

Between Camp and Slum

Informal settlement as a major process for the survival of a displaced population in Sabra and Shatila

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LES DIFFÉRENTES
 TYPOLOGIES

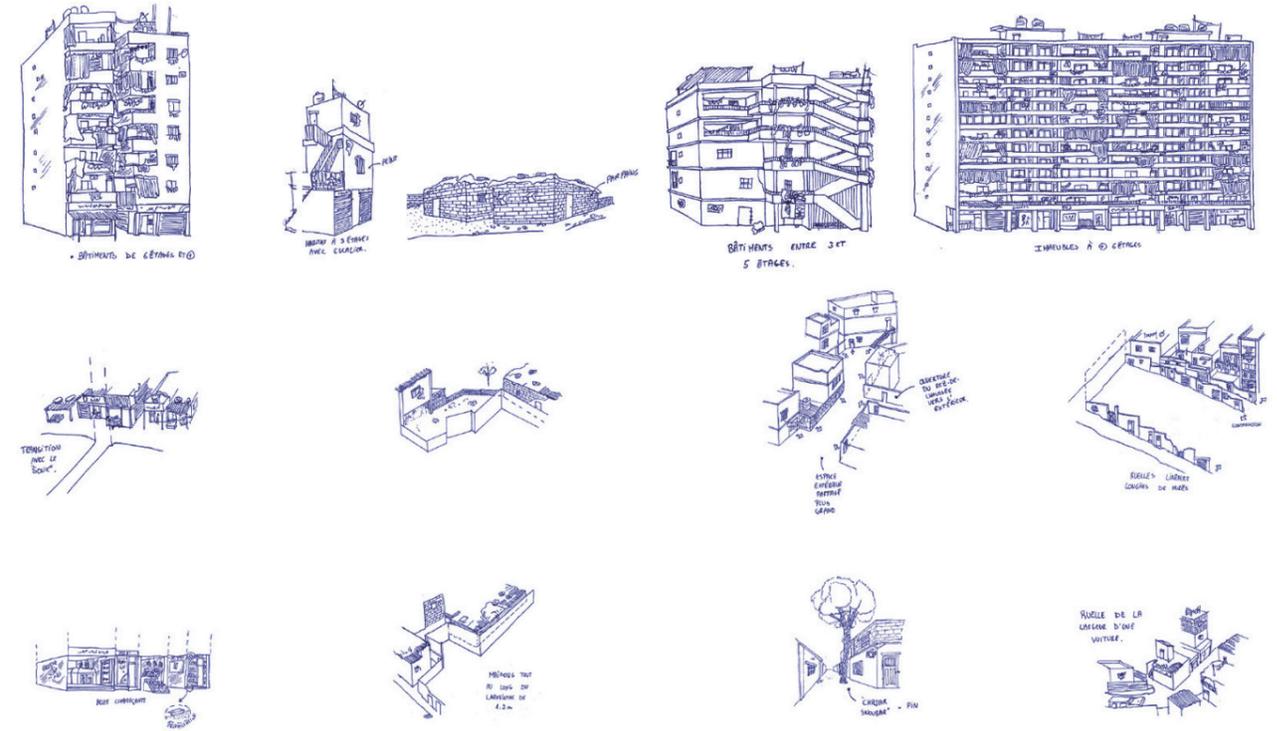


Fig. 2 - Informal settlements typologies at different scales.

Immersed in a world where economic crises intensify, displaced populations, including refugees and migrants, find themselves grappling not only with social inequalities and political conflicts but also with the stark denial of their fundamental rights. It is in camps and slums that many are forced to live in challenging conditions, making do with what is offered (and often not offered) on the fringes of our societies.

These populations often enter an informal settlement process, where notions of survival, home, and temporality overlap. Created in contexts of urgency and/or poverty, these so-called "relegation" or "transitory" spaces are established with the idea of accommodating individuals for a limited period.

Fundamental questions arise regarding the evolution of these spaces and the stance an architect should take towards them.

Focusing specifically on the Sabra and Shatila camps and slums (Fig. 1), located on the southern periphery

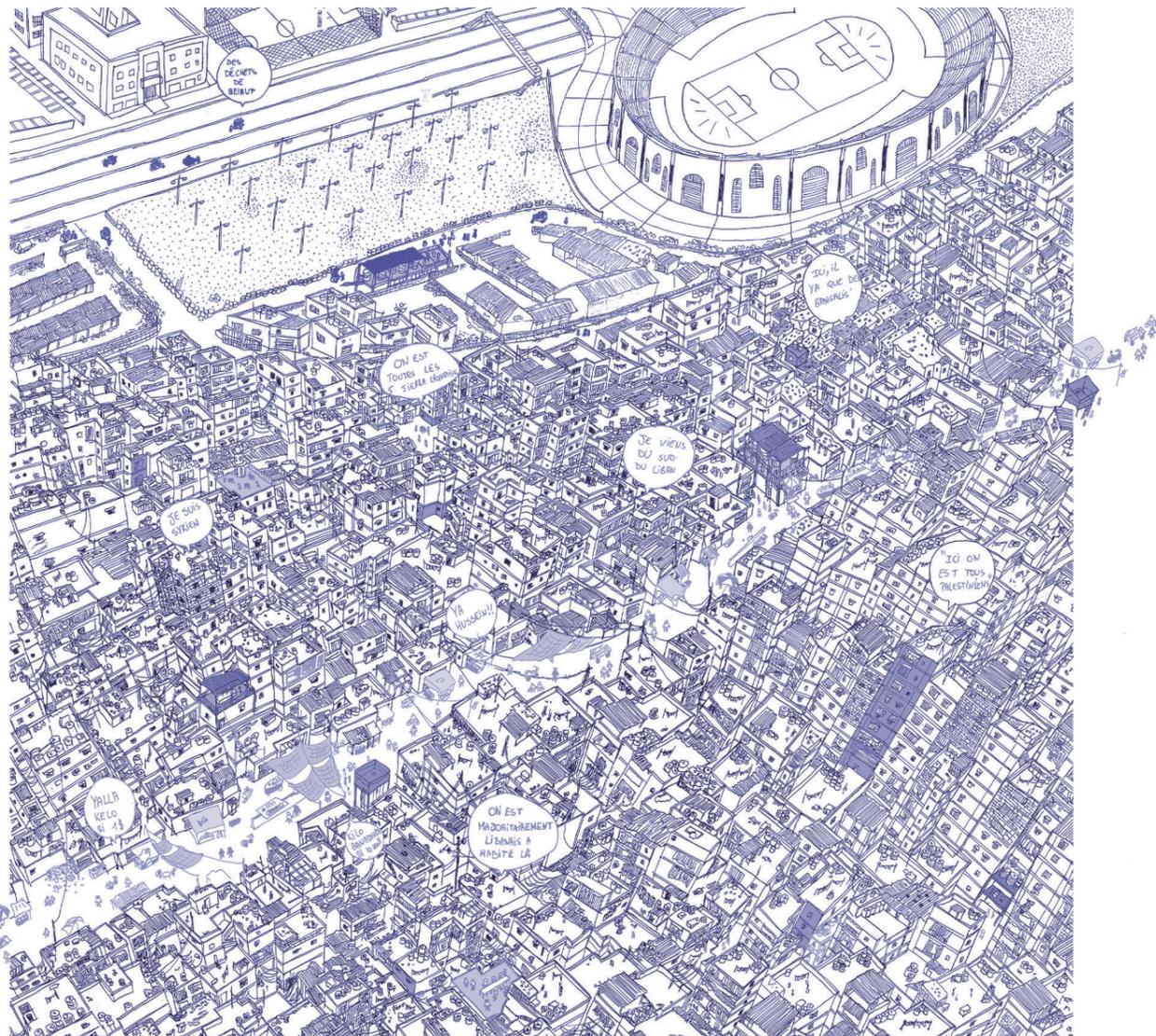
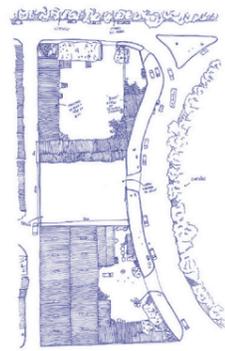
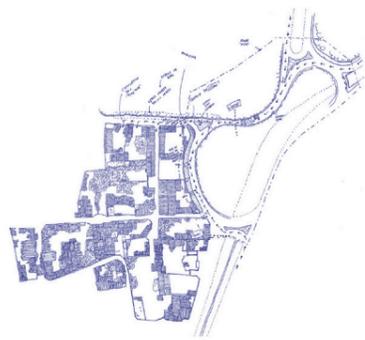


Fig. 1 - Sabra and Shatila camps and slums.



Fig. 3 - Informal settlements at the scale of the city.



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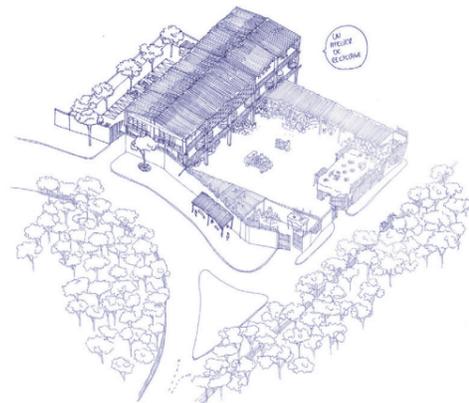


Fig. 4 - A recycling system for the city.

of Beirut, Lebanon, this research addresses various aspects of these informal settlements through different scales (Figs. 2, 3, 4), including the temporality of existing structures and proposed future interventions. Sabra and Shatila become a place where preconceived ideas dissolve, and a new understanding emerges through the movement of populations, their cohabitation over time, and their territorial appropriations in space. Delving into an informal place like this is not a marginal challenge; it constitutes the daily routine for over 1/7th of the global population. This work testifies to the challenges of daily life, the inhabitants' way of life in Sabra and Shatila, and raises awareness of how quickly a place like this evolves.

Transitioning from ephemeral structures to a lasting densification of the place (Fig. 5), everything is orchestrated and implemented by the inhabitants according to their desires and needs. Adopting construction and planning methods unique to them, these inhabitants improvise living spaces and informal systems to survive. The trace of an architect is minimal, if any.

The proposed interventions (Fig. 6,7,8) do not aim to bind an idea to a specific time but, instead, act strategically by providing a toolkit that enables inhabitants to modify a space according to their needs while providing social infrastructures. The goal is not to mimic a city frozen in time and erase all human aspects of these neighborhoods, but to enable every inhabitant to meet their basic needs and access a fundamental right: the right to the city.

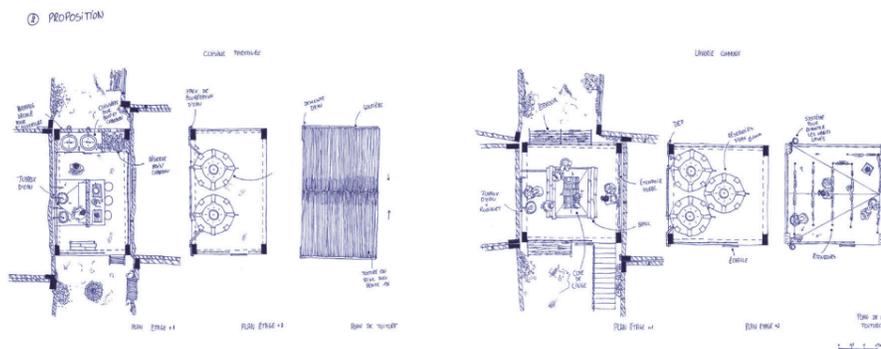
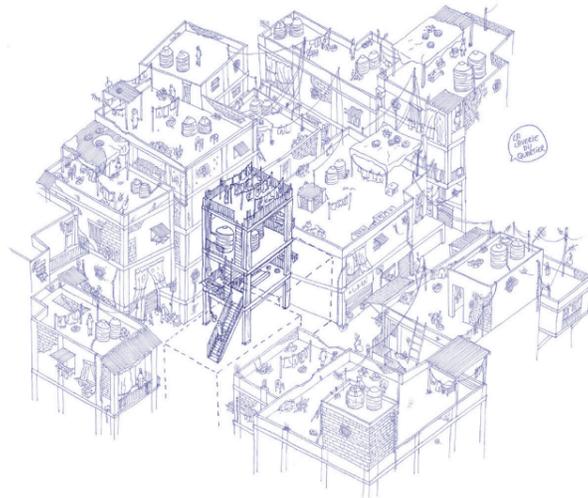
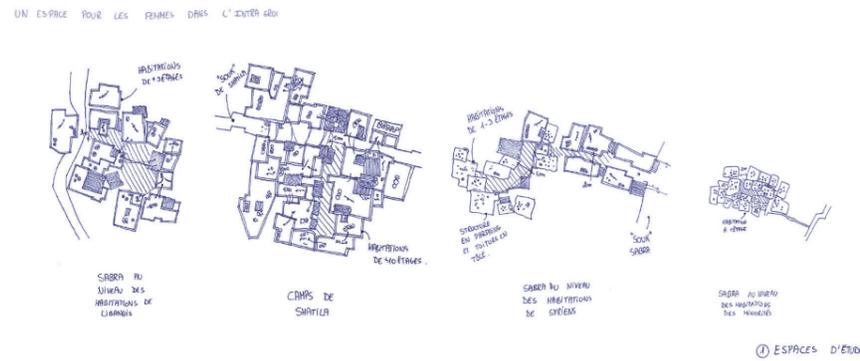


Fig. 5 - Proposition. From ephemeral structure to densification of the space.

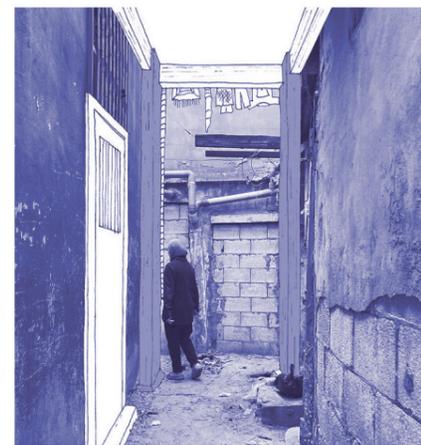
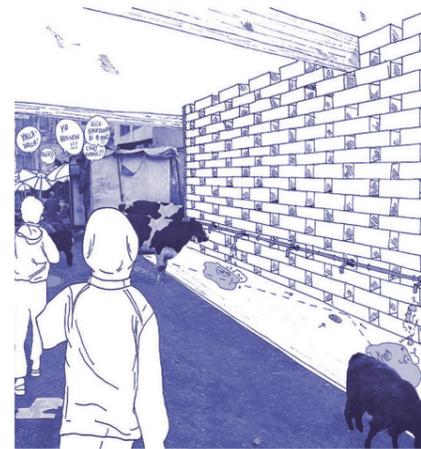
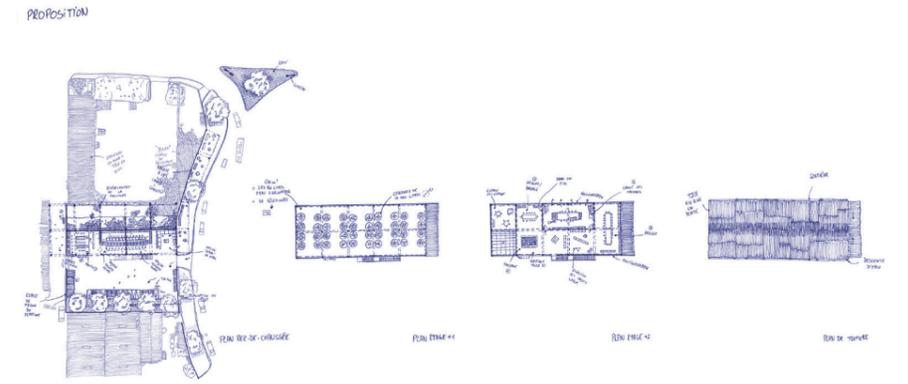


Fig. 7 - Minimal intervention through architecture.



6. Proposition. Planning methods improved by the inhabitants.

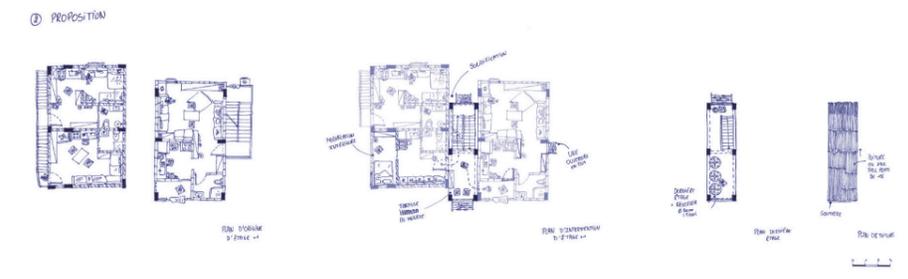
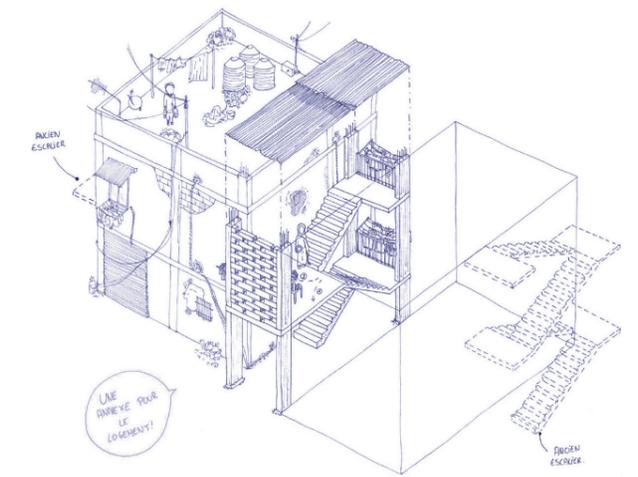
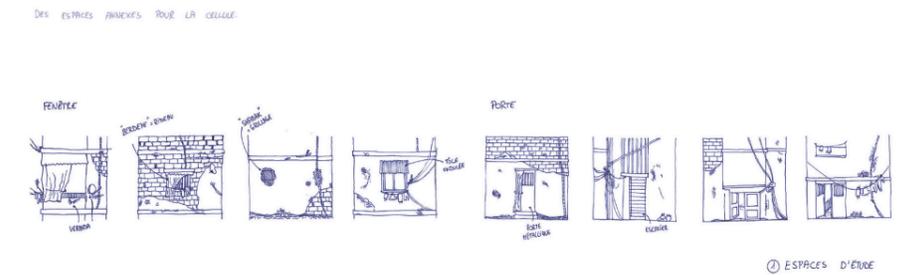


Fig. 8 - Proposed intervention. A toolkit.