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The Rifat Chadirji Prize 2017: Rebuilding Iraq's Liberated Areas: Mosul's Housing

Relatore: Prof. Lucia Ceccherini Nelli
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Inquadramento: A post liberation outlook (excerpt from the Brief)

"Mosul witnessed further deterioration of conditions after Daesh occupation and allied air strikes, facilities for education, healthcare, water, sanitation, electricity, and communications services were damaged or severely restricted by Daesh. It is estimated that between 50 and 75 per cent of the city's governmental buildings are destroyed... The impending housing crisis will put further strain on the city as neighbourhoods are freed and internally displaced persons (IDP's) or refugees return home- albeit to nothing but complete desolation... Mosul city suffers from a chronic housing shortage. The deficit in housing units in Nineveh is estimated to have reached 172,000 units in mid-2016, with a 53,000 units' deficit in Mosul alone... The United Nations and the International Organisation of Migrants warned that the current number of internally displaced people from Mosul is estimated at over 500,000 (January 2017) and could reach 1.2 Million as the military operations continue..."

Obiettivi: response, program and location (excerpt from the Brief)

"Participants are asked to propose a solution for the Mosul's upcoming housing crisis, which will affect the city as more neighbourhoods will be freed and internally displaced persons and refugees will start to return.

Design a prototype for affordable housing for the post-Daesh Mosul, which can be easily replicated with the objective of increasing the capacity of housing in the city and providing a practical and inspiring solution for returnee... The prototype should be flexible enough to adapt to various sizes with different inhabitant capacity requirements. The designs should also be adaptable, allowing adjustments to be made in order to suit different residential capacity requirements. It is required to provide a detailed scheme of the Prototype and the principle of their arrangement/stacking in large groups."

Metodologia e contenuto: "What is the city but the people?"

The project keyword for developing a prototype for Mosul's reconstruction is sustainable realism. In the development of the project particular emphasis has been given to flexibility (as per the Brief) and social participation. The dichotomy between the needs of planners (planning, control and organization to avoid the sprawling growth of informal settlements) and those of residents (customizing their dwellings) is overcome thanks to the application of a very basic concept: the unfinished construction.

Historically (in the Mediterranean and Arab Regions) dwellings have been built according to the family needs and enlarged when the need of more space arose. The tendency of contemporary urban planning is to be overplanned and sometimes ideological, following statistics, trends, fluxes and often disregarding the notion that urban phenomenology is more complex and next to architectural forms it's important to consider the invisible network of relationships, processes and desires of real people living in real places.

Flexibility is granted using simple modules, easy to build with local materials, labour and know-how, whose numerous possible aggregations grant wide visual variety of types and sizes. Hence the proposal to have two separate "layers": the general "finished" layout, responding to the need of governance and

planning, and the unfinished one, customizable in a later time by the residents or left as it is: a simple open loggia.

Conclusioni:

The aftermath of an armed conflict is always complex: an immediate solution for dwellings is asked, but attention to further developments is also an inescapable necessity. Given the brief and the topic, and in respect to the traditional architectural characteristics of privacy and modesty (being Privacy, Modesty and Hospitality the milestones of Islamic Architecture), the focus is on the organization and layout, therefore the proposed project is sober, functional, and realistic, with little room for frills and fancies, yet considering features taken and reinterpreted from local tradition, but most of all, the call of the project is for social sustainability, in attempt to involve people granting them the possibility of active participation in the process of rebuilding their own lives.

Bibliografia

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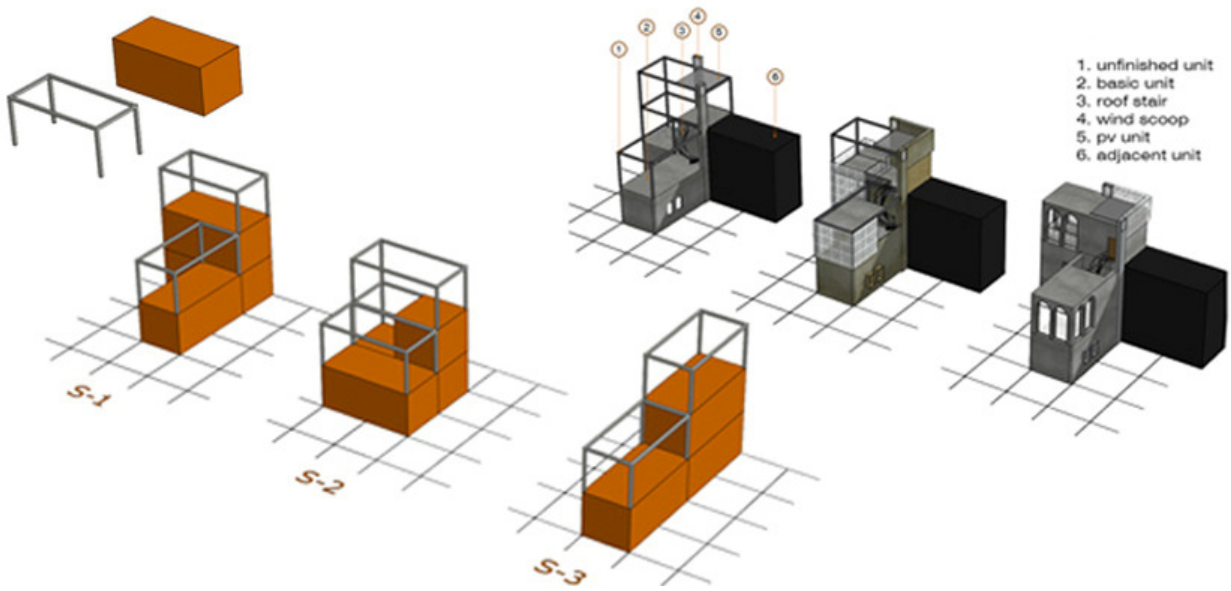


Fig.1 The basic modular aggregation and possible "finished" solutions of the same layout

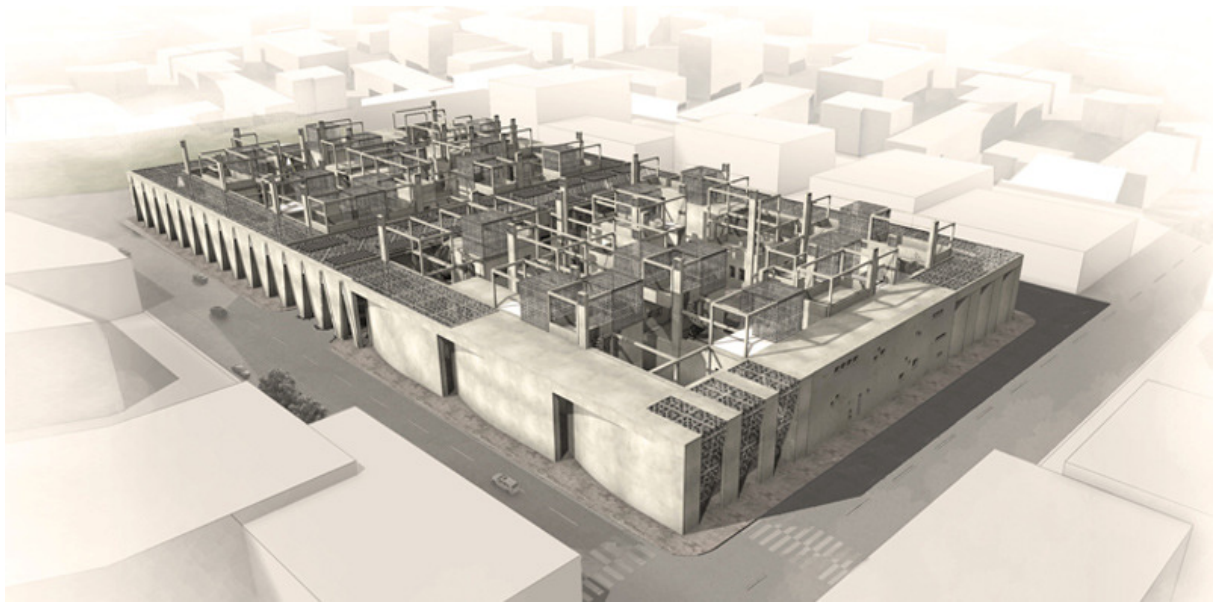


Fig.2 Bird's eye view of one possible compound (apartments' basic aggregation)



Fig.3 Street view of courtyard houses compound