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2015

Understanding the Influences of the Interior on the Urban

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Recommended Citation

Dawn Haynie. "Understanding the Influences of the Interior on the Urban," *Blurred Lines*, FIU College of Architecture + the Arts, Miami, FL, April 2015.

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“Understanding the Influences of the Interior on the Urban”

Dawn Haynie

Abstract

Theory:

Politically, Arendt (1958) has described the public realm as that which appears to all of us, is common to all of us, and yet is distinguished from the privately owned; while, others suggest that we should consider the public realm not only as all that is politically defined as public, but all that effectively functions as public as well (Hajer and Reijndorp 2001; Kayden 2000). So the question arises, how are the structures of public space, in reality, affected and/or shifted when access to perceived public space is considered as part of the public realm?

Framework:

Using a section of the 1748 Giambattista Nolli map of Rome, a vector map is constructed first to represent the central path of circulation through the politically defined public realm; and then second to illustrate the central path of circulation through the perceived public realm.

An analytical analysis, using *Spatialist_lines*, is run on the two vector maps, and the measures of metric reach and directional reach are used to explore the influences of the interior on that which is traditionally urban. Metric reach measures the linear distance captured given a limited distance and is thus a measure of density. Directional reach measures the linear distance captured given a set number of changes in direction, and is thus a measure of connectivity in terms of configuration (Peponis, Bafna, and Zhang 2008). Given the size of the Nolli map selected for study here, the parameter for metric reach is set at 660 feet; and then directional reach is analyzed for both 0 and 2 directional changes, with the change in direction set first at 10 degrees and then at 30 degrees.

Conclusions:

When reviewing the analysis, first in terms of metric reach, differences appear between the two maps. The path with the highest density shifts from one area of the city to another. For directional reach, the structure remains fairly consistent, with each map highlighting portions of Sixtus V's axial plan for Rome; yet, the map of the perceived public realm illustrates more clearly the emerging spine and structure of the city that we know and navigate. When the two measures are overlaid, the map of the perceived public realm demonstrates a greater intersection between the measures, overlapping the areas of density with those of local and global intelligibility. These variables, or those measuring similar attributes, when intersected often coincide with successful, vibrant areas of a city (Hillier 1996). Clearly, the inclusion of interior space as part of an urban analysis illustrates a better conceptual understanding of the city.

The traditional idea of the city and its street structure fails to capture all that we truly perceive when we move through and navigate space. Arguably then, practitioners should

recognize the importance and perhaps necessity for considering comprehensive, congruent spatial relationships when designing the public realm – political or perceived. The design of the interior space, its connection to the urban setting, and their relationship is critical to designing successful cities.

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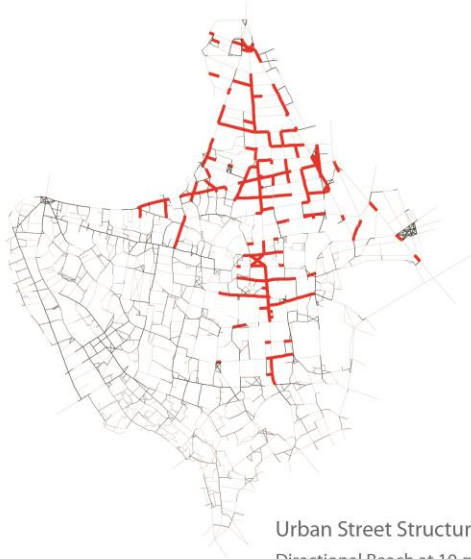
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Urban Street Structure
Directional Reach at 10 quantiles
10 degrees, 2 direction changes



Perceived Public Structure
Directional Reach at 10 quantiles
10 degrees, 2 direction changes

UNDERSTANDING THE INFLUENCES OF THE INTERIOR ON THE URBAN

S. Dawn Haynie