

REFUGEE HOUSING IN EUROPE AND THE US

Generative and Re-Generative Design

University of Oregon – Urban Architecture

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Illustration: Refugees escape a destroyed city in Syria

RE-GENERATIVE DESIGN: The idea for this advanced architecture studio or thesis design studio is to first understand and analyze major large-scale world-wide problems and second connect them to particular architecture and urban problems and potential projects in the urban structure, neighborhoods, parks, and buildings. The combined perspective of these two aspects will form the basis of your research and your thesis design studio project.

REFUGEE HOUSING IN EUROPE AND THE US: In this year's re-generative terminal studio we will look at refugee Housing in Europe and the US and try to find solutions to refugee housing including live-work situations. Re-Generative Design in this context means first of all to renew the life of refugees who went through tremendous hardships and need to recover.

THE LARGER PROBLEM: The United Nations estimates that there are about 250 million migrants in the world and 65 million refugees. This means that one in every 113 people alive today are now displaced by war, violence, and persecution, and the severity of the situation only continues to increase. Refugee arrivals in Europe continue at crisis levels, particularly in Germany, where more than 435,000 asylum seekers arrived in the first half of 2016 alone. These forced migrants joined the nearly one million earlier arrivals to Germany in 2015, many still in awaiting asylum approval or appeals. In Europe and in the United States, migration issues are divisive and at the fore of public debate and protest. How the world responds to this global crisis will arguably impact the trajectory of peace and well-being on this planet for generations to come.

ARRIVAL CITY AND DAILY LIFE: In this studio we will look at this difficult situation from the point of view of daily life in the arrival city. The concept of the 'arrival city' is based on a book by the Canadian journalist Doug Saunders, in which parts of cities can play an important role in welcoming migrants and refugees, and help them to assimilate into cultures they are not familiar with. In addition, the concept of the welcome city used in the German Pavilion at the Venice

Biennale in 2015 may be considered a similar but more general concept.



Illustration: Refugees escaping by boat via the Mediterranean Sea to Europe

URBAN DESIGN: The Studio will involve an urban component and an architectural component. Students will work on an urban design, create an urban site plan and connections to the city environment. During the instructor's refugee research studies the summer and fall he will look for particular urban places in various cities, that might fit well with the particular task at hand. Currently sites considered are in the cities of Frankfurt and Essen, possibly Vienna, and in Oregon the cities of Eugene and Portland may work well, San Francisco is another option. Students who feel strong about selecting their own site and city, should talk to the instructor.

ARCHITECTURE: The architecture or building component will focus on the project of housing for refugees and will involve the design of prototypical housing with common facilities. Some of the units will be combined with work places, shops, workshops etc. The program will include several components:

- Housing for refugees who have just arrived and do not have asylum status yet
- Housing for refugees who have been in the country and have reached asylum status
- Workplaces on the same site or building or connected to it close by
- Common facilities for refugees and refugees support
- To permit mix of population, apartments are not necessarily culture specific but have flexible features for cultural adaptation such as a specific guest welcoming room
- Male population might be in the majority of users given the refugee demographics
- The number of apartments may be between 30-50 depending on the site conditions

IMPORANT DESIGN ASPECTS: The studio will emphasize important issues: the use and transformation of housing/site typologies, based on historic and modern precedents, appropriate to the program and site; particular circumstances of refugees, their vulnerabilities, their economic needs, their aspirations, their relationships both to their home country and their new country; and the material/construction development of dwellings—including the deliberate development of architectural space, light, materials and details—that can support people's lives in humane ways.



Illustration: Refugees arriving in Europe

The studio will be conducted in a professional way with alternating research and design features, including weekly pinups and well defined design objectives, utilizing design and research. A variety of scales and modes of study and representation will be engaged on an ongoing basis.

RESSOURCES:

Arch 4/507: A seminar will be conducted concurrently in the spring quarter that focuses on Generative and Regenerative Design with emphasis on refugees.

Arch4/558 A seminar on Building Types and Typology including social, low cost, or social housing types will be conducted in the winter quarter of 2018

Arch 4/584: The studio conducted by Professor Howard Davis in the winter of 2017 can be studied as an example of refugee housing: Living and Working in an Arrival City. (Will be published in a few weeks on the CIU website: www.inclusiveurbanism.org (Collaborative for Inclusive Urbanism)

PUARL (puarl.uoregon.edu and refugee.uoregon.edu)

The Portland Urban Architecture Research Laboratory, PUARL, is devoted to the study of urban architecture and urban design locally in Portland, regionally in cities of the Northwest and the Pacific Coast of the United States as well as internationally, specifically in Europe and Asia. The main purpose of PUARL is to conduct and promote activities in urban architecture research and urban design research that help to improve the quality of buildings and the life of people in the city.

PUARL has begun initial research on refugees in Europe, the Middle East, and the US by developing a set of focal areas situated within the broader context of this international crisis. These focal topics are also referred to as building blocks within this larger study of refuge escape, assimilation, integration and return to original home country. The building block that gives the name to this website is called patterns and pattern languages for refugees in Europe and the Middle East. The website is one of these building blocks that contains all the other building blocks. For current building blocks that are being studied by PUARL visit: refugee.uoregon.edu

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