Proceedings

EURAU 2016

European Symposium on Research in Architecture and Urban Design

Ion Mincu University of Architecture and Urbanism
Bucharest, Romania

http://eurau2016.uauim.ro

Bucharest, September 28 - 30th, 2016

IN BETWEEN SCALES

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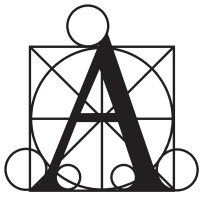

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EURAU 2016 European Symposium on Research in Architecture and Urban Design: In Between Scales

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EURAU 2016
European Symposium on Research in Architecture and Urban Design
Ion Mincu University of Architecture and Urbanism Bucharest, Romania

Introduction

The eighth edition of the European Symposium on Research in Architecture and Urban Design will be held from the 28th to the 30th of September 2016 in Bucharest.

The seminar will take place at the "Ion Mincu" University of Architecture and Urban Planning from Bucharest in collaboration with the institutions that organized the previous editions:

> École Nationale Supérieure d'Architecture de Marseille, on doctoral research (2004);
>
> École Nationale Supérieure d'Architecture et Paysage de Lille, on large scale (2005);
>
> Association des Instituts Supérieurs Brussels-Liège-Mons (IESA), on cultural heritage (2006);
>
> Escuela Superior de Arquitectura de la Universidad Politécnica de Madrid, under the theme cultural landscape (2008);
>
> Facoltà di Architettura dell'Università degli Studi di Napoli Federico II, under the theme venustas (2010);
>
> Faculdade de Arquitectura da Universidade do Porto, on public space and contemporary city (2012);
>
> Faculty of Architecture of the Istanbul Technical University, on composite cities (2014).

The project EURAU is constituted within a network of schools and researchers in Architecture and Urbanism, meeting every two years to share the status of their investigation. In the long-term, it is intended to lead to the creation of a physical meeting and deposit space with all the research undertaken and ongoing in Europe to facilitate the sharing of resources and deepening of knowledge in these scientific areas.

The main concern of the EURAU is to establish itself as a place of debate and discussion of thematic disciplines of Architecture, City and Town Planning.

The theme of EURAU 2016 is "In Between Scales."

Assoc.Prof. Beatrice-Gabriela JÖGER, Arch, PhD, UAUIM, Bucharest, Romania

IN BETWEEN SCALES

Bucharest, September 28-30th 2016

History

The EURAU project was initiated by the French Ministry of Culture, when, in 2004, it launched the proposal of an annual symposium for researchers dealing with Research in Architecture and Urbanism. The various editions were organized by different European schools of Architecture with a coordinated effort by a broad group of university professors and researchers.

The purpose of this initiative is to enable the confrontation between researchers concerned with the Architecture and the City on the European scene.

The acronym EURAU describes the congregation of the objectives which motivate these events: EU for "European Union", R for "Research", A for "Architecture" and U for "Urbanism".

Important Dates

December 2015	Call for papers
January 15th, 2016	Abstract and registration possible
April 15th, 2016	Abstract Submission Deadline
May 5th, 2016	Notification of acceptance
June 30th, 2016	Deadline for Final Paper submission for the publication of the proceedings
June 30th, 2016	Registration Deadline for Authors
September 28th-30th 2016	Conference dates
October 1st-2nd 2016	Post-Conference Tours

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TEMPORARY TOOLS FOR CHILD HOUSING WELFARE

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Abstract

In the last 10 years the cut of health and social services and the cut of public investment in housing policy have increase the unsatisfied social requirements of the population.

This occurred when the Great Recession, which was triggered by a financial meltdown that started in the United States and spread rapidly across the globe, and has inflicted from 2008 the economic crisis on children. The gap between rich and poor families has widened in an alarming number of industrialized countries.

The *Innocenti Report Card series* show, in the past five years, rising numbers of children and their families have experienced difficulty in satisfying their most basic material and educational needs.

In this scenario the families with children that live in critical and uncomfortable situation are increasing. Often the situations is so critical and alarming that much more is the numbers of children turned away from the family to ensure his well-being.

Starting from an analysis of the young people and his situation post crisis, the study translate the results of some recent local research about children needs and his unsatisfied social requirements, into a new model of younger housing that could prevent the long term stay in traditional structure for children removed from families and at the same time, meet the contemporary housing needs.

The welfare system is called to review his priority of children services and first of all to design new social tools, like residential and semi-residential community for removed children, to answer at a new educational project, made of integration and temporary solutions. It's necessary to rethinking the structures for children removed like "space of transition" in which the children stay like in a big family but to return in his own regenerated family as soon as possible.

An event so relevant have meaningful economic and social effect that necessarily involve also a changed and new thought "architectural-design" of the system properties usability and of the re-planning and temporary reuse of the houses and spaces.

The study focused on a real pilot-case based on public property in the Municipality of RO, Emilia Romagna.

The idea is to think up an integrated system economic-technical/design-social that allow a new welfare system to be able to transform the assistance children's needs into places and spaces economically sustainable, usable and that valorized the property public and private, creating virtuous net of solidarity, economic, fairness with temporary residences and proximity service.

The aim is to identify new common tools and languages between architectural children temporary housing projects and the social project for young people, integrated in a temporary and proximity model.

Temporary reuse of space becomes sustainable strategy because it introduces a significant new concept of use of the social assistance residence: not only space for integration and most secure residence, in which to put the children, but a new place of temporary living, in which children it is

educated and integrated into a community along with others, in a physical and spatial transition, confidential place regenerated for the common use.

Proximity, realized with a participatory-inductive method for the stakeholders and proximity in the architectural project, changing parting elements into architectural elements of inclusion: borders and margins are areas of proximity, hybrid, in which the meeting also social happens.

It therefore introduces a new regenerative potential, not only space today unused and disposal of public property, but a much more interesting and explosive social mix, capable of intercepting social need, planning services, community response and lower costs. Create of light intervention strategies, which, through a minimal impact, work on the spaces left vacant.

It now intends to work on the concept of proximity: social and architectural.

Social through a new concept of understanding the detention of minors in public structures that include social integration processes, architectural in which the common indoor and outdoor spaces (gardens, spaces for socializing as for the well-being of the body or recreation) becomes an interesting system in the definition of barrier, no longer understood as a border or boundary, but as margin buying thick and that is modulated to meet the different requirements of use.

Border and margin are concepts that refer to a variety of situations that are adjacent to something that is physically recognizable. Borders, and margins are areas of proximity, hybrid, in which happens the meeting, also social.

The study provides the basic elements required to plan for housing and social services children's oriented, through regeneration of a old vacant school building

Keywords: temporary housing, regeneration, border, margin, hybrid, proximity.

1 SOCIAL FRAMEWORK: FAMILY AND CHILD FRAGILITY

The global recession, which began with the financial crisis of 2008, has had a great impact on families, increasing the situations of financial hardship in households with children and often worsening the social decay and caretaking problems in family contexts that are already in difficulty.

The number of families in difficulty is on the increase, with hardship in childcare responsibilities, the precariousness of relationships, and solitude.

A family remains the ideal place for bringing up children, and for this reason, as expressly envisaged by the New York Convention, governments must offer it support in performing these duties. But if the family is not sufficiently protective or does not guarantee a child's harmonious growth, it is necessary to intervene.

No less important, the constant increase in the migration phenomenon, involving entire populations fleeing from hunger, poverty, and wars, brings to our shores increasingly higher numbers of unaccompanied foreign minors, who must be placed in special structures designed for children.

The phenomenon of children estranged from their families of origin or travelling alone, placed in reception facilities, is a complex situation which bears witness, on the one hand, to the fragility of families and the social, cultural, and economic crisis of a territory and, on the other, to government efforts to intervene for the benefit of children in situations of serious difficulty in their family environment.

In Italy, the last estimated figure dates from 2012: there were 28,449 children and youths aged 0-17 years outside of their families of origin who had been placed in foster homes and residential communities.

The complex transformations characterizing contemporary life make necessary a critical rethinking of the categories used to recognize and interpret the various current family configurations and expressions of parenthood.

The welfare system itself is called upon to revise its priorities in the services it provides for protecting children, not only with regard to the possible educational tools, but also and above all through a broader vision of an integrated planning at the social, urban planning/architectural, and economic levels.

1.1 The living place: contamination through diversity

Over the years, structures set up for children have undergone major changes (orphanages, juvenile communities, educational communities, boarding houses, etc.), almost always dictated by changes in regulations, rather than by an actual process of rethinking in relation to the social phenomenon.

The growing attention paid to the phenomenon of estranged children and/or unaccompanied foreign minors makes it necessary to also rethink how to design accommodation facilities.

The idea underlying this study is that of redesigning a place, a social form which, identifying itself by and within the space, determines and re-determines that space through the lives of the children who will be temporarily inhabiting it.

The planning is above all social, with the aim of creating a place that is “liquid”, capable of enveloping the often sad and blighted lives of these children with the sensation of a place familiar to them, one that is not “like” a family, but instead “is” a family, and parental in the educational sense of the word.

This must necessarily be a place of exchange: of life experiences, culture, contamination between the experiences they carry within themselves and the outside with which they act and react.

It is a contamination which we intend to promote in the educational plan, but also in the architectural spaces, without limits or barriers, because it’s not boundaries or walls that make us feel protected, but a sense of community, nearness, and family.

2 METHODOLOGY: THE HYBRID, TEMPORARY PROJECT

Architecture today is more than ever one of relationships rather than of objects, of dynamic relational spaces rather than of static scenes.

In the early 1960s Melvin Webber theorized the possibility of interactions owing to more complex, variable spatial structures, not discrete and locatable, where urbanization was no longer supposed to design spaces, but build networks of relations and place communication flows and activity systems[1].

This means it is necessary to plan in a way different from that of the past – when objective, consolidated operations were the norm, with their spatial and physical connections, between the ground and the building, interiors and exteriors, public and private uses, open and covered spaces, nature and artifice – and make these connections the primary meaning of the design itself.

Contemporary architecture is thus becoming increasingly frequently a *hybrid design*, an open design, which communicates directly with the physical and social characteristics of the place. It is more and more frequently an interstitial design, one of mediation and bonding amongst physical and social contexts, which must operate within a territory already heavily anthropized, and seek proximity relationships within abandoned, already-existing structures. Working on what has already been built, with recycling and repurposing rather than with endless growth, seems to be the most convincing route for architectural thought.

Therefore when we work on existing architectural structures, it is necessary not only and simply to safeguard, protect, and adapt them, but also to go beyond, through the “recycling” of the building and the places, first temporary and hybrid, and then final, always leaving room for a possible mutation, for the allocation of new functions, overwriting that which already exists.

The configuration of the place is thus the result of different configurations which have been modelled

[1] Melvin Webber, Order in Diversity: Community Without Propinquity, in Cities and Spaces. The Future Use of Urban Land, Lowdon Wigo Editor, Johns Hopkins Press, 1963.

over time, one over the other, throughout a long course of events. And it is there, ready to support the ones newly born from systems which, in part, belong to the “remains”, others to their “reuse”, and still others to a theoretical thought that derives from different systems.

While the “Modern” had modelled objects that were defined through their masses, the organization of solids and voids, the construction system and functional organization, basing the pride of their permanence and challenging of time on this compositional grammar system, today’s architecture produces structures which resemble temporary set-ups, sensitive organisms that seem to be occupying the ground they stand on only temporarily.

Thus contemporary architecture abandons the dimension of the unchangeable to evolve into a dynamic substance: expressions such as temporariness, transitoriness, flexibility, changeability with time, and interchangeability of the parts have by now become part of the endowment of qualities required of many specialist buildings – those which, more than others, are called upon to incorporate the rapid changes in the ways they are used and the social systems.

The urban areas abandoned by the conventional market are giving rise to categories of alternative users, temporary users, who occupy a stage of transition between the former use and the future intended use, born with the awareness of having a limited lifetime, of being naturally in a temporary state during a period of uncertainty.

Temporary architecture, by its very nature, permits the experimentation of uses, spatial vocations, encouraging its appropriation by the citizenry. Small-scale urban operations are able to enliven the attention to abandoned spaces, giving way to longer-lasting processes of regeneration and resignification, arriving at increasing the value of the properties and improving their image, thereby attracting other users. Where traditional planning finds it difficult to regenerate empty spaces because of the numerous limiting factors characterizing it, temporary uses have the capacity to attract new uses, economies, and unexpected social capital.

The new “light” forms of temporary living may provide an answer for the growing fragility of some social classes in difficulty today, through an architecture of spaces and services designed around the individual and no longer around an illness or hardship (meeting a need that is not only functional, but above all emotional).

The condition of transition makes it possible to bring closer together heterogeneous social units which, precisely by virtue of their condition, can communicate and create an informal support network, contributing to solving living- and service-related needs at the same time.

2.1 The architecture project. The “RO Ferrarese” case study for an integrated model of a children’s accommodation community

The design of new social instruments also entails the consideration of new residential and semi-residential community models for estranged children, designed and built to correspond to a new educational plan, made of integration and temporary solutions. It is necessary to rethink the structures for estranged minors as a “transition space”, where the children stay in a place that creates a routine and the habits of a “large family” for them, pending their return to their own as soon as possible.

These are situations that are not final, and to which we must respond with a temporary offering of living spaces.

The case study is that of a public-private project in the town of RO Ferrarese, Emilia Romagna.

The structures consist of a former elementary school with another external building which was formerly the kindergarten and the surrounding yard, in addition to two buildings across from the school which consist of four two-room sections each, for a total area of approximately 2,000 m^2.

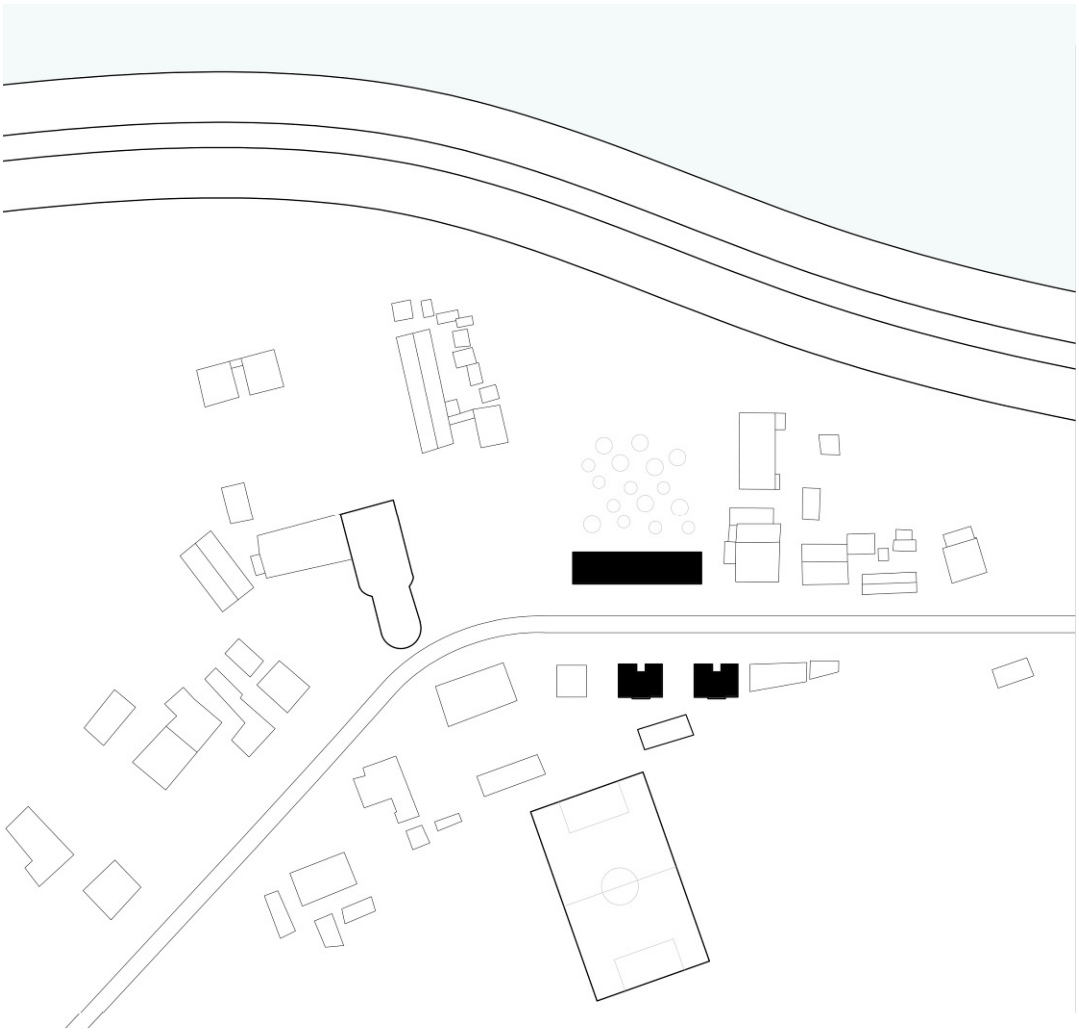

Figure 1. All elements object of regeneration. Black elements from a temporary transformation.

In order to be able to provide for a temporary reuse from the bottom up, following the principle of minimum intervention at different scales, the public and privately owned unused buildings appear to be the first interceptors of this phenomenon.

The method consists of creating a series of non-invasive intervention strategies which, with minimum impact, work on the vacated spaces pending their future transformations and uses. The idea is to work seeking to do little, almost nothing, but in a precise manner, in order to be able to understand if the intervention is metabolized by those living in the space, and thus continue only later with further work.

The temporary reuse of space becomes a sustainable strategy because it introduces a new significant concept of use of a social-educational residence: not only a safe space in which to house minors, but a new place of temporary living, in which the minor is educated and integrated into a community together with others, in a physical and spatial transition, based on the concept of proximity, both social and architectural.

“Social” means through a new way of thinking and intending the stay of children in public structures which include processes of social and architectural integration, in which the common internal and external spaces (gardens, socialization areas, areas for fitness or leisure time) become an interesting system in the definition of the term “barrier”, no longer meant as a border or boundary, but as a margin which acquires depth and is modulated to meet the various utilization needs.

The border and margin are elements that refer to a variety of situations which are adjacent to something that is physically recognizable: they are areas of proximity, hybrids, in which the social and intergenerational encounter takes place.

No longer boundaries, i.e. the line that marks a separation between different entities, nor a limit, which strengthens the concept of separation, but the porous space between things that is the "relationship" space, the system of proximity between persons and things that can generate and create an identifying space amongst the different entities that make up the scene.

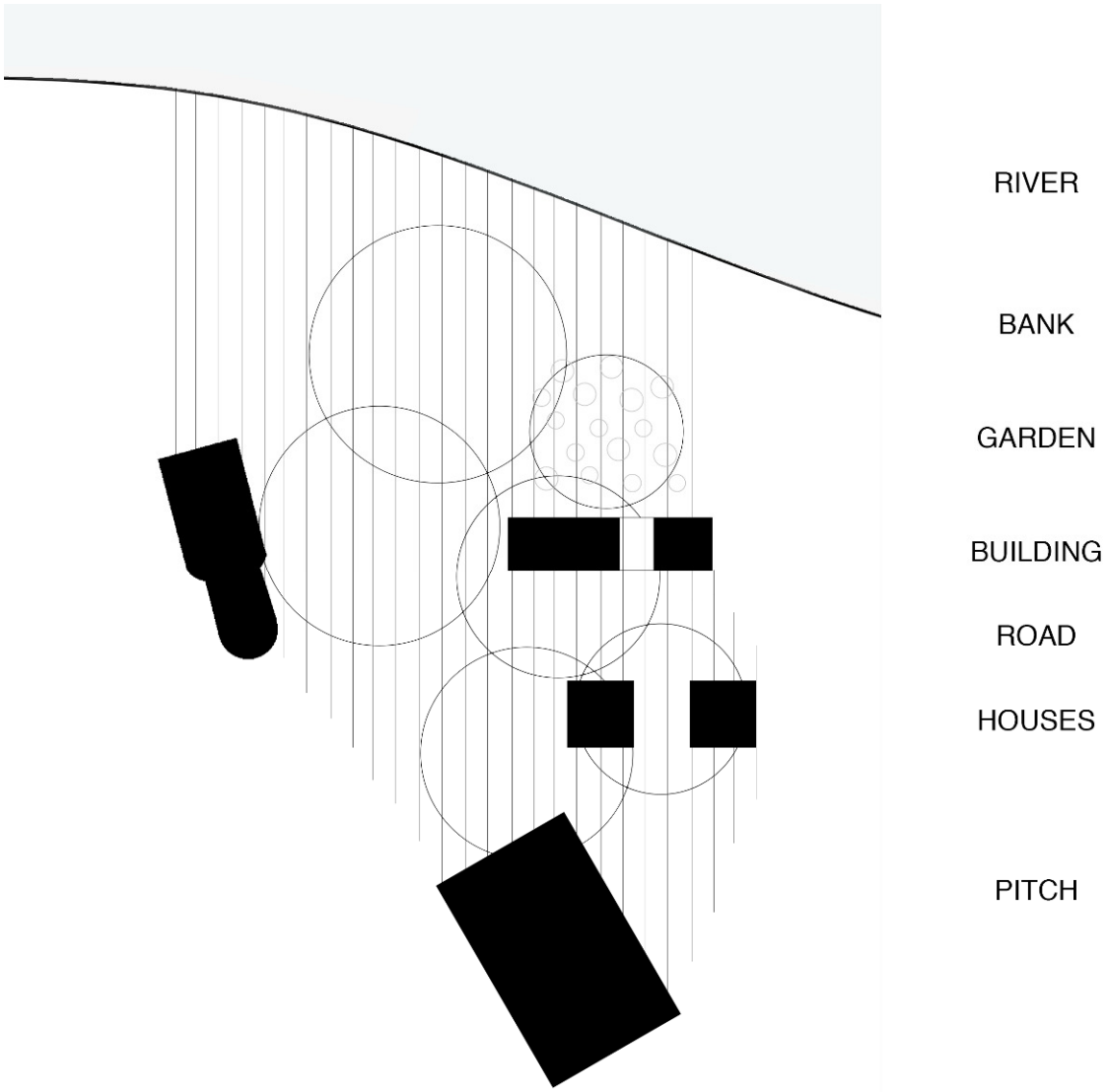

Figure 2. Connections

Working with this vision makes it possible to plan not objects anymore, but temporary, dynamic relational spaces which lead to a new conception of intervention strategies.

Architecture is thus called upon not to build more self-referential "objects", but to work on the "leftover" space existing amongst things, amongst people, and amongst physical entities, rapidly changing its state and substance, and thus modifying its scope through constantly changing configurations.

This "research device" does not explore a structured space, but a space "pre-organized" by the interaction of attracting and repelling elements that slowly pull and shift from one dynamically stable state to another, recomposing themselves into new mutual aid configurations through the self-organizational system of voluntary cooperation.

We are speaking of spaces without set limits, which fluctuate between staticity and dynamicity, between the definite and indefinite, and between the tangible and intangible.

The work will be done according to a strategy of parasitic occupation of the space of the abandoned structures, temporary infiltrations with lightweight set-ups, and operations giving the spaces a superficial cosmetic “facelift”, in keeping with the principle of minimum intervention, of the “almost nothing”, and of the selective subtraction of elements to render the spaces functional for temporary use.

Parasitic occupation thus becomes an approach for endowing the buildings with those spaces, between the interior and exterior, that make it possible to introduce new elements of interaction such as greenhouses, loggias, and new spaces for the community.

Inside, a series of additions will permit a sort of **grafting process** that will make the lodgings usable by the various social categories: from lightweight temporary systems, such as things for leisure time with partitions, to services such as cooking and bathroom areas.

3 EXPECTED RESULTS

The experimental project, being defined with the evaluation unit of the Emilia Romagna Region Social Policies department, strives for:

- social results comprising the care for and reintegration of estranged minors;
- technical results of an architectural transformation of the buildings and regeneration of the outlying areas and unused public real estate assets;
- results of sustainability, development of a new entrepreneurial model, and sociality based on the hybridization of the single contributions;
- In particular, the project:
    - defines and promotes a series of integrated service activities (for self-sufficient children and senior citizens with slight disabilities and/or social hardship), living in the various properties involved in the regeneration;
    - is financially sustainable, and with a profitability margin of 7% for the investor;
    - can guarantee an average boarding cost per minor lower than that currently incurred by local welfare services;
    - generates forms of satellite profitability through the creation of services in addition to the main one for minors;
    - regenerates a portion of the territory and redefines the local community by activating it.

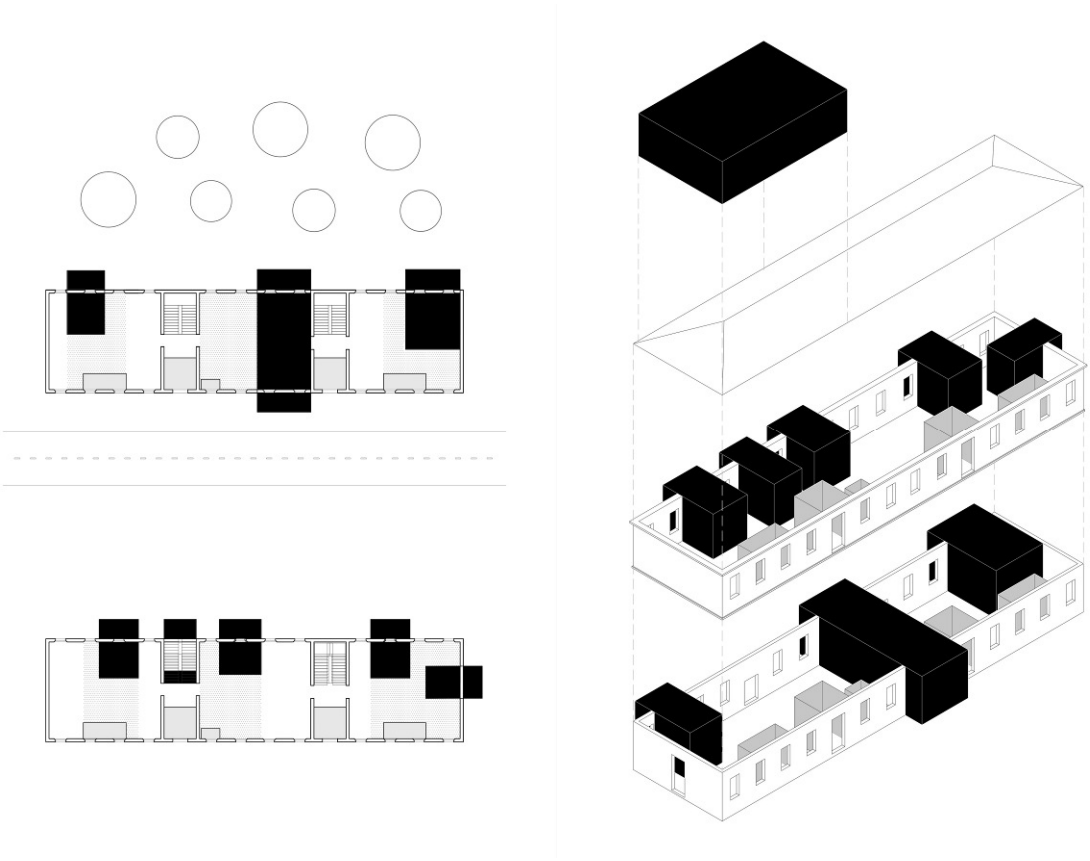

Figure 3. New plan of building ex school with the parasites and grafts

The transformation of the current school into a structure for housing children, which from the economic standpoint is expected to have an occupancy of 80%, uses the entire available area of the property. The restructuring of the residential buildings, with the creation of 4 lodgings per building to be used for temporary housing for the elderly, the demolition of the former kindergarten building with the recovery of the area within the plan of the former school, the connection of a pedestrian path to the existing infrastructure, and connection to the sports field complete the project.

4 CONCLUSIONS

The social definition of the project through the experimental phase, the architectural definition based on a temporary operation, and its economic sustainability for a financial operator have made it possible to start up the process of regeneration of the entire area involved in the transformation which, lacking such a project, had been left in a state of disuse and neglect.

The cooperation amongst public bodies such as the Town and the university, and private organizations such as foundations and investment funds, has permitted the start-up of a process of regeneration of an area otherwise left to decay and, above all, is experimenting new forms of temporary social proximity.

The social, architectural, and economic project is the result of a contamination and interaction amongst different elderly-children categories, amongst neighbouring, nearby, temporary, bordering, and never bordering living places, and of a hybrid of social-speculative finance.

Figure 4. Possible scenario with grafts and parasites

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