





HOUSED by CHOICE, HOUSED by FORCE - Homes, Conflicts and Conflicting Interests

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Abstract / Initial Proposal Form:

- 1. Paper / Proposal Title: Housing choice when forced Inquiring migrant positioning in transforming urban villages in China
- 2. Format: Written paper/verbal presentation
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- 5. University or Company Affiliation: Bergen School of Architecture
- 6. Abstract (300 words): In this paper I will draw upon the findings from a long term study in the urban village Xian Cun in Guangzhou, China. Xian Cun was an ancient village that found itself placed in the middle of the new central business district. The village provided housing for a large migrant population taking part in constructing the new development area and working in service related jobs in all phases of the district transformation. I

followed the inhabitants and their spatial practice of positioning belonging during a period of rapid transformation, first through habitable flux and massive densification, gradually transforming to a period of consolidating and upgrading the urban fabric, then shifting into a period of forced replacement, ending in total demolition and expulsions. Throughout this process living conditions were put on trial with purpose made hinders used with increasing force by the local authorities to provoke a rapid decline. Deliberate removal of vital public services, demolitions and a standstill in the garbage handling was means used to transform an urban block with a population of 50 000 residents into a pile of brick fragments. When this tactic did not result in a quick relocation of the population, it ended up being a harsh environment negotiating the premises of a neighborhood existence. I will in this paper elaborate on the spatial practices that emerged among the population in adapting a situation of habitation to a society in vanish. Through this example temporary housing and subjective ways of housing temporality are discussed with relevance to the ongoing refugee situation in Europe.

7. Author(s) Biography (200 words maximum for all authors): Cecilie Andersson trained and practiced as an architect, and is currently Rector at Bergen School of Architecture. She received her doctorate from Norwegian University of Science and Technology in 2012 on the topic of migrant positioning in the cities with emphasize on urban villages in China.

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