

## MODERN HOUSING, PAST, PRESENT & FUTURE

A4598

Professor Gwendolyn Wright <gw8@columbia.edu>

Tuesdays, 11-1; 408 Avery Hall

Housing has been a prime site for experiments throughout the history of modern architecture. The principal locales, ideas and forms have changed, of course. Today's modernism no longer promotes a single standard; architects realize that innovation does not preclude comfort, familiarity and delight. Housing relates to dwelling: both a universal human need and a diverse panoply of forms, desires and social conditions. Site plans as well as floor plans are critical, together with a range of services within and beyond a specific site. Design prowess extends into new realms like financing, political support and popular media.

This seminar will explore some of the key themes and examples of 20<sup>th</sup>- and 21<sup>st</sup>-century modern housing around the world. The first half of the class will survey and compare a broad range of early examples from iconic social-democratic housing estates of Europe in the 1920s and progressive American enclaves of that era to more recent prefab prototypes in Sweden, apartments in Rio and barrios in Caracas, new suburbs in China, "green" apartment buildings in Malaysia, as well as projects for refugees, the homeless, and what has come to be called "affordable housing" on various settings. We'll explore multiple scales from the individual body, the room and the wall to larger composites of housing complexes, production systems, social services, environmental factors and economic challenges.

The history of design choices helps us think about architecture and policies in the present. Students in the GSAPP Housing Studio will work with students from other programs and other departments across the university. Research is a parallel theme. Students will choose topics for the second half of the semester and present their initial work, culminating in papers (and/or design projects) due on **Wednesday Dec 14** at noon. (Please submit both hard copies and electronic copies.) Required weekly readings for group discussion will be available on Seminar Shelf # 359 in the Avery Library Reserve Reading Room.

**\*\* CLASS SIZE IS LIMITED. Please submit a short (1-paragraph to 1-page) statement about your particular interests in the topic before the first class on Monday Sept. 5 to gw8@columbia.edu.**

## Week 1 (Sept. 6) : What Is ‘Modern Housing’?

The term “Modern Housing” used to mean canonical European villas and social-democratic workers’ dwellings of the 1920s: unadorned white walls, free plans, steel and glass. While those remain essential foundations in architectural ambitions, we’ll also explore far more varied forms and social/cultural aspirations of the term in recent decades.

Look over the seminar shelf’s books on modern housing, such as:

Eric Firley and Caroline Stahl, *The Urban Housing Handbook* (NY, 2010)

Wolfgang Forster, *Housing in the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> Centuries* (Munich, 2006)

Hilary French, *New Urban Housing* (New Haven, 2006)

Alber Ferre and Tihamer Salij, *Total Housing* (Barcelona, 2010)

Maria Alessandra Segantini, ed., *Contemporary Housing* (Milan, 2008)

Peggy Tully, ed., *Modern American Housing* (New York, 2013)

Josep Luis Mateo, ed., *Global Housing Projects: 25 Buildings since 1980*  
(Barcelona and New York, 2008)

Annabel Biles and Adam Mornement, *Infill: New Houses for Urban Sites*  
(London, 2009)

Graham Towers, *At Home in the City: An Introduction to Urban Housing*  
(Rotterdam, 2005)

Ulduz Maschaykh, *The Changing Image of Affordable Housing: Design, Gentrification  
And Community in Canada and Europe* (London, 2015)

## Week 2 (Sept. 13): Meanings of Home, Housing, and Domesticity

Barbara Miller Lane, ed., *Housing and Dwelling: Perspectives on Modern Domestic  
Architecture* (New York & London, 2007), esp. pp. 50-81 **[on reserve]**

Mary Douglas, “The Idea of Home: A Kind of Space,” in Arien Mack, ed., *The  
Home: A Place in the World* (New York, 1993), 265-81

Be prepared to discuss **meanings** of these words in *various languages*.

Recommended:

Christian Topalov, et.al., *L’aventure des mots de la ville à travers le temps, les langues,  
les sociétés* (Paris, 2010)

“The Question of Home,” *New Formations* (Summer 1992), vii-xi, 3-15, 146-7

Pavlos Levas, *Dwelling and Architecture from Heidegger to Koolhaas* (Berlin, 2009)

David Benjamin, ed., *The Home: Words, Interpretations, Meanings. . .* (1995)

Bridget Franklin, *Housing Transformations:* (London and New York, 2006)

Jan Willem Duyvendak, *The Politics of Home: Belonging and Nostalgia in Western  
Europe and the U.S.* (New York, 2011)

DASH (Delft Architectural Studies on Housing) Publications, e.g. ....

### **Week 3 (Sept. 20): Looking Backwards and Ahead**

\*\* Prepare 5-minute presentations on one *historical* example of a “modern housing” project and its site (in cultural, material and environmental terms).

A few possible sources, most on the seminar shelf:

Hilary French, *Key Urban Housing in the Twentieth Century* (New York, 2008)

Jacques Lucan, *Eau et gaz à tous les étages: 100 ans de logement* (Paris, 1992)

William Blumfield and Blair Ruble, eds., *Russian Housing in the Modern Age* (New York, 1993), esp. 85-170

Kimberly Elman Zarecor, *Manufacturing a Socialist Modernity: Housing in Czechoslovakia, 1945-1960* (Pittsburgh: Univer. of Pittsburgh Press, 2011)

Luis Carranza & Fernando Luiz Lara, *Modern Architecture in Latin America: Art, Technology and Utopia* (Austin, 2015)

Antonio Folkers, *Modern Architecture in Africa* (Amsterdam, 2010)

Norma Evenson, *The Indian Metropolis: A View to the West* (New Haven, 1989)

Stephen Hammett and Dean Forbes, eds., *Planning Asian Cities* (London, 2011)

Lu Junhua, Peter Rowe and Zhang Jie, *Modern Urban Housing in China, 1840-2000* (New York, 2001)

### **Week 4 (Sept. 27): We Usually Have to Continue Presentations!**

### **Week 5 (Oct. 4): Modern Standards, Innovations and Adaptations**

Lucy Bullivant, ed., *Home Front: New Developments in Housing A.D.* vol 73, (July/August 2003), introduction and at least one article

Florian Urban, *Tower and Slab: Histories of Global Mass Housing* (New York and London, 2012), esp. pp. 1-17 [E Books]

Annette Becker, et.al. eds., *Network Living: Architecture for All Generations* (New York and München, 2013), pp. **TK**

Recommended:

Alina Congreve, *Sustainability in New Housing Development* (London, 2011)

Salvador Perez Arroyo, et.al. *Emerging Technologies & Housing Prototypes* (M, 2008)

Ellen Lupton, *The Bathroom, the Kitchen and the Aesthetics of Waste* (NY, 1996)

Graham Towers, *Shelter is Not Enough: Transforming Multi-Storey Housing* (B, 2000)

Barry Bergdoll and Peter Christensen, eds., *Home Delivery: Fabricating the Modern Dwelling* (New York, 2008)

## **Week 6 (Oct. 11). American and Latin American Housing Reforms**

- Gwendolyn Wright, *USA: Modern Architectures in History* (London and Chicago, 2008), esp. 209-222, 167-80, 249-50 [EBooks]
- Suzanne Schindler, "What Is Affordable Housing?" *Bauwelt* 10 (2010): 13-17
- Roberto Segre, "Antillan Architecture of the First Modernity, 1930-1945," in Carolo Brillembourg, ed., *Latin American Architecture, 1929-60: Contemporary Reflections* (New York: Monacelli Press, 2004), pp. 116-135
- Vicente del Rio and William Siembieda, eds., *Beyond Brasilia: Contemporary Urbanism in Brazil* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2009), esp. "Upgrading City Squatter Settlements into City Neighborhoods," pp. 266-90

### **Recommended:**

- Alex F. Schwartz, *Modern Housing Policy in the United States* (New York, 2010)
- Gwendolyn Wright, *Building the Dream: A Social History of Housing in America* (Cambridge, 1983)
- "Public Housing in the Americas," *Journal of Urban History* 33 (March 2007)
- John F. Bauman, et.al., eds., *From the Tenements to the Taylor Homes. . . Urban Housing Policy in 20<sup>th</sup> Century America* (University Park, PA., 2000)
- "Architectures of Latin America," *Harvard Design Magazine* 34 (2011)
- Richard Williams, *Brazil: Modern Architectures in History* (London, 2009)
- Luis Carranza & Fernando Luiz Lara, *Modern Architecture in Latin America: Art, Technology and Utopia* (Austin, 2015)
- Future Anterior* 6 (Winter 2009) on "Historic Preservation in the Americas"

## **Week 7 (Oct. 18): Modern Housing in Asia**

- Ken Tadashi Oshima, "Balancing the Cramped with the Communal: Recent Japanese Housing," *Harvard Design Magazine* (W 2012):142-189
- Claudia Hildner, *Future Living: Collective Housing in Japan* (Basel, 2014) [EBooks] pp. 7-9, 12, 21-26 and skim the examples.

### **Recommended:**

- Philip Judido, *The Japanese House Reinvented* (New York, 2015)
- Albert Ferré and Tomoko Sakamoto, eds., *Kazuyoo Sejima in Gifu* (Madrid, 2001)
- Lü Junhu, Peter G. Rowe, and Shang Jie, *Modern Urban Housing in China, 1840-2000* (Munich et. al., 2001)
- In-ha Chöng, *Architecture and Urbanism in Modern Korea* (Honolulu, 2013)

## **Weeks 7-12 (Oct. 25 – Nov. 29): Student presentations**

Presentations will be based on your research paper topics. (These can connect to present-day designs or policy proposals -- but the history is essential.) Please focus on particular places/projects for more general topic, highlighting specific examples. We'll try for 4 presentations/session & a summary discussion.

Please give other students (and me!) some background reading beforehand. A brief handout with basic information, site plans, etc. is much appreciated. I'll also give you downloads of some of excellent papers by previous students.

### **POSSIBLE TOPICS**

(Make the work specific to a given national or urban culture, past or present)

Neighborhood Social, Economic or Environmental Sustainability  
Designing “Supportive Housing” -- and Full-Service Facilities  
Beyond the Nuclear Family: From “Multi-Family” to “Multi-Unit” Dwellings  
How Do Housing Needs Correlate with Residents’ Age (e.g. Children, Young Adults, the Elderly. . . ) or with specific Ethnic/Racial Groups, etc.?  
Adaptive Reuse of Materials, Outdoor Spaces and Social Functions  
The Evolution and Future of Affordable Housing  
Supportive Services for Housing the Formerly Homeless  
Housing Reform in *Barrios*, *Favelas*, *Bidonvilles*, etc.  
Housing for Immigrants, Past and Present, from Different Cultures  
The Preservation and Adaptation of Public Housing  
Live-Work Spaces for Various Kinds of Jobs  
Reformatting the Suburbs  
High-Rise Housing in Shanghai, Hong Kong, Mumbai or another Asian City  
Manufactured or Prefabricated Housing; New Materials (Plastics, Aluminum..)

**Week 8 (Oct. 25):**

**Week 9 (Nov. 1):**

**Week 10 (Nov. 8): Election Day Holiday**

**Week 11 (Nov. 15):**

**Week 12 (Nov. 22):**

**Week 13 (Nov. 29): Summary and discussion of 21<sup>st</sup>-Century Housing**