

Notes on DIY Room Design and Emotional Aesthetics Research of 17 Temporary Residence

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Abstract: Taking the 17 temporary shelters that the author has lived in as the subject, the article summarises, explores, and reflects on the autonomous design of residential space in the specific category of temporary shelters. By integrating the function and form of space with the inner projection of human beings, the article concludes that the form and aesthetics of objective space are closely related to the aesthetics and emotions of human beings and their memories. The aim is to advocate that people, as the main body of space users, spontaneously carry out spatial design and decoration to improve the satisfaction of living and the quality of space and life.

Keywords: Seventeen rooms; Temporary shelter; DIY; Emotional aesthetics

Online publication: August 23, 2024

1. Introduction

The development and continuous change of society, economy, and era have largely changed people's living state. This change is not only the differentiation of people's work and life rhythm from the past but also, more importantly, the form and "expiration date" of the space of "home" as a shelter are changing. Throughout history, people find that residential space has been undergoing a process from big to small, which is even more prominent in contemporary times^[1]. Based on differences in economic levels, work commuting, and children's schooling, many groups of different ages are in a state of phased rental housing, which can be referred to as "temporary housing."

2. Types of space and characteristics of temporary accommodation

2.1. Types of space

Based on the author's study, work, and life experiences, he has lived in 17 temporary shelters, the longer ones being dormitories during his undergraduate and postgraduate studies and shelters after joining the workforce, and the shorter ones being neighborhood houses and flats. The four main types of spaces used as temporary housing are flats (dormitories), public housing, neighborhood houses, and peasant houses (**Table 1**). Each type

has its specific attributes, which include differences in the area and volume of the space, the formal composition of the outdoor space, the specificity of the group of users, and the configuration of furniture and electrical appliances, as well as corresponding to different standards of rent. Flats are mostly dormitories in schools and enterprises, and the user groups are mostly students and young people who have not yet established families. Public rental housing includes young office workers and groups who have already established families, and some of them even have three generations of the same family, which belongs to the low-cost housing provided by the government for the improvement of the living conditions of the public, but mainly for reducing the cost of their living. Community housing is comparatively better in indoor and outdoor spatial environments, and also includes the aforementioned user groups; while peasant houses have a better spatial environment, and also include the same user groups. The unofficial term “peasant houses” is used to refer to individual houses for rent, which are relatively poorer in terms of geographic location and hardware facilities, but at a favorable price. The price is directly proportional to the quality of the space, and the existence of a variety of rental housing meets the differentiated needs of different groups at specific times and under specific conditions. Regardless of the living conditions, it is a comprehensive presentation of an individual’s current stage of life, and in a sense, a reflection of his or her values, aesthetics, and emotions. It is true that people pursue and aspire to high-quality material conditions, but the space and materials that are truly suitable for their specific stage are in a sense the best.

Table 1. Main types of temporary housing and related attributes

Type	Features	Population	Household situation	Price overview
Public rental housing	Small and medium-sized homes predominate	Urban workers and their families	Kitchen and bathroom only and modular	Low Cost
Flat	Smaller units	Commuters and Employees	None or relatively simple	Free or Medium-low fee
Subdivision housing	A variety of house types	Urban workers and their families	Relatively complete	Medium to high-cost
Farmers’ houses	Smaller units	Commuters and employees mainly	Jagged	Variety of costs

2.2. Characteristics of space

The types and conditions of space have their uniqueness based on the environmental attributes and the nature of the building, as well as the differences in the house type and volume itself. In addition to the limiting factors of the housing itself, there is a common characteristic of “relative fixity.” Based on the rental, especially the short-term and medium-term rental housing, the indoor space is relatively limited in terms of variability. That is to say, the house belongs to the owner, and the renter is only the user, so basically has no right to change the house. Changes here refer to the decoration of the space, the layout of the plan, and so on. When the lease term expires and the lease contract is terminated, the housing needs to be returned to the landlord in its original state, whether it is from the hygiene and integrity of the space, or the completeness of the facilities such as home appliances, and the corresponding property utility costs and so on. In this way, the user’s ability to change or design the space remains at the level of “decoration” and beautification.

In the early days, there were no independent interior designers, let alone soft furnishing designers. The space was basically all stereotyped in the design process of architects. Based on the development of the times and the differentiation of people’s spatial needs, there is a gradual division of labor. However, in the case of the “light decoration, heavy decoration” concept gradually popularised, people for the beautification and decoration of space more and more unique, along with their own aesthetic needs for space design, especially

soft furnishings, accessories, furniture, and furnishings. This is because this part of the content has greater flexibility and variability. Decoration is not embodied in the function, or not embodied in the “use” function, but embodied in the “aesthetic” function [2].

3. Space requirements and DIY design

3.1. Space demand

For space demand, there are certain differences between different groups. For example, single occupants, double (couple) occupants, three families, and three generations of occupants. This is not only based on the composition and structure of family members but also includes the actual use of space, as well as personal preferences and aesthetic factors. Generally speaking, the use of space by a single person is more free and flexible since they do not need to take care of the needs of others; young couples need space for two people; a large family of three needs to take into account the needs of the children; three generations of the same family structure also need to take into account the needs of the elderly. These needs include not only basic functional convenience but also safety and psychological factors.

The regular space needs of the majority of the population can be summarized into five aspects: basic space shelter; daily household chores; interpersonal communication and interaction; spiritual satisfaction and aesthetics; and ultimately a sense of belonging. In other words, the material form of space ultimately directly or indirectly affects the achievement of people’s residential satisfaction. Implemented into specific spatial functions, it can be realized from the specific configuration of sitting and placing furniture, sanitary ware, storage cabinets, and furniture for interactive communication. Furniture is one of the important members of the interior space design. If no furniture is placed in the interior, the interior space where it is located will lose the meaning of existence [3]. Furniture is an artifact compared to purely objective things and is the link between people and space [4]. In addition, categories of artifacts and decorations such as soft furnishings and furnishings contribute largely to the visual effect and spatial ambience of the final space. This is the same more intuitive spiritual and aesthetic pursuit that people seek after satisfying their basic functional needs, as shown in **Figure 1**.

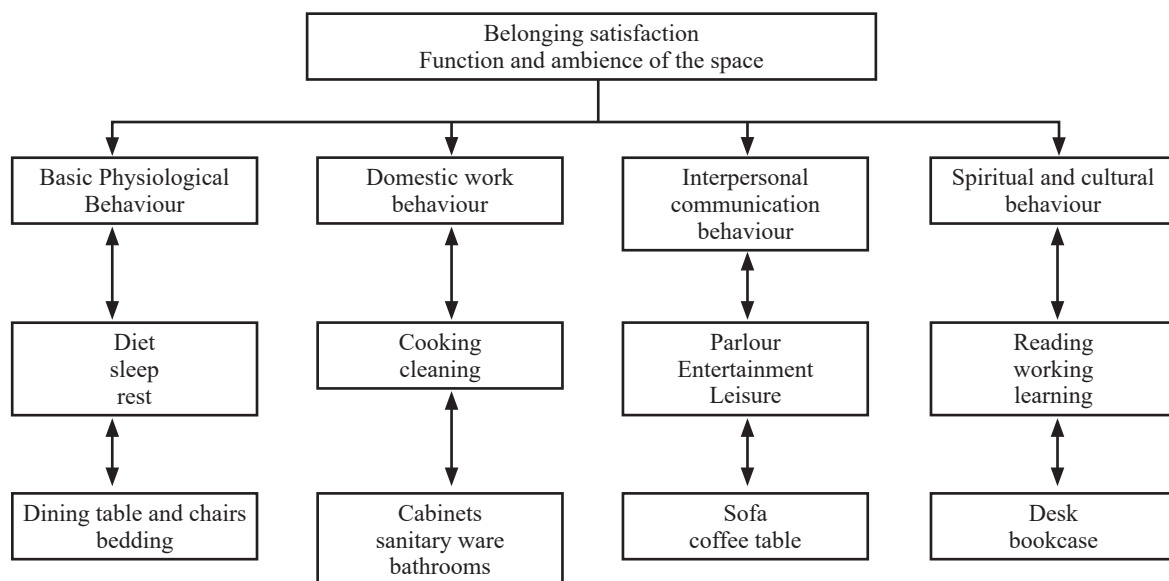


Figure 1. Relationship between spatial activities and facilities

3.2. DIY design

DIY is the abbreviation of Do It Yourself, which means doing something yourself. However, from the design

point of view, it can also be understood as Design It Yourself, which means designing by oneself. In the 1960s, the design idea of DIY appeared, which originally meant not relying on professional craftsmen, and repairing residential homes themselves with suitable materials in their spare time ^[5]. In fact, any space has the shadow of the idea of design by its owner or user present. This autonomous design has accumulated over time to give the space a particular aura or atmosphere. This includes the style of the furniture already the decorative objects' attributes. This is inevitable, because the user of the space is different in its characteristics, and it can even be said that each person is different, because the unit's personal values and aesthetic standards are unique, and it is the composition and establishment of its own growth experience in the process of physical and mental accumulation. DIY design also has another level of factors which is low cost, which is what people understand as daily economics and aesthetics. Although the degree and standard of aesthetics are difficult to unify and quantify, people have the same pursuit of beauty, which is the pursuit of visual, functional, and psychological pleasure and comfort, and DIY design may only be a piece of furniture built by oneself, a piece of handmade decorations or two-dimensional graphic wall paintings, and photographs, or a certain kind of plants or fruits (such as gourds) that are grown by oneself, or a purchased commodity. It could be the secondary design and embellishment of purchased goods, such as writing or coloring on a lamp or other object purchased to give it a certain uniqueness and aesthetic satisfaction. But it is precisely this kind of initiative to some extent expresses their inner feelings, effectively forming the interaction between people and space, people and things, thus allowing people to have a sense of participation. In turn, the space and things are endowed with a specific meaning, as the "Little Prince" said, there are many roses in the world, for which we have paid emotion, observation, and even sweat belong to our roses. Its significance exceeds the value and function of the object itself and can be called a metaphysical projection and carrier of emotions.

4. Space form and human aesthetic emotion

The form of space has its objective state, no matter whether open, semi-open, or closed, all have their specific functional needs and effects. As mentioned before, in a sense, for the temporary accommodation of rental housing, the degree of changeability of people's space is relatively low. However, from the point of view of flexible separation, the space can still be organized through curtains, screens, and so on. At the same time, the most flexible and effective way is the placement of furniture. Furniture as an important element of the functional composition of the specific way of separation, can form a different spatial flow and partition, and thus meet the different needs of people. In the author's memory of living in the space, most cases of furniture are distributed by the wall, because this can ensure that the furniture and the wall enclosure space is maximized. This initiative is based on the need to give children a larger field of activity, even as a child to crawl and learn to walk. However, in the distribution of another standard rectangular studio flat, a sofa is used to divide the space into two parts, the interior as a bedroom, and the front area as a living room and study (desk) area, this initiative is for the husband and wife to work and rest without interfering with each other, but also for friends to visit the independent reception and relaxation area, thus avoiding the embarrassment of going straight to the bedroom. Thus, as mentioned earlier, the treatment of space is always centered on the group of users, as Alvar Aalto said, "Good design is always one-to-one." The "one" here is a specific group and user, or even a specific stage of the same group and user.

Apart from the function of space itself, aesthetics and emotion are also important factors in the final presentation of space. Aesthetics vary from person to person, and this is reflected in the differences in personal values, which are the total of all past life experiences. Aesthetics is to a certain extent a reflection of life

experience and the nature of work, as well as economic conditions, education, and other multidimensional factors. There is no first place for literature and no second place for martial arts, and it is difficult to distinguish which kind of beauty is the real beauty, which is a problem that many aesthetic researchers keep thinking about. In addition, there is another factor, namely, the problem of contradictions between aesthetic interests, aesthetic standards, and one's ability. For example, people's inner expectation is a gorgeous artifact, but the objective conditions cannot satisfy their possession of it, and then they have to lower the standard or change the form. Many people like celebrity paintings, but can only hang their textiles in the space. Many people like textured furniture but can only seek a similar form but inexpensive items to replace. Hence, people are maximizing beauty in the way that suits them best. DIY was mentioned earlier as a way to create unique beauty, in addition to a type of beauty that is given by time. In life, there is no shortage of objects that have been used by people for many years, including houses and their various sizes. This kind of artifact itself may not have a high objective value, but from the perspective of emotion and companionship, artifacts are witnesses and companions of a certain period, so they have a specific meaning and temperament because a piece of artifact becomes old with the accumulation of time, which cannot be achieved quickly. The significance of space and object does not only lie in its function and its value or price, but it projects or is projected a certain emotional value as a witness of life experience. It is as if it were another storehouse of time and memory other than the human brain, and it is believed that this is where the metaphysical significance of space and objects lies. This is also why some groups of people have a strong sense of nostalgia in their lives. People are always looking for some kind of "familiar" feeling and sensation, which is a unique human emotion.

5. Conclusion

It is difficult to answer the question of how many houses a person will live in during his/her lifetime. Maybe this question is simple for the people of the father's generation, because there are a large number of people who live in only 1–2 houses in their life, and they even spend their whole life here. For example, the "home" of some nomadic groups is a mobile house, which is highly variable in the vastness of the country. But in the present age of urbanization, people's dwellings are constantly changing, both in terms of the properties and forms of the houses themselves and the mobility and movement of people. In terms of traveling, the shifting and temporary character of the dwelling becomes even more pronounced. The house is not a fixed place for people, but more like a station in life, fulfilling different missions and tasks at different ages. The author is thinking that people are always pursuing a kind of inner stability, while in this process, the external situation is the opposite, mobile, which includes factors such as career development, children's education, parents' old age, and other factors. This flux of residence will go on forever, and the question of when it can come to a relative halt is difficult to answer. Space as a box has no meaning in itself, while experiences and emotions give it a specific meaning.

Disclosure statement

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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