon arriving on a new spot, will try to re-establish their own place: by putting a family picture near the bed in a hotel room, or on a desk in a new office, that would remind them of the town they used to live or work at before. All these human behaviors, Prof. Violich described through *Ten Properties of Identity With Place*¹⁰.

Places are located - they have their sublocation, but their location or position is neither an essential, nor a sufficient condition of *place*. The nomadism throughout the history does not necessarily mean that all these humans (or even animals) are placeless beings, beings without an attachment to the place. To the contrary, every single living being has a very strong attachment to its own *place*, regardless of the location of the *place*.

According to well-known American geographer Yi-fu Tuan¹¹, the distinction between *Space* and *Place* can be interpreted as: When *Space* feels thoroughly familiar to us, it becomes *Place*.¹² The questions are: What does it mean: *familiar*? When someone can say: I know this place? Is it when a person is able to put his own intimate boundaries around the space, the boundaries that help bring the image of the *identity of place* and *identity with place*? This could be a possible answer, but not the only one.

1.2. Landscape

There is something that no one can deny: the existence of connection between place and the landscape. The landscape is, somehow, a physical and visual form of the *space*, some kind of a boundary that makes it a *place*. At the same time the word *landscape* has various meanings. At this very moment we shall consider landscape to be everything that is surrounding some particular place: natural and urban landscape. The appearance of the place, particularly of towns and villages on hilltops or river confluences, is the most obvious attribute of some place and its identity. The spirit of place lies in viewers and is performed by surrounding landscape, but it is for sure not the only one. The image of place depends on the inside factors as much as on the outside ones, but landscape is for sure one of the most important outside factors.

The natural environment surrounding of some particular place has a very important role in its appearance throughout the entire history of the place. A statement that some town is situated on a hill is far from being enough to get the right picture of it, as

¹⁰ Among his very rich and plentiful opus on urban and landscape planning these are the articles and books dealing with the *Identity of Place and Identity with Place: Dalmatia, Urban Identity and the War 1991-1993; Seeking Meaning in Places; Experiencing Places: The Aesthetics of the Participatory Environment; Identity and Giove: Hill Towns are Alive and Well in Umbria; Identity Key to Meaningful Place-Making: The Case for Berkeley; Identity With Place: A Source of Human Meaning in Urban Design; The Bridge to Dalmatia: A Search for the Meaning of Place* (manuscript for the book).

¹¹ For more about phenomenological perspective of space and place refer to his book *Space and Place: The Perspective of Experience* (1977).

¹² Tuan, 1975: 73.



FG. 1. a The Octopus-spread-like street net of Motovun, Istria, Croatia

Source • Izvor
Istra - Terra Magica, p. 53.

SL. 1. a. Mreža ulica Motovuna u Istri, zagrlila je brdo kao pipci velikog oktopoda



FG. 1. b A hillridge-spread main and the only street of Draguč, Istria, Croatia

Source • Izvor
Istra - Terra Magica, p. 121.

SL. 1. b. Glavna i jedina ulica Draguča proteže se duž sljemena manjeg brežuljka okomitoga na lokalnu prometnicu



FG. 1. c Village of Marija Bistrica, squeezed among the hills of Hrvatsko zagorje, Croatia

Source • Izvor
Krapinsko-zagorska županija: Romantično srce Hrvatske, p. 15.

SL. 1. c. Marija Bistrica, stiješnjena između brežuljaka Hrvatskog zagorja, Hrvatska

the spread of the town on the hill slopes can be so different. For example, an image of the small towns (FG. 1.a and 1.b) in the heart of the Istrian peninsula is totally different from the image of the places in Hrvatsko zagorje (FG. 1c), a north-west region of Croatia. A place can acquire different images (appearances), as the entire landscape changes just by altering the range of the viewed territory.

1.3. Time

We preserve present signals of the Past or control the Present in order to satisfy our images of the Future. Our images of Past and Future are all present image, continuously re-created.¹³ The place is the present expression of past experiences and events and the expression of hopes for the future. When changing characters of the places through the time, we always have in mind the changes of the buildings and landscapes. We have to be aware that the time for *insiders* is different from the time for *outsiders*¹⁴. The persistence of some place through the time is related to our experience of change. When moving from place to place, people try to establish the image of the previous place by putting on sight some recognizable items. In some way they are trying to re-establish the time they spent at the previous place. The attachment to some place becomes stronger by the length of time spent at the particular place.

Nevertheless, many places have "died" throughout the history, like: Stonehenge, Carnac, cities of Aztecs and Incas. We need not go so far back to the past to think of dead places. The recent war in Croatia and Bosnia (FG. 2), for sure, has implanted a lot *in-future-to-die* places. The reasons are not just ruined houses and destroyed settlements, as people have managed to restore (to build on ashes) much bigger towns and cities (London and Berlin after the World War II). The reason lies in people: many of them are trying to establish their new *place* in some other region, or country due to different reasons. Yet still, there are a lot of people that wish to come back, and live on their ancestor's land. They feel they just cannot leave it. It can be called relation between people and their place through time. But, are these places to be the same after several years of reconstruction?

1.4. Private, Personal and Public Place

Previous sections have brought a brief description of the *place* through three dimensions (location and landscape) adding the fourth one (time). They all represent, so called an objective awareness of *place*. To be able to understand the meaning of *awareness of place*, and later on *identity of place*, another dimen-

¹³ Lynch, 1972: 65.

¹⁴ *Insiders versus Outsiders* is one of the Ten Properties of Identity with Place revealed by Prof. Francis Violich. For more upon this topic refer to the article *Identity: Key to Meaningful Place-making. The Case for Berkeley* in: "Prostor" (1995): vol. 3, no. 2(10), pp. 201-216.



FG. 2. Vukovar, a symbol of war destroyed towns in Croatia

Photo by • Fotografija HINA, 1996.

SL. 2. Vukovar, simbol ratom razorenih gradova u Hrvatskoj

sion has to be mentioned: a subjective awareness of place, that depends on the viewer perception, awareness and feeling.

Every single *place* with its surrounding *landscape* will be differently experienced by each of us. Each of the places we look at through our own *lenses* that are created by our attitudes, experiences and intentions, under our own circumstances. Each of us tries to form his own *private place*. These *private places* (physically defined and publicly respected) are usually apart from the public world, relating to psychological meaning and they are important for each of us. That *private place* can be a working table in a corner of the room, or a chair by TV or When we are in one of our *private places*, we do not want to be disturbed. They express our individuality, and that is something that architects and planners must have in mind when designing places: building, set of buildings, neighborhood, streets and squares, towns.

Meaning of *private place* does not necessary mean it is meant just for one person. *Private place* can also be defined by a group of people or the whole entire community, and still each of them will feel it like his own *private place*¹⁵. A simple bench in the park, or traditionally known place for young people meeting point in Zagreb "*pod satom*" (under the clock) at the central square of Zagreb can be of a special meaning of *private place* to part or even the whole community. Although these places are in fact *public spaces* they are considered as *private places* by so many people. Real *public places* are streets, squares, public buildings, parks, recreational areas, beaches, but what is most important, every single person or a group of people is capable of making a *private place* out of every single *public place*.

Some *places*, like places from our own childhood, have a special significance for each of us; they can be remembered in a very specific manner only by one person, by me, or him, or her. They can not be experienced in that special way by anyone else as they are in our mind, in our memory. We call them *personal places*, and they are reflection of our own experience, our pure individ-

¹⁵ Examples of the meaning of public space to the people and whole entire community and their awareness of it as a *private place* can be found in case studies done by Prof. Randolph Hester at the Department for Landscape Architecture at CED UC Berkeley. In a case study for the town of Manteo, North Carolina he showed that sometimes a very simple, everyday public places in a small town can be of a great importance for people as themselves in the way of considering them as a precious *private place*. More about this and other case studies can be found in his recently printed article in "Prostor", titled: *Economic Progress Within Community Preservation: The Case of Manteo, North Carolina, USA* or some of his books as: *Neighborhood Space* (1975); *Planning Neighborhood Space with People* (1984); *Community Design Primer* (1990).

uality and identity. Thousands of people may see the same place, but each of them is going to have his own experience of it; everyone is going to make out of it his own *personal space* and its recognition. The places that we are mostly attached to are places of care, the settings in which we have had a multiply experience. We feel a special sense for that place. There is also a respect for these places, a commitment to the place. Some of these places are called homes. Not to be mistaken: home is not just the house, it is the whole lot, surrounding, landscape that makes the place so special that we are so attached to it. This is also called the need for the roots.

*To be rooted is perhaps the most important and least recognized need of the human soul. It is one of the hardest to define. A human being has roots by virtue of his real, active and natural participation in the life of the community, which preserves in living shape certain particular expectations for the future.*¹⁶

2. Space and Place

The various types of space are within direct objective experience of space on one side and subjective or abstract thoughts on the other side. In this paper we shall examine physical space that we are concerned with.

Space defines itself by everything we can experience in daily life: sky and earth, water and land, hamlet and city, street and square, a building itself from outside and inside. We call it visible space, space with physical or objective awareness. *Space* with subjective awareness and without physical appearance is space in astronomical, mathematical or other kind of meaning as the *space* claimed to be occupied by objects, settlements or even countries. The real nature of *space*, and how it can be described, has been a matter of many discussions by philosophers, sociologists, scientists and others. The discussions are not even to be close to the final understanding of that simple word as the variety of space forms and space experiences is nearly indefinable: *space* is something so amorphous, so unpredictable in its understanding. *Space is the entity that can not be directly described and analyzed.*¹⁷

2.1. Primitive Space

One of the descriptions of *primitive space* could be the space that the infants and baby animals are "aware" of, the space that is associated with body movement and senses. This is a space that involves no images and awareness, no spatial relation between things in material world. At this very primitive and limited level of self-consciousness it is very hard to distinguish space from place. In primitive space, a human infant starts to learn the essential movements through the space: moving his hand to reach some faint distant shadow that is moving somewhere around (its mother's face or hand). The infant does not recognize the distance to what makes the shadow; and it takes quite a while to coordinate the movement of its eyes and its hand with the movement of the "shadow". This kind of space can be considered as a set of places where someone finds himself in but is in no way capable to make any kind of a mental picture of it; it is not aware of the existence and the difference between them. The next experienced *place* momentarily erases the "picture" of the previous one. By growing

¹⁶ Weil, 1955: 53.

¹⁷ Relph, 1976: 8.

and learning their mind becomes more aware of the surrounding. The humans, unlike any other living being, become aware of *perceptual space*.

2.2. Perceptual Space

By growing, the infant gets more mobile; it learns more by experiencing the space around. Its egocentric space is getting larger and larger. Primitive space becomes perceptual space, a space that has some content and meaning, a space that can not be divorced from experiences and intentions. In this new formatted space, as mobility increases, each individual arranges the world around in his manner and needs by picking up the elements that might serve him in living in this space. The individual becomes capable of perception - *The perception that means process of becoming aware of the different stimuli in our surroundings*.¹⁸

From the definition of the *perception* we come to one of the definitions of *perceptual space* given by psychologist Norberg-Schulz: *Perceptual space has a center, which is perceiving man, and therefore it has an excellent system of directions which change with the movement of the human body; it is limited and in no sense neutral; in other words it is finite, heterogeneous and subjectively defined and perceived; distances and directions are fixed and relative to man*.¹⁹ The perceptual space can also be defined as a collection of emotional encounters with the earth, sky, water (natural environment) and any built or created space. Through these particular encounters and experiences perceptual space becomes differentiated into places. *Perceptual space* can be shared by many individuals, and still be so unique for each of them.

2.3. Cognitive Space

The process of which the stimuli are the part of the outside world, the process of categorizing them, distinguishing between them or recognizing them is known as cognition.²⁰ As a contrary to perceptual space that can be seen, experienced, even touched, there is *cognitive space*, as homogeneous space with equal value everywhere and in all directions. It is uniform and neutral. Cognitive space in planning practice relies on geometry and theory of spatial organization. Trying to define the meaning of cognitive space in planning perhaps the most suitable definition could be the one that is defined within Euclidean space. The essence of concept of this space is within the relative location of each single thing, the location that can be defined in a very systematic manner. *Place* in Euclid space can be understood as location defined by sets of 3-D (or 2-D in aerial space) coordinates that help the observer to understand the inter-relationship between places and its subdivisions.

Using elements from Euclidean space architects and planners form a place from something that is momentarily so empty or abstract. Using points, lines, curves they reshape a part of *abstract space* into something that will be understood and recognized by the rest of the people; they create perceptual or cognitive space defined through Euclidean space, space that will become real through development, construction and reconstruction. This kind of process is the essential tool in architectural, urban and environmental design.

¹⁸ Canter, 1977: 8.

¹⁹ Norberg-Schulz, 1971: 13.

²⁰ Canter, 1977: 8.

2.4. Abstract Space

Euclidean space is not the only and necessary reflection of the space, but for sure is one of the mostly acceptable to the human mind. Today's mathematicians are dealing with space with more than three dimensions, practically with space with N-dimensions, so difficult to be understood by so many people. Ordinary people would say it is so *abstract*. *Abstract space* must not be related to chaos. To the contrary, abstract space is the space of logical relations between points and lines, symbols for abstract relations. *Abstract space* is continuous, isotropic, homogeneous, finite and infinite at the same time.

There is no significant distinguish between spaces; they all overlap each other and help every mind create its own variety of spaces and places. *Primitive space integrates man with his natural, organic environment; perceptual space is essential to his identity as a person, existential space makes him belong to a social and cultural totality, cognitive space means he is able to think about the space, ... and logical space offers him a tool to describe the others.*²¹ The relationship between forms and space help us create the image of some particular place.

2.5. Spatial Ability, Knowledge of Space

Built and planned spaces represent an integration of experience and thoughts of some particular person, unlike the natural environment which is an integration of ecological forces that are not related to human hand, but can be altered. The knowledge of creating and reading maps is a fundamental part of somebody's experience of existential and perceptual space. Spatial knowledge extends, somehow, beyond terrain manifestation; it relies also upon the *knowledge of heaven, or the entire landscape as itself.*²² Map represent the relations between objects; they helps us to establish the basis for creating almost everything. They are, undoubtedly, the evidence of human power to conceptualize spatial relation and help us find our way in space; they enlarge and encourage our spatial ability and help us gain knowledge of some particular space.

Besides, there is the spatial ability and knowledge of space and place that relies upon something that can not be so easily determined through maps. It is spatial ability and knowledge of space through learning and determining from right to wrong direction. Spatial ability is something that humans have to learn ever since they are born, it develops slowly, while other animals are born already with some spatial ability, but the ability that can not be widen too much. The human mind learns to deal with spatial relations long after the body itself becomes capable in performing some movements. Owing to the mind, the human spatial ability rises above the one of other living species. By acquainting with *space* and *place* we gain better spatial ability and vice versus. *Spatial ability becomes spatial knowledge when movements and changes of location can be envisaged.*²³

2.6. Relations Between Form and Space

Maps with their set of lines and drawings help us create an image of some space but they also give us a relationship between places in some space, relations between different forms in some place,

²¹ Norberg-Schulz, 1971: 11.

²² Very good example for this statement are the sailors that manage to find their way through the broad seascape only by watching stars, or by watching the change of sea color or movements. The same can be applied to the tribes living in deserts of Africa, or tundra in Siberia, or everlasting icescape in northern Alaska and Canada. Without producing any kind of maps the people are capable in finding their way through the surrounding landscape. And what is the most important, as the surrounding landscape has been less differentiated, the spatial ability and awareness is better. It is probably the lack of differentiation that forces people to reveal the *sense* and the *image* of *space/place* in order to be able to move around.

²³ Tuan, 1977: 67-68.

relation between different spaces in some particular form (by *form* I consider an artificial object - a building, but a natural objects as well). Every single space or place can be identified by different forms that are within. They can be natural or manmade one. Nature makes all the natural forms as seas, lakes and rivers, mountains, hills and valleys including the whole entire flora and fauna. An individual develops the space according to its needs. He builds different settlements and roads in between, he makes built and planned spaces (places) that integrate his experience and thought.

All these forms help us create an *image* of the space/place, a term that we are to use very often in future discussion. They help us create a cognitive space with cognitive ideas that help in creating all the environment in which we live. Every human being creates its own image and experience of some place according to the information and images it has gained of the particular place. For instance, someone who lives in some particular place has very different image and awareness of the place from the others who come to that place for a short period of time (residents and tourists). Perhaps we should call them *users* and *viewers*; or *insiders* and *outsiders*? However we name the people that get the awareness and experience of some place, we have to consider the relation between form and space that can be natural or artificial one.

2.7. Architectural Space and Planning Space

Speaking of relation between natural and artificial forms, we get to the phenomena of architectural and planning space. Architectural space can be described as a part of abstract space that has become cognitive space as a result of some human attempt to create the space. Architectural space can be identified, according to Siegfried Giedion, in three different ways:

- a) Interplay between different kinds of volumes;
- b) Space that is hollowed-out - interior space;
- c) Space that is treated from several perspectives simultaneously, free relationship between inside and outside.²⁴

Creating some architectural space we need larger space (a building lot) to build it on. This space is always surrounded by some other volumes (architectural or natural ones) and it is very important to understand their future interplay and correlation, as this is forming an image (identity) of the place. For example, a glimpse look upon the drawing of a skyline can be enough to tell which place it belongs to.

Unfortunately, the goal in creating a recognizable identity of some places led us to *placeless* architectural space. Placeless architecture can be found all around the world (from gas stations and fast-food restaurants, food and department stores, all the way to well-known hotels). The architects had to serve the only goal: to preserve *the identity of the function* of the architectural space by repeating the same outside and inside design of the building (FG. 3). Fortunately, today's trend in preserving identity is heading other direction and is getting stronger and more important. This time we are speaking about the identity of place (including the whole environment) and not only of the building or serving function itself. A great number of very successful designs and

²⁴ Giedion, 1978: 32.

FG. 3. Safeway department store looks same in Berkeley in California, or anywhere else in US

Photo by • Fotografija
N. Lipovac, 1996.

SL. 3. Robna kuća Safeway izgleda jednako u Berkeleyju, Kalifornija kao i bilo gdje drugdje u Sjedinjenim Američkim Državama



realizations prove that it is possible to save the identity of the place, or setting and still (speaking in commercial language) keep the recognizable function identity of the place.

Space that treats the insideness and outsideness of some building as of same importance represents a bridge that connects architectural and planning space. This kind of planning, fortunately lead us to the point where the planning as itself is not considered only as a 2-D planning process, as it was a case in the past. The two-dimensional arrangement of functions and different urban usage led the planning space toward two-dimensional cognitive space of maps and plans - zoning. This resulted by enormous usage of orthogonal grid street network system in town planning, specially in USA, as it served the most efficient transportation system, what was the main goal in town and city planning. The planning space was filled up with volumes of architectural spaces sited on two-dimensional sites, and empty space in between regardless what was around.

Fortunately, today we have different views upon planning process and preserving the environment (natural and man made), considering the space within three dimensions. This is one of today's' rising-to-the-surface approaches in architecture and town planning process that will, for sure, help to provide a sense of the *identity of place* and human scale, and preserve it for generations that are to come. In order to be able to read out the uniqueness of some space/place, the planner has to be able to *experience the place*, to feel it, to catch *the sense of place and time of that place*, to feel *the spirit of the place*. During the process of planning the planner has to let the place to perform *the impact of its spirit*, and always keep in mind that the place has to live after his/her involvement through planning. The correct and sincere *perception and awareness of the place* will help in *making and creating the sense of place*. These are the points that we shall try to discuss about in the next section.

3. The Experience of Place

In previous sections we tried to discuss on different kind of space definitions. It was done in order to be able to perform a suitable definition of *place*. To be able to understand what is a *place*, in this section we shall try to reveal the meaning of *the experience of place*.

We, the humans, can perceive the surroundings by two-dimensional and three-dimensional sensing. Human mind is capable, somehow, to "translate" the 3-D image into a 2-D one, and vice versus. Of course, this can differ from person to person, according to someone's ability to "read out" the environmental settings. This ability, that we are not always aware of, enables us to experience places around us. In United States of America the experience of places has become a vast field of research in social psychology with its subdivisions of environmental, urban and ecological psychology as a study of relationship between people and places.

American sociologist Fritz Steele in his book "The Sense of Place" suggests to the reader to make an effort in answering the following questions in order to understand what is the meaning of experience of place:

- What kind of mood is this place stimulating to me?
- What are the messages that this particular place holds about what happened here in the past?
- Can I get more out of this place/setting by changing the way I am using it?
- Am I allowing myself really to experience what this place/setting has to offer?
- Can I change the place/setting in some positive way?
- Do I want to stay here, or should I move on?²⁵

These questions, or better to say the answers, can also be of a great help to the planners and architects in solving the everlasting problem: how to make a plan for a place (settlement) that would provide all the good images the human being need to get from it, and still preserve the image of the place and environment before his impact. But the answers themselves are not enough; there is much more than that. We need to get experienced by some place to be able to understand it.

In order to understand the meaning of *the experience of place*, in this chapter we shall try to describe and define the *feel for place experience, sense of place and sense of time, spirit of place, and its impact*. To understand the meaning of place experiencing very important role has the *perception and awareness of the place*. Understanding of these meanings is of a great importance for a planner who really wishes to make a livable place or settlement. The planner has to learn to discover, reveal and understand all that if he wishes to *make and create the sense of place*. Yet there is another task: he has to teach the people living in this place or area to understand the planning process that was just introduced and to keep the existing sense of place through settings, goals and future managing.

3.1. Feel for Place Experience

The meaning of the word *Place* is reflecting the importance of its role in human history. The places are phenomena of direct experiences; people identify themselves with places; call some places

²⁵ Steele, 1981: 10.

their homes. Differing places, people distinguish themselves by identifying the places they come from. There is no doubt: Places are shaping the characters of the residents, and people are shaping places through time, creating the new ones that they become part of. Ever since the first primate has descended from a tree he tried to find the place that would provide him and the members of his flock a sense of security - a feeling that they have a place they can go back to, the place that provides a sense of control over their own fate. These feelings and experiences can be very intimate and social ones.

■ 3.1.1. Intimate experience of place

Intimate experiences of places are very difficult to express, and explain so far. By intimate experience, place undoubtedly becomes the intimate one. *Intimate places are places of nature where our fundamental needs are heeded and cared for without fuss.*²⁶ People like to consider intimate places as home, although they are not. Home is the place that is filled up with ordinary objects that we use in everyday life. A hometown is an intimate place, too. Never mind if we move out of it, each come-back will refresh our memories and fill us up with so warm experience. But the intimate experience with some place can develop even if we have never been to that place before. The first moment I saw and set my foot at San Francisco streets in 1978, I knew I *fell in love* with the place. There was something in the town that made me say to myself: "I want to come back, I want to feel the sense of this place".

Connectivity with the past, or is it better to say with the roots, is of a great importance in experiencing some familiar places, too. The roots of my American mentor, Professor Francis Violich, go back to a little village of Kuna, on the Pelješac peninsula in south Dalmatia. The roots and the intimate experiences of this and other places on the Dalmatian coast that he has experienced during his visits to Croatia became a unique force that led him to write a book²⁷ he finished when I was in Berkeley, in spring 1996. The book, *"The Bridge to Dalmatia: A Search for the Meaning of Place"* is a collection of interpretive analyses of several Dalmatian towns and villages, on the coast and some of the islands. The nature of his direct field study provides very good examples for the meaning of the expression: *intimate experience of place*. Its intimacy stands from family ties and enables the reader of the book to form the *pictures in the head* of the distant places, and sense the urban forms at the same time.

■ 3.1.2. Social experience of place

Contrary to intimate experience of place, the social aspects need to be discussed, too. *People and their environment form so called "transactional systems", systems with each giving to and receiving something from the other.*²⁸ The social context of some place is the collection of different forces upon an individual as a result of different relationships to other people. Each place will be experienced differently. It also depends whether you are alone at the spot, or you are a member of a bigger social group. If someone joins the tourist guided tour around some particular place, then he/she is going to see and experience something that wasn't his/

²⁶ Tuan, 1977: 137.

²⁷ The title of the book is *Bridge to Dalmatia: A Search for the Meaning of Place* that is going to be published by John Hopkins University Press, Baltimore.

²⁸ Steele, 1981: 9.

her own choice, but a choice of somebody else. The choice that was made in order to give the participants some image or experience of the place. The inter-behaving of the members becomes the part of the place experience, too. The experience of the place is less objective, and more subjective, but subjective in the meaning of somebody's else image of the place. The image that he/she wants to carry over to the rest. In case of tourist group it is the image that a guide wants to give to the group. After the tour is finished all the members of the group are about to have very similar experience of the place, but if someone from the group returns to "the site" by him(her)self, the experience is probably going to be very much different.²⁹

In the planning process it is very important that the architect planner manages to reveal both experiences, his (her) own and the experience of the people living at the place that the plan is to be made for. The planner has to search and reveal the *sense of the place* and the *sense of time* of the place and the people living in it.

3.2. Sense of Place, Sense of Time³⁰

As we have learned in the previous sub-section, the same place can create different senses for different people, as they connect the appearance of some particular place with their being there (direct experience) or what they have read or heard about it (indirect experience). We can say that the sense of some place is a collection of reactions that the settlements induct in somebody's mind, but also a set of aspects the person brings to the settlement. The sense of the place is something that the *living-in person* or the *coming-in observer* creates in his (her) mind at (or during) some period of time. A sense of place is an *unusual composition of space and forms (natural and man-made)*.³¹ Presentation of this simple sentence in the mathematical way of formula would be like this:

<p>PERSON + SETTING = SENSE OF PLACE</p> <p style="margin-left: 20px;">psychological factors</p> <p style="margin-left: 40px;">+ physical setting</p> <p style="margin-left: 40px;">+ social setting</p>

Sense of place is an expression that can be considered as a translation of the Latin term *genius loci*, which had more meaning as a *guardian divinity of the place* than as the place itself. It had some kind of a divine and supernatural meaning, but our modern culture "translated" it into something as "influence" of the place, or "the ability to recognize different places and its identities". A strong sense of place supports our sense of personal identity.³² Whatever expression and translation we consider as the right one, for each of them there are two possibilities for differing the *sense of place*: It can be *authentic* and *inauthentic*. The second possibility takes us to *Placelessness*.

■ 3.2.1. Authentic and inauthentic sense of place

Authentic place is the place with sincere appearance; appearance in time and space. Authentic sense of place is something that brings individual and community belongings upon the surface of somebody's perception and cognition. It is something that cannot be replicated anywhere else. Each place has its own authentic

²⁹ Back in 1978, when I visited California for the first time, I took a guided tour around San Francisco down town. I enjoyed my visit very much, I fell in love with the place and promised myself to come back. So I did. I returned to California in 1983. I was attending some classes at Summer School Program at UC Berkeley, College of Environmental Design, but I was staying with some friends in a small place named Cupertino, some 40 miles south from San Francisco. One weekend I went to San Francisco on my own. I walked around the same places, once I had seen from the bus, or from a crowd. Of course there were some changes in architectural and urban settings, but I felt the place so differently, so intimately that I could say: "That was my place".

³⁰ The title of this sub-section has been taken from the title of the book by American social geographer Brinckerhoff J. Jackson: *A Sense of Place, a Sense of Time*, 1994.

³¹ Brinckerhoff, 1994: 151.

³² Lynch, 1976: 25.

FG. 4. a Shopping areas near Louisville in Kentucky, USA

Photo by • **Fotografija**
N. Lipovac, 1996.

SL. 4. a. Trgovački centri u predgrađu Louisvillea, Kentucky, SAD



FG. 4. b Shopping mall near Livermore, California, USA

Photo by • **Fotografija**
N. Lipovac, 1996.

SL. 4. b. Trgovački centar pokraj Livermora, Kalifornija, SAD



sense and experience, nevertheless if it represents a copy of some other distant place. There is only a question: *Is this place authentic?* An authentic place is made through personal commitment. To be able to "read" the authenticity of some place we have to wide up the range of our perception: to take into account the entire built and natural landscape.

*While places acquire meaning simply because we live in them, their architecture and man-made landscape are not superfluous, for human life requires a system of places that have structure and form and meaning.*³³ This system of places can be determined self-consciously and unself-consciously. The self-consciousness creates the authentic sense of place associated with architectural or planning design process. In his book "Place and Placelessness" E. C. Relph writes: *An authentic sense of place is manifest in attempts to create places that reflect a clear and complete*

33 Brinckerhoff, 1994: 160.

*conception of man as well as a sensitivity to the significance of place in everyday life.*³⁴ This is something planners should have in mind when starting a planning process.

As we have concluded before, the authenticity is a phenomena that consists of an openness to the world on one side, and an awareness of the human conditions on the other side. The inauthenticity is, naturally, something with *opposite* sign. This is also characteristic of normal and everyday life, especially in industrialized and mass economy and values societies. Perhaps the simplest description of the meaning of *inauthenticity is place with no sense*, leading us to a new term *placelessness*.

■ 3.2.2. Placelessness

*Cultural and geographical uniformity is not, of course, an entirely new phenomenon. The spread of Greek civilization, the Roman Empire, Christianity, or even the diffusion of the idea of the city, all involved the imposition of a homogeneity on formerly varied cultures and landscapes. Landscapes of placeless geography, lacking, both diverse landscapes and significant places, and also imply that we are at present subjecting ourselves to the focus of placelessness and are losing our sense of place.*³⁵

Rising demands of industrialized world, following the logic of *nothing but economic development*, introduced the problem of characterless settings, places without any personality and distinguishing spirit. Towns and cities, built through so many years, began to loose their character. The "modern society" tended to destroy all the richness of places. Most of the place-decline started in the second half of the nineteenth century with industrial revolution in Western world: the town-spread consisted of massed proletarian areas: street after street, uniformed houses in a row, attached wall to wall. Not even the curving streets of England could save the placelessness experience. What happened, meanwhile, across the ocean? The vast opened land, the rapid "progress" demanded "more efficient" planning which has resulted with grid planning system with straight streets, equally sized blocks; everything was planned to serve the vast growth of transportation.

Even the *industrial and merchandise architecture* became part of the placelessness. For example, one of these clone-designed super market stores on the outskirts of an average US town: the lot on a main streets crossing with the building that is surrounded with a vast asphalt surface determined to serve as a parking lot for hundreds of vehicles (FG. 4a). There are no trees, no bushes, no lawns. Just asphalt covered with metal. Perhaps the reason in doing so is to enable the customers to see the shopping place wherever someone parks the car. The facade of the entire building is a flat, bald surface. Only one wall is different, the one with a numerous photo-sensitive sliding glass-doors that are so efficient when pushing the cart full of merchandise out. The inside is a bright artificially illuminated area, with neatly arranged rows of shelves with all kind of goods, shelves on a distance that allows two-way cart traffic in between.... The progress goes on and on: in early sixties American planning system introduced shopping malls: places that under same roof have all kind of different shops, restaurants, ... Now the customers could "enjoy the shopping all day long". To attract the customers the designers go for

³⁴ Norberg-Schulz, 1971: 226.

³⁵ Relph, 1994: 71.



FG. 5. San Francisco skyline as seen from the Bay

Photo by • Fotografija
N. Lipovac, 1996.

SL. 5. Obris grada San Francisca, viden iz Zaljeva

an attractive architectural details: between the Korynth-styled columns on the facade there are stainless steel framed windows. To expose their concern about the nature, a small creek jumping over rocks covered with moss (FG. 4b) and beautiful trees aside can be found within the structure called shopping mall. The approach is the same on the East or West coast, in Central States or north in Canada.

Another most discouraging examples can be found in tourism. The hotel-monsters, or how they are sometimes called hotel-cities are the worlds for themselves. In everlasting race for hotel standards there are things that for sure do not belong to some place like swimming pools with nicely warmed sea water that are built just several meters from the coast. The best is when the pools are on the roof!

Speaking of placelessness in town planning, as an endless source are the American towns built on rectangular grid system, widely spread along the vast open land, with far distant hill-line. The down-town area within several blocks in square is filled with sky-rising towers, whose horizontal size mostly cover the entire block. The rest is flat built surface, not exceeding two or three floors. This is the sky-line of most American cities. Fortunately there are still bright examples of unique experience and sense. Of course, on the top of my intimate scale are San Francisco and Berkeley, the cities that beside the grid urban structure have some intimate, but still international sense of place (FG. 5).

■ 3.2.3. The image of place and time

Another, very important impact upon the sense of place is *Time*. Time is something that we are splashed with and within. Everything that we try to remember is connected with time: work, meals, meetings, sleep. We talk about time that we have spent together with some other people, daily or weekly timetable of the life we share with others brings us together. The whole framework of somebody's cognition is based upon orientation in time. *It is our sense of time, our sense of ritual, which in the long run creates our sense of place, and of the community.*³⁶

As it has been said at the beginning, we have to observe every single appearance of some place in three geometric dimensions,

³⁶ Relph, 1994: 80.



6a

FG. 6. a Stonehenge, EnglandSource • Izvor
Foto Archive CED Library, UC Berkeley**SL. 6. a.** Stonehenge, Engleska

6b

FG. 6. b Angkor-Watt, CambodiaSource • Izvor
Foto Archive CED Library, UC Berkeley**SL. 6. b.** Angkor-Watt, Kambodža

plus the fourth one: time. The time is very important in perceiving the image of some place or settlement. It help us understand the way some particular place was built and the reasons for it. Let us see how does Edward Relph write about the connectidness of place and time: *The changing character of places through time is of course related to modifications of buildings and landscapes as well as to changes in our attitudes, and is likely to seem quite dramatic after a prolonged absence. On the other hand, the persistence of the character of places is apparently related to a continuity both in our experience of change and in the very nature of change that serves to reinforce a sense of association and attachment to those places.*³⁷

Places live and die. The whole entire world is filled up with dying places and dead place structures: Stonehenge in England, Carnac in France, Aztecs' and Incas' cities in South America, golden rush towns in California, town of Anghor-Watt in the jungle of Cambo-

37 Relph, 1994: 31.

dia, Greek temples and other similar places (FG. 6a, 6b). These places have lost their original meanings, and now serve as, nothing else but tourist "attractions": thousands and thousands of passers-by scrawl around them without any special interest upon the place itself and its identity. They only represent objects of casual observation, and something that could be talked about with pride: *Look! This is where we were last summer!*

In search for such ghost places we don't have to go very far into the past: just think of the places that were destroyed during the WW2. Most of them have been re-built, people say more beautifully than they were before. The big question is: are these places the same as they used to be before? So many places have been destroyed during the war in former Yugoslavia. Now when the war is over the politicians are bringing promises to the refugees that all the places are to be rebuilt. Are the places going to be the same? The places will not be the same! Most of the houses, or better to say remains, must be removed totally in order to build the new ones. People want to return to their ancestors' homes and the time is not on their side. There won't be time to reconstruct, to rise from the ashes, the buildings that once were part of the identity of places. Therefore, we the planners should have to fight to save the places, save their sense and spirit. In the process of post-disaster reconstruction we have to understand that unavoidable part of place experience is time, the time from the past as the time for the future. *A sense of place supports our sense of personal identity.*³⁸ And personal identification with the place is the force that forms the *spirit of place*.

3.3. Spirit of Place

In the book "The Sense of Place", Fritz Steele discusses with reader about *The Spirit of place: Finding the Blue Haze*.³⁹ Here is what he says about the spirit of place at the very beginning of his book: *There are certain physical and social settings that are so potent that they evoke similar responses, regardless of the diversity of internal states of the responders. These settings have, what we call, a strong spirit of place that acts in a powerful, predictable manner on everybody who encounters them.*⁴⁰ Physical features of a setting will affect the feelings and the activities of the *insiders* and *outsiders*. Physical environmental settings (location, boundaries, size) combined with social features (behavior, the willingness to share the setting with the outsiders etc.) of the people living and working in these settings form the spirit of some particular place (setting).

■ 3.3.1. Location

When speaking of location as one of the factors that defines physical factors of a particular place we have to think of it in geographic manner: where it is and how it relates to its surroundings. Locational impact to the spirit of some place is more potent when the key feature of the setting is in strong contrast to its immediate surrounding. A vast valley, with nothing to be seen for miles around would bring to the observer a different picture than the valley that is surrounded with mountains in distance. An island within an island (*Košljun island within the island of Krk*) that is only a short boat ride far from the coast makes a different experience to the visitor than the island far in the open sea that takes several hours to reach on a fast ship.

³⁸ Lynch, 1976: 25.

³⁹ This title has been taken from the title of the chapter 6, part III in his book from 1981.

⁴⁰ Steele, 1981: 13.

There are numerous places and cities that are built upon the hills, but owing to its surrounding they all have different spirit, they are unique. Let us recall the image of some places upon a hill(s): Motovun in Istria with its spiral ascending streets, or Draguč that is spread along the three hundred meters long ridge of the hill (see *FG. 1a, 1b*), or San Francisco and its hills with city rectangular street-net that flows regardless the relief are for sure part of the spirit of San Francisco. There is no similar place (city) in the world of that size which street net demands strength and skill in walking along certain streets that are over 45° steep. This special spirit of San Francisco streets I have acquainted during the walk along California street from Ferry building towards west, or along Powell street from Union Square towards north and intersection with Lombard street, or taking a ride on a cable car that sometimes reminds on a roller-coaster ride in one of Entertainment Parks.

Another very important factor of the location (and spirit of place at the same time) is the reachness of the particular place. For instance, a church of St. Eufemija in Rovinj (*FG. 7a*), Croatia that can be reached by walking through the narrow streets of the old town situated on a hilly small peninsula in Istria, will provide a different feeling than some church in plain region, like church of St. Lorenz in Petrinja⁴¹, Croatia that was easy accessible through the central park (*FG. 7b*), or the monasteries in Meteora, Greece that can be reached along the "wild goat passes" or even only by a primitive elevator - a basket on a rope (*FG. 7c*).

■ 3.3.2. Boundaries

Another very important physical factor in creating a spirit of place are *boundaries*. They represent a delineation of a particular place from its surroundings. Boundaries maintain *the closing-in* effect of physical features that help us to create a special spirit of the place. Boundaries can vary according to the scale of the observed place: they can be walls and fences, buildings, streets and alleys, rivers, hills or even mountains. *The most important requirement for generating a sense of identification is that the boundary be symbolically clear, so that there is an obvious difference between inside and outside.*⁴² The boundaries of the place can be very distinctive on one side, but very scattered on the other one. Let us have a look at Hong Kong: on one side of a narrow strip of coastal plain there is a dramatic panorama of the green mountains; on the other side there is a sea-shore line. But this is not the final boundary of the city. Far from the coastal line with high-rise buildings clustered tightly and harbor with breakwaters built to protect the ships from high waves, another environment unfolds - that of life on the water: junks, houseboats, rafts and almost anything else that can be lived in. This environment, that is still part of Hong Kong, has no fixed boundaries, they change with the approach of the tide and winds from the China Sea. But these boats, floating homes, represent a very strong and recognizable spirit of Hong Kong.

■ 3.3.3. Geographic distinctiveness

Places, settlements and regions create their spirits through their geographic features that are so specific. North-central part of Africa is always recognized and remembered by great desert of Sahara; France and California as wine regions; Austria, northern

⁴¹ During the war 1991-1995 in Croatia the church was totally destroyed. One year later, after the liberation of the town in August 1995 the foundations for the new church were cleared, and owing to Prof. Đurđica Cvitanović from Zagreb the plans were found, and the reconstruction of the church is about to commence.

⁴² Steele, 1981: 56.



FG. 7. a St. Eufemija church atop the hill, a strong and long-distance visible identity of Rovinj, Croatia

Photo by • Fotografija N. Lipovac, 1986.

SL. 7. a. Crkva svete Eufemije na vrhu brda, vrlo izrazit identitet Rovinja vidljiv i s velike udaljenosti



FG. 7. b St. Lorenz church in Petrinja (Croatia), surrounded along three sides with a park

■ 3.3.4. Scale and proportion

Size of particular environmental element and its relationship to the rest of the environment creates a special effect that is reflected within the spirit of the place. This relationship can be named as *scale or proportion*. The size of a mountain that surrounds a place can impress the insiders and outsiders. A breath-taking view upon the Grand Tetons in Wyoming, USA, or the view of Niagara Falls, mixed with the roaring sound of the falling water as they can be viewed from the Canadian territory, brings a very strong spirit to these places, mostly owing to its size and proportion to the surrounding environment. High buildings in New York, Tokyo, Singapore or other megacities create the identity that is strongly based on their size and scale in relation to the people working around or inside them. On the other side, small stone masonry houses, with nearly touching walls in small Istrian towns in Croatia, form the intimate public places (streets and plazas) that create the strong spirit of these places.

FG. 7. b St. Lorenz church in Petrinja (Croatia), surrounded along three sides with a park

Photo by • Fotografija N. Lipovac, 1990.

SL. 7. b. Crkva svetog Lovre u Petrinji, smještena na zapadnom rubu parka J. J. Strossmayera



FG. 7. c The monastery of the Holly Trinity in Meteora, Greece, attract the passers-by with its unique location

Photo by • Fotografija N. Lipovac, 1983.

SL. 7. c. Manastir Svetog Trojstva u Meteorama, Grčka, privlači pozornost prolaznika svojom jedinstvenom lokacijom

■ 3.3.5. People

All these elements mentioned above represent the physical features of a place or setting. The settings would remain settings if there were no people, the people that bring their own sense and the way of using the setting.

A Chinatown or famous Pier 39 on the waterfront of San Francisco would loose all the spirit they are famous for if there were no people there, but not ordinary people. Thousands of tourists gathered on a small area from all over the world, bring the spirit from their places and create so unrepeatabe international spirit of the Pier 39; or in Chinatown in San Francisco, where the tourists are mixed with the residents that sometimes can speak just a few English words although they were born in US. The sound of spoken words in many world languages is mixed with picturesque lights in Chinese signs. Another, very good example of people's role in creating the spirit of place is for sure Berkeley, an

University town in central California. The greater part of 130.000 inhabitants in this town are students that come from all over the world and create so opened, international and progressive spirit of Berkeley. The same is with other strong University towns all around the world (Cambridge, Oxford in England, Heidelberg in Germany).

In the book *The Sense of Place* Fritz Steel distinguishes people on *Doers* (insiders) and *Watchers* (outsiders). This is how Steel explains the role of people in creating the spirit of place: *If the physical features of a setting can be loosely called its geography, the social factors that contribute to its spirit of place can be called sociography: the impact of other people's presence and their activities in and expectations for the setting.*⁴³

■ 3.3.6. Impact of spirit of place

As we have seen in previous sections, the major components in making a spirit of the place are of physical and social nature. When speaking of possible impact of spirit of place we usually think and discuss only about the impact that physical and natural factors, creating the sense of some particular place, produce upon the humans. However, this is wrong as these factors influence and produce changes upon every single living being: animal, plant or human being.

For sure, the most obvious and most significant factor is the *landscape of the place*, the landscape that can be observed from inside and from outside of the place. Living or staying in a small town Vrbnik on the island of Krk (that has "grown" out of the stones of the cliff with the fantastic view out of the place towards sea and high mountains on the horizon and the restricted views due to the narrow and zigzagged and scattered streets within the place upon the stone masonry, several centuries old, two floor houses - FG. 8a) would have different impact upon someone than the life in places within great plains, with regular sized street blocks, flat horizon all around and where everything looks the same. This kind of setting very often can be hard to find the way through (FG. 8b).

The second, very important natural factor that has the important role upon impact of the spirit of place is *climate and weather*. The spirit of the setting located somewhere in Alaska, Norway or Finland⁴⁴ due to its short summers with temperatures not exceeding 15-18° C (59-64° F) and long cold winters with temperatures sometimes far below 40° C or 40° F will have very different impact upon the people than the one in medium climate settings.

The second group of factors consists of, so called, *man-made factors*: building styles and other technological features as transportation accessibility, the presence of mass media (radio, TV, newspapers etc.). The impact of a region upon the people living there can be drastically changed along with the change of transportation method within the region. Just let us think of the railway introduction and its impact upon the change of the spirit of the places in US in the 19th century. We don't have to go far to the past to face the transportation changes impacts. What about the whole globe-shrinking after the introduction of the plane traffic into everyday public lives?

⁴³ Steele, 1981: 63.

⁴⁴ There is a saying that long cold winter nights lasting for several months, when no production in the outside world can be done, are one of the main reasons for widely spread habit of consuming alcohol in the regions in the far north of Europe and North America. Is this, so called, long-term impact of the spirit of these places?

FG. 8. a Town of Vrbnik upon the cliff over roaring sea. The unique labyrinth street net with nearly touching stone masonry houses creates a special spirit of the place to every visitor.

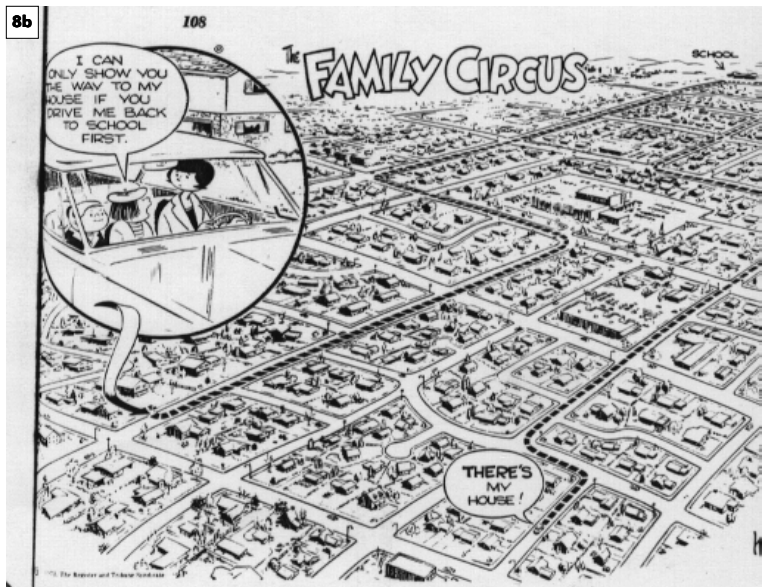
Photo by • **Fotografija**
N. Lipovac, 1995.

SL. 8. a. Gradić Vrbnik smješten na stijeni iznad mora, otok Krk. Jedinstveni labirint ulica s tijesno izgrađenim kamenim kućama u svakog posjetitelja stvori poseban dojam duha mjesta.



FG. 8. b The unified grid-system street net that creates so little of recognizable spirit of particular place is very often a subject in cartoons in US newspapers.

SL. 8. b. Uniformirani raster-sustav ulica ne pridonosi stvaranju prepoznatljivog duha bilo kojeg naselja u SAD-u i vrlo je često predmetom karikatura u američkim novinama.



All these factors are hardly recognized separately. They are always combined with *social factors* that are the part of the spirit of the places. They all are very potent forces in shaping lives of the living creatures. In *Part Four, chapter 10*, Fritz Steel discusses about *The long-term Impact of Spirit of Place* where he concludes the whole chapter about this topic with this simple sentence: *The spirit of place and its impact are functions of both setting and person.*⁴⁵ Social contacts and their impact are not based only upon the amount, but also on their quality and the characteristics that make them so distinctive.

3.4. Perception and Awareness of Place

Each place or settlement produces a set of *signals* that human mind accepts and organizes as information. Perception, as the main and most important psychological process, helps us organize all existing external information; it helps us understand what is our surrounding and what it has to tell us; it helps us in creating

⁴⁵ Steele, 1981: 101.

our experience of some particular place. As we have concluded in previous section, a sense of place can be described as a result of interrelation and interplay between a person and the particular place. The process of connection between a person and a place can be explained as a two step process: the first step consists of perceiving the information that place is *sending* to the observer and organizing them into different categories, while the second step is becoming aware of the particular features of the place at a particular moment.

At the beginning of the third chapter, in the second part of his book, Fritz Steele writes: *Perception is an information-receiving process wherein a person (1) receives a signal from the immediate setting, and (2) organizes these incoming signals in such a way as to give them meaning within a personal view of the world.*⁴⁶ We have to be aware that our mind cannot receive and process all the signals that are *sent* from a particular place; some of our mind energy has to be spared for other activities. Another very important point about perception and the *signals* sent from place or settlement is their interpretation: it is up to every single person to decide, consciously and unconsciously, which signals are to be picked up and how they are to be interpreted in mind and stored into memory. This interpretation has the main role in shaping our personal experience of place and us within it.

■ 3.4.1. Perception and perceptual styles

Perception, as a general process common and shared by most of the humans, has some specific styles. The perception that varies from person to person, from group to group. Living in a particular area will help form a specific perception, views, and behaving as well: people living in places by the coast or in the open planes will have different awareness through their perception, than people living in mountains, woodlands, or large towns among high buildings. The first ones have the fortune to see the distant horizon and a broad open space in between, while the second group can see only for short distances due to the mountains, trees and bushes or high rise buildings.

Personal or professional interest is the next very important factor in differing perceptual styles. Someone is going to pay attention to a place or a settlement in different way according to the importance it has for him/her. For example, a painter will feel and experience the view, upon a city with several million citizens, from the top floor of the highest building or within a small stone paved plaza in an Italian medieval town differently than the constructor engineer from the same place. The first one will perceive the beauty of the light and shade, form and emptiness while the second one is to be captured by the question *How the buildings were built up, How the material was brought to the site, etc.*

■ 3.4.2. Physical properties and perception

One of the very strong perceptual effects is the view upon the object or settlement size, the size that differs in relation to other objects or time. For example, some places or buildings could have formed a picture of enormous sized place or object while we were small or young, although they were not. Returning to the

⁴⁶ Steele, 1981: 21-22.

same site after several years the same place looks very different, speaking only about the question of size. This is so called relative perception that enables us to experience the places of our childhood as we did when we were young.

To be able to generate the image of a size by perception we need at least two "objects" to compare. In previous example of relation between perception and size, the size of particular place or setting was compared with the observer. Another way of comparing the size (as a physical property) of a place is establishing a boundary that defines the particular place. *Human vision seems naturally inclined to create enclosures in space even when the actual physical barriers are extremely slight and given the merest suggestion of enclosure we ourselves supply the rest.*⁴⁷ These boundaries help the observer to define the area that has to be perceived.

■ 3.4.3. Awareness of settings

As we have noted earlier, perception is a process, but it represents only a half of the whole process that is making connection between person and place and vice versa. We can say the perception is just an *incoming process*. To get the real image of the place, the real sense, these data has to be processed in our mind. After this second kind of a process, someone can say that he/she has become *aware* of the particular place. The awareness can consist of different colors, sounds or even odors. Awareness needs *stimuli* and they are our feelings, sensations, emotions, senses and even sentiments. *Sight* is for sure one of the most important stimuli for our awareness. To get an objective image of a setting and a true awareness as well, we must allow the existing *elements* to enter our awareness, and not to shape our *perception of the setting based on what we are accustomed to seeing or expect to see.*⁴⁸ The next stimulus is *smell*. This stimulus is not that much present in city people but in farmers, and tribe people that are far from civilization. They can "*smell*" the change of weather. Places and settlements have their own and characteristic smell. Modern cities are famous for their smell of exhaust fumes from numerous vehicles on the streets, or near by industries.

To conclude the list of the stimuli we have to mention *sound*. My first night in Athens was unforgettable, but not owing to the ancient Greek temples, or several glasses of *Uzo*, but owing to the enormous noise coming from the all-night-moving vehicles on the street. The noise that never stopped, but during the day was backed up by the other stimuli - sight, the sight upon the beauty of the place itself.

When we manage to return to some particular place for several times in a row we get the feeling of knowing the place, we feel it like our place. It is not necessary to get back to the place in person, we can see the picture of the place in a book, magazine, or see it on TV or a movie, and still have the same feeling: "*I have been there; I walked these streets; This is my place.*" These meetings with a place help create a special feeling within us. This kind of a perceptual process is known in literature as *process of certification*. Through certification we see the settings in different light, and we experience a special feature of the spirit of the place. Through certification we get to another notion in simulta-

47 Steele, 1981: 25.

48 Steele, 1981: 25.

neous perception: *connectidness*⁴⁹ a notion that can be simply explained by *knowing and feeling the place as my own personal property because I know every square inch of it.*

With the next sequence that I have found in Anthony Hiss's book *The Experience of Place* I would like to conclude this section about perception, hoping that the rest that has not been mentioned here and has to be said about perception in planning practice will be encouraging enough for all others that are willing to follow my steps: ... *Without the help of simultaneous perception, multisensory patterns would be hidden from us, and we might bump into everyone wherever we move. And when simultaneous perception shows us a pattern like cooperation in a moving crowd, something else appears that's normally invisible: a different sense of who, or what, we are.. ... We seem to use simultaneous perception constantly to monitor our surroundings on a subconscious level for information that helps us maintain ourselves and go about our business.*⁵⁰

■ 3.4.4. Place and cognition - cognitive cartography

*Perception and cognition are the psychological processes which enable us to understand places, to use them, to create them.*⁵¹ These processes help us understand life and work of people in a particular place or settlement, their respond to the places and their actions within them. To understand all that, a planner has to learn the way how the *place people*⁵² think and live, and very often he has to perform a research that is not usual for the up-to-date process of planning. A very good example of possible, and very successful, site research was performed by Randolph T. Hester and his group⁵³ for a small town Manteo revitalization plan in North Carolina back in 1987. During the site research they have watched the people living there: noting their habits, their places of interest and meeting and afterwards they produced a set of maps that were representing the most attractive places, the most used walk-pathways places of interest. The first part of his work in psychology and cognitive systems is known as the process of describing and understanding the environment, while the second part (producing maps) is known as the process of bringing these internal processes into public view. Still, all these methods do not give us the insight of people's feelings about their places and their evaluation. These feelings are within us, we cannot draw them, we can only try to reveal them through recognizing and our behaving. Most of the information that are within our mind can be revealed with a method known in psychology as *drawing pictures from the head.*

The information about some place that we carry within us is stored in many different ways that range from faint images to very cartographic records and sets of "snapshots" of places we have been to, or just seen or read about in some books. Human mind is so complex that it can create *pictures in the head* without seeing the particular place, but only by getting the information through reading about some particular place. The ability of human mind to store, draw upon and use spatial information helps us in very complex process known as navigation or location finding. Still, it is not enough to say *I have pictures in my head about some place.* We have to be able to present them to others; we must *produce map* from our memory. Producing maps from the

49 For more about *connectidness* the reader is advised to refer to chapter 2 of Anthony Hiss's book *The Experience of Place* (1990): pp. 27-52.

50 Hiss, 1990: 19-22.

51 Canter, 1977: 1.

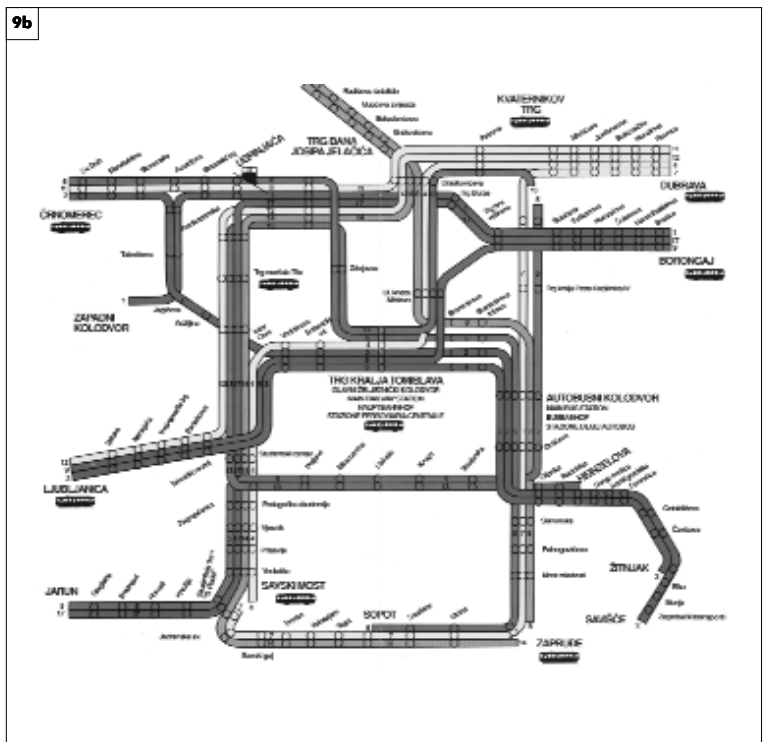
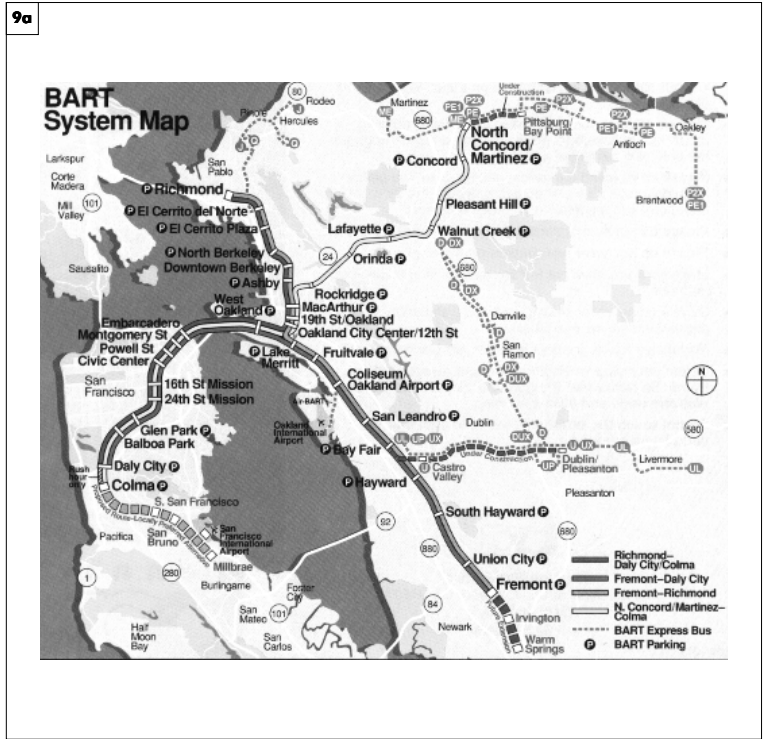
52 More about *place people* refer to Steel Fritz book *The Sense of Place* (1981), chapter 5, pp. 43-51.

53 For more about his work refer to his article *Economic Progress Within Community Preservation: The Case of Manteo, NC* in "Prostor", (1996) vol. 4, no 1(11), pp. 1-23.

FG. 9. a & 9. b Transportation maps of BART in San Francisco and ZET in Zagreb represent very good examples of map simplification in order to give maximum information in shortest sequence of time.

Drawings • Crteži
BART & ZET

SL. 9. a. i 9. b. Karte javnog prijevoza u San Franciscu (BART) i Zagrebu (ZET) dobar su primjer pojednostavnjenog kartografskog prikaza određenog prostora s namjerom da pruže najviše informacija u što kraćem vremenu



head is based upon remembering places of interest and importance. The final version of the map depends upon the main reason for drawing them, or better to say, the interest of the person for whom the map was made. Personal interest is one of very important issues that will model the *mental map*: a different mental map will be drawn for an architect, musician or a person who is seeking for places to eat well. People form pictures in their heads according to what they want to see and remember and what they are. These "maps in the head" still have a lot of similarities with official maps.

The *map in the head* is just a metaphor. The actual product and a result of observable actions is a *sketch map*. The process of making maps is called mapping and is described as *method of representing spatial arrangements*. *In fact it is many methods, because many forms of projection, many sets of symbols, scales and so on can be used.*⁵⁴ Naturally, there is a great difference between the sketch maps produced by different people. This variation depends upon many well known factors ranging from psychological, sociological to educational. We can say for sure that process of mapping demands particular skills, and therefore the type or quality of sketch maps produced by a certain person depends on the respondent's general spatial abilities.

The maps are in everyday use everywhere. The most common schematic maps used today are the ones for public transportation system routes in a particular city. They are produced in response to the cognitive processes that we have discussed in this section. They are, also, produced to represent the location of places with maximum simplicity (FG. 9a, 9b). The clarity of these maps is achieved by renouncing all geographic details except for the pertinent topological properties: sequence of stops and interconnections. Therein, roads are mostly straight lines, and angles are of ninety or forty-five degrees. Beside Transportation System maps and city street maps there are, for sure, innumerable maps nowadays in use: just to mention all kinds of topographic maps in different scales and punctuality of representation the topographic features and places.

To conclude this paper we have to underline that *our dealing with places are essentially cognitive rather than perceptual, and this has implications for the use of the maps because it suggests that it is the spatial arrangement of places not their visual organization which is crucial.*⁵⁵ What is more important, our *pictures in the head* are far from being photographic records. They represent the summary of conceptualization, frameworks for dealing with our environment. Yet, there is another very important conclusion and that is: the most significant differences are not between the places themselves, but the ones between people.

Conclusion

In this paper we have tried to reveal the meaning of several very important words and notions like *the essence of place, place, space, and experience of space*. We also have tried to explain the process that enables us to understand and describe the nature of conceptual systems of places. The notion *place* varies from a single location in a room to the whole metropolis like Los Angeles or any other multimillion city. To understand places we have to establish a proper hierarchy of them, hierarchy that would

54 Canter, 1977: 57.

55 Canter, 1977: 77.

omit any kind of ambiguity. This is very hard to do, as the border line between two entities is so faint. From the planning point of view it might be much easier to distinguish places according to the experience they produce upon some of the persons.

Each particular place is the result of relationships between actions, conceptions and physical attributes. These three notions (*action*, *conception* and *physical attributes*) represent constituents of places and they have very important role in making the sense of place. Through *sketching* (helps in revealing physical attributes), *description* (describes places and their concept) and *behavior* (collects information upon what is happening in the places) we are able to catch and understand the sense of place.

Except for evaluation and creation of the place, there is another very important process in keeping the identity and sense of place that has to be established. This kind of process depends mostly on the skill and experience of the planner himself. He or she has to learn the people living in particular place to feel their place, to understand it and persuade them to respect the place and community they are living in. This process has to be established from the very beginning of the planning process. During the first meetings and discussions with the residents a planner should help them in "reading" the place and listen to their "reading" experience. Managing places requires active citizen participation and their understanding what they are fighting for. This is a very hard battle as *citizens or residents are generally neither inclined nor prepared to create resilient communities; they often have "not-in-my-backyard" attitudes towards sustainable actions and are accustomed to success in disrupting, protecting and litigating.*⁵⁶ Most of the time they do not understand others needs, but only their own.

In conclusion to all these mentioned, we can say that the definition of *Place* is a very complex integration of nature and culture manifested in physical terms that has developed and is still developing in particular locations. Places are linked by flows of people and goods in between them. *Place* is not only the answer to "where" of something, but it is a location plus everything that occupies that location in time and place as an integrated phenomenon. All these elements of the place concept have to be recognized in order to be able to improve them.

*.... if the goal of design and planning is the creation of places, then the role of the designer (planner) is to facilitate that creation. This often involves a process of innovation for which training and experience will frequently be so essential that other associated groups will be unable to make so direct a contribution. ... His task, therefore, is to create, or put together, something that will generate an appropriate set of inter-related concepts.*⁵⁷

56 Hester, 1995: 15.

57 Canter, 1977: 176.





FG. 10. Preserving the sense of time: the architectural form of Merriot hotel trying to emulate the form of St. Patrick's church in San Francisco.

Photo by • Fotografija
N. Lipovac

SL. 10. Očuvanje osjećaja vremena: arhitektonskom formom Merriot hotela pokušava se emulirati arhitektura crkve sv. Patrika u San Franciscu.

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Sažetak • Summary**Prostor i mjesto**

Učinkovito prostorno planiranje treba promatrati kao rezultat razumnog prosuđivanja na temelju istraživanja lokalnih potreba, težnji i obveznih prioriteta te poduzimanja odgovarajućih mjera radi davanja potrebnog značenja prostoru za koji se izrađuje plan. Kako bismo to objedinili i ostvarili u procesu planiranja, moramo naučiti kako postati svjesni i razumjeti gdje smo i što je potrebno učiniti za taj prostor sada ili u bližoj i daljoj budućnosti da on ostane i dalje prepoznatljiv. Ta vrsta procesa trebala bi pomoći ljudima da shvate nužne lokalne i regionalne promjene, kako u društvu, tako i u gospodarstvu, a da pri tome mjesto ostane i dalje *ono mjesto koje poznajemo*. Prostorno planiranje treba shvatiti kao proces istraživanja stvarnih potreba i mogućnosti, a sve unutar razumnih granica razvoja određenog kraja, mjesta ili samog naselja. Prostorni planeri trebaju shvatiti činjenicu da planiranjem nekog naselja oni ujedno mijenjaju njegovu pojavnost u prostoru, ali i sam prostor koji to naselje okružuju.

Zbog toga je jedna od najvažnijih obveza koju planeri preuzimaju pri izradi prostornog plana razvoja nekog naselja ili regije zadržavanje *karaktera mjesta*, odnosno svih onih sitnih elemenata koje taj prostor ili mjesto čine toliko posebnim u odnosu prema drugome mjestu, zadržavanje ne samo procesom planiranja, već i prilikom realizacije pojedinih postavki plana. Plan treba promatrati kao rezultat postupnog procesa koji traje i kojim se štite jedinstveni prirodni, kulturni i povijesni elementi identiteta toga mjesta kroz vrijeme. Planom je nemoguće uvijek dati jednostavni prijedlog kako riješiti neki problem, ali se planom bar mogu dati smjernice kako izbjeći te probleme. Planom treba zaštititi *mjesto* tako da se sačuva i njegov okoliš. Da bi planer to ostvario procesom planiranja, nužno treba znati odgovoriti na ova pitanja: *Što je mjesto? Od čega se određeno mjesto sastoji? Što je svjesnost o mjestu? Kako ljudi i ostala živa bića doživljavaju to mjesto?*

U članku ćemo pokušati dosegnuti odgovore na neka od tih i drugih sličnih pitanja otkrivajući značenje riječi *prostor* i *mjesto* objašnjenjem pojmova *bit mjesta*, prepoznavanjem razlika između *prostora* i *mjesta*, sve do istraživanja mogućeg *doživljavanja mjesta*. Na taj ćemo način pokušati otkriti i razumjeti elemente koji stvaraju identitet nekog mjesta, koji od nekog *mjesta* stvaraju *mjesto*.

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PROSTOR

ISSN 1330-0652
CODEN PORREV
UDK • UDC 71/72

GOD. • VOL. 5(1997)
BR. • NO. 1(13)
STR. • PAG. 1-200
ZAGREB, 1997.

siječanj - lipanj • January - June

N. Lipovac: Space and Place

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