More than Dwelling ...

Constructing the Sense of Place in HDB Estates

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Abstract

This dissertation is essentially an exercise in urban study. In our constantly evolving built environment, it will be enlightening for us to have an appreciation of the existing urban form including the cultural values, ways of life and activities that shaped it. It is then that we may begin to understand the factors that constitute the Genius Loci or Spirit of a Place. Armed with this understanding, we can continue to improve our environment to satisfy the needs and aspiration of the society and yet retain the quality of the Place. The designable qualities of urban spaces and their implications and limitations on urban design would be studied in view of providing a comparable knowledge base for future developments.

The objectives of the study are thus two-fold. The first being to ascertain the physical, spatial and cultural characteristics to impart upon it the unique quality of a Place. The second is to analyse the various features and elements of imageable local urban settings in order that architects, planners or designers may manipulate them to provide visual clarity, nuances and contrast. The focus of the site studies would be on our ubiquitous HDB estates.

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