Power and domination
An open eye on the 21st century’s urban conflicts in Central Bogotà

This project tries to establish a dialogue between different types of reflections and intentions. ‘Le fil rouge’ that keeps everything together is a renovated idea of ownership for la Perseverancia, a working-class neighbourhood located in the area of central Bogotà (Colombia). The typological transformations I imagined to introduce in this area are informed by the idea of trading private space for collective economic purposes. Such a radical upheaval in the living patterns of the inhabitants of this barrio can easily arise questions about compensation, nevertheless what I believe this project tries to do is giving shape to a process of negotiation.

La Perseverancia, if we consider the state of poorness in which it is now, will not be able to survive long. Gentrification processes have now started to jeopardise this peculiar urban area and the social structure of the community that inhabits it. Staring from the idea that people in struggling conditions should get together in order to get the most out of the small resources they have available I defined a modular system of construction. This simple architectural tool being highly adaptable can be used to create small production spaces within this dense urban environment. This new spatial entities created and managed by the community would serve as space of production for a local drink called Chicha. Such a micro-economic system spread all over the area through small production and distribution areas could increase the level of autonomy of this neighbourhood in regard to larger urban frame of reference.

As second element of reflection I noticed that self-construction practices have always been very common among the members of this community.
over the one-century long history of this barrio. The modular system of construction here proposed should then be seen as a tool to be given in hands of the local population in order to empower them economically, culturally and politically. The two resources present in the area (Chicha and self-construction practices) can be unlocked together and used to activate a radical transformation of this problematic area. Such a profound transformation of the architectural substance of la Perseverancia is obviously very difficult but necessary in order to achieve fruitful results. Moreover this project does not stand as a simple formal exercise it almost takes the form of a political act. It is the translation of a reality that already exists but only in the form of potential and for this reason it requires a daring explorative attitude. My exercise had faced a many difficulties that were necessary in light of the innovative result I was pursuing.

Final goal of this cultural exercise was not finding solutions to problems but rather learning through theoretical, spatial and material explorations.