

# *Architectural Phenomena and the Human Habitation of Space*

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What brought me to the subject of this paper is my long-time interest in the occupancy and psychology of space.



My approach to the subject is trans-disciplinary and systemic, in that I think in contemporary times, we have to converge many fields of study and understand their interrelations to know the subject.







What I find particularly interesting and relevant are reciprocal influences between one dynamic body of disciplines, associated with architecture, design, and engineering the construction of human dwellings on the one side, and another body of disciplines, associated with psychological and philosophical thought, human creativity and productivity, and well-being on the other side.

By way of architectural decisions, what we do to our surroundings have lasting effects.

We see the evidence everywhere.





With the proliferation of humanity over the surface of our planet, the design and construction of our habitats has meant the blatant exploitation and disregard of the natural order and fabric of the physical world, despite the exceptions.



From our architectural decisions and following them, subsequent actions to organize and construct our living spaces, we have today the accumulation of the physical, psychological, and social effects of them.

If we believe our surroundings are there only to serve us to fulfill our needs to live, communicate, work, and breed, we have

***The nature-for-humans attitude***





**With a slight shift of consciousness:**  
If we believe we are here to serve our surroundings in a sustainable fashion to fulfill our needs, we have



***The humans-for-nature attitude***



Typically today, we are separated from the natural environments that were common for most of humanity several generations ago.



Today, most of us live our lives in cities.



We live and work in contained and well-defined spaces.





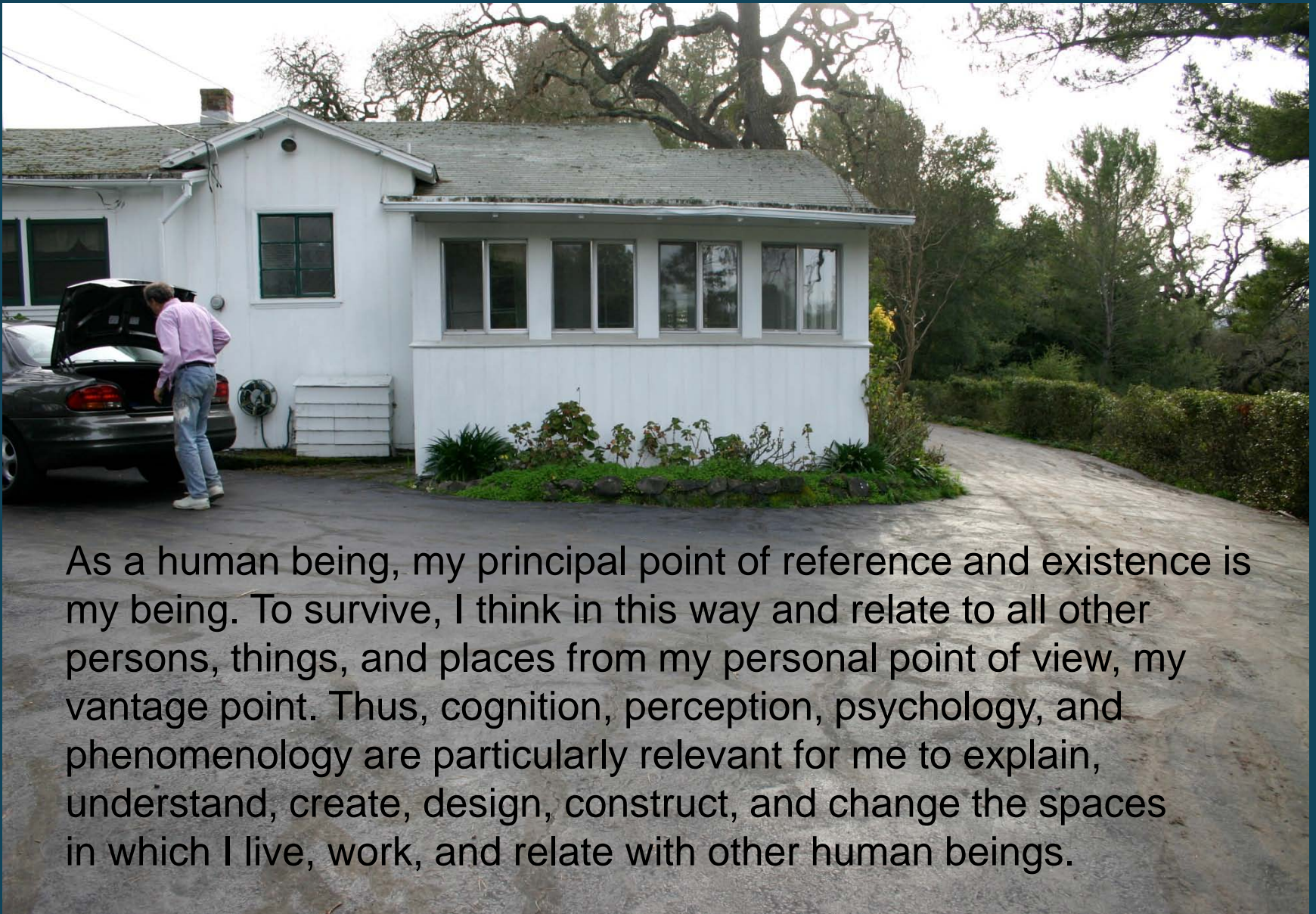


It is a non controversial fact, a given, that the space a living being occupies has a profound influence on that living being.



Architecture shapes  
and organizes  
the environment  
for human beings;  
thus, *de facto*,  
architecture is  
an important  
environmental  
force.





As a human being, my principal point of reference and existence is my being. To survive, I think in this way and relate to all other persons, things, and places from my personal point of view, my vantage point. Thus, cognition, perception, psychology, and phenomenology are particularly relevant for me to explain, understand, create, design, construct, and change the spaces in which I live, work, and relate with other human beings.



At every moment, induction has much to do with my experiencing of the space in which I inhabit.



What sights, sounds, smells, touches and tastes make *my space* of this place?





The objects I perceive and my sense of their configuration about me constitute my experience. My experience is amplified because of my movement through space, which also means through time.

My perceptions of and interactions with objects constitute specific relations and my space a general relation, all of which are inductions.

But those aspects of my experiencing the space that may be attributed to decisions determining the overall design and organization of the space may be termed ***architectural induction.***





# Architectural Induction

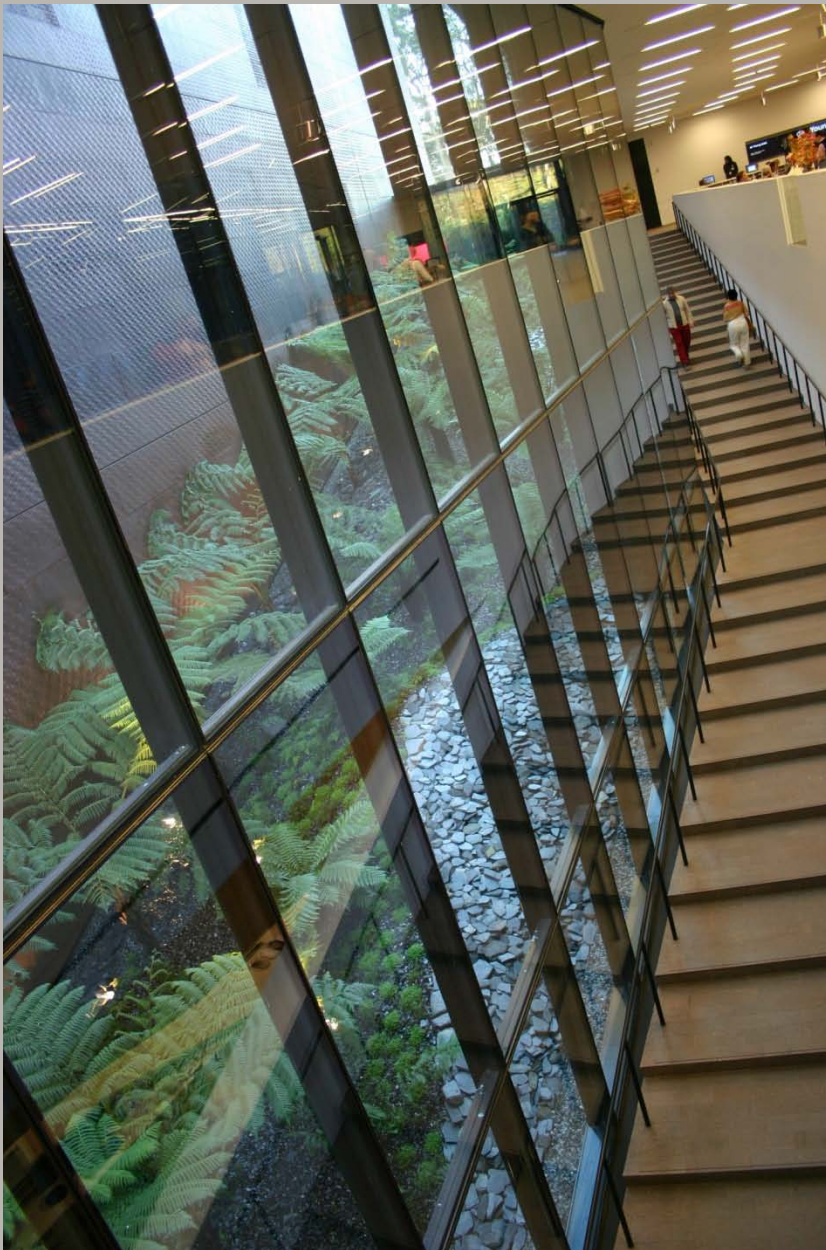
What induces the occupant because of  
the very nature of the space?



Design, organization => thoughts, feelings, actions







## Three Sides of Experiencing Space

By means of perception cognition, one experiences space in chiefly three ways:

1 - In fixed body positions, one senses what is (sensual modalities).

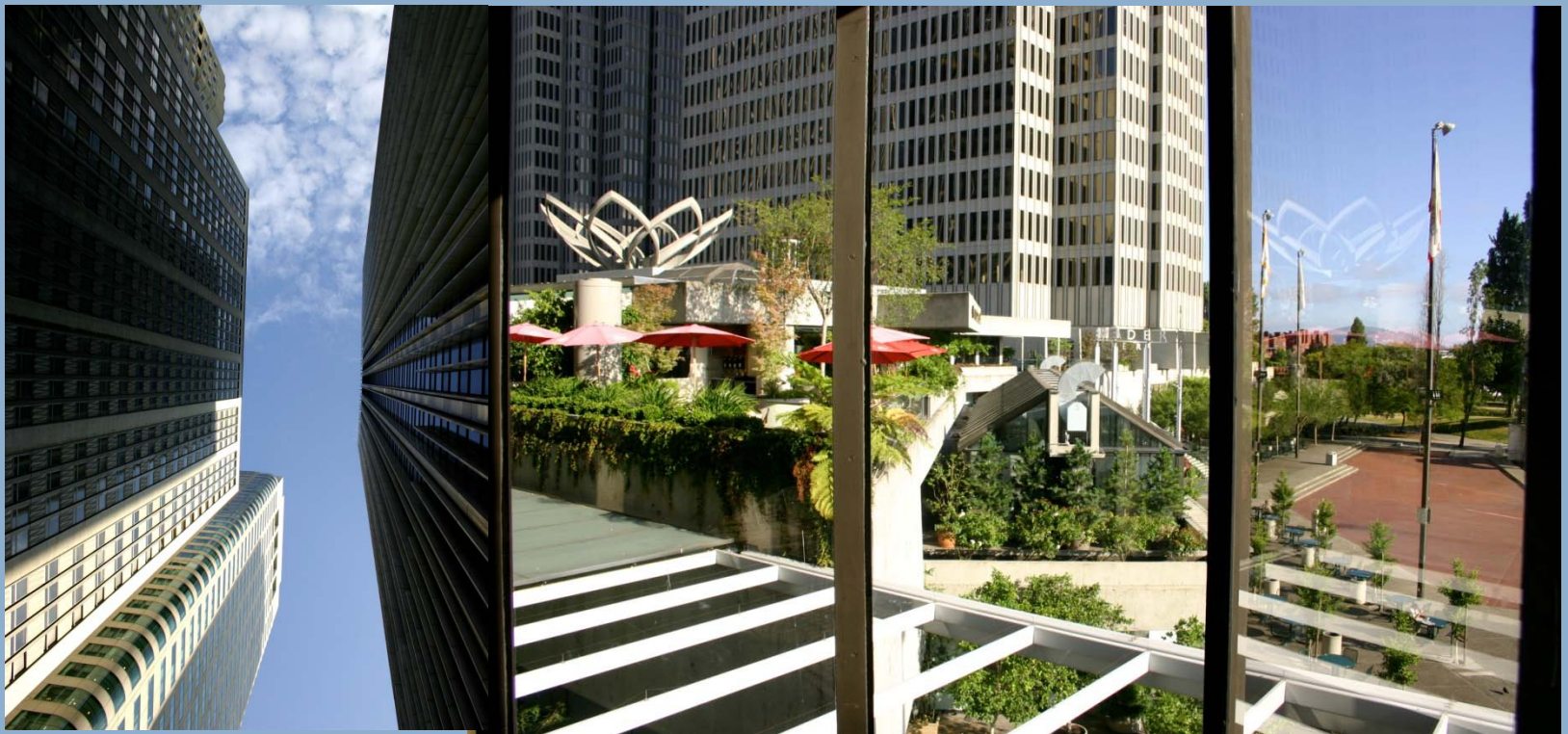
2 - One senses what is, while the body is in motion (serial, sequential perception).

3 - One integrates what one senses what is from multiple separate body positions, locations, and senses (perceptual constancy, invariance).

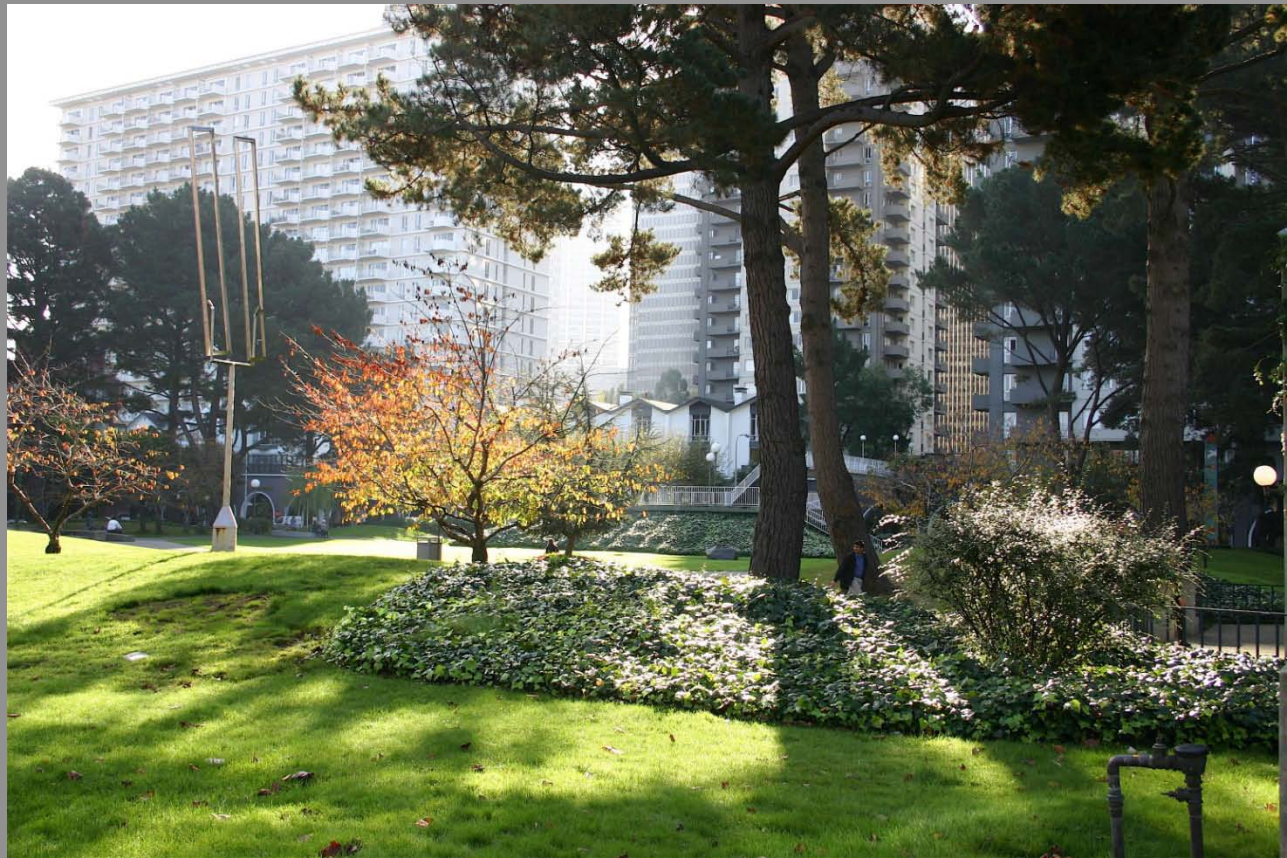
The three-sided scheme of experiencing space is conceptual of course, for the benefit of understanding, because one is doing all three at the same time, most of the time.



The complexity of the triangulation, experiencing space with duration (time), becomes even more profound when we take into consideration that the relations among the elements of the space we perceive change:



when we experience the passage of our body through the space, for example, changing odors across the garden;

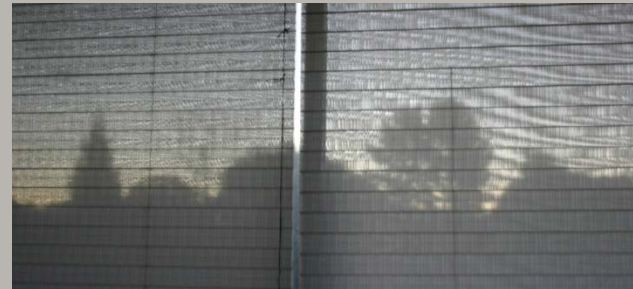






when we experience the space through the day, for example, changing reflections and shadows on the wall;

when we experience the same place through the seasons, for example, temperatures.





“As we move through spaces, the body moves in a constant state of essential incompleteness. A determinate point of view necessarily gives way to an indeterminate flow of perspectives. The spectacle of spatial flow is continuously alive . . . It creates an exhilaration, which nourishes the **emergence** of tentative meanings from the inside . . . It is precisely at the level of spatial perception that the most architectural meanings come to the fore.” (Holl, 2000, p. 13)





A point of view  
gives way to  
spatial flow,  
and an  
architecture  
emerges.





The particular qualities that describe my experience  
in the most rudimentary and essential respects are  
**emergent** phenomena constituting my experience.

### Characteristics of space:



empty - - - - - full

present - - - - - absent

visible - - - - - invisible

loud - - - - - silent

colored - - - - - black/white

soft - - - - - hard

hot - - - - - cold

strong - - - - - weak

Regarding those aspects  
that stem from decisions  
determining the overall  
design and organization  
of a given space,  
we may use the phrase  
*architectural emergence*  
to refer to them.





# Architecture, Human Beings, and the Phenomena of Induction and Emergence

Put people together in a place. Define the space by means of an architecture. After some time, their interactions may induce a system. That is to say, a social system of some kind emerges, a system defined not simply by the collective beings, but more definitively by their interactions.

Certainly the nature and qualities of the interactions make the system what it is.



But it is important to include in our thinking:  
The architecture of the space is part of the system.  
It induces and influences emergent properties.

## The Trans-disciplinary Nature of Architecture

Today I think for an architecture to organize a space, it means the inclusion of cultural elements; recognition of the unique qualities of indigenous materials; imaginative perspectives; knowing physical, physiological, psychological, social, and economic effects of the architecture on living beings; familiarity with current environmental conditions and fauna; knowing the perceiver's angle of vision; the history of the place; and preconceptions of the inhabitants.

Making an architectural decision can be a complex endeavor.



A confluence of disciplines becomes important to consider and likely necessary to consult, in order to design both conscientiously and consciously with the humans-for-nature attitude.



This means a trans-disciplinary approach to making architectural decisions.



In conclusion

Our experience of space influences our state of being, relationships with others, home and work life, and connectedness to context.

The name *induction* is given to label this phenomenon.

Induction is a mediating construct to suggest critical relations between architectures and human activities.





In conclusion

The importance of the consequence of induction is termed *emergence*, that is, another phenomenon defined as a quality, feature or characteristic of human interaction with the environment and others associated with and intentionally attributed to its inductive influences.





In conclusion

Once the influences are known, their intentional confluence in making architectural decisions is termed *convergence*.





### Expectation, hope, and challenge:

When applied to developing human habitats architectural induction, emergence, and convergence may become advantageous to promoting mutually beneficial humans-to-nature relations.

The End





# Resources

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