REAPPROPRIATION OF URBAN RUINS

CONFRONTATION
FORMAL
INFORMAL

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« The right of people is to have a home, without fear of forced eviction, a place that offers shelter, security and the opportunity to secure a livelihood. »

Urban humanitarian response, David Sanderson

INTRODUCTION

Urban crises caused by conflict, disaster, economic crisis or climate change drastically increase the need for shelter as people will escape the crisis context, if they can. The increase in urban crises that the world has experienced since the 1960s-1970s has intensified the lack of basic necessities, such as housing and a demand for quick solutions is required in these situations which will result in large-scale forced migration. In addition to the unstable situation, regarding access to housing, that the various crises cause, they last longer and longer. They are spread over long periods and their urbanisation is intensifying. The United Nations (UN) has announced that « half of the world's population lives in cities and will double by 2050.»[1] The exodus of the population and its urbanisation will continue to increase. Faced with these crises, economic insecurity is often added to the situation, so the survival instinct will be to find refuge.

In a context of these crises where the urgent need for housing appears, traditional humanitarian aid will be concerned with the construction of housing, more particularly the field of humanitarian architecture. This profession will intervene mainly in emergency situations, with professionals setting up temporary shelters. The planning and installation is undertaken by non-governmental organisations (NGOs), the UN or private aid. The traditional strategy of these housing solutions is increasingly inadequate. Attention is often focused on logistics and speed of feasibility without considering the influence that the social organisation of the population itself may have. The affected population, vulnerable by definition, has no way to appropriate the space for there own needs.

Affected populations will then build their own shelters if humanitarian aid is no longer adequate. Their constructions are often described as informal, such as self-built camps, slums and anything that is, theoretically, not controlled by the law. The distinction between reality and what is planned by law is often very different. This is something that needs to be paid attention to and is « particularly important in relation to informal settlements (which, by law, should not exist, but which represent the tenure of hundreds of millions of people).»[2]

The increase in urban crises creates a much-needed rethink of these solutions and the strategy for dealing with these population. The planning tools for humanitarian services must be constantly rethought because the current constructive strategy is not adapted to the needs of a population. These solutions often have short-term design, whereas in reality crises last for a long time. These solutions are planned on an emergency basis, for a temporary period, and it is often imagined that the exodus of a population will be redirected towards its place of origin. Populations that are considered «transient» are not a reality because they end up settling over years, even generations, developing their own habitats. They often have no access to property so their situation is unstable due to their temporary status, they can be displaced or evicted at any time. These urban contexts are very complex due to either local policies, informal infrastructure development or both. The urban approach to implementing housing solutions needs to have a systemic view, linking context, actors, development and long-term planning.

Given the urban dimension of informal constructions, it is equally relevant to study the housing possibilities offered by the city to the population. My focus is on vacant, abandoned buildings in cities and their potential for reappropriation and occupation. These buildings are, in urban contexts of strong crisis, inhabited by the most vulnerable population. This approach obviously raises many challenges, such as population density, the verticality of these buildings, various structural flaws, governmental prohibitions and everything related to the official master plan. How to make these housing solutions more adapted to the needs of the population, more dignified, more inclusive and more sustainable?

This work is close to my heart, since fundamental human rights issues are essential and often not taken seriously enough by political governments. I have always wondered about the social and technical solutions developed by non-governmental organisations and how to find solutions that are better adapted to current issues. These issues mentioned above will become, in my opinion, one of the most important challenges of my generation. We must strive for and achieve a new type of urban planning in the context of crisis by working towards uplifting the community rather than to be a service provider.

In my work I will explore the potential of abandoned buildings associated with social communities that disadvantaged populations create, organising their own social dynamics and developing their own housing solutions. I would like to analyse the complexity of the contexts of the crisis that generate a quantity of abandoned and vacant buildings in order to defend their potential for reuse. I will use three case studies that differ in their contexts and also in their building typology. These three studies are the Torre David in Caracas, Venezuela, the Gaza Hospital in Beirut, Lebanon and the City Plaza Hotel in Athens, Greece.

This paper will be developed in three parts. The first part will deal with the hardship and issues that can arise in a rapidly urbanising context following a major crisis situation. The context of the three case studies will then be analysed in order to understand why these buildings have been abandoned and in what context an appropriation of the place is possible. Finally, the internal social organisation will be studied in order to understand the various housing solutions that a community conceives in its appropriation of these places.

URBAN CRISES

How are urban crises defined?

Various sudden crises such as war conflicts, natural disasters as well as economic crises, lead to an exodus of a significant mass of the population. Humans with the capacity to move away from this instability seek viable refuge elsewhere. These crises can have very serious consequences on human life and they also lead to a dysfunction of the built environment.

How do they arise?

Conflicts, such as the Syrian civil war of 2011, will always be the result of political and social revolts, whereas natural disasters, such as the Haiti earthquake of 2010, are instantaneous and devastating in their destruction. Their impact on buildings can be very significant. Buildings are partially or totally destroyed, causing people to flee. Other types of crisis can be just as important and brutal, such as economic crises. They raise even more issues because they will have a direct impact on the way of life of the population due to the capitalist dimension of our societies. An economic crisis will affect the country, possibly creating an inflation of its currency as well as an amplification of social class inequalities, which will lead to an increase in the wealth of the wealthy, while at the same time the most precarious population will become even poorer. These unstable and problematic contexts will be the main actors of social and political tensions within a population.

An exodus for the population, but to where?

Large cities such as metropolises and their centres have an obvious attraction. This is because of the economic potential and globalisation of cities, which leads us, as citizens of the world, to believe in the city. People seeking to rebuild and discover new opportunities for living and working will settle as close as possible to these economic centres. People will move in and out of their home countries for many reasons. Due to the unexpected nature of their exodus, the places of arrival are often not able to meet such housing demands. It is at this point that we witness the growing, rapid and exponential urbanisation of cities.

URBANISATION

Why is this urbanisation becoming a problem?

The cities in which people live are currently designed, planned, controlled and built by our rulers. Planning laws have a limit, which is not a reflection of reality. As mentioned in the introduction, most of the world's population is urbanised, but a large proportion lives in situations of severe poverty. This mass of people arriving in the city in an unstable situation seeks its place in an already fixed master plan. They therefore take refuge in the most precarious parts of the city. The city is growing rapidly and therefore *« escapes the laws of planning. It is now seen only as a huge chaos. Its dynamics are increasingly marked by unpredictability. »*[1]

What is the difference between the formal and informal city?

The formal city does not offer enough realistic alternatives for all its population, which pushes self-builders to develop. The urbanisation of the underprivileged in society is growing in proportion to its population, which is also growing exponentially. This part of the world's population finds itself developing its own infrastructure, its own neighbourhoods, its own cities. The marginalized in society, due to their political status, such as refugees and/or their personal economic situation, work together to develop these informal cities. They are often found on the outskirts of the city and the development of road networks linking the centre to these areas is generally not developed. This part of the city, the informal part, such as the slums (and all its other names such as favelas, barrios, bidonvilles) is further marginalised and removed from what is considered the formal city. But its proportion is so great that it becomes wrong to classify it as a separate category from what the contemporary city really is. The city is constructed physically, but *« it is also politically that the form, exclusive or inclusive, of this city is chosen »*[2]. The place of the informal city in political choices is left to its inhabitants and to chance.

« Contemporary urbanisation may need chaos more than planning to grow and multiply »[3]

INFORMAL ARCHITECTURE

What is the architecture of these informal environments?

Inhabitants have to become self-builders and the resulting urbanism shapes the landscape around the big cities. The historical layers are overlapping, the soils and materials are multiplying. All this architecture develops in relation with the different needs and means of its inhabitants and is improvised due to of their unanticipated arrival. The urbanisation of the world cannot be achieved without this informal architecture, which is illegal by definition. Unfortunately, this informal aspect also brings certain problems which the population must find alternatives to, as the sanitary and electrical installations as well as everything related to the general networks of the city (such as waste sorting) are not implemented in these areas. The government often leaves these parts of the city out and this also concerns the public resources to which everyone is entitled. Their housing is by default, built with defective materials that sometimes lead to collapse or insalubrity. The economic situation of the inhabitants will have a direct influence on the quality of the construction, which is why their economic stability is essential if they want to be able to meet certain living standards. Unemployment has *« a very important role in the gap between the haves in the formal city and the have-nots in the informal city »*.[1]

How does the architecture of the inhabitants develop?

Not all residents who build their own houses are, by default, professional builders. But in a community there are likely to be some people who know how to do it, so these people will collaborate and build their houses together. As we will see in the case studies that follow, this human-to-human collaboration has been the essential aspect of making a community work. The sharing of knowledge and resources is one of their greatest strengths given the lack of government support. But this independent character is what makes informal architecture more interesting than the formal architecture of specialists, because they are commissioned to build the city and they *« can not assume that they know the needs of a city until they know its inhabitants. »*[2]

What is the potential of formal cities in informal architecture?

Given the obvious expansion of cities and informal architecture, the architectural projects that will be most suitable for this urbanisation will be projects that are considered to be scalable over time. This will not mean that they are incomplete but that they are able to evolve and adapt to the needs of the community they serve. In the case studies chosen for the further development of this work, hybrid examples between the formal and the informal have been chosen. Urban centres today have an increasing amount of buildings left empty of users due to various reasons. These abandoned buildings in the centre have a huge potential for the disadvantaged populations who are far away in the peripheries. The intersection between urbanisation, formal architecture and personal appropriation by the population is the characteristic that will be defended throughout this statement. The answer to developing the city of its inhabitants, the contemporary city, lies in this sharing between architecture and inhabitants.

In this chapter, the urban and social contexts in which the three case studies chosen, from three different countries, have emerged will be developed. Their contexts are distinct from each other on a political, economic, social and urban point of view.
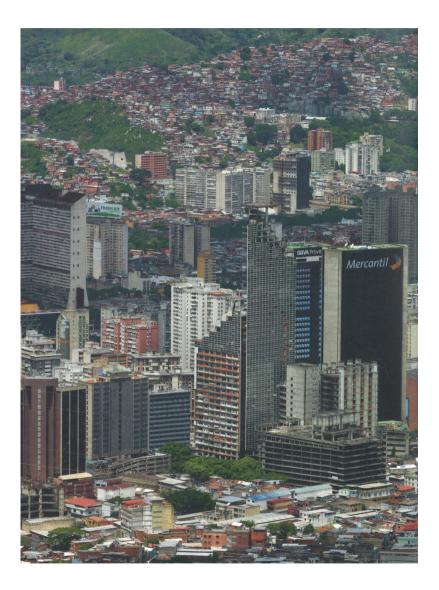
CONTEXT

CARACAS / BEIRUT /ATHENS

TYPE OF CRISIS
URBANISM
LOCAL POLICY
VULNERABLE POPULATION
LOCAL ASSISTANCE

SYNTHESIS

CARACAS

(1) The Torre David, in the economic center of Caracas.

The Torre David, whose real name is Centro Financiero Confinanzas, is a 45-storey tower designed by the developer David Brillembourg. Construction began in 1990, he died suddenly in 1993 and the construction of the tower was stopped, leaving it half built. It was occupied and transformed from 2007 to 2014.

The economic situation in Venezuela has become very unstable in recent decades. The different economic crises (1929 and 1994) were turning points for the country. After the first crisis in 1929, the country became one of the main oil exporters, which led to an implosion of profits. In 1983 the bolívars were devalued in an attempt to pay off some of the debts that the country was beginning to develop. This devaluation devastated the middle class by cutting their savings in half and caused the population to rebel because of the decline in their living conditions. This decline in the value of the currency and oil led to the 1994 crisis that stopped the construction of the Torre David. Half of the country's banks closed and went bankrupt. The gap between the social classes continued to grow during and after these events. The poorest class of the population was the first to have to face the considerable increase in rent prices in parallel with the stagnation of their income. Access to property thus became complicated or impossible and informal architectures such as the barrios on the outskirts of the city became a solution for a large percentage of the population. The Torre David has become one of the solutions to this lack of housing but also for some inhabitants of Caracas the architectural symbol of « the decline of Venezuela.»[1]

URBANISM

The Torre David was destined for a great economic and lush future. Located in the heart of the economic centre of Caracas and of a very imposing size compared to the rest of the city (it is one of the tallest buildings in Caracas at about 190 metres). The tower therefore has a very strategic location, which was obviously the intention of its developer. David Brillembourg wanted it to be representative of his *« power »*[2] in the city.

The city of Caracas is quite peculiar because it is composed of a strong contemporary metropolitan architecture on the one hand (such as the Torre David) and an urban fragmentation (such as the barrios) on the other.

In 1998, Venezuela witnessed the election of Hugo Chavez, the founder of the PSUV (United Socialist Party of Venezuela). It was a political turning point, concerning the property laws of the population. The Torre David was squatted and inhabited until the death of the president in 2013 because he deliberately accepted the occupation of the tower by a section of the Caracasian population. The community that built up in the tower between 2007 and 2014 was almost excclusively composed of supporters of their president's PSUV and praised him for his strong political loyalty. But Hugo Chavez established during his term of office some ambiguous laws that may have created some instability in the population. In 1999, at the beginning of his presidency, he changed the constitution, one of the articles of which stipulated that *« everyone has the right to adequate, safe, comfortable and hygienic housing, with essential basic services, including housing that humanises the family, the neighbourhood and community relations. »*[3] This gave the tower dwellers great hope, as Hugo Chavez encouraged the acquisition of landed property for the disadvantaged. But in 2009, two years after the tower's occupation began, a law decreeing that *« all unused land is public property »*[4] created controversy. In spite of the desire to reuse all the buildings left abandoned by their owners, the Torre David has lasted as long as it has thanks to the socialist policy of the country.

VULNERABLE POPULATION

The Torre David was looted of its materials between 1994 and 2007 and occupied primarily by former prisoners. One of the first inhabitants, Alexander Daza, *« a former gang member who became an evangelical pastor»*[5], later became the representative of the whole community. The first inhabitants were more problematic for the cohesion of the community as they generated a lot of delinquency within the tower, which reflected a particularly negative image of its inhabitants to the rest of the city. This image remained, even during the period when the community managed to build itself without crime.

The early occupants of the tower were divided into several categories of people. The first was those who tried to escape the government or hide their identity, and the second was the population of the poorest and most disadvantaged class in Caracas. The Torre David was invested in a major way in 2007, when heavy tropical rains destroyed a large part of the barrio areas. The population grew from 200 to 700 families, representing about 2,500 residents in 2011, with a peak population of 5,000 people.

The inhabitants of the tower belonged to the lower class of the population, who had great difficulty in paying their rents. The occupation of the tower was a first relief for them because their housing costs were drastically reduced. These were issues that were not addressed by NGOs or private charity funds, as the only actors that could have an influence on the situation of the inhabitants were the government and various public services. The networks serving the building, such as the water and electricity networks, were never provided free of charge but were subject to price negotiations between the community and the utilities.

BEIRUT

(2) View of the rest of the Chatila camp from a balcony of the Gaza hospital.

The Gaza Hospital is located in the Chatila refugee camp on the outskirts of Beirut. The camp was opened in 1948 for Palestinian refugees and the hospital was built in 1978 by the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO). It has survived the various conflicts that Lebanon has experienced and has been occupied by camp residents since 1978.

Beirut is a city that has gone through several wars in its history, important migratory flows from different neighbouring countries, but also an economic crisis that has been growing in the last decades. Lebanon is one of the most indebted countries in the world. Since the 2010s, the economic system of Lebanon has been deteriorating and it is now experiencing one of the most violent crises in the world, with a growing unemployment rate and an increasing inflation of the cost of living.

The case study is the former Gaza Hospital located in the refugee camp of Chatila, in the southern suburbs of Beirut. Through the various overcrowded levels of the hospital we see *« vertically, the history of migration, with a succession of residents escaping successive conflicts, displacements and deprivations and emblematic of the turbulent history of Lebanon ».*[1] At the beginning of the Lebanese civil war, which lasted from 1975 to 1990, the hospital was built by the Palestine Liberation Organisation in 1978 to improve the living conditions of the Palestinian refugees living in the camp since 1948. It was then taken over by the Palestinian Red Crescent Society in 1982 and went through the terrible Sabra and Shatila massacre of the camp's inhabitants that same year. It was finally stripped during the 1987 camp war. From that time on, it was simply abandoned and inhabited by the camp population.

URBANISM

Planned refugee camps are often located on the outskirts of city centres, so the former Gaza hospital is relatively far from the historic centre of Beirut. The Chatila camp, like all refugee camps, was intended to be temporary but is currently still in operation. It has long since exceeded its capacity but the waves of migrants continue to flow in. As a result, the floors have multiplied and over time it has become one of the suburbs of Beirut. Its limits have increased tenfold since 1948 and its borders with the surrounding areas are less and less clear. Chatila camp is an « open » camp unlike most refugee camps in Lebanon. It is currently 600 metres wide and one kilometre long. The former Gaza hospital stands, in four towers around a central courtyard, amidst the informal 4-7 storey buildings that have developed since the camp opened.

Regarding the laws for refugees in Lebanon, the situation is complex. The first issue they face is obtaining refugee status, which is not a given. In 1990, at the end of the Lebanese civil war, the exclusion laws for Palestinian refugees came back into force (civil, social and economic rights). These laws restrict their access to the labour market and stigmatise their integration into Lebanese social life. In 2002, a law prohibiting access to property for Palestinians was also voted by the Lebanese parliament. But at the end of the war in the camps in 1987, the hospital was abandoned and occupied by the refugees from the camps, and became a refuge.

The different buildings of the hospital complex have disparate owners. One of the towers *« depends administratively on the municipalities of Beirut and Ghobeiry, three buildings depend on the municipality of Beirut, while the fourth depends again on Ghobeiry, controlled by Hezbollah. »*[2]

But the land on which they are located is also of different ownership, some is private land and another belongs to the Ministry of Interior. This legal and geographical grey area is not owned by any refugee protection organisation, so the residents have no title to the land. One resident explains in a testimony that at the end of the camp war, the hospital was just stripped of its equipment and furniture, it was enough to *« go in, put a door in one of the rooms, install a lock and it became a flat. That's how the hospital became inhabited. »*[3]

VULNERABLE POPULATION

The hospital in Gaza was first occupied by Palestinian refugees fleeing after the advent of Israel and the subsequent wars. Lebanon is geographically situated around countries that are subject to much internal and inter-country conflict. The Syrian civil war that started in 2011 had a direct impact because being a neighbouring country, a significant amount of Syrian refugees arrived in Beirut and Lebanon. Between these two considerable conflicts, there were also other refugee flows generated by wars such as the Kurds, and Syriacs from Iraq.[4] Some people, belonging to the lower class of the population, seeking a more affordable living situation, also took refuge in these camps and in the hospital, such as the Lebanese working class, Egyptian, Moroccan and Bangladeshi migrants.[5] The choice to come and live in Chatila camp is therefore mainly linked to a financial issue, due to its strategic location not far from the city and its low housing prices. In general, women, children, elderly people and people with disabilities are particularly vulnerable to discrimination and violence in refugee camps.

Chatila camp is officially recognised by the United Nations Refugee Agency (UNRWA). This UN programme was set up in 1949 to care for Palestine refugees in the Middle East region, while other ethnic refugees are mainly cared for by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). There are other NGOs and local associations that implement means to help the population of the camps.

For the Gaza hospital, it is a *« local NGO, the People's Aid for Relief and Development (PARD), which has the role of administering two of the buildings […] and providing food vouchers and in-kind assistance to the needy refugees in the four buildings »*.[6] Regarding some major repairs, the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) in 2007 improved the comfort of the building by changing the plumbing, sanitary facilities and water access.

ATHENS

(3) View of the Exarchia district from the City Plaza Hotel.

The City Plaza Hotel, located in the centre of Athens, went bankrupt in 2009, following the financial crisis in Greece. It was then requisitioned in 2016 by socialist activists and associations who were struggling to provide aid for the mass of refugees arriving in 2015. The activists and residents were evicted in 2019.

Greece is geographically one of the gateways to Europe from North Africa and the Middle East. The refugee crisis of 2015 was one of the recent upheavals for Greece, as it no longer knew how to manage the huge influx of refugees. Agreements were signed in 2016 between the European Union (EU) and Turkey, blocking the arrival of refugees in Greece and sending them back to Turkey. These agreements resulted in refugees being stranded on the Greek islands and simply transferred the problem of reception to another country, which did not improve their quality of life. The conservative shift of the Greek government in 2019 has not helped the situation. The issue of housing for refugees is a critical issue since the arriving refugees were either homeless, housed in parks or multiple camps set up throughout Greece.

Moreover, it is one of the most indebted countries in Europe, which does not help to improve the conditions of thousands of people. The economic crisis started in 2008 because of the amount of public debt Greece had incurred. Being part of the EU, this has created complications so that Greece would not put other European countries in a critical situation. The situation within the country is one of high unemployment and a consequent lack of aid from the state to its population. As a result of this financial crisis, the City Plaza Hotel went bankrupt in 2009.

URBANISM

The City Plaza is located in the centre of Athens in the popular district of Exarchia. This area has experienced a lot of social conflict between the public forces and the inhabitants. After the economic crisis, it became one of the militant centres fighting against the precariousness of the population, the social misery and also against the political power of the government.[1] Some inhabitants of this neighbourhood have transformed their way of life by prioritising self-management and solidarity in order to fill the gaps in public services. The camps set up for refugees are generally located on the different Greek islands and outside the urban centres. Due to their location, the link to public services and their connections to the city is problematic. The hotel, on the other hand, being a reception centre for refugees, was conveniently located in the centre of the city. Access to the various health, education and public networks is therefore much more adequate to develop minimal living conditions. The hotel is located in one of the streets of the district, composed of buildings of the same height, about 7 floors.

The administration system in Greece for people with refugee status (who have yet to obtain it) has some contradictions. For example, an asylum seeker arriving in the country needs a tax number to rent a property but when seeking to obtain this number, an address is required. Refugees are cared for and recognised by the relevant NGOs, but Greek legislation has decreed that they are allowed to stay in camps or government flats for six months only. The financial support ends soon after and they are left to pay for rooms they cannot afford, with no support to find a place in the labour market. Refugees are also stranded in Greece due to border crossing laws, such as mandatory registration in the European country of arrival. The Greek government tries to house them all over the country, from the slopes of Mount Olympus to the old barracks and the various camps on the islands, where the conditions are mostly catastrophic.

In 2015, the government was re-elected and the political party of the Coalition of the Radical Left (SYRIZA) obtained the majority of votes. This government is critical of the European Union's reception policy and encourages the closure of camps on the various islands. The occupation of the City Plaza took place during the mandate of the president of this political party who was in favour of the use of the hotel.[2] Socialist activists could no longer allow the living conditions of the refugees to remain as they were and tried to demonstrate a different reception system than the one in place. Athens has thousands of vacant buildings within its walls, the City Plaza is intended to be an example for the government, as it has been left abandoned and has become a home for 400 families. In 2019 the centre-right New Democracy party returns to power and as a result of certain decisions, the City Plaza closed its doors.

VULNERABLE POPULATION

Refugees arriving in Greece come mainly from the Middle East due to the various conflicts that have broken out in these areas, as well as from North Africa in order to reach other european countries. Greece has often been the gateway to European soil. The City Plaza in the midst of this complex situation has been the place of reception and living for more than 2'500 refugees during its 36 months of operation. Due to the number of rooms, the hotel had the capacity to accommodate around 400 people, half of whom were children. These refugees came, in total, from at least 13 different countries and were all in a temporary situation, they were not going to stay in the hotel for very long. This feature made self-management of the shelter impossible by the refugees. The hotel was therefore run by members of the association as well as activists from the city and from around the world, who travelled to Athens to support the cause.

LOCAL ASSISTANCE

As mentioned in the previous chapter, the City Plaza was taken over by about 100 activists from the association The Solidarity Initiative to Economic and Political Refugees, which is composed of a network of university and radical socialist party activists. Their aim was to find accommodation for all refugees in suitable buildings in the city centre, to occupy empty buildings and to close down refugee camps on the outskirts of urban centres. Together with the City Plaza they created a cooperative shelter for 400 refugees. This solidarity movement was set up in response to the monumental refugee crisis of 2015. The hotel was able to function thanks to the various private donations that the Greek and global population gave them, *« without a cent of funding from the government or NGOs. »*[3] This model is an infrastructure without any income, it functions only thanks to its volunteers.

SYNTHESIS

The comparison of the three contexts of Caracas, Beirut and Athens has demonstrated the multiplicity of factors that can lead to informal occupations on the part of the population. The different points developed showed the diversity between the case studies, in their similarities and differences.

The occupations of these buildings have all been possible, for a determined or indeterminate period of time, thanks to the grey and ambiguous areas of their different laws and political governances. The situations in Beirut and Athens are linked to laws that mainly concern refugees. As these are often insufficient, they are defended by NGOs and various private associations. This assistance is precious and essential in these situations. The various resources, medium and long-term means of subsistence as well as housing can be offered or improved by this aid. The populations that have appropriated these buildings are often disadvantaged and displaced populations from lower social classes with a mix of ethnicities. As seen above, the case studies in Beirut and Athens, focus on migratory crises and large influxes of refugees.

Urban crises are multiple, frequent and pervasive. Economic crises and severe bankruptcy of all three countries are their main common features. The war conflicts and massive refugee flows faced by Lebanon and Greece are less similar to the situation in Caracas, although the city's crime rate and poverty are important factors in the overall understanding of the three cases.

The three buildings analysed are almost all located in the economic and historical centres of their cities. Networks are developed there, access to resources is optimised, such as access to food, to different energy networks and to waste separation. Being in the centre of cities brings many advantages that are less available in the refugee camps and slums that are usually located on the outskirts.

	TORRE DAVID	GAZA HOSPITAL	CITY PLAZA
TYPE OF CRISES	Economic crisis and poverty	Economic crisis and refugee crisis	Economic crisis and refugee crisis
URBANISM	Central dense highrise	Refugee camp dense	Central dense
LOCAL POLICY	Propoerty rights for squatters	No propoerty rights for refugees	No propoerty rights for refugees
VULNERABLE POPULATION	Urban migrants	Refugees	Refugees
LOCAL ASSISTANCE	No NGO assistance	NGO assistance	Private donations

In this chapter, I will develop the housing and collective living solutions implemented by the community in each building. These structures are different in their original typologies, sizes and structural states which will enrich the possibilities of appropriation by the population.

APPROPRIATION RESPONSES

TORRE DAVID

SPATIAL ORGANISATION

The main tower is composed of 45 floors but only the first 28 are inhabited, due to lack of accessibility. When the first inhabitants arrived in the tower, the spaces were unusable with a lot of rubbish, there was a lot of cleaning to do. They started by simply setting up tents and mobile kitchens waiting for the authorities to evict them or not.[1] After a few weeks, they began to explore the next floors and eventually cleaned the entire first 28 floors together. Each floor housed about 15 families. The flats started to grow from the second floor up to the 28th. The first arrivals settled on the most accessible floors and then the community gradually cleared the next floors. The construction of the interior walls was partially finished on the first six floors, and the inhabitants simply appropriated these spaces with their own furniture and by creating openings as they saw fit. The interior partitions disappeared as the floors went up because the construction was less finished. From the 10th floor onwards, there were none. From this floor onwards, the inhabitants built their own spaces using clay bricks. The size of the flats varies greatly, from 15m2 studios to flats of up to 110m2.

The common spaces are mainly the circulation spaces. Whether it is the multiple stairwells or the 10 floors of parking, the inhabitants share and gather in these spaces. On the first two floors, there are all the administrative and technical spaces, sports areas such as a basketball court and also the church that the inhabitants have opened. Apart from the sixth floor, the inhabitants have developed shops such as bodegas (grocery shops) and laundry areas on almost every floor in order to serve the inhabitants various needs, without them having to climb the whole tower. There is even a barber, a beauty salon and a dentist.

The function for which the building was designed was not the final use of the inhabitants. *« The first six floors were to house the hotel's support services; floors 7-16 were for the hotel; floors 18-45 were for 30,000m2 of office space. »*[2] The tower, being partially completed, allowed the population not to have to change or transform the spaces since they were already empty.

The occupants of the tower create their own spaces with the red bricks. (1)

STRUCTURAL PROBLEMS

The Torre David was abandoned in the middle of its construction and was empty for a dozen years. This allowed some people to come and loot the remaining materials of the tower (such as metal and glass), so there are many structural elements missing from the whole building. The unfinished nature of the main tower poses real security problems. The complex is composed of several buildings, but the tallest tower is the most popular, due to the housing capacity it has had. It lacks basic facilities, such as a lift, so residents have to walk up the first 28 floors. The first ten floors can be c by the car park adjacent to the tower, if the person has access to a vehicle. The community has developed a number of strategies to address these shortcomings. They have been thinking of new ways to make it easier to climb the tower. The use of the car park is the first one, the inhabitants have created accesses and links between the car park and the tower by drilling holes in some walls. They also developed a lift system to transport heavier items, such as building materials. The inhabitants, within the community, even developed a business of transporting goods and objects through the floors of the tower, which was very useful for all the merchants.[3]

The various staircases in the tower have no handrails or protective barriers, so these areas are extremely dangerous for falls. This problem is made even more dangerous by the lack of railings on the edges of the terraces, balconies and around the various patios. The lack of glass in the windows was also important as it caused the death of a child at the beginning of the occupation. To overcome this danger, the inhabitants used rebar or PVC tubes.[4] Networks such as sanitary pipes (drinking water and waste water treatment) are partially installed, but are not functional.
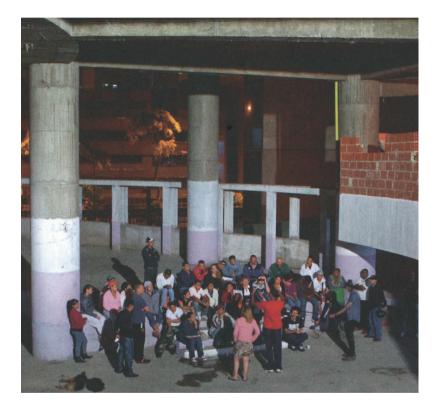
The stairs of the tower do not have safety railings. (2)

POLITICAL ORGANISATION

When the first occupants of the tower arrived, there was no solidarity among them. The distribution of flats was done on a first come, first served basis. Following the first years of occupation, in 2009 the inhabitants created their own cooperative called the Cacique Housing Cooperative of Venezuela with the aim of *« promoting the construction of an urban environment with dignified housing, consisting of a flat, a common house, a nursery school, a kindergarten, parking areas and a multi-purpose hall.»*[5] The system of distribution of spaces changed at this time and was more selective due to the high demand for housing that the tower was experiencing. The cooperative decided to accept the residents according to their stories, needs and personalities. The criminality faced by the inhabitants of Caracas was also one of the main problems within the tower. The inhabitants had to establish rules and prohibitions in order to live together successfully. [6]

In order to give a voice to all the inhabitants, the cooperative's managers set up a system of spokespersons and representatives. *« Each family chose a delegate, all the delegates from each floor elected a floor coordinator who participated in the cooperative meeting with all the other coordinators. The coordinators among themselves elected a president of the cooperative. »*[7] All the inhabitants of the Torre David had to participate in the collective life to live in the tower. Every week, one of the floors was responsible for cleaning the common areas and the community naturally helped each other.

The cooperative committee gradually developed the will to be legal and recognised within Caracas. At first, resources such as electricity and drinking water were stolen from public services. Subsequently, the cooperative charged each family 200 bolívars (about 26 Swiss francs) rent to pay for legal access to electricity and sanitation, general repairs and the maintenance of the tower's security. The inhabitants have all, little by little, participated in the improvement of the community life, which has allowed for the sustainability of the model and of this community for 7 years

The meetings of the cooperative committee are held on the first floor. (3)
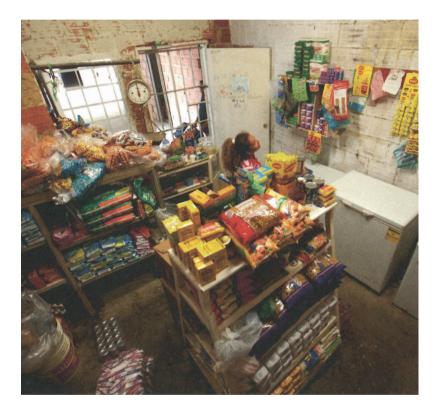
INTERNAL SECURITY

Access to the Torre David is guarded by inhabitants day and night. There are four official entrances to the compound. Only one of the four is pedestrian and residents need a magnetic card to enter. The other three are for vehicles and the cooperative has guards securing and checking each entrance. A foreigner, for example, cannot enter the tower without being invited by one of the residents. The city of Caracas, like many Latin American cities, is faced with high crime rates and illegal businesses such as the drug market. Checks at the various entrances as well as the internal rules of the community prohibit this business within the tower. As mentioned in the previous chapter, the rent that the residents pay is also helpful in maintaining this security and as many residents have testified *« the tower is almost safer than the city. »*[8]

The inhabitants of the tower guard the entrances day and night. (4)

ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES

As the years passed, the community naturally developed an economy within the tower. The inhabitants began to provide services to each other and to market them in order to have a minimum income. For example, on each floor, a grocery shop with different products was developed by some families. The cooperative committee checks that the traders are not abusive. They have decreed that the selling price for the shops on the first ten floors should be equivalent to the government regulated price. But from floor 11 onwards, the merchants were allowed to increase the price by one or two bolívars because transport becomes more difficult and expensive.[9]

Other businesses, essential for the population, developed, such as sewing shop, office supplies shop and a hairdresser. Certain businesses, which are essential for the smooth running of the tower, were also given a salary. These include the main co-ordinators of the cooperative, the security guards, the taxis within the ten parking floors and the various network repair professionals.
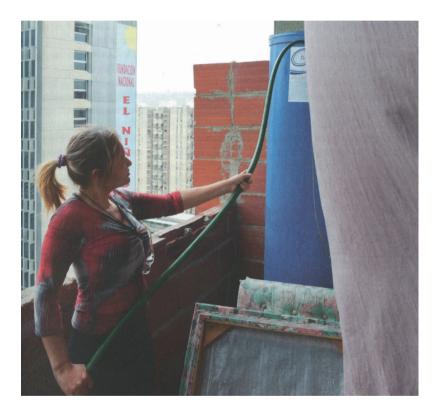
The grocery stores within the tower are of great use to its inhabitants. (5)

TECHNIQUES AND RESOURCES

The president of the cooperative explains that *« When we arrived here, there was no power supply. »*[(10)] So they managed to install, illegally, a connection to the city's electricity networks for the whole building. They later obtained it legally by paying for these utilities, as well as the drinking water supply from their already installed sanitary system. Before the city's drinking water was available, everyone had to carry their own jerrycans of water through the floors.

When the building was built, wastewater treatment was planned for floors 7 and 16. As this was out of order, it led to foul odours and mold on the floors, which were resolved when the public sewage system could be used.
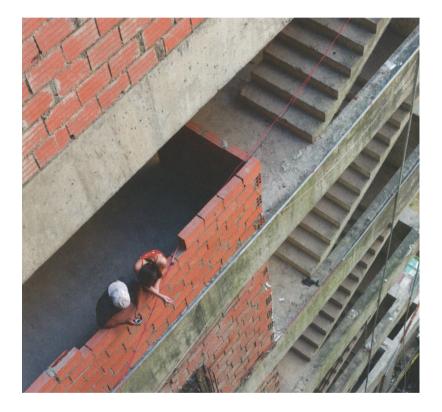
For waste separation, the cooperative decided to leave it to each family to deal with their own waste. As the building is located in the centre of Caracas, the public services take care of the waste collection in the surrounding area. This location in the centre of the city also allows residents to have direct access to all the primary resources they would need. Some of the shops within the tower provide many of these needs, but this is not equivalent to what the whole city can offer.

On each floor, pipes provide drinking water to each family. (6)

MATERIALS

« The construction in Torre David combines the collective knowledge of the self-built and progressive habitat of the barrios with new techniques and strategies that adapt this knowledge to the conditions of the Tower ».[11] Inside the concrete skeleton that is Torre David, the inhabitants had to rebuild almost everything. Being a population coming mainly from the different barrios of the city, they moved in and built their space using the same construction techniques. Red brick is the most economical and constructive building material. Brick is easily transportable and allows for natural ventilation by simply staggering the stones together. Brick walls are built to delimit the separations between the private and the collective, which can also be compared to the construction of barrios as a way for each person to claim their territory.

The inhabitants have created all the separations with red bricks. (7)

APPROPRIATION

The main facade of days and nights with the personalization of each inhabitant.
(8) & (9)

APPROPRIATION

The domestic and workshop interiors of the tower. (10) & (11)

APPROPRIATION

The domestic interiors of the tower. (12) & (13)

APPROPRIATION

The grocery stores in the tower. (14) & (15)

APPROPRIATION RESPONSES

GAZA HOSPITAL

SPATIAL ORGANISATION

In 1987, the four towers of the hospital complex were occupied by the inhabitants of the camp. At first, they wanted to create a kindergarten in the middle of these ruins, but the camp's housing shortage was more important. No institutions or public services were responsible for these buildings and due to the many generations of refugees in the camp, the community spirit was quite weak. The policy in place was « first come, first served». They got to chose their space, often those with natural light, leaving the basement floors for the last arrivals, which *« were the cold rooms of the morgue at the time of the hospital, without windows or ventilation, infested with cockroaches and rats, the air is pestilential and suffocating. »*[1]

The typology of a hospital room is quite conducive to the domestication of the premises by its inhabitants, although some of the interior walls have been destroyed in order to increase the capacity of the rooms. The demand for accommodation was so great in the camp that sometimes up to nine people could be obliged to share a standard hospital room.[2] Due to the complete stripping of the hospital, the inhabitants had to add their own kitchens, furniture, windows or doors which were often replaced by curtains. The partitioned spaces are often places of domestic and private occupations, sometimes some shops and workshops occupy these spaces. The common area are mainly located in the circulation spaces such as the corridors and staircases, no other spaces apart from the outside of the building have been organised as common and collective place. For example, corridors and ouside have become the main plpac area for childen.

The inhabitants gather in several rooms. (1)

STRUCTURAL PROBLEMS

The Gaza Hospital was initially built 10 storeys high, but an eleventh floor was added durring its occupation. The most consequent structural problems within the buildings are mainly related to the multiple wars that have taken place in the area. Chatila camp has been partially destroyed at several instances and its multi-layered, lightweight buildings, representing the architecture of the camp, have always been rebuilt on precarious foundations. The buildings of the former hospital are among the structurally stable buildings that have survived the various conflicts almost intact. However, bullet and explosive damage perforated the building envelope on several levels. Aerial bombs and cannons were used extensively during the war of the camps, which damaged the building on the upper floors, but their impact on the lower floors was less. As you make your way up the floors, the materials disappear, the glass is gone and the physical walls of the envelope are found partially destroyed and in some places they are completely gone. The hospital, at the end of this conflict, was entirely looted of its furniture and materials. The lifts and interior doors were no longer in existence when the first occupants arrived.

The building has several bomb impacts and no windows left. (2)

POLITICAL ORGANISATION

There are no real rules of community in place within the buildings of the Gaza hospital. The only constraints that the inhabitants may face are the different rent prices. The first arrivals decided that the spaces they occupied were theirs by default. They were mainly Palestinians, and as time went on, all generations of refugees came and went. The first owners cleaned up, cleaned up and restored what they could. After they moved in, they then divided their living spaces to earn more income. No rules were established, so all transactions were informal. The rental prices do, nonetheless, follow a certain logic, that of height. The logic being that *« the higher the floors, the more money the occupants could afford »*[3], due to the quality of the light, ventilation and security.

Until today, different groups have formed throughout the occupation, even today. People from the same background or speaking the same language are found in the same parts of the complex. For example, the majority of the Bangladeshi population occupy the basement. These financial means and origin seem to be the two chacteristics organising and distributing the population within the Gaza hospital.

The unhealthy basement is occupied by the most precarious populations. (3)

INTERNAL SECURITY

Security within the hospital is directly linked to the internal security of the Chatila camp. The groups controlling the camp and its organisation are often retaled to the various political conflicts emerging in the city. The institutional political structures governing the refugee camps in Beirut are the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO), the Palestinian authorities, humanitarian agencies such as UNRWA, and various factions or groups of people appointed by the authorities. The camp population hasn't got much to say. In 2005, a popular committee was chosen for the first time by the population in the Chatila camp.[4] But this model of popular initiative seemed unlikely to survive, given the constant intervention of political actors fighting for authority in the area, but also because they marginalise and do not take popular initiatives seriously. At present it is run and controlled by the popular committee which functions as a public service managing resources such as water and electricity. It also takes care of the general security of the camp, as the Lebanese authorities do not have the authorization to enter the camp.[5] The population also takes care of their own security, for example inside the hospital where the inhabitants watch the floors in shifts

The only entrance to the hospital within the camp. (4)

ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES

As with any community that develops autonomously, exchanges and the emergence of an economy occur. The population of the camp being in a very precarious situation, they have very few opportunities for trade. Considering their situation, resources such as drinking water, electricity and petrol are often the main demands. Within the Gaza hospital, a number of small grocery shops have appeared as some residents have invested rooms with the needs mentioned above. In addition to these shops, certain occupants occupants have also made their skills available to the community. Drilling and construction workshops have emerged at the front of the hospital, but there are also beauty salons such as a hairdresser and sewing shops.[6]

The residents of the hospital market water and gasoline. (5)

TECHNIQUES AND RESOURCES

In the shops of the camp, the inhabitants can find everything they need in terms of food in the local shops (bakery, restaurant) and markets (fruit, vegetables and others). Various humanitarian organisations, such as UNRWA, also organise food distributions[7]. As for the infrastructure and the distribution of different public services (sanitation, electricity and waste sorting), the situation is more complex. Drinking water, for example, is delivered by the camp authorities or sold by the inhabitants in the various shops. Within the camp, four drinking water wells have been installed but they do not meet the population needs. The UNRWA is therefore carrying out major excavations, but this is leading to a problematic infiltration of salt water. The salt water leaks into the system, resulting in partially salty water coming out of the taps and distribution pipes becoming obsolete. Drinking water then becomes a business among the population, as in the hospital in Gaza. The most precarious population can only afford it for drinking, as the inhabitants with morre financial means can use it for cleaning orr cooking as well.
Electricity is an equally important issue in Lebanon and even more so in the refugee camps. It is often more advantageous to install informal electricity connections than to pay the public utilities, as the latter suffer a lot of power cuts due to the problems in the country. The electricity works four hours a day on average in the camp and that is if it's not completely cut off.[8] For the inhabitants of the upper floors of the hospital, this problem will only have repercussions at night due to the many openings in the façade, but the lower floors, without access to natural light, live in a very dark environment. Finally, waste management is mainly organised by humanitarian organisations, although it remains an important issue. The several tons of waste that accumulate daily throughout the camp can rapidly cause sanitary and health issues fo its occupants.

The camp markets provide the necessary resources for the inhabitants. (6)

MATERIALS

In the Gaza hospital, but also in the Chatila camp in general, the economic situation of the population and the means deployed by the different institutions will have a direct impact on the construction and access to certain resources. As the population has difficulties obtaining primary needs, they do not have the capacity to make major repairs to buildings. Heavy constructions or modifications are taken care of by the various political institutions controlling the camps, such as humanitarian organisations.[9] Lebanon construction is mainly made out of concrete (brick, prefabricated or cast in place) and metal (mainly for the different armatures). The many conflicts tthat the building went and is still going through have led to the partial or total destruction of buildings, leaving a multitude of concrete skeletons. The Gaza hospital is one of them. Its location makes it peculiar because of the contrasting buildings around it, made of different layers of the camps, often structurally unstable. The main lack of materials in the hospital concerns the doors, the window panes and the various technical networks. To address this issue as much as possible, the inhabitants use fabrics to create privacy in the space but also to control the light. Given the absence of adequate electricity and ventilation infrastructure, the lack of glass turns out to be more advantageous than problematic. In the basement, for example, there are no windows to the outside which results in unbreathable air and a daily life plunged into darkness.
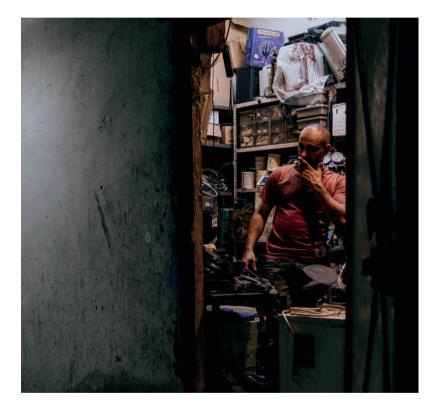
The inhabitants use fabrics to have privacy. (7)

APPROPRIATION

The roof of the hospital is used to house a family. (8) & (9)

APPROPRIATION

Welding and repair shops within the hospital. (10) & (11)

APPROPRIATION

Domestic spaces in the hospital. (12) & (13)

APPROPRIATION

Domestic spaces in the hospital. (14) & (15)

APPROPRIATION RESPONSES

CITY PLAZA HOTEL

SPATIAL ORGANISATION

The City Plaza is a 7-storey building with a capacity of 126 rooms. From the entrance of each room, there are functional bathrooms, the rest of the room with the appropriate furniture just after and at the opposite of the room, access to the balcony. The hotel is the closest programmatic function to that of a dwelling and its main typological advantage is the access to a private bathroom for each inhabitant, without having to build or modify anything. In each room, a family is housed and, as time goes by, each floor is filled with people who were, until then, strangers to each other.

Out of the 126 rooms, the activists have arranged about 100 to accommodate the refugees and the other 26 rooms are used for communal spaces (such as meeting spaces, classrooms and storage areas) as well as for housing the hotel volunteers, who occupy the entire 6th floor.[1]

Upon entering the hotel, the new resident will find himself facing the reception and will find a multitude of different common spaces such as a bar, a communal kitchen, a dining room, play areas for children, a health centre, a library as well as several other meeting rooms. [2] All these spaces are not locked in their programmatic functions, the dining room becomes a meeting room at certain times and the roof terrace becomes the place for meals in the summer when the temperatures allows it. The aim of the activists who occupied the hotel was not only to create a place of reception for refugees but also to create a place of shared life and cohabitation between inhabitants.

In each room of the hotel, a family resides. (1)

STRUCTURAL PROBLEMS

The City Plaza Hotel went bankrupt fairly recently, in 2009, and has not suffered any particular destruction, as it is not in a conflict zone. Therefore, the building isn't considerably damaged and the furniture was still in place at the time of the 2016 occupation. During the three years of occupation, the City Plaza did not suffer any deterioration, contrary to what some politicians, who did not approve of the illegal occupation of the building, shared as information.

The inhabitants spread their cloths on the balcony of the hotel. (2)

POLITICAL ORGANISATION

From the beginning, the association set up rules of life and organisation that the inhabitants of the hotel had to respect in order to continue living there. The activists and volunteers are mainly responsible for admissions, room allocation, general order and providing for the needs of the different residents. As one of the association's volunteers explains, *« We have four principles that we never compromise on, no alcohol, no drugs, no violence and no weapons. »*[3] Volunteers are essential to the smooth running of the structure, which operates in a self-managed way by providing for the needs of the inhabitants thanks to private donations. They all participate in daily assemblies held in the common areas, where the residents of the hotel can join in. That doesn't usually work because the residents are mainly in transit and do not see this place as a long-term accommodation. The internal organisation is still based on participatory principles, as the residents each have to take care of a weekly task according to their capacity, such as preparing collective meals, cleaning the premises or looking after the children.[4]

Refugees are welcomed at the reception desk by volunteers. (3)

INTERNAL SECURITY

The internal security of the hotel is entirely in the hands of the residents. Certain strict rules were decreed at the beginning of the occupation, which allowed the activists to exclude temporarily or permanently a resident who violated certain principles such as the use of violence or the consumption of illicit products. On the inside, the community operates autonomously and is committed to respecting the rules, while on the outside, security is the responsibility of public services and local law enforcement. The street is more insecure than life inside the City Plaza, and the residents do not want to return to this hectic life, and have made community life incident-free during the three years of occupation.

The sidewalk of the hotel is regularly cleaned by the residents. (4)

ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES

The City Plaza is a place of share and welcome, run by volunteers who are not paid by any organisation. They don't receive any income for their commitment, nor do they have a profit motive with this project. Refugees staying in the hotel do not pay for their rooms and other resources they are entitled to, such as three meals a day.[5] Due to the temporary nature of the residents occupation, no businesses have developed within the hotel, everything is organised on a self-help basis.

The residents (refugees and volunteers) cook together. (5)

TECHNIQUES AND RESOURCES

The hotel had been renovated in 2004, before it went bankrupt, which made the building's technical infrastructure recent enough to function during the occupation. The sanitary and electrical systems were then functional for all inhabitants and the financing of these was covered solely by private funds.

The involvement of outsiders in the financing of basic needs has been the only factor allowing the survival of the project, as the needs for food, hygiene products, medicines and maintenance of the building are important to be able to function properly.[6]

The hotel operates solely on private funds. (6)

MATERIALS

As explained in the previous chapters, the City Plaza Hotel has not been changed in its architecture and structure. The networks and the inner separations were already adapted for the domestication of the space by its inhabitants. The programmatic function of a hotel being the closest to that of a home, as well as the condition of the general building, allowed for a much more direct appropriation of the space.

The materials of the hotel have all remained intact. (7)

APPROPRIATION

The inhabitants spread their cloths on the balcony of the hotel. (8)
The roof terrace of the hotel offers a great view of Athens. (9)

APPROPRIATION

The residents (refugees and volunteers) cook together. (10)
the refugees enjoy the serenity of the hotel. (11)

APPROPRIATION

The hotel rooms are occupied by refugee families. (12)
The clothes of the inhabitants dry on the balconies. (13)

SYNTHESIS

The three community-based social organisations developed in these case studies allowed me to grasp the key points for achieving the sustainability of such a model.

The social organisation within these buildings differs because of their density, the state of destruction of the building and the means possessed by the people who occupy it. The Torre David has generated a great deal of cooperation among its inhabitants due to the size of its community and, above all, the willingness of the inhabitants to create a collective spirit. Gaza Hospital and City Plaza reflect a different dynamic, with different waves and generations of refugees causing a fracture in the community dynamic. The scenes of inner life in all three situations still reflect the community that has been created over time, the only difference being that maintaining it sometimes requires more effort.

Security is one of the important elements in maintaining the serenity of a population. This is structural safety, such as the improvements made to the Torre David to prevent falls. The physical safety of the inhabitants is obviously important, which can be protected by establishing rules for living.

The technical infrastructure of a building, such as sanitary facilities, drinking water or electricity, is one of the essential components of a good living condition for an inhabitant. The examples of the Torre David and the hospital in Gaza show us how the development of this infrastructure and its absence can lead to complications.

Finally, the state of decay of the three buildings was extremely different, which influenced the amount of materials used and the degree of community ownership. The City Plaza was not damaged in any way which left little scope for appropriation, as did the Gaza Hospital, which was partially destroyed but whose internal space distribution remained largely intact. In contrast, in the Torre David, the inhabitants have almost completely rebuilt the interior spaces, which has led to a high degree of appropriation by the population.

	TORRE DAVID	GAZA HOSPITAL	CITY PLAZA
SPATIAL ORGANISATION	Floors divided	Floors with housing only	Floors divided
STRUCTURAL PROBLEMS	Missing facade, no interior walls	No furniture, Bomb impact	Intact building
POLITICAL ORGANISATION	Systematic reorganisation, representatives	No organisation	Organisation by the activist group
INTERNAL SECURITY	Security organised	No security	Security organised
ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES	Internal economy	Internal economy	No internal economy
TECHNIQUES RESSOURCES	Local commerce local employment connection to service	Local commerce	Connection to service
MATERIALS	Red brick	Fabrics	Security organised

CONCLUSION

Through this work, I wanted to reflect on the social and human approach of an architectural project aiming at the reappropriation of a sustainable building by the community. My wish was to be able to compare the hybrid results between a sustainable construction and an informal occupation, as the three exemples demonstrate. I put them in parallel with the housing solutions that the formal city proposes to the most vulnerable populations, whether they are displaced or in great precariousness. Refugee camps and slums, to give some examples, are part of these housing solutions, their urban location and the fragility of their construction being two of their disadvantages compared to the models I have studied.

My work questions in the first place the notion of ruin or abandoned space, because no building should be lost, whether in its emptiness or by its materials, a building must have a continuous life cycle. If a building allows a high degree of reuse by modulating its interior and transforming it, it will have enormous potential for adapting its space. The strength of a building lies in its capacity, in its future, to be able to evolve according to its occupants, while offering them the possibility to create and appropriate their new environment. Its interior typology will, in this case, be important because it will allow to imagine and project its potential of reuse. As analysed in my paper, the initial function of each building was not adapted to its domestic use. Nevertheless, the different communities have been able to transform and adapt it to meet their needs.

How to create a space, a building of great adaptation and durability?
How to create the habitat of the multitude?

The sustainable life of a building also depends directly on its owner. The notion of ownership of a place is what can allow, or not, this place to change and reinvent itself. The desire to put down roots in a place makes it necessary to obtain a right of ownership or a guarantee of tenancy of the habitat. In order to obtain these rights, the services of the architects are no longer sufficient and that is why work and discussion with the different actors of the city is essential. As I have been able to analyze in my different examples, the notion of property, not being granted, often makes the stability sought by a community fleeing a crisis situation fragile.

The human being is at the center of my interrogations. As architects, we question ourselves on the best way to create a habitat in which the person will settle and project himself in the future. We are at the service of the human being in order to research and conceptualize a place that is sustainable and has the capacity to respond to the needs of all communities. The notions of reappropriation, reuse and the search for dignified housing solutions have been the main threads of my work.

What will be the future of the modern inclusive city ?

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