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la casa dei rifugiati - house of refugees - spatial densification in the Mediterranean context

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Abstract

Deutsche Kurzzusammenfassung

la casa dei rifugiati - Haus der Flüchtlinge - räumliche Verdichtung in dem mediterranen Kontext

Diese Arbeit befasst sich mit dem Thema eines Aufenthaltsortes für Flüchtlinge im Kontext der Insel Lampedusa. Der Fokus liegt hierbei auf der speziellen Lage der kleinen italienischen Insel und auf ihrer Rolle in der Einwanderungswelle des letzten Jahrzehntes. Das vorgeschlagene Projekt, das in Anbetracht der Größe der Insel die urbane Gestaltung relativ stark beeinflusst, stellt eine architektonische Aufgabe dar, die eine Auseinandersetzung mit dem Thema der räumlichen Verdichtung in der kontemporären mediterranen Bauweise erlaubt. Als Ergebnis entsteht ein Konzept, das stark auf die Synergie zwischen Architektur und Städtebau beruht, und generell die Themen Innen- und Außenraum, Haupt- und Nebenplatz, öffentlicher und privater Raum untersucht. Die Bauaufgabe, die durch die spezifische Nutzungsart des Gebäudes, sowie durch seine Auswirkung auf die Umgebung bestimmt wird, wird mit einer bewussten architektonischen Sprache aufgegriffen.

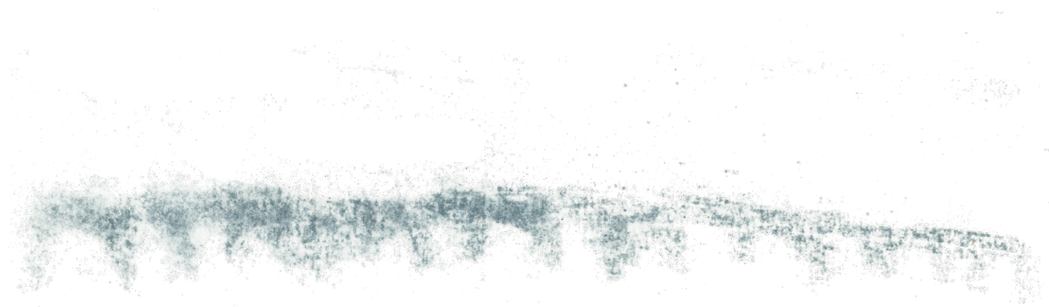
English Summary

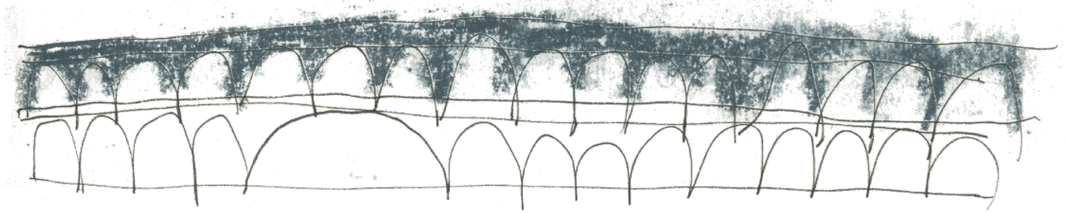
la casa dei rifugiati - house of refugees - spatial densification in the Mediterranean context

The present thesis discusses the topic of a refugee residence in the context of the island of Lampedusa, with a focus on the special role the small Italian island has played in the migration process of the past decade. The proposed project – which, regarding the size of the island has a relatively strong impact on the urban design thereof – is based on an architectural task that allows the exploration of spatial densification in the context of contemporary Mediterranean architecture. As a result, a concept that is based on the synergy between architecture and urban development emerges and the issues of interior and exterior space, main and secondary space, private and public space are investigated. The design task, which is defined by the specific purpose of the facility and its impact on its surroundings is being addressed with a conscious architectural language.

LA CASA DEI RIFUGIATI - HOUSE OF REFUGEES

SPATIAL DENSIFICATION IN THE MEDITERRANEAN CONTEXT





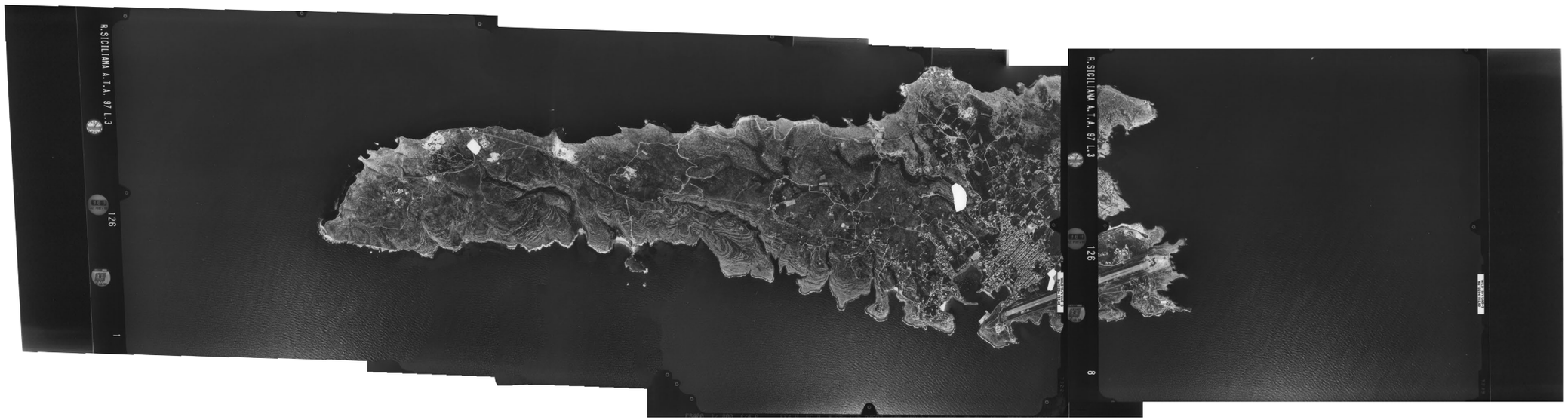


Fig.0.02 Lampedusa aerial shots, 1997

‹ Fig.0.01 "Arcades"

Content

Fig. 0.03 The Raft of the Medusa, Théodore Géricault 1818 - 1819

"Medusa's Raft"

And the world around us is complicated.
Built on fire and blood, loquacious.
It does not have time because it's making plans.
It wants to heal its own wounds by inflicting wounds.

A stream of migrants from the Levant countries, a river of lamentation.
smuggled through the trail of confusion.
A flash of hearts of diamond, a rush to the horizon.
Faces for rent. Souls for renovation.
Conscience hanging on the bell, there is no electricity.
Lessons of shame at a government meeting.
Phono without sound, video without view.
The pigeon is searching for land.
A flood under it, a ruined biotope.
Concrete, blood and a victorious display. Bird, fly high!
Where to? To a place where the eye and glass do not reach.
All this gold is evil.
Thousands of hundreds. Legions of millions.
Beings without voice. People without a home.

South of Lampedusa
A boat is drifting full of people whose world has turned into ruins.
They float in the midst of a storm from the land of despair
And the world watches, trusting God's forgiveness.
South of Lampedusa
A deranged boat is drifting, Medusa's Raft.
That world was too big, this world is too small.
The silent stars are looking. The naked rocks are listening.

Sleeping in the hell under the deck, in their ears the sounds of cannonade.
Falling. This ship is controlled by the devil.
This gentleman and ruler at the edge of the world
Simple satanic emotions, the patron of wolf packs.
We count the world in ducats, we have a priest and an executioner.
We have a nice smell in our cars.
When we have a running nose, we take a pill.
It seems we have an easy life, but our thoughts are furious.
So what are those claims about? We pay an honest salary to the executioner
In return, we have the latest version

Of ourselves. Look at the sign on the tree.
At the trace on the soil. The bird will guide you in the sky.
Look at the trail ahead, look into the bottomless well.
From Lampedusa to the south.

"Medusa's Raft", Piotr Górny 2017[1]

Fig. 0.04 Lampedusa, Nothern coast

In 2011, the public in Europe was shocked by the events that took place on the Mediterranean Sea. This was also the year when the - outside of the borders of Italy - little known island of Lampedusa gained symbolic significance. The following years changed the view on migration from outside of Europe, forcing politicians and public in general to deal with the issue. The most shocking events however happened in 2012 and public discourse took a very clear course. Migration became the biggest topic in Europe after the economic crisis of 2008.

The stories of people living in Lampedusa about checking the ground underneath their cars in the morning before leaving to work, being afraid someone might still be sleeping underneath were very shocking. But a walk around the coast of the island, and even only brief looks around the many ruins of the old military defence buildings revealed the truth of those testimonies. It was the story of the winter of 2011 when the little island with a population of some 6,000 people had to host more than 12,000 refugees.

But this was only the beginning: over the years that followed, the perception of Lampedusa as an Italian holiday paradise changed to one as the symbol of the migration situation in Europe. Citizens and local politicians had to take a clear stand. But just like Europe as a whole – they did not. Being in the middle of a large political discourse, with the enormous numbers of people trying to arrive safely with many dying over the attempt, and amidst their own struggles as a tiny community cut from mainland Italy, Lampedusa found itself in a very complicated situation. Of course, there are many testimonies of the citizens being extremely helpful and welcoming, or even heroic in their actions: especially regarding the political atmosphere in Italy and Europe as a whole over the past years, Lampedusa stood out. It is for a good reason that Lampedusa got nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize (in 2011, 2014 and 2016 along with the Greek island of Lesbos); but equally significant are also the words of local priest Mimmo Zambito: "*A Nobel prize should be given to those who have a vision for the future. The island is only reacting decently to a tragic state of things.*"[2]

The offices of the local government are hosted in a building form the 1950s (built on the ruins of a 19th century structure)[3]. Visiting Lampedusa in April 2014, I was welcomed by co-workers of the then still governing Mayor Giuseppina Nicolini. Unfortunately, at the time she was in Palermo, Sicily – fighting for Lampedusa to ensure that it is not being forgotten. However, the people I met there were very friendly and ready to answer every single question I had about the current situation of the island. But from the day I spent in the offices of "Comune di Lampedusa e Linosa" I remember one history in particular. One of the officials speaking perfect English explained to me the complexity of life on the island from his very personal perspective. Having worked a bigger part of his life for the American military, which as a part of the *LORAN-C* navigation system occupied a massive military structure in Lampedusa, he witnessed the complicated history of the island at the turn of 20th and 21st century.

In 1986, Libya fired two Scuds missiles, which crossed over the island causing no damages, however, Lampedusa found itself in the middle of the NATO – Libya conflict. In 1993, the navigation system was no longer needed by the US Army and the allied NATO countries, so the military buildings were transferred to the Italian Army, shortly afterwards falling into oblivion. As a result, my interview partner lost his job and had to witness how the place he had spent so many years at, turned into ruins over the years.

In his very emotional testimony he went as far as stating that for the last 20 years he had not visited the part of Lampedusa where the former US buildings were located, saying that it would break his heart seeing the once great structures now falling apart; the stories he had heard from friends were already more than he could handle. A quick glance at the map of the 20 km² island, or a simple walk from one end to another of the approximately 10km long isle explains the power of this statement.

And the refugees? – I try to ask him while he is handing me all the plans and data he can find on the office computer. He states that the administration is doing all they can, but the political context is very complicated, possibly too complicated for a little forgotten island on the Mediterranean Sea.

Fig. 0.05 Lampedusa "Ship Cemetary", 2014

Giuseppina Maria Nicolini – the mayor of the *comune di Lampedusa e Linosa*, in office from May 2012 on became a symbol. The chief of the community of approximately 6,000 people travelled the world, reporting on the hard conditions of refugees and fighting for new regulations – ones which would see Europe at unity, ones which would not leave places like Lampedusa fighting on their own. She was awarded many important prizes (Olof Palme Prize, UNESCO recognition, Nobel Prize nomination), hosted at numerous important events (among others: dinner with former US president Barack Obama at the White House), and she also succeeded in bringing important people like Angelina Jolie or Pope Francis to the island[4].

On June 11, 2017 Nicolini was ousted from office, coming third in the local elections with just 908 votes, loosing against Salvatore Martello – former mayor of the community, hotel owner and fisher. Much has changed over the years in Europe, however, still no agreements have been reached; France and Austria keep investing enormous amounts into keeping migrants in Italy and consequently, in Lampedusa nothing has changed.

The new mayor, although still talking about the need of hospitality (being a fisherman he was already helping people at sea in the 90s), won the elections focusing on local problems such as insufficient health care, lack of drinkable water, waste management, or employment opportunities.

"*We need to distinguish between migration policy and the management of both Lampedusa and Linosa. We have some serious problems, many of which are the same problems that were there when I was mayor for the first time.*" Martello explained[5].

The port of Lampedusa, located in the city, wakes up every weekday early in the morning. The ferry to Porto Empedocle, mainland Sicily, serviced by the company Siremar, leaves at 10:15. This ferry, being the most important connection with the outside world for the isle sets the rhythm of the day. For a few hours the port is full of people waiting for the entrance to open, fisherman loading fishes, trucks leaving heavy trailers on the boat, drivers honking to welcome each other...

1. The phenomenon of migration

Fig. 1.01 Jacob Lawrence. The migrants arrived in great numbers (panel 40 of 60). 1940–41

"No one shall be subjected to arbitrary arrest, detention or exile."[1]

United Nations: Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Article 4, Paris 10.12.1948

"1. Everyone has the right to seek and to enjoy in other countries asylum from persecution.
2. This right may not be invoked in the case of prosecutions genuinely arising from non-political crimes or from acts contrary to the purposes and principles of the United Nations. "[2]

United Nations: Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Article 14, Paris 10.12.1948

Migration, a term which can be defined by many definitions. According to the United Nation Encyclopedia, migration in an international view, means spatial mobility of the inhabitants of a country or region caused by natural disasters, wars, violent social changes or natural relocations from cities to cities, from villages to villages, from villages to cities, and from towns to villages, as well as in the search of work from countries to countries.[3]

Migration can be also defined as a social process. First of all, it is usually a mass phenomenon, in the meaning that a significant number of people with varying degrees of internal integration participates in it. Secondly, migration almost always expresses dissatisfaction and protest towards the existing socio—economic conditions. Thirdly, the individuals and collectives involved in the migration are trying above all changing their situation which broth them in the first place to the decision of relocation.[4]

Historical Context

"There is much about earlier migration crises that today's European policymakers might profitably recall."[5] Colin Bundy

Migration has always been an integral part of human history. It is needless to point out the fact that the homo sapiens populated the Earth by migrating. More relevant is perhaps the ancient Greek and ancient Egyptian history, which gives us examples of sanctuary seekers in holy places who could not be harmed without bringing about divine retribution. These rules were first codified in law by King Ethelbert of Kent (part of today's England) around 600 AD and were later on adopted by other European countries.[6]

Later in history, the Black Death resulted in the establishment of quarantines in Europe. The word itself originates from the venetian dialect for the Italian term *quaranta giorni* (forty days): due to the suspicion of diseases sailors might carry, they were isolated for a period of time before being allowed to enter the city. Between 1348 and 1359, the Black Death caused the death of an estimated 30% of Europe's population.[7] These tragic events lead to the establishment of the world's first lazaretto in 1403.

Lazzaretto
"historical/ An isolated hospital for people with infectious diseases, especially leprosy or plague."[8]

The island today known as *Lazzaretto Vecchio* – (previously known as *Santa Maria di Nazareth* – named after the abbey which was later on transformed into the Lazzaretto) is a part of the Venetian Lagoon and is located behind *Lido di Venezia*, one of the outer isles, which parts the lagoon from the Adriatic Sea and is seen as a protector of the capital of the Venetian republic – was chosen as an exile for sick people and those suspected of infectious diseases. Later, Venice chose another island for the *Lazzaretto Nuovo*. First the little church of *San Bartolomeo* was built on the island, which later became a place of storage for goods suspected of transmitting diseases, and finally was turned into the new Lazzaretto.
The connection between the two complexes can be seen in their prior sacral function.[9] The role of the church in European history, and directly related to that, the work of religious orders, define the functioning of places of exile and help, even nowadays. By this logic, the archetype of places of refuge are defined by monasteries. In the history of migration, Venice once again played a very important role in 1516, when on the island *Ghetto Nuovo*, where the local ironworks were located (allegedly, the later commonly used word ghetto comes from the word describing the ironworks in this part of the city), the world's first ghetto in the world was created, where Venetian Jews gained the right of settlement. The gates to

Fig. 1.02 Francesco Guardi, The Island of Lazzaretto Vecchio, Venice

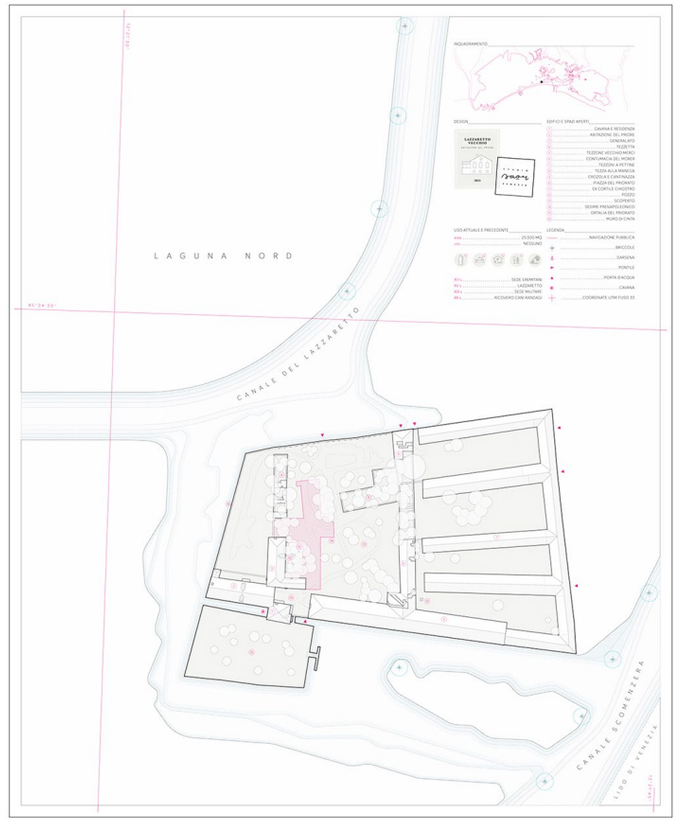


Fig. 1.03 Lazzaretto Vecchio, Venice

Fig. 1.04 British troops pass Belgian refugees on the Brussels-Louvain road, 12 May 1940.

this part of Venice remained closed until 1797, when Napoleon Bonaparte conquered and dissolved the Republic of Venice.[10]

The nineteenth century with its modern methods of transportation made mass migration possible. Migration until the late 19th and early 20th century happened largely uncontrolled. At this point of history, European countries as well as the USA started introducing controls on who might enter their territories, on what terms and what right they could have. The start of the First World War and the Russian Revolution in 1917 were events that created the first refugee crisis in Europe and accelerated this whole process. Between the years 1914-1922, five million people became refugees. The inter-war years brought about the creation of the position of the *United Nation High Commissioner for Refugees* and the issuance of the *Nansen passport* (refugee passport). Borders, in the sense we know them today, were established in the year 1918.[11]

The tragic events of World War II and its aftermath resulted in unprecedented migration on a global scale. Wars, political conflicts, rapid migration inside and from outside of Europe defined the upcoming century. This is when the issue became a clear task and a recognized problem. The number of people affected by this problem make it not only a political and sociological topic, but also one for the architects and city planners.

Fig. 1.05 Migrants Serie, Stefano Bosis, 2014

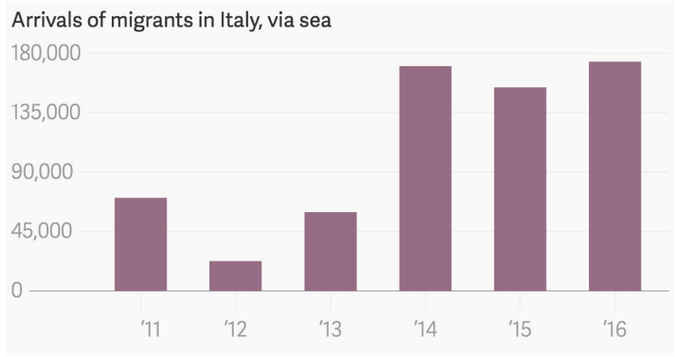


Fig. 1.06 Arrivals of migrants in Italy, via sea

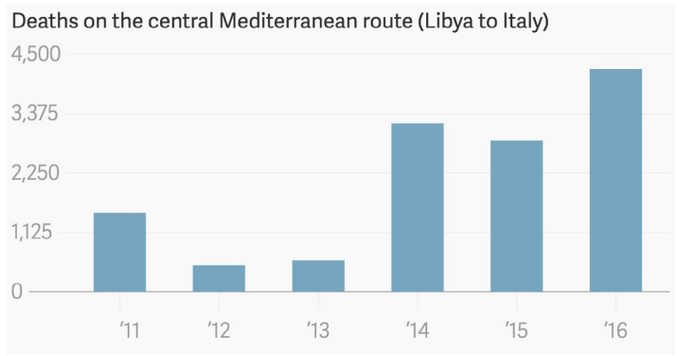


Fig. 1.07 Deaths on the central Mediterreanean route (Libya to Italy)

In December 2010, the Arab Spring began in Tunisia, rapidly spreading across the Arab world. It became the cause of death to thousands of people, with millions forced to leave their homes. Different regimes reacted in different ways: Tunisia and Egypt reacted in a relatively limited way, in Libya and Syria however violent conflict evolved. By mid-2012 the large wave of migration was set in motion.

Reacting to the Arab Spring, European politicians started showing panic, fearing that migrants would cross the Mediterranean Sea to arrive in Europe in huge numbers; the Italian government warned of an exodus of "biblical proportions".

Lampedusa, located only 113 km off the Tunisian coast suddenly found itself in the middle of the migration crisis. The influx of people to the little isle kept growing due to the reduced police control during the revolution in Tunisia. The discussion on the topic only became prevalent across Europe at this point, in spite of the fact that Lampedusa was not unfamiliar with this process, as Southern European countries had already introduced visas for North Africans around 1991, which increased the number of illegal entrants on the island.[12]

The statistics were overwhelming: between 1997 and 2017 an estimated 400,000 people crossed the Mediterranean Sea to arrive on Lampedusa, at least 15,000 losing their lives on the way.[13]

Until 2009, Italy actually had an excellent reception system in place: the authorities had a solid model of cooperation between central and local administrations. In 2009 the Italian government signed a bilateral agreement with Libya, halting mass migration over sea for a while. Hoping for the success of the agreement, the reception capacities were downsized. As a result of this decision however, local authorities in Lampedusa faced increasing problems in managing the crisis from 2011 on, as their capacities were very limited.

After a refurbishment in 2010, Lampedusa's reception center operated with a capacity of 800 beds. It being located in former US army barracks, the ventilation problems were severe. In 2011,

Fig. 1.08 Lampedusa reception centre fire, 2011

Fig. 1.09 Lampedusa ship wrack, 2014

when every day some 500 people arrived at the coast of the isle, at one point the overall presence reached 8,000 migrants, resulting in an overload of the temporarily increased capacity of 2,800 people. This in turn caused social turbulences leading to the burn down of the center as an outcome of a riot.

To make things worse, due to its peculiar infrastructure and natural conditions, Lampedusa has no natural water resources of drinking water. Water is partially transported by ships from Sicily and partially provided through distillation by a salt water treatment plant. Furthermore, the lack of a hospitals and the availability of only one single helicopter for the whole region of Sicily causes great difficulties and makes it almost impossible to host large numbers of refugees.[14]

Yet – in spite of the fact that media outlets have stopped covering the problems of Lampedusa – the numbers are still increasing, with the island fighting for its survival every day.

Fig. 1.10 A boat carrying refugees and migrants, seen from a rescue vessel, 2011

Fig. 1.11 Lampedusa reception centre, 2014

2. Genius Loci

Fig. 2.01 Lampedusa, view towards the city, 2014

"Cities are in reality great camps of the living and the dead where many elements remain like signals, symbols, cautions. When the holiday is over, what remains of the architecture is scarred, and the sand consumes the street again" Aldo Rossi[1]

History

Lampadusa, Lapadusa, Lopedosa, Lipadusa, Lipidusa, Lampadosa, Lampidosa, Lanbedusa, Lopadosa – these are all the names, the island known today as Lampedusa held over the centuries. Historians are disputing the origin of the name. According to one theory, it derives from the Greek word *λαμπάς* (*lampás*), which means torch: a name that might have been given to the island due to the lights on the island far away from the mainland coasts, serving as orientation for the sailors. Another theory suggests that it derives from *λέπας* (*lépas*), meaning rock, which describes the landscape of the island. One can also find historians suggesting the name originates from the Italian word *lampo*, meaning lightning. This name derives from the island's volcanic features, the once black colour of the coast and the intensive and spectacular lightings observed from the boat decks.[2]

According to ancient sources, the island of Lampedusa was inhabited by Greek, Roman, Phoenician and Arab colonies. During archaeological excavations, traces of Neolithic and Roman settlements were found.
Lampedusa and the surrounding islands were always inhabited by rather poor people. What made the living conditions difficult was on the one hand the lack of a drinking water, and the presence of *Saracen pirates* on the other. The medieval history of the island is characterized by only sporadic appearances by sailors and pirates, leaving Lampedusa practically uninhabited between the 12th and mid-19th century.

Ferdinand IV (*Ferdinand I of the Two Sicilies*) tried to colonize the island in the mid-18th century, but due to the plague, this plan failed just after a few years.
In the early 19th century, Salvatore Gatt, a Maltese merchant founded an agricultural community on the island: in 1810 Gatt leased the island to Alexander Fernandez of the *Army Commissariat in the Mediterranean*, who settled there three or four hundred people and started the construction of the first castle, at the place where four ancient towers, then already in poor condition stood. This attempt – just like several others before – failed. According to contemporary records, when Lampedusa was visited by sailors in the 1820s, nothing awaited them but an empty isle with some Maltese farmers living in caves.

The Bourbon Government attempted to colonize Lampedusa again in 1843, when Captain Sanvisente took the island in possession in the name of the King of the Two Sicilies and with the consent of the *Princes of Lampedusa* (minor title used by the Sicilian nobility). According to his own notes, in 1847 the number of inhabitants was around 700 people, mostly natives of different parts of Sicily.

In 1860 Giuseppe Garibaldi conquered the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies and one year later Lapmedusa also fell and became a part of the Kingdom of Italy.
A few years later, in 1872 the Italian Government created a colony of people sentenced to house arrest on the island, which existed until 1940.
The Italian census of 1881 shows a population of 1180 inhabitants.[3]

Fig. 2.02 Lampedusa, historical map from 1890

Fig. 2.03 Lampedusa, 1910

Geography

Lampedusa, the southernmost point of the Republic of Italy, is politically and administratively a part of Europe, but geologically a part of Africa (the sea between the two is no deeper than 120 meters). With a size of approximately 20km^2 and 5.871 citizens it is the biggest of the Pelagian Islands (from the Greek *πέλαγος*, *[pélagos]* meaning "open sea"). The other islands are Linosa (433 inhabitants) and Lampione (uninhabited). Lampedusa is a part of the Sicilian *Comune di Agrigento* (province of Agrigento). Most natives live in the only city, also called Lampedusa, colloquially called by the locals *paese* (village).

From the coasts of Lampedusa, on a clear day one is only able to see Lampione (in a distance of 18 km). Linosa, which is approximately 45 km off the coast of Lampedusa can hardly be spotted, as usually the horizon is limiting the view.
The coast of Tunisia at a distance of 110 km is the closest mainland, while Malta (90 km) and Sicily (200km) are the closest big islands.[4]

Lampedusa is mostly composed of Limestone. Comparisons with similar sequences in Sicily and Malta indicate that the genesis of Lampedusa carbonates can be dated to the late Tortonian-early Messinian age. Geologically, the island consists of a tilted block of limestone of a white to creamy-yellow soft colour. The highest point is in the North-Western side with an attitude of 133 m a.s.l. (*Albero Sole*). Its lowest point is on the South-Eastern coast.[5]

The flora of the isle is very similar to that of North Africa. Even though the Bourbon colonization and the attempt to build an agricultural society destroyed the initial flora, Lampedusa is still hosting many plants which cannot be found in other parts of Italy. Due to this fact, a big part of the island and coast was taken under protection by the establishment of the *Riserva naturale orientata Isola di Lampedusa* (Lampedusa's nature reservoir) in 1995.[6]

Lampedusa's agriculture is very fragmented, and – due to the challenging climate, the lack of water and natural protection from wind – insignificant for the local economy. Its role is also decreased by the competition on land use with tourism, the sector, which provides jobs to the bigger part of the population (with another significant proportion being employed in the fishing industry). However, thanks to a few elderly farmers who still farm their own lands, one can find several olive plantations on the island.[7]

The climate of Lampedusa surprises mostly by the little temperature difference between day and night. The island has a semi-arid-climate: the winters are very mild with moderate rainfalls, while summers are hot, dry and humid. Due to the shallow sea around the isle, the water temperatures are relatively high.[8]

Fig. 2.04 Lampedusa on the map of Europe and North Africa

Fig. 2.05 Lampedusa landscape, 2014

Fig. 2.06 Lampedusa´s urban infrastructure

Lampedusa, just like Italy itself is characterized by a relatively high density of population (Italy - 201 inhabitants/km², Sicily – 196 inhabitants/km²,[9] Lampedusa 260.6 inhabitants/km²)[10]. Due to the specific historical developments, the majority of the citizens nowadays live in the city of Lampedusa, which is located in the South-Eastern part of the island.
Due to the low geographical attitude, as well as a natural protection by the biggest bay on the isle, this was historically the easiest and most logical location for the harbour.

It was *Comandante Bernardo Sanvisente*, who was commissioned with the task of the colonization of Lampedusa in 1843, who started building the city, the chessboard structure of which is still recognizable until today. Over the last two decades, an impoverishment of the complex settlement evolution could be observed. The recent urban sprawl caused the rise of a contrast to the geometric order, but a close look at the architectural and urban morphology still reveals the rich history of the settlement of Lampedusa.[11]
Sanvisente chose the location for the administrative centre of the isle to be built on the ruins of an ancient castle nearby the present-day port, which clearly suggests that this location played an important role ever since humans set foot on Lampedusa.

Taking a walk through the centre of the city of Lampedusa reveals the fascinating past of the island. The structure planned in the mid-18th century functions practically untouched until present times, however, the diversity of materials and styles reveal a complex history of city development. Recent history of Italian architecture can be detected in the structures. Due to the lack of representative architecture, a feeling of simplicity and manifestations of a utilitarian approach are the dominant features.
The main street, *via Roma*, cuts across the entire city from the port till the outskirts. Only recently was the part of the street close to the port closed for traffic, thus allowing the emergence of modern pedestrian area.
The rectangular structure of the city is only interrupted a few times

Fig. 2.07 Port of Lampedusa, 2014

in order to create piazzas, that are typical features of Italian urban areas. However, due to the lack of urban development in the middle Ages, the feeling of these spaces on Lampedusa is totally different to that in the rest of Italy. The geometrical structure of the city is also broken by the differing heights of the buildings, although a maximum of three floors is rarely exceeded.
Leaving the centre, which today is heavily affected by tourism, a quieter life of the citizens appears. The streets are planned narrower, and the sidewalks in front of the houses are often used as a part of the house, almost like terraces or gardens of their own.

The port has a special importance in the city structure. The importance of the port started increasing in the mid-nineteenth century with the increasing role of fishing industry. Around the natural bay, small workshops and warehouses for processing and storing fish were build. Parts of buildings from this time are still visible in the part of the city called *Porto Vecchio* (old port). In recent times, the port has undergone modernization. The municipal administration also built a safety port located at *cala Pisana* for the case should docking be impossible due to weather conditions.

During World War II and in the political events of the post war years, Lampedusa became an important place for both radio communication and monitoring transit at the Mediterranean Sea. The state, driven by the cold war power game, launched two investments which have changed the dynamics of the island throughout the following decades: first the power plant in 1951 and later, in 1968 the airport. Both of these developments – first used by the Italians, and later by American and other NATO countries' armies – have changed the meaning and significance of Lampedusa on the world map. Throughout the years, these investments became very important factors in the rise of commercial tourism on the island. Of course, the rapidly transforming connections of the citizens with the outside world have also broadened their cultural and economic horizons. In terms of urban development, the structure of the island has changed: firstly, a large area to the South-East of the city was closed – to get a picture of the impact: the air belt of the closed area has a length of approximately 2km on an island the two outermost points of which are separated by no more than approximately 11km. Secondly, the change in the economic developments has also resulted in the rapid growth of new constructions: new settlements were built around the isle, scattered in manner that has no relationship to the Bourbon city order.

The urban planning process in small communities like Lampedusa that have a rich historical development is very difficult. Also, the specific conditions in Italy play a great role. Until the 1990s Lampedusa had a very unclear urban development plan, as a result of which many residential areas were erected all around the island, most of which are closed and introverted ones. The idea of a common urban space as present in the city of Lampedusa thus got lost around the island.[12]

Fig. 2.08 Lampedusa, urban structure, 2014

3. Spatial densification in the Mediterranean context

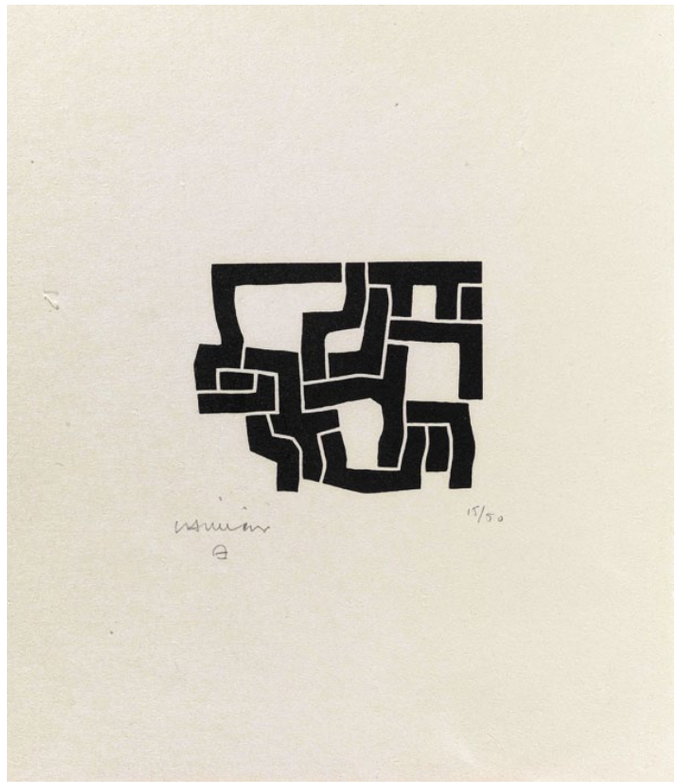


Fig. 3.01 Eduardo Chillida, "Jorge Guillén: Más Allá", 1973

Indisputably, the Mediterranean culture has played a significant role in the development of European and North African architecture. The rich history of the region, its influence on the surrounding countries, its role in the development of historical events, as well as all the different cultures it came in contact with lend the architecture of the region a uniqueness, which can still be observed in today's developments as well.
The specific climate-related requirements, which have influenced the region's evolution in the first place still dictate the rules of the Mediterranean building industry and pose a challenge in contemporary Southern architecture.
The morphology of the South European and North African cities is characterised by very complex structures, which usually follow a very clear logic and at the same time allow for a fascinating visual experience.

Due to the geographical scope of the Mediterranean region, its political, historical and religious variety and the diverse climate conditions, it is difficult to talk about a uniform Mediterranean architecture, however common characteristics can be found in many aspects.

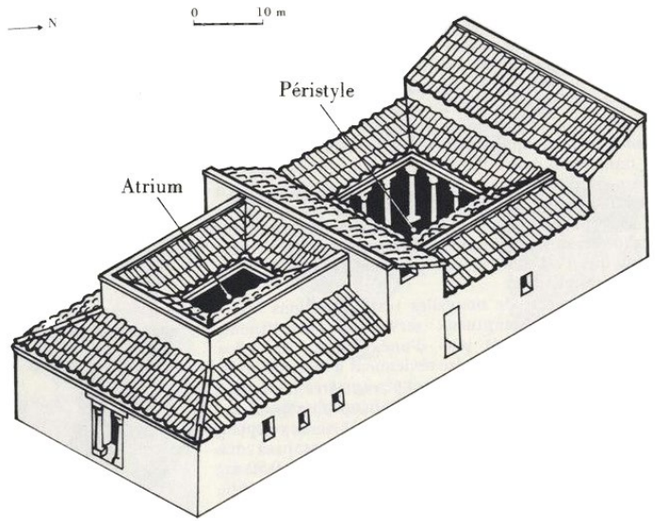


Fig. 3.02 Roman domus

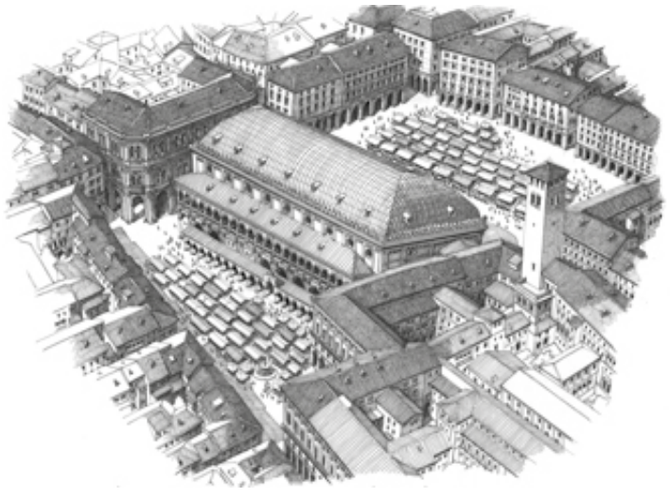


Fig. 3.03 Padova, Palazzo della Regione

The so called *domus* of ancient Roman times is a widely known form of housing, mostly occupied by the upper classes. Even today, it represents an archetype for the idea of housing: a place of living, a place of business and a religious centre for worship.
Two features make it especially interesting: first, the *domus* did not face the streets, it was very rare that these houses had outside-facing windows. Second, the whole structure was organized around a central point - the atrium. The primary reasons for this structure in ancient Rome were safety concerns, the objective of ensuring privacy, as well as climate conditions. Furthermore, the atrium also served as the centre of the social and political life in the house.[1]

A similar typology can be found in the traditional Islamic housing architecture: orientation towards the courtyard, external walls with few and little openings. The courtyard – connected with religious functions – played a central role, and the climate conditions were also very similar.[2]

The city and its urban structure represent the next interesting phenomenon in the Mediterranean.
In his book *"The Architecture of the City"*, Aldo Rossi defines architecture as a man-made object and a construction of urban artefacts. He describes urban artefacts as unique places of the city, characterised by their own form and history, which withstand the passing of time. As an example, he points out the *Palazzo della Regione in Padua* (Northern Italy), a building that represents rich historical value, one that has shaped the city, despite the different functions it had fulfilled throughout the centuries. It is an excellent example of architecture affected by time and space, as well as events, which have all defined its form and significance.[3]
Palazzo della Regione stands in the middle of a fascinating urban space in the heart of Padua. It separates the *Piazza delle Erbe* from the *Piazza dei Frutti*, and is closely set to the *Piazza dei Signiori*, all of which are significant urban squares in Padua. The building represents an early example of a communal palace. The building has an unusual trapezoidal form set in the middle of a rectangular square, which this way is separated into two separate piazzas. The form of the building originates from the booths of the market which took, and even today take place at the squares. The booths were constructed as stone cells, forming the base of a hall (*il Salone*), where justice was dispensed. On the longer side, the hall was finished with arcades facing the markets.
The construction of this landmark building began in 1218-19. Later a variety of expansion works were carried out, mostly in the form of additional layers of arcades.
It is important to underline that the building in its structure represents an excellent example of a continuous connection between the outer and the inner space. Additionally, the continued reuse of previous structures is also a manifestation of the city´s own history.
Also, the parallel fulfilment of different functions in a single building was a new phenomenon in those times, one that was only recently rediscovered in urban planning.[4]
The thus created urban situation is a fascinating one, especially considering its richness, the transitions between interior and exterior, between the squares, as well as spacious and small spaces.

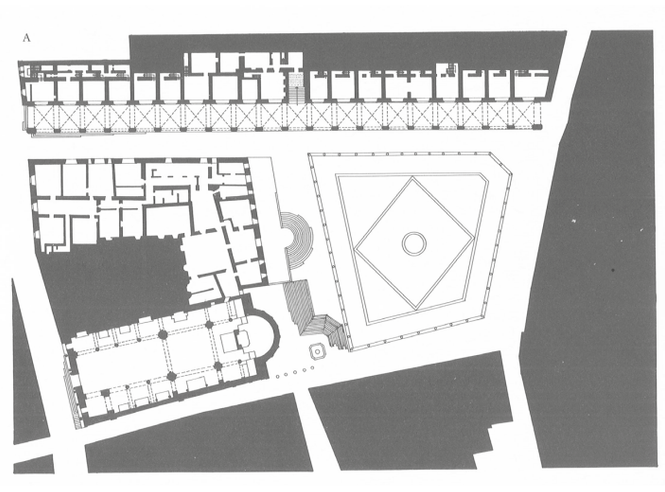


Fig. 3.04 Arezzo, Piazza Grande and its arcades

In the Middle Ages, arcades shaped the cities of Europe in a fundamental way. They originate from ancient times, with the first known examples in ancient Egypt and later on in the Hellenistic countries of the Middle East. The columned portico was not only used as a domestic or sacral porch, but also as a fragment of the urban agora wall (*stoa*). A direct predecessor of the medieval arcade can be found in Jerusalem, according to the early Medieval iconography of the city. The most likely reasons for this solution was the wish to extend retail space. The division of the urban wall became a common element of the city structure, adding a three dimensionality to the public space. A smooth connection was founded, which over the centuries served several different functions. Under the Southern climate conditions, it created a very functional protection from the weather, sun and rain, and it also created a layer of protection for the façade of the ground floor that prevented overheating as a result of direct sun exposure. The principle of arcades was later adapted from the public facilities and applied in private architecture, creating a connection between public and private spaces.
In the Mediterranean region, arcades play an important role in architecture even today.[5]

Applying a broader perspective of the Mediterranean context once again, another fascinating aspect of spatial densification arises. The typology of traditional Islamic cities, with a specific look on North Africa, raises the topic of privacy and conscious handling of the climate circumstances.
Most Muslim cities were strongly influenced by the social order and the culture of Islam. Due to this – with respect to the private communities and social groups – they developed in a more spontaneous and organic way: the need of the citizens dictated the expansion.
The central position was reserved for the mosque, which was surrounded by a multifunctional structure consisting of shops and markets connected with other civic and educational buildings and other religious and social structures. Together this created a

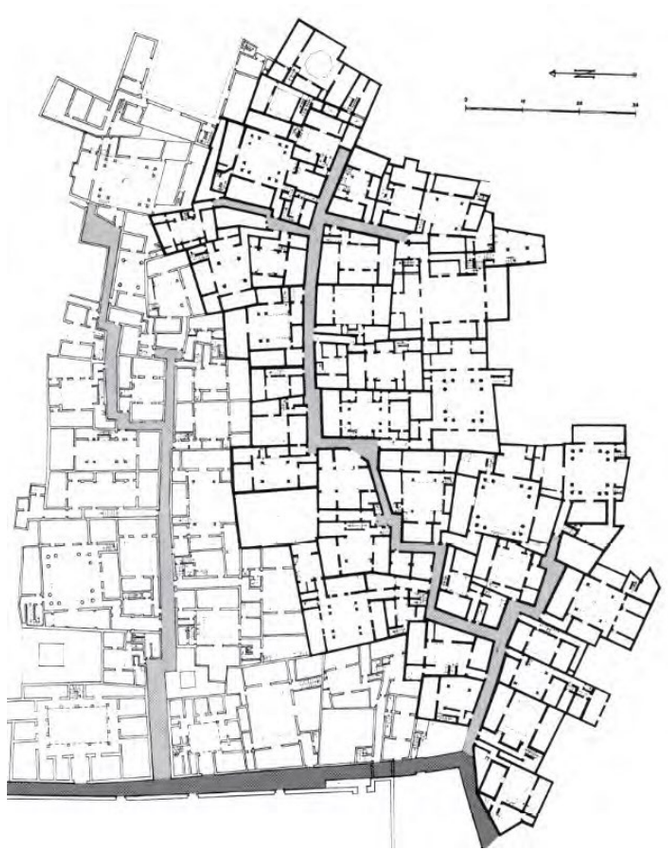


Fig. 3.05 A traditional residential cluster in Fez consisting of a variety of self contained courtyard houses and alleyway circulation.

massive mosque complex, where only the minaret and the large dome stood out from the roof surface. The central courtyard positioned in the complex became the most important public space of the city. Visually, the central mosque with its surroundings gives an impression of a uniform structure. A walk through this structure, all its gateways, passages, visual differences hidden in architectural details depending on the function, provide an exciting experience in a very diverse, yet homogeneous urban structure.
The remaining city parts were connected to the centre by wider communication roads. Between them, residential quarters were erected based on the fundamental rule of respect for others' privacy. Once the first building located its windows to face a particular direction, the other was not allowed to place the openings facing the same direction. This of course enhanced the organic development of those sites. Additionally, the house owners were able to expand their houses to the street as long they would leave a space under it allowing people to pass. This also made the street structure three dimensional and guaranteed additional cooling. Due to the limited space, the *mushrabiyas* (windows enclosed with carved wood for privacy and sun protection) were implemented.[6]

"Technically, modern architecture is in part the result of the contribution of Northern countries. But spiritually, it is the style of Mediterranean architecture that influences the new architecture. Modern architecture is a return to the pure and traditional forms of the Mediterranean. It is the victory of the Latin sea."[7] *Josep Lluis Sert*

Density

School in Vila Nova da Barquinha, Aires Mateus, 2009

Aires Mateus was commissioned with the task of building a school (*Escola Centro De Ciência Viva de Vila Nova da Barquinha*) in central Portugal in *Vila Nova da Barquinha*. The building was opened for public in 2009. *Vila Nova da Barquinha*, a suburb of a bigger city – the mid-19th century *Entroncamento* – is characterized by a very widely spread urban structure, typical for late 20th century structures. The construction plot has no connection with the city structure whatsoever, and thus the architects face the task of building a completely autonomous structure. The function inspires them to rebuild an urban space. Additionally, the different functions a school needs to fulfil serve as a good pretext to establishing various squares, a structure oriented completely towards the inside. Climate conditions and safety are also considered in the design. Overall, an impression of a small city structure emerges, a feeling that is intensified by the different heights of the rooftops. Disappointing in the project is the outside fence which surrounds the yard; the building itself gives an impression of safety, however as a result of this intervention the feeling disappears immediately.[8]

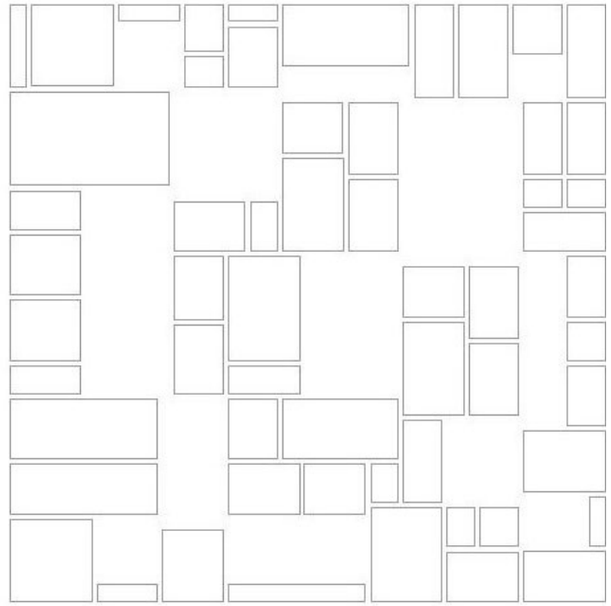
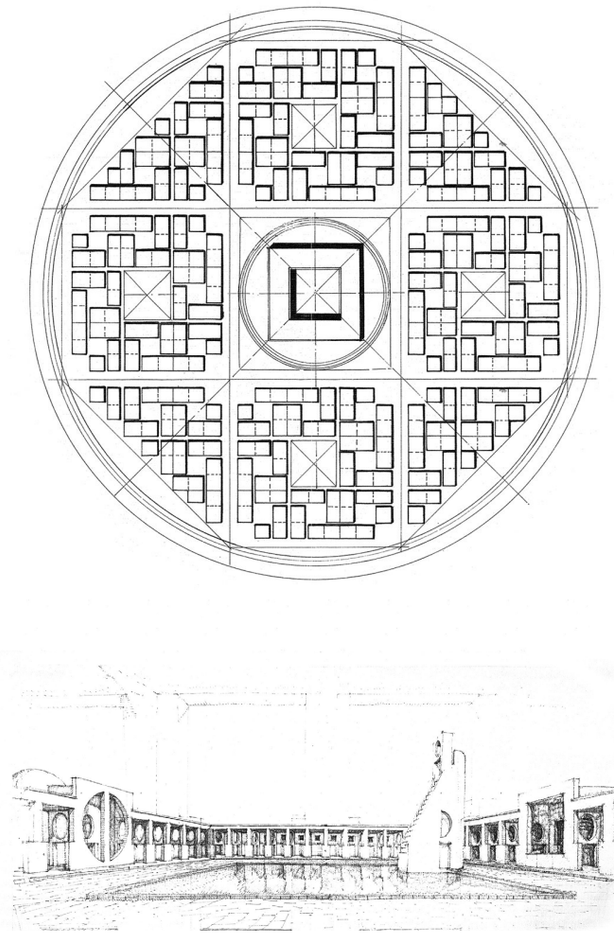


Fig. 3.06, 3.07, 3.08 School in Vila Nova da Barquinha, Aires Mateus

Houari Boumedienne Agricultural Village, Ricardo Bofill Taller de Arquitectura, 1980

Today, the *Houari Boumedienne agricultural village* project located in Algeria's Western district of *Abadla* stands as a forgotten symbol of a postmodern attempt of city planning. Bofill tried to develop an agricultural structure in a deserted area based on the Mediterranean and Arabic culture: a simplified system of piazzas, with a central square and dwellings organized in a circle around it. Privacy and ventilation were both factors taken into consideration. Also, the architectural expression, a modern reinterpretation of traditional details was supposed to guarantee an esthetical quality for the inhabitants. Unfortunately, the lack of trained workforce and a decision of cost cutting caused the city never to be fully built, and today the planned structure can barely be recognized.[9]



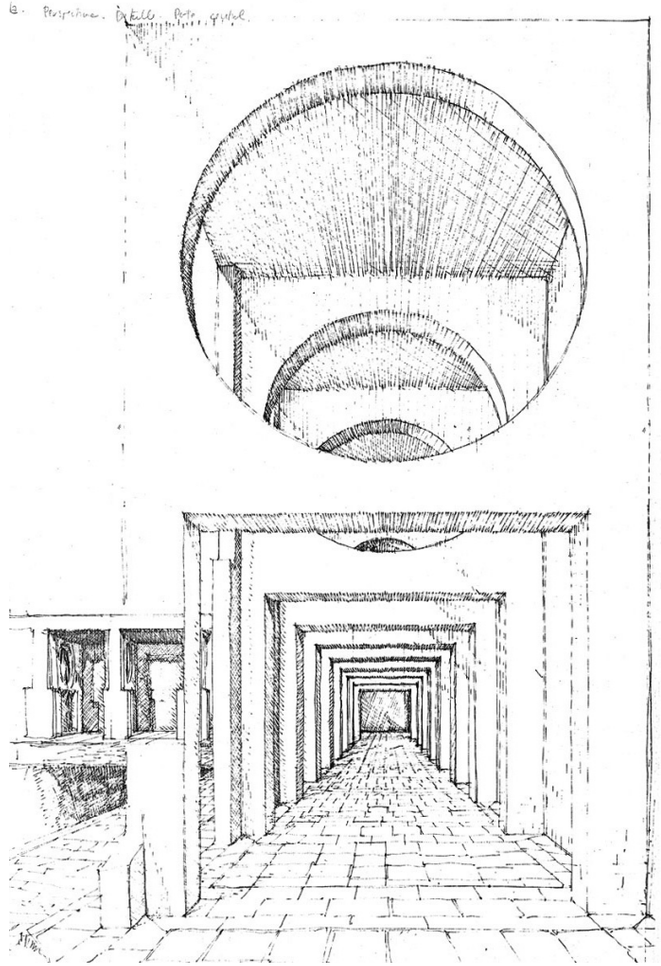
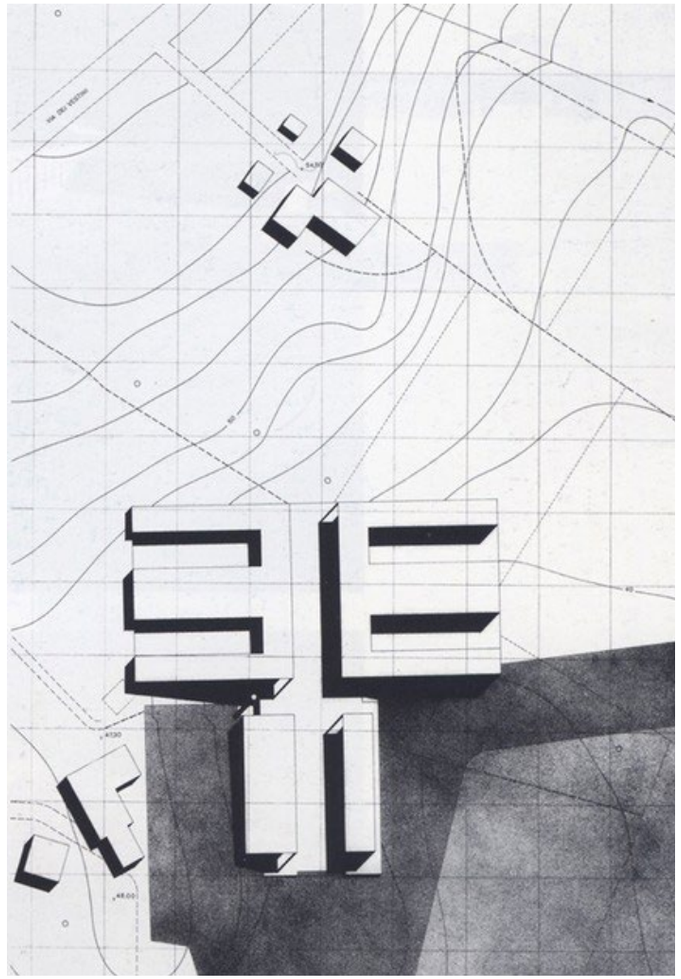


Fig. 3.09, 3.10, 3.11, 3.12 Houari Boumedienne Agricultural Village, Ricardo Bofill Taller de Arquitectura

Casa dello studente di Chieti, Giorgio Grassi and Antonio Monestiroli, 1979

In the 70's, the university city of *Chieti* located in Italy's *Abruzzo* region designated a plot to build a dormitory in a newly developed area outside of the historical centre of the city, characterized by urban unrest. The architects tried to establish a dialogue between the historic and new part of Chieti. On the one hand, the structure is separated into different blocks, ensuring a dialogue with the nearby surrounding, on the other hand, a central colonnade-lined street is intended to open a dialogue between the new chaotic part of the city and the old town. The new street of the dormitory complex becomes an important part of the new city. Thanks to the right density, the right overflow from the inner to the outer, as well as the esthetical choices coded in the collective memory, the architects succeeded in implementing the idea of city architecture in their project. The dormitory consists of several buildings, which however still represent unity.[10]



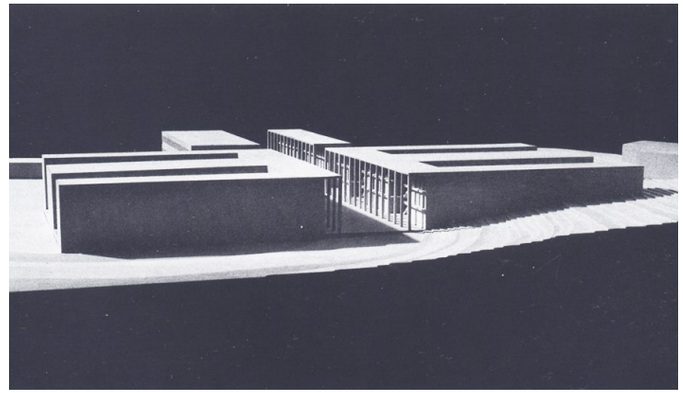


Fig. 3.13, 3.14, 3.15, 3.16 Casa dello studente di Chieti, Giorgio Grassi and Antonio Monestiroli

Hotel Les Gorges du Dadès, A. Faraoui and P. de Mazieres 1974

The hotel project was implemented east of the *High Atlas Mountains*, in the valleys of Central *Morocco*. It was planned as an accommodation satisfying the needs of mass tourism. A specific connection between the idea of western commerce functionality and traditional Arabic architecture of the region was created. A structure rich in form resembling the traditional Moroccan city centres with an interesting usage of modern materials was built. The edges of the buildings were rounded and the screed carried out with a big grain structure, so as to resemble clay buildings. A modern touch was added by showing the reinforced concrete structure in smartly chosen places. Notable is also how the structure reacts to its surrounding.[11]

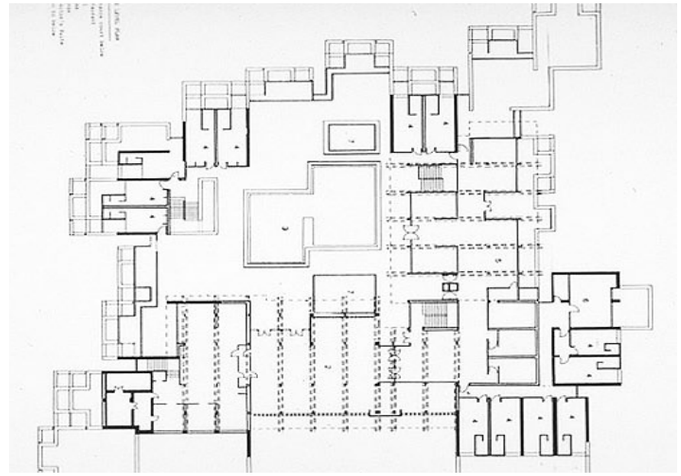


Fig. 3.17, 3.18, 3.19, 3.20 Hotel Les Gorges du Dadès, A. Faraoui and P. de Mazieres

Lycée Français Charles de Gaulle in Damascus, Ateliers Lion Associés, Dagher, Hanna & Partners 2008

The *French Lycée in Damascus*, Syria can host 900 students in a building integrated in a system of courtyards and green patios. The main aim of the project was to ensure sustainability, and therefore a search for cheap and easy solutions is characteristic. Natural shadowing by overruffing outer squares and the use of plants, as well as smart spatial planning are all aimed at achieving this goal. The most spectacular solution used in the school is related to the decision to avoid the installation of an air conditioning system, which is very unusual in public buildings in the Middle East. Instead, the architects decided to use solutions they understood as traditional Mediterranean, that is, permanent active ventilation for buildings that are well protected from the sun. Windows provide maximum day light, and at the same time are a part of the ventilation system. The outer walls are built of 20cm hollow concrete blocks, and the inner walls of 10 cm solid concrete blocks. Additionally, the concrete roofs' ventilation ensured with the help of parallel slopes. Furthermore, solar chimneys also provide natural ventilation from the cool air in the patios.
With costs kept low with the help of alternative, sustainable solutions the architects succeeded in providing very comfortable climate conditions.[12]

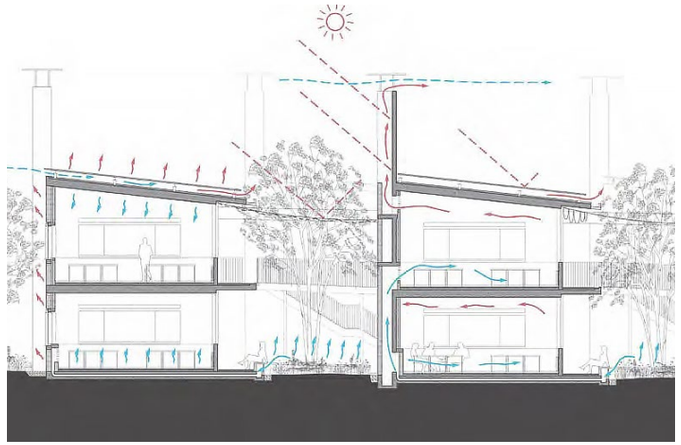


Fig. 3.21, 3.22, 3.23 Lycée Français Charles de Gaulle in Damascus, Ateliers Lion Associés, Dagher, Hanna & Partners

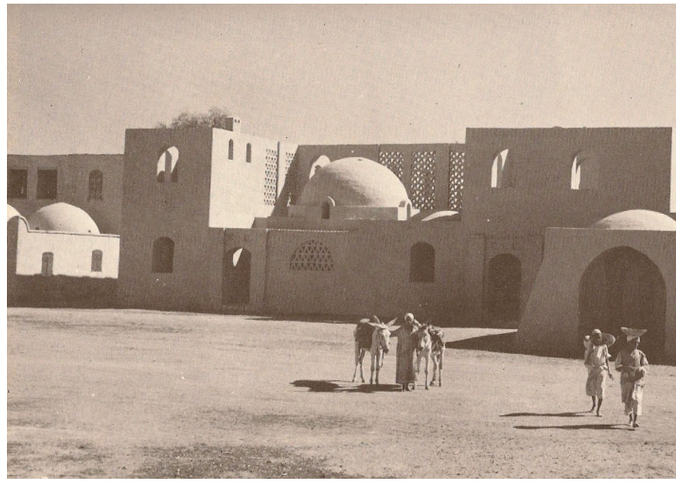
New Gourna Village, Hassan Fathy 1945

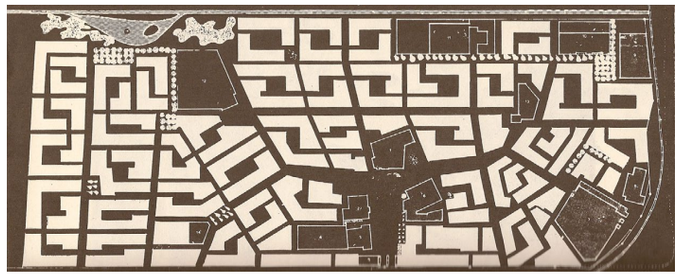
The project of Egyptian architect *Hassan Fathy* was popularized by the success of his book "*Architecture for the Poor*". The project was supposed to solve social problems connected with the relocation of entire communities. For the architect it was an opportunity to test his approach to satisfying the needs of the individual in a large dwelling.

The buildings of the complex were built of local soil in form of baked mud bricks. In the project the ancient technique of *Nubian Vault roofs* (bricks laid in angled arches, inclining against the wall, each supporting the next, resulting in a self-supporting way of constructing) was used, allowing for the elimination of wood – a scarce resource in Egypt – as a construction material for the structure.

By shadowing parts of the building and allowing a natural ventilation he managed to ensure low temperatures in summer and warm surroundings in winter time. As a result of this project, Fathy is recognised as one of the fathers of sustainability.

Unfortunately, due to social and economic problems, the project was never carried out till the end, and with time, the construction started to fall into havoc.[13]





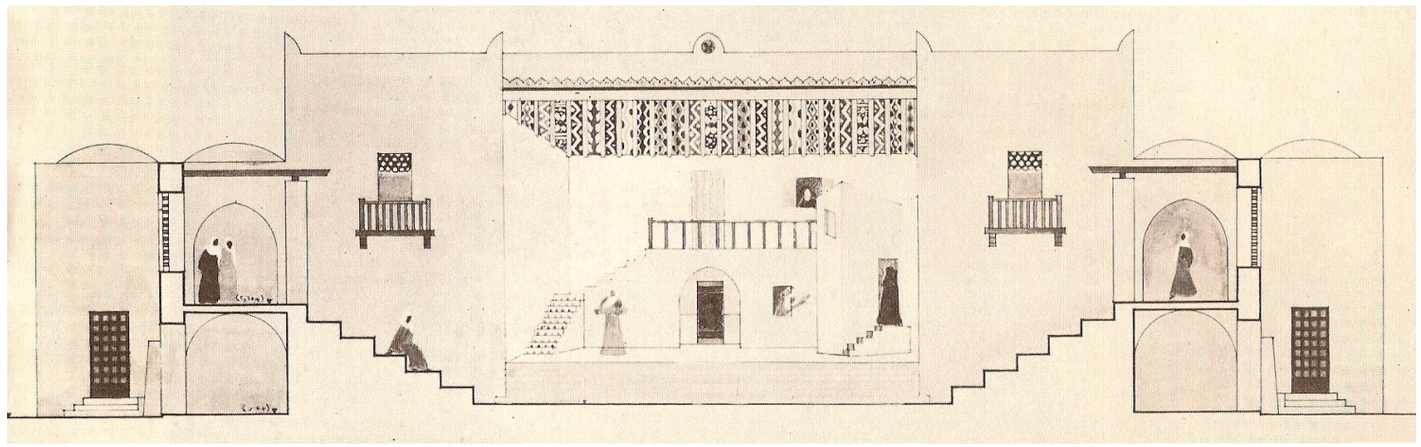


Fig. 3.24, 3.25, 3.26, 3.27 New Gourna Village, Hassan Fathy

4. Anamnesis

Fig. 4.01 the piazza

"The title of the most progressive creators does not belong to those creating according to the classical canons, nor the futuristic formulas, but to those who after picking up the thread dropped by the Egyptian priests, by Romanesque monastery monks, by gothic cathedral masons, by Brunelleschi, Michelangelo, Blondel, Corazzi, Marconi, will deeply understand the latest artistic achievements, and will produce new forms, using the possibilities of modern technology... Only architecture in this form has nowadays the right to life, but not the one, which semblances modernity, yet is full of rotted blood in it veins. And not the one which resembles classical architecture. After breaking the external modernistic decorations, a bare, gawky skeleton will remain, having nothing to do with modernity, exactly as after breaking the external baroque, or empire decorations, a bare, gawky skeleton will remain, having nothing to do with classicism. "

Szymon Syrkus, 1925[1]

Fig. 4.02 Ikea, the better shelter

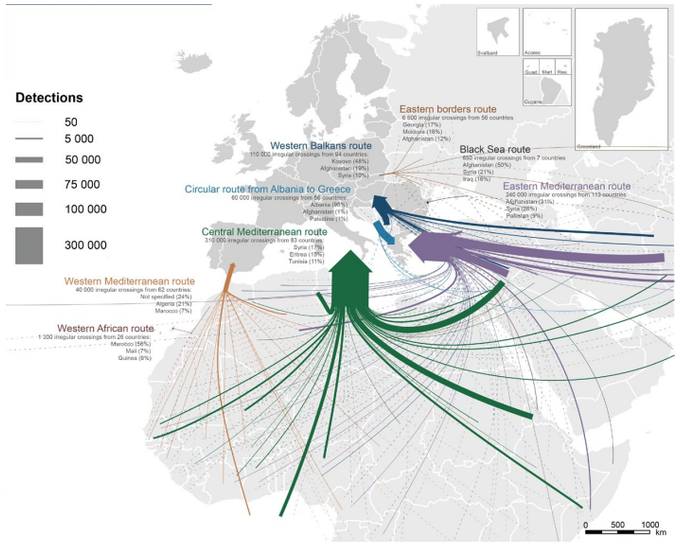


Fig. 4.03 Main irregular border crossing routes into Europe

Starting the research on this thesis in late 2014 and finishing in the beginning of 2018 has allowed me sufficient time for reflection and in some extent an independence for my thoughts from prevalent architectural and political discourse. I have had the chance to become an observer of the uneasy happenings of this years.

Massive migration to countries of the European Union, as well as other non-European countries has evoked great attention from the public, and from the very beginning on, a deep interest in the architectural community. At the very beginning, the discussion primarily focused on temporary solutions, which of course can be explained by the massive numbers of people in need of shelter. A wide range of proposals including the idea of reusing existing structures, container-based buildings emerged – basically fast solutions, for "here and now" were suggested. The Swedish company IKEA proposed, in its own style, the "*Better Shelter*" – a build yourself structure, fast and cheap to produce; the local government of Berlin decided to use a big part of the abandoned building of the huge *Tempelhof Airport* (which received its current shape during the 1930s) as a shelter.
Discussion on more sustainable structures only started later. But amidst intensified political disputes and because of the ongoing political changes worldwide, the discussion never really got the chance to leave the academical circles. A growing sense of powerlessness dominated the architectural circles.

Lampedusa – at first the symbol of the migration crisis – also disappeared from the foreground of discussions after 2015, when the masses of mostly Syrian war refugees started using the so called "*Balkan route*".
What was furthermore also neglected in the public discourse are statistics that evidenced the actual increase in the number of people arriving on the little island of Lampedusa. While the public attention was turned toward the Syrian crisis, problems in Africa were no longer discussed in mass media. To make matters worse, Africa is about to face huge political and environmental

Fig. 4.04 Lampedusa: "Door to Europe" and a military fort, 2014

problems, which will result in Lampedusa remaining a destination for thousands.

The choice of Lampedusa as the location for the present master thesis and project, as well as the decision to design the "*House of refugees*" in its current form was a joint result of the above factors.
Due to its location, the island has been a destination for people trying to enter Europe for many decades. It has also been the scene of many tragical events, seeing deaths of thousands of people fleeing wars, political instabilities and poverty at its coasts.
Observing the socio-political discourse at the end of 2014, beginning of 2015, I made the conscious decision of distancing myself from the mainstream architectural discussion on refugee shelters in Europe. I decided to follow a more independent approach and tried to understand the dynamics of migration in Southern Europe. On the one hand, Lampedusa was a quickly forgotten symbol, but on the other, the events around the island restarted the big discussion on migration. From a closer perspective, an image of a society fighting problems far beyond its capacities, with little help from its own government or international organizations emerged. A very complex, yet isolated society with a lifestyle that is fascinating in the times of urbanization and social networking of the 21st century. Members of this community are the ones who had to repeatedly carry the weight of European problems on their shoulders. For this reason, the logical consequence was the choice of Lampedusa as a place for my research.
The other aspect of the research decision to break from the classical refugee camp structure was the wish to build a complex which would represent an attempt of integrating the resulting architectural structure in its specific geographical location and sociological surrounding.
Due to this decision the research part in this book focuses on the wide range of topics associated with density. The focus on the Mediterranean region represents the desire of finding the mutual elements of both sides of the sea, and consequently the search for a specific architectural language.

Rather than analysing different refugee complexes I assembled several projects which together represent a different approach to the task of building in the widely defined South.
The focus shifted from simply building a refugee camp: in a certain way this became secondary. What gained more importance was creating a sustainable structure which can function in the chosen location.

Lampedusa as a small community is directly influenced by the immense impact of migration. On the other hand however, people arriving to the island find themselves in a "*purgatory*": spending weeks or months on the isle, sometimes maliciously called the Alcatraz of migration, is not a comfortable situation. So, it became very clear that the structure had do allow a coexistence of both sides, speaking a language which would allow the new architectural structure a comfortable position.

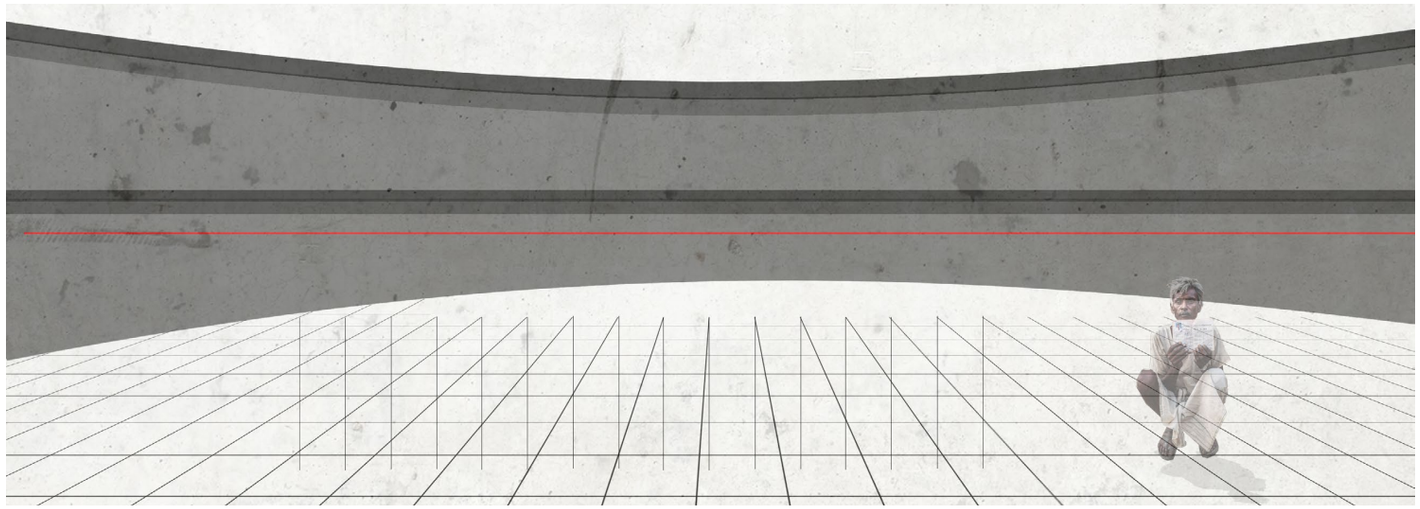


Fig. 4.05 Search of the human scale

The first two tasks of the project were a choice of an exact location on the island on the one hand, and a calculation of the size of the space needed on the other, both demanding a very careful understanding of the situation and both influencing each other.

As mentioned before, the number of people seeking safety on Lampedusa is varies depending on the season and political situation. This draws an interesting parallel to the tourism sector, which the isle is so dependent on. As the numbers vary over the years and tend to increase with predictions showing that this process will not stop over the next decades, it becomes clear that there is a legitimate need for the proposed facility.
The new refugee camp shall be able to host up to 1500 people, with flexible structures making it possible to host many more people in cases of emergency situations. Based on prior calculations, this would require an estimated area of 4.5 hectares.
The size of the complex raises the question of the location. The segregation of the newly arrived population as a result of a choice of a plot, which is totally separated from the city can impact very negative social associations. The location of the current refugee camp on Lampedusa itself is also causing problems due to its isolation from the city structures. On the other hand, a site directly in the city would mean greater exposure to unwelcome scrutiny for people who upon arrival very often face critical life conditions.
These opposing considerations call for a choice of a location, which is connected with the urban structure and builds an urban connection with the city, and which at the same time allows quick access to the centre of life on the island.
Also, the decision of influencing the island's urban structure this way raises the issue of Lampedusa´s urban development throughout history.
The chaotic developments lacking planning that characterised the period following the 60s provide the ground for this project to attempt giving structure these, and in a way calm the structure-less expansions of the city of Lampedusa.
The island guaranties a number of locations that fit these

requirements, as the city is only limited in the South-West, where it meets the port. Another topic to be discussed in this context is that of the airport and the influence it had on the island as a result of its runway cutting off a significant part of the island from the urban structures.
The current nonlinear development provides an opportunity for the new camp to reconnect the now separated area with the other parts of the island.

The space between *Cala Uccello* and *Cala Pisana* at the South-Eastern end of the island, located to the North of the airport represents a very interesting location. Set relatively close to the city of Lampedusa (a walking distance of ~15-20 min), yet located on a plateau on the coast, giving a sense of visual peace. This area has an undefined urban structure with only scattered buildings. It is equipped with an existing road structure, and the safety port of Lampedusa is located nearby. The plot represents an excellent space for the research.

The question of the urban effect that the development of a big structure would have also arises.

Fig. 4.06 Project location on the map of Lampedusa

Fig. 4.07 View on the project location, 2014

In an attempt of finding the right proportions for the complex, several trials were carried out.
The need of breaking the structure was relatively quickly understood, and as a result, the focus of the project was shifted towards smaller proportions. It became clear that the only way to incorporate the structure into its surrounding, it needed to engage in a discussion with it and point toward the importance of human scale. City structures became an obvious reference, with the game of relations between its spaces providing a tool for the design of the new camp.
The question of the human scale in urban structures is essential, as resulting from this factor, a feeling of safety and a certain sense of comfort in the environment the person is in emerges.
The Mediterranean climate conditions, as well as the aesthetic requirements of Lampedusa make the careful consideration of the issue of shadowing in certain public and semi-public spaces necessary. Preserving the imagery of the Southern city and the reinterpretation of the role of the architectural element of the arcades became the next challenges to be overcome by firstly guarantying the separation of open spaces and semi-private areas and secondly by saving the aesthetic heritage preserved in the collective memory.

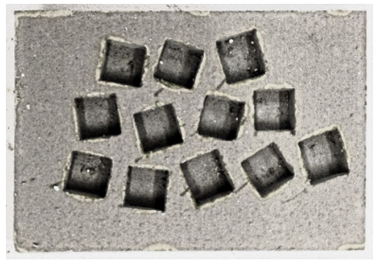
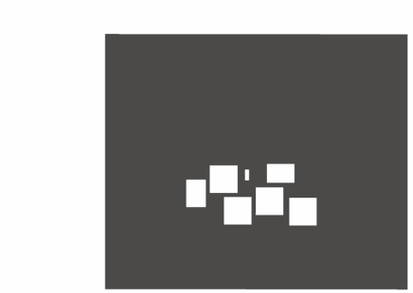


Fig. 4.08 Analysis of urban typologies 1

Fig. 4.09 Analysis of urban typologies 2



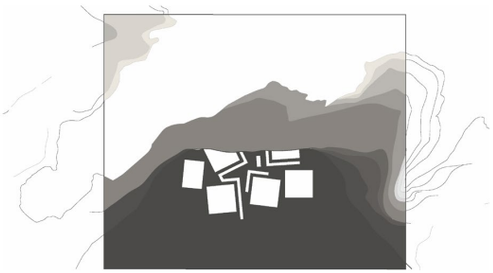


Fig. 4.11 Analysis of urban typologies 3

Fig. 4.10 Analysis of the potential proportions of the project in relation to its surroundings

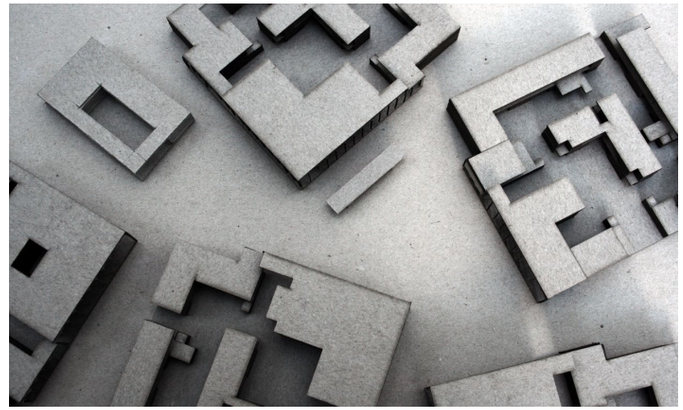


Fig. 4.12 Analysis of urban typologies 4

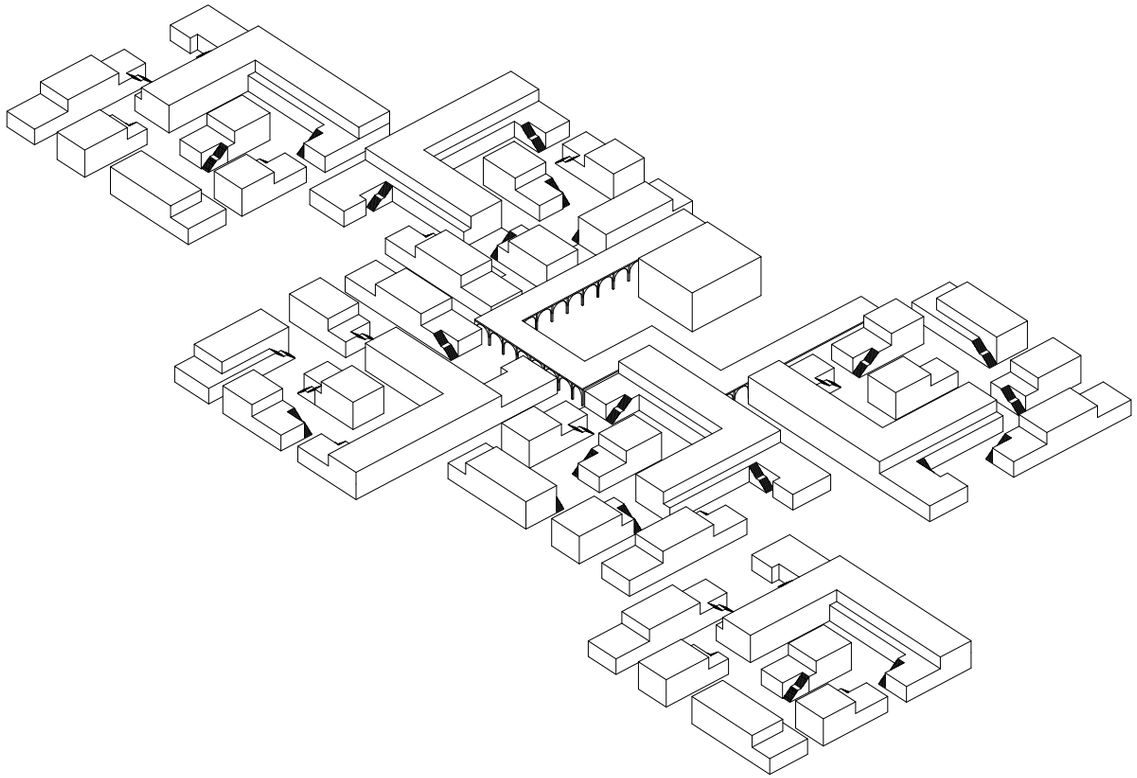


Fig. 4.14 Analysis of urban typologies 5

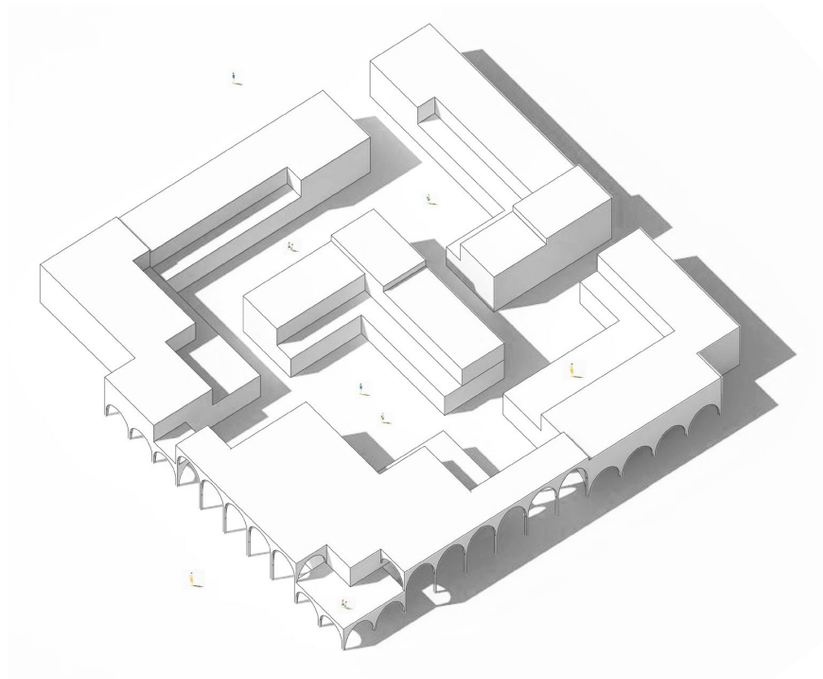


Fig. 4.15 Analysis of urban typologies 6

Campo San Giacomo di Rialto, Venice

Campo San Stin, Venice

Scalinata di Trinità dei Monti, Rome

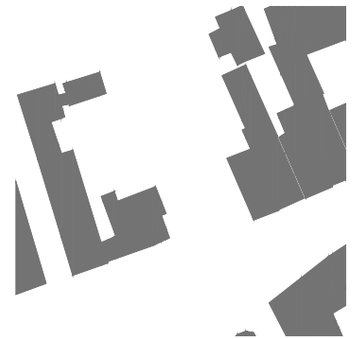
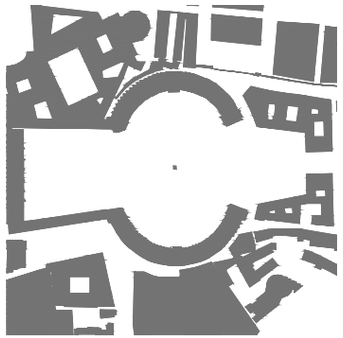


Fig. 4.16 Analysis of urban dimensions

In order to find the appropriate human scale, different historical piazzas were analysed. Except for the Red Square, all piazzas are located in Italy. Different functions and dimensions are being compared in the context of an urban enviroment.

Piazza San Pietro, Vatican City



240
320

Piazza di Spagna, Rome

63
260

Piazza Navona, Rome

65
240

Piazza San Marco, Venice

80
170

Red Square, Moscow

70
300

0 10 50

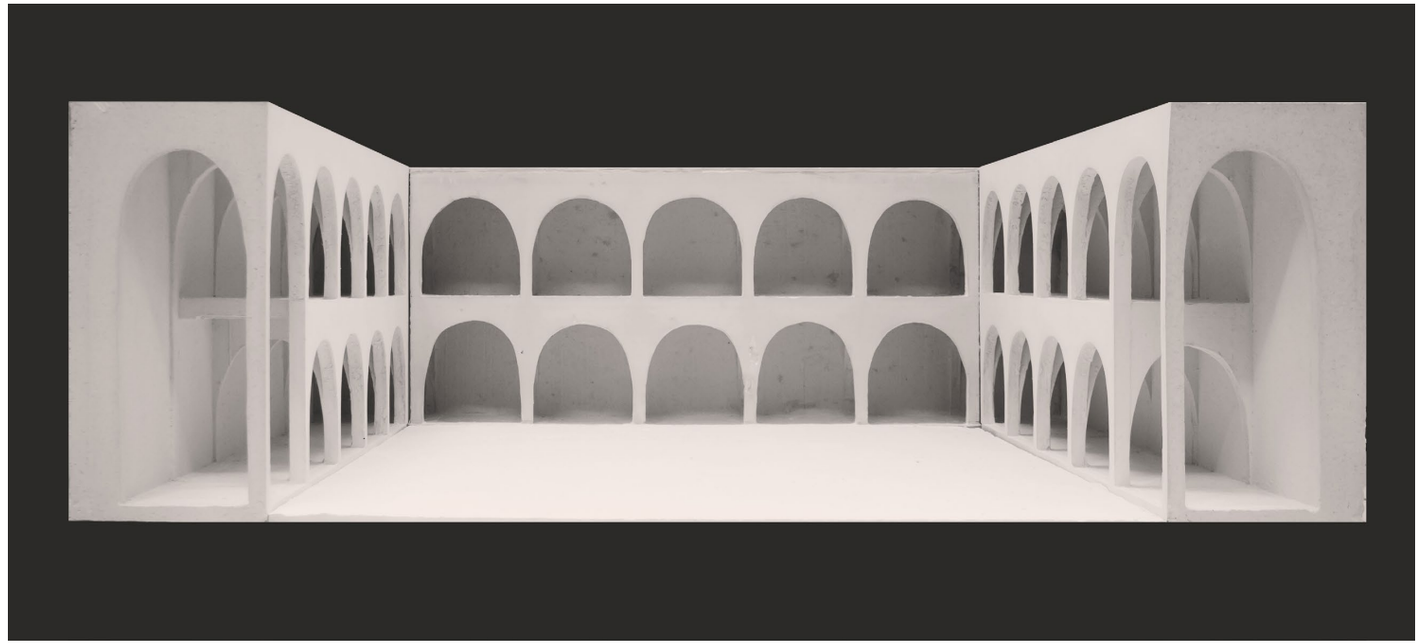


Fig. 4.17, 4.18, 4.19, 4.20 Model photos, inner yard with arcades.

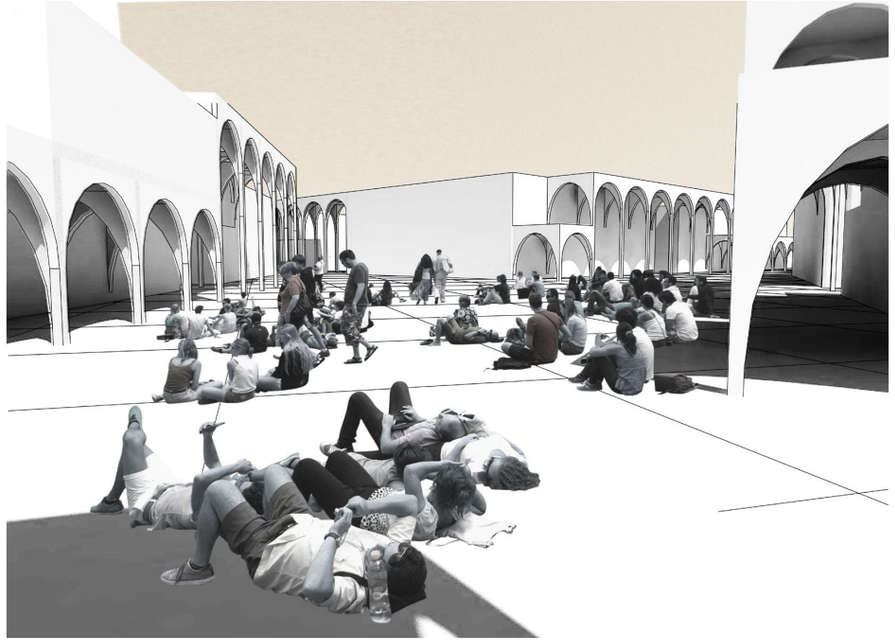


Fig. 4.21 Interspaces 01

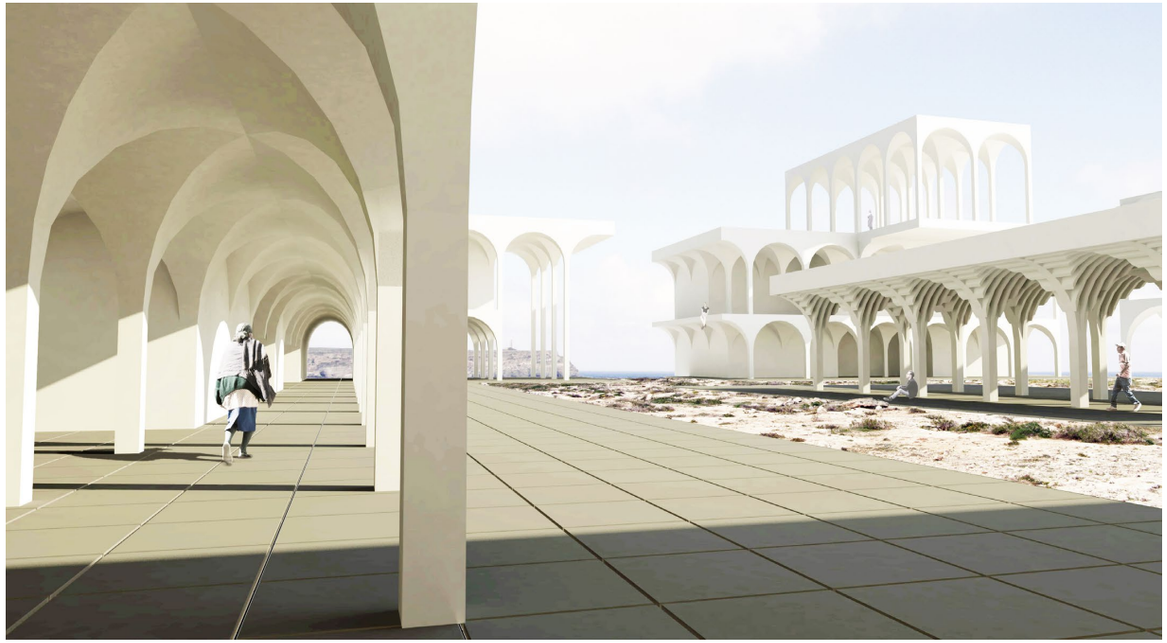


Fig. 4.22 Interspaces 02

Fig. 4.23 Model photos, inner yard with arcades 02

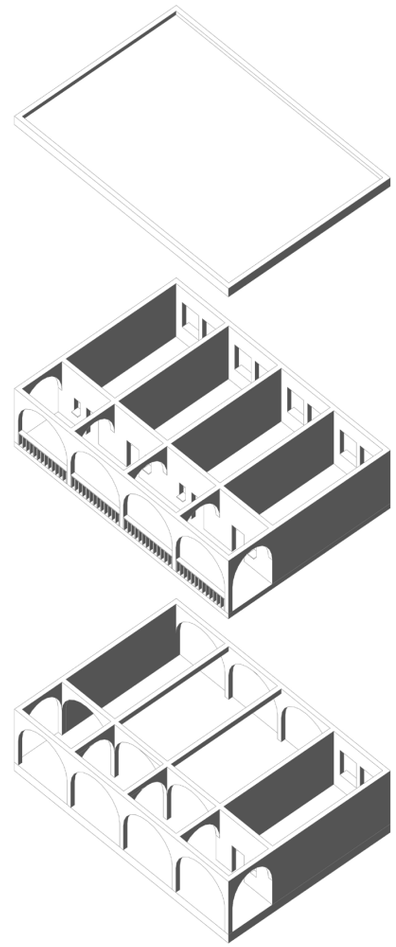


Fig. 4.24 Axonometry, arcades and their connections with the rooms

Fig. 4.25 Model photos, inner yard with arcades 03

5. la casa dei rifugiati – the project

Fig. 5.01 la casa dei rifugiati, entrance to the main piazza

"If (as the philosophers maintain) the city is like some large house, and the house is in turn like some small city, cannot the various parts of the house – atria, xysti, diving rooms, porticoes, and so on – be considered miniature buildings?" Leon Battista Alberti[1]

The chosen plot of the complex is located in the South-Eastern part of the island between *Cala Uccello* and *Cala Pisana*, directly at the coast. On the Eastern side the parcel is facing the sea, on the Western side the centre of the city of Lampedusa at a walking distance of some 1.6 km, 15-20 min. The road infrastructure is already established, the complex can be reached on asphalted roads: from the West via a smaller street, and from the Southern side via a big road, which is also connected with the second safety port of Lampedusa.
The plot is surrounded by mixed architecture: mainly detached houses and to the South-West a complex of 3 storey buildings that belong to the airport infrastructure.
The house of refugees is planned with the hope of developing a new urban centre in the unilinear urban structure of Lampedusa.

Fig. 5.02 Lampedusa: the construction site

Fig. 5.03 Lampedusa: Cala Pisana, Cala Uccello - the construction site

Fig. 5.04 la casa dei rifugiati on the map of Lampedusa

Fig. 5.05 view on the construction site from the Northern coast

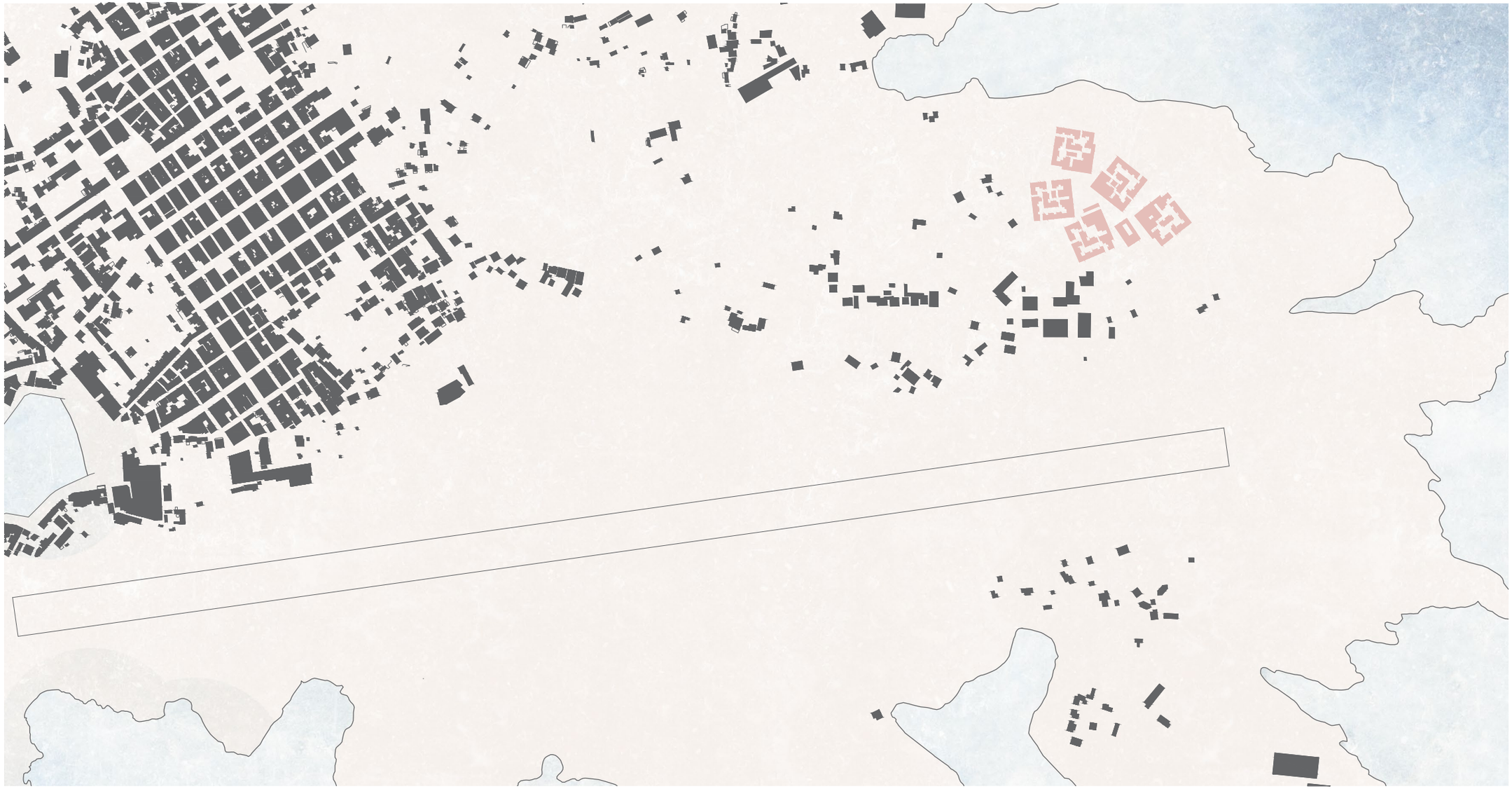
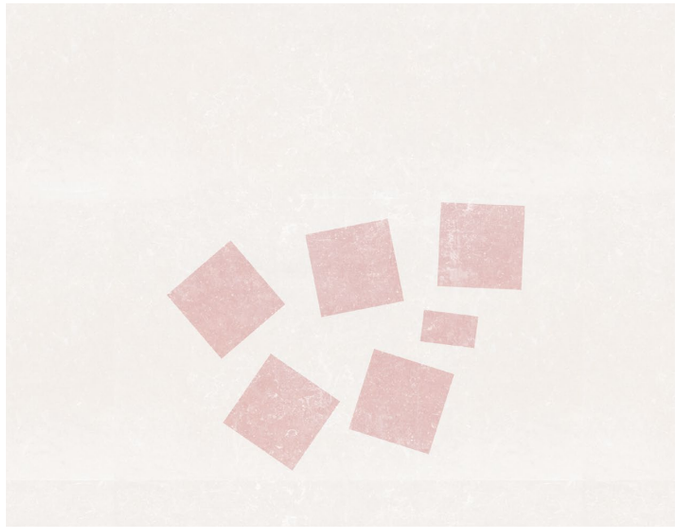


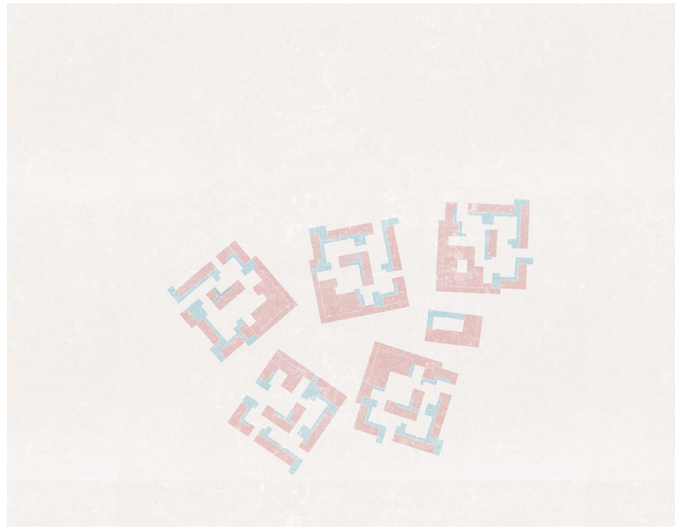
Fig. 5.06 la casa dei rifugiati in relation to the city of Lampedusa

The complex should be understood as an open city structure. Five separate units are defining the urban space. They are placed in a non-geometrical way playing with the open space which is formed between them. This allows the formation of different niches and scaling of the space. The structure remains relatively open to its surrounding. The arrangement of the units defines the view points in a way that the relation to the neighbouring area, and especially the sea, is cautiously controlled. The main entrances are indicated by opening towards the outer side creating a perspectival experience. Still it is possible to enter the complex from all sides. The main square grows in the middle of the structure, a forum if you want, separated from the seaside, yet still visible from certain points. This positioning allows on one side the protection of the square from the sea wind, on the other hand it creates a comfortable wind blast, which eases the hot climate conditions. Walking though the complex allows to experience a visual experience. The perspectives are changing, the feeling of a complex structure with different areas grows.

The urban space is completed by additional elements. At the North-Western end – which due to its vicinity to the city of Lampedusa will serve as the main entrance – there is a bus station, which is a decisive factor in positioning this newly developed area. Additionally, the location is also connected with a walkway leading up to the city.
The reception-centre for newly arriving refugees is located at the South-Eastern end, which allows a connection with the bigger road also hosting the parking lot, needed in emergencies.

The whole complex is planned in a tripartite way. The forum is seen as an element absorbing the public life of the structure, possibly attracting visitors from the outside. Additionally, each of the units is planed with a mixed-use structure. The residential parts are oriented to the inside, creating two kinds of semi-private areas. The public building parts are oriented towards the main square.





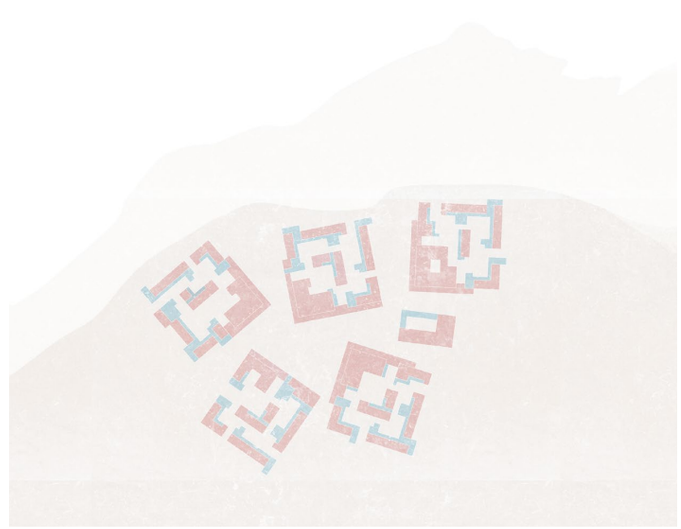


Fig. 5.07 spatial relations between the individual units of the complex

Fig. 5.08 la casa dei rifugiati, axonometry ›

The concept of the interior life of the "*village*" assumes the creation of different public functions, each hosted in different units and accessible from the main square. Additionally, parts of the units that serve a public function are marked with *arcades*, each with a different façade, thus creating the impression of an urban space. Arcades are creating a three-dimensional transition between the inner and outer space, as a result of which shadowed, semi-closed spaces are established.
The different functions include a *training centre, a cultural centre, two workshops, a market place with spaces for the production of handmade products, and a sports centre*. Although they are oriented towards the main square, some also use the inner spaces of the units. The sports centre is connected with a *multi-functional sports field*: this area can be regarded as an extension complex, as it is positioned in a way that fits the general positioning of the complex, however, it receives a special place, as it faces the sea and is close to the main entrance.

‹ Fig. 5.09 la casa dei rifugiati, coastal landscape

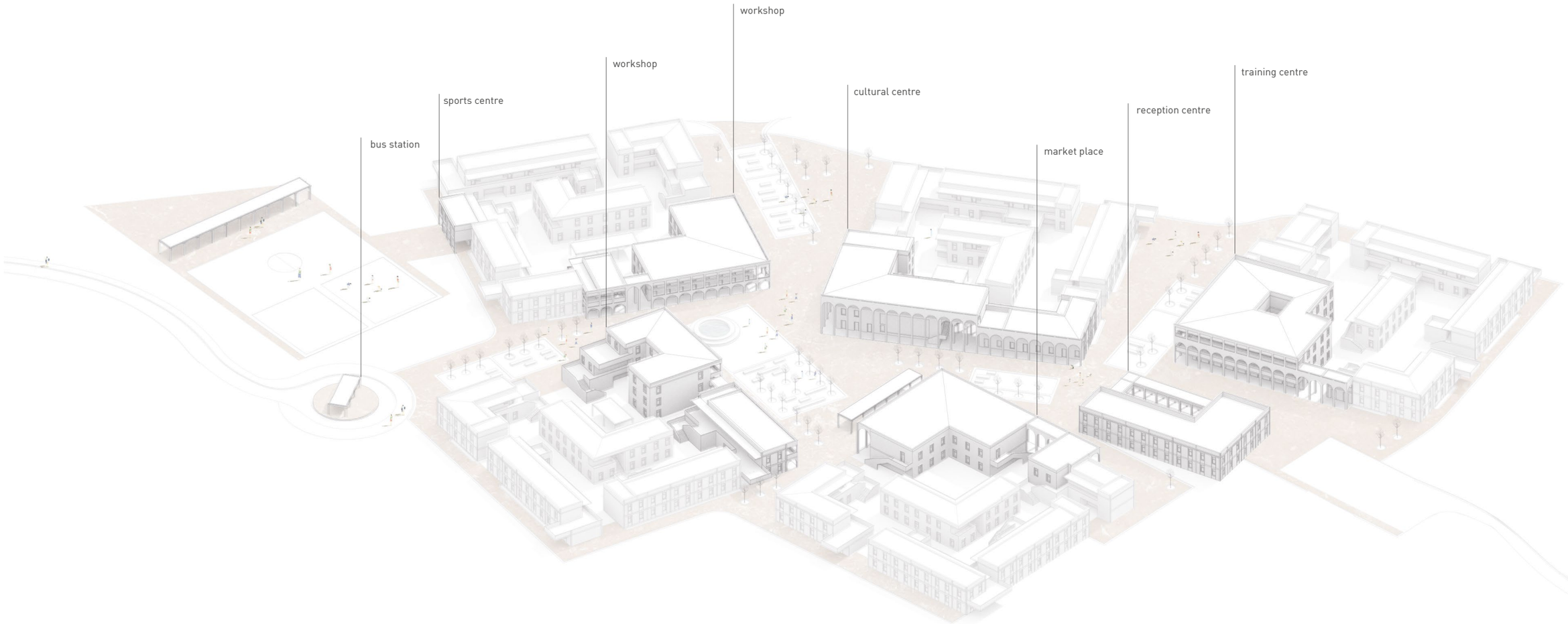


Fig. 5.10 la casa dei rifugiati, axonometry, public functions of the individual units

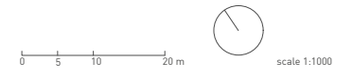


Fig. 5.11 la casa dei rifugiati, floor plan, ground floor ›

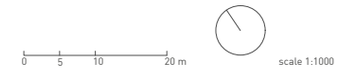


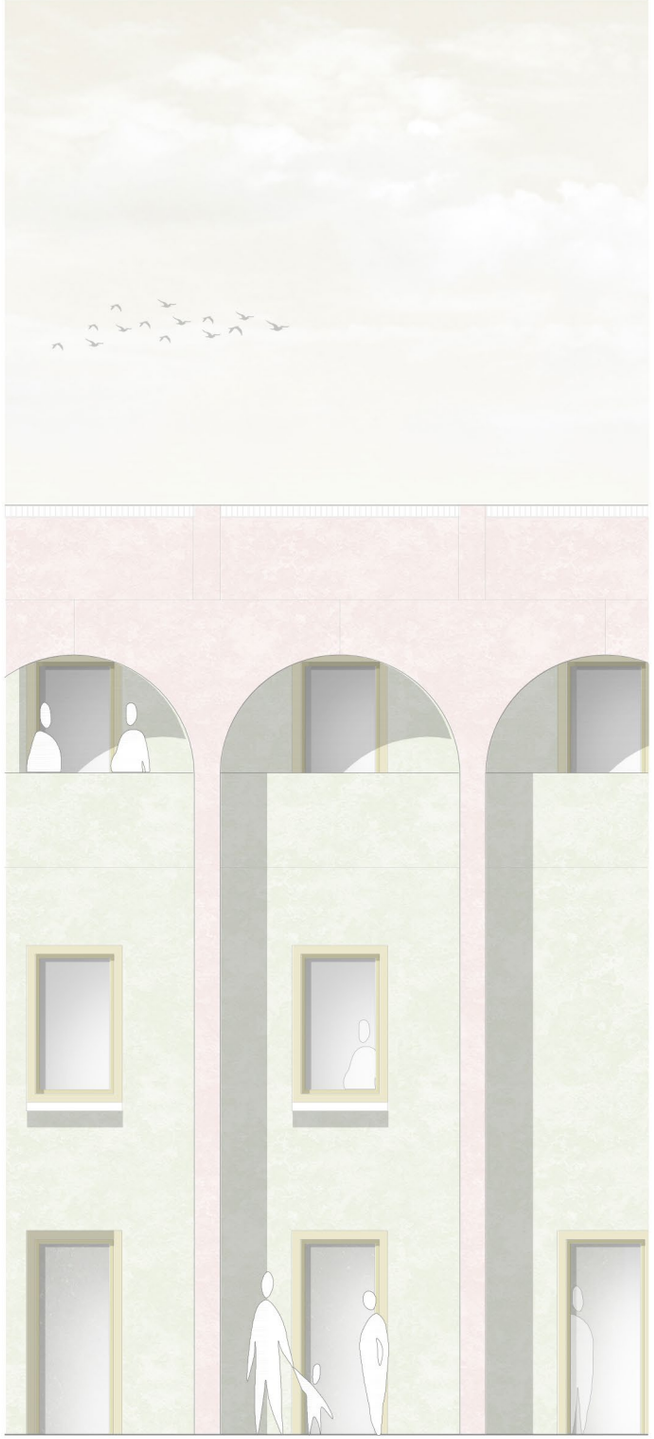
Fig. 5.12 la casa dei rifugiati, floor plan, first floor ›

Fig. 5.13 la casa dei rifugiati, main piazza 01

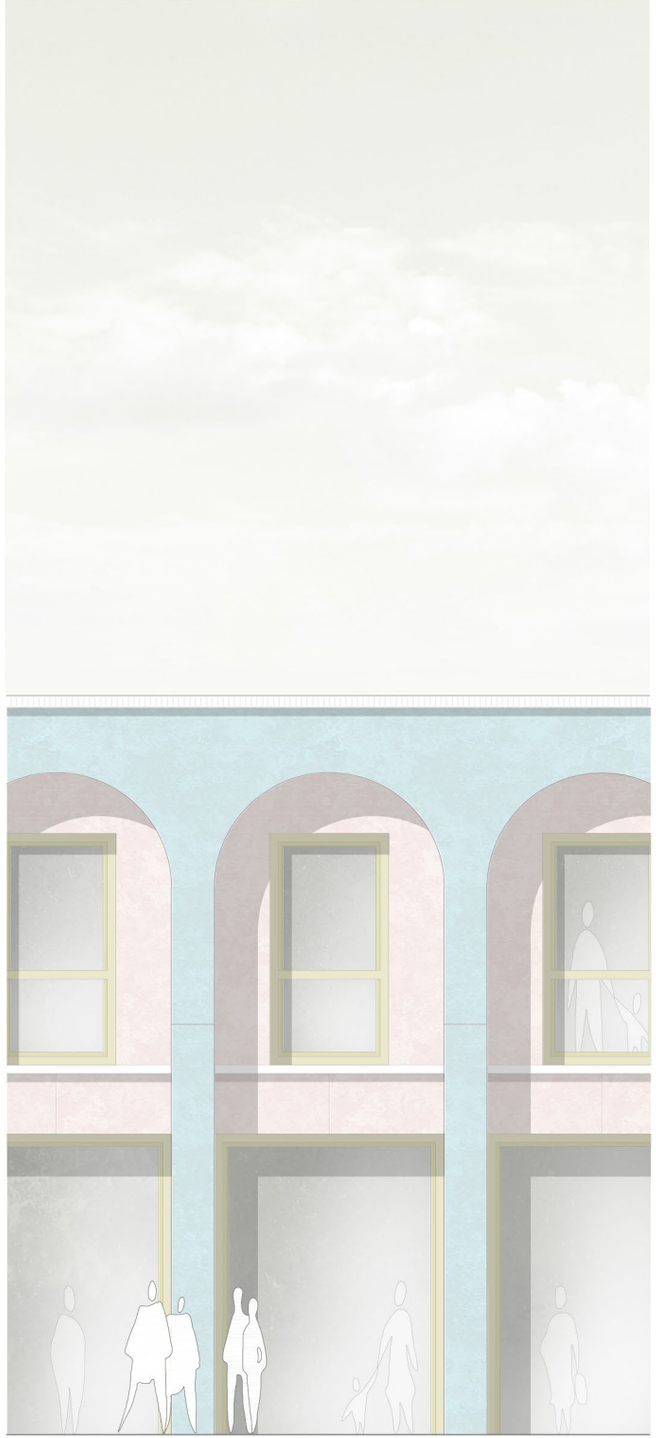
Fig. 5.14 Lampedusa, Piazza Brignone, 2014

The façades are designed based on the principle of creating a visually comfortable structure by simple means. The arcades represent a characteristic element of the whole structure, differentiating public areas according to their individual functions.
The remaining arcades follow the construction principles applied in the building, trying to create a relation to the human scale.
Colours also become an important factor: trying to adjust to the surroundings, the concept is based on the diverse shades of Lampedusa. The Mediterranean sun and the shades it brings out of pastel and sandstone colours are carefully considered.

The design of the pavement follows the same principles as the complex: the main square, the areas under the arcades in front of the units serving public functions and the relaxation areas all receive different pavement designs – inspired by traditional Italian city materials – allowing for differentiation based on functions.
Meeting points are created at the junction of main communication axes. These also offer various seating possibilities, which are additionally shaded by evergreen olive trees.
In the middle of the whole complex a fountain is placed, creating a central and recognisable space.



cultural centre



market place

workshop

Fig. 5.15 colour concept of the facades

Fig. 5.16 facade workshop 01, scale 1:250

Fig. 5.17 facade cultural centre, scale 1:250

Fig. 5.18 facade market place, scale 1:250

Fig. 5.19 facade workshop 02, scale 1:250

Fig. 5.20 facade training centre, scale 1:250

Fig. 5.21 outer facade living unity, scale 1:250

Fig. 5.22 la casa dei rifugiati, main piazza 02

Piazza materials:

a. asphalt colorized, rough surface
b. limestone
c. limestone sand
d. brick
e. terrazzo
f. wood
g. olive tree

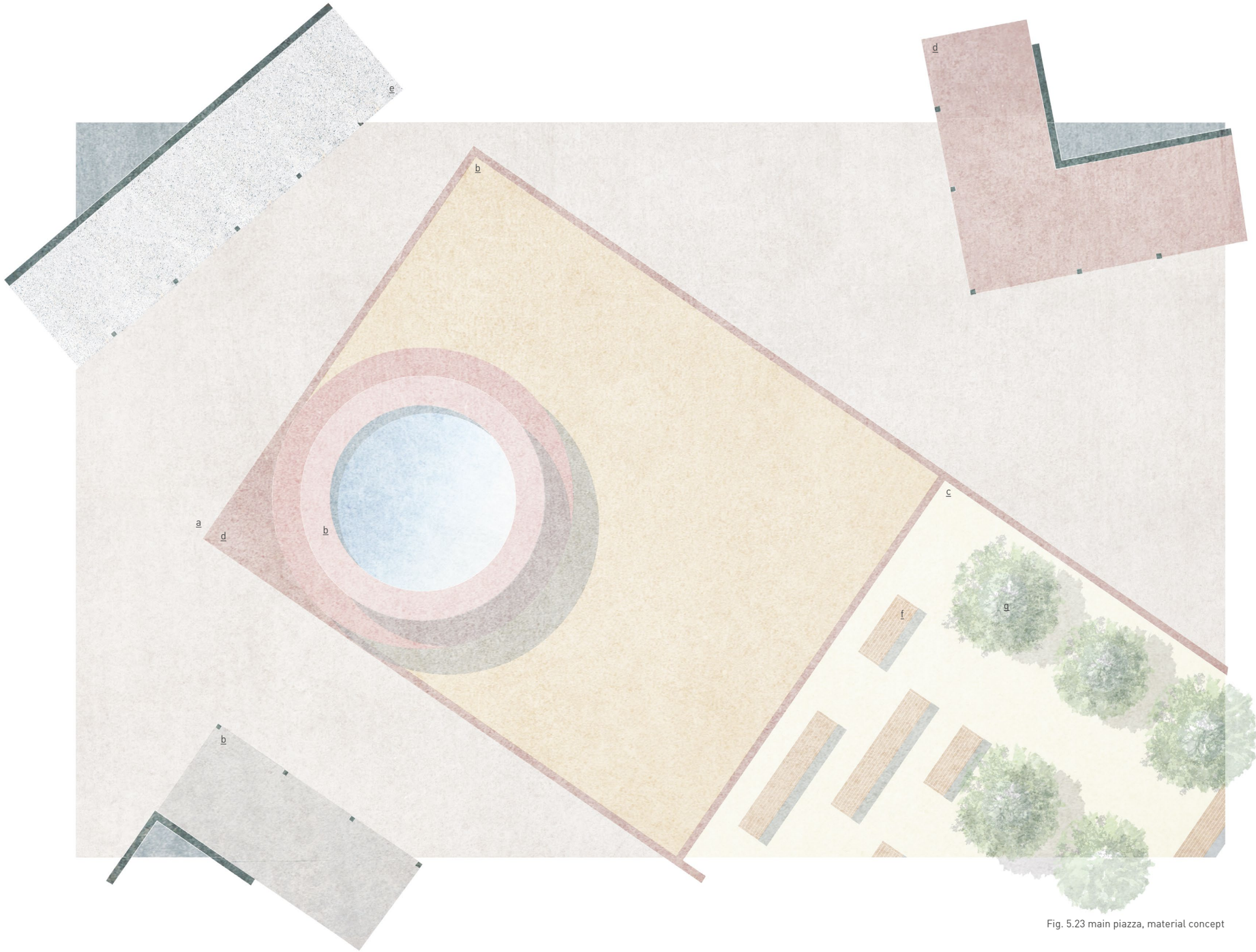


Fig. 5.23 main piazza, material concept

the unit

The major part of each unit is mainly occupied by residential areas and additionally, public structures are also integrated in the units.
The orientation of the individual areas within the units follows the sun's direction during the day, thus a typology that allows the creation of comfortable, semi-private spaces is developed. The rectangular exterior of the units is characterised by four facades, whereas the proportions of the different interior areas are complexly organised. Differences in spatial arrangement allow for different levels of privacy.

The residential areas are always placed on two different floors. On the ground floors pairs of mirrored residential units are connected with a roofed private space that belongs to the inhabitants. Residential areas on the first floor can be accessed through long open-space roofed corridors that are intersected with bigger semi-public spaces. Additionally, each of the five units has a number of dining rooms equipped with kitchens and leisure places, as well as laundry rooms, waste disposal places and technical rooms.
Depending on the function that the public part of the given unit fulfils, the inner yard is additionally equipped with a roofed space that can be regarded as additional public spaces for smaller communities.

The typology developed in the project tries to play with the question of accommodating a significant number of people in one single structure, hoping to achieve dynamics similar to that of a city structure. This is made possible by differentiation according to privacy levels and mixture of various functions served. This way, the spatial densification is being researched in a contemporary context.

Fig. 5.24 la casa dei rifugiati, inner piazza

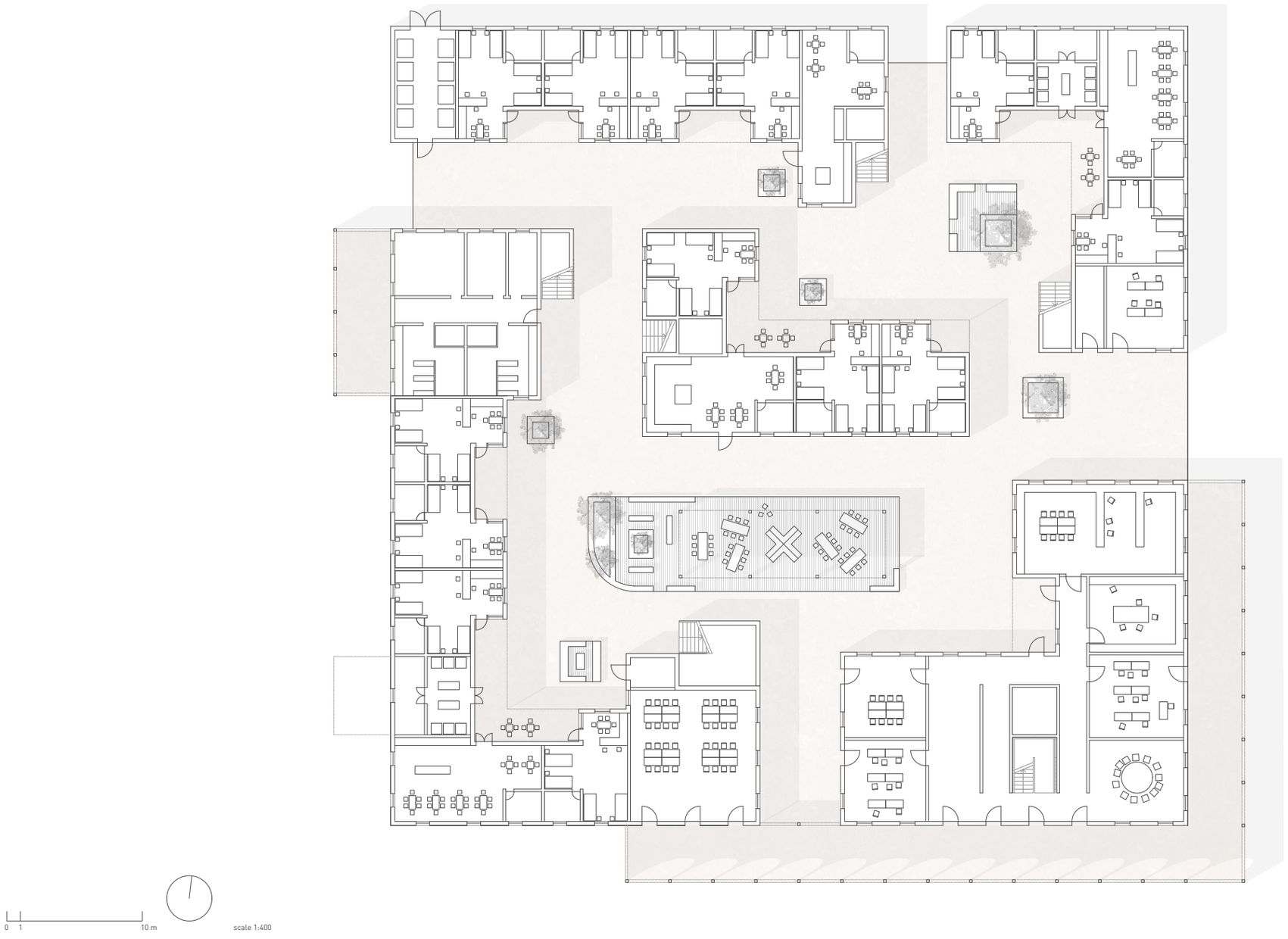
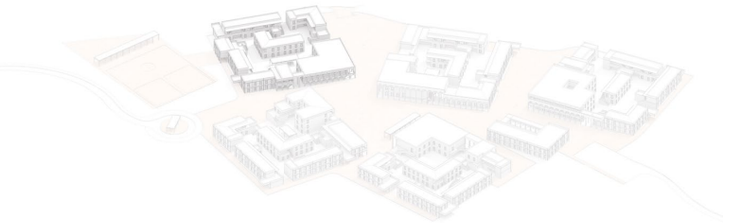


Fig. 5.25 la casa dei rifugiati - unit floor plan, ground floor

Fig. 5.26 la casa dei rifugiati - unit floor plan, first floor

Unit A



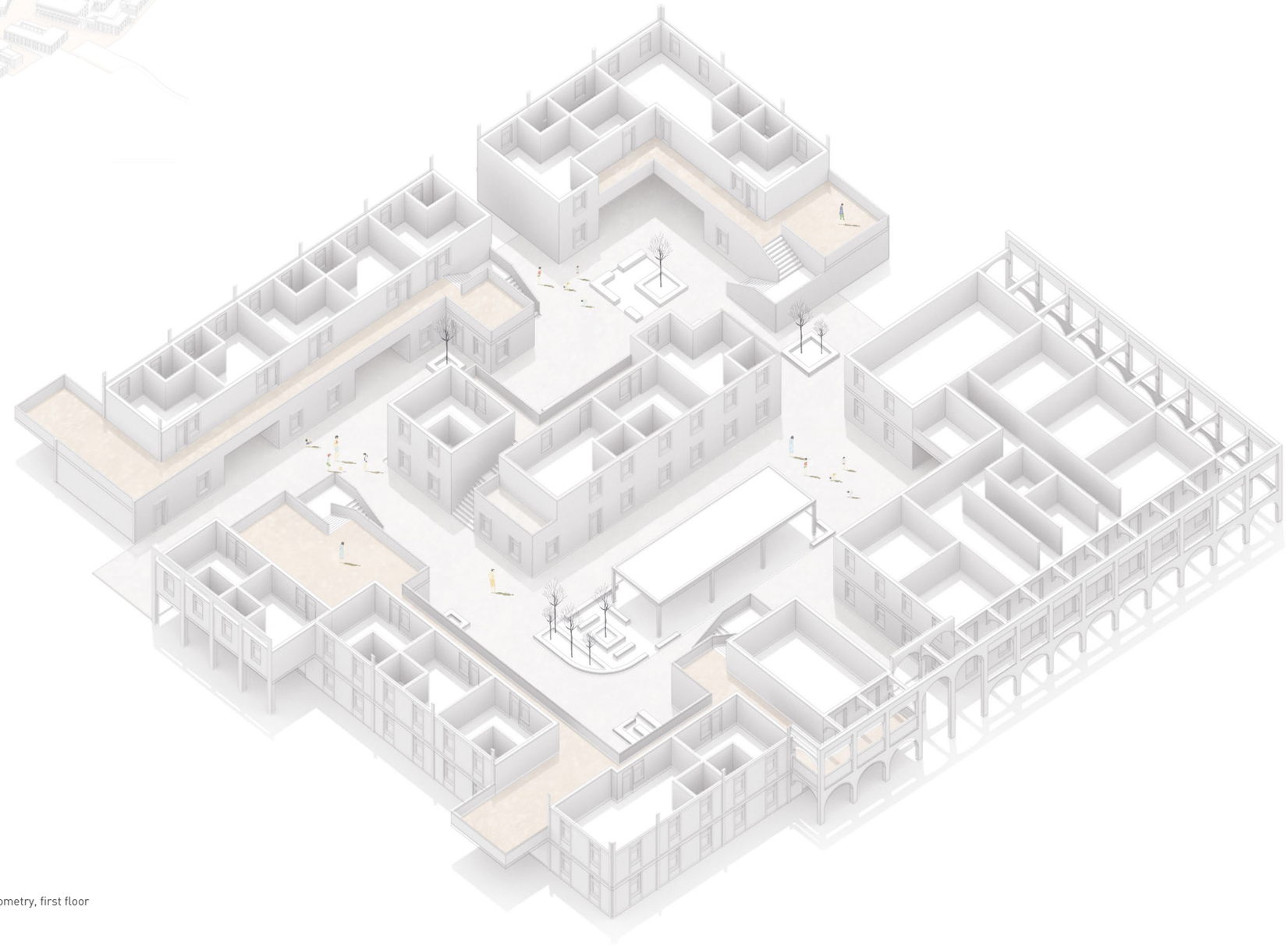
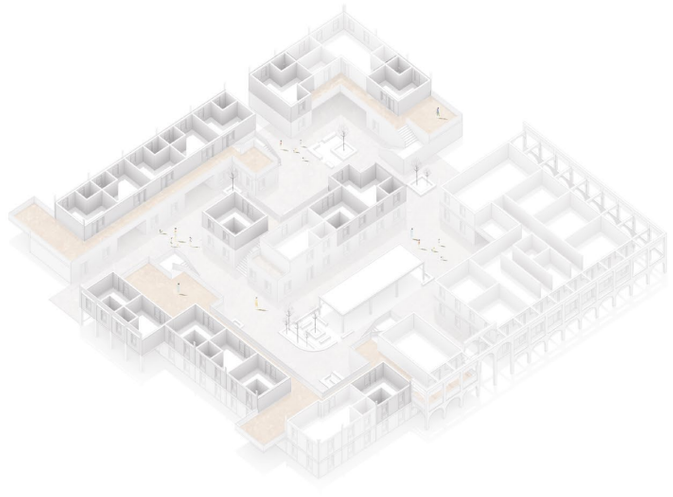
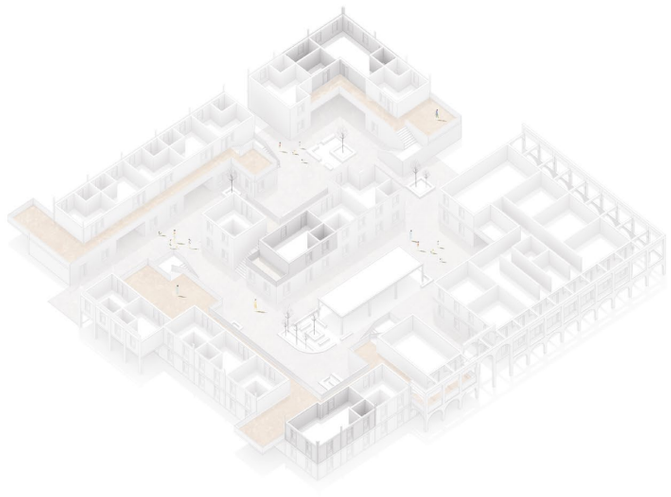


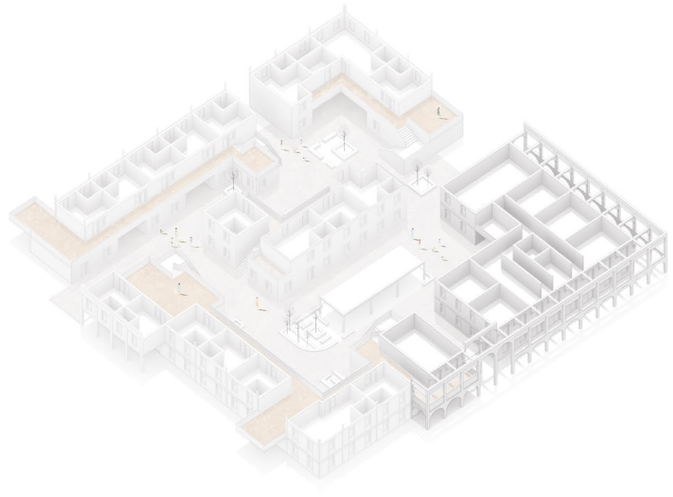
Fig. 5.27 la casa dei rifugiati - unit axonometry, first floor



the unit - residential areas



the unit - public structures (kitchens, leisure areas, laundry rooms)



the unit - public structures (workshop)

Fig. 5.28 la casa dei rifugiati - unit axonometry, first floor functions

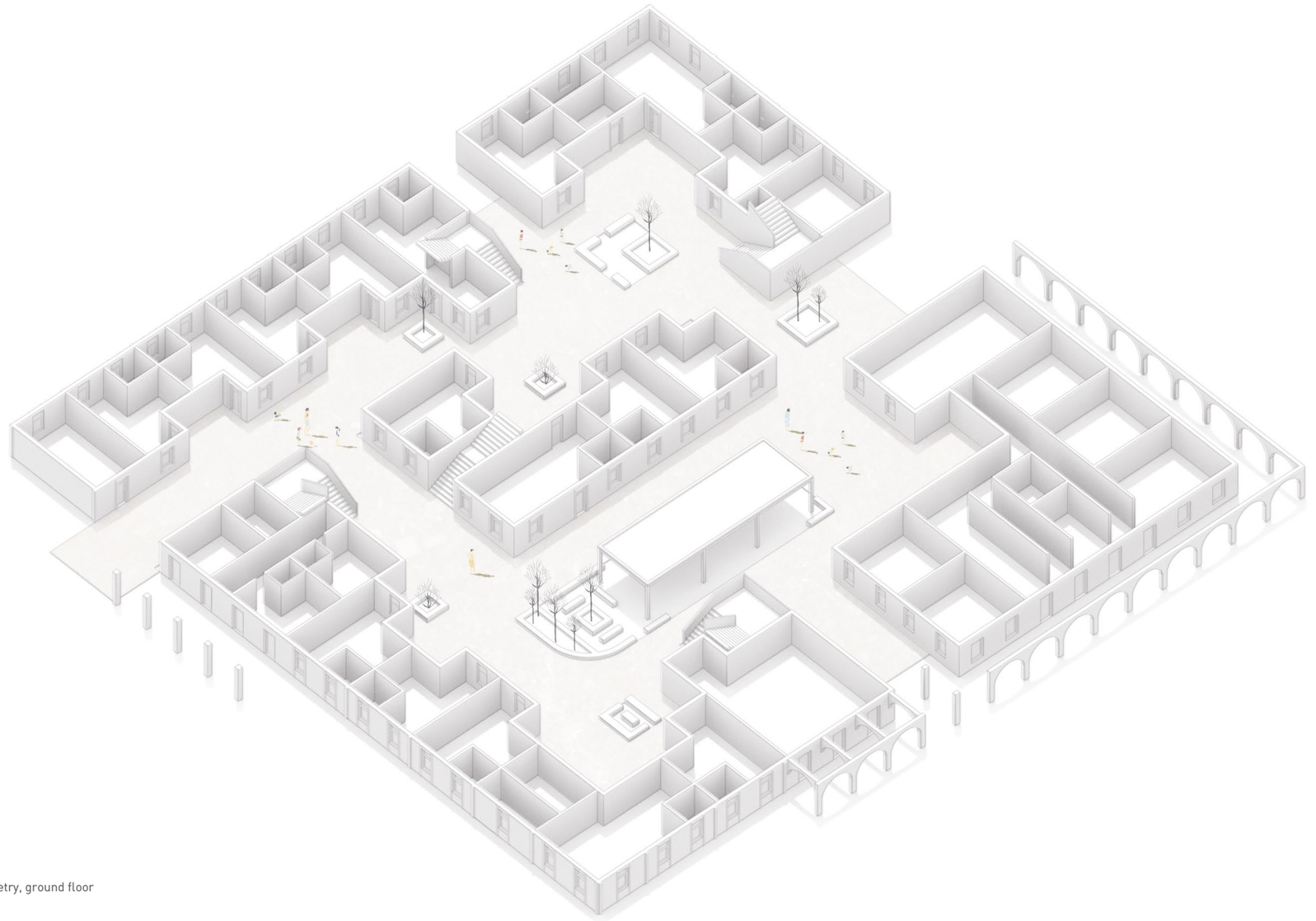
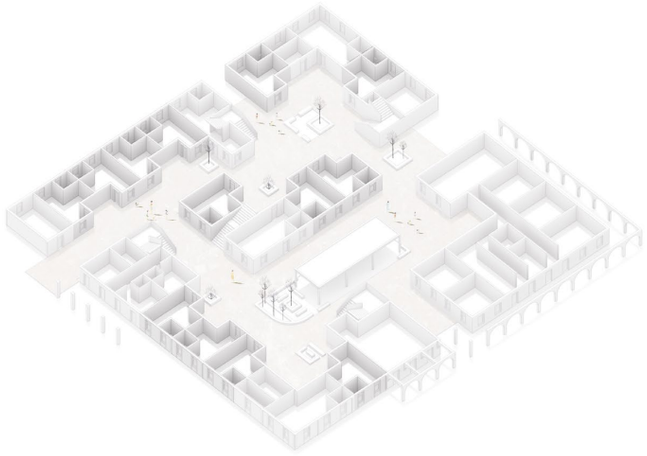
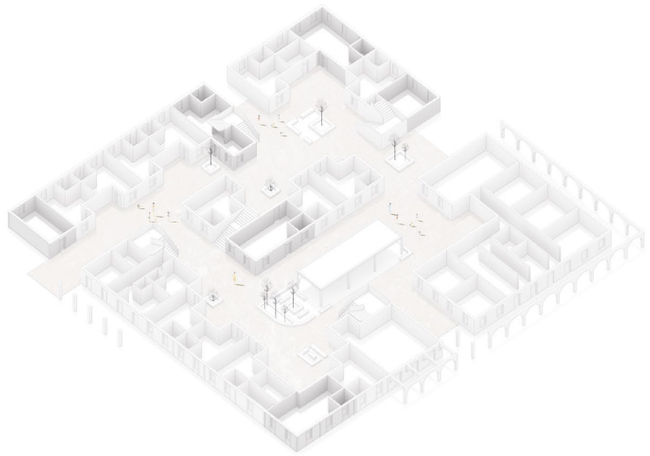


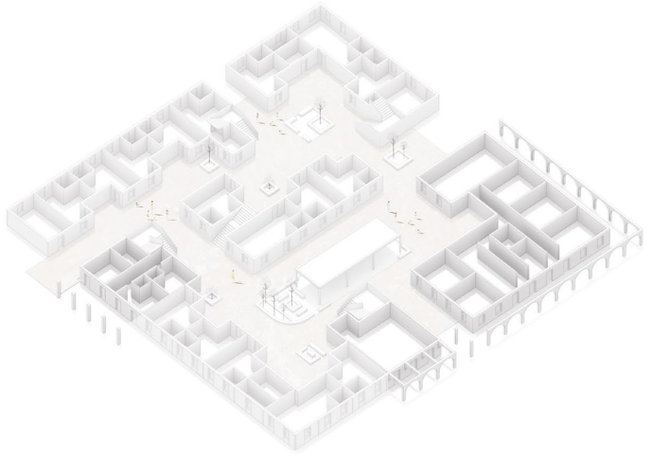
Fig. 5.29 la casa dei rifugiati - unit axonometry, ground floor



the unit - residential areas



the unit - public structures (kitchens, leisure areas, laundry rooms)



the unit - public structures (workshop, sports centre)

Fig. 5.30 la casa dei rifugiati - unit axonometry, ground floor functions

Unit A

60x60 m: 3600 m²
Open space: 2036 m²
Build area: 3128 m²

Ground floor

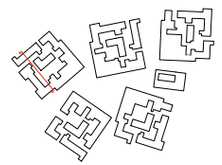
13 residential unities
Unit: 45 m²
Capacity: 5 people/unit (maximum capacity 16 people)

Public structures (kitchens, laundry rooms, leisure rooms): 352 m²
Public space – workshop: 444 m²
Public space – sports centre: 126 m²
Maximum capacity of floor: 120 people

First floor

16 residential unities
Unit: 35 m²
Capacity: 4 people/unit (maximum capacity 10 people)
Public spaces (kitchens, laundry rooms, leisure rooms): 204 m²
Public space – workshop: 444m²
Maximum capacity of floor: 150 people

Maximum capacity of unit A: 270 people
Maximum capacity of the complex 1500 people



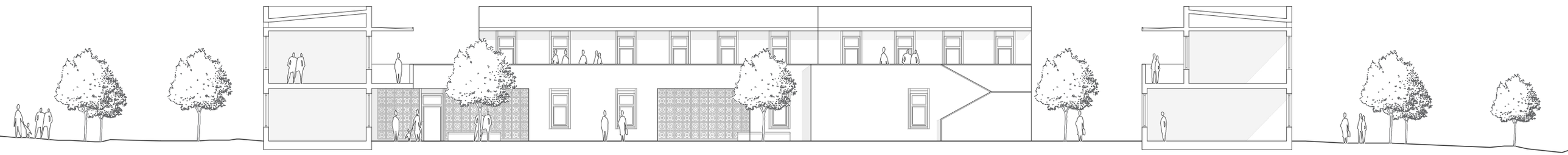
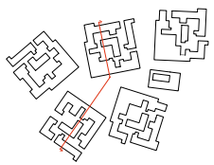


Fig. 5.31 section through the residential area of a unit, scale 1:250



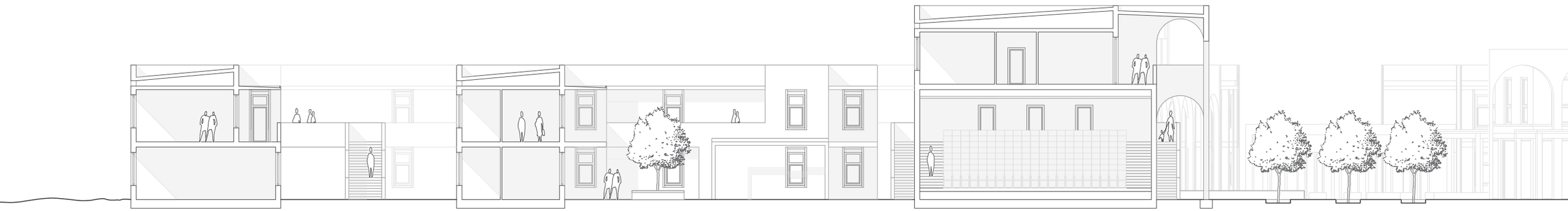
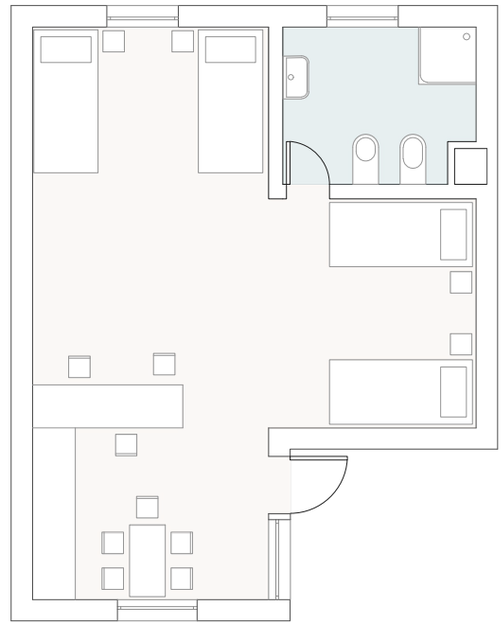


Fig. 5.32 section through two units and the main piazza, scale 1:250



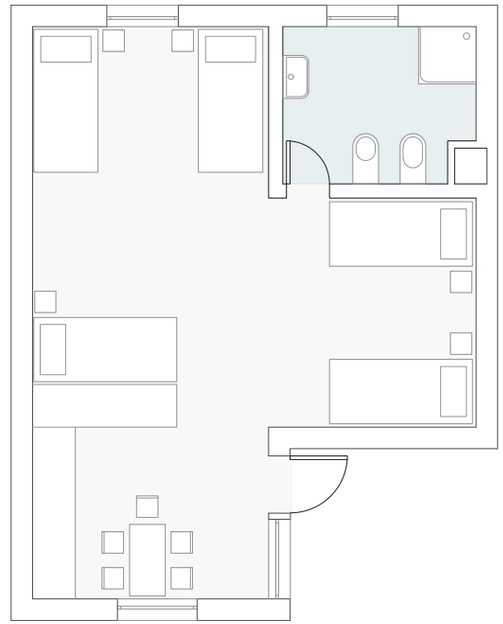
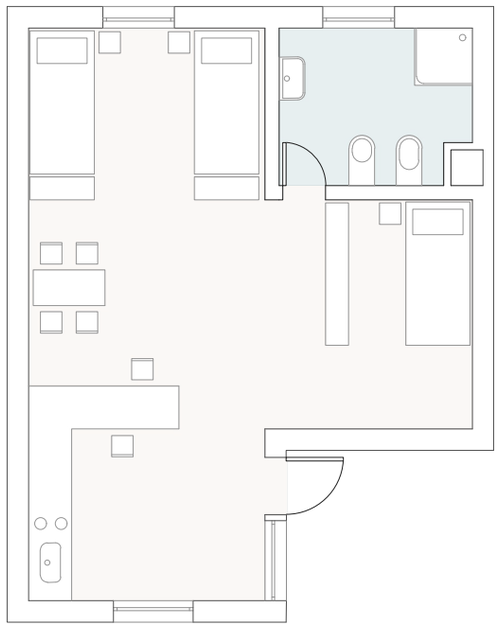
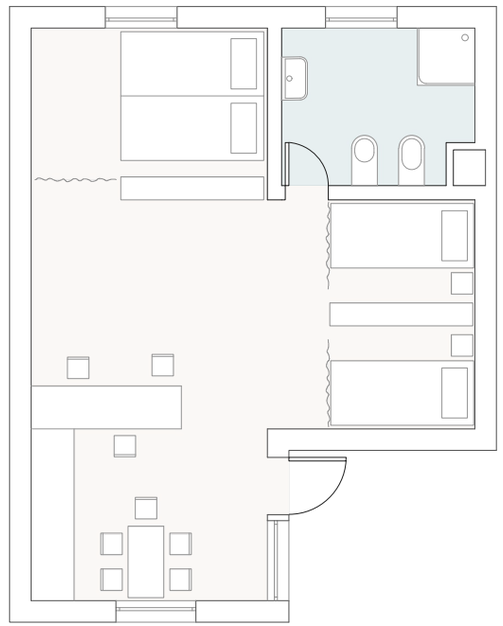
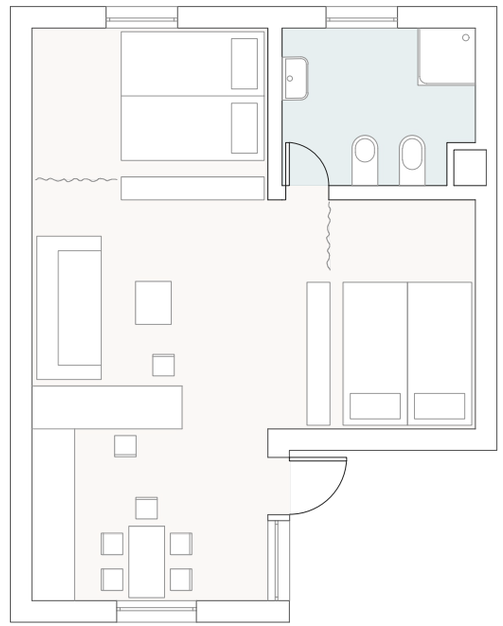


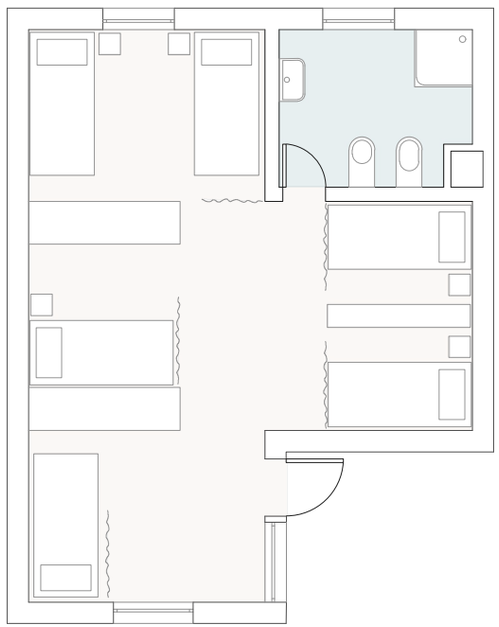
Fig. 5.33 various room designs, scale 1:100

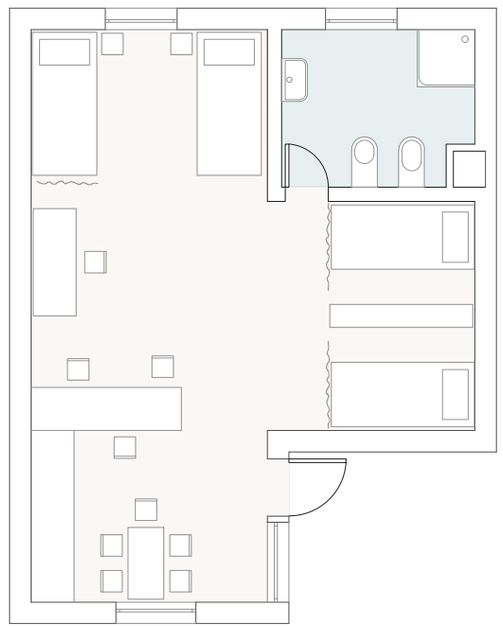
The room layout allows several different arrangements for the available space. Depending on the number of people using the area and the relationship between them, the structure can easily be rearranged. Privacy plays the most important role.

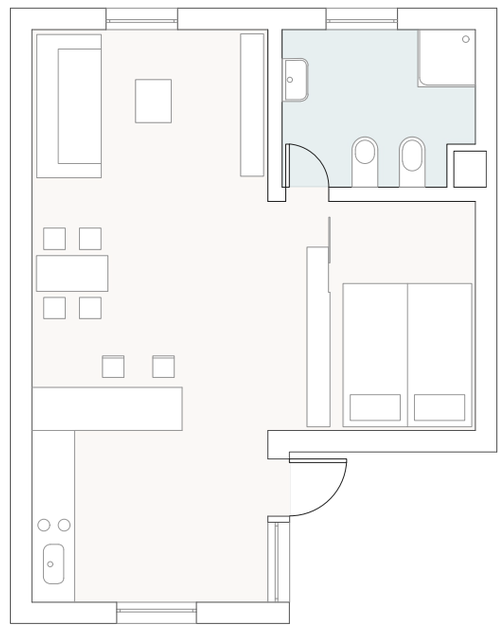










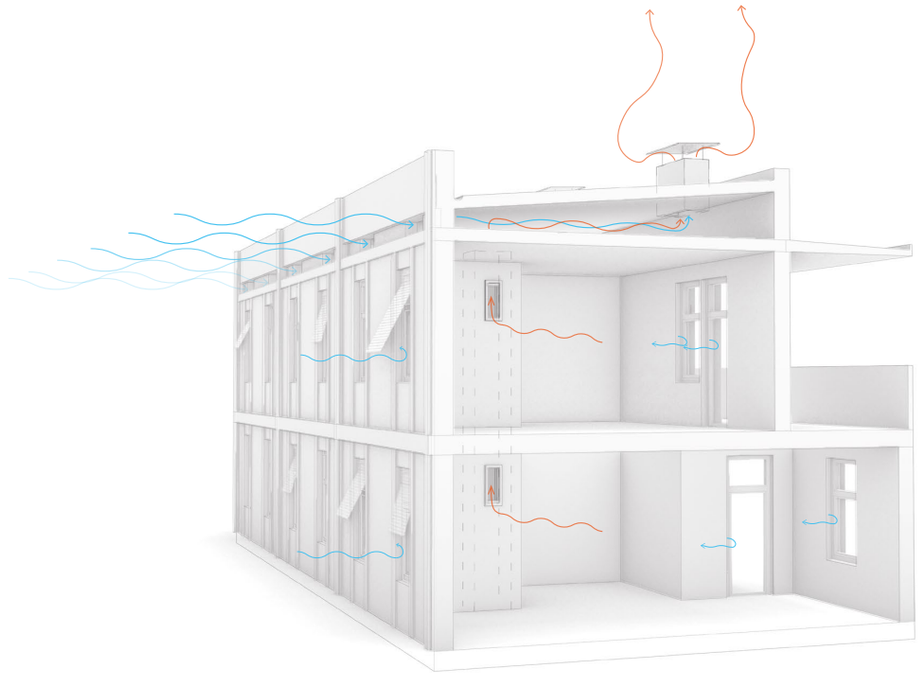


technical aspects

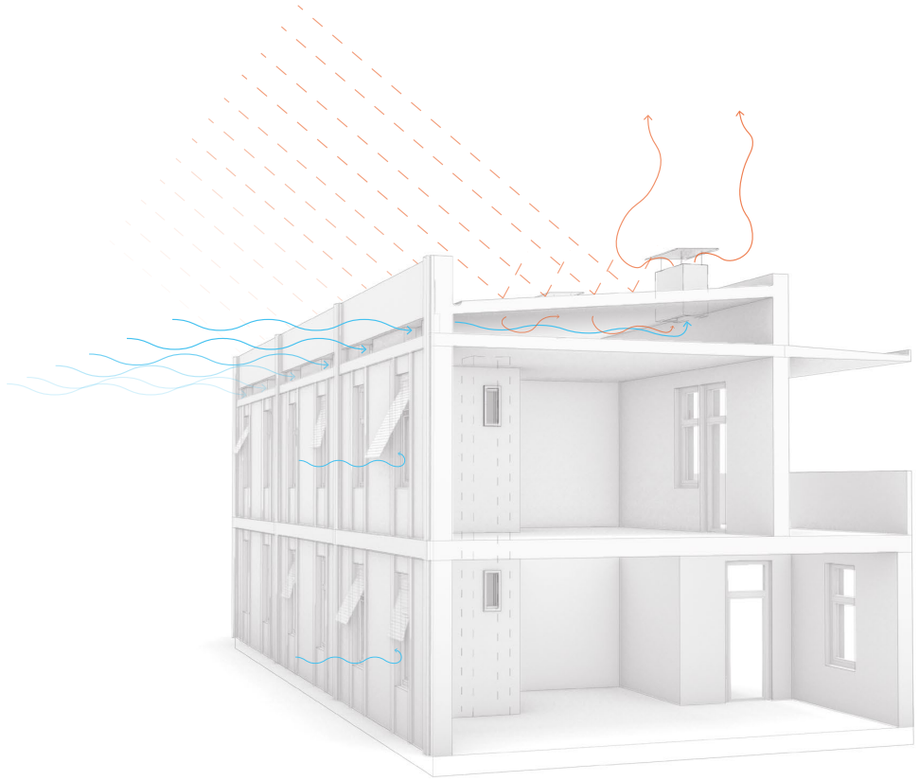
The concept of *la casa dei rifugiati* is rooted in the idea of sustainability and the reduction of costs. The design tries to fulfil this task as far as possible.
The chosen construction type also follows these objectives. The climate conditions are at all times respected with the help of two important considerations: the diverse application materials and a natural system of ventilation.

The complex is constructed of simple materials. The idea of prefabrication is of key importance. Lampedusa has serious problems in the field of supply of drinkable water and it also lacks the building materials for such an impactful structure. In this respect, it makes sense to ease the construction process by importing single parts to the island.
The construction follows a principle of mixing concrete, perforated bricks and render. Foundations, ceilings and roofs are made up of prefabricated concrete elements. Analogically, the walls are constructed as a prefab wall system. Each wall for each floor is shipped to Lampedusa and assembled on the spot. At the end the entire structure is being rendered.

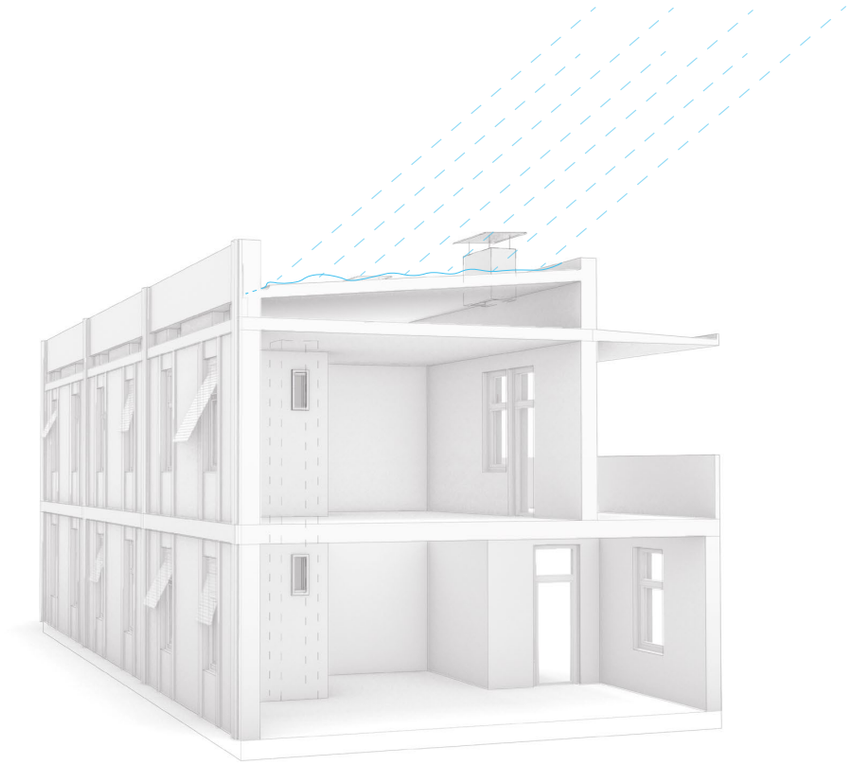
Thanks to the wide wall section and the use of perforated bricks, the climate-related requirements are fulfilled. The units are constructed with a double layered roof system: the inclined upper layer protects the building from direct sunbeams on the one hand, and the space between the two layers ensures natural ventilation using a simple chimney that ventilates the roof using the air string. To support this concept, the openings are directed towards the outer parts of the unit. All the residential units are additionally connected with a ventilation channel to the roof. Also, the windows – which, like other parts of the complex, are prefabricated elements – are equipped with a ventilation system guaranteeing a continuous air flow.



ventilation system - the ventilated window system and the ventilated double roof system connected with each room allowes a continuous air flow



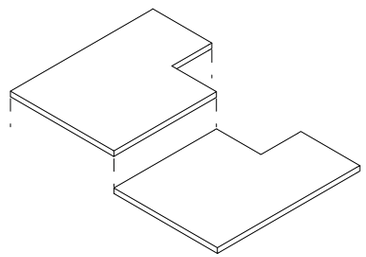
double roof system - protection from direct sunbeams



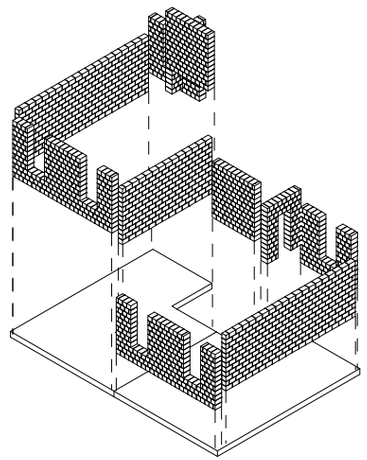
rainwater collection system – the relatively large roof surface allows the collection of rain water and thus can provide a part of the drinking water needed

Fig. 5.34 ventilation and water supply concept

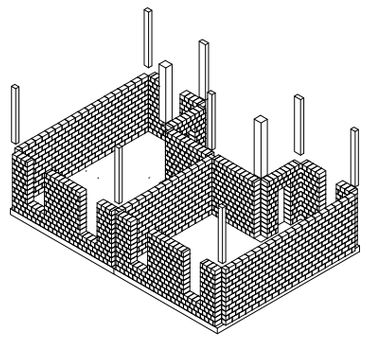
In order to further cut costs and to ensure sufficient water supply in an environment where drinking water shortages pose a great challenge, the relatively large roof surface will not only be used to protect from direct sunbeams, but also to collect rain water. The rain water will be collected in containers in the technical rooms of the units, and after its treatment will be channelled into the water system of the complex.



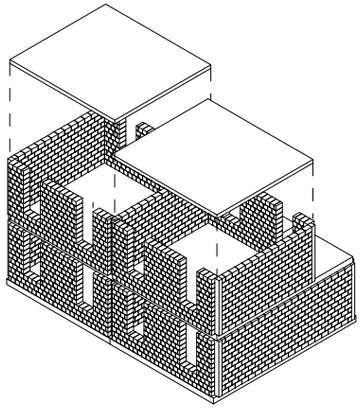
prefabricated foundations are placed on the ground



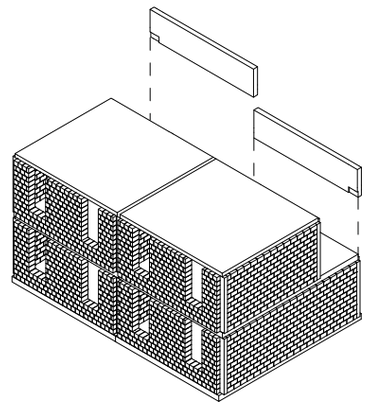
prefabricated brick walls are placed on the foundations



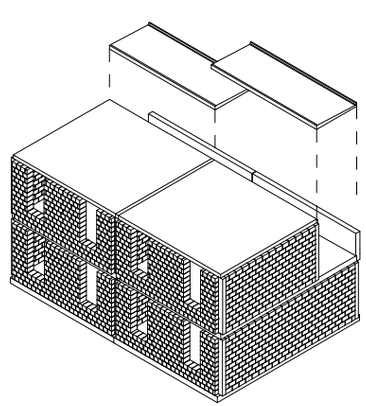
the single wall elements are connected with reinforced concrete, strengthening the bearing structure



prefabricated reinforced concrete ceiling elements are placed on the first floor structure



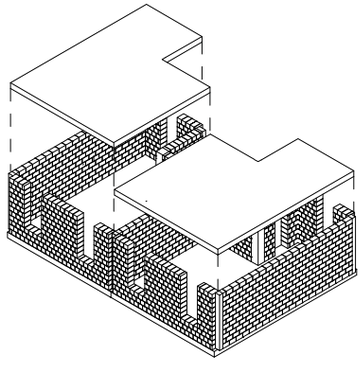
prefabricated corridor railings are placed on the ground floor ceilings



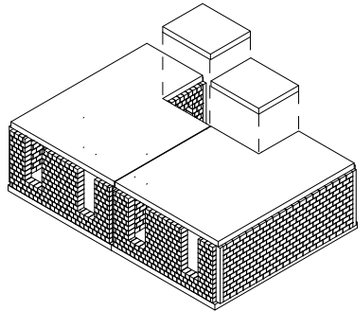
prefabricated reinforced concrete overhang elements are connected with the ceiling structure

Fig. 5.35 construction process

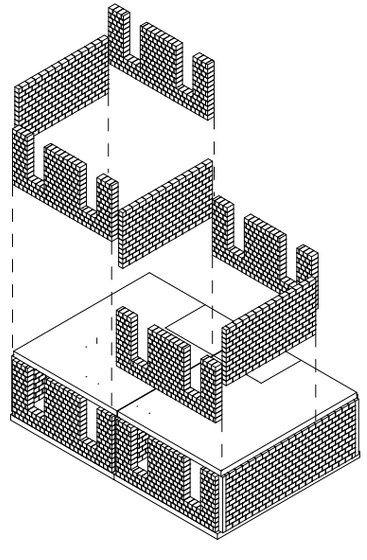
The construction of the complex is planed in a simple way with the application of prefabricated construction elements. The uniform construction process of the units allows for the optimisation of costs.



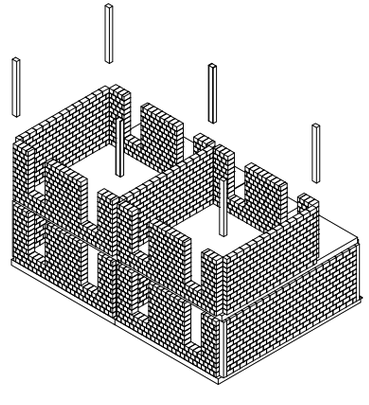
prefabricated reinforced concrete ceiling parts are placed on the ground floor structure



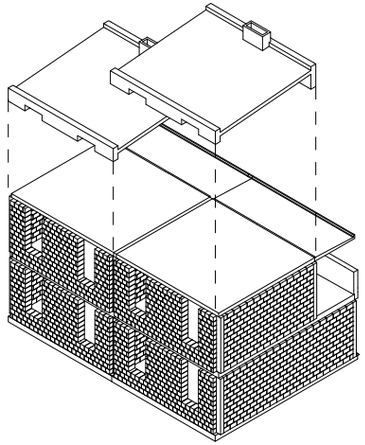
prefabricated reinforced concrete overhang elements are connected with the ceiling structure



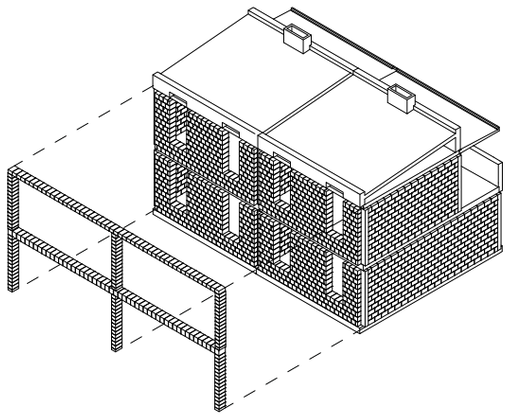
prefabricated brick walls are placed on the ceiling



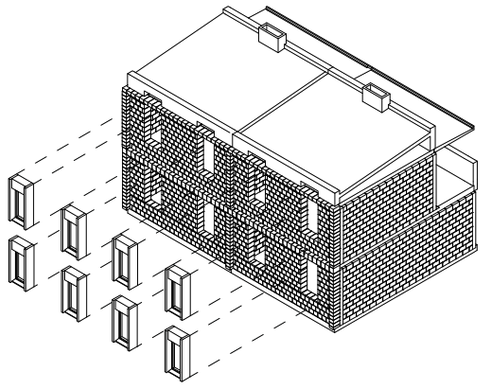
the single wall parts are connected with reinforced concrete strengthening the bearing structure



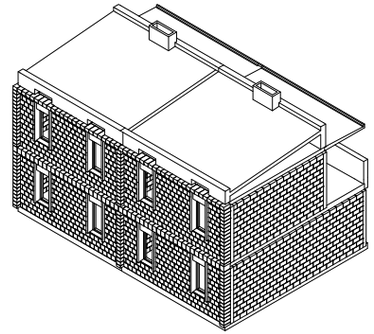
the prefabricated second roof layer is placed on the ceiling

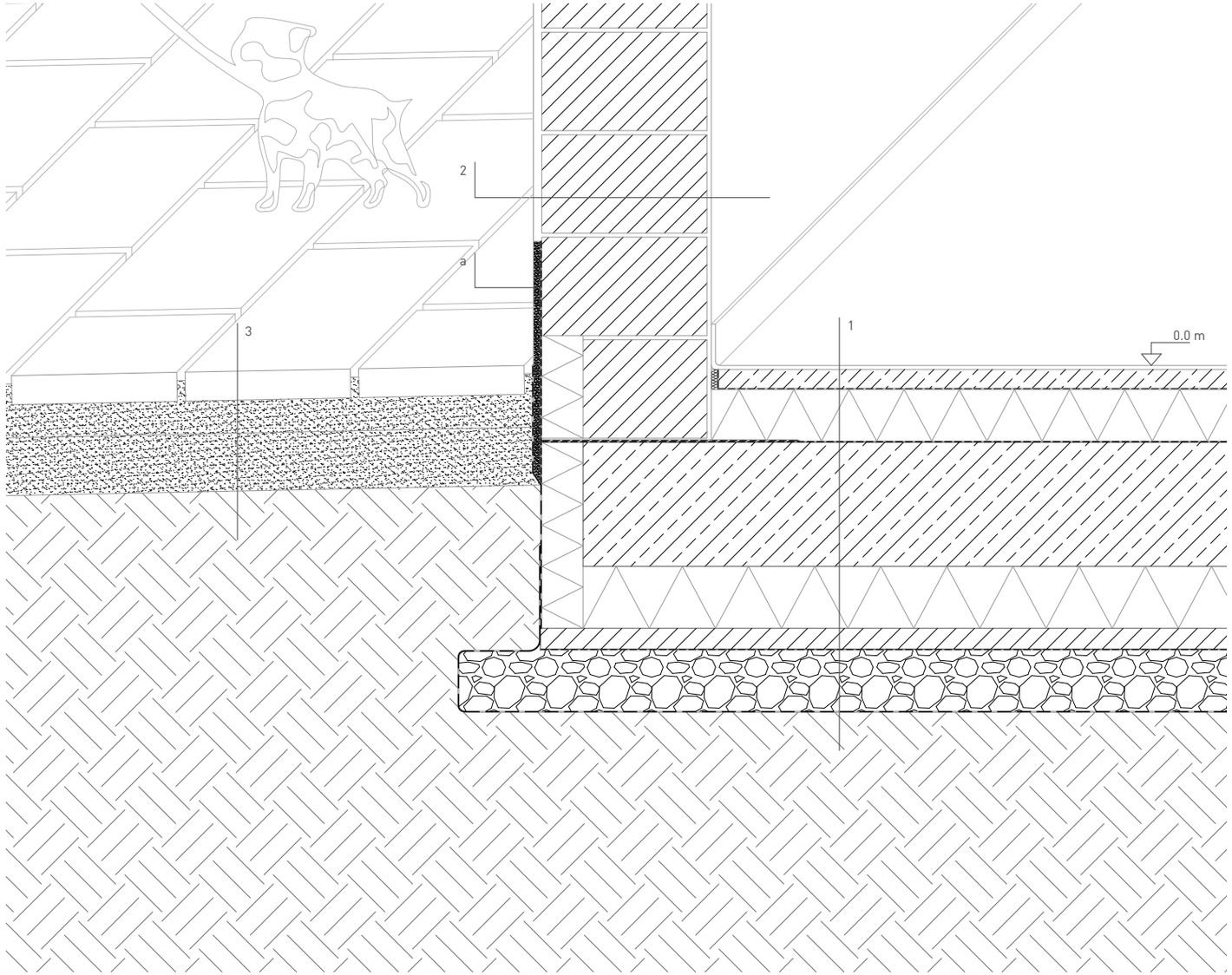


in order to avoid thermal bridges, the concrete elements are covered with an extra layer of bricks, at the same time also creating the aesthetic facade structure



the prefabricated windows with a built in ventilation system are placed in the wall openings



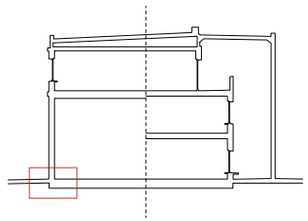


1.
10 mm floor finish – linoleum
45 mm screed
separating layer
125 mm thermal insulation
separating layer
300 mm reinforced concrete base slab
150 mm thermal insulation
50 mm concrete subbase
(prefabricated)
PE foil
150 mm capillary breaking layer – gravel bed
filter web layer
soil

2.
20 mm render
400/250/238 mm vertically perforated brick
(prefabricated brick wall system)
10 mm render

3.
70 mm precast concrete unit
30 mm sand bed
140 mm gravel bed
soil

a.
base render



Detail 01, scale 1:15

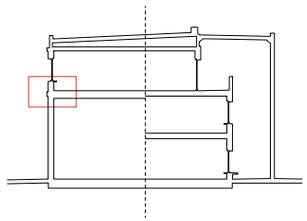
4.
10 mm floor finish – linoleum
45 mm screed
separating layer
50 mm impact sound insulation
300 mm reinforced concrete slab
(prefabricated)
50 mm mineral wool insulation
steel supporting structure, galvanized
20 mm glass wool acoustic board

b.
preframe window system with build-in
roller shutter and ventilation system

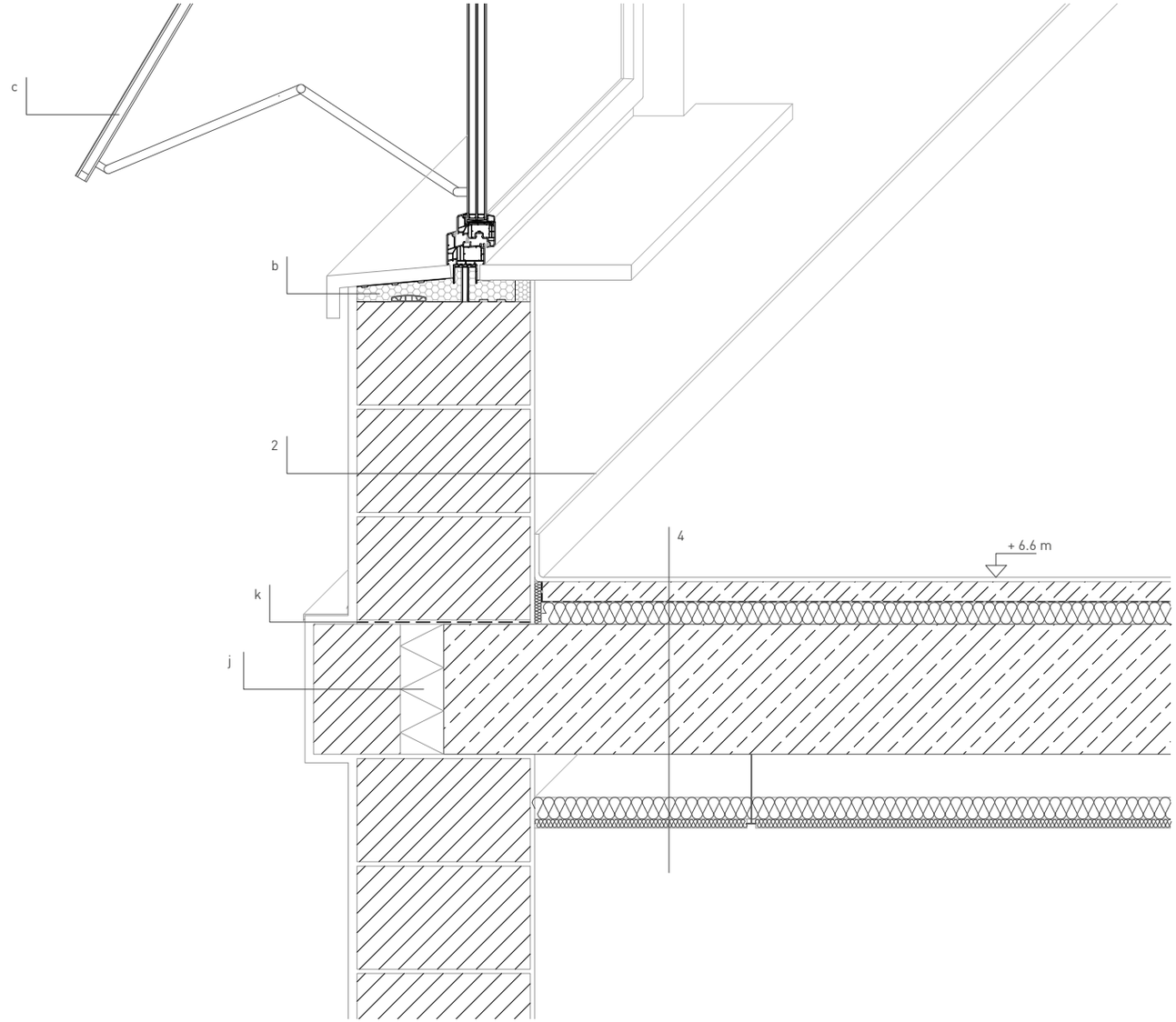
c.
tilting laths

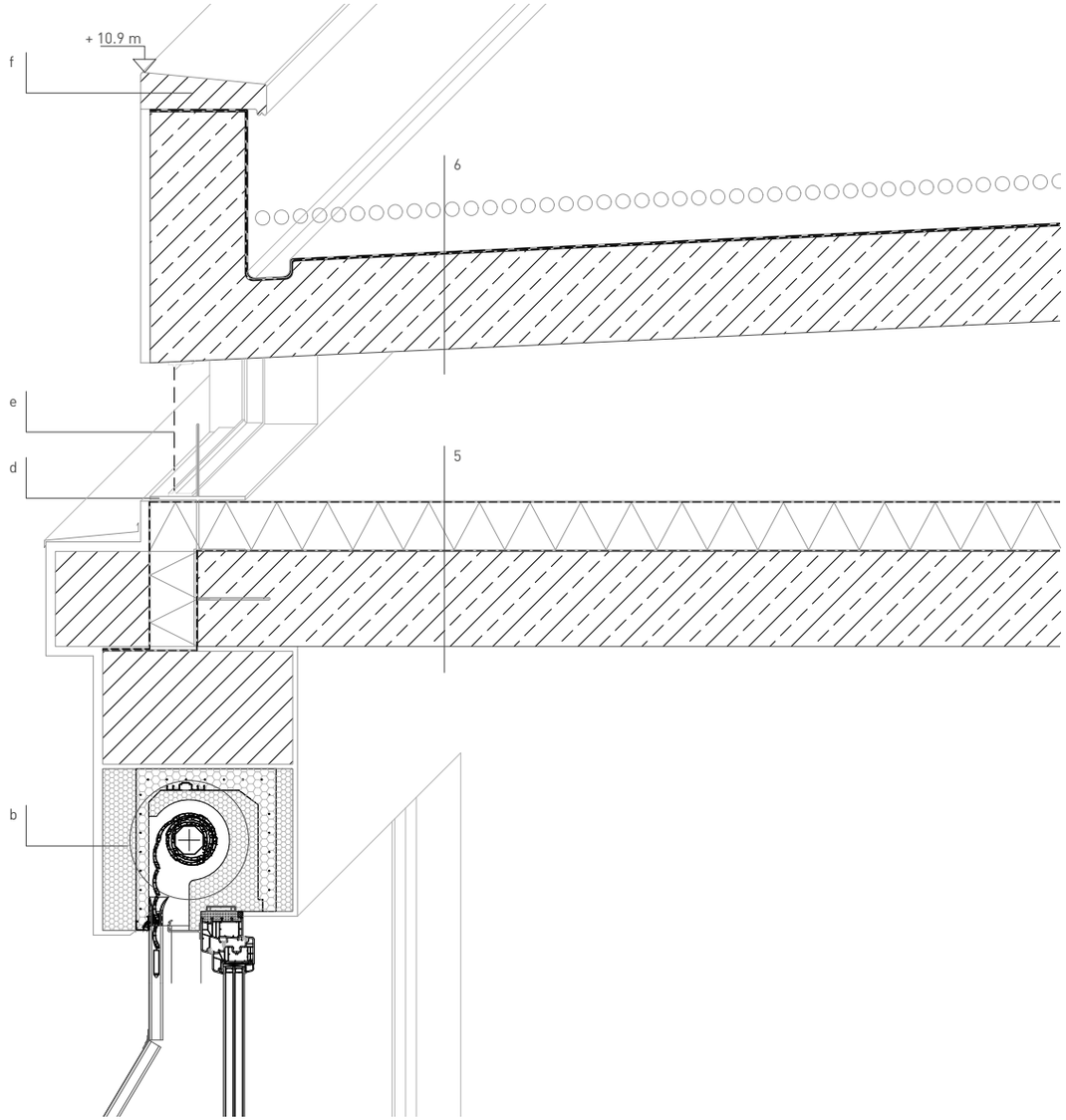
j.
100 mm PUR thermal insulation
vertically perforated brick
20 mm render

k.
separating layer



Detail 02, scale 1:15





5.
EPDM sealing layer
100 mm PUR thermal insulation
vapour barrier
200 mm reinforced concrete slab
(prefabricated)

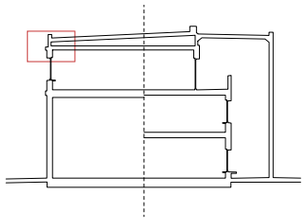
6.
90 mm (approx.) gravel
APP modified bituminous layer
vapour barrier
200 mm reinforced concrete slab
(prefabricated)

b.
preframe window system with build-in
roller shutter and ventilation system

d.
construction support element – steel galvanized

e.
1 mm aluminum sheet metal,
perforated in steel frame galvanized – bird control

f.
precast concrete attic finishing element



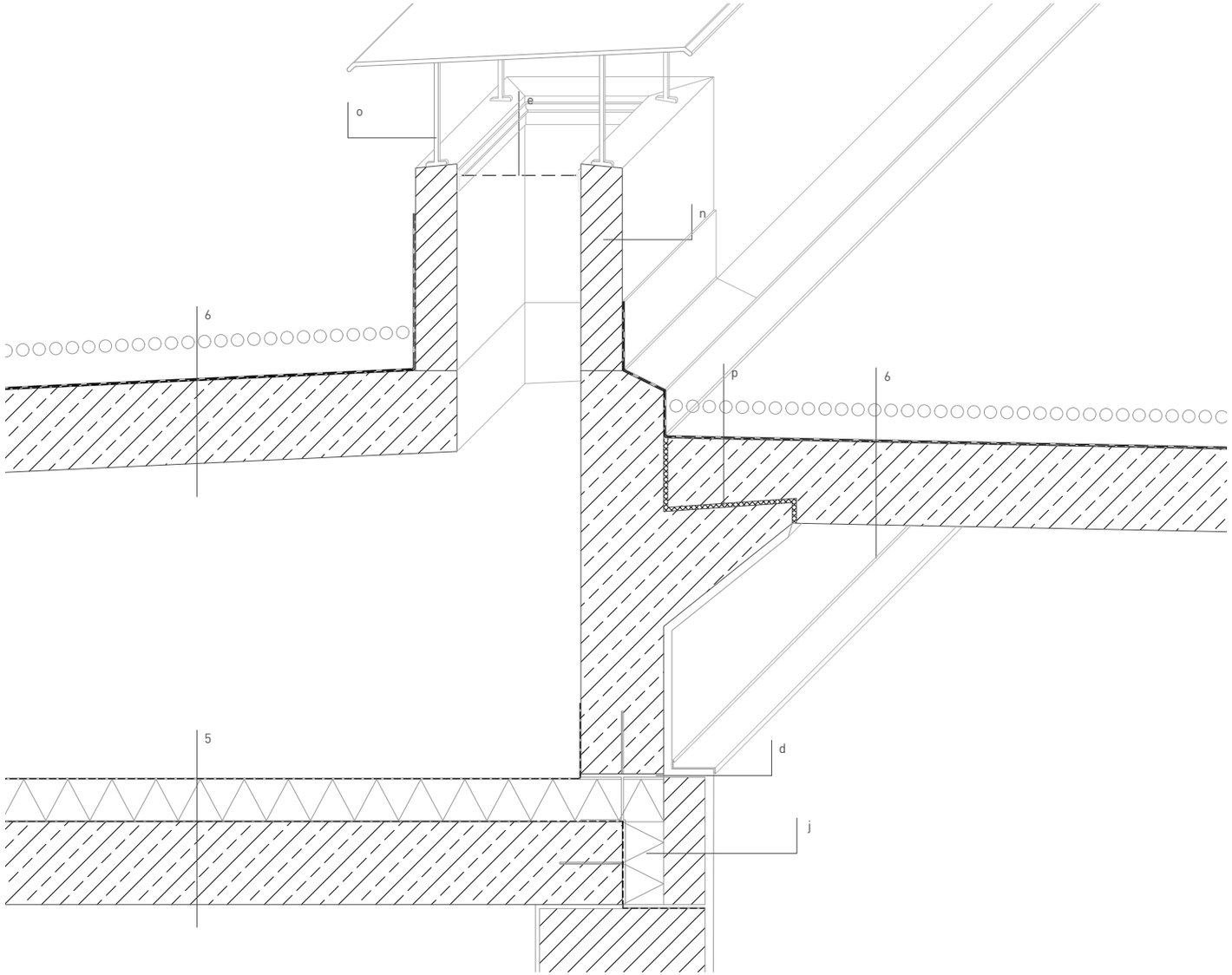
Detail 03, scale 1:15

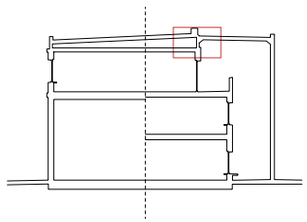
j.
100 mm PUR thermal insulation
vertically perforated brick
20 mm render

n.
precast concrete ventilation chimney

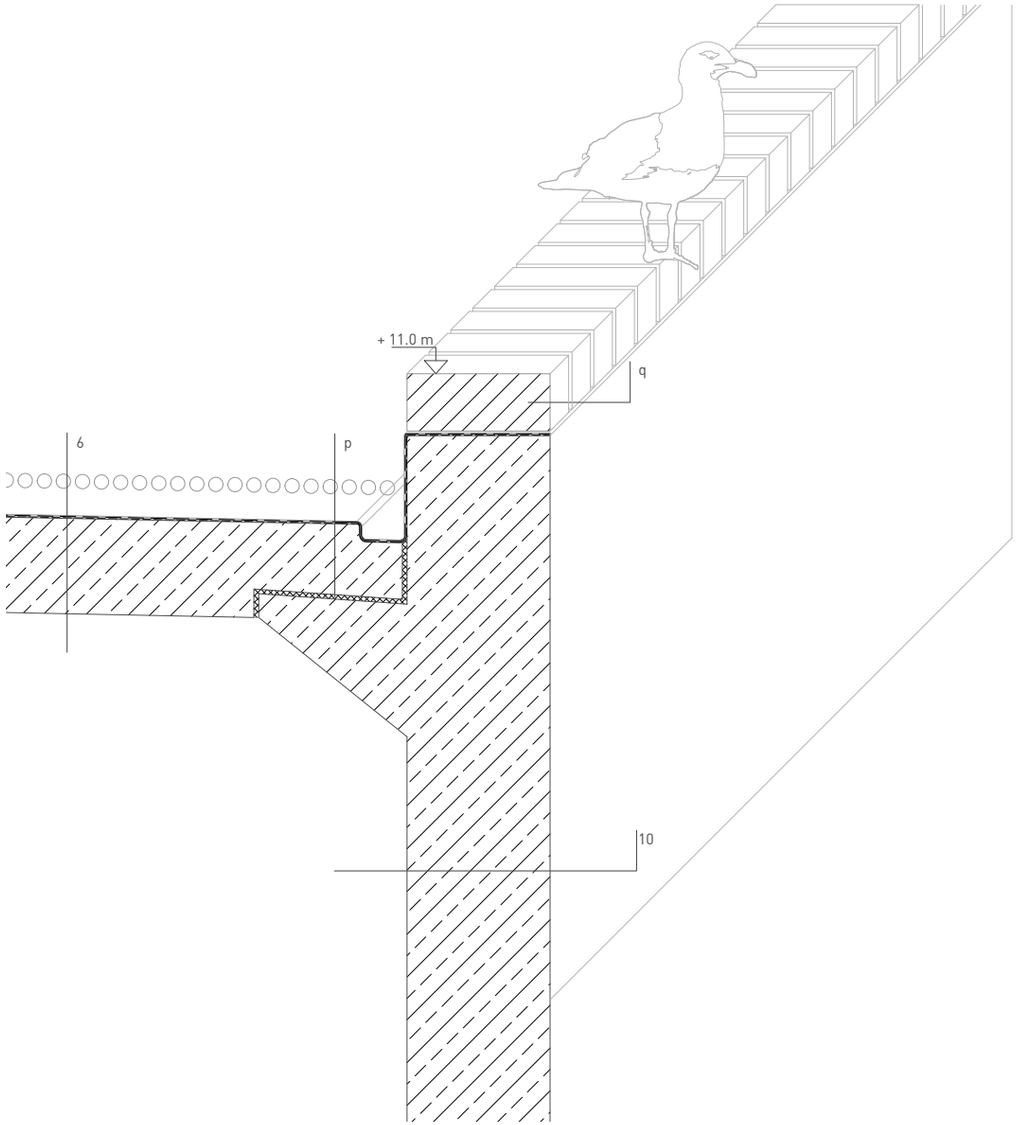
o.
chimney cap – steel galvanized

p.
flexible plastic joint sealant





Detail 04, scale 1:15

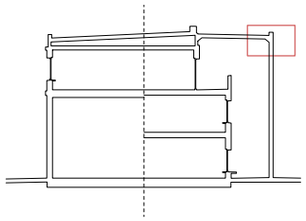


6.
90 mm (approx.) gravel
APP modified bituminous layer
vapour barrier
200 mm reinforced concrete slab
(prefabricated)

10.
300 mm pigmented reinforced concrete column
(prefabricated)

p.
flexible plastic joint sealant

q.
120/300/55 mm clinker brick



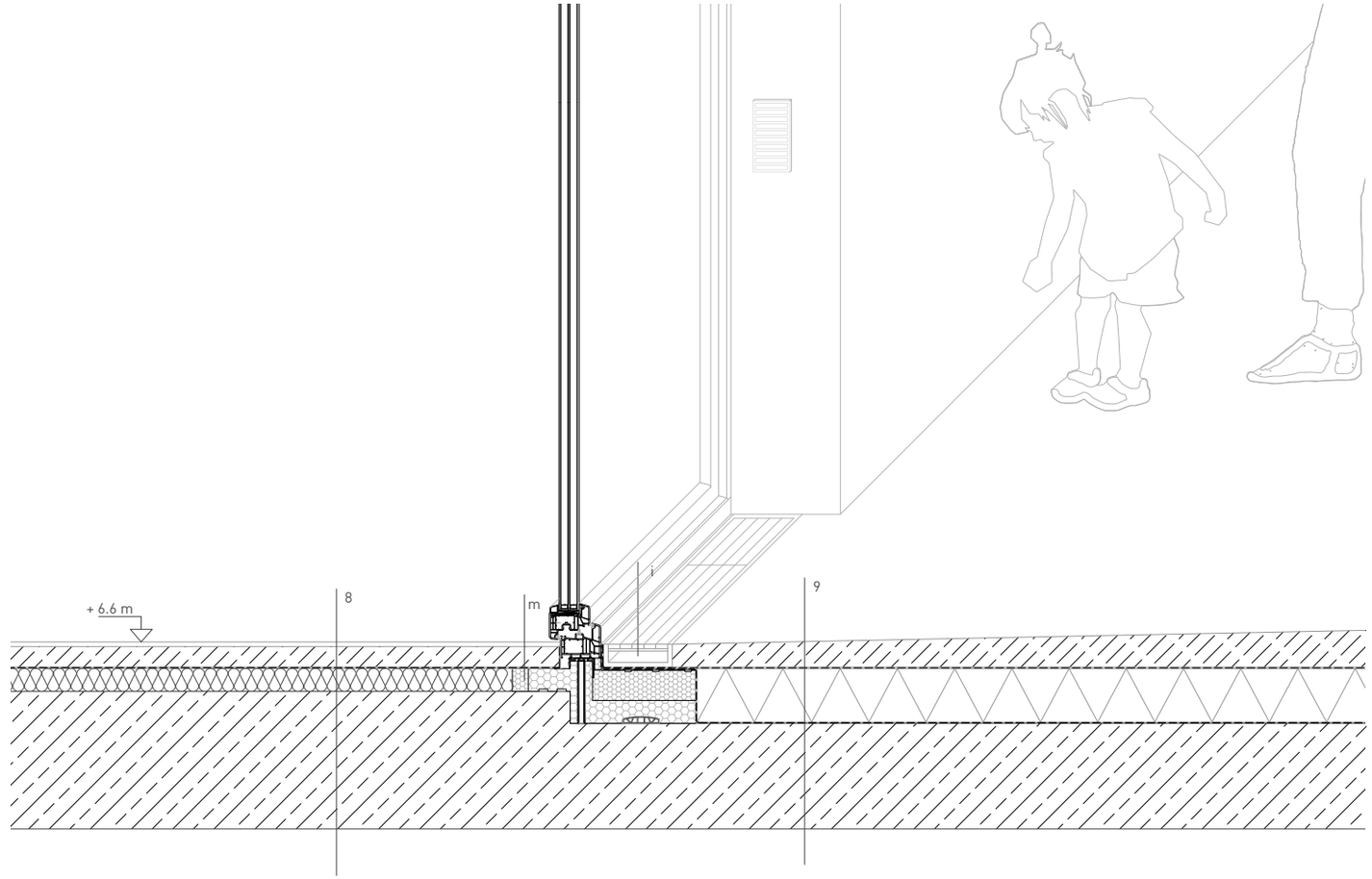
Detail 05, scale 1:15

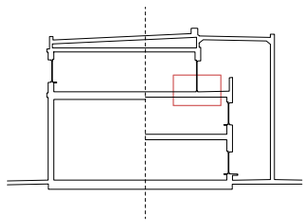
8.
10 mm floor finish – linoleum
45 mm screed
separating layer
50 mm impact sound insulation
300 mm reinforced concrete slab
(prefabricated)

9.
90 - 50 mm screed
separating layer
115 mm rigid foam thermal insulation
vapour barrier
230 mm reinforced concrete slab
(prefabricated)

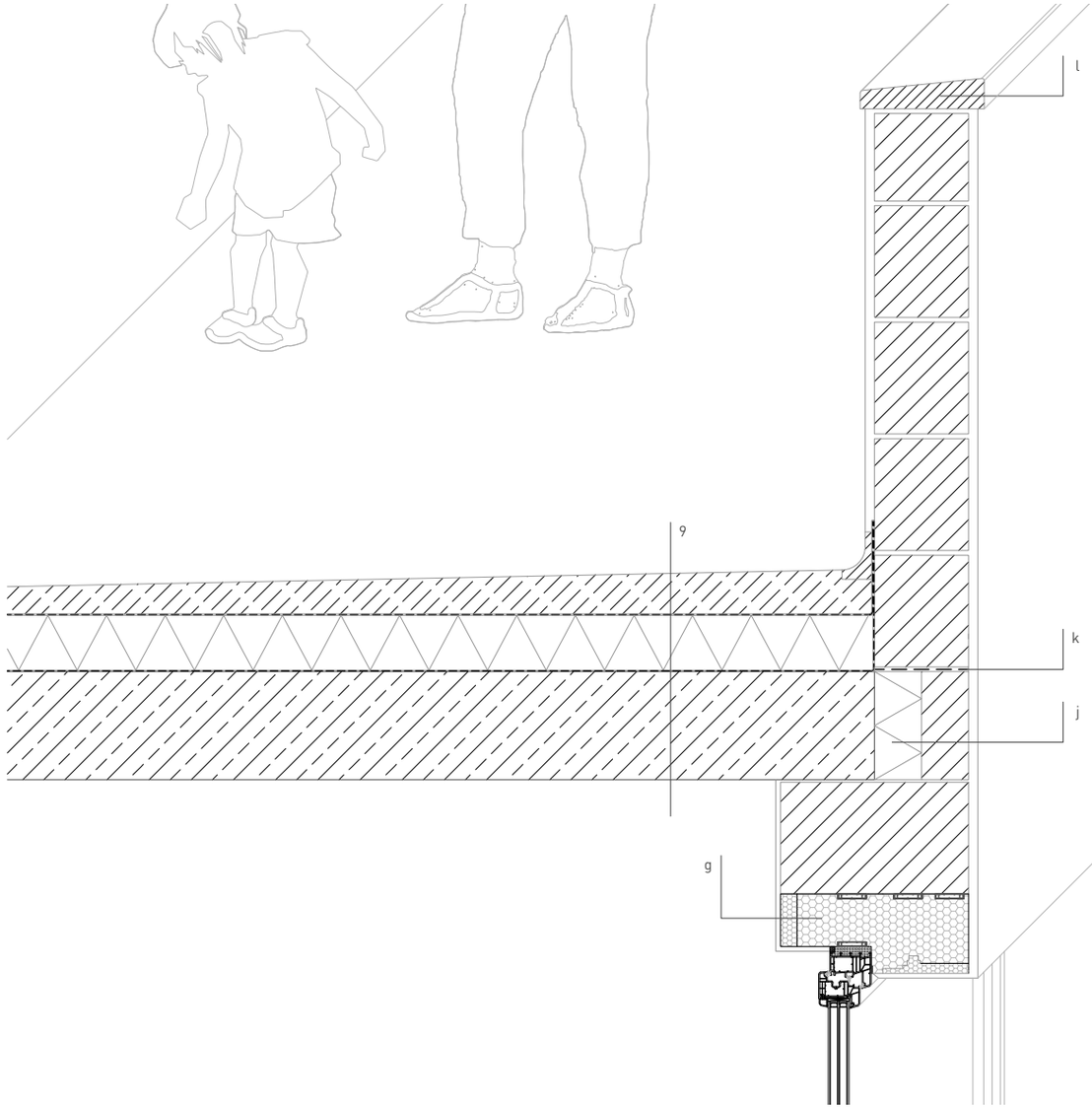
m.
preframe door system with build-in ventilation system

i.
drainage channel aluminum





Detail 06, scale 1:15



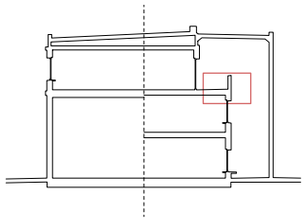
9.
90 - 50 mm screed
separating layer
115 mm rigid foam thermal insulation
vapour barrier
230 mm reinforced concrete slab
(prefabricated)

l.
precast concrete railing finishing element

k.
separating layer

j.
100 mm PUR thermal insulation
vertically perforated brick
20 mm render

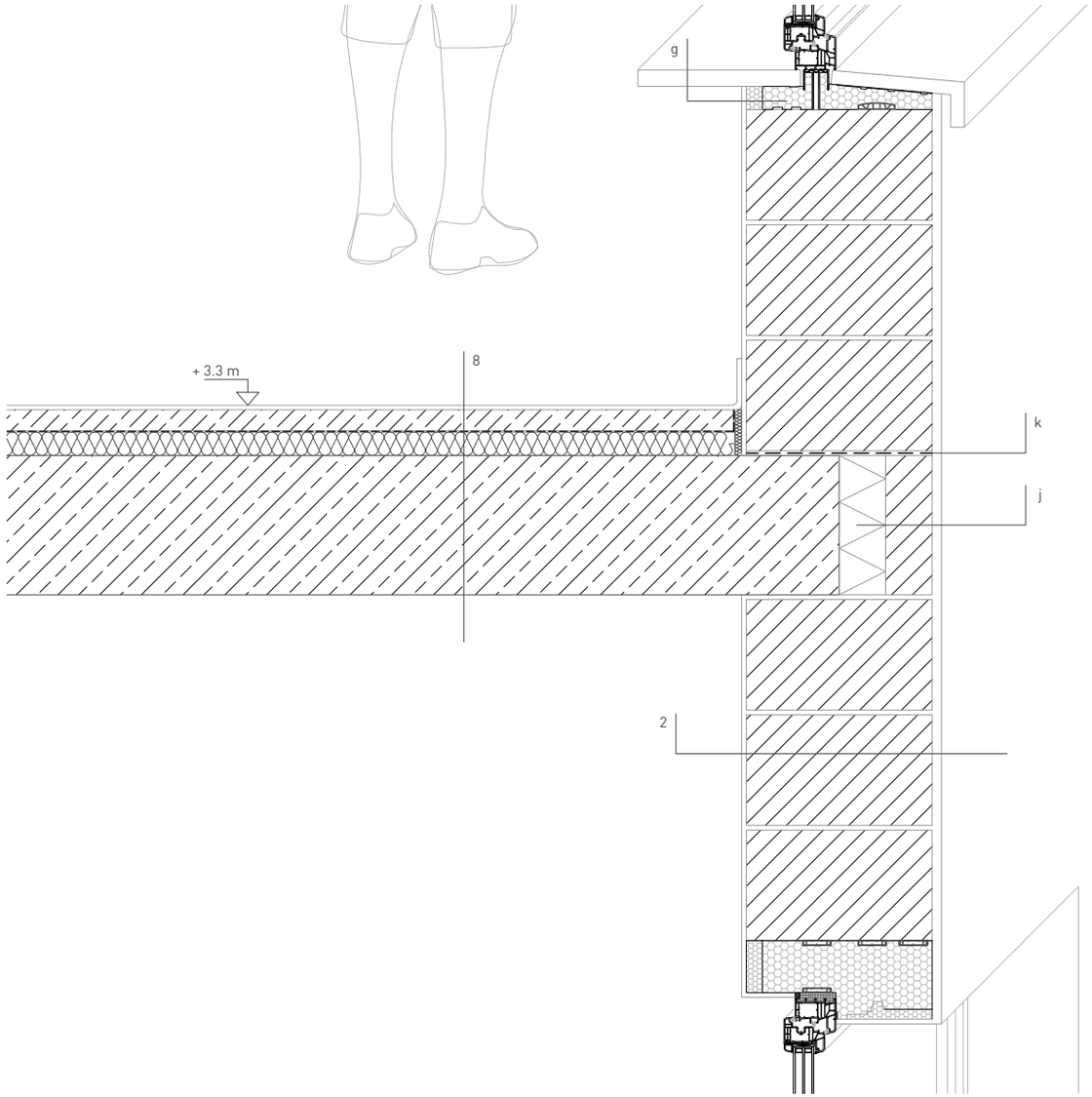
g.
preframe window system
with build-in ventilation system

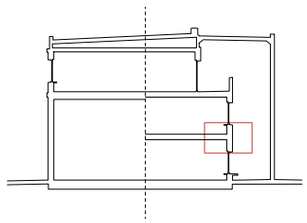


Detail 07, scale 1:15

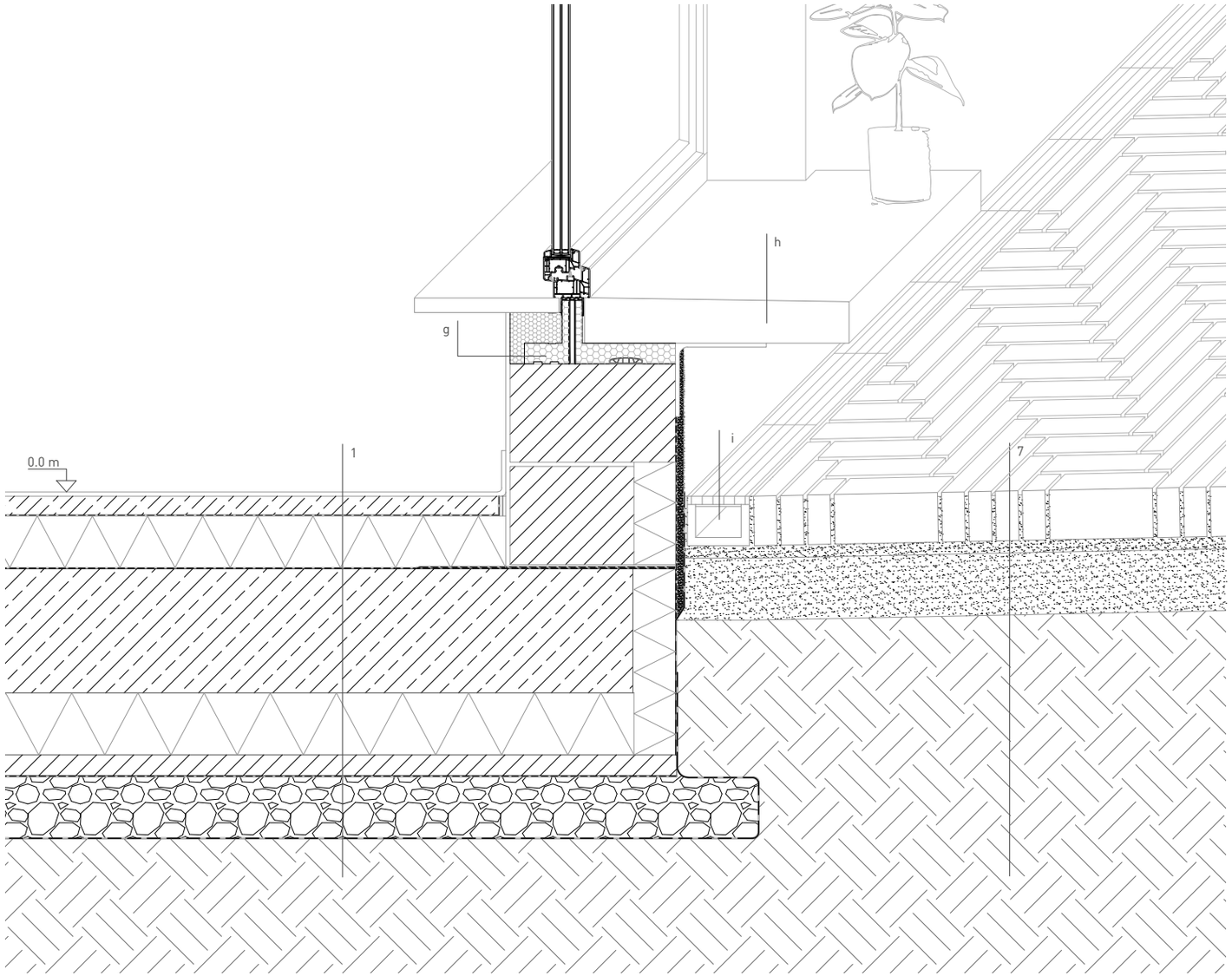
8.
10 mm floor finish – linoleum
45 mm screed
separating layer
50 mm impact sound insulation
300 mm reinforced concrete slab
(prefabricated)

2.
20 mm render
400/250/238 mm vertically perforated brick
(prefabricated brick wall system)
10 mm render





Detail 08, scale 1:15



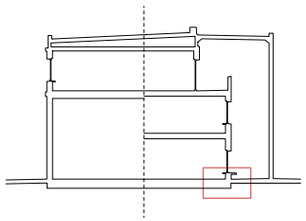
1.
10 mm floor finish – linoleum
45 mm screed
separating layer
125 mm thermal insulation
separating layer
300 mm reinforced concrete base slab
150 mm thermal insulation
50 mm concrete subbase - prefabricated
PE foil
150 mm capillary breaking layer – gravel bed
filter web layer
soil

7.
120 mm brick
30 mm mortar
150 mm gravel bed
Soil

g.
preframe window system
with build-in ventilation system

h.
precast pigmented concrete window sill
supported by steel angle 200/200/10 mm

i.
drainage channel aluminum

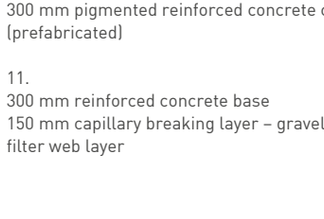


Detail 09, scale 1:15

3.
70 mm precast concrete unit
30 mm sand bed
140 mm gravel bed
soil

10.
300 mm pigmented reinforced concrete column
(prefabricated)

11.
300 mm reinforced concrete base
150 mm capillary breaking layer – gravel bed
filter web layer



Detail 10, scale 1:15

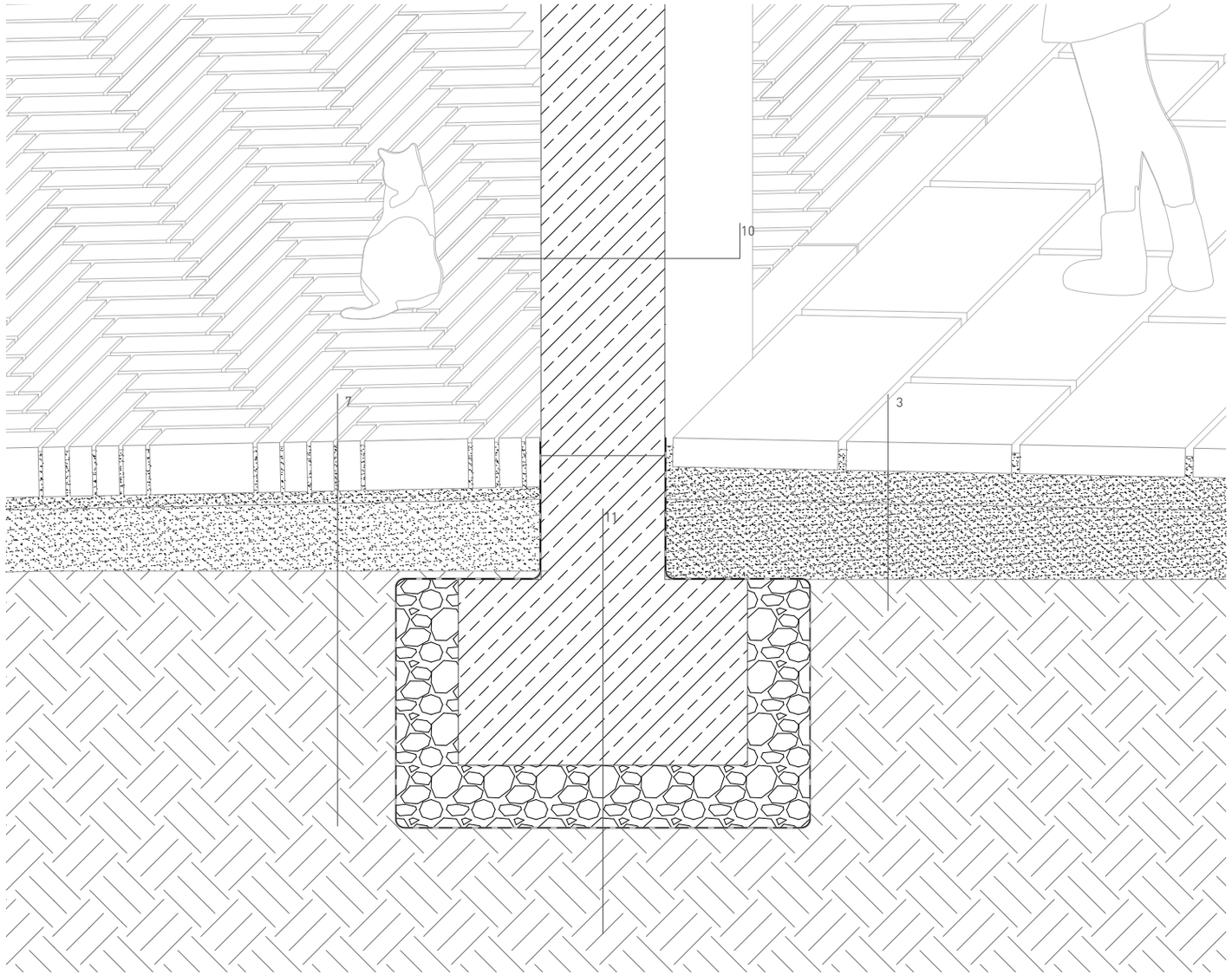


Fig. 0.06 Giorgio de Chirico, Melancholia, 1912

At the beginning of 2018, some 150 Tunisian migrants chose to sleep on the stairs of the city's main church as a sign of protest against the decision refusing their transfer to other European countries. Only a few weeks before this event, other migrants sewed their mouths shut with needle and thread, also protesting on the church steps. In March 2018 the refugee centre in Lampedusa was once again set on fire, following the arsons of 2009, 2011 and 2016. Following this incident, the Italian government decided to close and repair the centre, once again.[1] Reacting to these events, Mayor of Lampedusa Salvatore Martello states: *"A nightmare is over."*[2]

Years go by, and Lampedusa is still facing the same problems. While there are changes in social sentiments, the core of the problem remains unchanged. The task of an architect in this situation is still an open question.

The presented project does not aim at providing a clear answer. Its aim is to touch upon and research architectural solutions from the Mediterranean, seeking a simple language that can address contemporary topics in architecture. It follows the conviction that a great deal of knowledge can be gained by simply observing.

While creating this book and the project it focuses on, with time it became clear that the complexity of the problem discussed allows no more than simply offering an idea, one amongst many.

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Introduction

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2. Giuffrida Angela, 'Do-gooders' no more: Lampedusans turn against refugee tide as patience wears thin, 08.08.2017, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/jul/08/lampedusa-turns-back-mayor-refugee-crisis-italy-north-africa
3. See Longhi Giuseppe, Conti Francesca, Bellina Diletta, Steiner Anna, Origoni Franco, Freschi Anna,
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4. See Daniela, DeBono, After the mayor's defeat, Lampedusian voters face a global media backlash, 30.06.2017, http://theconversation.com/after-the-mayors-defeat-lampedusian-voters-face-a-global-media-backlash-80340
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1. The phenomenon of migration

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2. United Nations: Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Article 14, Paris 10.12.1948
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Thank you.

This book is dedicated to all the people I encountered while working on this project, especially those who will not be able to read it anymore.