CLUSTER 5: REFUGEES IN NEIGHBORHOODS AND COMMUNITIES

Hajo Neis, PhD, Associate Professor of Architecture, PUARL - CIU University of Oregon, USA and Pamanee Chaiwat, PhD Cand., University of Oregon, USA

ABSTRACT

THE SUGAR IN THE MILK - A Refugee Pattern Language
Cluster 5: Refugees in Neighborhoods and Communities

In chapter five, the main challenge or question is to find, research, and formulate new design patterns that help accommodate and integrate refugees and forced migrants into host cities. It also contains the context connection and integration of each pattern into a Pattern Language. The research includes utilization and transformation of existing neighborhoods and urban districts as well as new formation with refugees and local population. As part of A Refugee Pattern Language, the first four patterns of Refugees in Neighborhoods and Communities are presented.

PART I: REFUGEES ARRIVAL AND AMENDMENT
Cluster 1: THE REFUGEE FAMILY
Cluster 2: LEAVING PLACE – ESCAPE JOURNEY
Cluster 3: WELCOME COUNTRY - ARRIVAL PLACE
Cluster 4: ARRIVAL CITY – Urban Life and Infrastructure
Cluster 5: REFUGEES IN NEIGHBORHOODS AND COMMUNITIES
    5.1 The Sugar in the Milk – Mosaic of Subculture Neighborhoods
    5.2 Social and Spatial Openness in Neighborhoods and Communities
    5.3 Benevolent Boundaries
    5.4 Identifiable Neighborhood for Refugees
    5.5 Local Transportation, Walkability, and Connection to Downtown
    5.6 Eccentric Nucleus Community Center
    5.7 Density Gradient for Community District
    5.8 Refugees Housing Support in Neighborhoods 2-3 Stories
    5.9 Neighborhoods with Refugees (Essen & Portland Projects 1 and 2)
    5.10 Transforming existing infrastructure into Neighborhood (Rome)
    5.11 Designing new Neighborhoods (Guasare, Amazon)
    5.12 A New Neighborhood for Refugees
Cluster 6: BUILDINGS, FACILITIES, NEIGHBORHOOD SUPPORT
Cluster 7: HOUSING, LIVING, AND LIVE WORK
Cluster 8: WORK AND WORK LEARNING
Cluster 9: ANTI-PATTERNS
Keywords: Pattern Language, Urban Morphology, Refugees, Neighborhoods, Integration

INTRODUCTION

This paper introduces the first four patterns of chapter 5 entitled 'Refugees in Neighborhoods and Communities' within the 'Refugee Pattern Language' (RPL). The four patterns include: 5.1 The Sugar in the Milk – Mosaic of Subculture Neighborhoods for Refugees. 5.2 Social and Spatial Openness in Neighborhoods and Communities. 5.3 Benevolent Boundaries. 5.4 Identifiable Neighborhood for Refugees. The text is written close to the authentic format of a pattern language (Alexander et al, 1977). Here, a pattern can be defined as a solution to a recurring problem in the world (i.e. architecture and urban structure). A pattern language, consequently, can be defined as solutions to a set of problems in a particular domain (i.e. refugee neighborhood). Twelve patterns create the Neighborhood Pattern Language. APL refers to patterns in the book *A Pattern Language*, RPL refers to patterns in 'Refugee Pattern Language.' Numbers refer to specific Patterns, for example, APL8 or RPL5.1.

…SUGAR IN THE MILK expands the pattern MOSAIC OF SUBCULTURES (APL8) to include refugee neighborhoods as part of the larger fabric of communities within the city in a respectful and integrative fashion with other subcultures…

❖   ❖   ❖

How can refugee and migrant population be included in an overall neighborhood structure of the city in a way that benefits both the existing local and the new incoming neighborhood population?

Figure 1. Refugees, locals, and migrants in an urban community neighborhood

Like any other population, refugees need a spatial urban unit they can identify with in a new land. This may be part of a city, part of a neighborhood, or even a neighborhood with other refugees and migrants. But how can they possibly obtain and live in their own neighborhood in a new country in a way that they can call their own and also have the approval for their lifestyle by other local neighborhoods adjacent to them and within the larger community of the city. In some ways, this is the age-old story that the Parsi people went through about 1200 years ago known as 'the sugar in the milk legend.' (https://parsikhabar.net/heritage/flashback-like-sugar-in-milk/4463/) Here, it is helpful to build on the pattern 'Mosaic of Subcultures' but focus on a totally new and additional problem, that is the inclusion of refugees in an integrative way.

The original argument was developed based on psychological needs of a neighborhood for building a solid community and encouraging strong individual character in its population. In the investigation, three kinds of urban structures were compared. First, the heterogeneous city with little differentiation; second, the city of ghettos with strong differentiation; and third, the city of subculture neighborhoods and communities with strong differentiation, identity, and openness.

The idea of the heterogeneous city is based on individuals' freedom socially because people are mixed together independent of lifestyle or culture, but this turned out to be homogenous spatially. "Actually, it dampens all significant variety, arrests most of the possibilities of differentiation, and encourages conformity. It tends to reduce all lifestyles to a common denominator." (APL8) Therefore, it did not respond positively to the problem at hand.

Figure 2. Diagram of three kinds of socio-spatial city structures:

A. Heterogenous City

B. City of Ghettos

C. Mosaic of Subcultures

The city of ghettos overresponded to the problem in a way that would not work either in a modern democratic and open world. "In a city made of ghettos, people have the support of the most basic and banal forms of differentiation – race or economic status. The ghettos are still homogenous internally, and do not allow a significant variety of lifestyles to emerge." (APL8) And they have no openness to their surrounding urban context.

The third option, a city as a mosaic of subcultures, seems to respond to the problem best, because it offers the potential of a large range of subcultures within a main culture, but it also seems to have potential of including subcultures that originally may come from another very different culture. "In a city made of a large number of subcultures relatively small in size, each occupying an identifiable place and separated from other subcultures by a boundary of non-residential land, new ways of life can develop. People can choose the kind of subculture they wish to live in, and can still experience many ways of life different from their own. Since each environment fosters mutual support and a strong sense of shared values, individuals can grow." (APL8)

It seems that there is a large potential to develop the model of the mosaic of subcultures including migrant and refugee populations with very different backgrounds in ethnicity, religion, language etc., i.e. for people from the Orient or Africa arriving for new life in the Occident. Here is an opportunity that a migrant and refugee neighborhood could be part of an overall structure of subcultures. This could indeed be very positive for easier integration, co-existence, and even co-development and cooperation between subculture neighborhoods. (Fig. 3: See Refugee Neighborhood embedded in regular local neighborhoods in an urban community district)

It is recognized that migrant neighborhoods can develop 'organically' over a long time in areas less desirable by host city population. But the development of a refugee neighborhood can also be supported by the city as part of an overall beneficial new settlement within existing neighborhoods and communities, enriching the social and cultural life of the city of the 21st century.
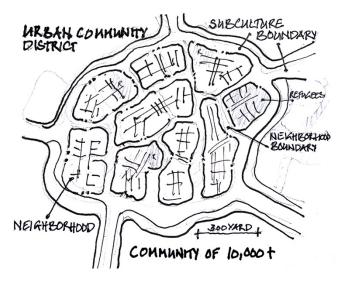

Figure 3. Urban community district with mosaic of subculture neighborhoods including a refugee neighborhood

Therefore:

"Do everything possible to enrich the cultures and subcultures of the city, by breaking the city, as far as possible, into a vast mosaic of small and different subcultures, each with its own spatial territory, and each with the power to create its own distinct life style." (APL8). Make sure that migrants, refugees and internally displaced (i.e. within the EU) can participate in this development either as parts of neighborhoods but` also to the point of obtaining their own not too large neighborhood within the structure of the city.

❖   ❖   ❖

...MOSAIC OF SUBCULTURE NEIGHBORHOODS need OPEN URBAN COMMUNITY DISTRICTS (RPL5.2), they also need BENEVOLENT BOUNDARIES (RPL5.3) and they need to include and nurture IDENTIFIABLE NEIGHBORHOODS FOR REFUGEES (RPL5.4)...

…a city should stay open and welcoming WELCOME COUNTRY-ARRIVAL PLACE (RPL3.0) to include refugees and migrants into urban communities and neighborhoods OPENNESS AND WELCOME (RPL3.1), SANCTUARY CITY (RPL4.11), and COMMUNITY OF 7000 (APL12)…

❖   ❖   ❖

For neighborhoods and urban communities to be helpful to refugees, migrants, and internally displaced population, they need to show some social and spatial openness to refugees to co-exist and live together.

A city and its urban districts (Stadtteile, Arrondissements, Municipios) as the largest administrative entities need to show some forms of openness to welcome refugees into their midst before any practical actions of allocation can be taken. Space needs to be available or made available for refugees to live and co-exist with the current local inhabitants. Initially, allocation of refugees will take place at the lower levels of urban community district and neighborhood. As a positive example, the small town of Riace in Southern Italy with about 2000 inhabitants created a tradition and welcoming program and tradition for up to 400 refugees. (Driel and Verkuyten, 2019 p. 2).

Figure 4. Spatial openness in an existing community

The urban community district administrative level is between the larger city districts (i.e. Arrondissement) and the neighborhoods. Here, it is necessary to clarify the urban community district and its relation to neighborhood and mosaic of subcultures. First, the urban community level was strengthened by the pattern COMMUNITY OF 7000 (APL12) with the argument that "people can only have a genuine effect on local government when the units of local government are autonomous, self-governing, self-budgeting communities, which are small enough to create the possibility of an immediate link with the man in the street and its local officials and elected representatives." (APL12) Two supporting arguments are based on the right size for self-governing of the community and face to face visibility of community members. First, based on empirical evidence and calculations, the size was figured out as between 5000-7000 people and, going up to 10,000 people could still communicate effectively. Second, it was concluded that visibility for and of all people could be reached in larger venues such as large marketplaces, parks, or sports fields.

Because of considerable improvements in communication since the original formulation of COMMUNITY OF 7000, it is reasonable to use the 10,000+ number for a current urban community. The advancement of social medias and professional communication software for larger numbers of people, such as in zoom, skype and other applications, makes it possible to put forward the hypothesis that a larger number of people can communicate as effectively as the 7000 people. It is assumed that an urban district community of 10,000+ can constitute an appropriate size of a contemporary community that still can conduct direct democracy with face to face meetings of people and large representative meetings. **Therefore, the term 'Community District of 10,000+' will also be used from now on.**

An urban community of this kind is also the appropriate administrative level of making deliberate recommendations if, how, and where refugees might be accommodated within its boundaries. Furthermore, an urban community district is assumed to contain various neighborhoods within. In rare cases, the urban community district might actually be considered a large neighborhood by itself, or a large neighborhood might be considered a small one as in the case of a migrant neighborhood in the inner city of Paris. "The Goutte d'Or neighborhood… is quite small in size - perhaps 750m north to south, and 400m east to west, and is well contained… The district is populated with over 23,000 people." (Kaplan and Recoquillon, p.37-38). The relationship between mosaic of subcultures, urban district communities and neighborhoods can be explained as:

1. Neighborhoods can exist in the mosaic of subcultures and in urban community districts.
2. A subculture can coincide with an urban community district and also with a neighborhood.
3. But generally speaking, a neighborhood is mostly considered smaller than a subculture or an urban community district.

People in urban community districts of 10,000+ in its various neighborhoods need to indicate if they are open to accept refugees and migrants, where and in what form, and how many. Social openness is usually expressed in a basic approval of accepting refugees in one's neighborhood or urban community. A Community of 10,000+ can discuss and approve such a move, or deny it.

Spatial reality and opportunity define what kind of space and physical opportunities exist at all within a given neighborhood or urban community to accept refugees and migrants. Initially, this includes permitting refugees to live in various kinds of existing unused buildings as temporary use (REFUGEE HOUSING SUPPORT IN NEIGHBORHOODS RPL5.8). When spatial and social openness are coming together it can lead to modifications of existing buildings for the purpose of accommodating refugees, including building new housing so that refugees can start to live long time in a neighborhood. Initially this might consist of a temporary modern tent structure for 150-200 people and later a full-fledged cluster of houses or housing cluster within a community if the land is available and the new buildings are helpful to newcomers and locals alike. Therefore:

Like countries, and states, cities need to show some level of openness for refugees, so do neighborhoods and urban district communities. Identifying neighborhoods, where there is some degree of social openness and spatial capacity to help refugees is one of the initial tasks of any city and urban communities. Make sure to find and identify these open places, as well as opportunities for expansion and innovative building approaches within your city and neighborhoods for the inclusion of refugees into regular daily life of the neighborhood and city life.

❖   ❖   ❖

… accommodations for refugee housing and living can be provided as House adaptations for refugee populations… REFUGEE HOUSING SUPPORT IN NEIGHBORHOODS 2-3 Stories (RPL5.8)… they can also be provided as a full scale HOUSE CLUSTER (APL37) special ROW HOUSES (APL38), and Housing Cluster Addition (RPL7.4 p)…

PATTERN 5.3 BENEVOLENT BOUNDARIES CONNECTING NEIGHBORHOODS AND URBAN COMMUNITIES

…MOSAIC OF SUBCULTURES (APL8), SUBCULTURE BOUNDARY (APL13) and NEIGHBORHOOD BOUNDDARY (APL15), whether they are individual subculture neighborhoods or communities COMMUNITY OF 7000 (APL 12) and COMMUNITY OF 10,000+ (RPL5.2) they set the direction for the investigation of benevolent boundaries for refugee neighborhoods within the urban communities…

Figure 5. Benevolent Boundaries between neighborhoods and communities (Park Block in Portland, OR)

❖   ❖   ❖

Mosaic of Subcultures suggests that a large number of different subcultures including refugee neighborhoods will co-exits together with different culture neighborhoods and communities. Subcultures also need their own life and ecology, to live unobstructed by other neighborhoods. This can be arranged best by providing **'benevolent boundaries'** that divide by neighborhood identity and connect for coexistence and cooperation. For a refugee neighborhood community, this aspect of cultural independence and freedom is of particular relevance for people who escaped war and death so to feel comfortable, safe, and free in a new land. But adjacent neighborhoods also need to feel confident and comfortable with a refugee neighborhood or refugee clusters within neighborhoods.

Therefore:

FOR URBAN COMMUNITY DISTRICTS AND LARGER NEIGHBORHOODS: Create benevolent boundaries between subculture district boundaries with up to 200 feet wide (~60m). This boundary could consist of natural wilderness, gardens and urban farming, waterways, major roads and railways, parks, schools, and refugee temporary housing. Along the seam between two subculture districts, build meeting places, shared functions touching each community, such as sports fields and playgrounds. For refugees, additional features may be included that are specific to refugee culture and can also serve as communal meeting places with activities that also connect with other adjacent communities.

FOR SMALLER NEIGHBORHOODS: Help the formation of a benevolent boundary around each neighborhood up to 60feet (~20m), including refugee and local neighborhoods alike. Such a boundary can be formed by limiting access to the neighborhood by closing streets, and place gateways at points where access has been restricted; the boundary zone should be wide enough to contain meeting places for common functions shared by several neighborhoods. For refugees it may be important to make the neighborhood boundary sound and safe.

❖   ❖   ❖

PATTERN 5.4 IDENTIFIABLE NEIGHBORHOOD FOR REFUGEES

Figure 6. Migrants and refugees frequently move to old (historic) parts of a town as affordable locations (Center of the Town of Borken, Germany)

It is not easy to define an identifiable neighborhood these days (Talen, 2019, p 4) but is more difficult to define an identifiable neighborhood for refugees and displaced migrants. Nevertheless, refugees and displaced populations need an identifiable spatial and social unit to belong to in a new land.

Therefore:

Help to find and define neighborhoods for refugees that can be as small as 300 feet (100m) but not larger than 300 yards (~300m) across, with a population of 500-1500 people, and also do not permit a major street going through the neighborhood. Equip the neighborhood with

appropriate infrastructure, buildings, public services, green, and housing for refugees that include particular cultural events and spaces, i.e. mosque, orthodox church, or temple. Find areas in existing cities, towns and urban community districts, that can be established and developed as an identifiable neighborhood for refugees, and that can peacefully and productively co-exist with other surrounding neighborhoods in existing urban areas and as newly built neighborhoods.

❖   ❖   ❖

FINDINGS – CONCLUSION

Although presented at different levels of completion, we have four key patterns that form the beginning of chapter 5: 'Refugees in Neighborhood and Communities.' They have one thing in common, all four patterns exhibit two essential features first, a 'problem formulation,' and second, a problem solution.' All four also have an illustration. But not all of them have connections to context patterns, that actually make them part of a pattern language in a domain, but they exhibit all these features in the full Refugee Pattern Language RPL.

	Pattern Language Features
5.1 The Sugar in the Milk – Mosaic of Subculture Neighborhoods	5
5.2 Social and Spatial Openness in Neighborhoods	5
5.3 Benevolent Boundaries	4
5.4 Identifiable Neighborhood for Refugee	3
Patterns 5.5 - 5.12 (work in progress)	

The meaning of the main title 'The Sugar in the Milk,' is expressed in the pragmatic optimism that refugees and locals can live in a productive way in identifiable neighborhoods together with local populations and create a common future.

REFERENCES

Alexander, C., Ishikawa, S., Silverstein, M. et. al. (1977) *A Pattern Language – Towns, Buildings, Construction*. Oxford University Press, New York.

Alexander, C. (1975) *The Timeless Way of Building*. Oxford University Press, New York.

Driel, E. and Verkuyten, M. (2019). 'Local Identity and the Reception of Refugees: the example of Riace. Identities, DOI: 10.1080/1070289X.2019.1611075

Kaplan D.H., and Recoquillon C., 'Ethnic Place Identity within a Parisian Neighborhood.' Geographical Review 104 (10 :33-51, January 2014.

'Sugar in the Milk Story.' (https://parsikhabar.net/heritage/flashback-like-sugar-in-milk/4463/) accessed, June 19, 2020.

Talen, E. (2019) *Neighborhoods*. Oxford University Press, New York.

Other Sources used in the non-full format pattern presentations:

Mehaffy, M. (2019) *A Pattern Language for Growing Regions*. Sustasis Press, Portland.

Neis, H., Meier, B. and T. Furukawazono. 2018) 'Welcome City: Refugees in Three German Cities. *Urban Planning*, Cogitatio Press. 3(4), 101-115. (doi:http://dx.doi.org/10.17645/up.v3i4.1668

CORRESPONDING AUTHOR

Hajo Neis, PhD Associate Professor of Architecture, School of Architecture and Environment (SAE), University of Oregon Portland, Director of PUARL and CIU, UO - Director CES, Berkeley. HN. 1148 Euclid Ave, Berkeley CA 94708, US. 503 314 4077 (cell) hajoneis@uoregon.edu, Last book as co-author: *Battle for the Life and Beauty of the Earth*. Oxford University Press, 2012.