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# THE TRUE HOUSE

## PRAWDZIWY DOM

### Abstract

The purpose of the work is to discuss the truth and mystification regarding the house. There can be many reasons why the building's form is more or less recognizable in the world of architecture. Discussion on architecture includes discussing the space in which one moves, and its limitations. The building's form constitutes a space that meets one's functional and aesthetic needs; it creates a living space. A house that meets the user's living needs, harmonizes with their life, will be called a true home. There are some forms, however, the reasons for which are unrecognizable. This is called a mystification. For the user, the space will be true, but for the observer with not enough information regarding its reasons, a mystification.

*Keywords: house, dwelling, true, living, architecture*

### Streszczenie

Celem pracy jest omówienie prawdy i mistyfikacji domu. Powodów, dla których forma budynku przybiera mniej lub bardziej rozpoznawalny w świecie architektury kształt, może być wiele. Mówiąc o architekturze, będziemy mówili w szczególności o przestrzeni, w której się poruszamy i o jej ograniczeniach. Forma będzie miejscem do realizowania potrzeb funkcjonalnych i estetycznych, będzie tworzyła przestrzeń do zamieszkiwania. Taki dom, który realizuje potrzeby mieszkania, współgra z życiem użytkownika, nazwiemy prawdziwym domem. Są takie formy, których powodów powstania nie rozpoznajemy i będziemy wtedy mówić, że to mistyfikacja. Dla użytkownika tego miejsca będzie to prawdą, dla obserwującego, który nie ma wystarczającej ilości informacji o powodach powstania, mistyfikacją.

*Słowa kluczowe: dom, zamieszkiwanie, prawda, mieszkanie, architektura*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

One of the main and most basic properties of true space is its dimension. It has long been known that all real objects in a macroscopic experiment have a three-dimensional extension. This was the foundation for the three-dimensionality theorem. It was later clarified that with a frame of reference, any point in space can be determined by three numbers, and that vector-based physical quantities are decomposed into three components.<sup>1</sup>

It was mathematically defined what a space is, and what conditions must be met in order to describe it properly. However, one wishes they knew more about how it is perceived by our senses.

<sup>1</sup> A. Mostyepanyenko, *Wymiar przestrzeni a siły przyrody* [in:] *Przestrzeń, czas, ruch*, PWN, Warszawa 1976, p. 7.

Architecture refers directly to space – to its limits (delineation), to movement within it, and to the experience of space. Limited space is needed since the limitation allows spatial perception based on the senses – an observation.

## 2. EXPLORING SPACE

Inside a cuboid with invisible boundaries: walls, ceiling and floor, the interference is at a maximum, i.e. 100, because the limitation of space cannot be observed. The senses cannot perceive any ambient elements, neither to admire nor to use them.

Even if the cuboid is in a forest, this cannot be seen, felt or heard. When the top cuboid wall swivels, a light crack is formed from the inside between the ceiling and the wall. A light beam penetrates inside, dimly illuminating the cuboid's interior and the interference decreases to approx. 98 on a 1–100 scale. The light reveals new elements and encourages learning. It reveals the colors and the contours of the walls or objects ahead. As a tool to showcase architecture, light illuminates walls, ceilings and objects; their functions are recognizable and possible to localize in space. The light introduces an atmosphere of mystery: some elements remain in the shade, some are more illuminated. "The eye becomes restless, is unable to fix its gaze for any length of time, and seeks distraction and rest in blue or green. This elementary effect comes from a deep-reaching emotion, that is due to spiritual development."<sup>2</sup> This is how Kandinsky describes the perception of colors by the eye and how it affects one's well-being. Sensitive people perceive the world differently than the indifferent. Similarly, some of the users of space will be indifferent to the variety of life scenery. Only some will appreciate the spatial nuances and their impact on well-being.

The closer to objects, the more precisely recognizable they are. At first, only the outline and then the shape. The stages of discovering an object are as follows: first a spot, then an animal, then a horse, and finally, its color. The same applies to recognizing the truth in architecture. When the object appears, its image is hazy. It is only after a closer and more careful observation that one can see the details of the surrounding objects. What can be observed initially is only the germ of truth. In architecture, the space is limited by walls; one is either its passive observer or active user. Observation yields only very superficial perception, but using the space, moving within it, allows seeing the truth. It can be said that the truth of space is directly proportional to the time and amount of its use. The truth of space is revealed in its use, therefore it is difficult for the two-dimensional presentation of architecture in drawings could provide that, which is expected. It is difficult to present and then verify the truth of architecture in its flat representation: a photo, visualization, or projection.

The truth is presented by the cuboid in time; the glow of light reveals further places. It could be said that the cuboid has layers to be unraveled: the slight roughness of the material, its texture. The nature of new things is first understood, then admired and ultimately, experienced. At this point, the cuboid space appears more distinct, but not yet believable with its dim, unknown and mysterious places. It seems just an illusion, a projection, a mirage, or just a dream. To confirm that architecture is there, the space should be enjoyed and experienced. In true architecture, there will be places that cannot be seen or touched;

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<sup>2</sup> W. Kandinsky, *O duchowości w sztuce* [*Concerning the Spiritual in Art*], Państwowa Galeria Sztuki w Łodzi, Łódź 1996, p. 59.

the proximities of individual movement sequences, transitions, the “in-betweens.” Such passages, or proximities, will be called a functional program. A properly designed journey in space will reveal its truth. The space will feel comfortable and welcoming, and will encourage return visits.

As the journey towards the light becomes bolder, it starts involving objects. Not all of them will be used, because their purpose is unknown. Some of them are to be handled, some are for sitting. What the forest-immersed cuboid has offered becomes more and more enjoyable, and its layout becomes increasingly agreeable. The more the arrangement of elements in the cuboid space is agreeable, the lower the interference. The interference is eliminated by foregoing the elements that cause uneasiness, e.g. too high windows, too small chairs, uncomfortable armchairs. The choice of objects is made based on well-being and comfort. Therefore, the sensitive experience of space and the developed awareness of one’s needs help making the right choice. The smaller the interference, the greater the comfort will be. It can be said that spatial comfort is inversely proportional to spatial distortions.

Now if human beings, considered in the terms of the “allegory,” were suddenly, while still within the cave, to glance back at the fire whose radiance produces the shadows of the things being carried back and forth, they would immediately experience this unaccustomed turning around of their gaze as a disruption of customary behavior and of current opinion. In fact, the mere suggestion of such a strange stance, to be adopted while still within the cave, is rejected, for there in the cave one is in clear and complete possession of the real.<sup>3</sup>

### 3. THE INTERFERENCE AXIS

Architectural projections are designated by two spatial vectors. If they are to be fully designated, the third vector should be determined. The design should be composed of cubes and not two-dimensional geometric figures. It is thanks to the three vectors that space can be observed and manipulated, to design neighborhoods and passages and create true architecture. The true architecture relates to the man’s needs, which range from simply moving from one place to another, reaching a destination, taking cover, to the higher needs: aesthetic experiences, feelings of peace, tranquility, strength, fulfillment. Architecture can more or less refer to these. The designer would do well to know what spatial solutions create a given situation, climate and how individual needs are satisfied. One cannot talk about satisfying needs if certain solutions interfere with their realization. “All means are sacred when called upon by innermost necessity. All means are a sin and lacking virtue if they do not come from this source.”<sup>4</sup>

#### 3.1 SPACE AS A SYSTEM FOR OBSERVING INTERFERENCE

There will be elements that affect the user to a varying degree. A threshold is a weak interference. The stairs, which will require more energy, are a greater interference, and an unused, disliked bathtub is a major interference. When walking around a crowded city, disliking crowds, one chooses the less frequented streets. One changes the spatial distortion level

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<sup>3</sup> M. Heidegger, *Znaki drogi*, Fundacja Aletheia, Warszawa 1995, p. 108.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 80.

independently on the axis, from left to right, replacing the elements that generate interference with those that do not create it. When settling in, the user seeks a suitable furniture setup, constantly changing the space plan. That the user wants to have things their way baffles the uneducated designer. The user, on the other hand, is stuck with an internal need to mitigate interference. They move along the interference axis to the right, so as to eliminate all spatial proximities that interfere with their natural dwelling. An educated designer understands the nature of changes and tries to meet the spatial needs of the user so that they can reach self-fulfillment thanks to the space.

In a discourse on the users and their internal truths and needs, the individuality of the needs should be mentioned. Each user feels a desire to combine their way of life with the space they live in. For some, the house will be just a place to sleep. For some, a place to start a family. Some people consider their vehicles as homes because they spend more time in them than anywhere else. They have prepared these places to accommodate their basic needs. The feeling of home is not a feeling of being inside four walls and under a roof; it is a general expression that briefly describes the fulfillment of one's basic living needs. For example, when a child drives with their parents in a car, they feel "at home." A good car or bus design is one in which spatial interferences are not observed. The control buttons and knobs are at one's fingertips, ready for use even without looking. The seat does not cause pain during a long drive, and one can fit everything that's needed for a long trip in the trunk. Driving alone, one feels comfortable and when in company, they are not annoyed by the passengers. Everything is done in such a way that the journey goes smoothly. Movement sequences in the vehicle and the proximity of the interior elements meet the needs of the user and the situations in which they find themselves.

### 3.2 INTERFERENCE DISTRIBUTION IN RELATION TO THE ARRANGED SPACE

Let us imagine space as a sequence of movements which affect the user. Moving around, one can notice that while some spaces can be negotiated with no major obstacles, and some of them are troublesome. One tries to understand how the space works, what its sequence is, and then how to live in it.

It can be said that on the one hand, when entering the building for the first time, one can feel at home and move around it as in a long-familiar place. On the other hand, a space can feel so unwelcoming that it discourages one's presence altogether. The more willingly one stays in a given space, the less interference there is. The more difficult it is to stay in a given space, the higher the interference. Please note that interference varies between individuals and affects them differently.

### 3.3 HOW INTERFERENCE AND ITS LEVEL AFFECT THE PERCEPTION OF SPATIAL COMFORT

Architecture allows moving in space, in time. Time flows, and so does the space. The concept of time that accompanies space is interesting: time does not turn back, it passes and is said to heal all wounds. It does so within the future timeframe. Moreover, time passes differently under different conditions: it passes quickly when one is enjoying themselves, or can drag, because of a monotonous, tedious activity.

Since space interacts with time, the notion of comfort changes over time. Solutions chosen in the past can create new interferences in the future because of new needs. Young and strong people have no problem climbing stairs. Children use them as slides, they sit and play on them. The interference is minimal, or even none, because not only is the staircase free from interference, but it has become something new. The staircase is not just used to move between floors, albeit that's its original purpose. The stairs are used for playing, reading a book, observing the parents' interactions with the guests in the living room. However, with time, the stairs become more and more of an interference and are used less willingly. When strength fails, the stairs are the main cause of concern for the weary users. This is why it is so important to understand the space and interferences that change over time.

The perception of simple physical events is easy to investigate, because one can freely and precisely change and dose stimuli. Their importance also lies in the fact that starting from these impressions will hopefully allow reaching the understanding of more complex objects and events. If this hope is fulfilled, the examination of perception will of course be facilitated. Knowledge of our sensory systems has generally been shaped by the study of such simple physical stimuli.<sup>5</sup>

### 3.4 SHOULD THE SPACE BE ONLY COMFORTABLE?

The truth of architecture is expressed in an asserted form. The form creates a living space, i.e. comfortable presence in a space with a minimal interference that does not fluctuate in time. The interference is constant rather than highly variable. It can change periodically, but is quickly neutralized. Moreover, the space will be limited by the said form.

The architect follows the investor's guidelines, own intuitions and technical guidelines. However, each user has different needs. One wants a house to invite friends and showcase the grandeur and complexity of the forms that make up the building. The other will treat the house as a shelter, a place of refuge and homeliness. Each of these places is different and serves different purposes. However, each of them feels comfortable, which means that the interference is low and there are no large fluctuations in time. Interference can relate to the sphere of personal life as well as to aesthetic experiences. After all, the house may be partly a sculpture, providing new sensations every morning. For people who want to create a home, a house like this can have more interference than for people who consider it a showcase, a place for entertainment and meetings. All in all, the truth of the house will be referred to as living, i.e. comfortable being within a space. Mystification is inventions that do not take into account the spatial interference axis.

### 3.5 HOW COMFORT SHOULD CHANGE IN SPACES

If something is defined as a mystification or a lie, it will be due to a lack of understanding of the reasons behind the form. Spatial comfort can be obtained in various ways, by various architectural means. The comfort of sitting can be achieved with a sofa, but also with an armchair. However, the sofa will generate less interference if the user is also more likely to sleep on it. It will be used for both sitting and sleeping. The armchair, on the other hand, will satisfy the need of sitting, but it is uncomfortable to sleep on. However, apart from

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<sup>5</sup> J.E. Hochberg, *Percepcja*, PWN, Warszawa 1970, p. 27.

satisfying the need of sitting, the armchair will also cater to the need for reading. It is hard to read comfortably on the sofa. Both of these items, the sofa and the armchair, meet the user's needs. However, interference in time is different for both of them, taking into account their future use. The interference can seem minimal at first glance but may change over time due to the user's future needs. The comfort will change, however, it should change in such a way that the fluctuations on the interference axis remain small due to the user's future needs. Therefore, it is worth considering what is required from the space and how the user will live in it.

Man cannot go directly from feeling to thinking; he must first take a step back, for only by abandoning one determination can an opposing determination appear [...] Man must be temporarily free from all expressions and find himself in a state of mere possibility of expression. He must, therefore, in a way, return to the negative state of mere indefiniteness in which he was, before anything started to impress his senses.<sup>6</sup>

#### 4. CONCLUSION

The house is a place built to last for dozens of years. When creating a concept, the architect surveys the user's needs and tries to meet them. However, these needs change over time. One has many different needs throughout their life. "Personality is rarely the same throughout a lifetime. Therefore, it is possible, at least in the first half of life, to enrich it, or to transform one's personality. It can be enriched from the outside, thanks to the inflow and assimilation of new, vital content. On this path, a significant enrichment of the personality can occur."<sup>7</sup> Therefore, the space and the objects it contains should be selected in such a way that the interference axis is minimal and periodic fluctuations are small.

The object's form shows the previously unknown spatial and aesthetic requirements of the user. For the observer, it may be a mystification since they don't know the reasons for the form. However, for the active user, it will be the truth.

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<sup>6</sup> C.G. Jung, *Archetypy i symbole*, Czytelnik, Warszawa 1976, p. 331.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 106.



- III. 1. Very large interferences, entertainment and industry create an uncomfortable neighborhood. Portugal 2019. Source: Author
- III. 2. High interference, lack of railings creates a dangerous situation. Small interferences, the lack of a handrail enables a more precise contemplation of space, no boundaries. Portugal 2019. Source: Author



- III. 3. Slight interferences in the place where the fence connects to the street. The stone base gets in the way. Portugal 2019. Source: Author
- III. 4. Slight interferences, HVAC installations placed outside the building do not interfere with the free arrangement of the sports hall. Portugal 2019. Source: Author

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