



Middle Class Mass Housing
in Europe, Africa and Asia

European
Middle Class
Mass Housing

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OPTIMISTIC SUBURBIA 2

Middle-Class Mass Housing Complexes

International Conference

Lisbon, 16-18 June 2021

book of abstracts

[draft version. please do not circulate]

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Optimistic Suburbia 2

Middle-Class Mass Housing Complexes

theme

The “Optimistic Suburbia II - Middle-Class Mass Housing Complexes” has its starting point in a research on mass housing complexes in the outskirts of Lisbon, Luanda and Macau, then enlarged to Antwerp and Milan. In the last decades of the 20th century, these housing complexes were instrumental for the urban growth, showing similarities as well as differences in Europe and beyond. Drawing from this context the conference intends to open the reflection on these complexes on broad realities, showing the multiple features of urbanisations in several geographical, chronological and social contexts.

The objective is to put into perspective the shaping and the pattern of autonomous neighbourhoods for the middle-class, both of private and public promotion, on the outskirts of big cities, namely the ones designed in the second half of the twentieth century. Originally isolated in the orbit of large cities, they were characterized by a set of high-rise buildings of modern design, which were progressively articulated with the evolution of the historical city through major roads, which often ended up determining its limits.

This model, which arose in the interwar period (1918-1939), marked, globally – and in particular in the cities which were most affected by the two major wars –, by more than 40 years of an urban planning convinced of the benefits of decongesting the historic centres – freeing them of degraded and insalubrious living conditions –, of the rationalization of the city and of the development of metropolises served by circulatory systems of transportation to wooded suburbs. Imbued with desires of progress and social aspirations of a new culture and optimism, this model was also controversial and the target of criticism.

Although the origin of the referred model is located within an architectonic culture of central European matrix, its use occurred throughout a long time and in very diverse contexts, such as in Africa, South America and Asia (while in the United States of America this model never triumphed, facing the strength of the “American dream house”), with the middle-class as its target.

The objective of this Second International Conference is that of acknowledging the initial principles of the model proposed for the middle-class, describing and reflecting on the diversity of results and on the different ways of appropriation in very diverse geographical, social, chronological and cultural contexts. Therefore, research on architecture, urbanism, architecture and urbanism history, impact on the periphery urban areas, social sciences, economics, cultural issues related with the theme – as art, image and media (publications, film, photography...) – and other important subjects is welcomed. Aspects as terminology, concepts and representation will be addressed as well.



parallel sessions

HOUSING IN PORTUGAL | Chairs: Ana Vaz Milheiro and Inês Lima Rodrigues

Architectural Theory | Helena Barreiros, Rui Ramos, Gisela Lameira, Ricardo Agarez,

José António Bandeirinha

Architectural Practice | Paulo Tormenta Pinto, Carlos Veloso, Paulo David

01. Writing the History of Post-war Housing Complexes and Neighborhoods. A Take on Research Strategies and Methodologies | Chairs: Gaia Caramellino and Filippo De Pieri

02. Covid-19, Housing and Middle Class: Discussing socio-spatial imbalances and materialities in the Portuguese context | Chairs: Sílvia Leiria Viegas and Sílvia Jorge

03. Publicness in middle-class large housing complexes as a new way to examine the premises of cultural encounters and social integration | Chairs: Dr. Marie Glaser and Prof. Ellen Braae

04. City, housing and architecture in the 1960s' debate: between activism, scepticism and imagination | Chairs: Rui Seco and Rute Figueiredo

05. Middle Class Mass Housing: public / private joint-ventures | Chair: Filipa Fiúza

06. Spatial practice, representation and meaning of suburban housing estates | Chairs: Madalena Corte Real and Maria João Gomes

07. The Imagined Community of Middle Class Mass Housing | Chairs: Laurence Heindryckx and Tom Broes

08. New technologies in housing construction: a path towards a new city? | Chair: João Cardim

09. Inhabiting Suburbia: art (registers) of living | Chair: Maria Rita Pais

10. Building a Key Analytical Framework for MCMH | Chairs: Els De Vos and Eva Storgaard

11. Demolition Vs Renovation: an open question with regard to Middle-Class Mass Housing in the contemporary city | Chairs: Alessandra Como and Luisa Smeragliuolo Perrotta

PRESENTATION OF POSTERS | Chair: Mónica Pacheco



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abstracts

New churches and the shape of Lisbon 'optimistic suburbia'

João Luís Marques | CEAU-FAUP; jlmarques@arq.up.pt

The profound social transformations that took place in Portugal since 1950, notably the strong growth of Lisbon and its suburbs, produced significant changes in the urban fabric and their communities. The present paper aims at discussing the role of roman catholic parishes complexes in shaping the new modern middleclass neighbourhoods of the capital in the second half of the 20th century. The problem of new church buildings could not continue to be taken individually by each new parish created, but should be integrated in a combined strategy, taking into account different urbanization criteria and policies. Under the patronage of Cardinal Cerejeira, the creation of SNIP - Secretariat of New Churches of the Patriarchate in 1961, the unique office of its kind in Portugal, was founded to coordinate the foreseen major church construction, while addressing challenges posed by the rapidly expanding urban territory. The church needed to take into account not only the State but also the new actors of the city urbanization, namely the private commercial companies. As we intend to show, the SNIP strategy developed along three main axes: administrative, technical and propaganda (fund raising). Criteria and strategies for settlements of new parishes reveal different cost solution responses to societal challenges and territorial inequalities, with the search for new architectural typologies, little considered in History Architectural Studies so far. From a widespread database created by the author, the study confronts the history of three representative new churches in the capital: Santo António dos Cavaleiros, Nova Carnaxide and Nova Oeiras. Although planned for the civic center of each neighborhood, the history of these new churches uncovers the evolution of criteria and helps to better understand the meaning and importance of the religious spaces in shaping these neighborhoods carefully designed by architects, in a changing socio-cultural context.

João Luís Marques (Baden, 1981) is an architect by the Faculty of Architecture of the University of Porto (FAUP 2006), and in November of 2017 he obtained the PhD in Architecture - Theory, Project, History at FAUP, defending the thesis "The church in the city, service and welcome, Portuguese architecture 1950-1975", in 2017. Between 2013 and 2015 he was Invited Assistant of History of Portuguese Architecture, 4th year of the MSc in Architecture at FAUP, activity restarted in 2018 as an Invited professor. Researcher of the Center for Studies in Architecture and Urbanism of FAUP since 2013, he also collaborates (since 2015) in research projects carried on by Center for Studies on Religious History of the Catholic University. Member of the international "observatorio de arquitectura religiosa contemporânea", participated at the international workshop "Territories of faith. Religion and urban planning and demographic change in post-war Europe 1945-1975". At national level, he is giving sustained contributions over the last years, by organizing and participating in annual events and establishing a new network of entities with a multidisciplinary approach to religious architecture.



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