

TITLE

Enframing the Scene

Perceptual Interaction as a Design Tool, based on Chinese scholar gardens research

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KEYWORDS

Perceptual Interaction Design Tool; Contemporary spatial design; Ancient Chinese landscape architecture; Frame/windows and space/landscape

ABSTRACT

This paper is part of a Ph.D. thesis. It originates in a cross-cultural observation, which is from the perspective of the contemporary architecture academic context to interpret one typical Chinese landscape spatial phenomenon: *enframing* the scene.

Starting from a discussion of *frame*¹, both in contemporary architectural discourse and in retroactive research concerning Ancient Chinese landscape, this project aims to reveal certain similarities and differences in the use of *frame* between these realms.

Based on a cross-cultural methodological approach, we found a similarity in the use of *frame* in these two domains. They are both from visual habits. It is in one certain chain: 'the way of seeing'- 'the way to create space matching this seeing way'. Due to the different visual habits, the cases from ancient Chinese landscape offer another way to see, and then another way to organize, the space by using frame. This "another way", in this thesis, is defined as perceptual interaction between the users and space, happening in the user's perception field.

In the present paper, it will discuss the possibility to employ the perception-phenomenology and visual psychology to demonstrate the feasibility and effectiveness of this perception interaction tool in contemporary spatial design.

The adoption of phenomenology is based on the assumption that human knowledge of space includes some a priori. This means that, excluding cultural differences, there should be some spatial prototypes that can serve people of varied cultural backgrounds.

Ultimately, the research will highlight how the perception interaction, used as a "design tool", could lead to a higher context-sensitive spatial design practice in this contemporary extensively globalized society.

1 In the thesis, in the Western context, frame generally refers to a window, or to a (hidden) painting-frame drawn in perspective way, as well as in making movies, etc.; while in Ancient Chinese landscape, it refers to all the structures that can be visually recognized as frames.