



SESSION ABSTRACT

Migration and housing in contemporary cities. Opportunities to stay, move and settle

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Short abstract

The panel addresses opportunities of migrants to stay, move and settle on urban housing markets. Aiming at a locational analysis of migration and housing, the panel presents ethnographic research that considers the role of capital flows, public and private actors as well as immigrant agency for the opportunities migrants find in urban locations.

Long Abstract

In recent years, some scholars have started talking about migration without taking one migrant group or the national state as an entry point, but location. Such literature (Glick Schiller and Caglar 2011) looks at the opportunities and constraints that more or less established residents and new migrants find in one location. We consider housing – its availability, condition and use – as important to understand dynamics of inclusion and exclusion in the context of im/mobility and settlement. This approach opens up several questions concerning migration and urban development in contemporary cities:

- What chances do migrants have to stay and what forces migrants to move houses? – Or, to put it in a different light – Who has the possibility to move houses and who is forced to stay?
- How do capital flows and economic resources inform opportunities and constraints for migrants on urban housing markets?
- How do private and public actors in the field of urban planning enable or constrain migrants to stay, move and settle?
- What agency do migrants exercise in creating housing opportunities and in navigating the lack of housing opportunities?

We invite papers that present an anthropological analysis of migration and the dynamics of inclusion and exclusion in the realm of housing. Aiming at empirically rich contributions, we welcome concrete ethnographic case studies in different cities. Contributions may focus on global or peripheral cities, as well as on specific neighbourhoods and semi-urban areas.

SESSION SCHEDULE

Friday, September 21, 2018 | Slot 8 | Room 4

Daniele Karasz: *"What if I start to buy here instead of there?". Migrants, transnational capital flows and the scale of dwelling in Vienna.*

Anna Goudet: *'When we arrived, our first shock was the apartment'. Housing trajectories and decision-making process of qualified international immigrant couples in the Montreal area (Quebec, Canada) (SKYPE PRESENTATION)*

Ursula Probst: *Localizing agency and exploitation - Migrant sex workers navigating contemporary Berlin housing markets*

Supriya RoyChowdhury: *Impact of New Housing Projects on Migrants: a Study of Slum Housing in Bangalore City.*

Mauricio Rogat: *Making oneself at home...temporarily - an ethnography of temporary housing for new residents in Stockholm*

SESSION PAPERS

"What if I start to buy here instead of there?". Migrants, transnational capital flows and the scale of dwelling in Vienna.

Karasz, Daniele (University of Vienna, AUT)

The paper focusses on the link between urban development and transnational residential practices of migrants living in a Viennese neighborhood called "Kreta". I will discuss the transformation of a rundown apartment block and look at the actors involved. I will show how low-income migrants from Southeastern Europe got to be key players in the renewal of their residential neighborhood. Several residents managed to buy rundown apartments, others got small real estate developers. Such active involvement of low-income migrants into processes of urban renewal is hardly mentioned in urban and migration narratives.

I will describe the activities in pointing to the broader spatial dimension of dwelling. Lefebvre does not understand inhabiting as just tied to the private housing space and the neighborhood, but as a potentially multi-scalar practice linking together the "daily reality, the urban reality" and further "routes and networks" (Stanek 2011: 130-31). The paper discusses such understanding in relation to the residential practices of "Kreta's" resident migrants. It will show how the living in the rundown apartment houses was from the beginning on integrated into a transnational setting. Thereby, most of the income was redirected into the acquisition of real estate in the villages of origin in Southeastern Europe. The paper discusses how several persons, finally, inverted the direction of capital flows in reinvesting the capital into their Viennese neighborhood. This shift dramatically changed their role in the local renewal. Survival strategies of low-income migrants could, hence, turn into entrepreneurial practices in the real estate sector.

'When we arrived, our first shock was the apartment'. Housing trajectories and decision-making process of qualified international immigrant couples in the Montreal area (Quebec, Canada)

Goudet, Anna (Institut national de la recherche scientifique (INRS-UCS), Montréal (Quebec), CAN)

In my ongoing thesis, I explore the transformations in migrant's conjugal dynamics while they settle in the Montreal area by analysing their residential trajectory and financial arrangements.

The literature on conjugality highlights how the couples' dynamics are penetrated as much by logics of intimacy and solidarity as by inequality and power struggles (Pahl 1995, Belleau 2008). On the other hand, literature on housing typically doesn't address the residential decision-making process between spouses (Rérat and al. 2014). Nevertheless, few studies indicate any gendered imbalance within couples concerning their residential choices (especially on the issue: here or there?) and their consequences for each spouse (on their social network, career, family-work conflict and financial situation) (Fagnani 1989, Mounir 2013).

How are these choices taken in the context of a migration process – which is already a burden on couples? How can those decisions — and their consequences — be translated in terms of mobility and settling in, for couples as well as for each spouse individually?

This communication will be the opportunity to elaborate on unpublished parts of my analysis, based on in-depth interviews conducted separately with qualified dual-income immigrant couples living in the Montreal area. First, I plan to discuss the immigrant couples' residential trajectory, in which the quality of their housing dropped significantly the first years following their arrival, contrasting with their pre-migratory situation. Even though most of them are now homeowners, almost all the interviewees stated that they never regained their previous financial and housing situation. Secondly, mostly because of this homeownership, couples interviewed tend to reproduce the phenomenon of suburbanisation observed among recent immigrant population around Montreal (Germain and al. 2002). Thirdly, contrary to literature, I found less inequality between spouses in the decision-making process (both before and after migration), despite a gendered relation to urban and domestic spaces.

Localizing agency and exploitation - Migrant sex workers navigating contemporary Berlin housing markets

Probst, Ursula (Freie Universität Berlin, Berlin, GER)

One of the central disputes in public and feminist debates around sex work is the question if (and how) sex workers (can) have agency or if sex work can be equated with exploitation or – especially in the case of migrant sex workers – human trafficking. While much research has demonstrated that there are no simple answers to these questions, arguments about the complexity of migrant sex workers' experiences tend to focus on exclusions and vulnerabilities caused by migrations regimes and rarely take into account the local conditions of moving and settling for (sex) work.

However, in my current research project on migrant sex workers from Central and Eastern European countries in Berlin an analysis of migration regimes could not account for many of the problems and vulnerabilities experienced by most of my research participants, mainly because as EU citizens they did not have to worry about obtaining a visa or work permit.

It was rather the issue of being a migrant *in Berlin* that was causing them troubles and that their right to free movement did not translate into an opportunity to (temporarily) settle in a currently very tense housing market. After for a long time being regarded as a place where affordable housing is still available, the Berlin housing market is now marked by housing shortages and ever rising rents/property prices, exacerbated by gentrification and property speculation, with attempts of the city government to improve or counteract these processes yet unfruitful or even backfiring.

Although these processes affect many people and not only those currently moving to the city, finding a place to stay, especially with a proper rent contract, has special importance to many non-German citizens, as registering an officially rented/owned home with a German address ("Meldeadresse") as place of residence is a requirement for residence permits and/or access to the social welfare system and various other services. Being thusly excluded from the "system" without a Meldeadresse was for many of my research participants connected to other forms of exclusion from the housing market due to racism and discrimination, resulting in the need to rely on informal networks to find accommodation which then tended to be overpriced and unofficial (meaning: without a rent contract).

Not only migrant sex workers are facing these problems of finding an "official" place to stay, however, a recent change in legislation now requires all sex workers working in Germany to obtain a specific sex work registration document, for which they (among other documents) have to provide a "Meldeadresse" in Germany. At the same time this law also limits choices for accommodation as it is now forbidden for sex workers to sleep at their work places.

While lawmakers envisioned these measures as a way of improving the inclusion of especially migrant sex workers and counteracting trafficking and exploitation, the lack of consideration of developments and exclusions on the housing market therein has resulted in anxieties and uncertainties among migrant sex workers, as without a registration document they will face fines for working illegally.

Based on examples from my research I want to illustrate how migrant sex workers can(not) navigate this complex intertwining of legal requirements and a tense housing market situation in Berlin, showing on the one hand their agency in finding solutions which on the other hand can easily lead to further exploitation and vulnerabilities. Thereby I want to argue that an analysis of migrant sex workers' experiences needs to consider their opportunities to move and settle in local frameworks to better grasp the dynamics of agency and exploitation.

Impact of New Housing Projects on Migrants: a Study of Slum Housing in Bangalore City.

RoyChowdhury, Supriya (Institute for Social and Economic Change., Bangalore, IND)

In Karnataka, one of India's economically and industrially most advanced states, urban poverty is higher than rural poverty. At the same time, the capital city, Bangalore, has emerged as a global icon of IT driven urban growth. Urban migrants, a complex, changing and diverse population, embody the multiple contradictions besetting Indian cities, where factory jobs have dried up, leaving the unskilled migrant population in low paid and unregulated construction work and in the lower rungs of services. New migrants live in peripheral slums, while many second and third generation poor live in inner city slums.

Recent urban development policies have emphasized construction of multi-story buildings with small apartments for each slum household, (in situ or relocated) and granting property rights therein, thus enabling capital accumulation. While freeing slum households from the threat of evictions, housing projects typically have fallen short of granting the promised property right, even though the claim to land has occupied the centre stage of slum movements for many decades. Recent migrants, marked by multiple vulnerabilities, have opted for housing projects, and been disappointed; older inner-city slum residents, have resisted, holding on to their sites in slums which represent huge potential land value. NGOs, slum activists, have highlighted that housing projects have made little difference to the urban poor's continuing exclusion from urban land, access to civic amenities and higher incomes.

Drawing on my ongoing research on slum housing projects in Bangalore, this paper will present a contrasting study of slum households in three locations, one a relocated housing project, second, an in-situ project, and third, an inner-city slum which has resisted the coming of any housing project. The paper will highlight both the complexity of the land question which underlies the supposed good intentions of housing policies, and the inadequacy of housing projects to make any significant difference to the quality of life of migrant communities.

Making oneself at home...temporarily - an ethnography of temporary housing for new residents in Stockholm

Rogat, Mauricio (School of Global Studies, University of Gothenburg, Gothenburg, SWE)

This paper focuses on the first phase of housing for refugees with granted residency permits, i.e. new residents, in the wake of what has been called the “refugee crisis”, through the example of temporary modular homes multiplying in the Stockholm. As many other cities in Sweden, Stockholm is experiencing housing shortages. Furthermore, the coercive law on reception and settlement of new residents (2016:38), which entered into force in March 2016, stipulates that every municipality in Sweden has to host new residents, and offer them homes. This has resulted in temporary modular constructions, many times of poor living conditions. These buildings are temporary in two aspects: 1) they are constructed on temporary building permits, which means that they are built with the intention of soon being removed; 2) the new residents have short-term contracts, which enforces a kind of uncertainty in their daily lives. My presentation will depart from an area of temporary modular homes in Stockholm and focus on what kinds of homemaking practices the new residents use to make themselves at home. I will illuminate this issue from the following questions: How do new residents' homemaking practices relate to housing practices and its infrastructure, in the sense that they are being forced to make themselves at home temporarily due to temporary housing building structures? How does the temporary housing structure relate to capital flows and the general housing market? Which actors are involved in the processes of on the one hand, inclusion and facilitating homemaking practices, and on the other hand, enabling the temporary housing structures? I will present a few findings from my recent started fieldwork, which is part of my PhD project on temporariness, housing and migration.

Un(bounding) housing for mobiles? Local settlement of international students in downtown Montreal through the dwelling perspective

Gherbi, Amel (INRS-UCS, Montréal, CAN)

The cumulative phenomena of the massification of higher education and the globalization of education have a significant impact on contemporary cities. What has been described as *studentification* (Smith, 2005; Sage and al., 2013) has given rise to several empirical studies highlighting the underestimated role of students in urban forms, dynamics and transformations. Commenting on this literature, Holton and Riley (2013) suggest that this research agenda should avoid focusing solely on the cumulative effects of the student population in a particular locality, but rather take the issue the other way around in order to question the differential experiences and uses of these localities by students.

In this regard, we find that the non-institutional spaces that appear most significant in the students' experience (such as leisure spaces and everyday life) are not sufficiently investigated in research. Also, research on students in cities rarely focuses on the daily life and settlement of international students in particular, who constitute a rapidly growing population (Collins, 2010; Findlay, 2010; King and Raghuram, 2013; IOM, 2018). It then seems that the literature interested in international students in cities, is not yet fully able to describe how mobility for education is translated into specific ways of living and *a fortiori* to understand the « insertion » of these students in the host city.

After outlining the main residential typologies and general housing trends in Montreal by pointing the specific conditions of three administrative categories of students (Canadian citizens, permanent residents, temporary residents), we present the results of our qualitative investigation conducted in downtown Montreal in 2017-2018. In-depth interviews with student housing stakeholders and international students themselves make it possible to pinpoint modes of spatialization and socialization that challenge the insertion of these coveted migrants. Such observations address the issues of housing and temporary residence in cities, of which Montreal is an interesting laboratory.