



POLITECNICO
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Honors thesis

COURSE OF
ARCHITETTURA COSTRUZIONE-CITTÀ

Abstract

CHELAS, LISBOA

Five explorations

Tutor

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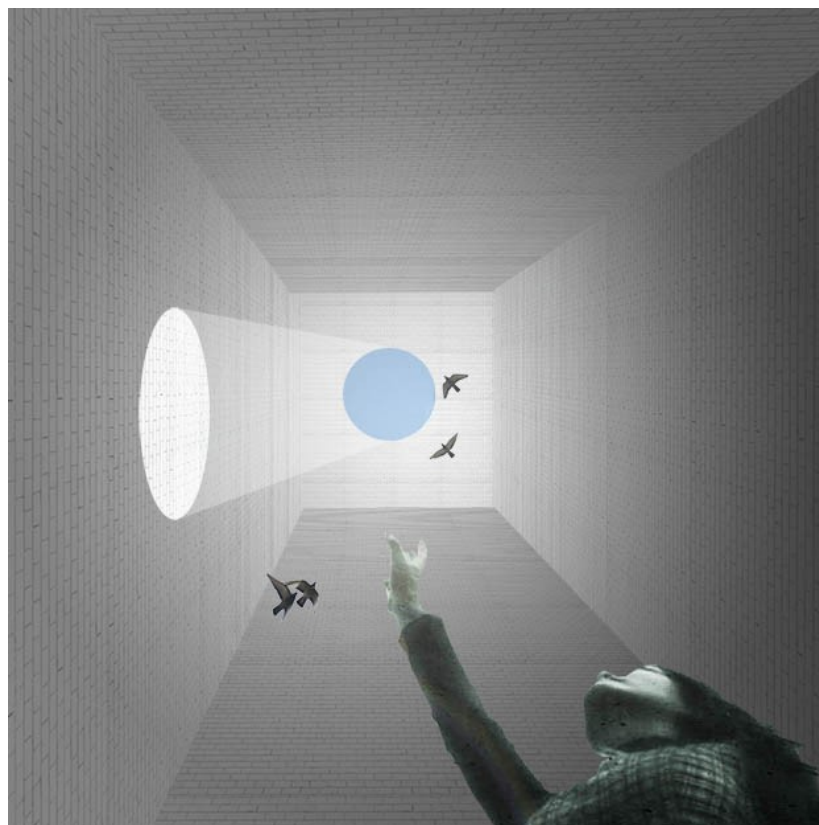
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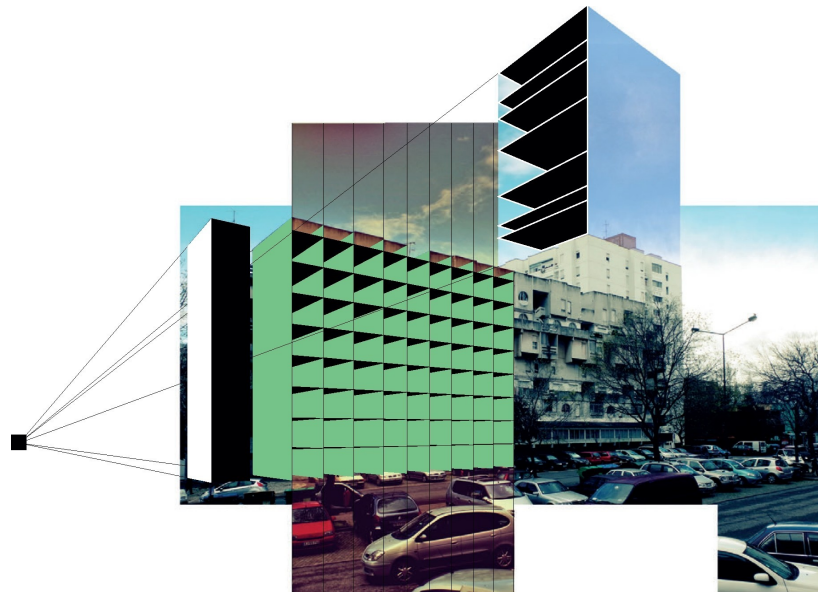
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The aim of this thesis is to raise a debate on the critical conditions of the south-European public city in this time of economic and demographic crisis. The research focuses on an emblematic case study, Chelas' district, in Lisbon, analysing this part of the city in five explorations that adopt different methods of inquiry.

- The first exploration is based on quantitative geography: an atlas which represents Chelas, in Lisbon, through statistical surveys and cartographic elaborations. Maps and data.
- The second deals with an historical reconstruction of places. Chelas is studied as an experimental territory in which the Portuguese design culture of the late Twentieth century developed its own specific expression of late modernism. The failed goal was to create an organic and democratic mega-structure.
- The third inquiry represents a personal perception of places in Chelas. Pictures, interviews and tales attempt to capture the difficult transformation of this territory deeply marked by the crisis.
- The fourth exploration analyses the on-going projects destined for Chelas. On one hand there are urban programs that tries to develop the potential of the area. However, many of these projects have been halted by the economic crisis. On the other, more economically sustainable initiatives based on bottom-up strategies and small-scale interventions have been drawn up. This Programmes are struggling to yield results because of the weak capabilities of the inhabitants.



- The final exploration, based on the current emergency conditions, proposes some radical actions, which are urgently required, that aim to put in stand-by, temporarily or permanently, some unexploited parts of the buildings, those which cannot be recycled any more.



This five sections provide a body of knowledge that describes Chelas: a complex situation that has no solution that could be acceptable to all the stakeholders. This specific issue highlights the need to open a debate about the potential of traditional planning, the ineffectiveness of policies based on bottom-up initiatives and the need of new design strategies in contexts profoundly affected by crisis such as Chelas.



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