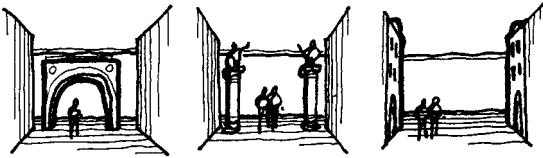
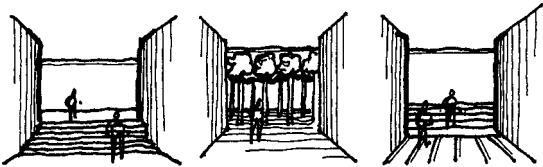


Container

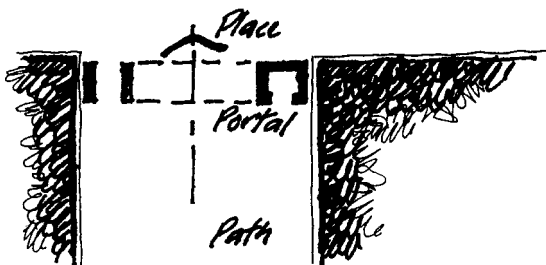
As physical urban entities, portals can be deliberately planned as gateways, or they can just appear, as undesigned points where paths happen to connect to places. The deliberate marking of an entry to a public space may assume many forms. Archways, gates, and lintels spanning columns are walked through and under at plaza portals. A plaza entry might be accentuated with flanking columns, pillars, or pilasters with no overhead component. Sometimes a matched pair of buildings serves to create the sense of gateway. A portal could be established more subtly with a ground level change, material shift, altered paving pattern, or variation in landscaping. Moving from an unlandscaped path into a court filled with trees can create the transformational experience vital to a good portal. Of course, the essential transformation at any portal is a spatial one, moving from a narrow, linear, dynamic path experience into a more generous, stable, urban place experience.



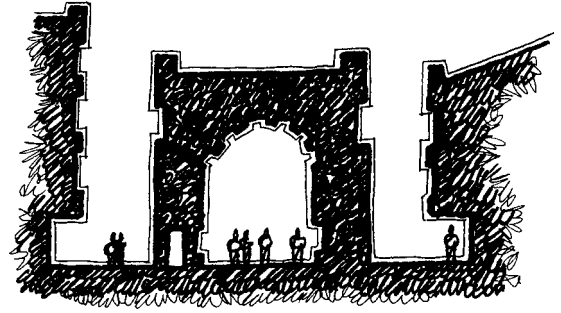
When portal has been specially designed as doorway to urban room, its physical configuration and qualities are of interest. Plan, section, elevation, and perspective are useful tools in this regard.



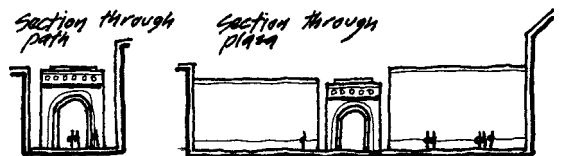
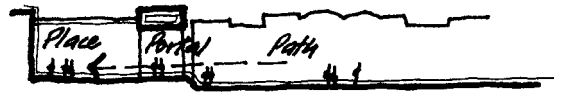
A plan shows the portal width, length, shape, and position in relation to the path and place that it



connects. Plan view also indicates solid-void relationships, whether the portal mass contains stairs, interior spaces, or secondary passages. In plan, a portal's relation to adjacent buildings is understood. Does the portal physically touch the buildings? Float as free-standing element in the path? Sit in the plaza and extend past the mouth of the path?



Sections through portals can be taken across the path opening or on axis with the path. Cross sections reveal the height, width, and shape of the portal aperture and the configuration of the architecture that forms the opening. Is the portal opening arched? Square? Rectangular? Is the boundary of the opening simple or complex? Are there niches, side doors, cornices? Portal sections along the path axis indicate the length or depth of the gateway as well as its height. Some gateways are only as deep as a wall thickness or column, essentially only planes through which we move into the plaza. Other are longer, more tunnel-like. There may even be a series of portals through which we pass into the urban space at



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