

M2.1 Habitude

the dwelling patterns of the Parisian

M2 Projekt im SS 2015/WS 2015-16

englischsprachiges Angebot

Lehrstuhl für Wohnbau und
Grundlagen des Entwerfens

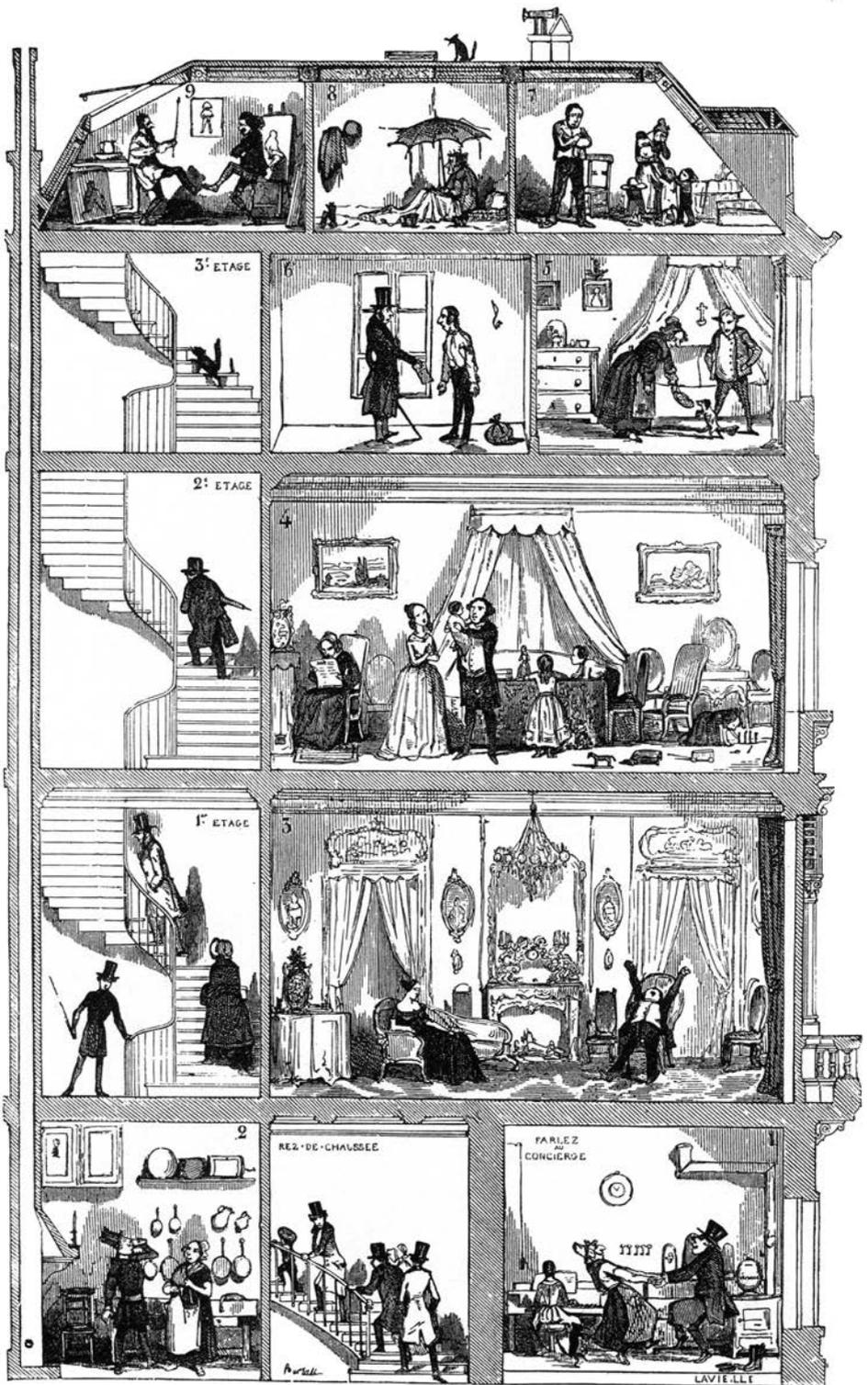
Univ. Prof. ir. Wim van den Bergh

Betreuer:
Nathalie Bodarwé
Mark Proosten

We live our everyday lives, unconscious of the system of habits and buildings that are in the background. These buildings perform their utility, and therefore we do not need to focus on them, but on what we are used to do in these settings. Yet within architectural design, the focus lies often within the aesthetic instead of acknowledging the capacity of the every day life, the habit of dwelling.

Since so little attention is given to the customs of dwelling we can ask ourselves whether our habitat has become so obvious that architecture needs to take us out of our comfort zone, forcing us to inhabit extreme and complex spaces. Did we become so used to the simple rituals and action that form our everyday life that we aim for inhabitable houses? Or have we become so fatigued of physical space, that we spent more time inhabiting the virtual world and beyond?

To answer such critical and difficult questions we'll begin leaving our own comfort zone behind, and move into a foreign language and to a city with its still unknown habits of dwelling. By crossing both borders we make us aware of the differences between usual patterns of everyday life and how they influence architecture and vice versa. Because habits are performed unconsciously, we often neglect their importance and are unaware of the changes that they may provoke.



Life and the built fabric work together and respond to each other, they shape a state of mind. Dwelling is therefore rooted in a particular culture and a particular place. Yet the interaction between both life and built fabric is often neglected due to a phenomenon that has been created in contemporary culture: the tourist gaze. This purely visual mode of acquiring information and conformation of what is beforehand expected, flattens our experience and knowledge production. We will move away from the strong focus on aesthetic analysis and we'll focus on the underlying narratives that have shaped the built fabric. In this project we'll look at building as a support for life, at dwellings as a legitimate parts of the culture of habitation.

The city of Paris belongs to the top of the European tourist destinations, promoting itself as a mixture of culture, tradition and romance. Yet we are not trying to conform these characteristics of the tourist destination, but we'll look for the underlying narratives that can give us access to the everyday life within this city. Due to its historical place within the development of the French culture, Paris has always produced and attracted many artists. Painters and draftsmen like Charles Meryon and Gustave Caillebotte have portrayed the daily lives of the Parisian in the 19th century. Authors such as Marcel Proust, Honoré de Balzac, Victor Hugo, Gustave Flaubert, George Perec and 2014 Nobel Prize winner Patrick Modiano have interrelated the daily lives of their protagonist with the city of Paris. And film directors such as Jean-Luc Godard, François Truffaut, Woody Allen and Michael Haneke have pictured many of the invisible layers of the city.



Within the first semester we're going to use cultural expressions like literature, painting and cinema in combination with typological and historical research to obtain a better understanding for the complexity of the cultural expression we define as dwelling. The house is namely an expression that helps us to achieve things we physically have to do, and various things we'd like to realize. To be conscious about these expressions, will help us to develop an attitude for the design assignment in the second semester. Here we expect the students to deploy the acquired knowledge about the Parisian habits and home typologies in a self-proposed research by design assignment within the Parisian context.

Our aim is to get a deeper understanding of the interacting between habit and habitat in the city of Paris. Unconscious of how, where and why we created recurring patterns of rituals, actions and informal decisions, we try to figure out the relationship between our behavior, the built environment and the development of architecture.



The English term Habitat derived from the French 'habitude' and originally from the Latin habitare literally meaning 'it dwells'. Habitat and habit have the same etymological origin, traditionally associating habits with the act of dwelling. A dwelling or home can be seen as a space for longer lasting habits, a place created by the inscription of habits.

When we come to know the buildings, which we are very familiar with, instead of focusing on pure visual attention we create a set of habits, tasks that we perform neglecting their origin. These habits or routine tasks, which are formed by many repetitions, can evolve into considerable complex actions. Because we are often unconscious of these actions, we neglect the importance of them in our daily routines and the way they are related to the architectures we inhabit.

To get an understanding of the interaction between the Parisian housing typologies and the habits of the Parisian inhabitant, we will address the following questions:

[project research M2.1]

What are the Parisian habits of dwelling?

And how do these attitudes relate to the typology?

Under which influences did the Parisian housing typologies develop?

[seminar part 2.1 and 2.2]

What's a 'habit'?

How do 'habit' and 'habitat' relate to each other?

How does the interaction between habit and architecture develop?

habit | 'habit | noun

1 a settled or regular tendency or practice, especially one that is hard to give up: he has an annoying habit of interrupting me | good eating habits | [mass noun] : we stayed together **out of habit**.

- informal an addictive practice, especially one of taking drugs: *a cocaine habit*.

- Psychology an automatic reaction to a specific situation.

- [mass noun] general shape or mode of growth, especially of a plant or a mineral: *a shrub of spreading habit*.

2 a long, loose garment worn by a member of a religious order. *nuns in long brown habits, black veils, and sandals*.

- short for riding habit.

- [mass noun] archaic clothes, in the vile habit of a village slave.

3 archaic a person's health or constitution. *a victim to a consumptive habit*.

verb (**be habited**) archaic

be dressed or clothed: *a boy habited as a serving lad*.

PHRASES

break (or **informal kick**) **the habit** stop engaging in a habitual practice. *trying to break the habit increases the compulsion*.

ORIGIN Middle English: from Old French **abit**, **habit**, from Latin **habitus** 'condition, appearance', from **habere** 'have, consist of'.

The term originally meant 'dress, attire', later coming to denote physical or mental constitution.

From the magnum opus of the German philosopher Walter Benjamin, *Das Passagenwerk*, we learn a great deal about the development of Paris. Expressed over manifold cultural phenomenon Benjamin creates an archaeology of the modern life in 19th century Paris. He opens up the dreamlike and romanticized image of the city and replaces it with cultural reading of the urban fabric and its many developments. For instance the emergence of the detective novel that comes in hand in hand with the development of the private person and the evolution of the Parisian interior.

Benjamin states that dwelling means to leave behind traces. Traces that form an important aspect of the interior and are one of the key elements in the detective novels of Edgar Allen Poe and all who follow up on that genre. Poe, who was translated into French by the Parisian poet Charles Baudelaire, created a genre in which the private person and his interior emerge but at the same time lose their segregation between their public and private life. The success of the detective novel comes forth out of the fascination for the interior, but most of all the private life of the private person.



The detective novel becomes a synonym for our research methodology. Like the fictional detective C. Augustee Dupin, we expect our students to combine intellect with creative imagination. A method described by Poe as ratiocination; to form judgments by a process of combining intuition and logic. Our aim is to detect connections between the habits of dwelling, economic, social and cultural developments and of course the built fabric, in particular the Parisian housing typologies.

In comparison with Benjamin, we want to relate the private sphere of dwelling with the development of cultural phenomenon in general and architecture in particular. We'll be mapping out the city of Paris using drawing techniques like morphology and typology, combined with a cultural reading of literature and film. We don't aim to create a magnum opus of the city of Paris, but try to relate everyday life with the development of the built environment and the housing typologies in particular.

The literary and archive research will be undertaken as a group work and combined with field research and an excursion to the city of Paris. This field trip will take place in the excursion week and constitutes out of social investigations and archive research. Our aim is to develop biographies of the many different housing typologies of Paris. These biographies constitute out of the initial research into their origin as well as their current utility.



Calendar

Tuesday, 7th April 2015	14:30 16:00	Presentation and distribution the M 2.1 and seminar
Tuesday, 14th April 2015	10:00	M 2.1
Tuesday, 21st April 2015	10:00	M 2.1 and distribution of the seminar
Tuesday, 5th May 2015	10:00	M 2.1 and seminar
Tuesday, 19th May 2015	10:00	M 2.1 and seminar
Monday, 25th until Friday, 29th May 2015		Excursion week, visit Paris
Tuesday, 2nd June 2015	10:00	M 2.1 and seminar
Tuesday, 9th June 2015	14:00	Colloquium I
Tuesday, 16th June 2015	10:00	M 2.1 and seminar
Tuesday, 23rd June 2015	10:00	M 2.1 and seminar
Tuesday, 30th June 2015	10:00	M 2.1 and seminar
Tuesday, 14th July 2015	9:00	Colloquium II + deadline seminar
Tuesday, 21st July 2015	10:00	M 2.1 colloquium critic
Tuesday, 4th August 2015	10:00	M 2.1
Tuesday, 11th August 2015	10:00	M 2.1 Lay-out critic
Tuesday, 25th August 2015	9:00	Final Colloquium M 2.1



Abb. 16

Die sieben Brücken

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