

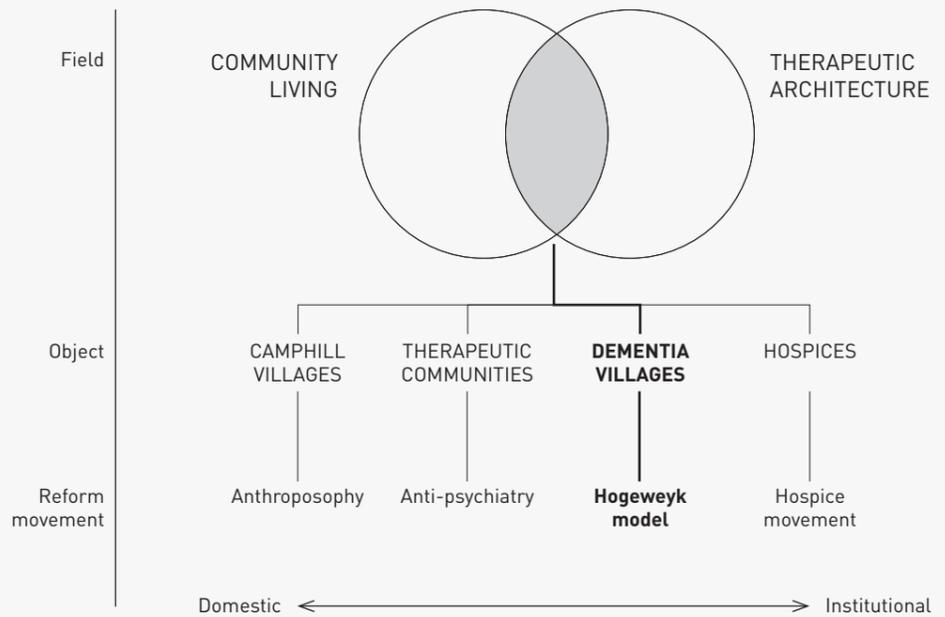


DESIGNING DEPARTURE

Examining Dementia Villages as an Emerging XXI Century Collective Living Type

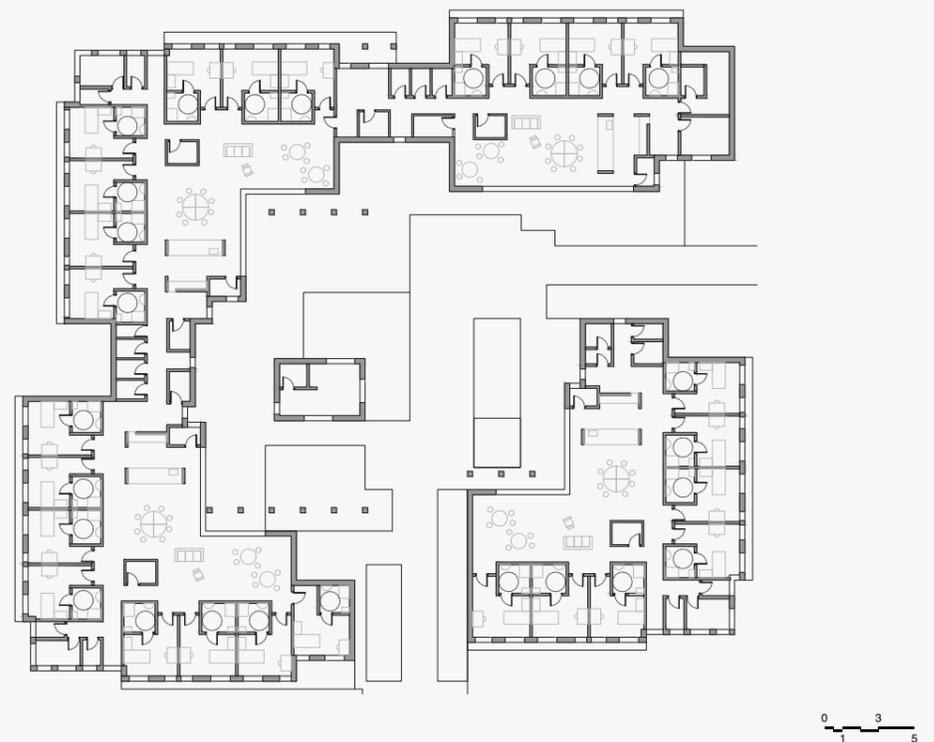
Context

In recent years various trends have reignited a wide interest towards community living, in particular in the developed world. The main aspect of this current is the fact that an aging population is increasing the demand for assisted living facilities in most nations. This fact is particularly evident in regard to the growing incidence of dementia. The rise of assisted living facilities corresponds with the rise of healthcare architecture, both in the academic and professional sectors. Within the field of architecture for healthcare, assisted living facilities occupy a peculiar position at the margin, representing the edge towards domesticity and community living. In this realm, numerous architectural experiments have regarded facilities involved in end-of-life and palliative care, such as hospices or dementia villages. Developments in healthcare architecture happen in interdisciplinary realms in conjunction with neurologists, psychiatrists and others. They have the capacity of driving the discipline in new directions. Additionally, the development of healthcare architecture is often underpinned by specific reform movements or ideologies that propose new relations between the human body and architectural space.



Object - Subject

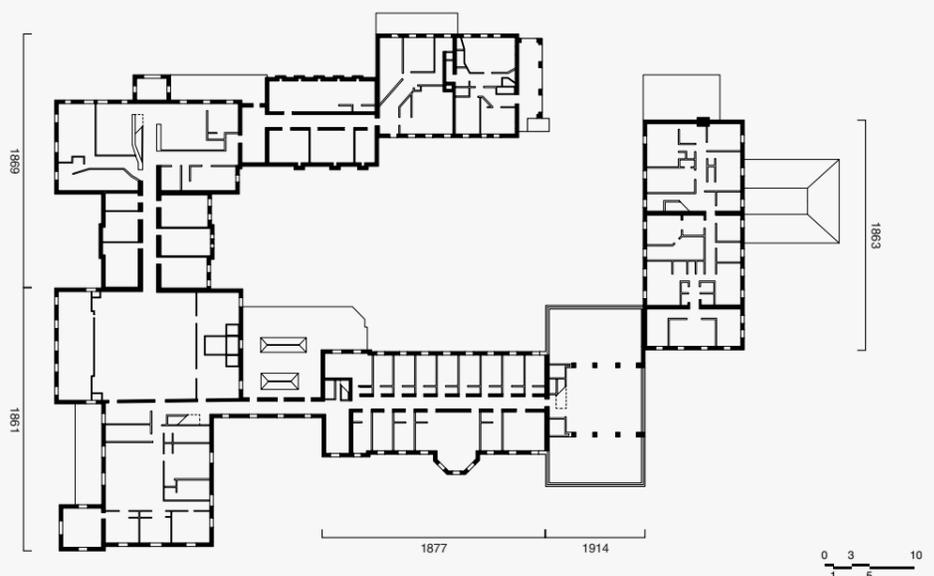
The research focuses on dementia villages as emerging collective living types in Western Europe. The subject consists of the ensemble of architects and developers involved in their construction. The research aims to study the principles that underpin the design of facilities related to end-of-life care and provide a framework for future collective living models in western Europe. A review of the disciplinary literature on the subject reveals an overwhelming focus on quantitative and compilatory methods. This research consists instead of a qualitative examination of dementia villages, based on an in-depth study of construction documents and interviews with the involved developers and architects of a few case studies in different European countries. The research is expected to provide insights regarding the logics that underpin the construction of these facilities and the skills that architects and developers acquired during construction, allowing for an evaluation of these building types' influence on the broader field of the architecture of assisted living facilities.



Village Landais, a dementia village located in Dax, France. Plan of a neighborhood unit.

Methodology

This research considers end-of-life facilities as examples of sharing based on social intentions, following the categorization illustrated by ETH Wohnforum in their History of Collective Living. This research thus contextualizes end-of-life spaces as intentional communities, or "self-contained, planned communities that attempt to pursue a peaceful ideal, as opposed to a community created and run without an organizing principle", positioning this work within the disciplinary platform of architectural literature on the subject. Dementia villages will thus be studied through the lens of collective living and domesticity, on the model of publications such as *Kommunen in der Neuen Welt 1740 - 1972* by Liselotte and Oswald Mathias Ungers.



Plan of the Oneida community house, from *Kommunen in der Neuen Welt 1740 - 1972*.