

Oikos Seminar Notes  
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DAY ONE

Opening Remarks.....	1
Louis Hems Marcelin .....	5
Mariana Cavalcanti .....	9
Graduate Student Panel 1 .....	13

DAY TWO

Benoit de L'Estoile .....	18
Eugênia Motta.....	21
Graduate Student Panel 2.....	24
Viviana Zelizer and Jonathan Morduch.....	28
Federico Neiberg.....	34
Graduate Student Panel 3.....	37
Exit Zero: Film and Discussion .....	41

DAY THREE

Susan Ellison.....	44
Ann Kelly.....	47
Bridget Purcell .....	49
Andre Dumans .....	53
Closing Remarks.....	56

DAY ONE: MAY 14, 2015

## Opening Remarks

**João Biehl, Federico Neiburg, Benoit de L'Estoile**

*Joao*

This international seminar foregrounds the house as a site of empirical and conceptual analysis, drawing from a range of ethnographic contexts. Taking the *oikos* as at once a built structure, a collection of relations, and a node in larger political and economic systems, we move across scales to ask how people's lives and worlds are made and remade in relation to the house and housing configurations.

Hannah Arendt on Public/Private: Ancient political thought took as self-evident and axiomatic the division between the public and private spheres. But with the emergence of the social realm in the modern age, the dividing line between the public and the private became “*entirely blurred.*” Tracking Arendt's questions and insights to the present day, ethnographic approaches allow us to people (so to speak) her philosophical renderings, avoiding totalizing claims in favor of close-up attention and offering new possibilities for reading the house and its social, political, economic and affective configurations.

These matters are not new territory for anthropology and there is a lineage of classic anthropological works exploring the house as a productive and generative domain: Mauss on “seasonal morphology,” Levi-Strauss on “Maison”

Reflections on the house in Vita: house reveals the working of power on the subject and the production of disregard, and also opens out onto desire, functioning as a site of memory-making, nostalgia, and illusion.

Jane Bennett: call for attention to the vibrancy of matter and its thingly power offers another entry-point into *oikos*, where the house as material entity might be considered through its potential to act on and through its human inhabitants and larger milieus.

What would it mean, then, to take the house as an ethnographic subject? What does anthropology open up in such debates, and what might the house do for anthropology?

Ethnography and unfinishedness: like Arendt's “blurring,” accounts for the dissolution of accepted categories and boundaries, but it is perhaps more dynamic, more open, more attuned to the ways in which lives and worlds continue to shift.

*Federico*

By mid 20<sup>th</sup> century, anthropologists started questioning classical studies of kinship. Idea of nuclear family, and of corporate groups (stable, clear frontiers). Family and kinship have rules and functions, anthropologists should describe them.

By second half of century, this was contested. David Schneider, etc: proposed to conceptualize kinship not only as theme, but as a complex of categories and concepts centered on proximity and shared (?) This shift was crucial on the way to the house, not as a closed space, but a space of circulation.

Reconsideration of house as strategic place for rethinking kinship/family ties.

Levi-Strauss: writing in the 70s on the house.

Questions of translation: house, casa, maison...

After LS's formulations of house, Schneider on kinship, new wave of studies on kinship:

Strathern, etc

In Brazil, return to work on working families, working houses

Most of his research takes place inside the house: who lives there, what are their frontiers, their inner spaces, the world outside, the relation between them/ As we learned from Malinowski, the house is a key space for ethnography. Yet, house and spatial/conceptual space around it—these spaces are also spaces to lives in, make families, but also to govern, to produce, to provide with money, subsistence items

This complex and totalizing dimension of the house: *oikos*

*Benoit de L'Estoile*

France-Brazil collaboration: bringing together economic anthropology/sociology and anthropology of the state. Investigating interactions between modes of government (Foucault's governmentality), (NGO's, international bodies, etc) which are constructing fields of opportunity and constraint that shapes tactics and economic practices ordinary people mobilize to make a living. common set of interests on issues of houses and housing

Finding a common language for discussion: Routine use of English as standard common language is not neutral; does it produce standardization in our thinking? With differences in language come ways of framing issues, traditions, bibliographies, perspectives "Casa," for example, has broader meaning than house or maison

Oikos: behind Arendt, reference to Aristotle...oikos was building, household, family (including slaves). oikonomia: economics, usually translated as "domestic economy." specific rule of the house master, domestic form of government, "government of the house." Dominus (?): master, domination, but also domestic

*Discussion*

Mariana: Dissertation on housing, favelas, materiality of housing. Interesting site from which to examine different scales of social processes. Affects, economies, policies. Straying from the ethnographic to dwell in policy, but this brings us back into the home. Blurring boundaries, established categories, and doing so from daily lives. House as methodology: as entry into ethnography—this is extremely productive.

Bridget: Two strands from three talks. Focus on materiality, embodiment, practice...the kind of active nature of matter, Mauss, Bourdieu, reproduction of daily life. On the other hand, the emphasis on transformation, mobility. The different ways these two elements intersect: daily reproduction, and sense of aspiration.

Joe: Criminal justice, prisons, removing people from homes, creating a space that is NOT a home. Research in Swaziland, where ministry of health had a strategy of offering every household an HIV test: what does this mean? What does this imply about what gov't considers a household? How are different kinship configurations seen or not seen? Zimbabwe, control, destruction of peri-urban areas, referred to as "tsunami," or "cleanse the filth": so-called slums being seen as political force, state goes in, bulldoze homes and require homeowners to clear the rubble...a lot of political orientations here.

Ann Kelly: The household. The ways, conceptually, animal and house...thinking about multiple kinds of inhabitants of the house, becoming accustomed to household environment, be they cockroaches, etc—this is what makes up public health problems. Pools of water that form between houses...thinking about the materiality of the house, and the strange, just-vicinities...how to expand the house analytically to include this

João: In-betweenness. Arendt: the law happens in the in-between space. How is this regulated, controlled, productive? What is in between the houses?

Alex: Two threads. Underlying comments is a strong sense of the moral of the household. Household as site where morality is constructed/contested, but also of the moral good. Nuclear family as home-owners, etc—moral valence to the house. Theological import of all of this—the house is not just site of governance, morality, economics, family, but also intensely theological, otherworldly. House is a place where people interact with this, in a v diff way from church, temple, etc.

Bruno: As opposed to objects as bounded object form, unbounded units, but also embodied, subjects.

Adriana: Unboundedness...in anthropology, the collective is actually often thought of as very separate from the house, the house is almost a leftover, we haven't brought it into our understanding of the collective. Issue of scandal, that becomes the matter of the collective...this is interesting, opens up another way of thinking about this.

Susan: Confluence in the house of domestic economies, political economy, transnational governmental organizations, NGO's, efforts to reach into the house. Scale-making project with intl organizations preoccupied with conflictiveness in the house as something that produces it on a national level. Intervening in/on the house. How do interventions conceptualize the house, how do people operate in real life? Cannot be reduced to these modes of intervention. What ethnography offers to complicate these narratives. New interventions then produce new forms of constraint and action as people try and maneuver around.

?: Other question: statistics, methodological question. How do we produce different framings, go into the house, ask...in comparison to census agents, who objectify. What different kinds of questions, interactions, in the field.

Joao: and what is counted, to stand in for the value...

**Louis HERNANDEZ MARCELIN**

**Inhabiting the Post-Colony: Personhood, House, and Configurations of Houses**

Introducing different histories. I want to see how we can operationalize the concept of the house, which is so complex, captures so many things, belongs to so many theories. What do you ask in the field, how do you ask questions?

Tracing genealogies. In the 1990s, so many challenges to face in social theory, in the way that we speak about groups, identities... At a crossroads, need to generate new categories, new thinking.

Key question that governs my research about the house: how do I inhabit the world? where do I belong? Where do I live? This is not just a simple question... Where is my space? How do I connect? These are essentially existential questions. And so we face the issue of language. These questions call for new investigations, thinking about social theory, methodology, epistemology.

Research conducted in creole and French. In process of investigating houses: how do I convey to you, how do we share, the local categories about houses? How to speak, how we will say things, requires modesty...

Returning to past projects, old materials, and also continuities...

Haiti is such a small space, yet so many things at play. Taking Haiti as a theater to think about circulations from rural to urban, from urban to (?), from Haiti to US—how do people inhabit this world?

No conclusive findings; different sites; from different methods/premises...

Case studies from different national contexts and policies, to think about category of house, configurations of housing. Data from many years of ethnographic studies. Different layers of temporality, different social spaces: family processes from rural to urban Haiti, from urban to transnational, and ways in which they have shaped these processes... sociocultural maps that emerge from mapping Haitian families from Haiti to US...

Key Questions: ways of being and belonging in the world

Idea of the encounter, liminal spaces, migration, constant circulation, or daily life, borders  
Neoliberal policies, international AID  
Challenges of inhabiting the Americas

Haiti, food sovereignty up until 1970s. By 80s, US. Accelerated poverty. Context of political fear, econ uncertainty...

Study of agrarian transition taking place. Degradation of *de la rue* (??), family settlement, organized under principles of consanguinity. Was heavily studied as a reproduction of Africa in Haiti. Wanted to explain disappearance. Was fading away, and with it, Haitian peasantry. US actively discouraged DuValier govt, to systematically eradicate main cash farming elements. Pigs had a disease. US would make Haiti “Taiwan of the Caribbean.”

Examining sociopolitical process driving changes in Haitian families.

Transformation of structure

Those who migrated to slums have redefined the same figurations

Tracing families from rural to urban, but continue following them—what are the principles under which they articulate proximity? how do they organize everyday life? how do they relate to intl aid orgs, etc?

Family, house, how it is organized—this is essentially political

In 1998, US commissioned ethnographic study of farm workers. Wanted to know about the behaviors of migrant farm workers. This initiative was part of a national project to trace behaviors of migrant workers, their levels of mobility. Contact w/ formal state institutions is avoided (often undocumented), so disincentives to be counted. Not being counted can constitute social invisibility. Haitian migrant farmworkers in Florida: followed them from state to state.

Capturing how/under what ideology people care

Disciplinary divisions: morphology of family, how children are cared for.

How care was organized in the household? By people who are not necessarily biologically related

What are implications?

1. These observations trouble epistemological categories of identity, individuality, difference...what the field teaches us is that if we are to understand social processes, we need to get beyond these ontologically bounded definitions. Need to understand conversibility, reversibility. Complex sociopolitical situations create conditions for people to convert friendship into kinship.
2. Cannot free ourselves from our idea of the individual. the concept of the anti-divisible individual...but a person can belong to multiple houses, configurations can belong to networks, etc...what about practices of mutuality, linkages that shape how people live and move? Defining positionalities of people within house, within larger configurations...Defined not by attributes, but by how they are linked

Need to introduce politics into the discussion, seeing the house as political.

Question of inhabiting the Americas, of settlement, at the core of investigations. A question of how to be in the world, the imperative of owning property, and belonging to a society, place, community, house. A quintessential philosophical, political, anthropological question.

In the Americas, new hierarchies—who owns can belong.

Finding a place to be and to become. More salient for those who emerged from plantations...

*Discussion*

Benoit: Return to political importance of family?

Bridget: How people in the transition from rural to urban reconstitute their lives “in an orderly fashion”—what does this mean?

Q: How do you relate idea that people belong to several houses to the America?

Frederico: TO what extent is this concept allowing us to think about different African American experiences?

Q: Relationship between houses in rural/urban areas?

Response: For any configuration/social form, there is a political dimension, that we don't pay attention to. We have evacuated this. The political is where we understand what is happening inside the house, which is a continuation of larger society, connected. Haiti has a reputation for not taking care of its people, and yet, agents of the state know how to connect two local communities through specific leadership. Even at local levels, these forms have to deal with transmissions, properties, order, communities, daily life. We cannot make the family/house into something that is protected, outside. This is part of the premise of separation btw individual and society, houses and clusters of relationships. *CA* article.

We have to be careful not to have a catch-all category to explain all things about houses. We have to consider history in the origins of these places. The Americas are unique. Any understanding of social relations in Americas must account for plantation—the very space through which most of our institutions emerged. Goes back to this when talking about marginalization, hierarchies...

Transition from rural to urban: migration happens always in networks, people migrate with their houses, their universe. Mapping slums—they usually represent particular localities, groups. Changes progressively with time, linkages...trying to trace these genealogies, emergence of these formations. How are they formed, how is power within these forms constituted, what is at stake?

Transnational relations also create kinships. Not only within, but between national contexts.

Joao: Emphasized history so strongly, plantations as so determinant. What about other dimensions? Imagination? Speculation? The virtual? How does this impact household, care, the figuration of houses? When people are thrown into unknowns, does this change this dimension? Or are we doomed to be historical subjects of the house?

A second question: about values. There is a novelty in repetition, but the values might be altered. Even when structures repeat, are values altered? Are people forced to coexist? A different calculation of this coexistence?

Q: Layers of temporality and social spaces. What is the idea of scale doing for you, in understanding these configurations of hosues in specific contexts? How can we think about

social movements trying to address issues of public housing—can we also think of those places as connectors of scales, time and place? Connecting private space of house to the city...how the city comes to be occupied by people?

How to think of housing configurations related to class? How to use the house to think more broadly about this?

Alex: Struck by governed by polygamous patriarch, and the dead: are the dead also subjects of this postcolonial history? What kind of outside relation does this bring in, having the dead as a social actor?

Susan: Quick comment on role of US, policies to turn peasants into consumers. How do you see consumption in households, esp in relation to care, where consumption escapes social control element?

Q: Word configuration in order to speak about clusters of houses. What is the role of physical space?

Marcelin: Configuration comes from idea of interdependency, of people but also social (?)...mutuality, shared stuff, as care, moral obligations...creating a setting that is not necessarily physical. Physicality happens as necessity. To move beyond network, have to sustain yourself, be connected with larger institutions. Self-sustaining subjects are only possible when institutions of modernity provide...

The idea of the house is about the possibilities of capitalizing on what exists for the future to be possible. This possibility is in the house every single day. How do these forms respond to particular contexts? Logic of production of life, network of reciprocity. Escape only happens when institutions step in.

How can someone belong to multiple houses? Even in classic studies of kinship/family, belonging was never singular. Multiple ways collectivities can connect. Obsession with the idea of identity, individual/society opposition...ways of seeing relations that prevent us to see the different ways people connect, different kinds of allegiances people have

The dead are more than history, are constitutive of what makes collectives. The dead are constitutive of worldviews, house system, family system.

Idea of Haiti as a “problem” for intervention. Not that it is trapped in history, but treated as an anomaly. After the earthquake, everyone comes to Haiti with “culturally appropriate” housing—Haitians have to be housed. What kinds of education should Haiti have? French, American projects...all of this with no voice of govt, community, locality.

The only space for creativity is the space of the house, where people have more control.

How do you think about class as a structure?

**Mariana Cavalcanti**

## **The Politics of Low Income Housing in Rio de Janeiro in light of the Minha Casa, Minha Vida Program**

Trying to renew studies of poverty in Rio. The whole favela thing has obliterated multiple forms of living. How do the poor live in the city? We are so stuck on favela/city split, but there are myriad ways of being poor, living in the city, building housing...

2009: Minha Casa, Minha Vida program to deliver 2.5 million housing units throughout the country. 3 “faixas,” each with their own stipulations. Up to faixa 1, heavily subsidized, low payments (at least according to original plan). For 30 years, there had been no housing programs in Brazil. Original programs (from 60s) were justified by framing property ownership as a means of pacifying the masses.

MCMV was legitimized differently: “the social measure that will make the machine of capitalism spin,” incorporate masses into formal economy, 1990s neoliberalism.

When it became the major housing policy, there was a break in the ministry. Most of criticism of the program came from urbanists v involved in thinking through the peripheries in SP...

MCMV blurred boundaries btw social housing and housing produced for market. Contractors now have access to public subsidies, but still make a profit off of major “condominiums.” Program produces “housing units,” does not produce “the city.”

A series of evaluations have come out, and there are 5 major criticisms:

1. reproduces historical pattern of peripheralization of social housing...building way out, where there are no services, schools, transit, etc
2. market driven logics drive cost-cutting in materials. lots of structural problems
3. creates/reinforces spatial and social segregation, entrenches existing problems
4. many of condominiums immediately go into debt w/ companies
5. hijacked by drug trade/militias

Faixa 2 and 3 (higher income brackets): people go in willingly. But this is not always the case with Faixa 1...

This was a social housing program, but because of how it was designed, became v much entwined with displacement policies rampant in Rio

April 2010, 2 key events transformed conditions of possibility for accessing low income housing:

1. Ministry of Cities changed legislation in a decree, set as a priority that people could be displaced from risk areas (usually, favelas). People displaced, have two choices: get apartment from MCMV, or financial compensation, which only takes into account built structure, not the land—so usually better to take the apartment, but in some cases, many families in one house...
2. Storm kills nearly 200, leaves many homeless. Accusations of leniency with risk areas, state govt needed quick response...

What does this mean for the ways we are used to thinking about poverty in the city of Rio?

What is the nature of this apartment that people receive, how do people relate to this very strange object of the house?

Housing markets—unique condensation of meanings, use and exchange value...  
double valence of commodity and ?

“Cursos de convivencia”

Not only entrench existing conflicts, but produce new ones...

People get these apartments, but do not immediately go on the market, 5 year moratorium—this shapes the markets that exist, places these apartments in a liminal space, not really a right, not really a commodity, opens room for all kinds of speculation on the ground

Strategies, tactics, conflicts

Existence of these displacements, of this mechanism, affects how people act on the ground. In communities where removal has been announced, people start to build bathrooms, kitchens, independent entrances, so that when the state comes, they have access to more houses. The state gets so desperate that they move people into better housing.

What is going to happen when 5 year moratorium goes out? Will affect real estate market in the city.

Also, people occupy risk areas so that they can get access to these apartments...

Just saying removal is bad does not get at the histories, complexity...

### *Discussion*

Ann Kelly: Struck by speculative logic, process as a game or wager of home ownership, in contrast w/ conservative assumptions of what the home is going to do, as property, inoculate against social/political risk. How does this make us think about oikonomia? How does inheritance play in? Are there legal formations around this? How does this map onto speculation?

Megan: Similarities w/ China, Turkey... at her fieldsite, people who take the apartment have created this emergent class who is thought of as morally bankrupt. How are these people being perceived by others?

Moises: Nature of critical accounts, how to think about critics otherwise? People giving these critical accounts are also very caught in these networks... What is the country becoming now, new middle class, etc? What are the showcases doing?

Connecting to values, how they change even when built env doesn't. Are people just reacting to state policies? What is the field of possibilities? Political subjectivity? These cursos de convivencia, for example—on the one hand, quite a conventional approach, but also speaks to new moral languages, of how people start thinking about citizenship in different ways...

Sebastian: How market is entering. These projects are being built on the periphery. How does their arrival create new markets? What expectations of citizenship?

Andre: Are these conflict mediation workshops—not exactly new, but somehow different. Space of conflict in political life. Connected to some kinds of technologies, forms of governmentalities, that are produced by int'l agencies.

Mariana: The conflict mediation is something new, and it goes with the whole language of rights, this was not there before. When it was all about modernization, apt to live in the city, etc, this was different. What happens in Brazil is this temporality that all these investments become urgent. What gets done, what is a priority, who defines? This question of what gets done is interesting, and in Brazil, what sets these priorities is violence. It's not by chance that questions of violence explodes in the 1990s, followed by attention to favelas, investment.

We need to drop the whole favela thing, hides what is not specific to Rio...“social urbanism,” these projects, ideas and practices circulate, because national tradition is so used to dealing with poverty in a particular way.

Interplay of continuities and discontinuities.

Emerging middle class. From the projects to the condominium. What sets these apart?

Citizenship and the market—what is happening? In Latin America, informality is getting recoded. “Entrepreneurs.” Same people, new licenses, now legal...imagining a better city through this. Market going into the pacified favelas. For a long time, the market existed without incorporating these people. Now, people see favelas and think: this is a huge market, these are consumers...and all of this gets packaged in the language of rights.

What will happen when these houses go on the market?

Transformation in how the state and the market deal with these places.

Federico: Wondering about people and families in this process of dislocation. Family, persons, houses—what do we find in these places? Militias, etc...where do they come from? Is it the same population as in the favelas? Broadening comparative perspective, historically.

Q: Ideology behind these programs. Dualistic ideology with isolated residential unit occupied by separate nuclear families on the one hand, one the other, abstract notion of community, collective group...but nothing in between. So what happens to kinship in this design of politics?

Q: Comparing to French policies of social housing, removal of shantytowns. Main difference is the status of occupation—in French case, houses are rented. Control of the state, agencies of housing, remains very strong.

Alex: Lack of compensation-giving for land, and form of condominium: shift in ideas of ownership, whether land is part of a house, whether it is part of the commodity. Is this a change being articulated here? Resurgence of socialist common ownership? Who owns the waterslide?

Benoit: Neighbors “don’t know how to live in a house,” sharing space with people you don’t think should be there...

Joao: Black box of state/market. What is the political rationality here? Is this governmentality? what is it? There are hints: governance happens through model policies—there is a history of this in Brazil, AIDS policy, in lieu of infrastructural reform. The recent 90s/2000s give us elements to start to deal with this, more critical approach to these rationalities. What is the object of pol-econ rights? The poor, the house...what is poverty? what are rights? Question of state and the market: there for the people, but what is the role of the market? how productive are these model policies? Finding a pause to think systemically about these political rationalities.

Mariana: Is the glue to all of this the language of rights? How to tease this out? Who gets to be a property owner? Is this even good?

Condominium projects do not allow mixed use. So the market enters, but not in this way, in a way that people could actually appropriate. It is “the market,” not people’s markets. Model program: 2000 units, brings people from all over the city...but not really clear what kinds of interactions/sovereignties will be enforced in this space. Almost a perfect “lab”: how do these things play out?

People are distributed in space through *sorteio*, a draw. People get dispersed. On the one hand, narrative people appropriate, about being torn apart from social ties, etc...and this is also used to speculate, to get more/better apartments...but in another way, is also true, and no one really knows what will come of this.

## **Panel 1**

**Pablo Landa, Consuelo Araos, Thomas Cortado, Megan Steffen, Alison Isenberg  
(discussant)**

### *Pablo*

1950s housing project in Mexico city, model community. Was believed to be ushering in era of prosperity, equality. Discretionality, corruption: unfair allocation of housing. Families changed, people rarely moved...hopes were quickly overridden.

Common ideas about domestic space (Bachelard) are incomplete, counter to local perspectives.

House as an image we hold on to (Bachelard)

Informants images of home combined harmony and brokenness.

Countering ideas of domestic space as separate from social sphere, as sites of exception.

### *Consuelo*

Overcoming limitations of *allegiamento* approach

Enlarging definition of residential proximity: on the one hand, stressing spatial/architectural dimensions; on the other hand, symbolic dimension, drawing on Mauss. In this way, can consider a wide range of family morphologies. Also captures experiential domain for families that share settings of common daily life. Individuals don't just live close, but with.

"Residential networks," distinct from "residential configurations"

Understanding proximity in this way allows to reinterpret role of material constraint and opportunity

Considering not just factual residential difference, but also what is feasible and desirable

How that which is feasible/desired shapes morphologies for families dealing with economic restrictions...

Trade-off between tighter/looser forms of configuration

For wealthy families, getting close again after relative geographic disparity, contrast with staying together forever of poorer families

Parents play key role, parental residence is anchor around which residence of children converge—true for wealthy and poor families

Long-term spatial and relational formation.

### *Thomas*

Can the working class develop autonomous symbolic practices, or is this always the result of domination?

Having one's own house: ideology of nuclear family. house as concrete instantiation, "physical counterpart" of nuclear family. Or, house constructs the family as a nuclear entity. Privacy is connected to freedom: having a house is not enough—renters have a house, but have no freedom. Rent is payment for "nothing in return."

Social Hierarchies: not everyone can afford to make a "good house."

Meia-agua not exactly a house, hasn't quite attained status of casa. "meia-agua, meia-casa." Used primarily in the context of colonial architecture. House as physical expression of social difference between inhabitants. More pitches, the better. Mixing architectural and social elements—norm is dual-pitched. These categories are deeply connected to hierarchies of dwellings.

Meia-agua as total social fact?

*Megan*

Thinking about empty houses: in China, seen as a sign of impending crisis. People have been talking about China's housing bubble for a long time. Bubble discourse persists. Why? What's going on here, and what is this doing? Where does the idea of a housing bubble come from? = USA.

Housing bubble: market pattern, 2007/8 financial crisis: its about too many people buying too many houses for too high a price. Value is illusory, houses are overpriced.

Taking the metaphor seriously: pressure from the inside (consumer) pushes outward of the outside (houses), and the invisible atmospheric pressure (invisible hand) presses until it bursts

This hasn't happened in China. There has been a deliberate slowdown, no pop. this is due to specific policies. Yet, western commentators have been predicting the collapse since 1997, Asian economic crisis.

1998 article: Shanghai as an example of what will happen to entire Asian economy:

"sinosclerosis": makes the market into a metaphor for the body.

What can we learn from this? what evidence are people looking for?

3 classifications for housing: commercial, welfare, working. people have stopped building second two because they are not profitable.

People say: how can there be so many highrises and yet, so many people without a place to live? who are all these houses for, and who can live in them? everyone can visibly see the supply go up...

This is the paradox of the empty house—the answer seems to be no one!

Coverage in western media:

"Chinese ghost city": city of residential high-rises that no one lives in.

Economist piece: "what appear to be ghost cities can acquire flesh and bones"

"banishing ghosts but looking for life"

these are missing the point! the empty house might not be an indicator of slowing economy—might indicate something else

Empty houses are ghostly bcs if nobody is living there, the value must not be real, they must not be worth anything. Distinction between real/illusory value...that all this wealth is fake, nothing behind the emptiness.

So, why are houses empty? People are renting them—so what's going on? 3 types of empty houses:

1. houses about to be demolished, or given for houses demolished (outliers)
2. houses bought for people's sons or grandsons after marriage
3. houses bought as investment—these are the ones we are worried about

These are aligned with specific future hopes...

Why are houses empty? Many answers. Some: "I don't need the money"

Megan rented a house for someone's 7 year old son. "you could end up with anyone living there" "too messy." wouldn't rent to locals

About control over visions of the future—keeping the house empty keeps this vision poor. Emptiness as an escape from a VERY crowded reality, disorder of everyday life idea of too many people in too small a space cited as cause of traffic, pollution, etc. Staking out a house, keeping it pure/empty, is one of peoples only means of asserting control over the future.

*Alison*

Similarity btw Pablo and Thomas, who address tension btw planned, singular place, and what evolves afterwards. Tension between the planned and the used/lived reveals itself here, in Pablo's argument about collaboration instead of resistance.

Thinking more closely about language: larger interest in the planned, the intended...that in some stories, there is an original intent that we can document and study.

In Pablo's paper, focus on the ideal: the image of the ideal home, as in Bachelard, but also of a model community. Already, distinction btw "model community" and the theorists ideal domestic world to which living residents can refer and relate. There's a bit of a slippage between the ideal and the idealized. Potential to think about how the model community/ideal home includes the brokenness described in daily life. Not letting go of ideal, but perhaps saying that it can include brokenness.

Value of looking at these communities unto themselves, how do they and do they not connect to other places.

Public housing complex in St Louis as a signaled failure of value of public housing. In many ways, most powerful work on this is argument that you cannot understand unless you understand how it intersected with St Louis in the 1950s. Building of this dense housing in the exact decade when jobs disappeared—this is the story.

Why was public ownership surrendered?

Glimmers of the larger structure, the origination story of intent.

Why do we privilege intent? There is a way in which original ideas are put out there, emphasized...why? We take this for granted. Maybe planners ideas don't matter, or don't matter in the way we think they will.

Conseulo: slightly different slants on framing. Two contributions are historical and historiographical—trying to remove a pejorative meaning that has been loaded into *adegamiento*, concept of co-residence, that does not need to be there...liberating this concept from a literature that limits it. Not inherently pejorative, it is a useful concept, could be expanded. Second—recovering an older meaning, returning to an earlier definition, brings together people and things.

Three kinds of things:

1. the house, the building
2. artifacts within the house
3. land beneath the house

Are objects outside the imagination of the planners ideal? The things that people live with.

Consuelo: very little choice for people. built into this idea of co-residence is such a narrow idea of freedom of choice...

What is social housing? A phrase not used much in US context. This is where the social connects with the ethnography. What can you get at with ethnography, even though social housing is a social policy term, in a sense.

Megan: bubble language of control, state capitalism, western real estate perspective. if you began with empty housing, would have to attend to other kinds of empty housing, that have very different symbolism.

could you find another language, from the ground up, for this?

Meaning of emptiness?

What happens when you make these cases comparative?

### *Discussion*

Ann: house as domestic assemblage of objects and artifacts, memory work. Institutional memory, personal memory...

Alex: Idea of a neighbor as a category that is neither kin, nor outside. Relation of proximity, in housing. Escaping kin/stranger binary

Benoit: privacy, freedom, slavery... Vancouver empty houses, having a place in case people have to leave Hong Kong

Moises: Question of houses as at the limit of what kind of economic thought/theory. Can economic development be thought of as a consequence of emptiness? Idea that social development has to be filled with people. On the other side, other set of questions about self-arrangement (?). Different types of markets, what kinds of regulations...how does the state meet people? Through policies? unregulated spaces? Connections of state, performance of markets.

Joao: Modes of expression. Is there something in how we study the house that begs for certain modes of expression. Something about the materials that we can only say it in a particular way? Does the materiality of what you study inform how you express it?

Pablo: Originally, tried to be comparative with USA. Idea of family, single-family home.  
Memory: American idea of house is of remembered house of childhood. what happens when you continue living in this house, same place where you've always lived?

Intent: not intent but intents. every person has a different idea of what the place should have been. For some, socialist society. for others, a place to house mistresses. Everyone who moved in had a different idea/intent. Leaving past, family violence, constraints...

Consuela: Neighbors, how we construct familiarity. At the same time, people clearly distinguish between us and them. Not sure if us includes the neighbor. Practical kinship.

Social housing: we think of it as a marker of poverty, we don't compare sufficiently with the middle class/rich, we only think of it in relation to poor people. but when we compare, we open to alternatives...

Thomas: Jardim Maravilha is nothing new, v common housing type in Rio, *loteamento*. Called this because they are legal settlements, big difference from favelas. There are companies who wanted to make money off peripheral land, sold these plots to the poor, but never fulfilled their obligations, made public works, sanitation, water, etc. This is why they are spoken about as *irregular*. They are legal with federal law, but illegal in terms of municipal urban law. Contradiction between federal and municipal regulations.

Processual aspect of object of study: building, families...a processual view of what is going on, the story-life shows how the process takes place.

Wall: through the wall, you are protected from the evil eye.

*"Parente serpente"*

Megan: If bubble metaphor doesn't work, what is it? Pressure cooker? Emptiness as an economic achievement? If you can keep a house empty, you've done something, some other kind of social achievement. Attempt to immigrate, EB5 (?), to have the house, a kind of occupation we are not used to seeing.

Alison: Detroit is different: emptiness part of a long story of dereliction.

Joao: where is the state? some element where people are trying to escape, and affirming a certain kind of right...something about their management of emptiness as a political assertion?

DAY TWO: MAY 15, 2015

**Benoit de L'Estoile**

**Oikonomia: Governing the House in the Land Reform Settlements in Brazil**

Two lines of thought. First is theoretical, concept of oikonomia: articulating a critique of dominant perspectives in economic anthropology—using idiom of economy as taken for granted frame of reference. we might look for alternative frameworks, like oikonomia, Aristotle via Foucault.

Exploring issue of governing the house where house is focus of tension btw state agencies and beneficiaries of programs in settlement projects. Economic anthropology is usually about aiming to uncover social foundations of economy, or how culture shapes economy. Have enlisted oikonomia, Aristotle, Polanyi. Oikonomia is the root of economy. While usually translated as domestic economy, if one looks at actual uses in Aristotle's politics, one sees that it is used in contrast with *politike*. Kind of rule fitting for the house vs what is suited for the polis, the city-state. Rule of one master over inferiors, wife, slaves, etc. So, translating oikonomia as government of the house, including self and other.

Using this as a productive tool to see how this helps us look differently at the world of our interlocutors.

As ethnographic tool:

1. modes of government
2. normative aspect: aim to lead a good life, control of self and family
3. responsibility for sustaining the house, acquiring necessities of life

Settlement projects in sugarcane region of Pernambuco. 2006 debate. House financed by government, people can live in it, be productive on land. Not ownership, rights of usage.

The house is seen as a means for production, a system of credit.

How is this lived by people?

“we want to show we are gente”: making a house to show one is human

House linked to history of housing in this region, post-slavery, post-plantation...

House was medium and symbol of plantation and domination

With land reform, coming back to plantation, for many people, it was chance to realize dream of having a *sítio*.

For the *sítio*/house, the key is to be the *dono*, to be recognized as master. It is not about ownership, but being recognized as a master in one's home.

The house is a process, constantly changing: *casa grande* change with needs of family, domestic life cycle. adding extension, new house for daughter and baby, tendency for expansion... Constant work within the house.

Changing frames from domestic economy and public policy, towards oikonomia. Not divided, but entangled: separating domestic economy and the rest maintains ontological divide. Too much respect for this! Oikonomia can help us get past this.

From Oikonomia perspective, house is more important than land, land reform was not meant to be a housing program, but has become so, being in charge is important, leading a good life, sustaining the house.

Oikonomia is close to autonomy: giving oneself one's own rules.

### *Discussion*

Thomas: Question about religion. Where do people perform religious rituals? Is there place for this inside the house?

Marcelin: Where are the ancestors? How is religion embedded? How do you see kinship relations in the house? How do families celebrate themselves within the house? When they become the master of the house? Connectivity between this and what is happening in favelas?

Andre: Idea of oikos is very productive in Brazil! Autonomy/protection. Is this idea becoming over-productive? Helps us understand poor house, but also big house. In paper, beneficiaries appear as wannabe landlords. Autonomy, liberty—there are very strictly associated with capacity to govern here. Is this all we can say about autonomy? Just mimicking the landlord? Is the *sitio* only a reduced version of the *engenho*.

Federico: Expression “big house,” *casa grande*. Go deeper into this idea of the house linked to the master house. Also, possession of land. Land reform has been more about having a house than having a plot, for beneficiaries. But there are many kinds of houses linked in different ways to land, property...maybe, future research could investigate this relationship to the land.

Benoit: Religious rituals...not really any ancestors presented, not like in Bahia, altar for saints...most people are evangelicals. Building the house, which is collective, is a sort of ritualization, festive moment.

Kinship: all these people (in photos) are related. In Bonito, new houses go to wed sons. Since decision was made to make a settlement, people stopped going planting, people are stealing, cant live on the land or you will be robbed, attacked. Violence is a big fear. Very high number of homicides.

In each family, half of siblings migrated to Sao Paulo. A lot of circulation. The house as concentration of legal status, but acting as if they were *donos*...discrepancy between what this is on paper, and what there is on the ground.

The idiom of being a *dono* is what is striking. Reference to *casa grande* model is visible. Both in the way they talk about it, and how they build, where...

Joao: Picking up on Andre's question about the analytic. Photos of house inside: also a consumer society. Who is selling these things? In the end the state comes in, and the oikonomia stands against governance...but isn't the market there? Need to transform them into subjects of a population, but maybe this is not what's at work there? Are they cast as, understand selves as, a population? If the market is already in the oikonomia, the freedom here is a different freedom: of freed slaves? of market subjects? liberalism?

Moises: Back to house/land questions. Can you scale this point up, think of urban settings where same strategic device is used, where people are waiting...governing through time, but hope that something else is coming...productive space of this entanglement. How people put themselves in this meantime...

Q: Opposition btw oikonomia and politeke. Oikonomia as view of inhabitants, Politeke as view of state. How to consider ties of power, what about domination within this relation, of those who give houses...

Alex: Gender? Aristotle's definition, house led by master (man), vs Politeke, between equals. Can Oikonomia represent other gendered experiences of housing?

Benoit: Market society is present, of course. Competition between houses. Quality of family is made visible in how the house is made and cared for. The *dona da casa*, women are often the heads of families, same vision of being master...quality of woman is assessed by others by how the house is kept, if people are well-fed, etc. Vendors come, say they sold something to neighbors (keeping up w the joneses?). The state is what is constraining, the very fact of the state creating this new place, new rules of the game, wants it to be private plantation...with market, it is a kind of non-market place for selling land and houses, like Minha Casa Minha Vida.

The idea of waiting, *esperar*, waiting, hoping, expecting.

People mobilize friendship with neighboring bosses, politicians, administrators.

The state is present, but in what form? Are they a population, like Foucault's sense, or are they subjects of the market? Free to be subjects of the market?

State is more of a bad landlord than a good landlord.

Fiction of the settlement as it exists on paper and the reality of the lived settlement: role of middleman is to create a ritual fiction by arrangements in meetings, that these worlds somehow fit. Ritual mode of government.

**Eugenia Motta**

**Houses: Quantified, Projected and Lived**

Fw in cluster of favelas in RJ, complexo de alemão.

Forms of government in the favela, centered on house.

3 types of agencies: quantifying, building, and living. Negotiation over different conceptions of houses that inform these agencies are key to understanding the favela: as a way of occupying city; as a problem of government; as a space of everyday life

Concept of “domicile,” construction code from 1930s, first legal definition of “favela”

Businesses inside houses are common.

Recent interventions in Alemão: clearing houses for construction that never happened, teleferico, pacifying police

Many houses were demolished for urbanization projects.

Domicile (as defined by IBGE): connects people, house, economy, based on isolation.

Boundary in which two sense of norm merge: as rule, as dominant idea/practice

Cases/houses that resist quantification are considered exception and subversion at once

Construction code: first legal document containing the word favela. Prohibits improvements to houses and surrounding infrastructure, or construction of new houses. Pre-existing houses should be replaced by minimal dwellings, according to hygiene criteria. These houses should be sold at low price by the city to recognizably poor people. These houses cannot be sold. Conception of the house here is constructed by lasting associations and assumptions that persist to this day...

A house is located in relations with others. Configurations of houses, concerns relations, maintained through movement, circulation of objects, transformation over time. Based on asymmetries, obligations, moralities.

house of origin and new house: cared for become carers, need to constitute a new house.

connected to ideal of house as autonomy, physical separation from other houses. connects to idea of domicile, but concerns form in which houses relate, not mutual isolation.

Circulation of money, food, meals. Practices that form part of relations of affection, proximity, trust, expressed through language of kinship.

Mutability of the house—changes are constant, and possibility that built spaces can be transformed. This effects how people plan for the future, earn and spend money.

Both status and presumed stability differ from domicile.

Attribution of value is complex.

Proposing three research strategies, corresponding to three sets of Qs:

1. As Foucault suggests, knowledge is fundamental to government. Explore in detail notions of domicile, domestic budget, etc, analyse
2. Investigation of processes of destroying and construction houses through public policy
3. housification, *casaficacao*

### *Discussion*

Susan: Pick up on last two points. Documentary practices of state agents. Can you link this to lived experience. Sounds like you are thinking about documents as part of a relational household—how are these mobilized, appropriated, deployed: how does this fit or not fit with ends of the state...

Bridget: the domicile, the ideal of the isolate house. This is a specialist knowledge...but does it circulate as an idea, value, aspiration among the people who live there. Do people aspire to live in them, want to get away from their families, in-laws, etc?

Pablo: Relationship between knowledge and government. What forms of knowledge to people have that government does not? What the state is not seeing?

Ann Kelly: what kind of statistical knowledge are being produced, what other kinds of knowledge, epidemiology, cash-transfer, where domicile becomes a key...

Bruno: 1937 building code has a lineage in beautification plans, beauty looks a certain way, symmetry...equivalency between morality and geometry. Does this language, that gets dropped from language of technocrats, does it surface on the ground? Is there a language of beautification? How are these new symmetrical houses perceived?

Eugenia: People have very mixed feelings. It is common that they express one opinion in one, space, others elsewhere. These spaces are seen as a better place to live, for some people and in some degree, but for others, not: marks you as someone who needs a house, didn't have one before, stigma. Public discussion tends to either say how great it is, or how horrible, polarized. People themselves have mixed feelings. Being close to families, etc, is a strong argument for social movements, but in fact, people are always moving. Many are in apartments but don't see apartments as the end-point of housing trajectory, it is one part. A moment with opportunities, and constraints.

Knowledge that people have: water system in favela, dense occupation...this was constructed by people! government does not know how it works. There are people in favela who can control flow of water, know how this works. This gives a lot of power.

Ideas of beauty, etc, are not made explicit, but are there.

Louis: who is defined as poor? official definition? practical? this is a very particular category.

Joao: I love the example of water, para-infrastructure. The issue of rights: what is the culture of rights here? One would assume there is something here...how do people mobilize to address core question of sanitation (raising q's of hygiene, healthy subjects)...

Consuelo: relationship btw ethnographic production of knowledge and statistics. Ethnography could help us make better stats, and vice versa. What opportunities for this reciprocal contribution do you see, between your work and public policy. Definition of domicile, related to Thomas' discussion of walls, entrances, etc...not a bad definition, but incomplete. Through stats, we come to understand relation btw domiciles. Could your work serve to better inform stats?

Mariana: Less to do with private sphere, more to do with production of the city...state arriving, entering, building teleferico, etc. How does this appear in lived experience of the house? Impinges upon historically constituted ways people build houses, etc...very public dimension to this!

Celeste: Following up on numbers question. Population pressure is the language where I work, numbers going up is bad. Are there ways people don't want to be counted, because this might signal more interference in their lives?

Eugenia: Question of who is "poor." People negotiate with technocrats, within system. How people talk about poverty in daily life: the poor is always the other, v rare that people call themselves poor. Doesn't have much to do with income. "You, that are poor, like us"—I don't own my house. "you that are rich, talk in low voice"...varied criteria!

Rights: there is a lot of mobilization in complexo de alemão. People do want to be counted.

Statistics/ethnography: the definition is very good—what IBGE wants is to create population statistics. You have to create discrete objects that can be counted...it serves its purpose well. What is to be asked is what is the relation between these ideas about domiciles and how people really live. Stats/Ethnography—one cannot substitute for the other.

## Panel 2

**Sebastian Ramirez, Alexander Wambolt, Moisés Kopper, Bruno Carvalho (discussant)**

### *Sebastian*

The idea of “dwelling”

Temporality: crisis and emergency, opposed to temporalities of care  
participating in the house as “descent into the ordinary”  
the space of the possible, expectations of a shared future  
“you can’t go home again”  
giving time

### *Alexander*

home as negotiation of aspirations, expectations, realities  
uneasy mixing of private and state  
conflict of categories and epistemologies  
home as cipher for  
“the faked jewish home rewrites its inhabitants jewish temporality”  
home as tautology for jewish belonging

### *Moisés*

Moral economies and subjectivities that emerge  
house as a moral state than instantiates a desire for home-ownership  
Boundaries of citizenship, new political and neoliberal subjects  
Citizenship and market inclusion  
House as a key category for new middle class  
House as window into citizenship, social inclusion, economic development  
citizenship predicated on precarity  
market inclusion and consumption  
entrenched notions of poverty and worthiness  
House as a kernel for political rationality and selfhood in the making.

### *Bruno*

Posing two clusters of questions, one of which is explicit, the other which underlies.

In all three papers, imaginaries of the futures are present, to different extents. Families striving to rebuild (Sebastian), aspirations, jewish future (alex), desire to pursue a future (moises). New sense of mobility, middle class consumer Brazil. Cars in US have been theorized as an extension of the household. Since the coinage of the “right to the city,” the configuration of urbanization has shifted dramatically, we live in a more urban world...in these papers, as if right to the city was refigured as a right to the future, which only becomes possible at scale of home and household. What do these futures look like, what is in them? If there is indeed a shift in scale, what does it mean? Privatization of belonging?

Unnamed ideal of stability and permanence, that is present in subjects views and writing about them. Immigrants, migrants, displaced or diasporic subjects. What are the expectations around ownership, do they divert from legal claims and structures? Epistemologies of belonging, expectations of permanence, extent to which we should take them for granted? Jewish and Latin American culture, certain normativity of flux. Very idea that non-semi-nomadic living is non-normative is very recent, and culturally specific. Ancient greek is not very ancient, in grand scheme of things. What about belonging within flux?

Sebastian—birds. for birds, there is nothing like ownership...seasonal morphologies, expectation of mobility, movement and flux. is there an opportunity to think about what this means? her metaphor is not apt to describe her expectations of the household? what to make of these performances of the dignity of the *casa propria*

Alex—who are the subjects here? How does this fit into a larger project? Who gains from “catching” these schemes. The marketplace is fascinating, what is going on here? What is this economy, what else is at stake? Why not name the cities? How do these cases persist within neighborhoods. This is a persecutorial scene. Households not as bounded units—what networks of friendship, etc?

Moises—idea of a moral hierarchy of worthiness. people constantly have to prove precariousness. idea of consumerism as redemption, entanglement between state and the market. rich in an aspirational mode. Where is class conflict here? Does this resurface, and how?

### *Discussion*

Pablo: Question for Sebastian. Conflict between openness and crowding. Breakdown of intimacy...but is there also a different kind of surveillance? Thinking of ethnography of Mexican immigrants in US, what they miss is open space, associated with individual freedom. In this place, spatial configurations, surveillance?

Megan: Birds, movement, travel. Unexamined idea that unpredictability is bad, difficult, this normative idea...Here, predictability is associated with the home, idea that once you have the home, things will be stable, then we can do other things. But many things are unpredictable: travel, going places...is predictability always good?

Benoit: idea of worthiness. People want to show that they are worthy of being good workers, trying to continue...Dona Hilda uses rhetoric of *ciudadania* and politics. This is a moment, 2014, when poor/rich distinction is being activated. Framed not as activism, but as work—the work of citizenship.

Aaron: Shift to the word “housing” instead of house or home. Is this important? *Oikos* does not necessarily connote “housing.”

Sebastian: Idea of stability and permanence created in these spaces. In retelling these moments, illusion of stability in the past is being created. But previous lives were not all that stable,

poverty, violence...was not easy. But in these moments of retelling, idealized past, you create the very possibility of stability. A snapshot.

Moises: Question of belonging in flux. Dona Hilda rereads her own trajectory at junction of different processes. She is engaged actively in work for citizenship. She willingly accepted this place. Turning point from past to present, towards the future...circulation btw spaces and sites. What does stability mean? In her case, the home is also constantly being shaped as a place where she can settle down, think about her trajectory. In her case, not so much what will happen in the future, as what does stability actually look like in her life, what can it unleash?

Marketization, creation of markets targeting the poor, fostering broader arguments...ideologies that feed into this.

Alex: Israel is an exceptionally odd place. Bialik is the only investigator who is not a former mossad agent. Most have former espionage experience! Most people in this position are in a very precarious economic moment. He sleeps on floor of synagogue because he can't afford rent, and is not religious enough to get welfare. People peg Judaism on consumer goods: dishwashers, etc...kind of expensive commodity products! Are Shabbat candlesticks silver, gold, a lesser metal. People using a lot of consumer goods to indicate these things. Settlers, reappropriation, kicked a family out to gain this jewish home. Different layers of hierarchical persecution here. By and large, people who do the work of the state in these religious institutions are lower class and highly religious, whereas clients are middle class. People have a non-economic form of power here...

Ann Kelly: Points about the contractual, a basis of oikos. More about legal content of the marriage contract, what kind of protections and rights come with this, versus cohabitation?

Q: Bialik's poverty—you would imagine he could be bought off...does this happen? There is certainly the potential? (Yes). Use of consumer goods as proof of Jewishness. Immigration test in US, to certify whether marriage is real or just for papers, one of tests is knowledge of consumer goods within the household. In *the purchase of intimacy*. Defining recipients of state property as "workers."

Bridget: Work about codification of Islamic law in colonial contexts or modern state—is there work like this in Israeli context? Does this have to do with the contractor role?

Onur: Role of the state, state violence has spatial continuum, changes forms, affects lives of people and their homemaking capabilities...

Shreya: Narrativizing pasts. How storytelling and personal histories emerge. Severing of past—what kind of work does this do? Holocaust narrative bringing humanity to this interaction. Dona Hilda experiments with the past...there is a lot here! How does narrativizing the past relate to place and identity?

Joao: If we stay with the continuously adrift as the human condition, which kind of life stories can come out of this? Figure of the false, the farcical, is a key figure here, implicitly or explicitly.

So to what extent do people become the characters, and of which kinds of plots? Is this a different kind of political critique, that comes from this adrift condition, temporalities at work? Nuanced critical theory in the making.

Federico: agency of the house, the house performs something. mobility.

Alex: Contracts—Judaism loves contracts, marriages have been done as contracts for about 2000 years, closely resembles a prenup. Divorce documents are also highly ritualized, but zero content, in Aramaic, written by hand by a scribe. Takes hours to produce, woman walks around with it, then tears it up. Uneasy sense of roles around Judaism, wanting to have a different relationship to space and time.

Moises: Narrativizing—seeing how affects and strategies blend. Dona Hilda's memories are formed in specific glimpses of the past... fits into engagement of telling public stories, future engagements. Seeing what is concealed by the stories. What is the main subjective outcome of the labor for citizenship, of engagement in telling public stories. House as imagined space for overcoming unfinishedness...

Middle class—what is the moral language of middle classness, what is it doing in opening specific forms of marketization. House or housing. Opening specific kinds of markets. Consumption enters, but is highly subsidized by the state, people lost track of what kind of money is deployed, theirs are the state. How much does state and market congeal in personal trajectories?

Sebastian: Role of the state—war involves many actors, state has displaced people in many ways, through development projects, etc. When you are trying to become a displaced person officially, you have to give a declaration, only particular victims count, displaced by guerillas (can't say state displaced you). Moments to capture other narratives. Recognizing the otherwise.

## **Viviana Zelizer and Jonathan Morduch**

*Viviana Zelizer*

Starting with a letter from last weeks Sunday NYT: should I lend money to my irresponsible parents? Notice letter-writers efforts to identify appropriate economic relations between adult children and aging parents? A dangerous gift? A caring transfer? Dilemma is not about the amount of money, but about the adequacy of payment from adult child to parent. Would this be different if it were a child needing money from parents?

Intricate blending of economic transactions and intimate relations.

Outline: 1) Cartoon summary of overall approach, 2) issues about the home as site of economics and intimacy, 3) possible agenda for future research

Challenged two influential accounts of domestic economies. First, “hostile worlds approach” that separates intimacy and economy. Second, “markets everywhere approach,” that reduces economic transaction to economic rationalities. Both miss what is really going on!

Instead, theory of “connected lives”—far from living in separate worlds of sentiment and economics, or flat markets, people use economics in their social lives, and to differentiate among ties. How do we create connected lives? People engage in relational work, trying to create viable matches among social relations. Not any monetary transaction is compatible with any kind of relation. People find econ relations that sustain and confirm relations.

Home is a fascinating site to explore this mingling of economic and intimate relations. Exploring relational work involved in each of these economic transactions. There is almost no work on this! Economic sociologists focus mostly on capitalist firms and markets, marginalize a whole range of economic activities, including domestic economies.

3 ways houses matters:

1. represents largest purchase people make, major store of wealth, most momentous site of gifts and loans, major form of wealth for transmission to next gen
2. acquiring housing makes a weighty set of commitments, effects social interactions, renting or buying in a particular location, household members insert themselves practically and symbolically into a web of social conduct
3. actual use involves day to day negotiations over rights and obligations

Housing significantly affects people’s self-conceptions.

Six possible areas for research:

1. earmarking of household monies: if, when and how do couples set aside a house fund, who decides how much money, are there competing earmarks, housefunds vs college funds, etc
2. which money matters: how does source of money used to purchase home shape decisions? does it matter if money comes from inheritance, windfall, family loans and gifts?

3. gendered monies: how does gender shape negotiations over the purchase of the home
4. third-parties: how do parents, siblings, etc intervene, via monetary interventions, advice, etc. children are increasingly active in decisions over location and type of home. real-estate agents?
5. media matters: how does media used for house purchases shape transactions? Argentina, real estate purchases are paid in cash, in dollars. Bitcoin is emerging as alternative currency. What is the impact of different media
6. contested monies: what happens when home becomes a source of dispute: beyond family fight, becomes legal dispute/contestation. divorce—who paid for the house, how, why?

Focuses on qualitative distinctions among house transactions. Quantity also matters, and so does class dynamics...

Domestic economies absorb intense relational work. Focusing on the house opens up intriguing questions about our complex economic lives.

*Jonathan Morduch*

Trying to open up economic framework...

economists often focus on issues around income. starting to focus on assets/wealth more (piketty). trying to think about something else: cash flow

cash flow: how are things paid for, what gets purchased, who decides? we don't really have this data. it is possible to collect this data, and it opens up richer conversations about choices, and also leads to a fundamentally different conception of poverty, its conditions and challenges

Basic question that doesn't get asked enough...thinking about global poverty/development. what is striking about this data at a high level, is that 2.2 billion people live on 2\$ a day. its hard to get our minds around this, so we make assumptions. We assume if you live on this, you must live hand to mouth, you can't plan to the future, you can't save, and you can't have much of an economic life with choices. This gets framed in a way that takes a lot of questions off the table, about agency, decision-making, difficult choices.

So—set out to track this. Using financial diaries to track how households were navigating this, keeping food on the table, etc. And the assumptions turned out to be mostly wrong.

South Africa, Bangladesh, India

The poor are active moneymakers. Respondents patched together a wide array of services and devices. Informal, semiformal, wages, microfinance, etc. Not only do they engage in financial lives, make choices, this is happening all the time. In India, households enter a fresh financial arrangement every two weeks, on average. LOTS of different kinds of activities. Some of these don't make sense from an economic standpoint.

The poor face a “triple whammy”

1. low incomes
2. irregular/unpredictable incomes
3. lack of appropriate financial tools

This creates spaces in which we need to think about the relational work. This leads to the outcomes that make the difference, being able to stay afloat.

Solutions are not about finding silver bullet. Are about creating some intervention that will help the other pieces work better. Goal is to make interventions that help all these negotiations. Reliable engagements are the one thing that every household is missing.

Sociology/anthropology, conversations around issues of precarity. There is a sense in which it captures households hanging on by a thread, living with risk. What we are seeing here is a normal situation of ups and downs, where volatility and fluctuation is just the normal condition that has to be managed. This is a different set of concerns.

### *Discussion*

Federico: Economic sociology, in general, doesn't care about the house, the house is not there. Confluence is true for anthropologists. Money in the house is not studied...more interested in survival...economic anthropology takes household as main concept.

Importance of money for people who have no money. Methodological question. Concept of household: what does this mean? How can we conceptualize the household in relation? is it the best analytic unit to see economic life?

Viviana: amount of resources matter, but there is also another dimension, the quality of quantity: tiny monies vs big monies. college students economic activities—how does it vary?

Jonathan: we used the word diaries to capture intimate decisions and monies that are not usually seen. yet, methodologically, they are not diaries, are surveys. what is an innovation here is that we've used the tools of economics to make sure things add up, so we see almost in real time what is missing, go back and ask questions. this is how we see money under the table, monies that are uncomfortable to talk about, etc.

Marcelin: Ideal household attached to idea of conjugality. What mechanisms allow you to capture continuity, integrate emerging forms, stabilize tools...

Benoit: Language of letter in NYT, how naturalized use of economic language is. How to get out of this economic language, see how economic framework already defines the way we think. We put everything in terms of economic flows. Economic relations are related to other things, but we still believe more in economy than in god.

Ann Kelly: Hospitality—is this a useful idiom? are any of these strategies thought of in terms of insurance? are there modes of dealing with the unforeseen?

Moises: Financialization, how idea of debt comes into the scene. How credit economy opens up new ways of living. How do people pay back? How does this connect to education, public policy?

Viviana: types of households are crucial. these sorts of questions can be expanded to all kinds of households. As you differentiate between types of household, different types of third parties will emerge.

Differentiating between use of economic language and economic practices. It has expanded as a vocabulary, but this doesn't create economic practices. These are two separate agendas. I've been mostly interested in practices, which exist throughout history. Existence on NYT dilemma is particular to our time, but can be explored in other non-capitalist, corporate-dominated cultures...dominance of econ language is not the same as prevalence of economic practices.

Hospitality—implicit issue is that economic arrangements then define social relations. How certain kinds of relations allow or exclude certain kinds of economic transactions. Type of relation defines the parameter of what is possible. And if you do the wrong one, that is a problem. Once you have certain kinds of transactions, that redefines relations.

Income tax credit refund: (recent book) taking model of earmarking monies, how this particular form of money is spent differentially from other kinds of money

Jonathan: the issue is not just that economic language is unhelpful for people thinking about this in anthropology, its also not helpful for economists. before poverty, we talked about the poor—poverty flattened this. our mission is to open up the language. I don't think the language gets in the way—it leads us to collect data of a certain kind, see the world in a certain way...

on insurance—we don't see this very much, but in a world of risk, so many things that you don't think of as insurance have insurance components. you borrow from moneylender, something happens, they let you payback less, skip interest, etc...happens through negotiations. the biggest risks are fundamentally unshareable—economic downturn. you can't buy insurance against a recession.

Education—how do you manage all of this better? microfinance, the premise was, households know what to do, just need to be unlocked. this was too limited. many attempts to fund financial literacy programs, etc. but these make no difference to choices. we don't have a good sense of how to provide education in a meaningful way.

Joao: Talk more about children making decisions for household. is this cross-cultural?

Great to hear an economist invoking theories of contemporary...link back to questions of drifting, up and down. how do you see the macro of this up and down at the micro level. what do we learn about broader political economy.

Martin: Abandoning old conception of poverty, recognizing different levels of agency. Normalization of precarity, this risk is normalized, not exceptional. How to include this risk in

analysis of poor households...something more political and conflictual...maybe you are making this too normal?

Onur: With migrant workers in Istanbul

Alison: How is household economic language? Are there literatures about the term household in particular, and does it translate into other languages...are there precise terms in other languages?

Celeste: question of relations, what emerges out of the microfinance scheme...idealized relations, but it was really awful. can we move beyond the household as we look at social relations, not assume that we will have this ideal, that people will just step in and help each other in this harmonious way...

Heba: Household and relational work as important for family outcomes. But cash is fungible, we should provide financial resources. How do you think about this fungibility, these two things together?

Jonathan: Joao asks, how does this add up to bigger picture. When I see households saving, I think of it as an activity. Yet on macro side, it is a number on a balance sheet. this creates a big disjuncture, distorts a lot of policy. as we start to see relations, transactions...you see lots of interactions, that don't necessarily add up. a lot of this work is invisible. Things policymakers see and don't pay attention to.

Not that ups and downs are normal, or that precarity/risk isn't important, but that ongoing ups and downs, knowing that you can't really predict—its about how you live with this. Middle class have the same problems, extreme volatility, but it is experienced differently because they have more resources.

Story of microfinance is so compelling to so many people, that you can build on social resources...very romantic, and not necessarily true. If you give people a choice, will usually choose individual instead of loans with a bunch of people. This will go in other directions, a movement towards more individualized relationships, this is already happening, embracing the reality of the situation.

Viviana: practices, saving as a practice, is invisible to economists. parallel to longstanding invisibility of women's domestic work. expands the umbrella of invisible work that is not accounted for.

Kids—original focus was to see focus of transformation of children into sentimental beings. changed my mind, now see them as also economic actors. work of translating by immigrant children, etc, variety of practices. The example of children affecting consumer decisions, this is in trend. NYT article on rich kids helping parents buy a home.

Language of household: housewife? househusband? "Maisonnee"? are there Spanish/Portuguese words? doesn't seem so.

Sentimentalization of household relation, assumption that if it happens in the household, will be nicer and more loving—not true! Dealing with definition of intimacy, had to deal with this as well, that intimate relations are supposed to be more authentic...had to moderate this

**Federico Neiburg**

**The Pragmatics of the House: Preliminary Remarks on Socio-Spatial Categories, Intersections, Scales and Agencies**

Term for house in Haitian creole is ? : extends beyond nuclear family home to encompass other configurations and geographical territories, living humans and ancestors. House also belongs to wider universe of socio-spatial categories operating at diverse scales. These categories are not limited to family, though may contain it.

Growing scope of questions involved in the management of shared life and collective/political action, through analysis of term house and related socio-spatial categories, in relation to slums of Port-au-Prince.

Historians identify Belaire as first black neighborhood of the Americas. 19<sup>th</sup> century, transformed into residential area of middle class artists, traders, civil servants, etc. Mid 60s/70s, Belaire, like the country as a whole, underwent rapid transformation and urbanization. Number of inhabitants increased, infrastructure crumpled, new arrivals drew older population to new areas, expansion and increase in density. At the end of this transformation, region was identified as one of the most populous district of city, quartier populee, ghetto. Extreme poverty, unemployment, surviving on less than 2\$ a day. Lack of infrastructure, water, coal, electricity, etc. Insecurity, stigma.

Belaire was a main backdrop for violence after overthrow of dictator, and after military coups in 1991 and 2004. Periods of violence associated with political conflict, earthquake of 2010, dramatically transformed relationship between people and territory. People left homes, sectors changed owners, because old owners had died or fled. After the earthquake, houses and squares were turned into refugee camps.

Raising question: need to widen the scope of the house, taking seriously the need for providing, and thinking the house as a place beyond state agencies and NGOs that we are accustomed to think about when we talk about housing policies.

Problematic of housing cannot be observed in a state-centered form. Not because there is no state. Nor can we discount NGOs. Observing how a series of other agencies intervene. Houses in the sense of places to live. Agents range from families themselves to collectives who control territories and flows.

Housing and framing, from a broad perspective consistent w/ Foucauldian view of government, which includes various agencies that influence lives and futures of houses and housing.

Relations between houses, persons, families, politics, economy

House and families in Haitian ghetto. Exploring conceptual possibilities demands radical abandonment of premises that shape approaches to family dynamics and poverty—single parenthood, extended family, based on ideas of normative ideas of nuclear family, that sees other family dynamics as disordered or anomical. A substantial critical literature exists on this.

Cais (?), house, posits a variety of meanings, shared by other contexts. The house is at once a locality and a concept. This double sense is second key point of this talk. Cosanguines and affines, who share resources and places to sleep, but also affections, aversions, substances, and temporalities, tasks and friends, neighbors and fears...the house is identified by people who inhabit it, and are inhabited by it. “Just as important as living in houses, is the fact that houses live in us” – Mia Couto. Ties between people inhabit and are inhabited by, are seen as ties of consanguinity. Ideal model of relatedness. Like calling a good friend “brother,” language of blood provides sense of proximity, mutuality of beings. Blood as a category forms basis of familiarity. Famille appears through blood.

Rationalities of various scales and intensities. Languages, idioms, of family, house. Language of the house. Paying attention to what this claim means—what does language signify, here? What do we mean by idiom? House and family are at once places, and more than that. Place contains neither family nor house. Family and house overflow.

Crucial to understand what we mean by language.

Multiple belongings: people have more than one house, and houses have many people. Remember that house is not only a place, but also a concept. Belonging to multiple bases. Can eat/sleep. Feels protected/safe. Has obligations. This relationship between person and houses are not stable and permanent—they can be broken. Conflict is latent.

Conflict and division of the house: we used to see house as space of solidarity and mutuality. But the house is also a hierarchical space, at least by age and gender. If not only a place, but also a concept, and people belong to multiple houses, house is also a space of tension. Always possibility of conflict. Children are most fragile members of house. Adults need to take of them, or they need to take care of selves with friends and magical being. Death of children cause tension. Witchcraft. No more explosive conflict than conflict with relatives. All of this is involved with money.

### *Discussion*

Joao: through the house, the person can understand the (?), relate to humanity...and work of scaling, how a subject belongs to or understands multiple scales of existence. House as an instrument through which people do work of scaling, belong to multiple time-spaces, but also scalings.

Conseulo: One house could be many houses at once. Coresidence. I study residential proximity in different social classes, see that it is not just cooperation, also just passing time together, not necessarily doing useful things. What is the place for useless (nonproductive) sociability in context of survival situations?

Mariana: Open talk with the earthquake, how it destabilized the city, brought all these people in, had an impact on houses and housing. Also talking about housing as stability, objects and relations...what was the impact of the earthquake on this imagination of housing?

Benoit: Interested in idea of language of the house. When your friend uses the word *cais*, places where one can eat/sleep. Does this word always have the same meaning? Is some of it more metaphorical? Same of brother.

Angele: Ambiguity about the word house. In this case, 3 levels: geographical, practices (economic activity etc), use of the word in justifications, discursive. What are the tensions between these levels? Do people play with these, with this ambiguity?

Federico: Mobility—who moves and who does not is an empirical and theoretical question. Many things to ask about this. Who moves, when, where, who stays. Not all *cais* are the same.

Making of proximity—how people make proximity, why they use (or not) certain metaphors to refer to certain people in certain circumstances, transform a place into a house, for example. We need to pay attention, to discuss the assumptions we have of the house. When people talk about the house in different places, they are saying something to us, we need to pay attention. Not to say that all houses are the same. analytic malleability.

Playing with scales, places, temporalities. Scales exist in time as well as space. We used to think about houses as an undifferentiated space, even if we see that they are very differentiated. Care of children is a central point in the production of the house. Where children are moving, care and circulation between different houses brings them together.

Marissa: What kinds of practices people use to become part of houses, who exchanges money, is this something people do? What specific practices through which people become part of a house.

Thomas: how do people interact with neighbors? What is the relation between these notions and the unity of the neighborhood? Is there any kind of community association?

Joao: You began with violence. But ended with conflict. Tell us a bit more about the violence, the crime. What is crime in the household, the neighborhood. Thinking of the divided city. Crime in the *oikos* that pulses under the fantasy of democracy.

Federico: Overlapping neighborhoods. How people imagine their own space, this is a key point, how they imagine the social space where they live. Frontiers where we can pass or not... associations play a key role. Maps of territory are important, linked to different ways of thinking about the neighborhood. Linked with houses and with family, frontiers between neighborhoods, also mobile. Even if there are houses with borders that separate interior from outside, house extends to the street, space of cooking, opposition between street and house is complicated. Relationship between neighborhood and family. Transformations in urban context.

Violence as a native category referring to specific periods of time. Not used to talk about crime. Following their use, referring to the “times of violence,” after Aristide, etc. When mobility of people was even stronger. One characteristic of these periods is the mobility.

### Panel 3

**Clemence Leobal, Onur Gunay, Magdalena Isaurralde, Celeste Alexander, Christine Walley (discussant)**

#### *Clemence*

Describing dwellings on both sides of the river that divides French Guyana and Suriname  
Configurations of houses—constantly changing  
Life spent on both banks of the river. How to live on both sides of the river at once?  
Maisonnee, configuration of houses, exchange, solidarity. but this has limits.  
People move within configurations, which stretch across urban boundaries, and over the border  
Many people have lived, or still live, on the other side of the border  
Some people have double residence  
Configurations change, and is not objective—depends on whose points of view  
Configuration is a hierarchized space in which both sides do not have same status  
Distinguishing between maisonnee and (?), we see house as hybrid concept

#### *Onur*

3 levels: body, house, city. inhabiting body of migrant laborer, the house in Istanbul, and the city space. struggle of Kurdish migrants to live in Istanbul like other ethnic groups.  
How political violence and economic restructuring drive migration, and how urban labor practices impinge on ethnic identity-making processes  
cuts as reminders of betrayal instead of care  
“if we hadn’t fought hard enough, they wouldn’t have let us live here”  
inversion of Clastres  
“all these things will come to an end when we build a home together”  
family as basic medium of social mobility  
Building a home is not only material—solidarity that has symbolic meanings  
Buying a house has inherent tensions, conflicts of interest

#### *Magdalena*

Gas extension project, NGO  
What does access to gas mean for these families in relation to indebtedness  
Entering the domestic sphere to understand what kinds of changes these projects cause  
symbolic ruptures, indebtedness, inversion of growth in domestic sphere  
popular housing as something included in popular economy, Polanyi’s principles of economic regulation  
organization of care activities  
interactions btw ngo and household  
this is the start of a process of indebtedness within the family  
internal negotiation to maintain equilibrium within domestic sphere, internal calculation  
this is a different definition of indebtedness. person indebted does not perceive that she is getting in debt

*Celeste*

what house has no windows and no doors?  
“we are an egg that is surrounded on all sides”  
claiming belonging in what outsiders view as a home for wildlife  
“surrendering” land  
battles over land, livelihood, belonging  
being at home in a wider net of relations that includes ancestors  
roundness as being (bachelard)  
egg as archetypical house  
spatial strangulation  
crossing thresholds of personal and political  
figure of the door: moving beyond the egg as perfect integration or complete strangulation

*Christine Walley*

Showing housing as a verb.

The egg, how home is linked to land, homes embodying a paradox: an integrated whole, but also an impossible ideal.

Need to look inward and outward at once. Outside defined by dominance of neoliberal thinking and institutions, growing inequality, writing off of people and places—how does this impact housing, families? How are sources of strain and conflict multiplying in an increasingly unequal world?

What sorts of governance are these spaces of land protection? Symbolically, imagined to embody logics other than capitalist ones. But wildlife is heavily commodified. Parks are zones of exclusion rather than access. Valuing wildlife more than citizens, scramble for private reserves.

Who is seen as productive/desirable citizen? What kinds of support are available?

Growing inequalities of our era, tensions of competing needs...

Loss of middle class industrial jobs, declining marriage rates among whites with high school education. Young people feel too precarious to get married. Marriage gap in which college-educated people feel empowered to marry, working class do not, has not been this wide since gilded age.

Linking affect, economy, physicality of space, negotiating relationships between structure and agency, to gain understandings of constraints of everyday life, and also hopes...

Questions about scale—how do we understand what is thought of as scale, also implies false hierarchy of levels of abstraction, when all we have is the world in which we live.

how to go large, but remain up close? what are the strategies we have for thinking about scale with these fine grained ethnographic analyses, how do we think about this without using this language? what other ways to go deep to go large? productive ways forward?

### *Discussion*

Louis: scale, and also density. how do we translate some consistency in methodology. Configuration from point of view of ego. We have to be more open to think, cannot use same methodological approaches... We have to challenge ourselves methodologically.

Moises: All papers rely on an object—river, scar, kitchen, egg...picking up on this to think about the house. Could we extend this into methodology, going beyond house as idiom. How to expand this way of thinking through objects...form, aesthetics

Ann Kelly: River as a kind of barrier. How history of Tanzanian efforts, keeping geographically remote politically proximate. Elaborate on the histories of this—does it persist? Is this a new formation?

Bridget: Do people really want to go back to the village? do they actually do this? narrativizing that people do, nostalgic rendering of what's been lost?

Joao: Up and down, constantly, people are always dealing with this, not crisis or emergency, this is the constant. So where do we see this at macro level, managing this, acting differentially. How do you think about this work of scale, or how are you struggling with it?

Benoit: style of writing. start with anecdote, going through individual histories, connecting to some theoretical apparatus. Different ways of writing. Provocations, an occasion to reflect on different ways of working on same kinds of realities. How you get from individual story to the broader picture. From individual case to theory? Or, what is the evidence we are marshaling, or that we think we need to marshal?

Clemence: currencies circulate, can pay in either on either side. two phones.

Lena had two children who died. incest, either she or child had to die (??????).

Subjectivity: the exchanges are concrete...

Onur: Prices of housing has a huge influence. General pattern, 50s and 60s, most people stayed in the city. People who came through forced migration, it wasn't a question, they spent all their lives here. Labor migration of last two decades, ratio of people who stay in the city is decreasing. When people get married, need to save to buy houses, land in village, their home town. The city is not only oppression, also a site of desire, calls to people. But when you cannot afford a house, and it is time to get married...so people go back, or go to less expensive cities.

Magdalena: institutional economics, Polanyi, multiple levels of economic regulation. these forms can exist together. interpersonal relationships with neighbors, domestic relations within household, also market situation, with arrival of gas, arrival of credit, market penetrates the domestic sphere

Celeste: scale questions. one approach is to think about how interlocutors are also manipulating scale. Wambura and the map. Following people as they move around. Temporality to the moments when certain things become available to people.

## Exit Zero

Thomas: Thinking home and the workplace at the same time. What happens in the workplace affects the home.

Bridget: Father is such a familiar cultural type...walking, speaking...it's a figure of masculinity that we don't have anymore. It was something about this generation, and about producing. Now, people take pride in consumption, give through consumption...then, it was all production. There is something so interesting about this figure of masculinity.

Mother having connections in the neighborhood, as opposed to father, who retreated to the home. This also seems to be common, for retired men...we think of home as the woman's place, but it actually ends up being the domain where men become isolated.

Federico: Always the same house. Who, when, how did you arrive at this house. It is a strong house, historical, familial terms. How did your parents end up there?

Concept of "closed society"—speak to this a bit more?

Christine: this area used to be all wetlands, housing emerged with steel industry, late 19<sup>th</sup> century. Neighborhoods got built to house the workers. Four neighborhoods interspersed with where industries used to be. Parents house story is interesting! Dad's dad married mom's mom. The house was Christine's mother's house that went back to the Swedish grandfather, bought house right across the alley. Neighborhood was very tight, all of cousins in a few block radius. Incredible density of kinship ties. This is also part of being a closed society. African Americans worked in the mills but weren't allowed to live in the area. Because there was so little social and governmental support, so people depended heavily on ethnic groups as well as kin. You worked in the mills in "gangs," by ethnicity. Built in the mills, around ethnicity. Closed society also linked to racism.

Onur: telling a horrible story in a poetic way. Something coming from anthropology, attention to scales, particular kind of storytelling. How did you get the idea to make this film? How did Chris get involved, what was his motivation?

Chris: First trip was in 1994, had just met, more than 10 years after this, mills were still closing at this time, but her dad's mill had closed more than 10 years before. Struck by terrible pain, how her father internalized it, physicalized it, couldn't talk about it, yet was desperate to talk about it, and this extended beyond him. First time I drove down exit zero ramp. The movie was always something they wanted to do. Shot slowly over time, over about a decade...captured by story of family, neighborhood, it seemed like an important story. There are many movies about deindustrialization, but often very political, some talking heads, some full of rage, we wanted to take a different tack, go from the inside out, start with the family, hook it into bigger story.

Joao: there is this unfinishedness there. your character emerges through the filming. somehow the filming created the character, the possibility of the character. there is this tension, story of father, also your story, there is this movement. Play of scales in the narrative, that we are haunted

by. The up and down of personal, family, economic, how it is related systemically, how we get to there. Something of the craft of storytelling—could only cinema do this. Must be affective, in some way, for this multiscale analysis to work.

Chris: the intention of the film, its about stories, voices, stories that don't get told, or get interrupted, who wont wear microphone, cant give the speech at Exeter, are inaudibly recorded...then you realize it is Christine sorting through this, it is her story...

Christine: Pull-out where you see the area. The idea then is to link to larger scale, as you go out, will be a colored map, job loss, zooming out from Chicago, NE, US... color-coded to see this. This is very hard in terms of research. Mills don't tell you how many people they fired! Trying to assemble this data is really difficult, the graph itself is a process of research.

Chris: Department of labor keeps stats by county and kind of job. So students have been working on getting this data together.

Christine: The idea is, you go deep into this one story, but the visualizations hint that this is just one story like many others.

Unfinished—we've thought of this as an exploration.

Joao: how do you punctuate this? Who will punctuate?

Chris: Third part of this project, the website, with the historical museum, this will not come to an end, is an open-ended exploration. And so has this film, which has made it so hard to end. We have a conversation, work more, do it again...eventually will stop doing that.

Christine: a couple of screenings in southeast Chicago. most common response is people witnessing. Getting up, crying, telling stories. Or sending things: like, mailing dad's ID card. People want to capture that this was there. Website can be a place where we can emphasize many different stories, have more space for all of them.

Andre: how often do you go to Chicago? how did your mother cope with death of your father?

Christine: she has a powerful network in her neighborhood, so has coped well.

Joao: Jonathan, what about the ups and downs?

Jonathan: curious about the book, thinking back on it after making the movie.

Chris: although book came out last year, they grew up together. Movie is not an adaptation of the book. Both had huge influence on each other, lots of cross pollination.

Christine: its my narration, but much of the writing is Chris.

Joao: pace, unfolding, narration...tells another fold of the story.

Eva: ethnographic films, narration often seems so seamless. The work of thoughtfulness came across really strongly. How do you show people reflecting on their own lives...

Christine: thinking about being in conversation, as cultural producers, with other cultural producers. Great grandfather wrote a memoir. all these people reflecting on their lives, being in dialogue with others, having it be conversation.

Susan: how multivocal this was, working with visuals. Read book with class...expressing anger, marked by class. scale stuff at the cellular level. how do you talk about own experience with students when teaching? first generation college kids using this text to talk about their story.

Christine: hadn't anticipated how first generation students and faculty members would respond. language about upward mobility now is very individualized. What happens to home communities? As an individual, how do you relate back to those. This is something these students want to talk about...

DAY THREE: MAY 16, 2015

**Susan Ellison**

**The Conflictual Social Life of an Industrial Sewing Machine**

Oikos as object of foreign aid intervention, and also a spatial relation.

Pushing against culturalization of social conflict and domestic violence, contributing violence and unruliness to indigeneity, drinking.

How debts produce, maintain, and injure  
Political economy of domestic violence.  
Pathologizing political activism

Sewing machine as emblematic of larger patterns—about how debt and violence are entangled  
At first, this violence is invisible

Conciliation as a form of leverage, however weak, in trying to cajole others to repay loans

Writing against culturalization of violence. When we talk about domestic violence here, it is individualized, psychologized. In Bolivia, it is characterized as a cultural pathology—rural, uneducated, indigenous. This is depoliticizes, erases larger interventions etc.

What about a more political economic approach? Invites us to examine interplay between factors that shape people's experiences of violence.

Stories of debt as stories of violence.

*Discussion*

Joao: Do you see these courts as a technique of governance? Where is the state? Evo Morales, indigeneity, in power? Does the state now impersonate the subject of rights, but this does not translate locally? They use this as a kind of leverage—is this a para-infrastructure? A para-legal infrastructure? What is the larger impossibility of the legal subject in the country? “We also now speak of justice.” In Brazil, “entrar na justica,” entering justice...as if you were out of justice. What makes poor people speak of entering in justice in Brazil, where here they speak of justice?

Pablo: You ended talking about compadres. Are there these obligations? When someone dies, does debt disappear?

Federico: Collateral. Sewing machine as collateral. What are major categories? Are there other kinds of collateral? Why collateral, in this context? More about houses: where these women live, where does the sewing machine fit in the house?

Sebastian: graffiti. What does this do to people's sense of being, as you are walking, you are accused of something. signs of debt everywhere, enticing you. What does this play of accusation and hope in space do, walking down the street?

Alex: Comparisons to Israel. Center for Women's Justice. Gendering of a particular form of justice, a particular way of resolving conflicts. Are these alternative models offered for women only, or also for men?

Bridget: women as objects of state intervention. these forms of violence are framed as rural/traditional. Are these forms of violence seen this way by your interlocutors?

Heath: If we think of these domestic spaces as bounded from non-domestic spaces...when someone comes into your house as a guest, versus if someone comes over for a loan, is there a difference—don't offer coffee, etc. How does the loan reshape how people embody the space inside.

Susan: People are moneylenders with friends, but some sit outside, wait in front of microfinance office for women who are desperate...but most are friends, neighbors, kin. People who have ongoing social relations. Turning people down is painful! People wouldn't draw up documents, but when things got too grinding, would want to write down, ask for collateral—once there has been a breach of trust. Often after the fact. People would also ask for interest after the fact. Is interest acceptable in domestic relations? Lenders also debtors, would get desperate, start to do these things.

Urban—rural. In popular discourse, trope that violence was brought from rural to the city. Intersecting with issues of drinking. Circulating moral discourses.

Graffiti—how space is marked. Women tell stories of becoming shut-ins, because they are avoiding being in public, they are ashamed. People will hunt you down in the market looking for repayment. Signage everywhere. Huge billboards celebrating futures of women with microfinance loans, celebratory stories. And then storefront moneylenders, and signage of defaulting moneylenders. Promise and peril, blurring boundaries of public and private.

Collateral—comadres loan money all the time. Life has its ups and downs, people recognize this...its financial, its moral...

People are looking for ways to take the law home with them. Are being interpolated through this legal-like document, to behave as if it were the state.

Very weird genealogy to these mediation programs. Ultimately exported globally, tied to neoliberal projects. And used to target social movements, to get them to sit down instead of street protests. Say, the state is broken, we can't fix it, make state institutions responsive. But people want this! Still an ideal of having bureaucracies, legal systems that work, that people yearn for.

Evo—has an anti-neoliberal platform, but many of his policies are folded into this.

Shreya: more methodological question. spaces in which these stories are told. how do you navigate your role?

Onur: Is there a particular narrative, genre of talking about violence? Disrupts peoples capacity to speak. We are often more able to hear about it through a political narrative, common genre, etc.

Celeste: Idea that this is circulating between everyday people is very compelling. is there a point where the sewing machine ceases to circulate. is there a capture by the institution? is ADR tied to economy of microfinance? what moments of capture? Institutional component?

Q: people are saying I want legal systems that work: does this necessarily involve strong state? or could this come from somewhere else? or could these other systems give people a sense of broader membership, etc?

Magdalena: Analysis shows link between global financial flows...

Susan: methodology—this is complicated. lived with compadres—lived and worked in Bolivia for 4 years before grad school. living with compadres, lots of violence. how to intervene? how to grapple with this? getting advice from people who work in domestic violence. what did my presence there do? often called to act as a mediator in family conflict. playing social role compadres play. as comadre, many roles you are expected to play. notion of mimetic violence. all of this is unresolved. ethical negotiations—working as a kind of social worker/bureaucrat. co-production of narratives, what kinds of jobs they serve, what they do in statistics, how people use them, for medical exams, etc. Narratives produced in a very public venue, for many reasons. Careful dance of receiving people, playing role, negotiate how to ask them to be part of research...didn't want people to feel they had to. Sitting in on conciliation, follow stories.

**Ann Kelly**

**Towards an Anthropology of Light and Zoonosis: Shadows of Home**

Mosquitos—house as key site of research.

“blood relation” between humans, mosquitos, parasites

Domestic camouflage articulates its own image

Experimenting with ethnographic foci

Multiple micro-ecologies of the house—expanded conviviality of the house

Political economy of global health attention and neglect

Material proximities, “problematic proximities”

Quarantine as quintessential reworking of private sphere, surveillance, governmentality

Moments where bodies and eyes meet in quarantine

language of darkness and shadows

Finding another way into the domestic around phenomenology of darkness

*Discussion*

Shreya: idea of house as laboratory—conceptually and methodologically.

Benoit: insect that carries chagas. construction, new ways of arranging houses.

Alex: Mary Douglas’ purity and danger: light is cleansing, dark is unclean. In jewish/catholic/Islamic law, there is a reversal. Fire and light bring impurity. Play of native conceptions of cleanliness/purity/hygiene, and biosecurity.

Ann: house as lab, ive been thinking/struggling with this. laboratory is an absence from the quotidian. house as laboratory does open up ways of thinking about scientists and local communities, idioms of hospitality. sleeper, paid to sleep in hut, draw museums. also nightmare of imperial science, bait inside the house. opening up domestic spaces of science to see these relationships.

Chagas—at what point in these infectious diseases does public health intervene? Hero of public health as opposed to vaccine, etc...point to intersect population, environment, etc, different angles, come with specific governmental modes of practice. Rat vaccination program (!!!). Where you get from these nuanced studies of ecology, to pick a point of public health intervention.

Light/dark—has this incredible problematics, slippages into metaphor. Safety and sanctity of the house at this time, spaces of hiding, bodies buried beneath house, in dark. possibility of sanctuary is key to what makes the domestic home, importance of concealment.

Sebastian: Something licking your fingers can have a sense that is not dangerous. To what extent is affect of distrust product of public health intervention. How do you train people to be afraid?

Shreya: attunement—training of a different type of scientific observer, attunement to distress. how does this help us think about knowledge, idea of contagion and health?

Joao: more about bush meat, eating practices. people have a close relation to the animal via hunger, taste. Perspective of the animal, pushing the boundaries to think of the subject of the oikos differently, what theory of the subject. Another kind of unconscious, material unconscious, in which animal plays a role.

Federico: zoo-oikonomia? Also, methodological side of fieldwork.

Clemence: Policies. Are you a part of the team? who do you collaborate with? What kinds of housing policies could emerge from this work? French overseas departments as laboratories for housing policy.

Susan: quarantine, archetypal breaking of domestic space. strange places where bodies and eyes meet. Thinking about, in a scalar way, what you are describing about light and darkness, playing out in an international way, how these images circulate, and the work that they do.

Ann: Children—constant play and capture. Where is sensitization message, public health? Post 9-11 funding, awareness, people began to associate rats you don't eat, shrew, town rat—but is not pathogenic. There are subtle ways in which those efforts go awry, because of experiential relations.

Nothing like fieldwork, lab work in places where you have to draw upon local participation, spaces, access...this makes this kind of scientific work a bit more open. What is capacity building mean? Thinking of the science in this way is evocative.

Bush meat—now called consumption of wild animals, there is politics to this. How tasty rats are. People have ideas of food security, economic benefits, etc, but its actually just tasty. Very different valences of what bush meat looks like. After ebola, huge campaigns around not eating animals. What are these messages? Imaginaries of the exotic, the dirty, parallel with dirty burial practices.

Zoo-oikonomia—language of domestication has always been about dominance, extracting economic value, about relationship between humans and animals as one of dominance. But processes of reciprocal adjustment. Humans and animals have coshaping capacity.

Fieldwork: I would stay with research teams, travel with them, ended up doing some of this work. Collaborator stayed in one place for longer.

Feels unique the way anthropology has been brought into this.

Joao: At the moment that everything else failed, all cultural all of a sudden.

Ann: quarantine, scaling. Quarantine is an incredibly old, blunt, tool, many debates over whether it works. As a kind of scalar imaginary, what was happening in airports, the border as a space of boundary...

## **Bridget Purcell**

### **The House Unbound—Or, Decoupling the Place of Women and the Pace of Change**

Place of women in Islamic world, fw in SE Turkey.

Urfa as object of cultural condescension and target of state intervention.

Modernization narrative, urbanization as good for women. But also, that we can read this in the landscape of the city.

Today: the figure of confinement in the home, commonsense emblem of women's confinement. House as space of containment or enclosure.

Place as a container part of an anglo-american thought tradition, dividing place and space (Ingold). This is a conceptual, not experiential distinction. The house is centrally implicated in setting up this distinction.

Generative capacity of materiality. Place is never closed. Challenging to reclaim generative capacity of place, to generate distinctions, not just reflect them.

Built environment as principle idiom for understanding cultural change and social distance. As people tell stories about changes in the city, also telling stories about religion, gender, class, economy, etc  
“the city was villaged.” boundaries are in flux, new forms of social differentiation are emerging.

Place as an idiom—something people talk about so they don't have to talk about other social distinctions...but this is NOT what she is arguing

Focusing on place allows us to glimpse cleavages as they emerge.

Openness of old houses becoming a problem. Not only that people are moving, but that the boundaries of the house are themselves in flux.

Ingold: house as box-like enclosure is not a given. In Urfa, has emerged as emergent middle class was setting themselves apart from new migrants.

Boundary questions as status differentiation. Deeply gendered from the start.

Situating questions about gender and space within wider landscape of social and material change.

Trying to get at how women inhabit the house, how they think about it, how they position themselves in relation to others along lines of class, geography, belonging

How lines dividing inside and outside are drawn. How activities in the house are spatially organized.

Ultimately, contradict/invert developmentalist premise, that women in rural villages are more confined.

“unfinished” spaces—objects arranged provisionally for task at hand. gendering of space depends on arrangement of bodies. in village house, gendered spaces are not formally inscribed. In urban home apartment, stark contrast. Distinction between inside and outside. In city, spatial organization is less responsive to shifting organizations of people. Furnished. Spatial sensibilities and embodied capacities—the elite don’t squat. In the new city, gender inscribed in space as such. This also continues outside the home—restaurants with lofted sections for women. Shows a broader concern for these formal demarcations.

Aim is not just to reverse official narratives of urbanization and modernization. These narratives about space, urbanism, modernity, are not only those of the state. Confinement doesn’t mark backwardness, but modernity—is desired. It’s complicated!

three big points

1. place is productive of social differentiation: domestic boundaries are an important way that people are positioning themselves in relation to one another
2. position working along multiple axes: not primarily about men and women, about class, upward mobility, religiosity, ethnicity
3. place of women being used to gauge modernizing change—this is not just official discourse, local people draw on gendered discourse as a way of marking change over time, this often overlaps with official discourse, surface ambivalently

*Discussion*

Pablo: Genealogy of layouts. Where does this come from? Architects, planners, the state. Is there something about homogenizing?

Mariana: Village, urban, peri-urban: are these native categories? It seems that they don’t let us see the complexity of the ethnography. When you divide like this, you go back to idea of place as a box...idea that the urban is not just about the city. Present peri-urban as if it were a dialectical synthesis...are there other ways of classifying these different experiences? these seem like external categories, that take away from ethnographic richness. How do these spaces get produced?

Onur: This nostalgia for the past...how do you situate the destruction of Armenians in urfa. Rosaldo’s concept of imperialist nostalgia. How do you deal with this?

Question of scale: in Urfa, there is state, government, work in particular way. But Urfa is also the place where PKK started fighting. Particular focus on role of women, emancipation. What is the big story here? What constitutes the political here? There are different projects of Turkish nation state, Turkish islam, Kurdish movement. How does ethnography speak to this?

Alex: Anthropological focus on something often explored through art history—space as mutable category of shifting objects. Infinite palace. Why does this building need two rooms? What does two-ness allow for? A house larger on the inside than the outside...

Women, confinement, “Why do women need saving.” Veil as portable house—thoughts?

Bridget: Particular form of urban religiosity, that one doesn't find in village. Veil is something inside and outside the house, doesn't really have to do with maintaining home. But veil changes when people go from village to the city. In urban spaces, does have to do with religiosity. But it doesn't matter what personal religiosity of a woman is, in some way—these are about place.

Alex: another infinite home, extension of space, can bring the home outside with you

Bridget: Two rooms—never actually seen them as men/women's spaces. often, use only one room, other room is just storage or overflow or something...

Expulsion of Armenians—it's a big question. there is official reckoning, both exclusion/denial, and the new pluralist imaginary, which has its own way of construing the past. I argue there is another way of reckoning the past...subject of another paper.

The big story—one of the major things in my work more broadly is holding off these kinds of questions, because they tend to obscure more...finer forms of social differentiation. Urfa is not (?)...the way politics is working here, is about much finer distinctions among families, inter-ethnic, and part of what I want to do is hold off on these questions

Overly schematized, yes. Talking about women's lives, these different women, some in village, some in city, these different life trajectories. this is how I get at mobility, urban/rural. and yet, mobility tends to be one way. people never go back to the village.

New city apartments, separate functions for different kinds of activities, idea of everyone eventually coming to live there. Not sure about planning stages, whether there were questions about homogenization, kind of doubt it...built ad hoc, by elite turks in the old city, who wanted to get out. there was a demand for modern housing like you would find in major cities of the west.

Joao: continuing to push, to think preliminarily about broader questions. Can one not make some preliminary takes on what's happening in the broader field...is the city becoming a box of sorts? homogenization? Given where politics currently is? Can you not make some preliminary statements on what is happening in country more broadly?

Heath: Contrary to what I would think, it seems people become more religious as they urbanize. Why do people start buttoning up...is it because in these other spaces, the oikos was diffused, so people could move in and out? If this is the case, are they under surveillance in the urban space in some way? Foucault says along with policing/surveillance comes urbanization. Is it because people feel more surveilled? Why is this the case?

Ann: Genealogy of housing unit as modern construction. Creating spaces where people are side by side with difference. What happens to the threshold? Things through the letterbox, more interchange with state, etc...talk more about threshold space in these units.

Celeste: Threshold really resonates. Of home, of contamination, of population, economic speculation...and this is an entry to the political, that is also the physical space.

Onur: Critique of developmentalism is v. important. Book on how people remember genocide in Kurdish regions. Bigger political project, social movements, changed the way people imagined the past, remembered the past. Returning to these “big questions.” Talking about religiosity...Urfa is close to a place where ISIS, PKK are fighting. thinking of last night's documentary. Is it possible to talk about working class industry without mentioning deindustrialization. How the bigger political sphere enters. People aren't talking about how this works at level of oikos.

Conseulo: problem of how to construct familiarity in a context that becomes strange. coping with strangeness.

Benoit: Bourdieu, also Boltanski. Opposing structuralist fixed view, and boundaries in flux. Challenging the idea of things being in flux. There are situations where the house is in flux, but other house is much less so. This idea of flux is generic, doesn't capture differences of situations, where some are more flexible than others.

Bridget: Formalization of Islam in urban centers, has to do with literacy, evaluation of everyday religious practices in light of these texts. Revivalism is very much an urban movement. This is a much wider story. Part of why I didn't foreground religiosity in this paper is because it has been done, Islam and the privileging of these spaces.

Why the veil in the city? Being among strangers is key. In village, house is more permeable, you know neighbors. A single village might have only 4 last names. In the city, being amongst strangers. That also means donning a more formally religious outfit. Also, just style and norms. If you go to a fancy restaurant, you wear a jacket, because its expected.

How people remember the genocide. Major issue, but hard to deal with in this context of gender/place.

**Andre Dumans Guedes**

**Barracks, Huts, Camps and Stable Houses: Mobilities and Moralities in Transitory Sites**

Houses as counterpoint to mobilities. I do not consider house as a point of departure. Instead, house as points of arrival. Or maybe less than that...houses appear to interlocutors as places of rest, temporarily. Experiences as people pass through these spaces.

Conflicts involving those who overstress the house and those who understress them

Succession of fevers: ups and downs

Idiom of the *trecho*

“life cycle model of quieting down”

Maintenance of a stable state does not seem to be the rule here

The tension between stabilities and instabilities can be more clearly apprehended if we detach from linear temporality of life cycle

Influenced by idea of return—of unstable, feverish, etc

Stable walls, marriages, etc, cannot prevent these returns

House and world—associated in particular moments in peoples lives

Diachronic opposition frames projects and dreams

Understanding weakness of the house in other spaces

Rather than tents/shacks being incomplete or imperfect, house is really only a slightly more stable tent/shack

Arts of keeping things and people together, at least for a while

*Discussion*

Megan: In my fieldsite, not world and house, outside inside. For diachronic, anxiety is that these things get flipped—people are in this steady mode until they get married, then there are mistresses, morally dubious things. One of the things with renting, is they can turn into brothels, a lot of renters are sex workers. Can we talk more about sex? Anxiety about what’s legitimate, what counts as domestic life, what has to be excluded to be a house, or a home...

Alex: More about diachronic lifestyle model. Working on marriage and divorce, this is a constantly negotiated thing. After divorce, socially treated like children again. Could this still be a frame of reference, but one that gets reworked. Even if not true to life, might be reflected in how people think about their lives.

Consuelo: How kinship relationships are experienced in the house, in terms of which kind of relations represent the world, and which, the house. Conjuality, filiation...

Clemence: Can you have some differences, gender differences, class, in these concepts?

Q: in Romania and Moldova, front room as called “big house,” place where its appropriate to gather, host people. What are the alternative? Is the alternative to little room the big house, where there are appropriate ways of gathering?

Pablo: We've been talking about stable structures, you've destabilized this as a fixed thing, allow us to see it as a window into other things. Levi-Strauss on the family, quotes. Stopping to catch one's breath. Family life as need to slacken the pace at the crossroads, take a rest. Families are both society's condition and its negation.

Andre: How can we think in the same analytical framework work and house. Considering family, house, mobility, and the problematic area where these economic instabilities, ups and downs... areas where ups and downs are common, people are used to living with them. Areas where a city loses half of inhabitants in two years.

I started considering prostitutes because fieldwork raised it. Difficult to think about sex, gender, prostitutes. In the past, single women has been a euphemism for prostitute. Barrier separating brothel from house is not that big.

The big house...related to Benoit's work. Comparison people establish between areas where there are big houses, and areas where the big house is not present. Huge opposition in Brazilian cultural life between *sertao* and *litoral*.

Thomas: working place, not just place you work...how this can act as an infrastructure for the house, to stabilize, build housing in different senses of the term building, architecturally and symbolically.

Importance of religious movements in creating new frame of private life?

Nomadism. Did you have views on concept of nomadism in your work? How does this connect?

Marcelin: We have to fight with identity of things...when we transpose worldviews with categories from identical to identical. epistemological questions that return again and again.

Circulation as something operation. But we don't take it seriously enough.

Susan: Returning to idea of women in the fever, thinking about brothels and prostitution. In Bolivia, a real hierarchy, a lot of questions about autonomy and vulnerability, in terms of where women are located. Women go to boom-towns like El Alto. also a sense that some of these places are more difficult. Ways that women are moving between these spaces often depends on what's the boom town to go to. Autonomy/vulnerability. Creating spaces within these structures, how you are relating to other women. Inside and outside, fever of this kind of work...ebb and flow, return. Different kinds of boom and bust, this circulation.

Ann: Mining in chile: thinking of place as an anchor of identity, move away from artificial coupling of family and house, thinking about place as capacity. Thinking differently about capacity instead of stability.

Fevers: how this strikes with ideas of health. Virus. These social relations...

Joao: Wondering about wear and tear of these bodies, the constant movement, vis a vis ups and downs of economies...what does this do to their bodies. is the body a site where we understand how these ups and downs get housed.

Question of migratory flows, movement. Quieting down, house as temporary stability. Are these analytics bounding...but you are unbounding. So what are you writing against? Illuminate uniqueness of what you are doing.

Federico: Integration, link between mobility and stability.

Benoit: Opposition between casa and mundo. The house as a more solid type of tent. Idea of shelter, temporary shelter, that is both tent and house, shelter against world?

Andre: don't use word shelter, because it means state. want to use native words for their encampments. stressing difference between encampments of miners and others.

Mobility and stability—I work with movements, has two meanings. Agitation, movimentada, and also spatial displacement. Trecho, fever. Movement is a measure of agitation. The idea of fever is common in mining areas. Metaphoric translation from malaria fever. Metaphor is interesting. A movement that starts suddenly, takes control, makes you lose yourself, then stops. Particular rhythm of the ups and downs. Malaria appears in these areas...

Problem of the body—when I arrived at city, was not boom. Men living there had so many health problems from mining, working in construction sites.

Writing against—I became an anthropologist because I worked on large development projects. Discussing social movements. Problem with political academic world in Brazil, which is working on same topics, but committed to political activism. They do not listen to me. Tension between activism and academics.

About the movie yesterday. Where did the mills go? They went to these kinds of places. Mining areas, which experienced a boom. Related to this movement, these changes. No longer in the first world...

People change houses constantly. Contrast to people living in same house fro 3 generations.

## **Final Discussion**

*Benoit*

Issues of scale, how we relate ethnography of intimacy, richness, with what happens at larger scales, political-economic structures, changes in flux and flows of goods, people, ideas...what do we do with this? Relationship between policy and individual decisions. Fields of opportunity and constraint, framed by these programs, rules, incentives, framing possible structures and tactics of people on the ground. People on the ground have their own frames of reference. Background and foreground, moving back and forth. Oikonomia and politike.

How we can account for different aspects of mobility, fluidity, flux, unfinishedness. And all the movements which are made to structure solidity, rigidity. Tension between house as an object made to be stable, at the same time, they are changing, moving, there is some fluidity. Houses can expand or reduce. Both analytical, and physical thing on the ground, that interlocutors are grappling with.

Something that appears here are varied terms, ways of speaking about this. How you design it. Semantic fields around dwellings, inhabiting, housing. Interesting for us to denaturalize our own ways, form our own cultural experience and field experience, to see many possible ways of framing things, that may force us to reconsider things we take for granted.

*Federico*

Many theoretical and methodological challenges. Many entanglements, between scales, the house, a small place, and large processes. Not opposition, but mixtures between inside and outside. Same for fixity and mobility. Humans and animals. The house is a place for many entanglements. Rural and urban spaces. Oppositions which are not oppositions.

Relationship between houses, places to be, and rights, in relation to the state, and rights to the house, which include and surpass the problematic of the state. Where is the state in all of this? What are we talking about when we talk about the state, and rights?

Problematic of transmission of ethnographic knowledge. How to transmit all of this complexity.

The divided family, the divided house. House not as another opposition, but as also a unifier of universe, a space of tension.

*Joao*

Another seminar, "beyond ethnos," organized by George Marcus and Tobias Rees. After "Writing Culture," ethnography has lost its subject, the ethnos. So why do we still talk about ethnography, we are no longer interested in culture, society...so what do we do when we do ethnography?

Beyond ethnos cannot mean beyond engaging people. Discursivity, rationality. Marcus and Rees were arguing that if old anthro was concerned with space, new anthro is concerned with time, and the category of the emergent. I found this problematic—doesn't account for history. And is a very speculative kind of anthropological knowledge making. Wrote a piece on "fieldwork and the unfinished." This informed thinking on oikos.

Means engaging with people, over time—you get a sense of something unfinished, certain potentialities unleashed.

So are we doing an "oikography"? What is this? If we are no longer doing "culture," "society," but oikos captures something. Raises all kinds of questions. Allows for entanglement of singularity, and larger socio-political-economic processes.

Narrative and storytelling: what kinds of stories does allow or encourage us to tell? Thinking with or through oikos. Encourage—there is an agency that comes in the house. What kinds of lifestories? How we tell stories also matters—how do we craft our stories? What mediums for storytelling? What genres, affects does oikography pose to anthropology, getting back to people and the world?

Who is the subject of oikos? Subjects of populations? Policies? Market? and how are people claiming belonging to these systems—rights, participation in consumer society, something else? At the interface of materiality of house, the market, the state. Which political subject is this subject?

What kind of group formations does it let us see? Who are these collectives? That we can see, via oikos? Are these temporary collectives? What does it do to ideas of the political body?

Opens into debates about values, ethics more broadly.

What is at the center? Places of life and death. This gains many forms: dead child, violent husband, neighbor socially killing the other. Spaces of birth, life, death.

What has to become public, and what has to remain hidden. And what might not exist if it were not public.

Scale, drift, up and down: intimate worlds, broader systems. Scale-making is also something that people do themselves. We do not encamp ourselves into impossible position of imagining a totalizing multi-scale system.

Berlant's cruel optimism. The present is a present in which fantasy of good life is gone, but we are attached to the objects that stand for the good life, even though the project has failed. She creates "historical sensorium" that informs affective engagement with decay, precarity, death of social mobility. Taking oikos, can we think of an "ethnographic sensorium." Being bricoleurs of these elements, something that has been activated here. Keeping this attunement, attention to where things are out of place. How can works of the oikos tell us something about the present

moment? Do we need to outsource to critical theorists? This is conceptual work. How to harness this sensorium into this.

Materiality of house, and its overflows. Figure of the false. Starting to see the house as a farce, in some way. The house as an illusion, of source, that has its own materiality, its own performance. Subject of oikos is also the subject of this falsehood.

About proximities: nourishing, dangerous, both at the same time. What do we learn, reading human proximities, play of shadows.

House as a language—is there a language of the house? What does it allow us to talk about?

### *Discussion*

Clemence: Opposition between private and public, which has been contested by feminist studies in the 80s. Challenging public/private, house is a place of public life, can make women into public figures, and the intimate can figure in public sphere, through scandal... Opposition between state and society...

Bridget: Foucault brings to attention the moment where house becomes an object of power. Thinking about how different people are talking about enclosure and containment. Federico cites Mitchell, enclosure, domicile. We are thinking of power as something that fixes and demarcates, as opposed to flows, flux. Challenging the habit of thinking power as what is fixed. Sebastian and Onur talking about desire for enclosure, stability. So another entanglement.

Thomas: We are always dealing with a kind of Maussian total social fact. We are dealing with processes. Not dealing with models, but with processes, unfinishedness.

Joao: House as moment where you can capture the movement.

Ann: In contrast to biopolitics, rethinking things like territory, population, asking where economic comes into view. What constitutes the economic? Coming from oikos, what different kind of biopolitics do you end up with?

Consuelo: Residence as epiphenomenon.

Moises: We are all instigated by trying to get beyond the house as construct, but also caught in this tension...is it time, space, past, present, future, moving or stable...traversing this. Still, we have the language that remains. New repertoires of language, how to deal with tension...the built environment, house as porous.

Alex: Can we get past the house as an object? “House-ing”—house not as a noun, but as a verb, that exists in different conjugations, temporalities. This has been productive to think through with what people do.

Benoit: in translation, can play with this differently.

Alex: in Hebrew, houses, linguistically, you can't live in. Always a different word.

Celeste: What has to become public, and what has to remain hidden. Being able to conjugate housing. Scale thing. Depending on if you take scale at surface value, maybe at a certain scale, the kind of secrets you have couldn't go public...Tying secrecy and transparency to scale-making is part of whether you are able to conjugate the verb housing.