Call for Papers: "The Terms of Habitation: Re-theorizing the Architecture of Housing"

Academic conference for housing scholars and practitioners
April 20-23, 2020, IIAS Jerusalem and Technion, Haifa, Israel
Convened by the Research Group "Retheorizing the Architecture of Housing as Grounds for Research and Practice" at the Israel Institute of Advanced Studies (IIAS), co-organized by Yael Allweil, Gaia Caramellino, and Susanne Schindler.

https://termsofhabitation.net.technion.ac.il/

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Key Dates:
Deadline for submission of abstracts: Tuesday, December 24, 2019
Notification of acceptance: Thursday, January 16, 2020
Deadline for papers: Monday, March 30, 2020

Humanity is facing an ongoing, global housing crisis with major consequences for the social and ecological stability in towns, cities, and nations around the globe. This is due, in part, to processes of neo-liberalization ongoing since at least the mid-1970s, which have transferred responsibility for housing provision from the state to markets, corporations, and the dwellers themselves. While the resulting and growing gap between rich and poor, manifested in housing, has been well documented, the role of architecture in these transformations has remained remarkably understudied. "Architecture" as a cultural product is often seen as distinct from, and unrelated to, "housing" as a socio-economic need—not only by the general public, but among policy makers and designers themselves.

The conference aims to recast architecture as a crucial aspect of housing provision and closely examine its divorce from housing as cardinal to the development of the current crisis. In order to develop a new outlook on the problem, the conference will investigate and theorize the language of housing. An exploration of terminology offers a theoretical frame that reconnects design to policy, finance, and other criteria and lays the ground for envisioning the capacities of architecture in a post-neoliberal society.

Terminology can be at once an object of inquiry and methodological approach, not only for historical research but for architectural design praxis. The words we use—whether "model," "unit" or "housing" itself—embed normative assumptions as to how "individuals," "families" or "communities" are to live; ubiquitously used words like "affordable," "low-cost" or "efficient" are often efficacious because they are poorly defined, all while codifying typologies, economic benchmarks, and power relations. Words frame how we interpret the past, evaluate the present, and consequently envision the future. The conference thus posits that through a close analysis of keywords across time and place, cultures, disciplines and actors, we can excavate and bring together the social, economic and political dimensions of design for housing as a specific, modern, design problem. Through a terminological lens, we can bring into focus, study and re-

think the changing role of architecture in the process of housing production and reflect on the enduring tensions between housing and architecture.

Toward this goal, we are seeking contributions from scholars and practitioners across the globe. We ask that contributors prepare 20-minute papers which take a specific term as a point of departure to discuss its origin, evolution, codification and impact on the ground, reflecting, where appropriate, on the implications of its migration across disciplines, languages and place. We are interested in the diverse usage and changing meanings of the housing's architectural language, from housing vocabulary's sources and effects to its dissemination and transplantation—and its non-textual equivalents.

How does terminology develop and mutate in motion—between architectural cultures, between disciplines and dialects, between texts and images, between historical moments? What are the material and conceptual vectors of its transmission? How has geographical movement and cultural displacement hybridized terminology, leading to misunderstanding/mistranslation in architects' discourses and practices? How do housing terms adapt as they shift between designers' personal vocabulary, public policy, the market realm and common use? What histories do the etymologies of terms reveal when contextualized in local languages, cultures, disciplines and traditions?

We expect the conference to be organized around the following tracks: Typology; Praxis; Pedagogy; Scale/Spectrum; Crossroads of Disciplines; and The Act of Terming. In all tracks, we will explore the relationships between theory and practice; between the specificity of the case and the universality of the issues; and between historical perspectives and contemporary challenges.

Please submit 300-word abstracts as well as a short CV on the website
https://termsofhabitation.net.technion.ac.il/abstracts/ by Tuesday, December 24, 2019.
For any questions, please contact rethinking.housing.conf@gmail.com.
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Organizing Committee:
Yael Allweil, Technion Institute of Technology
Gaia Caramellino, Politecnico di Milano
Tzafrir Fainholtz, Technion Institute of Technology
Mariana Fix, University of Campinas
Jesse Lockard, University of Chicago
Ana Vaz Milheiro, University of Lisbon
Avigail Sachs, University of Tennessee
Susanne Schindler, MIT and ETH Zurich
Sharone Tomer, Virginia Tech
Dana Vais, Technical University of Cluj-Napoca

Costs:

Participants are responsible for travel and accommodation; the organizers will provide meals. Fellowships may be available upon request.

Publication:
Selected papers will be published as part of the volume *The Terms of Habitation: Retheorizing the Architecture of Housing as Grounds for Research and Practice*.