GERRIT RIETVELD ACADEMIE

GENTRIFICATION OF TASTE

A perspective on the evolution of the domestic space

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HISTORIC ANALYSIS OF DOMESTIC ARCHITECTURE VALUES AND THEIR MEANINGS WITHIN SOCIETY

Is domestic space a category of the past or can still make sense as a way to understand the urban condition? Since early nomadic societies whose life meant to constantly confront extreme environmental conditions, the house offered a way to crystallise a routine against the chronic unpredictability of existence[1]. For this reason, the first forms of housing were also temples where humans and gods were supposed to live together. The ritualization of life fused material existence and spiritual transcendence within the same place, making early forms of domestic architecture a fixed and secured point within the open-ended space of the natural environment. The house is the most tangible representation of the economy in consideration of its representative value as mirror of society. Understanding its conceptual evolution allows us to be more aware of the current shift in domesticity. The current excursus will touch on the most salient key point in domestic architecture evolution, while not being a chronological and systematic research, understanding key concepts of the formation and evolution of family's spaces in history will underline the evolution of values which orbit around the households.

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[1] Aureli, Pier Vittorio, and Maria Shéhérazade Giudici. "Familiar Horror: Toward a Critique Of Domestic Space." Log, no. 38 (2016): 105–29. http://www.jstor.org/stable/26323792

NEANDERTHAL

Early Neanderthal groups (13000 -10000 BC) who lived in Eurasia, were composed of social units of 12-25 members, including children and aged. Although strongly probable, it is not yet certain that these groups were organised into nuclear families, nor that they followed a sexual division of labour within the groups. Nevertheless, as archeologist Brian Hayden argues, there was evidence of social structure already at these early stages of civilization. Visible in the role of ritual for establishing communications between groups as well as in differentiating social status through different treatment in burial.[2]

As a temple for the ritualisation of life, therefore, the home became a way to occupy and claim ownership of a place, as well as a space for the care of its members. Finding from 7000 BC in the Balikh Valley in northern Syria introduce us the notion of geometric shapes for space organisation, seeing circular buildings being used for food preparation and weaving, while rectangular ones were created to store goods and clay figurines, establishing a political and economic realm apart from that of women[3]. Within this domestic organisation, women were already confined to productive and reproductive activities while men managed resources and engaged in trade and hospitality.
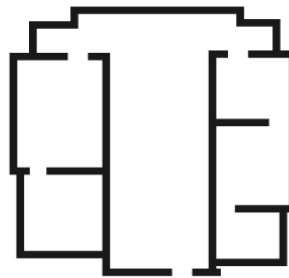

Illustration n.1 - Hypothetical model of a tripartite house from the Late Ubaid period (5000–4300 BCE). Plan redrawn from David Wengrow, "'The Changing Face of Clay': Continuity and Change in the Transition from Village to Urban Life in the Near East," *Antiquity* 72 (1998).

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[2] Brian Hayden, "Neanderthal social structure?", Oxford Journal of Archaeology 31, no. 1 (2012): 21.
[3] David Wengrow, "'The Changing Face of Clay': Continuity and Change in the Transition from Village to Urban Life in the Near East," Antiquity 72.

As British archeologist David Wengrow suggests, the segregation of domestic realms meant that the hearth no longer served as a shared locus of production, exchange and ritual[4]. Instead it paved the way to the rise of social-representational function in the space of the house, linked to the ritual of hospitality. In this diagram of a typical tripartite house of the late Ubaid period (5000–4300 BC), illustration n. 1, we observe how the central room conceived for hospitality defines two separate poles of domestic space: the female space for food processing, weaving, and nurturing infants and the male space for storing goods and administering the house. This tripartite model is an archetypal form in which multi-room aggregation both divides and unites the different functions of the house within a clear hierarchical logic. As such, it foreshadows the representational role of the house as a place of mastery and hospitality while hiding and diminishing its reproductive functions[5].

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[4] Aureli, Pier Vittorio, and Maria Shéhérazade Giudici. "Familiar Horror: Toward a Critique Of Domestic Space." (2016).

[5] Aureli and Giudici. "Familiar Horror." (2016).

ANCIENT GREECE

In Ancient Greek civilization, the house continued this process of representing and inhabiting social norms, officially overcoming its mere status of shelter by dialoguing with society as a stage for enacting norms such as property, privacy and citizenship. Before understanding the conformity of its space, we have to start by understanding its system of society's values.

In *The Human Condition*, Hannah Arendt describes the three spheres which constituted human life in Greek society: labour, work, and political action. While labour is concerned with the biological reproduction of the species (cooking, eating, sleeping, taking care of the household), work is seen as being able to produce objects that may outlast the life of a human[6]. Political action, finally, represents the "meaning of existence, independent from life", the political life is the ultimate achievement of all social cohabitation and the involvement in politics is the highest duty and honour.

Arendt argues that political action therefore must be independent of labour. This is reflected in the layout of the Greek city, which enforces a separation between the private space of the house (οἶκος) and the shared spaces of the city (πόλις). While the house is the space of reproduction and production, the agora is the space of political life delivered from those necessities. In fact the enclosed nature of the Greek house of the Classical period demonstrates an intention to hide 'labour' even though it is the primary condition in order to participate in politics[7].

The house (οἶκος) is the fundamental social, political and economic unit of ancient Greece[8]. In Aristotle's period almost all its productive labour took place within the household, unlike today in modern capitalist societies, by including workshop and opens space used as workspace for crafting[9]. Although within society reproduction and the maintenance of biological life are the foundation of political life, since antiquity they have been hidden in the silent and enclosed space of the οἶκος, excluded from the public visibility of political life.

For Aristotle and his contemporaries, 'eco-nomy' meant household administration, οἰκο-νόμος, and therefore the head of the household had the task of governing the household by producing wealth and steering it towards a comfortable life. Wealth, however, was only to be understood as a means to an independent life: when it became the very end of existence was considered as degeneration[10].

The term οἶκος has a range of meanings, which have been examined by MacDowell, and which can be grouped under three main headings. One is 'house', another is the property owned by one person and the third meaning is, approximately, family', and, like the modern

[6] Hannah Arendt, The Human Condition (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999), 79–135.

[7] Tuana Bukem Yildiz, *Fluid Living: Perspectives on the future morphological evolution of the dwelling space.* 2019.

[8] Foxhall, L. household, Greek. *Oxford Classical Dictionary.* Retrieved 21 Jan. 2023.

[9] Edward Clayton - https://iep.utm.edu/aristotle-politics/#H8

[10] Tapinassi, Martina. "Produrre Ricchezza, Amministrare La Casa: Aristotele e Il Concetto Di Economia Nell'antica Grecia." Parentesi Storiche, January 7, 2018. https://parentesistoriche.altervista.org/aristotele-economia/.

term, οἶκος can describe a nuclear family constituting the principal element of a household[11]. This last is made of three kinds of relationships: the despotic relationship between master and slave, the conjugal relationship between husband and wife, and the parental relationship between parent and child. From this analysis we deduce that co-residence was an important aspect of the household, due to the management and transmission of property was one of its major concerns[12].

In the ancient Greek πόλις, in fact, both citizenship and the right to own domestic premises were based on ethnicity and gender: only men native to the city-state in which they lived could be considered citizens, which in turn gave them the right to own property. The preservation of ethnic identity was thus linked to the right of property, and for this reason the possibility of surveillance inside the house was crucial. The house functioned as a distributive machine used to manage not only life itself but also the integrity of property, and thus contact between the inhabitants. Here we see the origin of the idea of privacy as a condition of the household. Privacy is not just the seclusion of the household members from the outside world but also the safeguarding of the household as an integral economic property rooted in the inner sphere of the family.[13]

This is reflected in the architecture in which the most important space is the courtyard, a place for gathering the elements essential for subsistence – thus featuring basins for rainwater, wells, or cisterns – and above all a means of circulation. Greek houses are a single-entry courtyard house, which means that the courtyard is a space not only of circulation but also of surveillance[14].

The ideal lifestyle for the Athenian man was to have enough wealth to be able to live a life of public duty, dedicating himself to carrying out his cult responsibilities, taking part in social activities and playing his role as a citizen by holding public office and participating in the political life of the city. In contrast, an ancient Greek women's role was confined almost entirely to the home[15].

The houses of Olynthus, which represents the most well conserved site for Greek house studies, illustrate the division of the average domestic space into two functionally defined spaces, as seen in illustration n. 2. The oecus complex, the infrastructural core of the house that included a kitchen equipped with a central hearth, and the andron, a space reserved exclusively for male dining, hospitality, and banquets, and which was considered the most exalted space of the house.

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[11] Roy, J. (1999). "Polis" and "Oikos" in Classical Athens. *Greece & Rome*, *46*(1), 1–18. http://www.jstor.org/stable/643032

[12] Aureli and Giudici. "Familiar Horror." (2016).

[13] Aureli and Giudici. "Familiar Horror." (2016).

[14] Tuana Bukem Yildiz, *Fluid Living: Perspectives on the future morphological evolution of the dwelling space.* 2019

[15] Gönül, Hale. "Politics of the Ancient City: Classical Greek Houses of West Anatolia." Tasarım + Kuram, 2018, 53–68. doi:10.23835/TASARIMKURAM.529975.
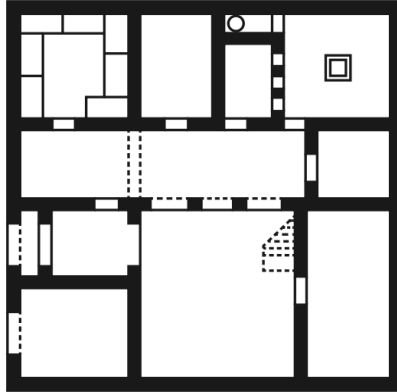
Illustration n. 2 - Plan of a house in Olynthus, Greece, ca. 450 BCE. The room on the top left corner is the *andron*, or reception room. The top right corner is occupied by the *oecus* complex, comprising three rooms equipped with a chimney, a well, and cooking equipment.

The oecus complex and the andron were the two poles of the ancient domestic space: the hidden space of subsistence and reproduction, and the open space of hospitality and representation. The relationship between these rooms was mediated by intermediary spaces such as porches and transit rooms, but it gives a clear understanding of what function the house is grounded on[16].

The home-owner's greatest concern was the possible contact between non-kin-group males and kin-group females, since such contact could compromise the integrity of the household's patrimony and its right to own the domestic premises it inhabited. This was a particularly strong concern for households that rented part of their premises, a common practice as the ancient Greek city was inhabited by many travellers. In fact, according to archaeological remains, women use all spaces of the house, and the space organisation is not to separate women and men but to separate women of the house from the male guests[17].

We can observe also how the notion of gender comes in play, not from a space orientation in terms of gender rooms but in terms of ethical value. The institution of the πόλις thus

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[16] Aureli and Giudici. "Familiar Horror." (2016).

[17] Gönül, Hale. "Politics of the Ancient City: Classical Greek Houses of West Anatolia." Tasarım + Kuram, 2018, 53–68. doi:10.23835/TASARIMKURAM.529975.

presupposes the oikos; politics is a function of reproduction. Yet in the house, politics is suspended and rendered meaningless by the demands of the reproduction and nourishment of life. For this reason, the ancient Greeks accepted and imposed slavery as a way to assure a minority of the population to "make politics", the only life they deemed meaningful[18].

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[18]   Aureli and Giudici. "Familiar Horror." (2016).

ROMAN ANTIQUITY

While the ancient Greek house was a self-sufficient cluster organised around the courtyard and sealed off from the space of the πόλις, the Roman house collapsed the distinction between public and private space by becoming a microcosm of the city that on certain occasions even welcomed public interaction[19]. Of course, this idea of domesticity applied only to families who could afford to own a domus, but their example was emulated on a smaller scale by the rest of society as soon as their means allowed them to acquire something more than a small apartment in a housing block, called insula.

In this way, the house becomes a symbolic device whose principal functions include not just the accommodation of people but also the representation of their status in society[20]. The idea of homeownership finds one of its most potent manifestations in the archetype of the domus and its term gives origin to the word 'domestic', whose Greek root demo means 'to build'. But while these origins might seem neutral, the same root also gave rise to words denoting potentially violent control, first and foremost dominus, 'the head of the house,' and its various declensions: domination, dominion, and so on. In essence, the domestic sphere refers to a set of power relations that constitute a specific hierarchy. In a domestic space there is always a paterfamilias, owner, or landlord[21].

Domesticity is, then, not only power over subalterns but also over the space and land in which this power is realised[22]. Thus the architecture of the house is, above all, a fiction whose manipulation of reality parallels the way law manipulates reality. As we have seen so far, when we talk about domestic space, we are not simply talking about a space of intimacy and affective refuge but also about a sphere driven by economic conditions that radically compromise the possibility of individual and collective autonomy, of an escape from the rules that structure society[23]. Given that the family was thus defined more by law than by biological heredity or kinship, a paterfamilias was legally allowed to adopt adult persons into the family or to change the status of family members just to ensure the best economic conditions for his property.

The Roman house was often organised along a main axis, illustration n. 3, that linked the entrance, the atrium (formal reception hall), and the peristyle (open courtyard). Not only would the house's doors often remain open to the street, but the axial sequence of the atrium and peristyle resembled a forum open to the public. A visually dominant position on this axis is occupied by the tablinum. Before the introduction of the peristyle, the tablinum, the master bedroom and place of the marriage bed, was the most important room in the house, later becoming an office where the paterfamilias preserved the family records[24].

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[19] Tuana Bukem Yildiz, *Fluid Living: Perspectives on the future morphological evolution of the dwelling space.* 2019

[20] Roy, J. "'Polis' and 'Oikos' in Classical Athens." *Greece & Rome* 46, no. 1 (1999): 1–18. http://www.jstor.org/stable/643032.

[21] Tuana Bukem Yildiz, *Fluid Living: Perspectives on the future morphological evolution of the dwelling space.* 2019.

[22] Aureli and Giudici. "Familiar Horror." (2016).

[23] Ibid.

[24] UKEssays. November 2018. Greek and Roman Houses Architecture. [online]. Available from: https://www.ukessays.com/essays/archaeology/classical-greek-and-roman-houses-differ.php?vref=1
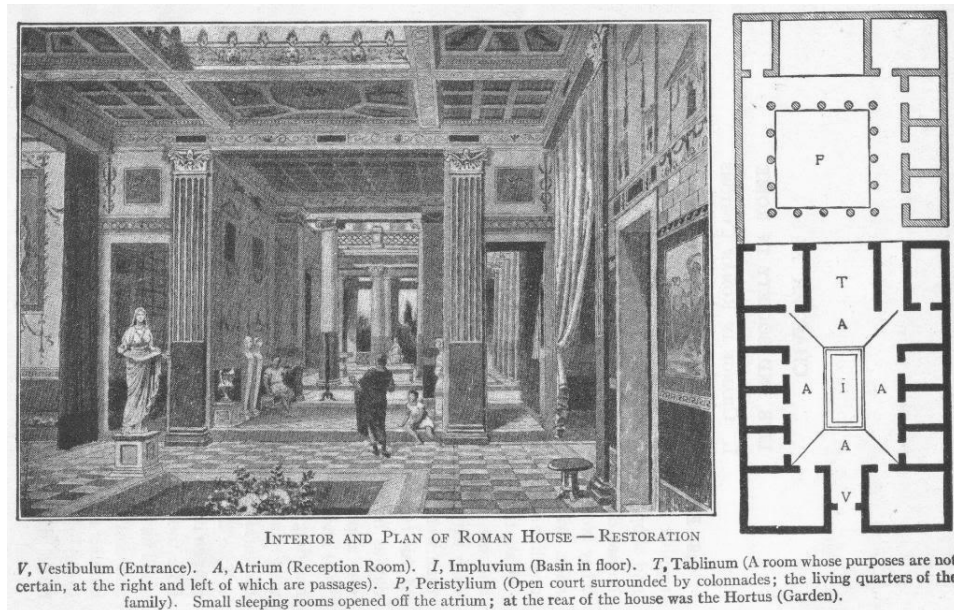
INTERIOR AND PLAN OF ROMAN HOUSE — RESTORATION

V, Vestibulum (Entrance). *A*, Atrium (Reception Room). *I*, Impluvium (Basin in floor). *T*, Tablinum (A room whose purposes are not certain, at the right and left of which are passages). *P*, Peristylium (Open court surrounded by colonnades; the living quarters of the family). Small sleeping rooms opened off the atrium; at the rear of the house was the Hortus (Garden).

Illustration n. 3 - Interior and plan of Rome House and Restoration view

While the axial composition of the house celebrated the authority of the paterfamilias, just as the ceremonial space of the basilica celebrated the authority of the emperor, the spaces that flanked this axis were arranged more freely to fill the area within the property lines. Service spaces such as the kitchen were pushed away from the central axis, and rooms could be adapted to accommodate any of the family's unforeseen needs.

Rooms were defined by their use rather than by their space. The plethora of small vestibules, cubicula, and triclinia that surrounded the atrium and the peristyle suggest that in the Roman house the gendering of space was far more relaxed than in the ancient Greek house. Roman slaves, moreover, were not segregated spatially from their masters. Since they were part of the familia, their place was everywhere. Such fluidity in the organisation of the domestic space reflects the fluidity of the Roman family, whose only defining limit was the idea of the family as private property. As such, the concepts of domesticity and family were defined not by custom but by law, especially by those laws that distinguished public and private property[25].

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[25] Aureli, Pier Vittorio, and Maria Shéhérazade Giudici. "Familiar Horror: Toward a Critique Of Domestic Space." Log, no. 38 (2016): 105–29. http://www.jstor.org/stable/26323792

RENAISSANCE

The condition of homeownership as we know it today was consolidated in Europe during the slow transition from the Middle Ages to the Renaissance. In Mediaeval times the only new example of domestic space to be mentioned is found in the monastery, an accepted architectural plan which saw at its centre the ritualization of life and the suspension of the concept of material possessions. On the other hand, as a new urban mercantile class arose in the 13th and 14th centuries, complex structures of control began to shape the development of cities[26]. It is no coincidence that the urge to manage and compartmentalise life also within the house arose at precisely the moment when the demise of the feudal system and the rise of wage labour was profoundly changing the economic landscape of Europe.

As an immediate consequence, in the 15th century we see that life within the house starts to be more carefully institutionalised from its spatial organisation. As Italian humanist, architect, and principal initiator of Renaissance art theory, Leon Battista Alberti testifies in his architectural writing 'De re aedificatoria' of 1452, dwellings' rooms should be defined by their function and inhabitants should take on roles that are enforced within the domestic space. Alberti attempts to put forward a "natural" and "rational" division of tasks that is to be seen as accepted, even desired, by all parties[27].

Aureli and Giudici argue that, from the peasant's hut to the sovereign's palace, the house becomes a terrain of primitive accumulation, defined by Marx as the brutal processes that separated working people from the means of subsistence, and concentrated wealth in the hands of landlords and capitalists. Asserting that the systematic exploitation of waged servants and unwaged wives has to be managed as well as staged and later celebrated as a 'labour of love'[28]. In this context, architecture comes to play a crucial role, for enforcing and organising this system – for instance, by relegating women to kitchens and barring them from workshops – but also, and most importantly, for naturalising it within the order of space. As political theorist Massimo De Angelis argues, this is imposed through the separation of the producer from his or her means of production. Manufacturing, baking, laundering, child-rearing, and retail enjoyed a close proximity and even a degree of fluidity in the premodern house, but by Alberti's time they had to be separated for symbolic and cultural reasons as much as for technical ones. Naturalising this separation became the primary task of the architecture of housing[29].

A second fundamental testimony of the changing architectural landscape of the 15th century is the work of architect Sebastiano Serlio. Partially published in the mid-15th

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[26] Tuana Bukem Yildiz, *Fluid Living: Perspectives on the future morphological evolution of the dwelling space.* 2019.

[27] Aureli and Giudici. "Familiar Horror." (2016).

[28] Ibid.

[29] Massimo De Angelis, Marx's Theory of Primitive Accumulation: A Suggested Reinterpretation (London: University of East London, 2000) and "Marx and Primitive Accumulation: The Continuous Character of Capital's 'Enclosures,'" The Commoner 2 (September 2001).

century, the research of the Italian architect on the design of houses marks the beginning of a process that turned the interior of the house from an informal product to a highly choreographed machine. Serlio's treatise '*On Housing for All Kinds of People*' is entirely dedicated to residential architecture and details dozens of housing solutions for a variety of users, from the peasant to the prince[30]. The breadth of this social spectrum is surprising since at the time no houses, not even large and expensive ones, were designed by architects, save for their facades. Serlio also focused on anonymous housings which had been neglected from architectural consideration Yet at the moment the articulation of the house's plan became important, it was somehow immediately clear to Serlio that the project of domestic space was not only a luxury for the upper class but also a necessity for all of society due to the growth of the labouring population.

The house became a project of accommodating all classes and reinforcing class differences, the ultimate goal of which was not simply to order society but to ensure the reproduction of life in the most orderly and secure manner[31]. The definition and strengthening of class differences has been the unspoken goal of much modern architecture and Serlio was no exception: he organised his examples by the owner's occupation and wealth, using the building's architectural language to express the "character" associated with each class, from the thatched roof of the peasant to the classical orders of the aristocrat. What is striking about Serlio's attitude, though, is that a number of aspects are common to all proposals, together suggesting consistent statements on domestic space applicable to all social classes[32]. The first of these concerns ownership: the house is a commodity to be owned and is the precondition for a subject's ability to express himself stylistically in a building. Second, Serlio separates productive activity from the solely reproductive function of the house proper. Animal husbandry, craft workshops, and storage are relegated to outbuildings, reflecting a refined division of labour and domesticity[33].

Different rooms should be now defined by their use – signals a shift in attitude from that of the Romans. However there is no specific typological definition of the rooms of the house, only a budding interest in the distribution of subjects in different spaces. In principle, Serlio's proposals start from a regular, defined outline, further subdivided into rooms of different sizes and shapes. While it is evident that the architect is interested in creating hierarchy and difference, the rationale behind specific design choices is based simply on geometric floor plans, as highlighted by the symmetry of the layouts.

In the Renaissance house, as in the Roman house, the courtyard is a representational space, an interiorized public space as seen in Villa Medici in Rome. The majestic villa representing the Florentine embassy of Cardinal Ferdinando de' Medici in Rome, presents an

[30] Galletti, S (2018). *Paired Models: Comparing Domestic Typologies Between Italy and France.* Retrieved from https://hdl.handle.net/10161/17646.

[31] Aureli, Pier Vittorio, and Maria Shéhérazade Giudici. "Familiar Horror: Toward a Critique Of Domestic Space." Log, no. 38 (2016): 105–29. http://www.jstor.org/stable/26323792

[32] Hayub Song (2006) Decorum and Comfort in Serlio's *Domestic Architecture* and the House of Delorme, Journal of Asian Architecture and Building Engineering, 5:1, 7-14, DOI: 10.3130/jaabe.5.7

[33] Tuana Bukem Yildiz, *Fluid Living: Perspectives on the future morphological evolution of the dwelling space.* 2019.

austere and simple facade facing the city of Rome but, at the same time, contains pompous facades which function as open air museum for the private guests of the Cardinal. In fact, the domestic layout is organised around this courtyard in such a way that the visitor would perceive the building as a proper palace with a legible form, even if the interior presented a warren of irregular rooms.

This process is associated with the term parti, whose participle of the verb re-partir means "to subdivide" and shares the root with the English word part. It refers to the relatively undefined typological differentiation of the rooms of a house, which allowed subdividing a building primarily according to geometric and spatial concerns. This enabled complex and multiscalar arrangements, as well as a legible spatial hierarchy, qualities that architects from Serlio onward valued in the design of residential buildings. The parti method also produces buildings whose logic departs from their relationship to the urban morphology, as exemplified by Peruzzi's Palazzo Massimo delle Colonne, see illustration n. 4. The parti can negate or enhance the specificity of the found condition but cannot ignore it, since the parti develops the specific quality of the rooms from the overall arrangement rather than the other way around[34].
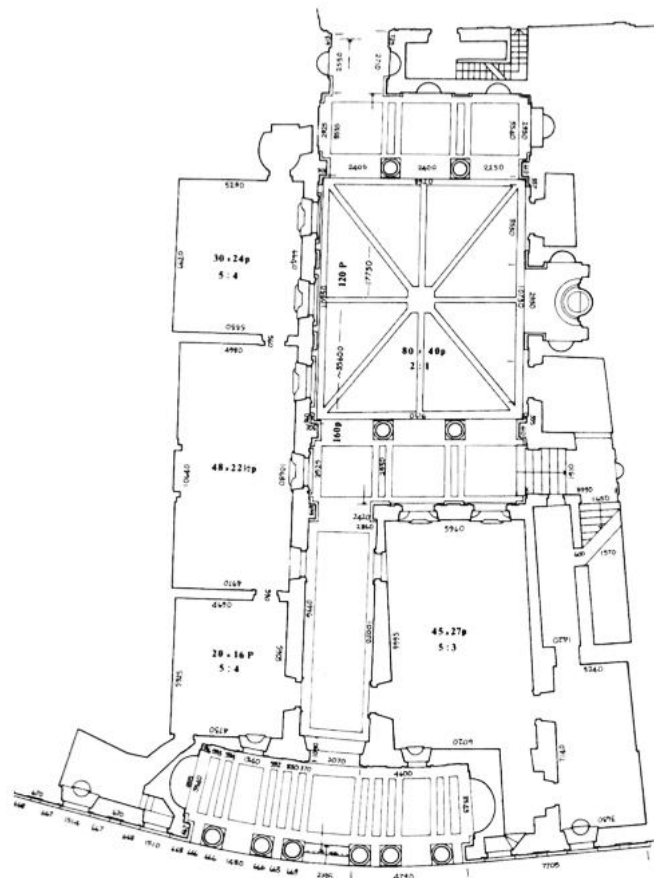

Illustration n. 4 - Floor Plan of Palazzo 'Massimo Alle Colonne' by Baldassare Peruzzi - 12th century

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[34] Aureli and Giudici. "Familiar Horror." (2016).

TRANSITION TO MODERNITY

In the 18th century, houses could potentially have a stove or fireplace in every room, both allowing each family to have an individual kitchen and enabling rooms that were previously bound to a seasonal rhythm to be used year-round. The relationship between adults and children and masters and servants also changed, making it more important to define separate sleeping places for the members of the household, first in aristocratic dwellings, then for the middle class, and, for 19th century reformers, ideally for the working class as well. Once the process of separation, definition, and subdivision evolved into the full-fledged micromanagement of domestic space, architects had to devise another strategy that would allow them to do what the parti could not: aggregate disparate rooms, each with its own function. Again, the architect's task was not simply to accommodate this dynamic but also to introduce a new paradigm that would replace the one created by the parti[35].

This new method was referred to as composition, a word that endures in the architectural vocabulary. Composition is, in the most literal sense of the term, the art of composing different parts into a seemingly harmonious whole. While the parti was concerned with symmetry and legible relationships between parts and whole, composition strives for a balanced formal ensemble that nevertheless can dispense with symmetry and organic part-to-whole relationships. Unlike the parti, which starts with a figure and then defines its parts, composition starts from parts that are joined through an additive process to form a whole. Composition starts from an understanding that individual spaces can be more effectively attuned to an ultimate choreography, which they not only accommodate but also accentuate and celebrate.

The term composition became popular in 18th-century France, where it supplanted the older and more prosaic term distribution. Whereas the parti worked by subdividing the plot into a pattern that strived for regularity and consistency, composition works in an additive way by clustering an accumulation of individually conceived rooms. The legacy of the parti[36] era was the persistence of a geometrically defined courtyard that allowed the rest of the plan to be colonised by heterogeneous spaces, in such cases with elaborate sequence of specialized rooms bearing little geometric relationship to each other.

The transition from parti to composition affected residential design all across Europe, but in London it found its most readable and radical application. The London terrace house is a particularly interesting urban type in that it accommodated a range of social classes by virtue of the simplicity of its basic principle: the subdivision of an urban block into equally sized slices with narrow frontages. This principle of subdivision – of the city into blocks, of the block into properties, of the properties into rooms – also shaped the early London terrace house. The main building element of this type is the party wall, which served as a load-bearing element, property boundary, and technical spine. But throughout the Georgian

[35] Evans, Robin. "Figures, Doors and Passages." In Translations from drawing to building and other essays, 55-91. London: Architectural Association, 1997.

[36] Aureli and Giudici. "Familiar Horror." (2016).

era, terrace houses started to grow behind their regular facades with the addition of outhouses, kitchens, storage rooms, and eventually secondary rooms, to the point that the original logic of subdivision was perverted into an aggregation of diverse cells bound on three sides by facade and party walls, but sprawling toward the interior of the block.

Two crucial shifts happened at this time: on the one hand, the idea that all housing for all classes should be designed by architects became widely accepted, and on the other, the transition from a parti design method to a compositional one was completed[37]. The best example of this convergence is the work of Henry Roberts, whose 'Model Houses for Families', presented at the 1851 Great Exhibition in London, provided a model for apartment living that is still applied today with few modifications. Roberts's model is essentially the aggregation of a suite of function-specific rooms: a living room, a master bedroom, two smaller bedrooms for children of each gender, a kitchen, a scullery, and a water closet. As we can notice in the illustration number 5, each room has a different size, shape, and equipment, apart from the twin bed-rooms of the children. Again, this model is a strategic attempt to divide genders, ages, and activities to better institutionalise domestic labour. This is the endpoint of the strategy of separation that began during Alberti's time.
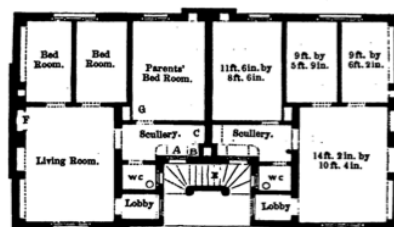
Illustration n. 5 - Henry Roberts' Model Houses for Families, presented at the 1851 Great Exhibition in London

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[37] Tuana Bukem Yildiz, *Fluid Living: Perspectives on the future morphological evolution of the dwelling space.* 2019.

The concept of architectural type was debated long before the 1850s, but only after the Industrial Revolution did it become key to the project of housing. Housing is not simply residential architecture; it is the act of providing living space for the labour force at large. Typological thinking is a fundamental design tool that allows architects to apply the logic of composition to large numbers of dwellings. As type usually aims to construct a commonality, this typology of housing constructs the daily routine as a commonality - with eating, working and sleeping patterns common to all members of society - also reproducible ad infinitum[38].

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[38] Tuana Bukem Yildiz, *Fluid Living: Perspectives on the future morphological evolution of the dwelling space.* 2019.

MODELS FOR LIVING

With the 20th century, the economic nature of capitalism shifts from small businesses to mass production systems where a class of executives - always smaller in numbers - holds the management of production executed by a continuously growing class of salaried workers.

The architecture of the factory, maximised with the 'daylight factory' of Kahn for Ford Industries, becomes a key factor in this system. In the architectural method of open floor that is used here, made possible by the building technique of reinforced concrete, the impact of vertical support in the plan and façade is minimised, creating flexible and well-lit interiors. The horizontal slab becomes the main architectural element, where the open floor would accommodate all actors of the production process, men, machinery and product, with the possibility to be extended as needed[39]. Architect and researcher Francesco Marullo argues that within the plan of the factory that evolved according to workers' frustrations and protests, aimed at consistently asking for more wages or commodities, we can read how the industrial city worked. He argues that this type of production reduces "living labour down to an abstract and generic entity, uniform in quality and only different in quantity" and this view is evident within the open floor plan of the factory. This plan enabled employees to guide modest changes inside their workplace, creating an illusion of control[40].

This logic of free plan is then extended to other spaces of human life, and eventually, to housing and Dom-ino model of Corbusier can be considered as the emblem of this process, illustration number 6. Using reinforced concrete, domestic architecture becomes framework: a structural skeleton, made of horizontal slabs and pilotis, where façade and internal infill are left for the user to complete, based on the function. Its modular structure allows Dom-ino to be reproduced to cover and organise entire cities and while doing so put together two types of production methods, which eliminated the possibility of social unrest. This model had the capacity to include both do-it-yourself methods in the organisation of the apartment and top-down processes of urban planning and industrial mass production for the raw material.

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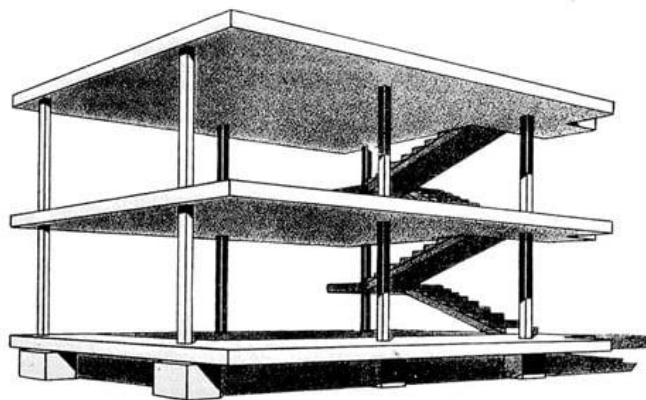
[39] Aureli, Pier Vittorio. "The Dom-ino Problem: Questioning the Architecture of Domestic Space." Log 30 (2014): 153-168

[40] Francesco Marullo, "Architecture and Revolution. The Typical Plan as In- dex of Generic," in The City as a Project, ed. Pier Vittorio Aureli (Berlin: Ruby Press, 2014), 218.

However, what follows the dom-ino model after the 1930s as diffused housing techniques differ from Le Corbusier's models in one crucial aspect; as an empty frame, the liberty of interpretation of the nuclear family and domestic economy that this model allowed, was unacceptable for modern housing goals.

The house had become a typology of storage, where all the components and elements were produced in industrial scale. Yet during the 19th and 20th century, there were attempts to not hide this industrialization of living. One experiment which is worth mentioning was the book 'The American Woman's Home'. Published in 1869 by the sisters Catharine and Harriet Beecher to liberate from the oppression of domestic labour. The book shows a new multi-functional use of the inside of a typical small cottage, where we find detailed treatments for areas often ignored by male designers of the nineteenth century, particularly the kitchen. The cook's galley in a steamship inspired their plan. Open shelves line the kitchen walls, and shelf boxes, described as cheaper and better than drawers, hold dishtowels, cooking utensils, and food[41]. Their traditional prose actually contained revolutionary ideas. Various chapters address the need for exercise, both physical and mental, fresh air, and clothing reform. That meant rejecting tight corsets that could do physical damage. With chapters devoted to ventilation and heating of the home they even anticipated modern central heating. Although their model home continues to embody the principles of efficiency and flexibility, as seen before in several examples, the architectural plan was increasingly compartmentalising for various political reasons. Nonetheless, modern architecture has deduced some of its fundamental spatial properties from dom-ino; flexibility and adaptability[42].
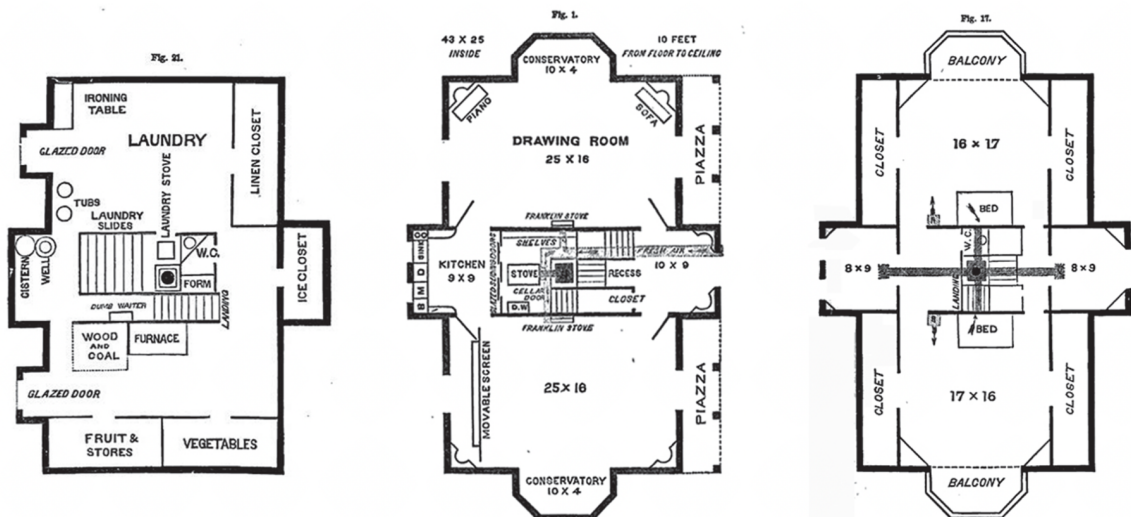

Illustration n. 7 - Proposal typology for a kitchen as multi purpose room

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[41] John Lienhard and Margaret Culbertson, "THE AMERICAN WOMAN'S HOME," 1940: The American Woman's Home, n.d., https://www.uh.edu/engines/epi1940.htm, 19.

[42] Tuana Bukem Yildiz, Fluid Living: Perspectives on the future morphological evolution of the dwelling space. 2019

HOME-MAKER

For roughly four centuries architecture has worked to institutionalise the house with the consequences of creating forms of primitive labour through the elaboration of plans[43]. If the mediaeval house was a loose conglomerate of rooms with no strong functional identity, the modern house developed as a composition of specific spaces such as the "bedroom," the "bathroom", the "living room", and the "kitchen". Since the 14th century, the link between housing and its subjects has been reinforced by the condition of private property. In this way, to live in a house means to accept the conditions of both being a family and entering the economic regime of private property either as a homeowner or as a tenant[44]. Designed to be cleaned, refurbished, and beautified, the house or apartment incurs expenses, encouraging workers to earn more to improve it or even sinking into debt in order to own the place where to finally feel at 'home'.

A space without a specific geography, symbol of this ever changing society. Where are you?—I'm home. Our personal dwelling is more than to merely eat, sleep and work somewhere — it is to inhabit the house. And inhabiting nowadays means to participate in a society which forces us to acquire a portfolio of objects which accredited us to feel accepted in the current post fordist neoliberal age of production and reproduction. In this way, the interior – that safe haven sealed off from the promiscuous world of production – becomes both the place for citizens to express their frustrations and the very source of those frustrations[45].

Therefore, we can easily understand what is intended when the home is defined as the barometer of our society. It varies in space and time according to personal experiences, to social models, to the political forces by which it is governed. And even more so, it varies in relation to the technologies in which it is enmeshed. At present, the internet falls into that long strand of innovations which, in one way or another, leave their mark on domesticity. the internet is progressively diluting those typically traits which have sedimented over the last few centuries and which still inform our current, westernised, understanding of the home as a stable entity[46].

In fact, arising from the use of the internet we have changed the way we live, the way we work and the way we inhabit. The current globalised society is dealing especially with the evolution of job conditions and the meaning of ownership in the peer to peer economies. Like free movement of capitals, the sharing economy and the advent of the pandemic has changed the physical space of labour through the use of technology. In January 2022, 59% of U.S. workers, who said that their jobs can mainly be done from home, are working

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[43] Aureli, Pier Vittorio, and Maria Shéhérazade Giudici. "Familiar Horror: Toward a Critique Of Domestic Space." *Log*, no. 38 (2016): 105–29. http://www.jstor.org/stable/26323792
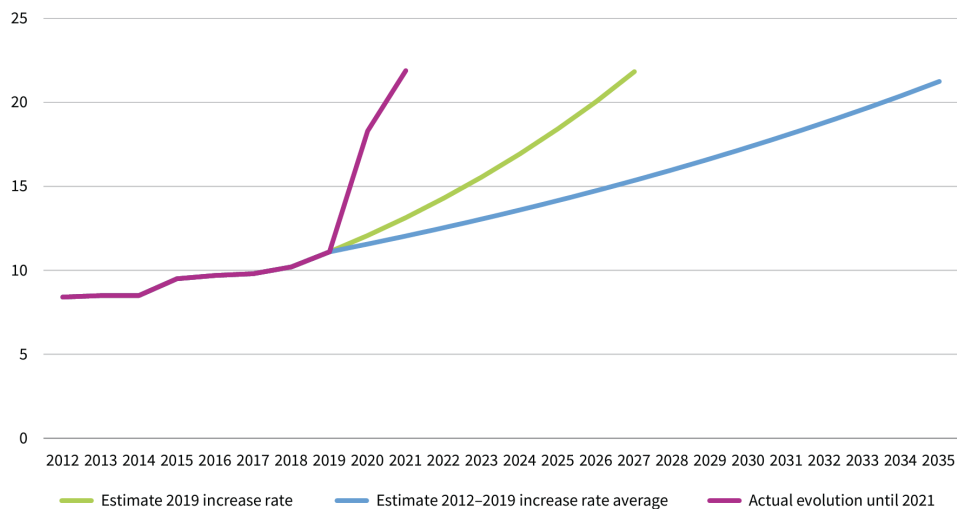
[44] Hannah Arendt, *The Human Condition* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999), 79–135.

[45] Aureli and Giudici. "Familiar Horror" *Log*, no. 38 (2016)

[46] Ballabio Fabrizio, Bava Alessandro, Govela Luis, and Perrault Octave "Catfish Homes: Airbnb and the domestic interior photograph". Rhizome. https://rhizome.org/editorial/2014/nov/12/airbnb-and-domestic-interior-photography. November, 2014.

remotely and in EU countries it has risen to 22% in 2021[47] as shown in illustration number 8. This has led to a major change in the connotation of what is public and private within our homes, as the domestic space becomes more and more a place of work. When we thought that the naturalisation of domestic space had arrived to the modern era already saturated, now we see the rise of a new corner in our bedroom, the "office". The home is becoming more a workspace and a medium of economical subsistence, making it the battlefield of the 21st century[48].

Figure 2: Simple projections of the share of employees working from home in a non-pandemic scenario, 2012–2035, EU27 (%)

Estimate 2019 increase rate   Estimate 2012–2019 increase rate average   Actual evolution until 2021

Source: *Authors' elaboration, based on EU-LFS data from 2012 to 2021*

Illustration n. 8

At the same time, public space somehow hybridised with domesticity: bars begin to look more like lounges, restaurants look more like our home kitchen with open islands, tourists can walk into cafés which have the same aesthetic of their own living rooms where is possible to pet cats for a fee and to recognise our same sofa-bed in the middle of our bank. No longer defined by the 9-to-5 workday, remote and freelance work transcend the traditional separation between living and working. This is why office space today is also being increasingly "domesticized" through domestic furniture and functions, such as living rooms, plants and large kitchens, with the goal to conceal the workaholic ethos of post-Fordist production[49].

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[47] Pew Research Center's Social & Demographic Trends Project, "COVID-19 Pandemic Continues To Reshape Work in America".https://www.pewresearch.org/social-trends/2022/02/16/covid-19-pandemic-continues-to-reshape-work-in-america. March, 2022.

[48] *Lecture by Claudia & Giacomo // Fosbury Architecture. Negev School of Architecture*. https://vimeo.com/787314405?fbclid=PAAaaf0vnO834ii4udJ4ZnJ-eLk5wFGtHZoA5Mfu4-ckeAwYuvXeD4Eg7QpFc, 2023.

[49] Aureli, Pier Vittorio, and Martino Tattara. "Production/Reproduction: Housing beyond the Family." Harvard Design Magazine. https://www.harvarddesignmagazine.org/issues/41/production-reproduction-housing-beyond-the-family. Accessed December 12, 2023.

Furniture and the applied arts capture the spirit of our times more than others, in fact, product designer and researcher Pinar Şimşek Çağlar from Middle East Technical University, in 2018 interviewed twelve Industrial Designers, who works in the field of design for office spaces, to understand their perceptions about the changing workspaces and work practices. As he argues 'the interviewee emphasised that workspaces are not merely a place for business, but rather a place where employees live in, fit in and feel themselves mentally relaxed. If the employees feel themselves at work they would not desire their actual home, they could work for longer hours and be more productive'[50]. His research concludes by presenting the designers' attempts to create domestic workspaces by designing cosy work environments. To accomplish this, designers use different strategies which aim to design products which evoke the senses of warmth, softness, sense of belonging, relaxation and comfort. In new standard spaces such as office kitchens and lounges, the use of fabric and puffy materials are the physical representations of such senses from a product design perspective.

These typologies of material are part of a larger group of objects which blur the border of life-work space clearly visible when visiting a modern city, they are part of the same zeitgeist such as craft beers, avocado toast, monstera plants, Nespresso machine, bright accent walls, raw wood and other little objects which are used to provoke an exaggerated diffuse sense of comfort disseminated globally, either you live in New York or in Rome, homogenised to the same field of domesticity and characterised like a white background[51].

The more globalisation becomes more capillary, the more these ritualistic elements arrive in every city, being shared online not only by experts but also by citizens. It's easy to see how social media shapes our interactions on the internet, through web browsers, feeds, and apps. Yet technology is also shaping the physical world, influencing the places we go and how we behave in areas of our lives that didn't before seem so digital[52]. Journalist Kyle Chayka in 2016 defined this particular geography created by technology as "AirSpace." It's the realm of coffee shops, bars, startup offices, and co-live / work spaces that share the same hallmarks. This confluence of style is being accelerated by companies that foster a sense of placelessness, using technology to break down geography. IKEA and Airbnb are a prominent example and case study which will briefly analyse afterwards.

As the geography of AirSpace spreads, so does a certain sameness, recalling what the architect Rem Koolhaas noticed in his prophetic essay 'The Generic City', from the 1995 book *S,M,L,XL*: 'Is the contemporary city like the contemporary airport—'all the same'?' he asks. 'What if this seemingly accidental—and usually regretted—homogenization were an intentional process, a conscious movement away from difference toward similarity?' (illustration number 9).

[50] *Şimşek Çağlar, Pınar. 2018. "Designing for the New Generation Workspaces: Considerations of Designers." M.S. - Master of Science, Middle East Technical University.*
[51] *Fosbury Architecture. Negev School of Architecture.*
[52] *Chayka, Kyle. "Welcome to Airspace." The Verge.*
https://www.theverge.com/2016/8/3/12325104/airbnb-aesthetic-global-minimalism-startup-gentrification, August 3, 2016.
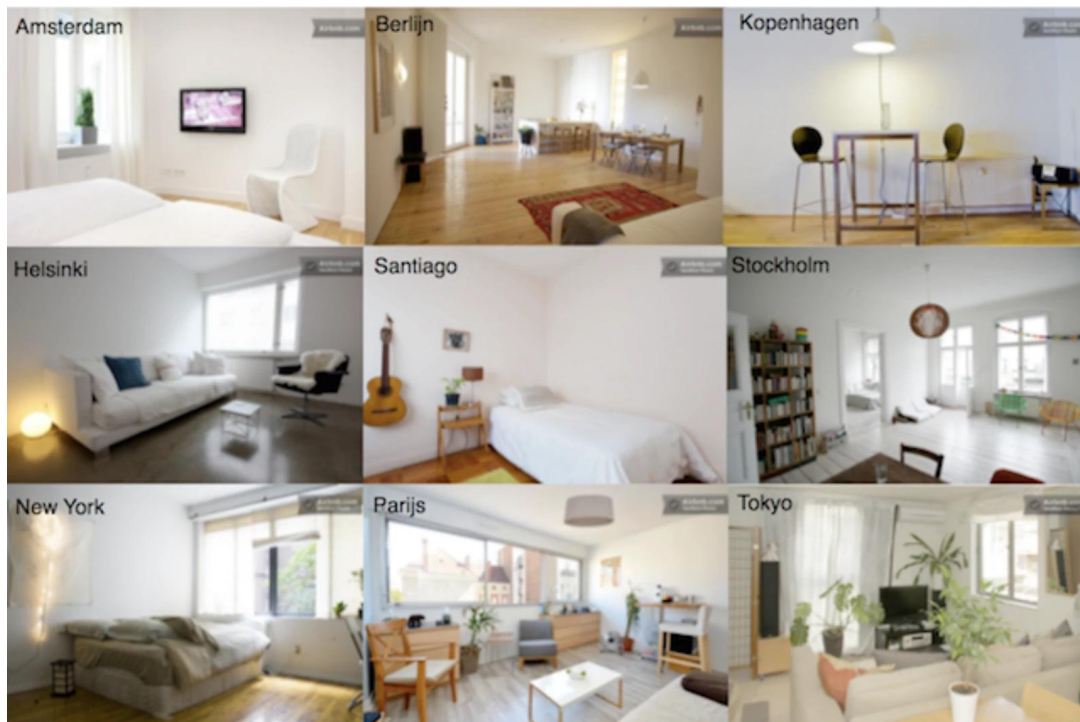
Illustration n. 9 - Screenshot of different Airbnb listings - 2016

The connective emotional grid of social media platforms is what drives the impression of the similarity. If taste is globalised, then the logical endpoint is a world in which aesthetic diversity decreases. It resembles a kind of gentrification: one that happens concurrently across global urban centres. Just as a gentrifying neighbourhood starts to look less diverse as buildings are renovated and storefronts replaced, so economically similar urban areas around the world might increasingly resemble each other and become interchangeable[53]. And this whole process has been driven by the need for individualization to be spread on the internet. The scale of the current interconnected and globalised world does so that an individual looks in those mass produced style to find a proper sense of personality . In fact, the internet is to us today what television was in the last century, a trend setter with "a certain ability to transmit and receive and then apply layers of affection and longing and doubt," as George W.S. Trow wrote in his paranoiac masterpiece of media criticism, "Within the Context of No Context," originally published in *The New Yorker* in 1980. But instead of Trow's "grid of 200 million," American television viewers, we now have a global grid of 1.6 billion: Facebook's population of monthly active users, all acting and interacting more or less within the same space, learning to see and feel and want the same possessions[54].

The need for an individual to belong to a class group is facing the current society which enforces certain aesthetics over others. To paraphrase Sharon Astyk in *Making Home*:

> The problem with beauty is that we've been told for a long, long time that aesthetics are the product of our "personal style", which involve the project of putting together mass-produced commercial objects or expensive antiques in such a way as to

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[53] *Kyle. "Welcome to Airspace." The Verge.*

[54] *Ibid.*

articulate our personal, tiny variation on the range of mass-produced aesthetics available to us. That is, we can be ~~"country"~~ "industrial" or we can be ~~"modern"~~ "Scandinavian" or ~~"Shaker"~~ "bohemian" or ~~"retro"~~ "rustic", but one way or another we have a limited range of options, ones carefully dictated to us by ~~TV~~ Instagram, ~~books~~ Pinterest, ~~design magazines~~ Kinfolk[55].

Analogous to how fashion and online shopping operate, the appreciation of the home or that of the objects which characterise it, is freed from the burdens of immobility and transformed into an economic asset by social sharing platforms, which are both the creator and the diffusers of these pervasive tastes[56]. Ikea's catalogue is the most printed book in the world, subclassing both Bible and Quran. It is estimated that its white shelf unit, named BILLY, is the piece of furniture most diffused in the world, with one piece being sold every 10 seconds, producing a homogenization of domesticity[57]. By looking at our domestic space through this lens, the website Airbnb proves to be a powerful case study in showing how particular modes of representation are forced upon its users as instrumental assets to global capital and its consumption-based economy.

The company was founded in 2008 by two graduates of Rhode Island School of Design by renting out cheap allocation on air mattresses as a substitute of hotel's rooms shortage caused by a design conference in San Francisco (illustration number 10). The idea gained public interest and was listed online, however after the first year the project seemed to not find a solution to get over the economical impasse. What was noticed by the founders was the amatorial image quality of the listing. From initially flying themselves to take the photos of the rooms listed to founding in 2010 the service Airbnb Photography, which offered professional quality imagery, the listings with new photographs were booked 2.5 times more frequently than those with unprofessional images[58].

[55] Nguyen, Celine. Everyone's home looks the same: On toothless good taste and individual desire. https://doublepluslovely.com/writing/everyones-home-looks-the-same/, June 18, 2019.

[56] Ballabio Fabrizio, Bava Alessandro, Govela Luis, and Perrault Octave "Catfish Homes: Airbnb and the domestic interior photograph". Rhizome. https://rhizome.org/editorial/2014/nov/12/airbnb-and-domestic-interior-photography. November, 2014.
[57] Fosbury Architecture. Negev School of Architecture.
[58]Ballabio Fabrizio, Bava Alessandro, Govela Luis, and Perrault Octave "Catfish Homes". Rhizome.

Illustration n. 10 - Email chat between founders of Airbnb - 2016

Since its birth in 2010, Airbnb Photography has been performed by "experienced" freelance photographers from all around the world hired on the basis of a portfolio and their capacity to match the standards required to be part of the company's iconographic stockpile. The images which are sent back to Airbnb's headquarters are heavily curated and subjected to a series of rather rigorous conventions involving make and lens of the camera used, brightness and contrast relations, lighting conditions and most strikingly a rather recurrent series of vantage points from which the photographs are taken (illustration number 11). With the camera set up in one corner, Airbnb photographs often feature an expanse of floor in the foreground. Such photographs will make the apartment look at its most spacious when a room's furnishings are crowded in the far corner and at its most brightness when the images are well-lit to the point of overexposure[59].

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[59]   Ballabio Fabrizio, Bava Alessandro, Govela Luis, and Perrault Octave "Catfish Homes". Rhizome.

Illustration n. 11 - Ioana Man, *30 listed bedrooms. London, Brighton, Paris, New York, Hong Kong, Mumbai*

In 2011, a New York artist and designer named Laurel Schwulst started perusing Airbnb listings across the world in part to find design inspiration for her own apartment. "I viewed it almost as Google Street View for inside homes," she says. Schwulst began saving images that appealed to her and posting them on a Tumblr called "Modern Life Space." But she had a warning feeling something was happening across the platform. "The Airbnb experience is supposed to be about real people and authenticity," Schwulst says. "But so many of them were similar," whether in Brooklyn, Osaka, Rio de Janeiro, Seoul, or Santiago[60].

In aligning to these doxas, the redundancy of Airbnb photography is characteristic of a series of conditions which are increasingly epitomic not only of how home-ness is represented in order to be commodified but even more of how our homes themselves are being affected by this imagery: most evidently, it highlights (and in so doing also fosters) the current homogenization of middle class taste all around the world. The sheer quantity of photographs Airbnb has collected since its Photography department was founded reinforces this condition while opening new perspectives on how the market operates. With over 3,000 photographers and more than a million photographs taken in the 192 countries the company which operates since 2010 own 'arguably one of the largest repositories of interior photography on the planet'[61].

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[60] *Chayka, Kyle. "Welcome to Airspace." The Verge.*
https://www.theverge.com/2016/8/3/12325104/airbnb-aesthetic-global-minimalism-startup-gentrification, August 3, 2016.
[61] Ballabio Fabrizio, Bava Alessandro, Govela Luis, and Perrault Octave "Catfish Homes". Rhizome.

The company's recent shift from a search-based model, you find what you need, to a browse-based one, you find as you wander, is not only symptomatic of how this new way of experiencing capitalist space operates; even more, it reflects the general diffusion across the whole of internet modality based on immersive interfaces and erratic navigation[62]. As long as you are renting a house or a room inside it, you are also renting an image of the host and their persona, their tastes, their biography which you share or desire. Fostered also by the company's new policy of encouraging hosts to 'Show personality, not personal items' in order to become even more 'hospitable'.

When we hear Airbnb slogan 'Belong everywhere', what it really reveals is that in our rarefied dwelling patterns, the contemporary urban dweller has long belonged Nowhere. If on the one hand this may be praised in the form of emancipation, on the other, mechanisms of expropriation - the primordial act at the origin of capitalism - have left us all in a state of permanent uprootedness, even when we are in our own home. To be able to feel at home in any one's home, to be pleased when pseudo-appropriating the life of a stranger anywhere in the world shows what the home ever was: a myth, a dream.

Domestic architecture has always answered to specific socio-economic needs, such as the Frankfurt kitchen design by Austrian architect Margarete Schütte-Lihotzky used to supply the enormous demand of social housing post WWI. Nowadays the needs are transformed into possible experiences, superfluous but ready to be browsed into. The creation of a commodified image of the house through the globalisation and homogenization of taste is the distracting safeguard which hides the real, carefully controlled condition of housing. By producing its own home-image, one is tricked into the simulacra without realising the risk of dying by falling into the waters in which its image was mirrored.

[62] *Von Briel, D. & Dolnicar, S. (2020). The evolution of Airbnb regulation - An international longitudinal investigation 2008-2020. Annals of Tourism Research, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.annals.2020.102983*

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