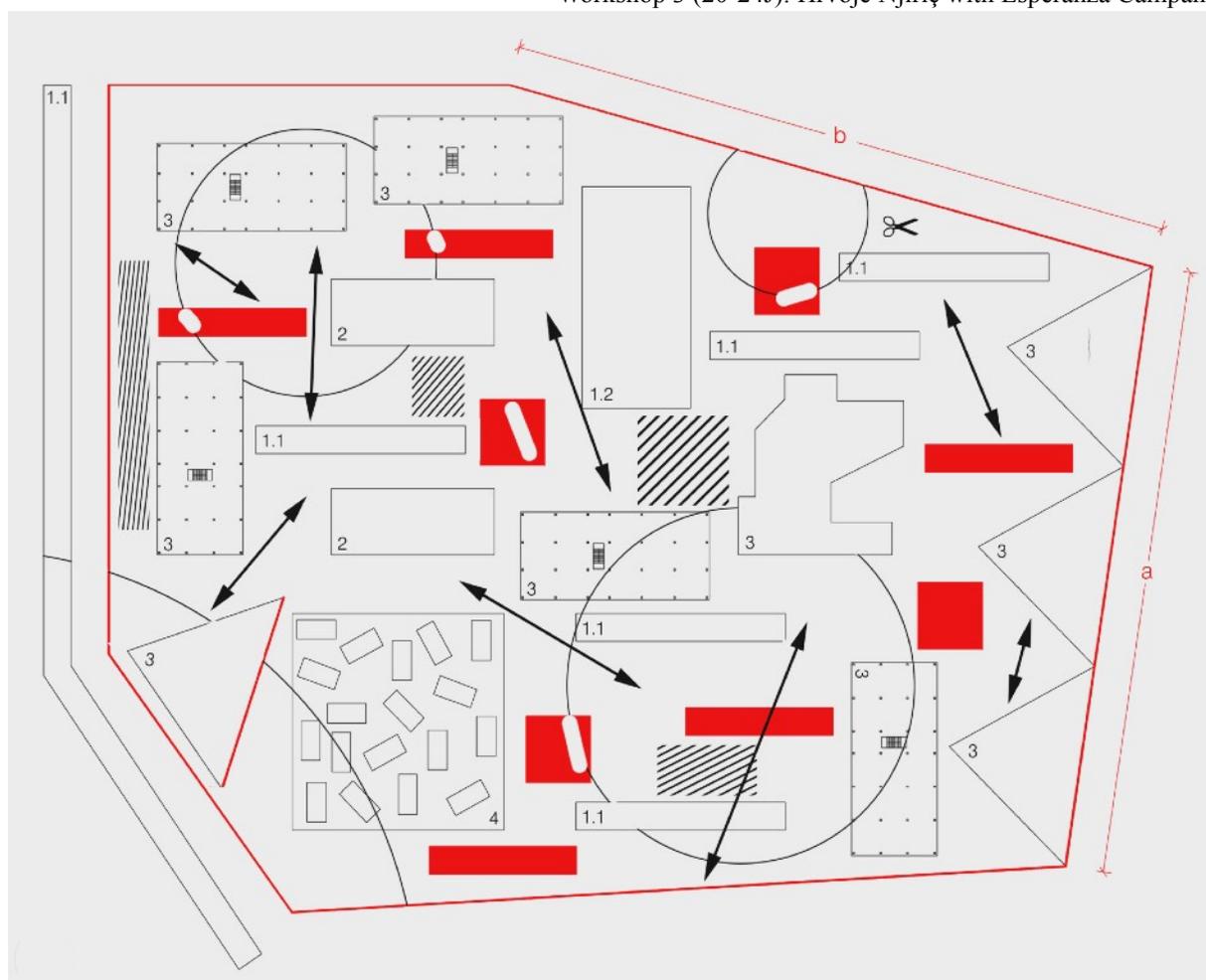


*Superar**

Overcoming clichés in collective housing design

Workshop 3 (20-24J): Hrvoje Njirić with Esperanza Campaña



**Surpass, overtake, get beyond.*

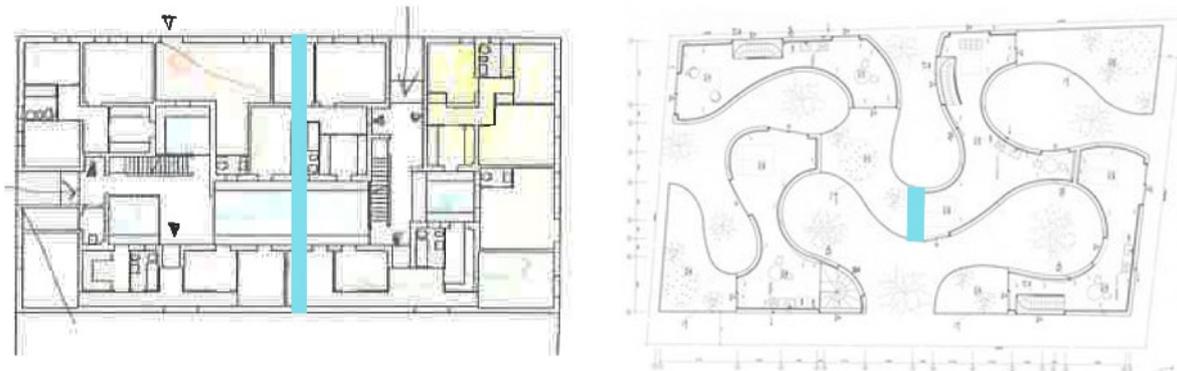
This year's task is focused on low-cost housing, on affordable and innovative solutions to the basic need for a small-sized quality housing. The assignment gives the opportunity to think about social, cultural and environmental effects in sustainable design and construction. Participants are challenged to conceive a new and original concept for a low-cost house with expandable units or local materials, however - not strictly limited to "low tech". The workshop is designed to challenge and seek creativity with traditional ideas and concepts in architectural design of collective living spaces. It aims to promote alternative solutions to housing, coming up with affordable and sustainable units with limited size and budget to meet urgent demands in housing market, something not in contradiction with singular, enjoyable and inviting domestic spaces. The challenge is both multidisciplinary and multi-scale, a minimal housing unit capable of fulfilling the residents' requirements of comfort, thrift and sustainability.

As a critique of usual shortcomings in housing market, participants will be asked to tackle and rework long-established clichés, turning them into new qualities.

There are 8 of them chosen for our elaboration:

1. The shallow/thick plan

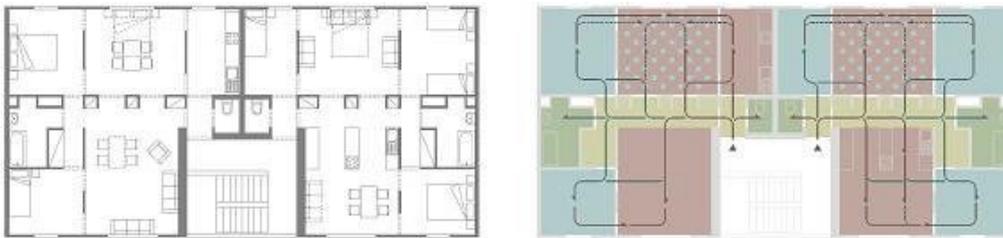
Speculations on the housing market often result in extremely deep floor plans which demand a lot of skill to deal with. Depths of 20m are not rare at all, often worsened by an extreme thinness of less than 6m. There is also a number of historical plans with such measures. Participants will be asked to find and study such examples and derive ways how to organize them in an appropriate way, making sure there is enough view, light and ventilation. On the contrary, websites are brimming with extremely thin houses which are not wide enough for two functional zones, one behind the other. The advantages of having cross ventilation and unobstructed views are topped with an extreme facade length and thermal losses. Participants will be asked to study and improve such cases, to show that such extreme measurements are possible to implement.



García y Rubiño, 10 Social Housing in Malaga, 1993. — Sanaa, Okurayama Apartments, 2009.

2. *The reversible plan.*

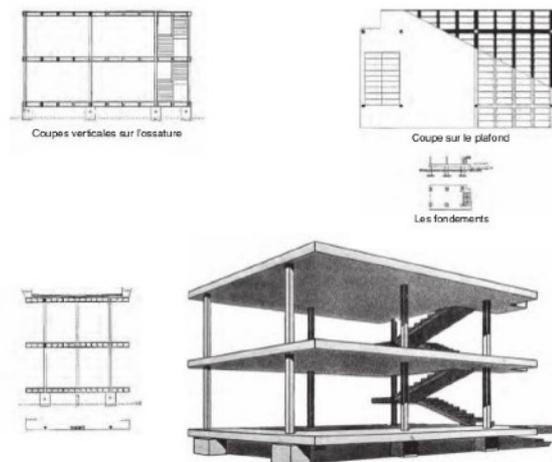
There is an on-going debate whether apartments have to be designed to offer transformations within the same perimeter. Reasons for that can be different: multi-generational transitions, patchwork household vs. traditional family layouts, etc. It was a hot topic in the seventies, somewhat taken aside today. However, there are some valuable contemporary examples to discover. Participants will be asked to apply the programmatic needs of today, (i.e. working from home, coworking, flexible storage, open air...) and enable smooth transformations.



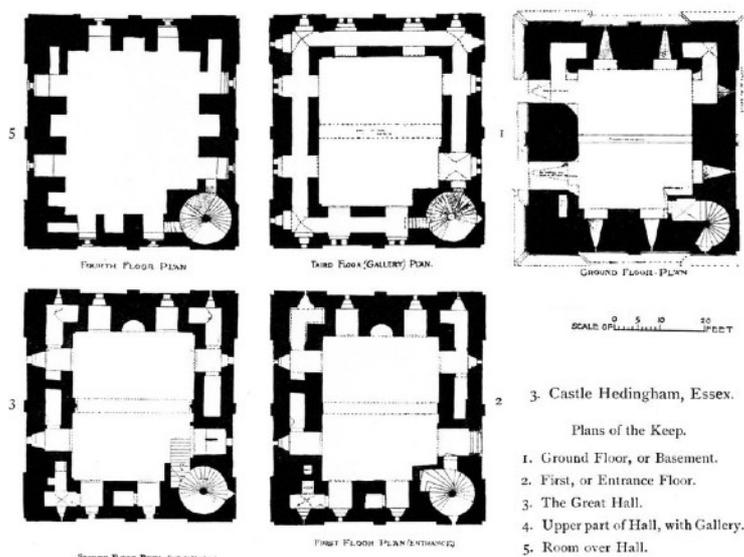
Riegler Riewe, Bahnhofstrasse Housing in Graz, 1994.

3. *The open/petrified plan.*

Open plan has its conceptual, ideological roots in the 20th century modernism. It is also to be found as a radical transformation of industrial legacy known as a loft. Whatever the lifestyle is, issues of privacy and confinement have to be addressed. On the contrary, a petrified plan with a lot of thick load-bearing walls with the short span is a relic of 19th century housing stock that needs to be conversed for the present-day needs. Functional and conceptual interpretation of both extremes demand good architectural skills.



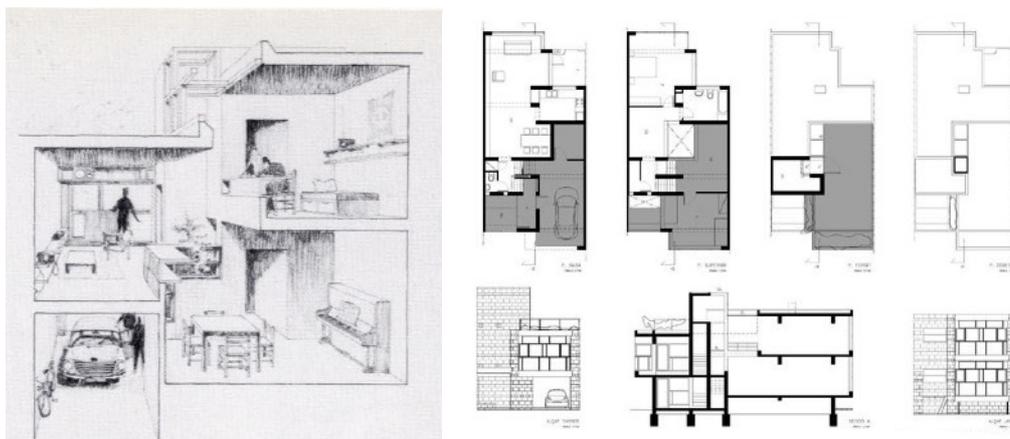
Le Corbusier, Dom-ino House, 1914.



Heddingham Castle, 1100-1140.

4. *The raumplan vs the uneven floors.*

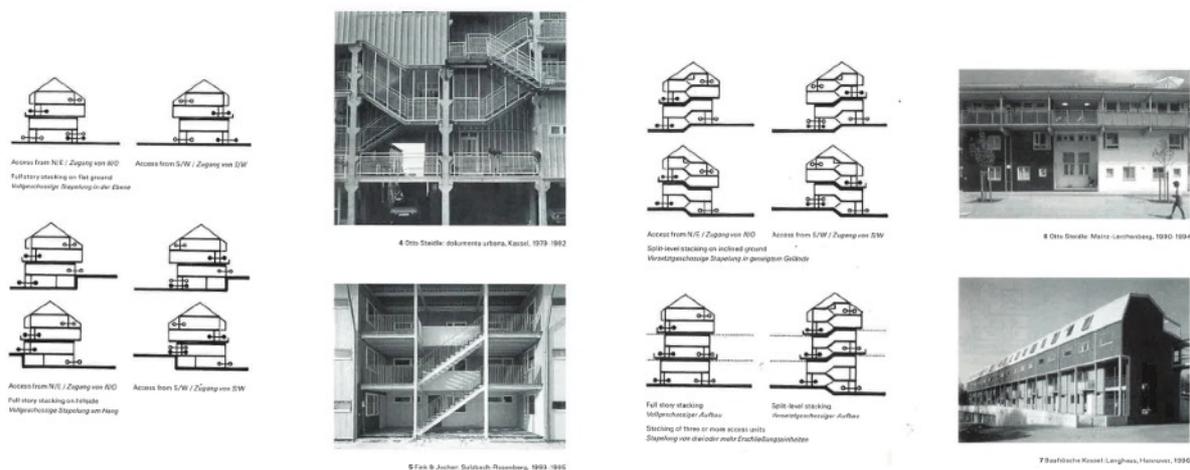
The recognition of the architectural section as a major tool in spatial definition has certain limits in housing. Otherwise of an exceptional value in public buildings, in a rational domain of residences there are not so many examples that could be taken seriously. The legacy of Russian avant-garde, the modernism of the Smithsons and the structuralist schemes —such as Hertzberger’s—offer a reliable point of departure. The new Berlin architecture gives some usable clues for a contemporary use of this tool.



Herman Hertzberger, Diagoon experimental housing, Delft, 1967-1970.

5. The diversified access modes.

This aspect opens a vast field for experimentation. On one the one hand, it offers rational solutions for cheap access to the dwelling. On the other, it enables rich spaces for social interaction. Participants will be asked to articulate an effective entrance directly form a street, from a gallery, from a garden, from a courtyard or from another building via bridge-like connections. An answer to the question of how many units can be successfully unified around a single staircase will be asked as well.



Otto Steidle. Dokumenta urbana, Kassel, 1979-1982 and Mainz-Lerchenberg, 1990-1994. / Fink + Jocher, Housing in Sulzbach-Rosenberg, 1993-1995/ Baufrösche Kassel, Housing in Hannover – Langhaus, 1995.

6. The elaborate transitions of public/private.

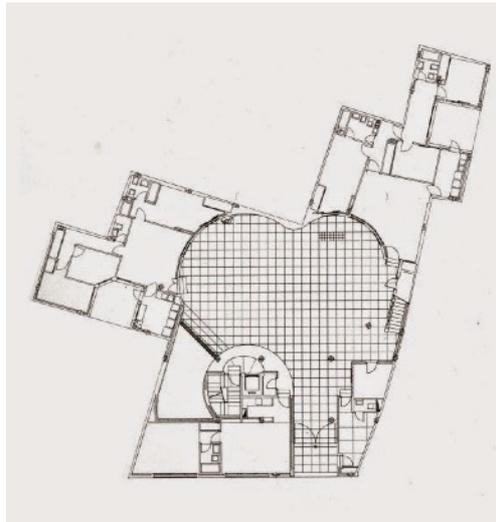
How many thresholds are to be crossed from the bedside to the street? Participants will be asked to find and study examples of advanced transitions between the very private space of the bedroom to the more and more public environment. What are the means used to facilitate these spatial and emotional transitions?



Alvaro Siza, Bouça Housing Complex in Porto. 1972-2007.

7. The irregular contours/limits.

Sometimes we face the task to design a dwelling in a predefined contour. Reasons for this can be quite diversified – be it an existing structure that has to be converted into dwellings or a complicated geometry of envelope articulated in such way to meet i.e. urban requirements. But complex and irregular borders doesn't necessarily mean a shortcoming in spatial and atmospheric quality.



Cruz y Ortiz, María Coronel Housing in Seville, 1973-1976.

8. The wrong functional formats.

Participants will be asked to take position regarding a hypothetical ideal format for every function of the dwelling. Is there such as an ideal measure for a living room, opposed to the dimensions of the bathroom? How far can we go applying the Neufert logic? Rem Koolhaas judged a Shinkenchiku competition in 1992 and the results might give us a clue what is it all about. Participants will have to make an update for such a variety of interpretations.



Yosuke Fujiki, House with no style Competition Entry, 1992.

—*Method*

The exercise of breaking away with usual dogmas in the domain of residential design will be performed in several steps. Each day participants will be asked to develop the aforementioned aspects, divided into 2 groups:

- a) main topic (1-4)
- b) extra aspect (5-8)

The main topic of the day can be freely associated/combined with one (or even more) extra aspects. Daily presentation of results includes production of the following **documents**:

- ground-floor plan 1/100
- typical floor plan 1/100
- section 1/100
- axonometric view of two opposed sides
- presentation of several referential examples (anonymous and well-known)

This procedure will be repeated for 4 consecutive days (Monday-Thursday). As the final exercise the participants will be asked to develop **a model of an urban display** for a designated block¹ ('manzana') with irregular contours, using as many of the building blocks, prepared in the former 4 exercises, as possible, to achieve an increased density. The volumes should be carefully positioned on the site, forming an outer facade, articulating inner squares, parks/gardens, passages, terraces, secluded corners, etc., thus enabling diverse social and age groups to find their favorite spot. Recreational facilities for the youth, moderate off-centered areas for the elderly, playground for kids and so on.

In this final stage of urban plan/collage, we also encourage creation of new living styles that are not only limited to houses, but also can take the form of pavilions, follies, temporary structures or landscaped areas, that focus on different urban themes and raise awareness of sustainability.

The participants' work will be evaluated and judged by the following criteria:

- originality of layouts in response to given data
- appropriate use of design principles
- clear definition of positive transformative social, spatial and environmental impact of the project
- response to the self-made context of block. A clear declaration of conditions that set the contextual parameters of the project through the identification of local challenges, construction, and living culture.

The participants will be offered to work preferably in groups of 3. However, each and every one is expected to demonstrate his/her own capacities and abilities to deal with the multiple tasks in a convincing manner.

¹ The shape of the block on the scale and materials of the model will be explained in advance.

—Schedule

Monday:

- 08.30 - 09:30 introduction + HJN lecture about own work in housing
09.30 - 11.30 task presentations:
task 1 *shallow/thick* – EC
+
Extras:
diversified access – HNJ
transitions – EC
wrong formats – HNJ
irregular contours – EC
- 17:00-19:00 participants presentation 1
19:00-19:30 task 2 *open/petrified plan* – HNJ

Tuesday:

- 14.00 - 17:00 desk crits
17:00 - 19:00 participants presentation 2
19:00 - 19:30 task 3 *raumplan* – EC

Wednesday:

- 14.00 - 17:00 desk crits
17:00 - 19:00 participants presentation 3
19:00 - 19:30 task 4 *reversible plan* – HNJ

Thursday:

- 14.00 - 17:00 desk crits
17:00 - 19:00 participants presentation 4
19:00 - 19:30 task 5 *urban plan* – HNJ+EC

Friday:

- 10.00 - 12:00 desk crits
14.00 - 14:30 submissions
15.00 - 19:30 final presentations
21:00 celebration