

Workshop:

Lifestyles, Dwelling and Postmigratory Societies



Goethe University Frankfurt
13th & 14th of December 2018

Introduction

Considering migration as a “process” presupposes careful descriptions of departures, journeys, the tactics, and, too, the social conditions of arrival after migration. This workshop focusses on arrival or, more specifically, the period after migration. It aims to differentiate between particular and distinct practices of way-finding, of inhabiting, and becoming familiar with a social environment that gradually changes from the unknown to the more and more familiar. Pragmatic decisions, but also value oriented positioning of the self and negotiations about one’s current and future status at the places of arrival are the key aspects in order to understand the situation of people conducting and experiencing mobility.

We are especially interested in changing or contested material orders of households in the aftermath of “arrival”, because we think that this convincingly can show the wide range of different practices and norms that prevail nowadays. There is no such thing as a “standard” or representative pattern of migrants’ homes, but rather a diverse bunch of quite different modes creating ones’ way of living. “Dwelling” in the Heideggerian sense precisely includes all conscious and unconscious forms of “feeling at home” or “being sheltered”, i.e. the cognitive foundations of considering a particular place as one’s “home”.

Including the concept of “postmigration” refers to an ongoing debate on how societies can be characterised that are significantly shaped by the migratory practices and experiences. This topic is closely related to dwelling in the sense, that “staying somewhere”, “becoming a citizen” are the most important aspects for migrants, and as well as for the host societies in return. Thus, a postmigratory perspective offers a promising glance on how migration along transcultural and social boundaries in everyday life matters. This offers an important and innovative field of examination, since it enables scholars to ask, how mobility and migration are experienced and in how far they are ascribed to people who are actually not more mobile than the rest of the society.

The present workshop brings together scholars from different backgrounds with regard to their disciplines, but also their countries of origin and research. We would like to thank all participants for their readiness to accept our invitation and for their much-valued contributions and perspectives.

We extend our gratitude to the generous sponsors of the event, which are the research project “Mobile Worlds” (funded by the BMBF within the framework of the ongoing programme “Language of objects”), the “Association of the Friends of the Goethe University” (Freunde u. Förderer e.V.) and – last not least – the Foundation for the promotion of International Academic Relations at Goethe University (IBZ).

Hans Peter Hahn, Friedemann Neumann, and Judit Tavakoli.



Please refer also to our project’s website: <https://mobile-welten.org/en/home-en/>

List of contributions (in order of the workshop schedule)

Paolo Boccagni

Homing: an emerging conceptual bridge between
migration studies and social theory..... 7

Iris Levin

A global-middle-class house? Cultural capital, taste and kitsch..... 8

Marc Hill4

Space for Visions. New Perspectives on Integration..... 9

Darja Klingenberg

Materialism, Hope, and Melancholia of Home. An Exploration through
Dwelling Biographies of Russian speaking Middle Class Migrants..... 10

Elena Höpfner

Fled People and the Meaning of their Things. 11

Sara Bonfanti

Home-sick and home-seeking. Translocal homing strategies among
Italian Punjabi households..... 12

Agata Lisiak

At home in the city? Migrant mothers navigating the urban 13

Friedemann Neumann

Home Cultures, Tactics and Materialities of Belonging after Migration 14

Laura Haddad

Contested Fashion – Negotiating Postmigratory Cultures and
Diversity by Getting Dressed..... 15

Özlem Savaş

The new migration from Turkey: Translocal experiences of mobility
and emplacement..... 16

Victoria Bernal

Concluding Remarks..... 17

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Homing: an emerging conceptual bridge between migration studies and social theory

This presentation advances a new conceptualization of "homing", as a connection between migration studies and social theory on housing, belonging, place-making and circulation. I define homing as the aggregate of social practices through which people - including migrants - try to make themselves at home in their life circumstances, and as the moral and emotional economies underpinning them. Homing depicts the ongoing ways in which home is conceived, felt and enacted in the everyday, by individual or collective actors, in interaction with their external environments. As an intransitive verb, homing highlights the processual and biographically evolving constitution of home, rather than essentialising it. Indeed, a critical revisit of the elusive notion of home is the starting point for a homing perspective. While "homing" has often been evoked, metaphorically, out of its original "home" in biology (e.g. in diaspora studies), the development of a consistent theoretical framework about it illuminates three broader debates, drawing on a variety of examples:

- i.) the negotiation of belonging, identity and the insider/outsider boundary under circumstances of (super-)diversity, with an emphasis less on abstract claims than on the attendant day-to-day interactions;
- ii.) the potential for people to appropriate space, or to feel attached to it and exert control on it, given their resources and the external structure of opportunities - with all of the conflicts between opposing claims;
- iii.) the portability and reproducibility of material cultures and everyday life styles - after biographic thresholds such as migration-driven ones - and the relevant enabling or constraining factors, which feeds into the debate on translocality and de-territorialization.

IRIS LEVIN

Swinburne University Melbourne

A global-middle-class house¹: Cultural capital, taste and kitsch

In this paper I show how the category of the migrant house, as has been recently discussed in much scholarship, can be expanded to include another subcategory – the global-middle-class house. Recently, the migrant house has generated much research in migration studies and in disciplines of the built environment. Consequently, it has been examined through various perspectives, including home and belonging, materiality in the home, and the transnational home. It has not been examined, however, through the concepts of cultural capital, taste and kitsch, as developed by Bourdieu and others. This paper applies these concepts in the exploration of the migrant house through a case study of one house and its transformation from old to new in suburban Melbourne. The paper shows how the concepts of cultural capital, taste and kitsch can be utilised to expand the category of the migrant house to include the global-middle-class house. Following a theoretical discussion, the paper analyses the old family house, the decision to demolish, the construction process and the redevelopment of a new house, together with an analysis of material objects in the new house and around it. The paper argues that this is a specific kind of a migrant house, a global-middle-class house, because it combines popular global taste with objects taken from the ancestral past of its migrant residents.

1 A shorter version of this paper has been published in Levin, I. (2012), “Habitue, Capital, Kitsch and the Migrant House” in Lozanovska, M. (ed.) *Cultural Ecology: New approaches to culture, architecture and ecology*, Geelong: Deakin University, pp. 82-91. This presentation departs from the already published paper in its discussion of kitsch and its detailed analysis of the meaning of cultural capital in the migrant house.

MARC HILL

University of Innsbruck

Space for Visions. New Perspectives on Integration

The concept of the parallel society turns up repeatedly in connection with Integration. In this case, parallel society means that Groups with a so-called migration background are not part of the majority society and seal themselves off in their own social environment. This political battle cry suggests that the state has but little access to and influence on them since they supposedly live inside their own separate structures. In the sense of a critical migration research, interested in exploring social power relations and not in the reproduction of binary differences between human beings with or without a migration background, the question arises: What do postmigrant visions look like? In my presentation I would like to reverse the perspective and shed more light on the discourses of Integration, viewed from a postmigration point of view.

Materialism, Hope, and Melancholia of Home. An Exploration through Dwelling Biographies of Russian speaking Middle Class Migrants

“Homeland [Heimat] is considered to be the relatively permanent location and the apartment an exchangeable, relocatable one. The opposite is true: you can change your home/homeland or you can’t have one, but no matter where, you always have to dwell somewhere [man muss immer irgendwo wohnen.]” In this quote Villem Flusser unfolds an understanding of the material and imaginary dimensions of home as routed in the phenomenological necessity of dwelling rather than in a discourse of belonging. In this paper I further explore the conceptual and empirical dimensions of material, lived and imagined or aspired aspect of home. Drawing upon reconstructions of dwelling biographies and home-making practices among Russian speaking migrants in Germany I’ll discuss the connection between the quality of material life, materiality of houses and experience of possibility in specific locations and affects and ideas of home. I propose a situated understanding of **materialities** and imaginaries of home that take into account class and gender specific experiences and negotiations of comfort and social mobility possible in a specific place. Making use of intersectional and phenomenological perspectives I thereby contribute to an issue at the core of the current discussion of home and migration.

In a first part I sketch out different approaches to the materiality of home within the growing literature on home making and domesticity. One promise of the new scholarship for the field of migration studies is to overcome an ethnic and identity focused lens that privileges narrative accounts of belonging over the reconstruction of lived experiences and practices and therefore tends to reproduce a culturalistic view on migrants as eternally looking for home somewhere far away. Here the research on home making opens a new perspective and more important new set of questions for migration research. On the other side the research of various home making practices and ideas of good life enriches the field of home studies.

In a second part I unfold the pragmatic, aspirational and melancholic relations towards dwelling and belonging reconstructed in my research among Russian speaking migrant middle classes. Against the background of a politicised overdetermination of materialism in a post-socialist discourse I reconstruct gender, generation and class specific experiences of and attitudes towards domestic material culture in migrants’ home making. In a third and concluding part I return to the theoretical questions of conceptualising the relation between dwelling and home, between brick, mortar and a sense of belonging. I want to argue for an intersectional approach that captures the class, gendered and racialized experiences of material culture and place. An approach that explores the imaginary and affectual qualities of home, taking its materiality into account.

Fled People and the Meaning of their Things

What kind of things do people take with them when they flee, and what role do they play on the run?

In order to answer this question in the context of a sociological study, one has to enter theoretical and methodological "uncharted territory". Body and materiality play a rather marginal role for the text centered social sciences, and so the material world in qualitative social research is treated rather marginally.

The methodology of Grounded Theory qualifies for a possible organization of such a research process due to its openness to the subject of research. This method has been extended by me with regard to the "Object Hermeneutics Approach", which seeks to access biographical narratives via the thematization of things. This approach seeks to capture migration experiences not only in a cognitive-verbal, but also in an emotional-visual way, thereby enabling access to people's experience of suffering and also the strength which arises from such.

I got access to very moving and often very difficult escape stories by asking about the things of the refugees or through conversations with these people about things that were important to them, regardless whether they stem from the place of origin, or were acquired during the journey. It became clear that the role of things is not always stable, but rather changes on the run as soon as contexts change. Favorite objects turned out to be objects that contained various messages. By speaking about them, their roles on each single stage of the flight became apparent, as well as the connections between the experiences in the country of origin, the experiences on the run and the expectations of the country of destination.

Home-sick and home-seeking. Translocal homing strategies among Italian Punjabi households

Drawing from multisite ethnography, the paper considers how long-term Punjabi migrants resettled in Italy and their families of origin devise and enact practices of home-making at a translocal level.

Basing my arguments on participant observation, life-stories and photographic data, I thread the tales of two Italian Punjabi households as they shift kin and possessions back and forth in order to inhabit their houses ‘here and there’, in presence and absence. Charting my host families through Lombardy’s hamlets and the Hoshiarpur district, I explore how diasporans imagine, build and (un)timely reside in far-apart but connected domestic spaces.

On one hand, housing schemes of tenancy or ownership are often fiddly for immigrants, due to administrative and informal sociability reasons in wealthy northern Italian areas marked by swelling cultural diversity and social inequity. On the other, diaspora investments in the real estate market impinge on the urban and rural development of the burgeoning Indian Punjab, as expats and returnees seek out city flats in gated residences or countryside family lodges. Simultaneous long-distance strategies for ‘homing’ signal diverse public engagements with properties, landscapes and communities. Yet, hybrid arrangements of domestic aesthetics and ethics within the privacy of one’s house(hold) reveal the contradictory commitments that genders and generations may infuse their homes with.

With a narrative approach, the piece aims at describing these attempts at transnational home-making as an allegory of the disparate diaspora’s search for bridging sedentarism and mobility, in my informants’ words for gaining some “unbound settledness”.

At home in the city? Migrant mothers navigating the urban

Despite decades of feminist interventions into the field of urban studies (McDowell 1983, 1991; Massey 1994; Peake and Rieker 2014) and feminist and queer geographers' insistence on exploring and complicating the notion of home (Johnson 1994; Valentine 2000; Kentlyn, 2008), urban research – especially with its recent focus on urban diversity – tends to overlook what happens inside the four walls. And yet, so much of urbanites' lives is spent at home. By disregarding the importance of what happens at home (and why) researchers thus generate incomplete understandings of the urban. In my paper, I aim to contribute to partially filling this gap by discussing homemaking strategies and tactics employed by migrant mothers in their new places of residence. Specifically, I will look into how Polish mothers living in German and British cities develop transnational and local support networks to get by financially and socially, elaborating on the importance of urban infrastructures (Simone 2004, 2009; Angelo and Hentschel 2015) and public familiarity (Blokland and Nast 2014) in migrants' homemaking practices. The analysis presented in my paper is part of my recently completed project *Immigrant Mothers as Agents of Change*, in which I applied a multi-method approach to research migrant mothering in migration and urban contexts.

Home Cultures, Tactics and Materialities of Belonging after Migration

Arrival after migration is a process which includes practices of wayfinding, of inhabiting, and becoming familiar with unknown surroundings. This process also finds expression in the material orders of households that change or become contested (not only) in the course of arrival.

Coming from a postmigratory perspective the results of my ethnographic study on material orders of migratory dwellers in Germany suggest the assumption that growing familiarity is not so much expressed through ‘objects as symbolic markers of migration’, yet rather by the relations people create, maintain, and moreover disconnected by domestic devices. Thus, the ‘qualities’ of things can be as well understood as the diverse experience of relations (Merleau-Ponty 2012 [1945]) to people or places left behind, to notions of past, current, and prospect lifestyles.

In this paper, I will demonstrate, how mobile people negotiate between needs and demands in more or less difficult conditions, and how they can create a home, as a specific individual domestic order. Arrival is a process of (post-)migratory social interaction and transformation: it goes along with shifting (gender) roles and relations, power asymmetries, it requires abilities to adapt to new/unfamiliar conditions, but often also necessitates to deal with hardship and loss. The ethnography of domestic material culture allows taking a look at everyday life in line with the demanded ‘epistemological turn’ (Yildiz 2017, Foroutan 2018) of migration research. By this concept, it is possible to critically look at how proximity and distance occur yet too how social interactions in the quotidian take place (along things).

LAURA HADDAD

IMIS, Osnabrück University

Contested Fashion – Negotiating Postmigratory Cultures and Diversity by Getting Dressed

Getting dressed is an everyday practice that many people do not even pay greater attention to. But even then the result usually tells something about the purpose or the function, be it leisure wear or an outfit determined to a profession or sport.

Thus dressing communicates on a visual basis. In the diversified postmigratory societies of the 21st century, this visual communication is highly contested.

As Fashion might be understood as a risky endeavour of subverting conventional dress codes and thereby circumventing the carrier from a group and affiliating him/her to another, it presents an exemplary practice of negotiating diversity and belonging. While fashion is also associated with the superficial and careless appropriation of different symbols and requisites, it becomes highly political in the discourse of cultural appropriation, what can be illustrated by questions like “Are white people allowed to wear bindis?” (Ash Sarkar, Dazed and Confused *Fashion Magazine*, August 2018). Also the use of feminist statements or head scarves as fashionable accessories is controversially discussed.

The project focuses on these different dimensions of getting dressed in the context of diversity in the postmigratory societies of the West. The cultural empowerment of marginalized subjects – be it because of religion, ethnicity or gender or all at once – informs this negotiation. It can be observed as a co-present practice in postmigratory urban areas as well as verbally performed via Social Media channels on the internet.

The participation of different, formerly excluded actors, enabling them to raise their voices, is crucial here. Still the maintaining of cultural borders questions the concept of diversity and the construction of new postmigratory belongings.

The new migration from Turkey: Translocal experiences of mobility and emplacement

Both scholarly and popular understandings of migration largely refer to the loss of sense of belonging that results from dislocation. Yet, individual and collective stories of migration are often preceded by the lack or loss of forms and spaces of belonging, that causes the desire, need or impulse to leave. This is also the case with the new phase of migration from Turkey. Due to the recent increase in political repression and turmoil in Turkey, a growing number of people – mostly intellectuals, academics, journalists, artists, and students – are leaving the country and settling around the globe, especially in Germany. This new migration is prompted to a large extent by the quest for re-emplacing individual and collective worlds that were once established in particular localities in Turkey and have fallen apart. This paper is underpinned by my ongoing ethnographic research that focuses on affective forms of affinity, solidarity and politics in the context of new migration from Turkey with a particular focus on digital media practices. In this paper, I will firstly address how particular lifestyles, events, media, resistances and collectives are dislocated from Turkey due to the political repression and are translocally emplaced in Germany, through specific examples such as *Uykusuz*, a dissident comics magazine; Istanbul Pride; *KuirFest*, an LGBTI film festival; *Off-University*, an online research and education site; and, *Kopuntu*, a digital network. Secondly, I will discuss how the experience and the feeling of mobility and emplacement in the context of new migration from Turkey are interwoven with the translocal and affinity-based practices of solidarity, commoning, and resistance.

VICTORIA BERNAL

KU Leuven

Victoria Bernal is a professor in cultural anthropology at the University of California and at the moment an IARA Senior Fellow at KU Leuven. Her scholarship in political anthropology contributes to media and IT studies, gender studies, and African studies.

She addresses questions relating her work to politics, gender, migration and diaspora, war, globalization, transnationalism, civil society and activism, development, digital media, and Islam. V. Bernal's research is particularly concerned with relations of power and inequality and the dynamic struggles of ordinary people as they confront the cruel and absurd contradictions arising from the concentration of wealth and political power locally and globally. Inter alia, she examines the issue of digital power and the security state and how websites established by Eritreans in the diaspora disrupt state control by offering spaces of expression and sources of news that are an alternative to and beyond the management of the Eritrean government.

Among Bernal's publications are the monography *Nation as Network: Diaspora, Cyberspace and Citizenship* (2014) and the two edited anthologies *Theorizing NGOs: States, Feminisms, and Neoliberalism* (2014) co-edited with Inderpal Grewal, and *Contemporary Cultures, Global Connections: Anthropology for the 21st Century* (2012).

Map of accommodation (motel frankfurt)

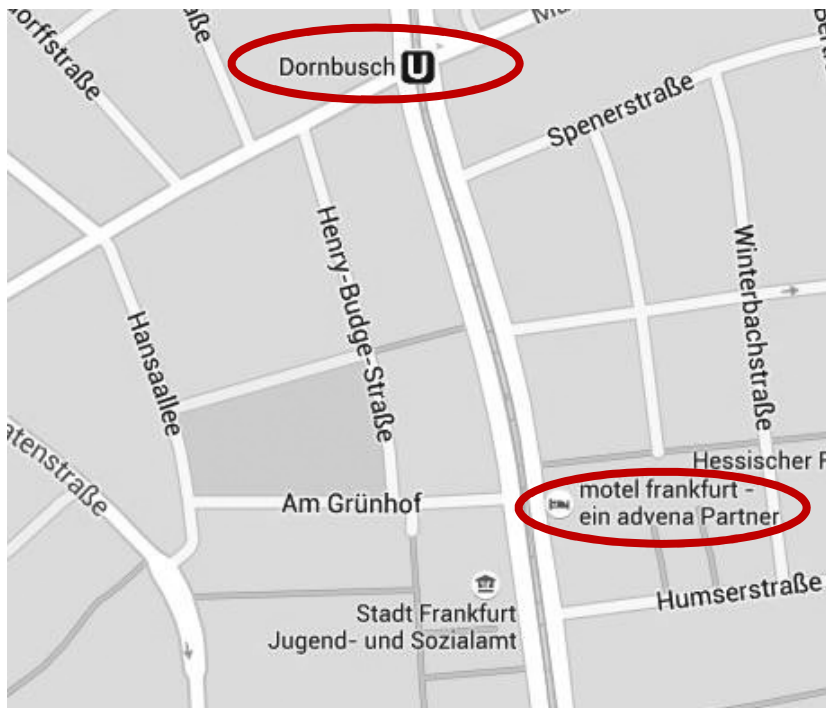
The next subway station (Dornbusch) and the motel are marked up with red circles.

Address:

motel frankfurt

Eschersheimer Landstraße 204

60320 Frankfurt



Thursday, 13th December 2018 18.15-19.45, room Casino 1.812

Boccagni, Paolo	University of Trento	Homing: an emerging conceptual bridge between migration studies and social theory	18.15
<i>Reception and Buffet 19.45</i>			

Friday, 14th December 2018 09.00 – 17.30, room SH 3.105

Hahn, Hans Peter	Goethe University Frankfurt	Welcoming Speech	09.00
Levin, Iris	Swinburne University Melbourne	A global-middle-class house?: Cultural capital, taste and kitsch	09.15
<i>Coffee Break 10.45 -11.00, room SH 5.102</i>			
Hill, Marc	University of Innsbruck	Space for Visions. New Perspectives on Integration	11.00
Klingenberg, Darja	Goethe University Frankfurt	Materialism, Hope, and Melancholia of Home. An Exploration through Dwelling Biographies of Russian speaking Middle Class Migrants	11.30
Höpfner, Elena	FAU Erlangen-Nürnberg	Fled People and the Meaning of their Things	12.00
<i>Lunch break 12.30 -14.00</i>			
Bonfanti, Sara	University of Trento	Home-sick and home-seeking. Translocal homing strategies among Italian Punjabi households	14.00
Lisiak, Agata	Bard College Berlin	At home in the city? Migrant mothers navigating the urban	14.30
<i>Coffee Break 15.00 – 15.30, room SH 5.102</i>			
Neumann, Friedemann	University of Göttingen	Home Cultures, Tactics and Materialities of Belonging after Migration	15.30
Haddad, Laura	IMIS, Osnabrück University	Contested Fashion – Negotiating Postmigratory Cultures and Diversity by Getting Dressed	16.00
Savas, Özlem	Humboldt University	The new migration from Turkey: Translocal experiences of mobility and emplacement	16.30
Bernal, Victoria	KU Leuven	Concluding statement and discussion	17.00
<i>Dinner 17.30</i>			