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Homeownership, Prosperity, and Inequality in the 21st Century

BOOK OF ABSTRACTS

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HOUSINGWEL

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An Analysis of the Physical and Semantic Dimensions of the Anonymous Apartment Residents' Causes for Renovation

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After the Industrial Revolution, urbanization led to a severance between the housing production process and the unique qualities of inhabitants. This resulted in the reduction of those who would live in housing to mere "anonymous residents." The concept of "home," to which the dweller was historically connected through a sense of belonging, disappeared, and the act of dwelling was limited to a framework of mechanical functionality.

This study, part of an ongoing doctoral thesis, examines housing renovations in Antalya, Turkiye, and proposes that renovations be considered a means of analysing the relationship between people and their residential environments. Turkiye's unique modernization and urbanization process has produced similar apartment blocks accommodating the majority of the population.

Despite increasing renovation costs, residents modify their flats to reflect their identities, often after saving for years. The hypothesis is that such renovations do not stem solely from physical concerns but may reflect a desire to transform the "house" into a "home" by breaking the spatial anonymity.

The research examines residential renovations in 21st-century Turkiye as initiatives through which residents develop a sense of belonging and express identity by creating unique living spaces. Thus, the meaning of renovation may expand from a mechanical intervention to a practice that enables residents not only to inhabit houses but to dwell in them. These modifications may reveal how housing is perceived by inhabitants while exposing shortcomings of housing production.

Ultimately, the study aims to interpret resident-initiated renovations through housing perception, everyday interaction with the residential environment and the desire to reshape the house despite its limitations, in order to reveal emotional and physical housing needs and their relation to human well-being.