

A sheltering choice appears at the boundary where space is temporarily divided: to occupy a warm space or a cool one, wet or dry, light or dark. The choice can be conceived based on real sensations where a person can actually feel the difference. Or the choice can rest on the belief that a difference will soon appear. A choice based on natural rhythms will always return over time.

While rhythmic experiences may drive us to choose, they do not determine how we will act. Individuals and even whole cultures may respond quite differently. One person may move toward the comforting sounds and smells of the kitchen, another may move away from the distractions. The Canadian may desire sunshine while in the same setting the Mexican prefers shade. Yet, common to all is the temporal circumstance of making a choice.

Refuge

Shelter is usually understood as object, a building or a cave . . . something that protects us. Architecture is often spoken of as composition, “frozen music” that affixes one thing against another. But the people who seek refuge are not frozen or fixed in time. Their relationship to these shelters is a dynamic one.

Sheltering is the concept that recognizes this dynamic relationship, the ways our bodies and emotions respond to different measures of time. When we live in a place, we modify it for comfort, choice, and a sense of well-being. Sheltering, therefore, is not simply about a building but about a course of repeated actions in relation to the building.

To the extent that we are a natural process, we must expect our own acts of sheltering to follow nature. Three basic adaptive modes of the natural world apply to us as well: *migration*, *transformation*, and *metabolism*. Of these three methods, only metabolism in its modern, mechanical form fails to change the boundaries of space

rhythmically. Instead, it often works from a premise of uniform conditioning of space. The resulting sensory monotone produces a dilemma, not a true choice: we can only select that space or none at all.

MIGRATION

The adaptive migrations of people follow the rhythms of nature. Some movements retrace ancient pathways for miles over periods of weeks. Others track hardly any distance at all through different rooms of a house. Regardless of distance, migrations tend to follow days and seasons.

It may be argued that moving about for comfort does not really change the boundaries of space. Yet shifting our position carries us through doorways and around objects, changing our perceptions of space. We may move to a shady porch, descend to a cool lower floor, or leave the house entirely and go out under the trees on a warm summer afternoon. In winter, we may go upstairs for the rising heat or gather close to a fireplace. Each of these small migrations not only promises more comfort elsewhere, it rhythmically animates passages that vary with time and season.

Troy Chattariyangkul, an art student, has provided maps and a firsthand account of his passages through his family house in Monterey Park, California. Different seasons evoke separate passages, using up more or less of the house and its surroundings.

In the cold winter season I usually move around from the living room to the kitchen a lot. My family and I usually stay close together for warmth. I enjoy this as well because we would usually watch a movie together while eating popcorn.

During summer I usually move from the family room to my bedroom, back and forth all day because it is nice and cool in my room as well as the family room. The feeling I get from these two