

BIASES

GLITCHES

and

OPPRESSIVE VALUES

or

Starting from my grandmother's house

A HAPPY DOMESTICITY

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The following piece of writing consists of an autographical story and a research section.

Everything that is written is 100% true and based on real facts.

However,

its outcome would like to trigger you to think and create something beyond the real,

perhaps something completely

imaginary that make you feel

closer to yourself, released or

even happier.

Then,

you would already know what are the further steps and this text will have achieved its purpose.

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GLITCH

The etymology of glitch finds its deep roots in the Yiddish gletshn (to slide, glide, slip) or the German glitschen (to slip). Glitch is thus an active word, one that implies movement and change from the outset; this movement triggers error. \1 In 1962, astronaut John Glenn used the word in his book "Into Orbit": "Another term we adopted to describe some of our problems was 'glitch'. Literally, a glitch is such a minute change in voltage that no fuse could protect against it." \2 The word re-surfaced some years later in 1965 with St. Petersburg Times reporting that "a glitch had altered the computer memory inside the US space-craft Gemini 6"; still again in the pages of Times Magazine: "Glitches – a spaceman's word for irritating disturbances." \3

BIAS

a strong feeling in favor of or against one group of people, or one side in an argument, often not based on fair judgement

\1
Legacy Russell,
Glitch Feminism:
A Manifesto

\2
Emily Siner,
What's A 'Glitch',
Anyway? A Brief
Linguistic History

\3
Ibid.

I start from my grandmother's house

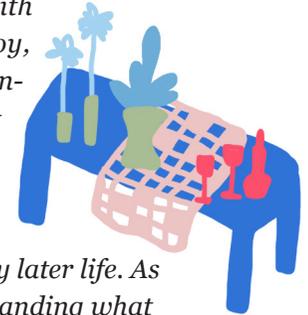


*During my childhood,
I remember being mostly at my grandmother's house
because my mother was working.*

*The house is located in a small
town at the countryside of
Greece and was built in 1975.
The house has two living rooms;*

*one for casual daily use and one more
"formal" for special occasions or family gatherings.
Yet, I strongly remember the second one being mostly claimed
by my grandfather and his friends. My grandmother always
helped with the food and generally with the serving, moving
between the living room and the kitchen, always crossing the
long, dark corridor. My grandfather died in 2003, and to this
day we only use the "formal living room" at most twice a year.
My grandmother kept all those habits she had before and that
she knew to perform quite well. Coming from a typical patri-
archal family, she also created her own family core by follow-
ing the same clichés and patterns.*

*The driving force of the present research is the observation
and the relationship I have developed over the years with my
grandmother's house and herself as a link in a chain that nev-
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Even when surviving

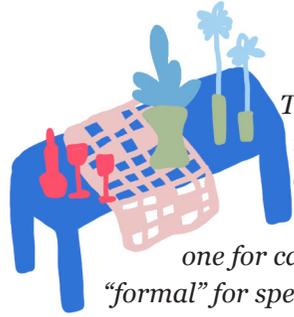
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introduction

DOMESTICITY

life at home with your
family, taking care of
the house

What does intimacy mean? This thesis begins with the question of intimacy, of what it means for each of us, where we can find it and why. Intimacy is always combined with our “home”, the place that where we were born, shaped our memories, connected with behaviors, materials, objects, moments, sounds, smells, faces. Gaston Bachelard in *The poetics of space* describes the house as a geometrical object which ought to resist metaphors that welcome the human body and soul.¹ But transposition to the human plane takes place immediately whenever a house is considered as a space for happiness and intimacy, space that is supposed to condense and defend intimacy.²

Intimacy is found where the individual feels comfortable expressing, creating and existing. Our home, the domestic environment, teaches us every day, from the moment we are born, how to exist in a place that often functions as a miniature of the social and cultural system that we will later live in. This relationship continues throughout most of our lives if one considers that we spend more than half of our lives within the domestic realm. This of course does not only concern the relationship that is developed between the space and the people who inhabit it, but also all those elements that make up these interrelated relationships and often define them. Standards, values, cliches, traditions, norms and stereotype patterns are often found in a big part of our daily lives within the domestic environment. Meanwhile, each individual creates their own space of familiar interpersonal encounters.

Of course, these elements do not suddenly emerge in the

family core but often derive from the present social effects and events that family members bring into the home. Thus, chronic behavior patterns are cultivated that consequently determine not only the spatial qualities that the individuals create as their “home” but also the attitude of the individuals within it. The Canadian sociologist Erving Goffman in his book *The presentation of self in everyday life* in 1956 highlights that when a performer guides his private activity in accordance with incorporated moral standards, he may associate these standards with a reference group of some kind, thus creating a non-present audience for his activity.³ This can work like a vicious circle which in turn leads to the projection of these behaviors and attitudes back into the public realm. Individuals may privately maintain standards of behavior which they do not personally believe in, maintaining these standards because of a lively belief that an unseen audience is present who and will punish deviations from these standards.⁴

Focusing mainly on the post-World War II era and to this day we observe that over the years patriarchal standards and capitalism have evolved simultaneously with the numerous feminist and LGBTQ+ movements. What was and is the impact on the determination of the domestic environment and how did the relationships and roles of family members evolve over time? But most importantly, how does this environment become the cause for the development and implementation of behaviors that essentially block the proper functioning of the people living in it? In other words, when does the person feel fear, pressure, insecurity, or even boredom in their personal space and why? How do these emotions act as a deterrent to the

development of creativity, imagination and ultimately the happiness that they must feel from a very young age in their most familiar environment? And how does all this contribute to the social behavior of the individual?

Feminist writer and scholar Sara Ahmed in *Queer Phenomenology* points out that the question of orientation becomes then a question not only about how we “find our way” but how we come to “feel at home”.⁵ In other words, Ahmed directly connects the feeling of being in a familiar environment, such as home, with the feeling that we have found where we belong, who we are and what we represent. Familiarity is shaped by the “feel” of space or by how spaces “impress” upon bodies. This familiarity is not, then, “in” the world as that which is already given.⁶ Ahmed mainly focuses on the meaning of gender and how it is affected even when the individual is in their own familiar environment. According to that I will use the intersectional approach (Kimberlé Crenshaw, 1991)⁷ within the feminist aspect starting with approaching the role of gender within domestic realm and how it influences our relations with intimacy. An intersectional feminist approach goes beyond mere leveling with patriarchal structures⁸, since it proposes a way of thinking about the conditions in which domestic environments are being formulated and the manners in which the design should be connected with equality.

However, since 1929 Virginia Woolf in *A Room of one's own* raises the issue of gender inequality and the lack of real space for women in both private space and the public sphere. “Women are supposed to be very calm generally: but women feel just as men feel; they need to exercise for

their faculties and a field for their efforts as much as their brothers do; they suffer from too rigid a restraint, too absolute a stagnation, precisely as men would suffer, and it is narrow-minded in their more privileged fellow-creatures to say that they ought to confine themselves to making puddings and knitting stockings, to playing piano and embroidering bags”.⁹ This state may seem obvious to many today, but it has not always been. Remnants

of these behaviors are deeply rooted in society, often creating a variety of problems not only for women but for

INTERSECTIONALITY

The network of connections between social categories such as race, class and gender, especially when this may result in additional disadvantage or discrimination. As Kimberlé Crenshaw noted, that feminist theory and antiracist policy that is not grounded in an intersectional understanding of gender and race cannot adequately address the experiences of Black women when it comes to the formulation of policy demands. Design justice holds that the same is true when it comes to “design demands”.¹⁴

humans in general who do not meet the characteristics of the standard “white men”. The American curator and writer Legacy Russell in her book *Glitch Feminism: A Manifesto* takes a strong position and writes that patriarchy exercises its social dominance by taking up space as its birthright; when patriarchy comes into contact with whiteness, it leaves little room for anything else.¹⁰ To what extent can we as designers and architects take these prerogatives and their consequences into account and be conscious on how the design of a house can influence gender inequality and social behavior?

¹⁴ Kimberlé Crenshaw, Intersectionality and identity politics: Learning from violence against women of color

In a society that is advancing, evolving and trying to survive, there should be no more space for such attitudes and values. Private space like home, and spatial values play a primary role in the development of the individual before coming out in society. Persistent gender segregation and often even incitement to force the individuals to follow the same line even if they are unable to do so or do not feel familiar with it can have profound consequences for behavior, psychology and more generally in defining their orientation within this world. American philosopher Judith Butler argues that gender is not something that is attributed to an already pre-existing subject because of this subject's biological characteristics, but rather something that is produced through its repetitive enactment in response to discursive forces.¹¹

When elements based on patriarchal patterns are predominant, then the domestic space is often flooded with a feeling of pressure, fear, suffocation. Individuals feel "lost and found" and often without realizing, they tend to project these patterns in their personal daily life. They often feel that they do not belong somewhere, since the home is the primary environment that is built to provide

How does the concept of intimacy relate to the patriarchal patterns which are ingrained in most of us?

GENDER
the fact of being male or female, especially when considered with reference to social and cultural differences, rather than differences in biology; members of a particular gender as a group

security to its user. By this way, when this security is lacking, the person either tries to survive by reproducing these behaviors herself or by looking for ways to escape.

The present research aims to create a flow map to the reader following the path that I follow also in the design phase. The work of Belgian film director *Chantal Akerman* and especially the way that she used the setting of a kitchen to explore the intersection between femininity and domesticity, contributed a lot to my own inspiration for the present thesis. By researching my own autobiographical story, I am trying to find and categorize data, collected from my grandma's house in the Greek countryside, by distinguishing the patriarchal patterns that are present within the specific domestic environment.

In this analysis, I am trying to find how patriarchal patterns that can be present in any object, behavior, situation tend to hinder the development of intimacy within the space (-). When those patterns perish, the intimacy and equality within the space are intensified and contribute to the suppression of biases, glitches and oppressive values in the domestic environment (+).

The theoretical analysis follows also the same path starting from the factors that contribute to the creation of unfamiliar spaces such as violence, fear and despair in the members who inhabit it --, as a result of patriarchy and in contrariety to a more feministic approach. Moreover, the reasons that can

How can we think drive the individuals to experience pressure; the feeling of suffocation *the architecture of a* and the loss of personal freedoms - *domestic environment* are investigated.

beyond these patterns, The chapter *something in-between* deals with an in-between situation; the situations that *oppressive values,* cannot be characterized directly as bad but might not help the individuals to intensify their interests. In this chapter, the *outside of binarization* familiar elements are many but still there are some that contradict them, often by positioning the person unconsciously in a *and* process of struggle within their personal space 0.

How can this contribute significantly to understanding the environment in which the

individuals invest Furthermore, in the chapter *most of their* we can do better, I am describing potential steps and gestures that could contribute to the design of a more intimate space, free from residues and dark aspects, that would promote a more pleasing and creative living +, deprived of definite rules, *life?* *without right and wrong.*

codex

I use this:

-- for the less intimate things

- for the not so intimate things

0 for the things that in-between

+ for the intimate things

++ for the most intimate things

--

from -- to ++

-

+

++

0

!

the supervise chair and the table



For the last 40 years my grandmother has been following almost the same schedule on a weekly basis. Every day of the week is special in terms of dietary choices, chores to be done and anything related to selfcare and care of other family members. However, over the years many things have changed regarding the habitants of the house. In 1975 was the first year that my grandparents and their two daughters (my mother and aunt) stayed in their new house. Two years later my uncle was born and few years later both my grandfather and my grandmother's parents moved in there, in order to be taken care of by my grandmother.

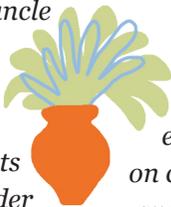
I know from my grandmother's stories that her entire program was based on caring for family members and the household. My grandfather, as I remember him, but also through the stories of others, had the profile of the strict, the one who determines how things will be done, the one who mainly made the decisions.



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The rest just obeyed,
that being a typical reality of the time.

My grandmother on the other hand to this day remains a calm figure, quite condescending and willing.

I was born in 1994 and due to my mother's lack of time due to work, my grandmother was the one who had to take care of me. Because of that, I was constantly at my grandmother's house as a little observer of everything.

One of the strongest memories that I have is the figure of my grandfather coming home after work at noon, around 2 o'clock, and always sitting in the same place at the table. The table was round and he always sat in the chair next to the TV and in front of the window. From that position he could supervise the whole area and observe everything. It was in a way the "sacred" place, which since my grandfather died in 2003, no one used. However, a few years later and ever since my uncle got married, every time we have a family gathering, my grandmother insists that my uncle sits on that chair. Any other change is not normal and if any irregularity occurs, she protests and tries to fix the situation. Instead, she always sits on the chair closest to the kitchen, while if there is a formal dinner with more guests, she always gives her place to someone else and she sits on a small stool or an old chair that she brings from the storage room.



The correspondence of the positions around the table with the members of the family, indicates that, from the simplest habit that is reproduced in the domestic environment, a stereotype can be created that reflects a form of power in relations. The male figure is imposing control by symbolically taking the reins of the "leader" while the female serves, helps, obeys.

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discomfort, anger or anxiety: power and matrix of domination

MATRIX OF DOMINATION

refer to race, class,
and gender as
interlocking systems
of oppression, rather
than each operating
"on its own." It is a
conceptual model
that helps us think
about power, oppression,
resistance, privilege,
penalties, benefits, and
harms are systematically
distributed. 15

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15
Patricia Hill Collins
Black Feminist Thought:
Knowledge, Conscious-
ness, and the Politics of
Empowerment

The home as a domestic environment, is often likened to the concept of the familiar and the personal, something that is very much “ours”. It often acts as a mirror of the members who live in it, having an impact on their social status and beyond. It is a relationship of “input and output”. Individuals create their own domestic environment based on what they already know, have learned and experienced so far. The house and household are built on these powerful pillars which will then accompany future behaviors within the home. Yet even today these pillars are often based on patterns stemming from patriarchy, capitalism and colonialism. In other words, criteria such as gender, class and race accompany the creation and maintenance of the family fabric and therefore the home environment often prevailed by those. The domestic sphere is arguably the most potent place to explore the spatiality of gendered power relations.¹² Michel Foucault argues that the issue of inequality and fundamental dissymmetry between the male and female within the household, is deeply rooted in ancient times and that basic principles that govern some individuals even today are derived from the remnants of norms and stereotypes of previous centuries¹³ - *a wife who must be kept under control and respected at the same time.*¹⁴

The way the home environment is structured, both in relation to space and to human behaviors, often has negative effects on some of its members since it is strongly based on power relations.¹⁵ An extreme consequence of this is domestic violence. Indicatively, only in 2021 and so far in Greece there have been 17 femicides;¹⁶ the largest number of victims during the past ten years. This phenomenon be-

came stronger especially after the long quarantine period and this can be explained if we consider those primitive feelings that jumped and created new conditions within the domestic and family core. Most of these incidents happened inside the house and most of these men seemed that they were normal according to the standards that our contemporary society has imposed on us. Historian of gender and feminism Lucy Delap refers that the 1970s and 80s saw an explosion of feminist shelters, refuges and places of safety, mostly focused on what was increasingly named as ‘domestic violence’, as well as

rape and sexual assault.¹⁷ Where previous debates had talked of wife-beating, the new terminology stressed both how serious and pervasive violence was, and that its effects stretched beyond wives to encompass children, girlfriends and other relatives.¹⁸ However, in Greece of 2021 even if you are a victim of domestic violence, it is impossible to find a place that really protects you. This is because on one hand although victims often report incidents of domestic violence to the police, the latter does not give the proper attention needed. (*When a woman reported domestic violence in her building in the Athens suburb of Dafni in July, it took 25 minutes for the police to arrive*).¹⁹

Violence is the key component of supremacy and, as such, a core agent of patriarchy. Where we see the limitation of a body’s “right to range”, be it at an individual or state level, we see domination.²⁰ The question that arises is

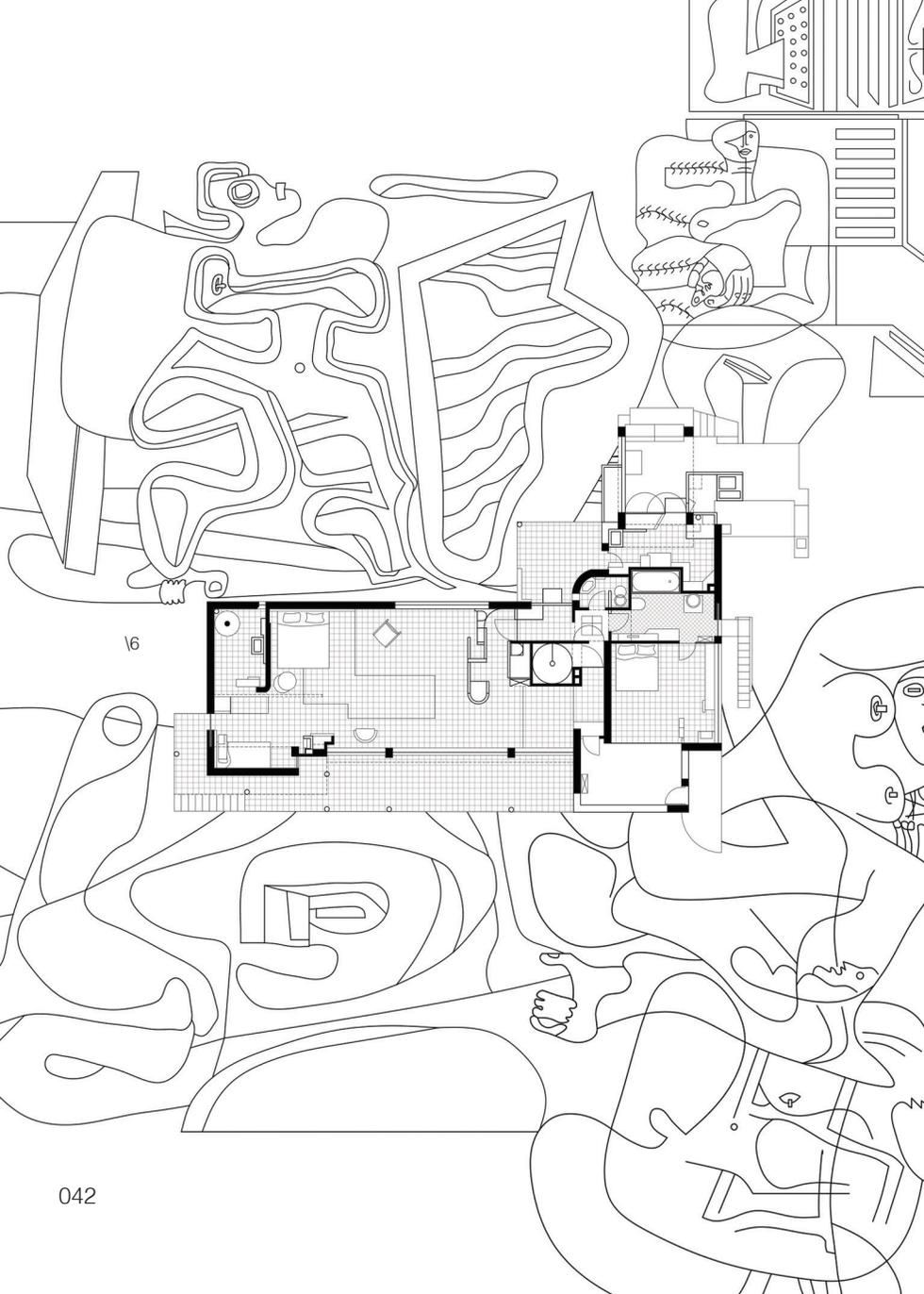
INEQUALITY
the unfair difference between groups of people in society, when some have more wealth, status or opportunities than others

to what extent the house can finally work as a shelter, as a home for all family members? Why the domestic violence increased so much in the last two years under the pandemic situation? Leslie Kern, associate professor of geography and environment, director of women's and gender studies and author of *Feminist city* says "I am also not suggesting that the solution to fear of crime is for women to get better at following our guts".²¹ This would do little to reduce the greatest threat women face: violence from known men in the home, school and workplace. And, indeed, this remains a major stumbling block for anyone thinking about improving safety for women. Public and design interventions rarely address private violence.²²

Although domestic violence is one of the most extreme phenomena based on patriarchal motifs, it is not the only one that causes a multitude of negative emotions and/or behaviors within the domestic realm. It is quite interesting to refer to the case study of Eileen Gray's E.1027 house in French Riviera (1926-1929) and how Gray essentially introduced a new housing model free from traditional modern design standards. Katarina Bonnevier in her essay "A queer analysis of Eileen Gray's E.1027" refers that Gray designed the habitat out of the formula of the "living-room" which would offer all inhabitants a total independency, and permit rest and intimacy. A generous bed makes up the largest piece of furniture in the grande salle, which is the main section of the building that composes half of the upper ground floor.²³ Gray calls the habitation "un organisme vivant".²⁴ A person can set the house in motion. No motor powers the living machine - a player/actor is called for. The architecture prescribes a behavior

where the body is engaged with the building elements.²⁵ In 1949 Le Corbusier built a small wooden cabin (the Cabanon) for himself overlooking the beach and right behind E.1027. Le Corbusier occupied and controlled the site of E.1027 by overlooking it, the cabin being little more than an observation platform, a sort of watchdog house as Gray herself put it.²⁶ Beatriz Colomina describes the process of how Le Corbusier claimed the Gray's space painting most of the walls of the house with his lewd cubist murals in order to mock Gray's bisexuality and to undermine her creative vision as one of the few women working in the architectural field.²⁷ This fact can be a form of violence which is based on the patriarchal patterns of power relations, since by violating one's most personal space, the person who inhabits it is automatically violated.

Even today in many societies it is still accepted that the female body - not only biologically - but mainly socially is what is responsible for the upbringing of children within the house and in general for the family members care. The binary division of the gender, places the woman next to the term "female" and what it entails, while at the same time pushing the man away from it, forcing him to believe that his place belongs where the "masculine" is. Donna Haraway writes that a related 'regulatory fiction' basic to Western concepts of gender insists that motherhood is natural and fatherhood is cultural: mothers make babies naturally, biologically. Motherhood is known on sight; fatherhood is inferred.²⁸ We use "body" to give material form to an idea that has no form, an assemblage that is abstract. The concept of a body houses within it social, political, and cultural discourses, which change based on



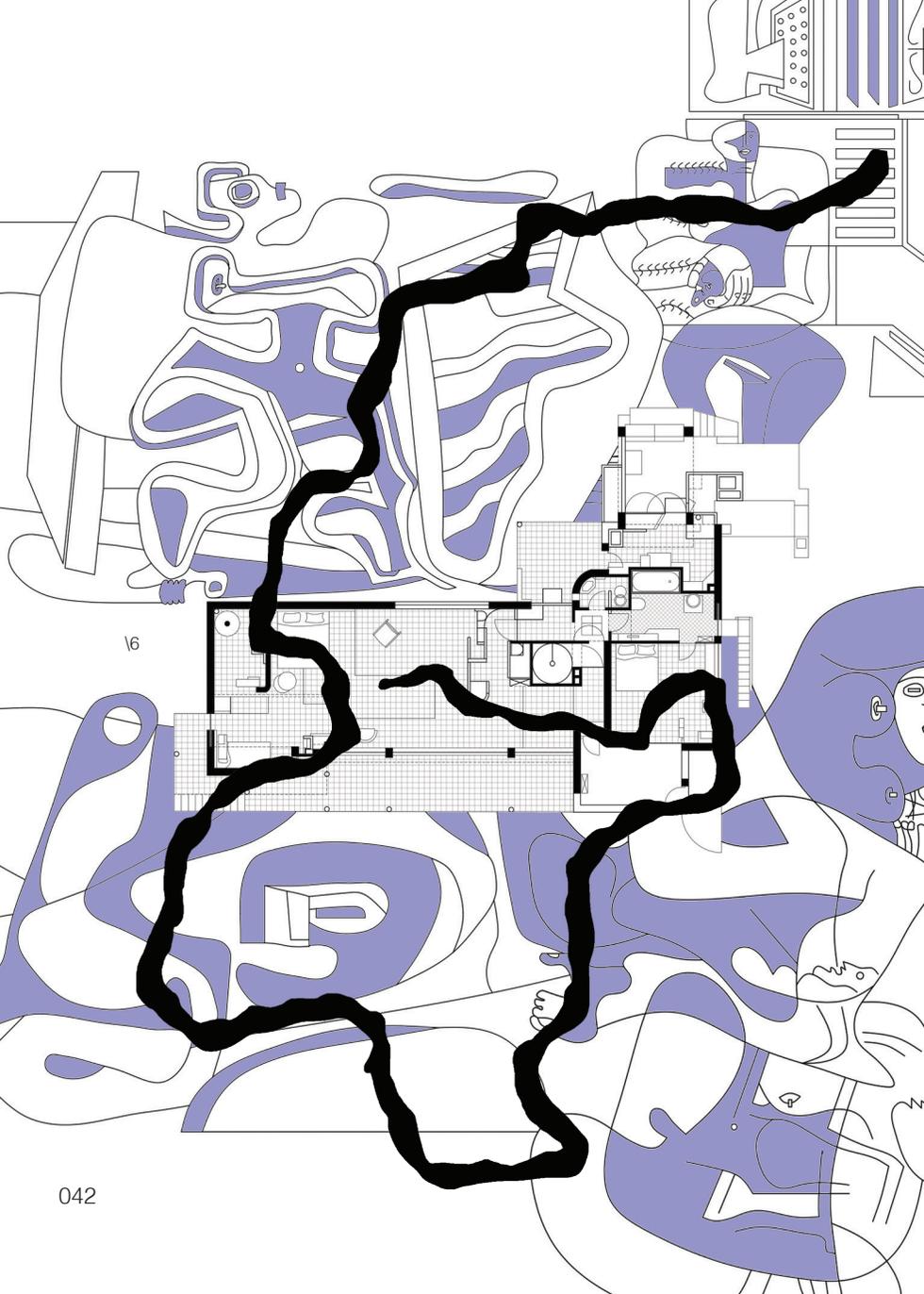
where the body is situated and how it is read.²⁹ There is nothing about being 'female' that naturally binds women. There is not even such a state as 'being' female, itself a highly complex social construct in contested sexual scientific discourses and other social practices.³⁰ Gender, race, or class consciousness is an achievement forced on us by the terrible historical experience of the contradictory interferences of patriarchy, colonialism, and capitalism.³¹

to E.10.27 floor plan. Le Corbusier's cubist murals redefined by me.

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E. 1027 floor plan & Le Corbusier's cubist murals redesigned by me.
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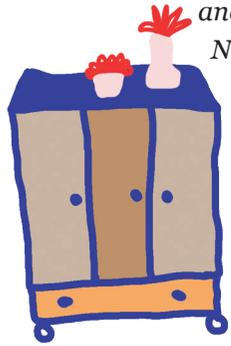
there are some differences between male's and female's bedroom



My grandmother's house is quite big. She now lives alone and the space is free to use it as she likes. Nevertheless, she chooses not to change anything. The bedrooms of my mother, my aunt and my uncle are almost the same as they were, even though it has been almost 15 years since the last one left the house. My grandmother's life is full of caring for others. Husband and children always had the possibility of isolation and privacy in the house. My grandmother, on the other hand, had to be constantly available for anything. Merely the process of having lunch strictly at two each afternoon never left her the flexibility to configure her schedule based on her own needs. This is something she had never thought of. The constant "availability" she provided and continues to provide to all members of her family made her completely devoted to the needs of others, while by creating space for them she removed squares from her own personal space.



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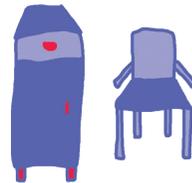
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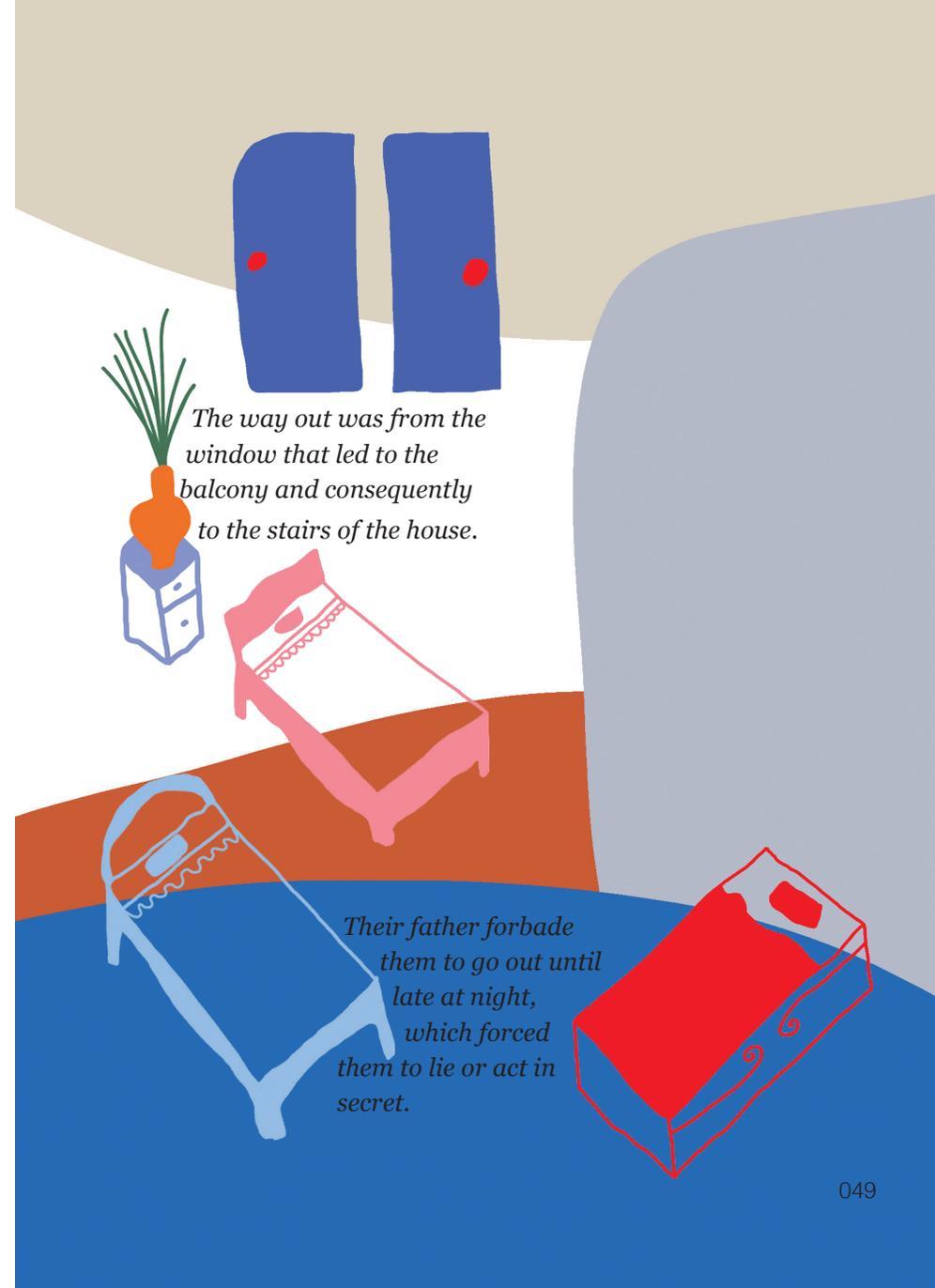
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It is worth mentioning another example on this. My mother and aunt shared the same room as opposed to my uncle who although smaller had his own room. This is somewhat logical since as people of the same gender and almost the same age they had more in common to share in contrast to their younger brother. However, the girls' room were much smaller than the boy's. To this day there are two beds, a desk and a closet. In addition, this room is right next to the master bedroom. In this way, the parents could more easily supervise the girls and effectively control them. On the other hand, my uncle's room is closer to the entrance of the house making it the most secluded of all the rest.

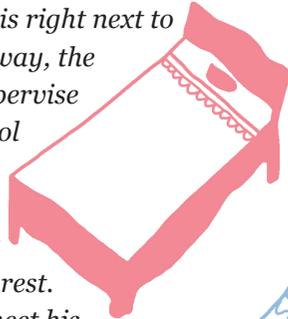
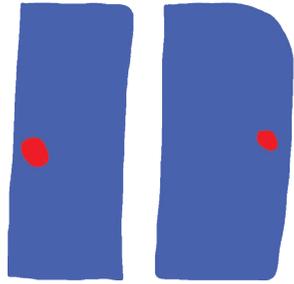
In this way he could meet his needs for privacy but also freedom within the domestic sphere. It is interesting that the daughters as they grew up often waited for their parents to fall asleep so that they could leave the house without them realizing it.



The way out was from the window that led to the balcony and consequently to the stairs of the house.

Their father forbade them to go out until late at night, which forced them to lie or act in secret.

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-

anticipated threshold

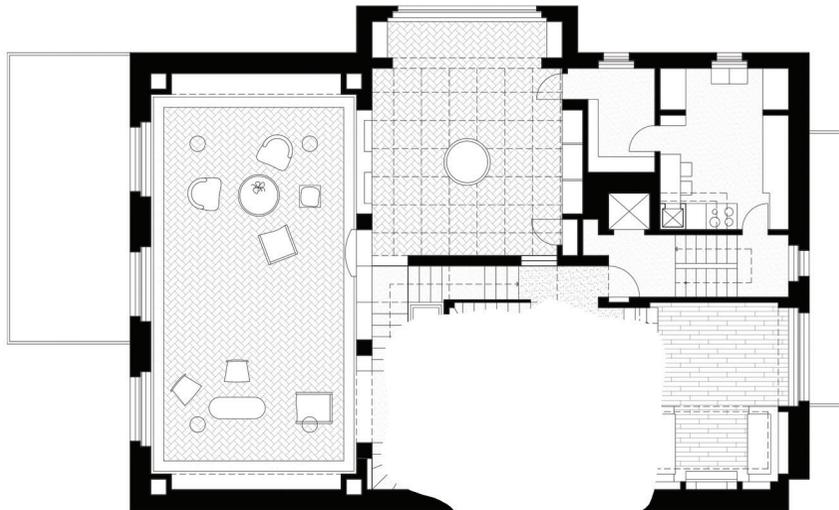
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In the Western World, almost all of us have grown up learning that our house has some rooms which are called kitchen, living room, dining room, bedroom, bathroom, office and so on. Each of them is associated with specific functions and activities that occur during the day and by specific users. According to that, the physical space acquires identity as it is defined by specific behavior patterns and situations. Even objects such as the table we eat or our parents' big double bed are identified by specific uses and references that stem from the standards and stereotypes that each household user sets as informal rules in their domestic environment. The Belgian professor of architectural theory and author Hilde Heynen in her essay *Modernity and domesticity* refers that the spatial elements such as the "master bedroom", the "rational kitchen", or "the study" do have implications in terms of gender, since their unproblematized presence in the home underscores the expectation that it will be inhabited by a married couple, with the wife an expert cook and the husband keen in his privacy.³² Examples of patriarchal-based societies profoundly influence the role of the gender within the domestic sphere, often associating women with household, care and household chores, and men with income, social life, and decision-making.

However, the design of the space itself often influences the reproduction of these stereotypes. The location of the kitchen, living room or bedroom affects the privacy of the members who live in them. When, for example, the kitchen is open and communicates with the living room or the dining room, a communication network is automatically created between the different actions that take place in

these spaces and of course the members included. This way the cooking process can often be part of another action taking place at the moment. At the same time the person can supervise a bigger space without feeling isolated from it. It is thus, in this domiciliation, in this house arrest, that archives take place. The dwelling, this place where they reside permanently, marks this institutional passage from private to the public.³³

Beatriz Colomina in her essay *The Split Wall: Domestic Voyerism* makes an extensive reference to the Adolf Loos' interiors.³⁴ She describes the interior of the houses as a spatial-psychological device³⁵ which could also be read in terms of power, regimes of control inside the house. In the Müller house (Prague, 1930), the sequence of spaces, articulated around the staircase, follows an increasing sense of privacy from the drawing room, to the dining room and study, to the "lady's room" (Zimmer der Dame) with its raised sitting area, which occupies the center, or "heart", of the house. But the window of this space looks onto the living space. Here, too the most intimate room is like a theater box, placed just over the entrance to the social spaces in this house, so that any intruder could easily be seen.³⁶ Adolf Loos challenges by reversing and combining contrasts causing the user to collide with the standards that define the space. Placing the "Zimmer der Dame" in the center of the house automatically upgrades and highlights its use. Here, Loos challenges with the stereotype that feminine spaces must be protected, covered and not exposed. In addition, the contrasts that exist in the space such as the different heights and the visibility from one space to another create different points of



17
 Adolf Loos,
 Floor plan of Müller house
 Placing the "Zimmer der
 Dame" in the center of
 the house automatically
 upgrades and highlights
 its use.

control. Comfort is paradoxically produced by two seemingly opposing conditions, intimacy and control.³⁷

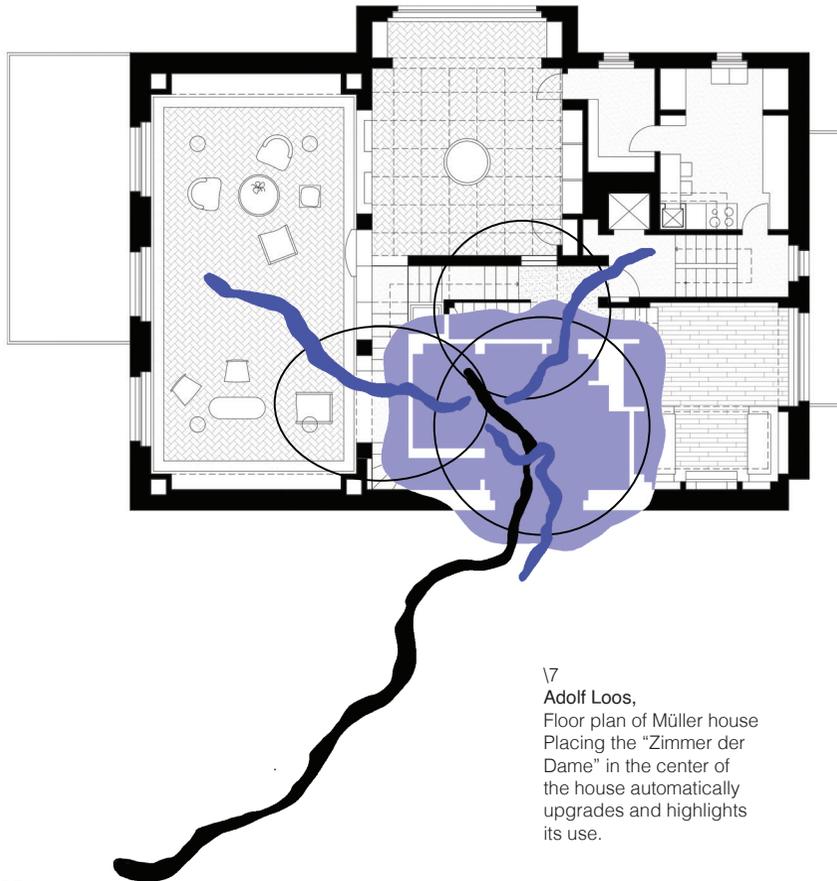
Using the example of Adolf Loos although designed in 1930, I seek to understand how concepts such as privacy, intimacy and comfort can differ depending on each individual. The binary discrimination that the patriarchal and capitalist system has imposed on us, hinders the development and creation of spaces and objects that resist it. In some cases, people can suffocate or feel that they do not belong to the space without even realizing the reason behind it. The process for the individuals to recognize their own "familiar" and apply it in their own personal space requires an awareness of their orientation and how much they are really "feeling like home". Through this process may they are called to recognize also the anticipated threshold which underlines any contrast or exclusion. sent a stark difference and an imp

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Regarding the home environment, the individuals should always be able to recognize and question the location, use and value of any object that surrounds them. The German philosopher Edmund Husserl suggests that it must see “without” the natural attitude, which keeps us within the familiar- indeed, within the space already “decided” as “being” the family home.³⁸



17
Adolf Loos,
Floor plan of Müller house
Placing the “Zimmer der
Dame” in the center of
the house automatically
upgrades and highlights
its use.

velvet is only for special occasions



In my grandmother's house as in every house, there are many objects that compose the scenery of the space. Growing up, I learned to observe all of them, while some calling me closer, others pushing me away and some being completely indifferent to me. The selection criteria for these items differ from one to another.

Some are of practical importance, such as furniture and objects that serve the needs of sleep, rest and food and electrical appliances, while others function more as ornaments

that decorate the space. Behind this domestic collection, I already know

that there are various reasons which constructed this spatial reality.

Plenty of them were arisen from those norms of Greek culture during 70s based on the political and social motifs, which encouraged people to build their houses with little doses of luxury.

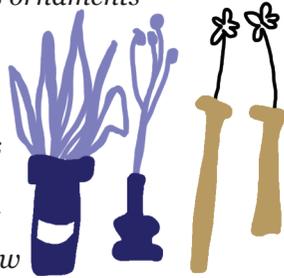


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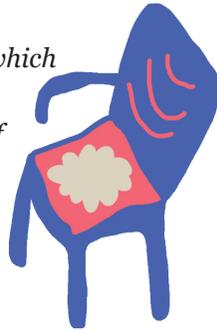
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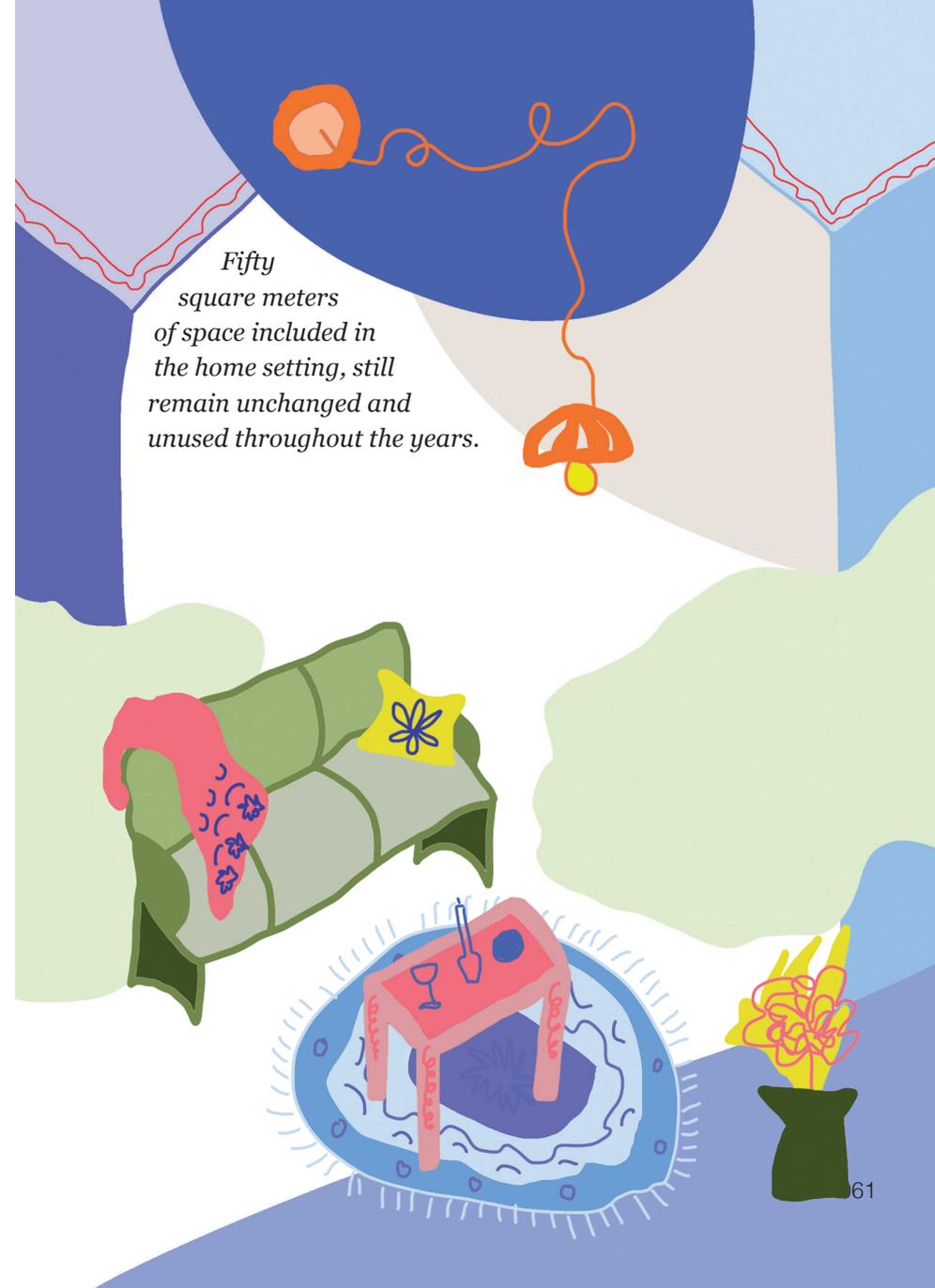
A notable example is the sofa and armchairs in the large living room and the chairs around the dining room. Their surfaces are made of velvet, making them particularly fragile with use and over time. That way the living room gained a different dynamic, highlighting the element of formality and superiority over other objects within the domestic realm.

At the same time this fragility made users gradually move away from it and use it rarely.

The fear of wear and tear closed the window that led to the appropriation of these objects and therefore the space that hosted them.

My grandmother is still responsible for the maintenance of this space.

Every Friday she opens the windows of the room and starts to wipe and clean the furniture.



Fifty square meters of space included in the home setting, still remain unchanged and unused throughout the years.

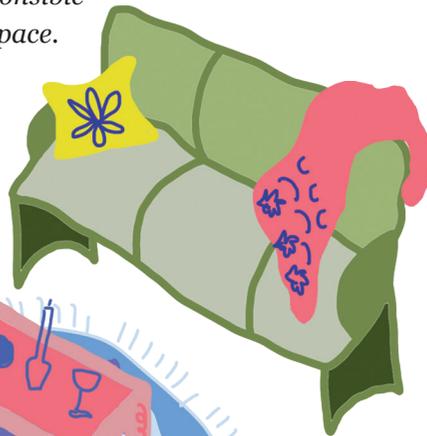
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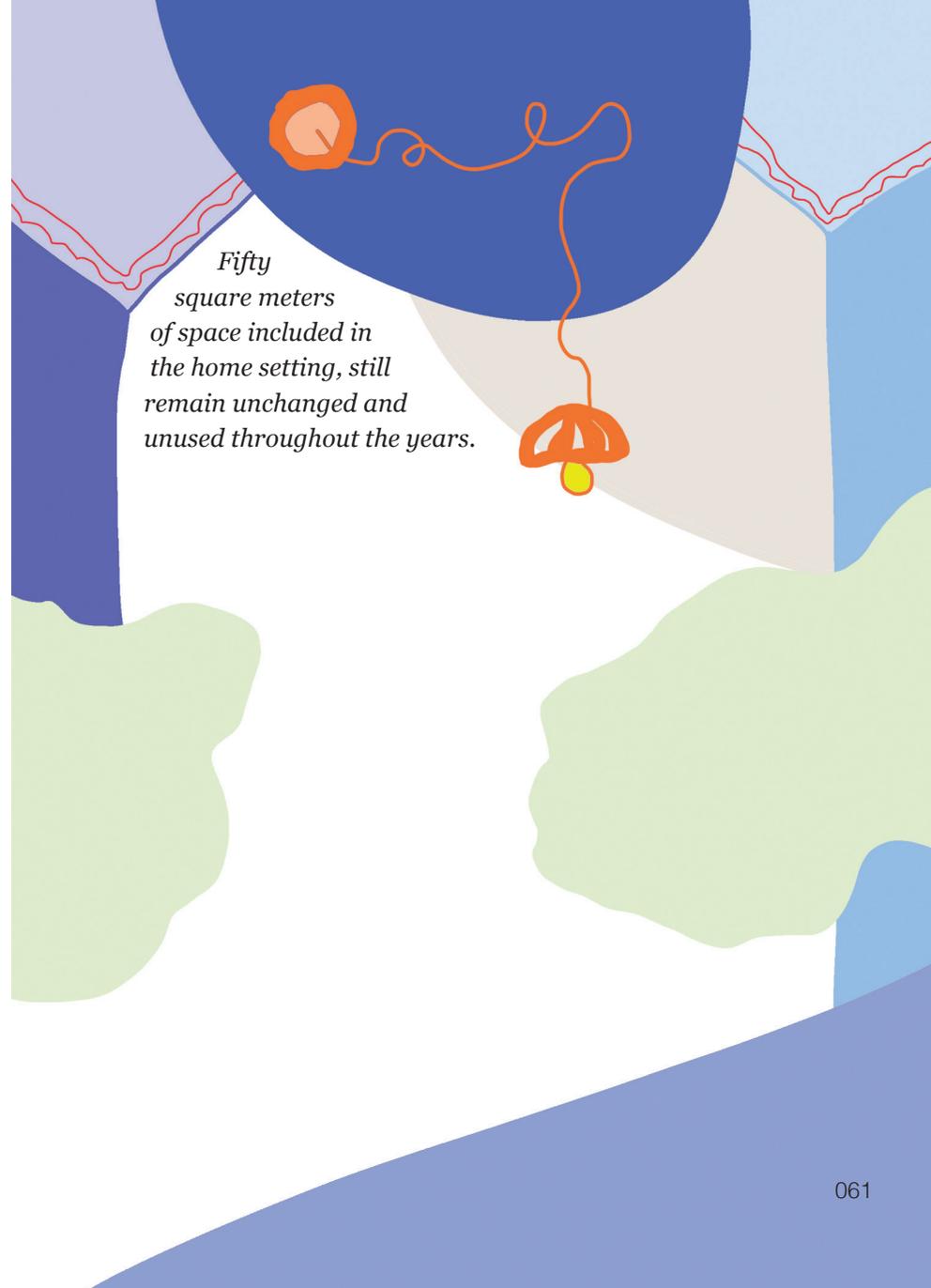
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something in-between

Every object that exists around us creates, at the same time, its own special conditions which sometimes may not seem to affect us while in other cases determine how we feel and behave in a space and especially in our personal space. There are often different key points that, where they exist, contribute to the auspicious residential reality, bringing people closer to their own personal familiarity but when this is absent, it might go unnoticed. What goes on in houses necessarily does so in close juxtaposition. The house brings together spatial representations, everyday living, meals, cooking, and the sharing of resources with the often-intimate relations of those who inhabit this shared space.³⁹

But what is the role of the architect and designer on it? How can contemporary and post-contemporary design help users clarify their true needs and communicate them to the architects so that the new domestic environment is designed from the ground up to be closer to the users and reflect their character? Matrix Feminist Design Cooperative in 1984 writes that the whole process of designing and getting a building built is conventionally described as only a technical process. Although much has changed since then, it often remains the same even today. The ideology that underlying how information is organized, to whom you listen to, what questions you ask, which parts of the process could be open to group involvement- these are not generally discussed by architects or by those who employ them.⁴⁰ Working for two years in various architectural studios in Greece, I noticed that indeed the architect's interest is often focused on the construction of the building itself and not so much on the real needs of the

user. In fact, the architecture offices often “copy” trends that are relevant at any given time and apply them to the design of the building and especially to its interior. In contrast, architects who get closer to their clients, discuss or share hours together while learning about each other usually create homes that satisfy them, represent them and ultimately facilitate their daily lives. Contemporary architecture and design should create in the light of the intersectional approach, which argues for the methodological parallelism of gender, race, class and sexual factors, without flattening out any differences between them but rather investing politically the question of their complex interaction (Kimberlé Crenshaw, 1995).

Doreen Massey in her essay *Space, Place, and Gender* refers that the old patriarchal form of domestic production was torn apart, the established pattern of relations between the gender was thrown into question.⁴¹ This, too, was a process which varied in its extent and in its nature between parts of the country, and one of the crucial influences on this variation was the nature of the emerging economic structures.⁴² In each of these different areas “capitalism” and “patriarchy” were articulated together, and accommodated themselves to each other, in different ways.⁴³ The connection between patriarchy and capitalism is directly related to the domestic sphere, it is often a phenomenon that may go unnoticed because it may not have immediate negative consequences and thus often acts as a more transparent veil that blocks the development of intimacy in space; yet still existing and often in a more insidious way than an obvious problem as mentioned in previous chapters. A simple example is all these maga-

0 zines that have sprung up since the beginning of the 20th century and refer mainly to the “woman”, urging her to buy specific appliances and furniture for her “household”. In addition, we are all more or less in the homes of friends who are exact copies of IKEA catalogs. IKEA made the design accessible to everyone and that was a big innovation since the previous century. However, this effortless access to any product causes the utilization of plethora of items in our domestic environments which might be useless, bought without an understanding of our motive behind this desire. Other than IKEA’s low budget solutions there is also a theory named as “The IKEA effect” that might explain why many people are tend this solution. This theory supports that people are finding it satisfying to assemble their furniture themselves and by accomplishing the goal of creating your own furniture a sense of success is generating happiness.⁴⁴

Unconscious reproduction of identical layouts by both users and the designers can often be a deterrent to creating a home environment that meets the needs of the individual. The example of IKEA often leads users on the one hand to over-consumption (lower prices compared to other similar products) and on the other hand to the desire for identical reproduction of IKEA’s showcase in our own home. Often this partially unconscious consumption can often create spaces that ultimately do not suit or serve the users as they would like to. Obviously, each era has its own trends and promotes its own standards, but we must now be more cautious in terms of consumption and choice of items that ultimately do not express us, methodically eliminating the stereotypes that others before us already

established. A simple thought could be to think about the standard dimensions of the furniture that is circulating in the market. Think of a person who likes to spend time on soft surfaces, working with pajamas, constantly using pillows. A differently designed furniture than the existing ones, could meet those needs by covering a larger or smaller area of the space.⁴⁵

The intention behind the chapter “there is no right or wrong” is to clarify those things that are placed in-between. Things that exist without creating an obvious unfamiliar situation; things that neither hinder or intensify intimacy. Things that could be just “better”.

This chapter stems from my own personal exploration and experience of house interiors that I have lived, designed or visited. Also, I comment on the design decisions that are implemented due to a current trend and not because there is an urgent need of the individual. Here, the text focuses more on objects and less on situations and behaviors as in other chapters. It is rather important to discuss the affect of the objects that invade our domestic environment because in addition to space, they often influence the mood of the person who inhabit it. Furthermore, architects and designers should be constantly cultivating the communication with the users throughout the design phase focusing on the real needs of the user.

Approaching the domestic environment through the prism of creativity and imagination, hidden truths can emerge that can affect even the general behavior of individuals and make them feel even more welcome in their own environment.

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We may feel good at home,
but

could we be even better?



"Fluffy Library" by
Antigoni Tsagkaropoulou
and
IKEA LACK Side table,
black, 55x55 cm

the ultimate cosiness



The fireplace of the house is located in the living room next to the kitchen door. During the winter we all gather around it while spreading in every corner of this room. Its southwestern orientation makes it fill with sunlight throughout the day. Every object is chosen to be comfortable and able to accommodate various activities during the day. The table sometimes works as a workspace, other times of the day to serve lunch and dinner and sometimes accommodates conversations about various matters. Likewise, the couch that my grandmother is usually sleeping on every afternoon. Almost all the objects around this room are simple but at the same time functional. For example, the kitchen has a direct connection with the living room and also the door and the window above the sofa are all visible and easily accessible.

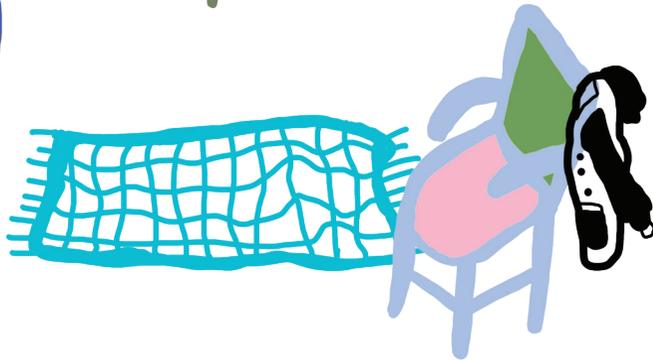


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The grandmother as a key user of this household spends most of the time in the kitchen. This room is communicating with the living room where other users of this space might occupy. For example, her grandchildren, who she may need to look after sometimes while also cook.

This feature of the house is something that she would not change even if she had the chance to create a new domestic environment for herself. It is also interesting that in order to reach her bedroom she has to cross a big central but completely dark corridor. In the past, it was common for the master bedroom to be located in the most secluded part of the house in order to be completely separated from anything that composes the public element. No one except family members should have access to it intensifying the element of decency.

So, while on the one hand the kitchen and living room are characterized by brightness, warmth and intimacy, the passage towards the supposedly more familiar space is exactly the opposite.



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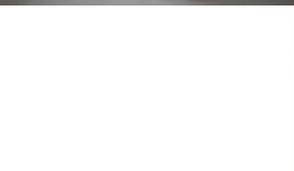
In recent years my grandmother goes to her bedroom only for her night sleep, while she has told me that if her house consisted only of these two rooms she would still be satisfied.

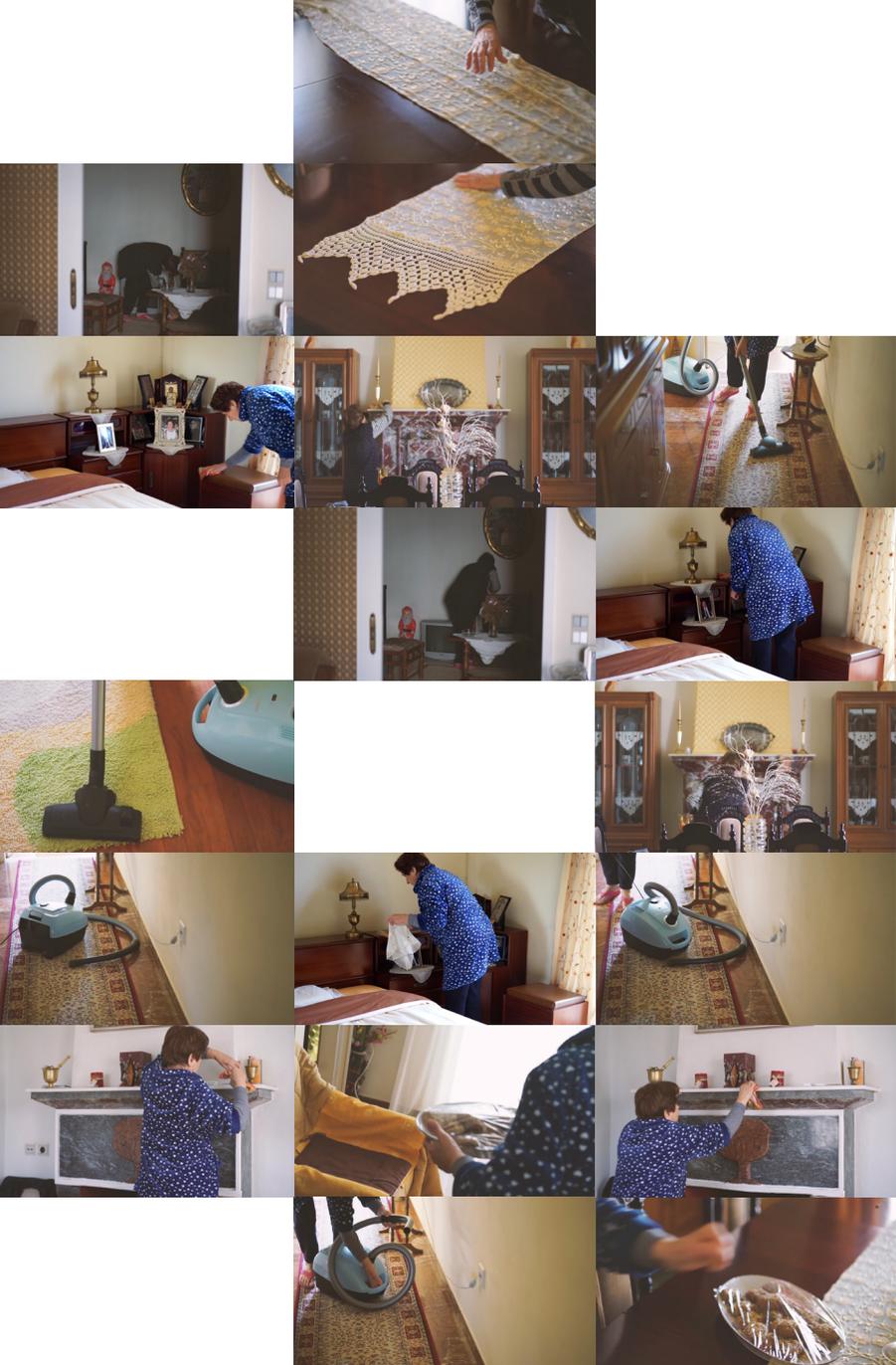


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we can do better





I find myself deeply inspired by the work of Chantal Akerman, especially the film *Jeanne Dielman, 23, quai du Commerce, 1080 Bruxelles*, 1975,¹⁹ where she creates + the portrait of a housewife's life. Particularly focusing on the way which she manages to do a representation of the very small details of daily things and the importance which is arisen from them through a feminist scope. Following the same paths, I approach my own story of my grandmother's house and I re-observe everything which may be hidden within this house. Focusing on every detail, I make my own representation of the house using this process as my own personal affirmation and realization of what really happens. With small steps and small gestures, using the neutral perspective, I am constantly trying to understand the relationship of every single object with subject. I use time, plenty of time and I play with distances in order to achieve that.

However, nowadays most of us are experiencing the lack of time which often leaves us no room for clear thinking and choice. Contextualizing this phenomenon within domestic environment, then maybe it often pushes us to choose specific actions that we may think suit us or we just like because for example they may facilitate someone else. Rosi Braidotti in her book *The Posthuman* states that it may be useful to start by clarifying some aspects of the globalized context in which the decentering of anthropocentrism is taking place.⁴⁶ She argues elsewhere advanced capitalism is a spinning machine that actively produces differences for the sake of commodification. It is a multiplier of deterritorialized differences, which are packaged and marketed under the labels of "new, dynamic,



¹⁹
Chantal Akerman
Jeanne Dielman, 23, quai du Commerce, 1080 Bruxelles, 1975,
image: FONDATION CHANTAL AKERMAN
youtube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5QH-By2X21bk>

+

and negotiable identities” and an endless choice of consumer goods. This logic triggers a proliferation and a vampiric consumption of quantitative options.⁴⁷ An example is the exposure to social media and ads that spring up -often without consent on that- increasing the feeling of consumption and non-choice. All of this is so present that the person tends to slowly lose their identity because they simply do not have time to think clearly about it. The global circulation of goods, data, capital, bits and bytes of information frames the interaction of contemporary subjects on a daily basis. Multiple choices confront consumers at every step, but with varying degrees of actual freedom of choice, Braidotti says.⁴⁸

This condition translating as a social phenomenon, of course, invades into the private realm, influencing the contemporary domesticity in its various manifestations. The patriarchal pattern that exists and is perpetuated in many cases within the space is intertwined with capitalist instincts, creating a blurred surface that needs to be clarified and then, restored. Considering our own era, what is happening around us right now and, deeply observing the space, the objects and the behaviors that originate, we can finally all be faced with our own personal “shock”.

+

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Take a step back from this text for a while and think about your own personal space

5 minutes

Start with the most familiar elements of the space,

+

the ones that define your own kind of "right".



Then you can clarify what is in-between,

what is there because it serves a condition

but if you suddenly left this environment,

you could leave it behind.

Then, focus on what is less familiar to you,

which may upset or discomfort you.

...

Distinguish them in your mind with three different colors.

+

What do you observe?

Through this process of unlearning, you may find yourself to feel uncomfortable. \10 This is already a design stage.

Braidotti argues that we need to experiment with resistance and intensity in order to find out what posthuman bodies can do.⁴⁹ I will add to this, the parameter of space. We have to look beyond every binary machine that has been imposed on us in order to be able to approach intimacy, this very personal part of us that is inextricably linked to our body living within the space. Our house must be our *home**

UNLEARN

to make an effort to forget your usual way of doing something so that you can learn a new and sometimes better way

*and we, as designers need to contribute to that

+

\10
SEE ALSO:
MY DATA CONTINUE
TO TRANSMUTE,
workshop hosted by me,
Appendix, page 121

my younger sister in
my grandma's house,
summer 2020,
image by me



before I leave



*There is a table, four chairs, two plates
of fish soup, some bread. The
television is open and the fire
on the fireplace is quite low.*

*Although it is December, the
sunlight is intense and ma-
kes the room quite warm.
We are the two of us,
we are eating.*

*Sometimes, I
ask her to tell
me a story.*

*Later, she will
put the plates on the dishwasher
and clean the table, step by step. She will
turn off the sound of the television
because
she wants
to sleep.*

Filiatra, Messinia
December 17, 2021
2:45 pm



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usurp your intimacy!

Domestic environments reflect the different psychosynthesis of the people who inhabit them. It is interesting and frightening how much the immediate spatial environment like our home affects our personality extensively. Objects, no matter how much we degrade them, have their own power and can shape us when they collaborate with space and when we learn from the day, we are born to exist among them. If we realize the effect of the environment, where we pass most of our time, against each person's mindset, the importance to analyze the reasons behind that seems imminent and important in order to get a perspective and understanding of many social phenomena and behaviors.

A deep understanding of these behaviors and situations can actually lead to read our domestic environments otherwise. Once the individuals realize what is really happening, the reasons they react and listen to their true "wants", only then they will be able to get rid of a daily routine that suppresses them or displeases them and leaves them no room to evolve and thrive. Therefore, in order to reimagine the body, one must reimagine space.⁵⁰

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Looking back to my research question and considering my re-reading of my grandmother's place, I would say that there are not obvious answers. Because answers, in their totality, tend to become new limits or rules that prescribe again behaviors and procedures for design and creativity. Through the process of my own "unlearning" I came closer with my own intimate things and also with my own personal traumas. When I took time to re-observe a determined condition such my grandma's house, I recognized

what I would like to secure and what I want to leave behind. And, this condition related to specific subjects and specific space, acquiring its own uniqueness.

++

Creating sustainable spaces both psychologically and practically for each person is a constant and open discussion between the person itself, the other members that share the space, and of course the space itself. Even the simplest questions like "what do I need" or "what makes me uncomfortable" can lead to the understanding of our needs. Questions such as "What can I keep from what those who lived before me taught me?" could be included also in this discussion. The present thesis in no way seeks to "demolish" what we have learned so far but to start a dialogue on how to take a step back and think more thoroughly what we really care about and what is actually useful in a more personal level rather than designing for inequality. Traditional elements that evoke intimacy could be reproduced even in post-contemporary design if that is what we are looking for and this should be accepted. The feminist approach seeks to highlight the values that compose intimacy, security, privacy and also creativity within the domestic environment. The objects in order to satisfy these values must behave in such a way that intensifies the realization of these values in real life. The notion of the female imaginary reminds us that the domestic realm needs not to be discarded but reclaimed in different terms.⁵¹

Through my own perspective, I find myself *as a designer* responsible to externalize and communicate all these findings with the other individuals. I use the term "other indivi-

duals” because I cannot specialize the group of people who may be interested on the present research; and that is because everybody has a home and everyone inhabits their own domestic environment. Even if it is a small room or a castle. Therefore, the designer has a duty to empower and stimulate the users to think beyond their obvious limits. To guide them on a journey of discovery and deep introspection with themselves in order to be able to clarify their real needs from their own space. The designer is

the catalyst that creates spaces and objects, which in turn potentially create atmospheres, conditions, behaviors. In order to be able to establish a discussion about an actually innovative design, everything must be processed through an intersectional approach. It is rather important to apply this logic from the smallest detail and object scaling up slowly to the bigger picture such as the public space. In this manner, our bodies and mind could live in a more just designed space and consequentially in a more just world.

RECLAIMING

Reclaiming means recovering what we have been separated from, but not in the sense that we can just get it back. Recovering means recovering from the very separation itself, regenerating what this separation has poisoned. The need to struggle and the need to heal, in order to avoid re-sembling those

we have to struggle against, are thus irreducibly allied.\11

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\11
Isabelle Stengers,
Reclaiming Animism

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Before,
you made an observation
of your own
domestic environment.

Can you remember the most familiar elements to you?

++

If yes,

*Can you imagine the whole
space to be overflowed by them?*

Now, you may think that this is impossible or even crazy.*

But,

start to think of possible ways** on
how this could be done.

I will do my best in order to make them true.

You can
always share
your thoughts
with me;

++

*Think beyond
the two sides

**Try to find your own personal --, -, 0, +, ++.
This small exercise of categorization of intimate
and not so intimate things immediately opens
a dialogue between you and your domesticity
which might make things clearer.

more

footnotes

- 1 Gaston Bachelard, *The Poetics of Space*, translated by Maria Jolas, Beacon Press, 1994, Boston, 84
- 2 *Ibid.*, 84
- 3 Erving Goffman, *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*, Penguin Books Ltd, 1990, London, 87
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44 See also: <https://thedecisionlab.com/biases/ikea-effect/>

45 Check also the project “Fluffy Library” by Antigoni Tsagkaropoulou. Fluffy Library is a soft-sculptural installation for those of us who wish their fairytales had been a little more adventurous with identity, gender, and human relations. Besides Fluffy, there is a monstrous alphabet of hybrid identities, making new languages and new narratives through storytelling. <https://arnolfini.org.uk/whatson/installation-fluffy-library/>

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Here, is a collection of things which might be of interest to you.

In any case, these things helped me to dive deeper in my research and realize the importance of the subject.

a dataset with intimate and not so intimate things

Alexandra 27.11

++

Lina 06.11
Iliana 15.10

+

Georgina 20.10

Maro 06.11

0

Chen 13.11

Martha 12.11

-

--

During my research period I did several *group therapy* sessions with people who are designers architects, artists or social workers approaching the topic through an open dialogue perspective.

That was a process of personal affirmations, realizing and discovering of what happens at this moment in our current domestic environments and how several situations, objects or behaviors are still connected with our own personal familiar. Opening up this dialogue, I externalized also my own histories regarding my grandmother's house and through a deep understanding I encourage myself to discover further, to accept and finally to communicate it with others.

Elisa 25.11

Here, is a collection of words and other objects that I collected during the group therapy sessions of intimate and not so intimate things of the participants.

crying eyes around me
screams, words of hate

moments of pain and confusion
parents shouting

being alone



no space for the clothes
no space for personal objects

the fear of being heard while having sex

an empty table
cigarettes

the rest of the
plates on the
dishwasher

cold bed

being judged for acting homosexually

to be
alone
during the
night

the air-condition

too silent

the shared toilets male/female

furniture and ob-
jects that are not
mine
a designed house
by someone else

absence of light

THE NORTH SIDE

the feeling that you have to feel familiar but you can't

when I cannot inhabit the space as my own

rental place provides boundaries

necessary functional objects

batteries

cleaning
the kitchen
surfaces

alone in my bedroom

the storage rooms

unknown people in my house

the unused furniture

ROOM LAYOUTS

the doors between the rooms

objects without memories

locking the entrance door
afraid of thieves
to leave the lights open because of dark

crossing the
long dark
corridor

television

conflict between parents

absent people from dining table



the feeling of some furniture needs to be in standard places

to leave the house secretly

old walls of my house dirty on walls

messy kitchen

empty house

to wake up early in the morning

WITHERED FLOWERS

homework

the Christian fasting

the coffee table is too small

shower with a plastic cover

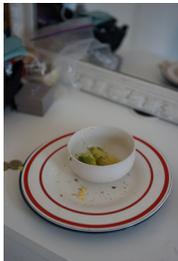
missing my cat

dishes that have to be washed hair on the floor

eating fast

to obey on the rules of the elders

rushing in the morning



cables

standard furniture

humidity

the temporary house

to pray because my father asks

sounds of television

rental place the empty picture frames

a midnight television show

dirty house

dirty kitchen and plates

dirty floor

play the role of the host

anything replaceable

the place of the plugs on the bedroom

the question if the lunch is ready cleaning the kitchen

the feeling that I miss to build my own house

the room of my parents after my father's death

to arrange the plates on the table
to order delivery

to bake some bread on
the fireplace

to wake up later than others
to open the curtains
to take off my pajamas
to make my morning coffee

0

transition day to night

0

the corridor

the plastic chairs

the wood floors

the floor with the grey tiles

the small IKEA coffee table

plates on
the small
table

a phone call

0

absence of a dining table

cigarettes on an astray



grey and white tiles

to go in my bedroom for sleep

the cup of coffee

0

lunch preparation

cold

to do my exercises

TEMPORARY THINGS

turning off
the light
before
sleeping

not having an extra room
besides bedroom

to sit on the chair close to the kitchen side

0

the entrance
a big cabinet with a mirror

the bathroom

to behave by standard ways

everything that I know
of household from my
mother

table with scratches and imperfections



bed
 blanket on the couch
 friends on the couch
 to sit all together around the table

to take a shower

+

staying with someone on the bed

videocalls

my personal items

family



finding myself under a comfortable situation

+

being in my kitchen with comfortable clothes

+

sunlight and shadows

friends on the living room
 dinner with friends
 warm atmosphere

photos on the wall
 illustrations on the wall

freshness

deep conversations
 walking around

+

friends in my house
 cooking for my friends

to comb my hair in front of the mirror
 a bit of body cream to my arm
 to wash my face with a green soap

dance alone in my room
 no one watching

ventilation

company with roommate

sitting in my armchair

colorful carpets

watching a movie

a warm bath

some music to the radio

+

the warm feeling of the duvet

yoga space

a glass of red wine
 to do the homework together
 the bread and the cheese

the fireplace

dinners

flowers
 smell of jasmine

+

saying good morning to roommates
 going to roommates

a floor made of white big rocks
 to help my mother with the cake

doing the laundry

the old furniture
 and object from
 my old house

THE SUNLIGHT

+

sunlight inserts to the bedroom

to pray

round tables and pillows on the floor

the notebook with the recipes

my boyfriend

my shared studio
my shared living room

breakfast

++

sleeping
dreaming
dildos

holding hands on the couch
drinking wine together
watching movies while hugged on a couch

hot baths

++

sitting next to the fire

to getting dressed in front of the mirror

hugs in a warm and clean space

warm light
familiar food smells
kitchen sounds

morning coffee

some perfume after a bath

stretching
during
walking

wine and
chocolate

flowers on the table

the windows

being nude

++

open spaces

that I can decide everything in my own place

++

to invite my friends at home
to be free to do whatever I want
to don't be judged by parents or siblings

selfcare

to play some
games with
friends
*deserts and
friends*

++

my most raw feelings
unfiltered stage

my paintings on the wall

memories of family

objects
connected to
memories

blue walls

something sweet
after lunch

music

to enjoy the tea
to go for sleeping late

winter lights

morning rituals
my sleepy face
making my morning coffee
not caring about anyone else

my red chair

making love in the bedroom

++

*a hot shower after a long day
stay on the bed after a good sleep*

the feeling of freedom



What claims our attention is the veritable gulf that separates all bodily sensations, pleasure or pain, desires and satisfactions -which are so “private” that they cannot even be adequately voiced, much less represented in the outside world, and therefore are altogether incapable of being reified.

Hannah Arendt, *The human condition*



The workshop aimed to encourage the students to develop an **open conversation** with themselves, their personal domestic environments and the others, investigating the meanings such **control, safety, personal limits, power, body and space**.

The main goal of this workshop is to divide which are those key-elements which select the participants in order to describe their familiar spaces, which is the other's reactions on that and if we can think otherwise our personal domestic environments using the sharing, trust and communication. Through this performative strategy, the participants challenge themselves and others to observe the various behaviours, the game behind the rules and to deal with the expectations and situations. This can frame our critical exploration of intersections between present, familiar, -under control(?)- and future orientation abilities and spatial perspectives.

my data continue to transmute(?)

Think about your personal space.

Your bedroom.

Your closet.

Your table.

Your kitchen.

Your wall.

How is it?

Is it soft?

Is it white?

Is it clean?

Is it comfortable?

Then, think that the same space is claimed by someone else.

How do you feel?

Do you think that this person can read your space?

What are the possible scenarios of transformations of this space?

Then, how this space can be again yours?

workshop for Inside
students
05.11.2021

It can be work as machine which
collects personal data of the various
identities, it is processing them and
forecasts a result.



a note \11

Your home will become you,

And you will become one with your home.

It is common knowledge,

One can
always argue
about
TASTE!

Who can say who is *right*?

...

When it comes to your home,

No one
else
is right

You are always right.

\11
extract of Adolf Loss'
essay "the home"
representing by me

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