

HOUSES

If while driving over the *MOST GAZELA*, one casts a glance at the settlement which lies under it, a chaos of plastic sheets, car tires, bricks and rugs meets the eye. These objects are, however, not strewn about arbitrarily, but serve as a covering for the roof construction of the houses which provide shelter for approximately 800 individuals. The similarity of their improvised construction in that they are all one-story dwellings consisting of one or two rooms gives, at first sight, the impression of a relatively unified whole.

In actuality, however, there is a striking difference: the older part of the settlement is characterized by simple huts, while the more densely settled newer part is comprised only of barracks.

HUTS

Even though a clear distinction is difficult to make, at least a seventh of the houses in Gazela can be designated as huts. They can be distinguished from the barracks through their use of durable building materials which have been obtained from derelict houses or construction sites.

The walls of the huts are primarily made of bricks which are plastered on the inside while the outside remains rough. The huts have lean-to or saddle-back roofs which are covered with corrugated tin, wooden planks or roofing tiles. Although the huts and the barracks are in a similar desolate condition, the former tend to be sturdier due to the type of materials used and thus do not have to be repaired as frequently.

The houses in Gazela are almost always built by their inhabitants rather than bought or rented, which is rare. In the 90s there was a construction boom due to the strong influx of refugees in throughout Belgrade, a fact which made it increasingly difficult to acquire durable building materials from that point on. This forced the inhabitants to resort to simpler materials such as loam or wood. In addition to this, the increasing rumors about the impending eviction of the settlement \equiv made the construction of expensive durable houses seem risky.

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Eduard Yes, but the project is co-opted from the outset, because it is being financed by some of these institutions, among them the *Erste Bank*.

Maja How long did you stay with the Roma and what kind of experiences did you have? Did you have the possibility to learn their language or how did you otherwise communicate with them?

